



*Sonbeams Sing!*

# Tabor Church News

December, 2015

## Phil's Ponderings

### "Freedom Bound"

*"Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths?" (Psalm 25:4)*

The season of Advent is upon us! This Advent at Tabor, we will be following the Mennonite *Leader* Worship Resources. Here's some of what Ken Beidler has to say about this year's resources:

The Advent season is a time of reflection on how God's coming in Jesus releases us from personal, social, and historical chains that bind us. The theme for this Advent–Epiphany season is "Freedom Bound." We live in the paradox that we are both bound and free, on a march to freedom but encumbered by the burden and sin we carry; we are carrying the scars of struggle but living with a new hope. God's freedom takes us down pathways of justice, mercy, trust, love, service and inclusion....

These [Advent] Scriptures confront us. Just as the biblical prophets addressed their own people's sin with a message of judgment, mercy, and hope, so also these texts address us and call us to conversion. Our lives, neighbors, church, and family members are touched by class inequity, the lack of resources that lead the vulnerable to slide into deep poverty, and the racial injustice of Ferguson, Missouri. Many of us—once immigrants to Canada and the United States—are now a part of a historical legacy of trauma and mistreatment of Aboriginals/Native Americans. Our churches struggle to stay together as we look across the barriers of theological, class, cultural, and urban/rural divides. The reality is that we are not free. We are bound by prejudice through racial and cultural misunderstandings and our own egocentric ways of seeing the world.

"Freedom Bound," this worship resource for Advent–Epiphany, invites us to see with bifocal vision: to have one eye on ourselves and the world and another eye on the Scriptural stories that, with the Spirit's help, can enliven and deepen our faith. Advent is typically seen as a season of waiting, but with all that God has yet to do through us we cannot be satisfied with a passive waiting. Our waiting is active, full of energy, lamenting, mindful of suffering, and hope filled. Advent is a time set aside for spiritual renewal, a time to develop a more robust and resilient faith.

Freedom is coming! The restless prophets of old, John the Baptist, Elizabeth and John, Mary and Joseph, and Jesus himself sing this same song of God's longing for mercy and justice for all. Will we join them singing on the paths of justice, mercy, trust, love, service, and inclusion?<sup>1</sup>

This Advent season, may we release the chains that bind us and embrace God's vision of freedom!

~Pastor Phil

## Sunday Worship Themes

### Dec. 6 - *Freedom Bound:*

*The Path of Mercy* (Advent 2)  
Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79;  
Luke 3:1-6; Philippians 1:3-11  
Pastor Phil preaching

### Dec. 13 - *Freedom Bound:*

*The Path of Trust* (Advent 3)  
Isaiah 12:1-6; Zephaniah 3:14-20;  
Luke 3:7-18; Philippians 4:4-7  
Pastor Phil preaching

### Dec. 20 - *Freedom Bound:*

*The Path of Love* (Advent 4)  
Psalm 80:1-7; Micah 5:2-5a;  
Luke 1:39-56; Hebrews 10:5-10  
Pastor Phil preaching

### Dec. 24 - *Christmas Eve*

*Celebration Service*  
Excerpts from Genesis, Isaiah,  
Luke, Matthew, and John

### Dec. 27 - *Freedom Bound:*

*The Path of Service*  
(Sunday after Christmas)  
Psalm 148; 1 Samuel 1:18-20;  
Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52  
Michael Unruh preaching

### Jan. 3 - *Freedom Bound:*

*The Path of Inclusion* (Epiphany)  
Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14;  
Matthew 2:1-12; Ephesians 3:1-12  
Pastor Katherine preaching

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<sup>1</sup>Ken Beidler, "Freedom Bound," *Leader: Practical. Effective. Anabaptist, Missional* 2.0 (Lansing, MI, MennoMedia: Fall 2015 Vol. 13, No. 1), 33-34.

