

# NEWS & NOTES

January 11 2009

## HERE AT BENTON

### This Week

Wednesday, 9:30 am Friendship Circle Sewing

Thursday, 7 pm Worship Ministry

### Staff Hours

**Brenda** Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9-2

**Doug** Tuesday-Wednesday 9-2, Thursday 9-12,  
Friday 9-11

**Steve** Friday, 8-12

### Happy Birthday! ☺

**Lorna Troyer** January 13

**Valerie Martin** January 13

**A new telephone list and hotline list** are in your mailbox. If you would like an electronic copy, please send an email to Grant Martin at [GrantM@MMNWorld.net](mailto:GrantM@MMNWorld.net). If you have corrections or additions, please place them in the bottom drawer of the secretary's desk with the announcements or send them to [Office@BentonChurch.org](mailto:Office@BentonChurch.org).

### New email addresses:

Troy and Donna Risser [tdrisser@ligtel.com](mailto:tdrisser@ligtel.com)

Chelsea Risser [cjoyful@ligtel.com](mailto:cjoyful@ligtel.com)

**Mennonite World Conference Assembly** is in Asuncion, Paraguay July 14 – 19, 2009. The theme is "Come Together in the Way of Christ," based on Philippians 2:1-11. Benton sponsors a member to attend, and this year \$750 is available for someone to attend. The costs will be at least \$1700, with \$1100 for travel. So far no one has said that they will go, so if you are interested please say something to Brenda or Doug by the end of January.

### Offering

Date Regular Offering	\$4,974.00
Year to Date Needed	\$48,150.00
Year to Date Received	\$51,677.00
Difference	\$3,527.00

## What we do and why: baptism, communion and membership

by Doug Kaufman and Brenda Meyer

A number of times over the past years the pastors have been asked why Benton practices baptism and communion the way we do, or what the relationship is between these practices and church membership. These have been helpful conversations for us as we clarify our practice, and led us to suggest that the congregation look at these issues.

For this reason we are planning a series of four youth and adult Sunday School classes on the topics of baptism, communion, and membership. The plan is that during the Sunday school hours on Jan 11 & 18 and Feb 1 we will meet in our regular Sunday school classes for discussion. Our six-session sermon series on "What Makes Us Mennonite?" begins with sermons on baptism, communion, and discernment, so those sermons will provide a reference point for our conversations.

On February 8 we will meet as a congregation during the Sunday school hour to look at each class's responses to the questions, then we will consider together which practices we want to confirm, and which ones might change. The Pastoral Leadership Team will take what is shared and bring a proposal back to the congregation.

Today's Sunday school classes will focus on baptism and next week's on communion, using the following questions. On February 1 we will look at similar questions on church membership.

- 1) Share a personal experience of baptism/communion that was particularly meaningful to you.
- 2) What, as you have observed or experienced it, is the Benton Mennonite Church pattern for practicing baptism? For celebrating communion?
- 3) Based on what you heard in today's sermon, and what you understand from your own study and experience, what are the most important elements to include in the practice of baptism? Communion?
- 4) How does Benton's current practice line up with your understandings? What would you like to confirm in our current practice? Are there things you would like us to consider changing?

# Amish and Mennonites: Common Origins, Divergent Paths

January 24 - 25, 2009, Saturday and Sunday  
at Benton Mennonite Church

Featuring John Roth and Steve Nolt  
History professors at Goshen College

Roth is author of *Stories: How Mennonites Came to Be* and translator of *Letters of the Amish Division*.  
Nolt is author of *A History of the Amish* and co-author of *Amish Grace*.

## Saturday, January 24

9:00 am	<i>Amish and Mennonites in the Division of 1693</i>	John D. Roth
10:30 am	<i>Old Order Amish and Amish Mennonites of the 1860s</i>	Steve Nolt
12:00 pm	Amish-cooked lunch provided by M & L Acres	
1:00 pm	<i>Common Origins and Divergent Paths of Mennonites and Amish Today:</i> <i>Amish and Mennonite Perspectives</i>	Doug Kaufman/Amish historian

## Sunday, January 25

9:30 am	John Roth preaches
11:00 am	Steve Nolt leads Sunday School
12:00 noon	Fellowship meal
1:00 pm	Doug Kaufman reports on his sabbatical to Amish/Mennonite sites in Europe

Program is provided free of charge through a Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Grant with no registration required. However, registration with payment of \$15 by January 16 is required for Saturday lunch for those who do not participate at Benton. For more information and registration material, see [www.bentonchurch.org](http://www.bentonchurch.org) or call pastor Doug Kaufman at 574.533.7625.



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