

NEWS & NOTES

December 14 2008

HERE AT BENTON

This Week

Wednesday, 6:30 pm, Benton at Greencroft

Wednesday, 7 pm, Church Council

Wednesday, 7 pm, Library Committee

Thursday, 7 pm, Worship Ministry

Staff Hours

Brenda Tuesday 9-3, Wednesday 9-5, Friday 9-1

Doug Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9-2

Steve Friday, 8-12

Happy Birthday! ☺

Dorvin Schlabach December 15

Announcements

No fellowship meal until January 11.

Christmas program is December 21. There will be no Sunday School.

We are putting together a new phone directory and hotline. If you haven't yet turned in your form, please do so and put it in Grant Martin's church mailbox by December 21. If you have any questions, please contact Grant Martin. If you would like to have your cell phone included in the hotline or would like to receive an email instead of a phone call for the hotline, please indicate this on the form.

Mennonite Education Agency "Prayers for Faith and Learning" and Mennonite Mission Network "Prayer Vine" are available to those who are interested. If you want to receive either or both of these regularly, please email office@bentonchurch.org or drop a note in the "Church Office" box and indicate whether you prefer to receive it via email and/or in your mailbox.

Offering

December 7 2008 Regular Offering	\$4,773.00
Year to Date Needed	\$49,895.00
Year to Date Received	\$37,450.00
Difference	\$5,445.00

Being Mennonite Today

By Doug Kaufman

In January and February we have several events exploring what it means to be Mennonite in today's world. This is part of our congregational goal of relating to the world as a Mennonite congregation. We will have a sermon series beginning January 11 called: "What makes us Mennonite?"

At that time we will also begin a series of four Sunday School sessions exploring baptism and communion. This will allow us as a congregation to continue the conversation we began at the November congregational meeting about our practice of communion and baptism. Over the years the pastors have had a number of conversations with members about how these practices relate to membership. So the Pastoral Leadership Team is proposing a conversation about these to help us clarify what we do and why we do it.

Finally, the weekend of January 24-25 will focus on the relationship between Amish and Mennonites, with guest speakers John Roth and Steve Nolt, history professors at Goshen College. John will explore the origins of the Amish as a split from Mennonites in Switzerland, and Steve will explore the split within the Amish in the 1860s that led to many Amish becoming Mennonite. On Saturday lunch will be catered by an Amish cook. This weekend is funded by the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Grant and so the meal is free to all Benton participants. Registration material is in your mailbox and is needed for the Saturday meal only. We hope this will be a time of helping us assess from where we have come and where we are going as Mennonite Christians.

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture is asking the next president to sign an executive order prohibiting torture, based on six core principles embodied in the Declaration of Principles for a Presidential Executive Order on Prisoner, Treatment, Torture and Cruelty. The Peace and Justice Ministry Team of Assembly Mennonite Church has invited the participants at Benton to add our voices to this effort. A copy of the declaration and sheets for signatures are on the foyer table for you to read and sign if you desire.

If you did not receive your *Rejoice Magazine* for this quarter in your box, please see me. I have an extra one.

– Delores Miller

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Goshen College has asked us to participate in praying for their faculty, staff and students. There are letters with attached pictures on the foyer table. Consider taking one home and praying regularly for the person featured there.

Emerge Ministries is a ministry of Church Without Walls, a sister congregation in the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference. One of their pastors, Cora Brown, is the director of EmERGE Ministries and preached at Benton last year. EmERGE assists low-income families who are on the verge of becoming homeless or those who are homeless and seeking basic shelter for their children and themselves. This winter they hope to open a new transitional housing space. They have been awarded a Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit in the amount of \$25,000. This means that if you make a contribution of \$100 or more, you can claim 50% as a credit towards your Indiana state income taxes. In order to participate in the program you need to fill out two forms to send with your contribution. These forms are on the foyer table. See Doug or Brenda for more information

Beginning in January, **Eighth Street Preschool** in Goshen, has a few openings for 3 and 4 year olds. Eighth Street Preschool emphasizes discovery learning and social interactions developmentally appropriate for 3-5 year olds. The 3/4 classes meet Tuesday and Thursday from 9-11 a.m. Children will experience quality age-appropriate activities in art, literature, music and movement. Eighth Street Preschool welcomes a diverse population. Call 533-6720 for more information.

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 7 pm

Bethany Christian Middle School will hold its annual **Christmas concert** in the school's chapel. The concert includes choral and instrumental groups.

Sunday, December 14, 3 pm

Sing Along Messiah, performed by Vesper Chorale, Vesper Chorale Orchestra, and YOU! at Kern Road Mennonite Church. Tickets available at Kern Road

Mennonite Church, Shirk's Piano and Organ Co, www.brownpapertickets.com, and at the door.

Handel's Messiah: Lecture and Workshop with rehearsal, Saturday, December 13, 1-4 pm at Kern Road Mennonite Church; \$10 workshop fee, \$8 copy of music score. Call 291-0924 to make workshop reservation by December 10.

Looking for a gift for your pastor or someone in a leadership position? Consider a copy of *Taking Our Moments and Our Days: An Anabaptist Prayer Book*. Two volumes have been prepared by AMBS faculty, one for the seasons of the church year (Advent through Pentecost) and one for ordinary time. You can purchase a copy from AMBS bookstore, www.ambs.edu/bookstore or from Herald Press, www.heraldpress.com.

Volunteer opportunities at Oaklawn, at both Goshen and Elkhart campuses. Some tasks involve direct patient contact and others have minimal contact with patients. Volunteers are welcome to work as much or as little as their schedules allow. You are eligible to volunteer if you are 18 years of age or older and out of high school. Contact Volunteer Services at 537-2646 or volunteer@oaklawn.org.

Mennonite Disaster Service needs construction supervisors at several projects beginning in January. Construction supervisors are responsible for providing leadership to all aspects of building; teaching and working with weekly volunteers and ensuring high-quality work.

Project directors, construction supervisors, cooks, and crew leaders are needed for the months of March, April, and May.

One experienced MDS couple is needed in Picher Oklahoma for January and February 2009 to give leadership to a new home build.

For available dates and information, call Sarah Yoder at 800-241-8111.

ABC-TV will air a special on addiction from Mennonite Media early in 2009. If you know anyone suffering from drug or alcohol addiction, you'll want to see *Finding Hope in Recovery: Families Living with Addiction*. The program features families and individuals affected by addiction, along with insights from professionals in the field. It will air at the discretion of local ABC-TV stations between January 4 and February 22. Check local listings or go to FindingHopeInRecovery.com for a link to updated TV listings, more information, or to buy the DVD.