## Conference Resource Library Books

*The Cutters* - Bess Streeter Aldrich  
*Full House* - Karen Anderson  
*Celia's House* - D.E. Stevenson  
*The Sodbuster Venture* - Charlene Joy Talbot  
*Beginning the World* - Karen Anderson  
*The Mark of the Maker* - Tom Hegg  
*We Just Want to Live Here*  
 - Amal Rifa'i & Odelia Sinbinder  
*Celebrations: Mennonite Girls Can Cook*  
 - Lovella Schellenberger  
*The Furies and the Flame* - Ongrid Rimland  
*Frost* - Calvin Miller  
*A Matter of Diamonds* - David Manual  
*My Story* - Rosa Parks  
*The Story Keeper* - Lisa Wingate  
*Double Wedding Ring* - Patricia Wendorf  
*Mosby, The Kennedy Center Cat*  
 - Bepie Noyes  
*Rise and Walk* - Dennis Byrd  
*Things We Wish We Had Said*  
 - Tony and Bart Campolo  
*House Calls and Hitching Posts*  
 - Elton Lehman  
*Seven From Heaven*  
 - Kenny and Bobbi McCaughey  
*Coping With Alzheimer's*  
 - Rose Oliver and Frances A. Bock  
*The Invention of Wings* - Sue Monk Kidd  
*Teresa of the Poor* - Renzo Allegri  
*The Bible Smuggler* - Louis A. Vernon  
*Broken Days* - Ann Rinaldi  
*God's Love is Like* - Ray Buckley

ALL BOOKS MUST BE RETURNED  
 TO THE TABLE IN THE LIBRARY NO  
 LATER THAN JANUARY 10, 2016



## Eight Christmas Gifts that don't cost a cent:

- \* The gift of listening
- \* The gift of laughter
- \* The gift of a compliment
- \* The gift of solitude
- \* The gift of affection
- \* The gift of a written note
- \* The gift of a favor
- \* The gift of a cheerful disposition

-via Apple Seeds, *The Joyful Noiseletter*

*Rosie's Reflections*

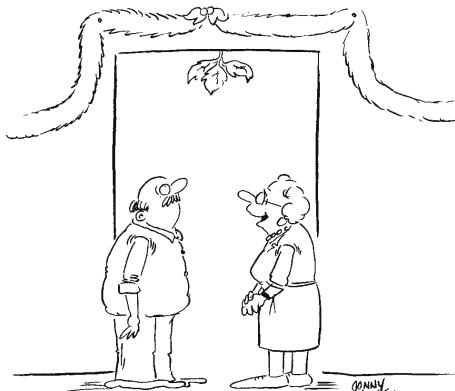
'Tis the season for gathering and celebrating with family and friends. These gatherings often include food and storytelling. I love listening to others tell stories because I'm usually reminded of a similar story in my life. My story is never quite like your story and vice versa. However, through storytelling we begin to identify with each other. According to William J. Bausch,<sup>1</sup> sharing stories create community. For example, the stories shared at Tabor's 75<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> year celebrations helped us connect to Tabor. They created a bond between us. Bausch also says that stories help shape our identity. The stories we remember and tell are the ones that have shaped us the most. Telling our stories and listening to others tell theirs help give us better insight into who we are personally and who we are as a community. Hearing each other's stories inspires and renews us to live more fully and faithfully as God's people.

So here is the invitation! Come to Tabor church on **Thursday, December 10, at 9:30 a.m.** for Stories & Stuff. **Everyone** is invited! We'll gather in the South rooms for food & fun. Bring a story to share, although it isn't a requirement. However, please **sign up** on the yellow sign-up sheet on the bulletin board so I know how much food to prepare. **Please come!**

~Pastor Rosie

<sup>1</sup>Bausch, William J. 1999. *A World of Stories for Preachers and Teachers*. Mystic: Twenty-third Publications.

## Kim's Cartoon Pick



"No, it's actually poison ivy. That's why I'm itching to kiss you."

