



Joy Mennonite Church

Member's Corner

In writing this, I am hoping to reconnect with Joy Mennonite in some way, as the combination of vacation and work schedules has kept me away most of the summer. The last few Sundays I have been working a pediatric clinic during our regular church time. Even on the "day of rest" babies can have high fevers, and older children can manage to injure themselves.

Since my return to school, and really before that, I have been thinking a lot about the role of religion in society. This seems especially applicable here, in Oklahoma City, where I still hear time being measured as before or after the bombing. What part do our various religious backgrounds play in our response and healing after an event such as this? Could religious extremism have played a part in the act itself, even though the ones apparently involved are more like "us" than "them?"

The denomination I grew up in seemed, to me, mostly full of "thou shalt nots," and perhaps not clear enough about exactly what Christ's followers should be doing. There are things that those who try to follow the words and examples of Christ should not do, and yet there are more things that they should be doing. This, to me, is the daily struggle of trying to be a Christian. Unfortunately, organized religion throughout history has many times participated in, or at least justified things which are contrary to Christ's teachings, and have been stunningly silent and immobile when they (we?) should have acted and spoken. If these words seem harsh, I believe that it is only by facing our failures that we can begin to move forward in a different direction.

Happily, my short experience with the people of Joy Mennonite Church has proven to be different from the rather dark picture I have just painted. I have been allowed to ask questions, and I have been challenged by great sermons and discussions. However small my own participation, I believe that I have seen the words of Christ in action. Keep up the good work -- I miss you all...

Cheryl Crichley

Cheryl Crichley joined Joy Mennonite Church in 1992. She is a wife, mother, college student, and a medical lab technician at the Oklahoma City Clinic. She likes to write poetry and compose songs, such as the song "We Gather Joy," written especially for our church. Cheryl is part of the Sojourners group -- people dedicated to peace and justice and spiritual growth. She also works with Results, a national organization calling government leaders' attention to issues of poverty and hunger, especially among children; and with World Neighbors, an OKC-based group which works to eliminate hunger, disease and poverty in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

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September 1995

Editorial



Dear Friends,

My, how time really does fly -- they say that happens when you're having fun, but how about when you're working -- well, working can and should be fun, so maybe that is a measure of one's attitudes toward life.

This has been an extraordinary summer; violent wind storms both before and after a long vacation, and most of the time between and since the storms we had it hot with a matching humidity. We are continually amazed at our preceding generations who did it all without air-conditioning.

A number of months ago I nearly got my tail in a crack writing about allegiances and loyalties. It seems to be a touchy subject invoking feelings and emotions -- at least in a segment of the religious community -- about how and with what we should show our loyalty to God, Christ, and his church.

Rereading that March 94 issue I saw that maybe I had truly let it be too much of an emotional or "feelings" thing, without close examination of what creates or is included in loyalty and allegiance (L&A). For me, it turns out that it is not that simple at all, because there are so many similarities and common denominations of secular and religious L&As that maybe they are not totally separate. Each side draws the same criticism from the other: Committed believers are often felt to be unpatriotic -- not enough love for their country -- because of protests, civil disobedience, and general dislike or distrust of government.

Flag waving patriots are frequently viewed as idolaters -- not enough love for Christ and his church -- with their support of defense budgets and war efforts, and pursuit of domestic and foreign policies that seem so flawed because of politics.

I used the word love in each scenario above -- was it out of place? Love is cracked up to be tolerant, forgiving, noncondemning, and if it were so in practice one could have a healthy portion of L&A in proper perspective with neither patriotism nor religious being hurt at the hands of the other.

We must each deal with these issues with honor and honesty, and asking forgiveness in our failures.

Even with many schools back in session, for me summer ends with the Labor Day weekend, and for all those starting new school years, all the best in your educational and professional development.

Bill Klauen

FELLOWSHIP NEWS:

Welcome back to many of our members and regular attenders after many activities seemed to have scattered us over the summer! Some have experienced sickness and even hospitalization, and we continue to pray for your healing and recovery.

Laura Powers went to Camp Mennoscah Aug. 6-11, for the Senior High Camp. She reports having had the best week at camp ever!



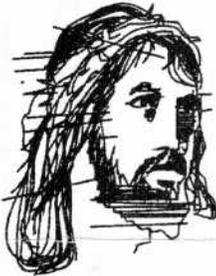
Mennonite Central Committee

Schools are back in session for our children, and some of our adults as well, both as students and teachers. May this be a great educational year!

WORSHIP NEWS:

Moses and Sadie will be attending the Oklahoma Convention in Enid, Sept. 16-17, so one of our members, yet to be asked, will be preaching that Sunday!

Remember to prepare your hearts for World-Wide Communion Sunday, Oct. 1.



COMING EVENTS:

Sunday, Sept. 24, we will be celebrating Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) 75th anniversary and taking our quarterly offering for their work. We will also be assembling a refugee kit for MCC to send to Bosnia. Come on Sept. 10 to choose an item from the list to contribute to this kit, or call Sadie, 799-7836, for more information.

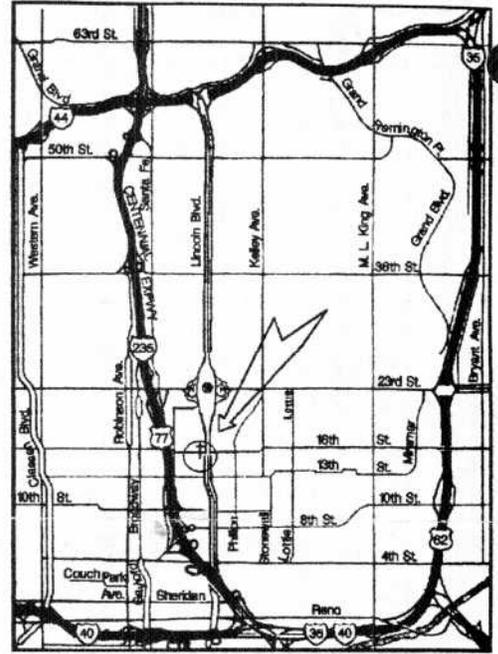
Also on Sept. 24, after a potluck dinner at the church, several of us will be participating in the annual CROP Walk, starting at the Capitol south steps. Persons wishing to walk may pick up pledge forms from Cheryl Crichley. Others may wish to support a walker with their donations.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Sept. 4 Labor Day
- Sept. 9-10 Women's Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
- Sept. 12 OK All-Mennonite Women's Meeting
- Sept. 16-17 Oklahoma Convention, Grace Mennonite Church, Enid
- Sept. 24 MCC Sunday
- Sept. 24 CROP Walk
- Oct. 1 World-Wide Communion Sunday
- Oct. 27-29 WDC annual sessions, Bethel College, North Newton, KS

Worship Service

Every Sunday at 10 O'clock A.M.



Church Address: 504 NE 16th St.
(just west of the oil derrick)

CHURCHES: Feel free to post this newsletter for your members to read. Thanks.

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS: Cheryl Crichley, Member's Corner; Bill Klassen, Editorial; Darlene Powers & Sadie Mast, News Items; Mike Powers, Publisher.



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