

## Community and Conference Announcements

**SEEDS**

*A weekly communication for WDC churches announcing what's new and good in WDC.*

**Generous congregation helps with heating crisis**

This winter, the weather on the plains has been particularly harsh. Add to that the high cost of propane heating fuel, and for the poorest among us, the situation can be disastrous.

"I came home after a wonderful worship service on a cold Sunday," said Rob Burdette, transitional pastor of Shalom Mennonite Church, "and read in a *Wichita Eagle* news article that a Lakota woman died on the Standing Rock Reservation. There was no propane to heat the trailer home."

Burdette spoke with Irma Walking Elk, the Energy Assistance Coordinator for the Standing Rock Reservation, and with Barth Hague, Shalom's Coordinating Council Moderator, to explore the possibility of Shalom offering assistance to the people on Standing Rock. After some discussion, a fund was established for Shalom members to contribute to the heating crisis on Standing Rock.

Contributions to the fund were accepted on March 2 and 9 and \$5,210 was collected and sent to the Standing Rock Energy Assistance Program. "This is an exceptionally generous congregation," said Burdette.

"Now people at Shalom are asking how the church might work proactively with the people on the Standing Rock Reservation in the future."

*--submitted by Rob Burdette, Transitional Pastor, Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton*

**Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum:**

"Extreme Weather: Living and Working with Nature's Moods" is the theme for Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum's spring **Sunday-Afternoon-Faspa-at-the-Museum** TODAY, March 23. The program will begin at 3 p.m. and will be an opportunity for attendees to tell their stories relating to tornadoes, drought, blizzards and other severe weather conditions. Faspa, a traditional Low German light meal, will follow the program at 4 p.m. This event will be held in the Preparatory School on the museum campus and is free and open to the public.

**Heritage Dinner** coming on April 4 at Tabor Mennonite Church. Guest speaker: Larry Hatteberg.

**Urgent Need for Pencils:** The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Material Resources Center in North Newton, KS currently has an urgent need for pencils for school kits. Based on feedback from kit recipients, MCC increased the number of pencils in school kits from four to eight. This much-needed change has created an urgent need for pencils, since many kits arrive at our warehouse with fewer than eight pencils. Your gift of pencils or your donation of funds designated for "Central States Kits" will help us complete hundreds of incomplete kits and send them to countries including Jordan, Afghanistan and Kenya. Pencils should be sent to MCC Central States PO Box 235 North Newton, KS 67117, checks should be sent to MCC U.S. PO Box 500 Akron, PA 17501. Questions? Call [316-283-2720](tel:316-283-2720) or visit [mcc.org/kits](http://mcc.org/kits).

**Dear friends of the Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale,**

Vereniki has been a longstanding tradition in many of our families and a longstanding tradition with the Kansas Mennonite relief sale. This year, vereniki has been a challenge, but rest assured, vereniki will be available at the Feeding the Multitude on Friday evening and Saturday lunch along with in the Domestic Arts Building at the sale. The KMRS board and sale contact liaisons worked diligently to replace the Vereniki Making committee after all of the former committee members resigned. The sale board determined it was vital that vereniki be a part of the sale—raising annually around \$30,000 for MCC. Therefore, the board entered into a one year agreement with The Breadbasket, in Newton, to make the vereniki for the relief sale this year.

**Vereniki Making** – The KMRS board would like to bring back the rich tradition of making vereniki as a volunteer effort. Aside from simply making vereniki, the vereniki making process has historically brought many volunteers together for a rewarding social time while serving MCC in the name of Christ. With that in mind, we would like to ask each of you to consider how you might participate in this process next year. The vereniki making committee is made up of 6-8 people and is responsible for coordinating the vereniki making day at the Marion County Fairgrounds in Hillsboro prior to the sale. This would include items such as making sure the building is reserved, supplies are purchased, church contact sheets are passed out, the equipment is ready to make the vereniki, as well as oversight over the actual production. Again, your consideration regarding this volunteer opportunity is appreciated. If you have questions contact your local church contact or Matthew Voth at [620-747-2245](tel:620-747-2245) or [info@kansas.mccsale.org](mailto:info@kansas.mccsale.org).

