



Baptism Sunday ~ June 8

# Tabor Church News

July, 2014

## Phil's Ponderings

*"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12b).*

As we focus on the story of Jesus in our Year of the Bible, I've been pondering what it means to faithfully follow Jesus today. What does it mean to have and share the light of life? Furthermore, how do we publicly commit ourselves to the way of Jesus?

Some churches have altar calls, a time in the service when people can go up to the front of the sanctuary in order to make a public commitment to Jesus. Committing (and re-committing) our lives to the way of Jesus sounds like a great thing, so why don't we do altar calls at Tabor?

Well, now that I think about it, we do. When I think back over the past four months, I can think of at least seven times when we called people to the front of the sanctuary and invited them to commit (or re-commit) their lives to Jesus. The examples I can think of include Ash Wednesday (3/5), Smashing Idols (4/6), Communion (4/17), Anointing (5/4), Child Dedications (5/11), Offerings (5/25), and Baptisms and welcoming new members (6/8).

- On Ash Wednesday, we were invited to walk up front to receive ashes on our foreheads in the shape of a cross as a symbol of our commitment to the way of Jesus.
- On Youth Sunday, we were invited to think of an idol we worship, write it on a slip of paper, walk up front, and drop our slip of paper into an idol that was ceremoniously smashed, thus symbolizing our commitment to worship God alone.
- On Maundy Thursday, we were invited to gather around the cross and take communion together, thus symbolizing our commitment to be Jesus' body and embrace Jesus' new covenant.
- On Sunday, May 4, as we reflected on the pain of exile, we were invited to walk up front, be anointed with oil, and receive a prayer of blessing, thus recognizing our hope that God is present with us even through the most difficult of times.
- On Child Dedication Sunday, we witnessed parents of young children commit themselves to raising their children in the care of the Lord and we were invited to commit ourselves also to supporting these families with Christian love.
- On Celebration Sunday, we were invited to bring our offerings to the front as a response to all that God has done for us.
- On Pentecost Sunday, we witnessed baptism and membership candidates publicly commit their lives to Christ and we were invited to commit ourselves to journeying alongside of them on their journey of faith.

*Continued on back page*

## Worship Themes

### July 6 - Christ-Pentecost:

#### *Death and Resurrection*

Selections from the Gospels

Pastor Phil preaching

### July 13 - Christ-Pentecost:

#### *A Kingdom and Priests*

Revelation 5

Joe Sawatzky preaching

### July 20 - Christ-Pentecost:

#### *Jerusalem Conference*

Acts 1-12, 15

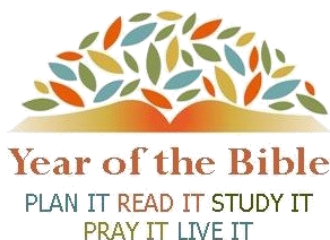
Pastor Rosie preaching

### July 27 - Christ-Pentecost:

#### *Paul's Missionary Travels*

Acts 13-28

Danielle Reeves preaching



## from the staff...

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# Baptisms as Tabor



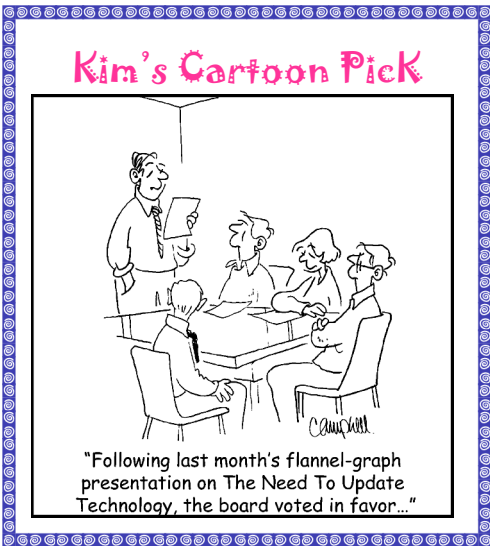
Kellen Froese



Mark Schmidt



Sarah Booth



## Rosie's Reflections

I often reflect on the events over the past year and say, Thanks be to God for the opportunity to serve Tabor Mennonite Church as Associate Pastor of Christian Education and Pastoral Care. After serving at Hesston College for 38 years, and feeling called to do so, I was surprised, humbled and ready to hear God and Tabor calling me into pastoral ministry. Thank you!

