

Tabor Mennonite Church

December 18, 2016

Note of Thanks

The Community Christmas Celebration with the McPherson Community Brass Choir and the Elbiata Singers from Goessel High School was enjoyed by approximately 365 people from our churches, the community, and the surrounding area on Sunday evening, December 11. The music was wonderful, joyful and inspiring. An offering of \$1,500.20 was received. We are so grateful for this gift of support for the ministries of GMA in our community. Thank you for sharing with others in the spirit of Christmas! - Goessel Ministerial Alliance

Congregational Announcements

The Tabor Mennonite Youth Fellowship will share their annual living nativity, Night in the Barn, on December 17 and 18 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. The friendly goat, the large cow with her little calf, the peaceful sheep, and the baby and big donkeys that share their love of people - these are a few of the critters who will assemble in the barn of Maynard Knepp and Carol Duerksen between Goessel and Hillsboro. The story this year will be from the perspective of a sheep that witnessed the first Christmas, and is from a new book by Kim Funk called "Christmas at the Stable." The come-and-go event includes Christmas carols around a bonfire, hot drinks and snacks. Admission is free and donations to the youth group will be accepted.

Wednesday Evening Ministries:

Children will practice for the Christmas Eve service from 6:30-7:30pm. No supper served this week.

Education Committee will meet to assemble Christmas sacks. Parents are invited to help fill sacks while their children are in rehearsal.

Youth will meet at 6pm at Karina, Benny, and Emily's house for a Christmas party. Please bring a white elephant Christmas gift (\$5 or less) and Christmas goodies to share.

Christmas Eve Celebration Service: December 24, 7pm

Celebrate the coming of our new King! Come early to hear the piano and organ prelude by many different children. Children meet in the fellowship hall at 6:30pm.

Christmas Day Worship: December 25, 10 am

Come celebrate the birth of our King through scripture and song.

Prayer and Visioning Retreat: Come join us at church from 8-11:30am on Saturday, January 14 for a prayer and visioning retreat. Rolls and fruit will be served at 8am and then we will spend the rest of the morning praying and reflecting on how God has been at work in this past year and how we hope to join God at work in 2017. We strongly encourage all who are part of the Deacon, Trustee, Worship/Fellowship, Education, Outreach, and Finance teams to come participate in this retreat and we invite all members and attenders of the congregation to come as well. Let us embrace this opportunity to pray and discern together as a community! ~Peace, Pastor Phil

Save the Date for KNOW JESUS - January 28-29, 2017 - an overnight event for Junior High youth groups and youth (6-8th grades).

Location: Hesston College campus. Being planned by Western District Conference and South Central Conference Youth Ministry Committee.

Annual Report: Fiscal year end reports are due in the church office by the end of December. Please submit reports to the church office, email preferred: kfunk@tabormennonite.org. **Directory Updates** and changes to the church directory are also requested at this time.

Healthy Sexuality: Beginning in January, we will be engaging in a worship series focusing on healthy sexuality. This series will not speak to same-sex covenanted relationships, as has been the practice of the church when speaking of sexuality in the past few decades. As people who know the Creator who created our bodies very good, it is important to speak to healthy sexuality within the church, to provide a witness that is different from that which we hear in the culture around us. More information on this series is in the December Newsletter.

Community Announcements

Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum: Ben Schmidt, curator and archivist for the Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum, will be leaving our community and museum. He will be pursuing a Master of Divinity degree with an emphasis on Church History from Westminster Theological Seminary outside of Philadelphia, PA. Ben's wife, Courtney, will be working as a financial aid assistant at the seminary. His last day with the museum is this next Thursday, the 22nd of December. The Board of Directors, while sad that he is leaving, is excited for him and his future plans. He did a very good job running the museum this year with a lot of energy, enthusiasm, and ideas. Keep Ben and Courtney in your prayers as they make this transition. Stop by the museum by Thursday to wish him well.