### **Camp Mennoscah**

—Naked Mattresses—Camp Mennoscah used to have a lot of extra mattress pads. But now with the Bluestem house open, we find we don't have any extras. So we're looking for more twin mattress pads. As long as they are in good condition (no spots and clean), they don't have to be new. Hunt them out at your local thrift store and then give us a call at [620-297-3290](tel:620-297-3290). We want to cover those naked mattresses!

—Men and Boys Retreat at Camp Mennoscah is April 4-6. Come whenever you want over those three days, but meals will only be provided from Saturday supper through Sunday lunch. Peter Goerzen will be our speaker for the weekend. No pre-registration is necessary. You'll be able to sleep in the staff houses or cabins, or bring your own tent or RV. It's a great weekend to fellowship, go fishing, or just hang out and do nothing. We're still looking for church groups or individuals to help with meal preparation. If you have any questions, or if you want to help with meals, call Kevin Neufeld at [316-284-0450](tel:316-284-0450).

—Retirees' Relaxation Retreat—It's a little announcement for a retreat with big-time relaxation. Camp Mennoscah's Retirees' Relaxation Retreat is April 21-23 on the theme of Little Drops of Water, Little Grains of Sand. Retirees of all ages and busyness are invited to spend a few days with us both relaxing and learning. Information is in the Camp Mennoscah catalog or give us a call at [620-297-3290](tel:620-297-3290).

**Women in Conversation Retreat** is scheduled for April 25-27, 2014 at Cross Winds Church Center, Hesston, Kansas. Jennifer Davis Sensenig will inspire us as she speaks on the "Spirited Lives of Women."

**The first-ever "Spring into the Arts" Festival**, presented by the Newton Area Arts Council, will kick off with its first major event, the Soweto Gospel Choir, at Bethel College, 7:30 p.m., Fri., March 28, part of the Hesston-Bethel Performing Arts Series. The **Newton Mid-Kansas Symphony Orchestra Spring Pops** Concert is 4 p.m., Sunday, March 30, and will feature Bethel's director of jazz studies, Joel Linscheid, on solo saxophone. Both events take place in Memorial Hall. For a complete Spring into the Arts schedule, see [www.newtonarts.org](http://www.newtonarts.org).

### **Are you a youth sponsor? Youth pastor? A church member who enjoys working with youth and wants to learn more?**

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then we want you to join us for **Youth Ministry Council** in Kansas City from May 12-15. Speakers will include Michelle Hershberger, professor of Bible and Religion from Hesston College; Rachel Springer Gerber, the new Mennonite Church USA denominational minister for youth and young adults; and Curt Weaver, youth pastor from Portland, OR. For more information and to register for this event, visit <http://www.mennoniteusa.org/youth-leaders-2/youth-ministry-council-2014/>.

**An invitation to prayer and presence with Mennonite Church USA:** Mennonite Church USA's Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) is meeting at Bethel College this week. Here's a link to the agenda they'll have before them: <http://www.mennoniteusa.org/2014/03/18/constituency-leaders-council-prepares-to-meet/>

Two of the CLC sessions will be open to the public: Thursday March 20, 8:30 am, Bethel College Dining Hall; and Saturday March 22, 10:30-11:45 am, Bethel College Dining Hall. Please send an e-mail to Shelley Buller ([ShelleyB@MennoniteUSA.org](mailto:ShelleyB@MennoniteUSA.org)) if you plan to attend either or both of those open sessions.

You are also invited to join together in prayer on the Bethel campus during the CLC closed meetings. Weather permitting, you are welcome to pray anywhere on campus. If you prefer to pray indoors, the Richert House, across from Bethel College Mennonite Church, will be available on Thursday (10 a.m.-8 p.m.), and the First Bank Conference Room, across the hall from the cafeteria, will serve as a prayer room on Friday (8 a.m.-8 p.m.) and Saturday (8 a.m.-noon).