## Grace's Goodies

Mushroom Soup  
*Served at staff get together*

- 1 lb. mushrooms-finely chopped, leaving some pieces larger, (mixture of portabella & button, etc.)
- 4 Tbs. unsalted butter
- 2 Tbs. flour
- 2 cups strong chicken broth
- Use unsalted broth and add some chicken bouillon cubes/granules
- 1 cup whipping cream
- Sauté mushrooms in butter 5 min. over low heat.
- Stirring constantly, add flour.
- Mix well. Slowly add chicken broth, (salt and pepper to taste).
- Transfer to double boiler to keep warm.
- Just before serving add cream and heat thoroughly.
- Serves 4-6



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

John Gottman, marriage researcher, has written a book entitled *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*. Last month, we focused on Principle 4: "let your partner influence you."

Before we dive into the next two principles about conflict in marriage, Gottman writes a helpful chapter (chapter 8) in which he identifies the two different kinds of marital conflict.

According to Gottman's research, "all marital conflicts...fall into one of two categories: either they can be resolved, or they are perpetual, which means they will be a part of your lives forever in some form or another."<sup>1</sup> All marriages have conflict. Some conflicts are solvable, but the majority of marital conflicts fall into the "perpetual problems" category—"69 percent, to be exact."<sup>2</sup> "Psychologist Dan Wile said it best in his book *After the Honeymoon*: 'When choosing a long-term partner ... you will inevitably be choosing a particular set of unsolvable problems that you'll be grappling with for the next ten, twenty, or fifty years.'"<sup>3</sup> Throughout this chapter, Gottman focuses on the importance of identifying whether a conflict is solvable or perpetual. When couples are able to identify the kind of conflict they are dealing with, they can embrace the next two marriage principles, which focus on solving solvable problems and coping with perpetual problems.

**Marriage Challenge:** When you are in conflict with your spouse, seek to identify what kind of conflict you are dealing with, solvable or perpetual. Remember that most conflicts are perpetual. Once you have identified what kind of conflict you are dealing with, use the appropriate principle to either solve your solvable problems or cope in healthy ways with your perpetual problems.

**Questions to Consider:** What are some unresolved solvable problems in your marriage? What are some of the perpetual problems that you and your spouse deal with?

With a little work, you too can make your marriage marvelous ☺!

~Pastor Phil

<sup>1</sup>Excerpt From: John Gottman Ph.D. & Nan Silver. "The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work." iBooks. <https://itun.es/us/GtdG2.1>

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

**Save the dates in 2016:**

—Tabor Leadership Retreat: Jan. 15-16. Everyone is welcome!

—Ministry Reporting Sunday: Jan. 24. We will also have a vote of affirmation to extend Pastor Rosie another three year term of service.

—Marriage Retreat: Feb. 5-6. Talk to Pastor Phil to sign up today.



**Christmas Brass:** Dec. 13, 7pm.

Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

**Women's Breakfast:** Dec. 19, 9am.

Tabor Church Fellowship Hall

**Night in the Barn:** Dec. 19-20, 6-8pm.

Willowspring Downs

**Christmas Eve Service:** Dec. 24, 7pm.

### ADVENT OFFERING 2015: Infant Care Kits

Infant care kits will be received at Tabor Church during Advent. The offering received on Christmas Eve will go toward additional supplies and shipping expenses for kits. Thank you for your generosity in participating in this project.

### Shopping List/Giving Schedule

#### November 29:

- ♦ 2 gowns/sleepers (flannel or similar warm, soft material)
- ♦ 1 cap

#### December 6:

- ♦ 2 undershirts/onesies (any sleeve length)
- ♦ 1 pair of socks

#### December 13:

- ♦ 4 cloth diapers (flat-fold preferred)
- ♦ 4 safety pins (2 inch)

#### December 20:

- ♦ 1 large bar mild soap (leave in wrapper)
- ♦ 1 receiving blanket (lightweight fleece or flannel, min. 36")

New items only, size 3 to 9 mo.

Items can be purchased or hand sewn.