Red Cross Blood Drive: In this season of giving remember to sign up to donate blood by calling 800-RED-CROSS (800-733-2767) or visiting redcrossblodd.org. Another way to give is to sign up to help at the drive between 12:00-4:00 at Goessel Church on Wed. Dec. 28. All donors will receive a long-sleeve Red Cross T-shirt.

Support Bethesda Home: Just a bit of news to make your holiday even brighter!! Information received after newsletter was printed. There is no need to re-enroll in the Dillons Community Rewards program... it's automatic! No additional action needed. Take this opportunity to encourage others to enroll and see how easy it is to sign up! The Bethesda account number is 10035. The more participants, the more Kroger donates to Bethesda. Contact either Terri Walker or Pete Flaming for assist with enrollment 620-367-2291. Just visit www.dillons.com/communityrewards for details. Joining Community Rewards does not affect fuel points or coupon discounts!

Conference Announcements

Prayer Requests:

- ★ Western District Conference: Pray for WDC pastors and chaplains as they lead worship and offer pastoral care during the holiday season.
- ★ Mennonite Mission Network: Tom and Disa Rutschman, serving with MMN, have shared Jesus as the Light of the World through many long winters on the Arctic Circle in Sweden. Pray that this year they may again create sparks of life through teaching in schools and the leadership they provide at Jokkmokk Free Church.
- ★ Mennonite Education Agency: Instituto Bíblico Anabautista (IBA) Pray for the tutors and students of the 38 Anabaptist Biblical Institute-IBA study centers who meet weekly for their study sessions. May God grant the tutors wisdom, patience and lots of energy in their ministry of teaching. And pray that the students become essential instruments in the Hispanic churches as we build the Kingdom of God.

Western District Announcements:

—**Know someone who's hard to shop for?** Celebrate Christmas by donating a book in their honor to the Resource Library. A registry list of Resource Library wishes can be found on Amazon at <http://a.co/jasaOaI> (or call the library). Order straight from Amazon and have it shipped to the library, or buy local and mark the book on the Amazon site as "buying this gift elsewhere." Also welcome are any Spanish language or bi-lingual resources. We would love new, or like new/ excellent condition books. All Christmas gifts will be acknowledged with a special bookplate inside the book, just let us know who to honor.

—The **Conference Resource Library** is open Monday through Friday, 8am - 5 pm. As of January 4, Resource Librarian Jennie Wintermote will be in the library Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:00-Noon. (Other WDC Staff can assist you when Jennie is not here.)

—Western District Conference is on Facebook. LIKE us!

Camp Mennoscah: Camp Mennoscah will be taking down the old boys bath house and the whale on Dec. 20th. Never fear, friends! The bath house has already been replaced and plans are in the works for a new play structure. Contact us at office@campmennoscah.org or 620-297-3290 to help.

Mennonite Church Announcements:

—**The Mennonite magazine** welcomes your original submissions of feature articles, poems, original artwork and photos for our February 2017 print magazine issue and corresponding online content focusing on the Mennonites, race, identity and faith. You can read the full details online at <https://themennonite.org/december-call-submissions-mennonites-race-identity/>. Submissions are due to Editor@TheMennonite.org by January 5.

—Do you have your summer vacation plans set yet? Why not spend it in Orlando, Florida? You can attend the **Mennonite Church USA convention** as well as visit your favorite theme park. The convention takes place July 4-8 with the theme "Love is a Verb." Learn more at: <http://convention.mennoniteusa.org/registration/> or find the convention on Facebook or Twitter.

—Registration for **"Beyond Buried Treasure: Turning Hidden Resources into Assets"** is now open. This second joint MHS Mennonite Health Assembly and Mennonite Education Agency Education Leaders Gathering takes place March 9-12 in Jacksonville, FL. For more information or to register, visit mhaelgconference.wordpress.com.

Bethel College is offering many of its classes for community audit. You pay \$50 per credit hour (compared to the normal audit rate of \$85 per hour) OR, if you're age 62 and older, a flat rate of \$30. For more information, go to www.bethelks.edu/audit, where there are links for interterm 2017 course schedule (enrollment deadline Jan. 4) and spring 2017 course schedule (enrollment deadline Feb 13).