

Joy Mennonite Church



**PASTORS
CORNER**

Mailing Address:

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Church Telephone No.:

March 1995



Friends of ours recently joined a church in the community they moved to. On the day they joined, 36 others also joined (we do good to have a new baby). This church provides a good service to the community. They provide counseling and prayer for the anxieties people have. As our friends describe it, people feel cared for. They have a gymnasium for the youth. Is this perhaps in the same tradition that the church led in building universities and hospitals? Now that our youth are in crisis, the church builds recreational facilities. We could ask, "what more does God require of us?" I could not help but be reminded how small we are. We will probably never experience this kind of growth. I believe, however, that we should not compare ourselves with others but instead reflect on how we can be faithful. We also should not justify our smallness as if it is because we are more faithful. That kind of justification is a real trap that keeps us from reflecting on our true relationship with God.

Being small can be isolationist. The church should provide a forum for proclamation and service. If the church is too small it may be very difficult to provide this forum.

A small church must make a greater effort to be effective beyond its walls. It is easy to lose sight of why we exist or should continue to exist. We do not exist to pay the mortgage or the salary of the pastor. We must remember that we exist to proclaim the gospel and to help each other remain faithful and keep from falling into the sins of our society.

A small church can easily spend more per member for building and staff than larger churches. If we are in fact a house church perhaps we should be more careful to operate like a house church.

Maybe we are more radical in our talk than in our walk. We must try to be more radical in our walk than in our talk. Radical talk without the walk doesn't sound like the gospel.

Small churches have been part of our history. Small churches have made great contributions in interpreting the gospel. A good example is Clarence Jordon with Koinonia Farms. They were a small group but made a great contribution to an understanding of the gospel in America.

We should always remember that small churches, too, must think about their focus and be aware of what are the distractions.

Moses Mast

*create
peace*



Dear Friends,

As we approach Lent and Easter, the Christian world attempts once again some degree of spiritual rebirth. We need to make some sort of acknowledgement of faith statement - "God, we are still with you," but maybe we end up with our 90's version of 30 pieces of silver or just say, "I really don't know that guy (Jesus)". Our combined community actions would often indicate that we truly don't know him - case in point, our "Christian" reaction or response to those different than we, and with different philosophies, opinions, and orientations.

In reading the Mennonite Weekly Review, I am encouraged that pro and con opinions are printed on the two hot issues - abortion and homosexuality, the latter threatening our church's very coexistence. Yes, I have my own opinions, those that I must live with or rationalize in my life, but that's really not the point I would make, after all, through generations millions are still being spent debating voluntary, inherited, developed, or "just in the genes" traits of homosexuality, and whether there is care, treatment or cure for this orientation. Here again the jury is definitely still out.

None of us will ever know how often we have: learned and studied with, recreated in sports with, served their country together with, worked elbow to elbow with, sat next in church to, or even knelt in prayer next to a gay person.

Before they "came out of the closet" there wasn't much distinction and not a whole lot of need for discussion of rights; HIV and AIDS has come along to be an identifier. Without being labeled one could be a hero, a genius, a good hard worker, a great guy to be around, or a good Christian. That has now all changed, and I have been assured that the straight/gay percentage is not significantly different than ever before, we are just dealing more openly with the question.

"Straight" Christians in this city (and other cities as well) are depriving homosexuals of their basic civil and equal rights and their rights to equal opportunities. Now is that really the Christ-like thing to do? Are we truly that flawless that we can pass judgment on those who have broken no law? Are they not also loyal Americans and to the minimum also God's children?

With all the pain and suffering that we have all observed resulting from AIDS, one would think a Christian response would (or should) be of compassion, caring, love and tolerance, but it has been one of hate, condemnation, and often violence.

Spiritual rebirth this season? Can we see some area for improvement in our personal lives? Can we pass it around in our hurting world?

When did you last really love someone, no strings attached? Try it, you might like it.

Love and best season's wishes,

Bee Klauen

P.S. You should be able to get your taters in the ground by St. Patrick' Day. *B.K.*

F·E·L·L·O·W·S·H·I·P



At our first business meeting of the year, church officers were affirmed for 1995. It was also decided to officially join the General Conference.

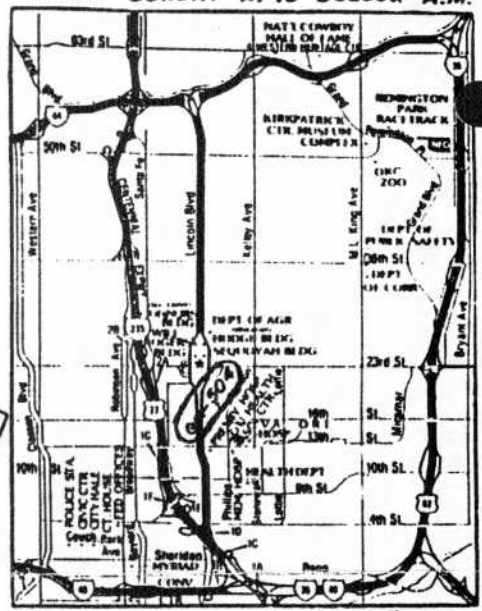
Mike Bartley, minister of the Clegg United Methodist Church, will lead us in a study of Mennonite history. "Native and naturalized" Mennonites alike in our group are excited about this.

Moses and Sadie returned Monday evening, 27 Feb., from the Western District Conference annual pastor/spouse retreat in Great Bend, KS. In their absence Ralph Ediger, with call to worship, and Cheryl Crichley, with a message, challenged our fellowship.



**THE
YEAR
AHEAD**

WORSHIP SERVICE
EVERY SUNDAY AT 10 O'CLOCK A.M.



Church Address: 504 NE 16th ST.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wed., 1 Mar.	.....	Ash Wednesday
Fri., 17 Mar.	.....	St. Patrick's Day
Sun., 9 Apr.	.....	Palm Sunday
Thu., 13 Apr.	.....	Maundy Thursday
Fri., 14 Apr.	.....	Good Friday
Sun., 16 Apr.	.....	Easter Sunday
Sun., 14 May	.....	Mother's Day
Mon., 29 May	.....	Memorial Day

Wichita '95



Wichita Watch. Youth convention speakers at Wichita '95 will include Hubert Brown, Ruth Boehm, Mike Yaconelli, Mark Vincent, June Alliman Yoder, Tony Campolo and Noel Santiago. Plan now to attend, July 25-30, in central Kansas.



ST. PATRICK'S DAY

LET'S ALL OBSERVE, EITHER PRIVATELY OR ORGANIZED, WORLD DAY OF PRAYER ON FRIDAY, 3 MARCH 95. IT CANNOT POSSIBLY HURT A THING. B.K.

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