*Help mothers give their infants a good start. These kits are given to families displaced by war or disaster and are used in a number of other settings to help support mothers who lack the supplies they need for a new baby.*



## Tabor Mennonite Church

### Devotional

12 Scriptures  
John 1:1-18

### Watching for the True Light: An Advent Devotional

*Katherine's Candor* -Katherine Goerzen

My favorite passage in all of Scripture is the prologue to John's Gospel which poetically speaks of God coming to dwell with us in our own flesh. This passage tells of the very essence of our Lord and Savior. There is beauty in its hearing: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God ..."

This is a beautiful hymn of praise to the Word of God who became flesh and who came to dwell among us within creation. And it is a holy and mysterious thing indeed to ponder the way that God's own self chose to come into the world in such an unexpected way. The Word which first spoke creation into being entered the world unable to speak, save for the tender cries of a newborn baby. The One who first breathed life into humanity drew his first breath in his mother's loving embrace. The Light of the World entered it on a cold, dark night. Thus it was that the Word became flesh and came to dwell among us.

Through the True Light coming into the world, God has been made known. The One who turned the water into wine is the same One who parted the waters of the Red Sea. The One who fed the crowd of 5,000 with five small loaves and two fish is the same One who provided manna to the people wandering in the wilderness. The same One who stayed the hands of those who would stone the woman caught in adultery also stayed Abraham's hand when he went to sacrifice his son on Mt. Moriah. The One who freed the man born blind from his illness also freed those who were slaves in Egypt. The hands that formed us from the soil were the hands that were nailed upon a cross.

The One and Only who is close to the Father's heart is the One who has revealed God to us. And through the Light who has come, all creation has come to know God. Or so we would hope, yet even though the Word become flesh was in the world, even though the world came into being through him, the world still did not know him. Even though he came to that which was his own, his own did not accept him.

We know that the True Light has come into the world and yet we still feel like a people who wait in darkness. The True Light has come into the world, yet people have loved darkness rather than Light. And it feels like the darkness is prevailing when yet another family is forced to leave their home in their war-torn country and become refugees. It feels like the darkness is prevailing when yet another person is gunned down in the streets. It feels like the darkness is prevailing when relationships continue to be broken and family ties continue to be severed. It feels like the darkness is prevailing while the church continues to be rent asunder by schisms and disagreements on what it means to be faithful. Where is the True Light when yet another precious child dies of starvation? Where is the True Light when we continue to have violence inflicted upon our bodies? Where is the True Light when we forget the image of God within ourselves and continue to doubt our goodness and see ourselves as anything less than a beloved child of God? Where is the True Light in the midst of famine and floods and senseless destruction of homes and lives? Where is the True Light when we continue to experience illness, pain, loneliness, abuse, and the pain of death? There are so many times when we find ourselves surrounded and overwhelmed by darkness, desperately longing for the healing, hope, and peace that only the True Light can bring.

We hope and we trust and we long for the True Light to come in full, and yet the Light still continues to pierce the darkness if only we have eyes to see. Though there are times when the darkness seems to prevail, we can still catch glimpses of flames and sparks and blazing fires where the True Light still shines among us. I have caught glimpses of the True Light when a youth group chooses to buy clothing and toys for children in their community. I have caught glimpses of the True Light when people choose to give of themselves and their time to volunteer at a homeless shelter. I have caught glimpses of the True Light when a family chooses to give all of their Christmas money to the reconciling work of Mennonite Central Committee. I have caught glimpses of the True Light whenever two or three gather to listen to one another's stories, to feast together, and to pray together. I have caught glimpses of the True Light in the wisdom and compassion of a child, in the loving presence of a friend when it was desperately needed, and in the promise of new life in the womb of a young woman.

May each of us be given eyes to see the ways that the Light is already coming into the world and dwelling with us this Advent season. May we place our hope in the coming of God's Reign into our midst in full, even as we seem to wait in the midst of darkness. For our Light will come. Indeed, the Light has already come into the world and still shines in the darkness, and we trust that the darkness will never overcome it.

In the Word is life, and the life is the Light of all people. And we have seen and will see God's glory, full of grace and truth. This is the One of whom the prophets of old have sung. This One is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. "Hail! Hail! The Word made flesh, the baby, the Son of Mary!"