My involvement with Christian Education has been exciting and far beyond what I could have imagined. I love Bible School and the energy it brings to Tabor. What a blessing it is to work with a group of talented, spirited, creative people who think and dream big about ministering to children. We have so many gifted leaders and teachers in our midst. Thank you for your willingness to use your gifts! You are an inspiration to me.

Preaching was one of the tasks that scared me. On one hand I was terrified, yet energized to try something new. I had experience teaching, but somehow preaching felt different. One of my mentors told me, "Rosie, preaching will make you pray." He was right. If I've learned one thing it is to seek God in every step of preparation. From a recent preaching workshop, I learned to look for at least 4 things in the sermon text: 1) The trouble in the text; 2) the trouble in the world; 3) the GRACE in the text; and 4) the GRACE in the world. This method keeps me focused on how God was working then, and how God is working now. Thank you for your words of affirmation as I find my preaching voice.

Connecting with Tabor members and beyond has been a joy. The wisdom I receive from these visits is tucked into my memory to draw on from time to time. Thank you for allowing me to join in your stories of happiness, pain and sorrow. You often remind me before I can say it – God is good and has been with me all these years. Yes! He does not promise an easy life. If he did, we would be robbed of our freedom. We aren't puppets on a string – rather we are free to choose God's redeeming love and grace. And if we are free, imagine how free God is to act and bring about his purposes.

Thank you God, for giving us freedom to choose to follow you. Thank you for your steadfast love that endures forever. Thank you, Lord Jesus, that your GRACE is sufficient, and that your power lives within us all. For the kingdom is yours; and to you be the power and glory forever! And all God's people say – Amen!  
~Grace and peace, Pastor Rosie

## TMYF Summer Service Trip

Swan Lake Christian Camp, South Dakota is the destination for Tabor's youth for this year's Summer Service Trip. They will leave the morning of July 6 and arrive late that afternoon. Monday morning will start with an orientation and the afternoon will begin with work projects which continue through Wednesday. Thursday will be a day for outings: visiting a Hutterite Colony and activities in Sioux Falls. On July 11 they will head back to Kansas, arriving at Tabor in the late afternoon. Youth going on the trip are: Karina Brandt, Sarah Booth, Tracy Henry, Josh Schmidt, Mark Schmidt, Kylee Unruh, Luke Unruh and Carson Voth. Sponsors: Michael Unruh and Kristin Unruh. May they have a great time and experience God's presence as they serve.

## Introducing... Eric Litwiller

I was born in Puerto Rico where my father was the CEO of the Mennonite Hospital in Aibonito, but grew up predominately in several small towns near Goshen, IN where we were members of Prairie Street Mennonite in Elkhart and then Waterford Mennonite in Goshen. I got my BS in Business management at Indiana University in Bloomington, IN and later my Master's degree in Business Administration in Indianapolis where I moved after college. Shortly after, I moved to Chicago, working in real estate management.



It was while living in Chicago, and attending Prairie View Mennonite Church in Flanagan, IL, that I was baptized at the age of 32. Three years later, I had an opportunity to move to Kansas to be nearer to my six nieces and nephews in Wichita, as well as to begin working in the not-for-profit sector where I could more directly live my day-to-day life in accordance with my faith. I moved to a small farm in McPherson and developed proficiency in fund development which brought me to the attention of Everence Financial Advisors where I now work as Charitable Services Representative.

I stay busy building my organic hobby farm which includes goats, pigs, chickens and grain crops (and soon bees and beef), as well as running a custom woodworking business called Heirloom Hardwoods. I also serve as Director for a family charitable foundation we started two years ago, and manage a few rental properties both for myself and for the foundation. In my spare time, I volunteer on several not-for-profit Boards of Directors.

### Grace's Goodies

#### Crunchy Potato Balls

*Served at February staff meeting.*

- 2 cups very stiff mashed potatoes
  - 2 c finely chopped or ground fully cooked ham
  - 1c (4oz) shredded Swiss cheese or may use half cheddar
  - 1/3 c mayonnaise
  - 1 egg beaten
  - 1 tsp prepared mustard
  - 1/4 tsp pepper
  - 2 to 3 Tbs. flour
  - 1-3/4 c crushed cornflakes
- Combine 1st 7 ingredients. Add enough flour to make a stiff mixture. Chill. Shape into 1 inch balls; roll in cornflakes. Place on greased baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 min. Serve hot. Yield: about 6 doz.



Here is our monthly marriage moment: a meaningful memento to married couples to make your marriages marvelous!

