

NEWS & NOTES

January 18 2009

HERE AT BENTON

This Week

Wednesday, Doug and Brenda will be at Bethany's Pastors Day.

Wednesday, 6:30 pm, Benton at Greencroft (Manor II)

Wednesday, 7 pm, Nurture Ministry at Mary Ann's

Wednesday, 7 pm, Library Committee

Thursday, 7 pm, Pastoral Leadership Team

Staff Hours

Brenda Tuesday 9-1, Wednesday 1-3, Friday 9-11

Doug Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9-2

Steve Friday 8-12

Happy Birthday! ☺

Brenda Meyer January 21

Announcements

Benton at Greencroft will meet at the regular time and place this week, weather permitting. Those who are together will talk about whether to change to a daytime meeting, and if so, which day and time.

Some Goshen College students, faculty and staff have requested our prayers. Take home a sheet from the foyer table, and pray regularly this semester for the person pictured there.

Josh Bustos, Eddie Martin and Nik Risser have now earned a drink of their choice for memorizing Matthew 6: 1-12, and saying it all together. All of the children are working on this for Bible memory.

Offering

January 11 2009 Regular Offering	\$1,640.00
Year to Date Needed	\$50,825.00
Year to Date Received	\$53,317.00
Difference	\$2,492.00

Amish and Mennonite Weekend

By Douglas Kaufman

Planning that began about two years ago comes to fruition this Saturday and Sunday, when we will host John Roth, Steve Nolt, and an Amish historian at our Amish and Mennonite weekend. The focus of the weekend is looking at what divides and unites us as Amish and Mennonite Anabaptists. Benton's own history has included many people from Amish background. My own family background includes many Amish. My hope is that by looking at our traditions, we will find renewal. Not that we woodenly follow the past, but that we appreciate and critique what we have inherited.

This weekend is the finale of my summer sabbatical funded by the Lilly Endowment. For two months I lived and travelled in Europe exploring my and our congregation's faith heritage in Switzerland, Germany, and France. This weekend allows you to share in a small way in the exploration that I enjoyed over that time.

On Saturday John Roth begins at 9 am by telling the story of the Amish division from Mennonites in Switzerland in 1693. At 10:30 Steve Nolt will tell the story from the 1860s of the division of American Amish into Old Order Amish and Amish Mennonites. After an Amish-cooked meal at noon, Doug and a local Amishman will speak about the commonalities and differences of Amish and Mennonites today.

On Sunday John will preach the sermon during worship and Steve Nolt will teach Sunday School, telling the untold story of the Amish Mennonites. After a fellowship meal, I will tell the story of my sabbatical journey to Switzerland, France, and Germany, exploring Amish and Mennonite history and learning about the Mennonite church today. Both John and Steve are history professors at Goshen College who have spent some time researching the Amish. Steve has written *A History of the Amish* and co-written *Amish Grace*. John has written *Stories: How Mennonites Came To Be* and translated *Letters of the Amish Division*.

Please feel free to invite friends, family, and neighbors who you think might be interested in coming to any of these events. The only cost for those who do not regularly participate at Benton is the Saturday lunch, which is \$15. If you have not already done so, **please let Doug know today if you plan to eat lunch here on Saturday.**

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. Possible add-on activities include a Global Youth Summit for those 18-27 years old July 10-12 and Assembly Scattered in other South American locations before or after the Assembly. 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.

IN THE COMMUNITY

Fun Fest Auction Quilt Set up at Bethany

Bethany Christian Schools has set up a quilt at the school for friends to help quilt for the Fun Fest auction. Come anytime between 8 to 4 Mon-Fri and invite others to join you. Check in at the office upon arrival. If you would like to stay for a complimentary lunch, please call 534-2567 in advance.

Join MCC response to Gaza crisis

Mennonite Central Committee and its partner organizations in Gaza are providing aid to families suffering from a punishing war and the misery of an ongoing economic blockade. MCC believes that peace and security can only be gained through peaceful means and is increasing its call for all parties to engage in political negotiations to address the issues that divide them. MCC has worked alongside Palestinians for nearly six decades and Israelis for nearly 40 years. MCC's partners in Palestine/Israel are committed to nonviolence and a future of peace, justice and reconciliation for both peoples. Visit mcc.org for more information, including regularly updated posts from MCC workers in the region. MCC encourages your prayers for peace, your gifts to help meet human need and your letters to government representatives, urging them to use their influence to end the violence in Palestine/Israel.

Delegates sent to ecumenical peace gathering

Julia Gingrich of Waterford Mennonite, Goshen, Ind., and our own **Rich Meyer** represented Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference at an interchurch peace conference Jan. 13–17 in Philadelphia, Pa., titled “**Heeding God’s Call: A Gathering on Peace.**” The late Martin Luther King, Jr.’s vision for peace lay at the heart of the gathering, whose purpose was to “strengthen our witness and work for peace in the world by inspiring hope, raising voices, taking action.”

Co-sponsors were the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the Church of the Brethren, and Mennonite Church USA. Organizers expected about 600 participants, approximately half from the historic peace churches and half from other Christian traditions. Read more: www.peacegathering2009.org

Kentucky Holy Land pilgrimage.

Because northern Kentucky has long been home to a variety of religious communities (some since the early 1800s), this region is known as “Kentucky Holy Land”. This spring, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana, will sponsor a pilgrimage to several of these locations., with a focus on the distinctive spirituality of each of these communities. The pilgrimage will include daily experiences of morning and/or evening prayer, stimulating presentations on the spiritual traditions of the communities visited, quiet space for retreat, time for recreation and long walks, and many opportunities for conversation and reflection with other pilgrims. Leader: Marlene Kropf, AMBS associate professor spiritual formation and worship. To learn more, see online: www.ambs.edu/Kentucky Or, contact Rosie Reschly: 574 296-6244 or rreschly@ambs.edu

Sister-care workshop: May 15-16 2009

A sister-care workshop and training weekend is being planned by the Mennonite Women groups of Central District and IN-MI conferences – together with Mennonite Women USA – to be held at Belmont Mennonite, Elkhart Indiana. The purpose is to equip lay people to be more effective caregivers in their congregations. Mark your calendars, and watch for more details.