John Gottman, a psychologist who has done a lot of research on what makes great marriages points out that healthy couples know how to recognize and diffuse the power of what he calls the "four horsemen" that can erode and eventually kill marriages. The four horsemen are *criticism*, *defensiveness*, *contempt*, and *stonewalling*. This month's focus: *contempt*.

"*Contempt* is any statement or nonverbal behavior that puts oneself on a higher plane than one's partner." Signs of contempt in a marriage relationship: when only one person is laughing, mockery, correcting another's grammar or other minor error, and facial expression (especially rolling eyes). Left unchecked, the cycle of *criticism* and *defensiveness* can lead to *contempt*, which can further erode a relationship.

**Marriage Challenge:** Recognize *contempt* in your marriage relationship. When you find yourself or your spouse taking the one-up position, or when you notice some of the warning signs listed above, consider creative ways to disarm contempt. For example, intentionally remember the things you love about your spouse, seek to maintain a level playing field in your relationship, and refuse to roll your eyes no matter how much you feel like it. Contempt can sneak into a relationship over time (not quickly) and thus will take some time to remove from a relationship. If you would like more resources on disarming contempt and reclaiming your marriage, please let me know.

With a little work, you too can make your marriage marvelous 😊.

~Pastor Phil

John M. Gottman, *The Marriage Clinic* (1999), 44.



## Faith Formation Summer Schedule Tabor Mennonite Church

### *High School Youth and Adults: Reliving the Story*

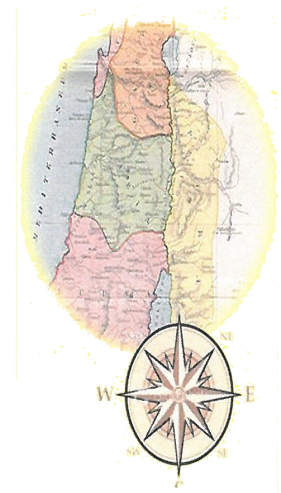
There are several exciting opportunities to get involved with Faith Formation this summer as the senior high youth through adults listen and reflect on stories of mission

- through Joe and Anna Swawatsky, our mission partners,
- through the Homeless Shelter, our local mission,
- through Ted & Co. DVD's on Jesus' mission,
- and through Tabor's mission to extend hospitality, healing and hope as we discern together the mission of a new addition.

- July 6 - Ted & Co. DVD "Triumphal Entry," "Last Supper," "Arrest," "Breakfast on the Shore"
- July 13 - Joe & Anna Sawatsky, Returning missionaries from South Africa
- July 20 - Harvey County Homeless Shelter – stories of healing and hope
- July 27 - Facilities Task Force – Tabor's building mission
- August 3 - Ted & Co. DVD "Pentecost," "Members of the Family: Acts 15"
- August 10 - Facilities Task Force – Tabor's building mission
- August 17 - Ted & Co. "Paul in Prison"
- August 24 - Ted & Co. DVD "Don't be Afraid: Revelation"
- August 30 *Saturday* - Celebrate our Year of the Bible with a family picnic in the park, food, games, overnight camping, and breakfast. Everyone is invited! More information to come!
- August 31 - Celebration Sunday – Jeopardy for everyone

### *Children age 3 - 8th grade: Walking the Story*

- July 6 - Jesus meets a woman at the well
- July 13 - Jesus heals at the pool of Bethesda
- July 20 - Sermon on the Mount: "Be-attitudes"; Salt and Light
- July 27 - Jesus: Death, burial and resurrection
- August 3 - Paul's Conversion: On the road to Damascus
- August 10 - Peter, Cornelius and the mixed potluck!
- August 17 - The big decision: Jesus is Lord!
- August 24 - Paul: Shipwrecked!
- August 30 *Saturday* - Celebrating our journey through the Bible!  
Everyone is invited for food, fun, campfire stories and singing,  
manna s'mores, stargazing, to your tents, & breakfast!
- August 31 - Celebration Continues!



*Ponderings continued from page 1*

Through these special worship services over the past few months, many of us have embraced these "altar call" opportunities and publicly committed or recommitted ourselves to Jesus. Therefore, as I continue to ponder my questions, I realize that the above examples are all ways that we can declare our faith in Jesus. These are all opportunities to grow in our faith as individuals and as a community. But Jesus doesn't only call us to declare our faith. Jesus also calls us to live out our faith in word in deed:

*"You are the light of the world...let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14a, 16b). Amen.*

~Pastor Phil