



# Joy Mennonite Church Newsletter

October 1996

## Pastor's Corner

This month I worked one week with Habitat For Humanity in their one week building blitz. Hundreds of volunteers participated in the construction of five houses. It was obvious the volunteers were of a different social, economic class than the people they were building for. Midweek there was a service of prayers and dedication of this labor of love. After we parked our car and were walking to where the people were gathering, a woman standing in her yard said, "We are so grateful for Habitat. They are not just building new houses. They are building a new neighborhood and we are all benefiting." One

morning before the volunteers arrived, a small child came by and smiled at me as if I was an old friend. I cannot believe this is the way this child always regarded white men. The volunteers for Habitat are not just building new houses but a new humanity, new relationships, and new possibilities. The children growing up in these houses will have possibilities they would not have growing up in a rundown apartment.

This was an experience of hope, people involved in building at a time when our society is experiencing a frenzy of tearing down. A way to

win in politics is to tear down the opponent. A way to succeed in business is to tear down the competition. The mood toward criminals is punish and eliminate. Just like helping one person can build so much new, so this frenzy of tearing down could someday result in tearing down a whole community or the whole country.

Romans 12:21 says, "Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good." We hear so much of confronting evil in decisive, forceful ways. The American way seems to be that those who do evil to us must be made to understand the consequences. By consequences we mean the evil will be returned,

but multiplied. In that way we are being overcome by evil.

Habitat is showing another way. Thousands of people are involved in building. We must extend this understanding of building to other areas of our lives. We must become less competitive, and think more of others and the common good. We must think less about winning or just getting even and think more about building. I pray that we can be rid of the desire to tear down even one person or even to lower one person a rung or two. I pray that instead we can build each other up in the faith of our Lord Jesus.

*Moses Mast*

## Member Profile

*Grace Roley*

Born and raised in Texas as one of 10 children, Grace's life as a child became very difficult with the loss of her precious mother when she was 12 years of age. She had to grow up very quickly as she became mother, sister, and friend to a ten year old brother and a six year old sister. In looking back at her life, it seemed to Grace that she had always been grown-up and had never had time to be a child. Nevertheless, her parents were devoted, loving people, and their home was always filled with laughter. So much love radiated from their mother that the children learned early that love was a very important factor in their lives. The love Grace's parents showed their children was a love which came from their knowing Jesus Christ.

When Grace was 18, tragedy struck the family again when she lost her father. Grace moved to Norman, Oklahoma, with her younger brother and sister in order to live with two other sisters. Since she did not know anyone and is shy by nature, this was a lonely time for Grace. It was difficult to cope, but Grace knew that with the love that she had for Jesus, life would become easier. She began visiting different churches, but she could not find what she was looking for.

In the meantime, she had met and married Chester Roley. The couple was blessed with three lovely children, although their first child was taken back to heaven to be an angel for Jesus. However, Grace was dissatisfied with her

life and needed to find a church home where she could feel that Jesus was there to guide her. She knew that if she could be patient, God would take her hand and lead her to the point where she could be at peace with herself, and He did.

A little group of Mennonite Brethren was meeting in homes having services with Dick Gerbrandt, who was leading the group. As their number grew, the group began meeting in a Seventh Day Adventist Church around the corner from Grace's home. She was very excited and quickly found the love and concern for which she had been searching. These were happy years for Grace, and she became active with nursery age children at the Wildwood Mennonite Brethren Church, as the church was then known.

However, with the retirement of Dick Gerbrandt, as pastor, sad times ensued. Grace felt that she was on the outside looking in and that she once again was without a loving church family.

Then one day a friend called and told her of a little Mennonite group meeting in the pastor's home in Oklahoma City. In this way she found Joy Mennonite Church, a wonderful group of loving people who she says have stolen her heart. Grace says that she is so happy to be a part of God's family, and she praises God for the loving fellowship she had found in this little church. She feels that she has come home again, and Grace tries to share the abundance of love that Jesus gave to her with others.

**Fellowship News:**

The weekend of August 31-Sept. 1, Darlene Powers accompanied her two teenagers, Laura and James, to Fall Holiday at Camp Mennoscah in Kansas. Over 150 youth from Western District churches attended to hear Jeff Wright, from LA, speak on "Seeking the City: Faithful Living in Urban Culture." The next weekend, Darlene returned to camp for the WD Women's Retreat. She very much enjoyed both weekends.

Sadie attended the Oklahoma All Mennonite Women meeting on Sept. 10.

Moses & Sadie Mast, Bill & Thea Klassen, and Darlene Powers attended the sessions of the 97th Oklahoma Convention, hosted by Herold Mennonite Church, Cordell, September 14-

15. Bill was elected to serve as Vice-President for the next two years. Jonathan Larson, former missionary in Africa, now living in Atlanta, GA, spoke on "Border Crossings -- Renewal for Today." Based on Acts 2 and 10, he challenged us to "learn the languages" of those around us, cross those borders, and "dream Christian dreams" that will cause us to go out and tell others about Jesus and include them in our churches.

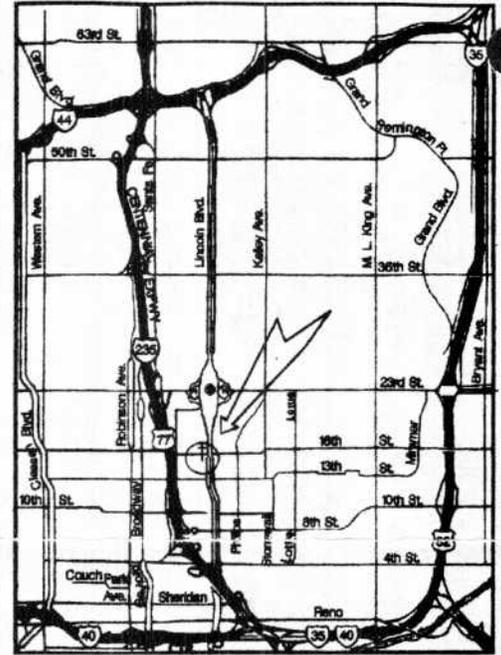
**Worship News:**

Judy Perkins served as Worship Leader for September.

Cristina Kaufman visited us on September 29, and told stories of her summer trip to Colombia, South America. She is now doing graduate studies at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO. We appreciated her coming back to share with us!

**Worship Service:**

Every Sunday at 10 O'clock A.M.



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

**Calendar**

- Oct 6 World-Wide Communion Sunday
- Oct 6 Church Dinner
- Oct 6 CROP Walk
- Oct 13 Troy Wedel, MMA rep. here, pm
- Oct 26 Quarterly Business Meeting, 9:30am
- Nov 28 Thanksgiving
- Nov 29-30 Oklahoma Mennonite Relief Sale, Fairview, OK

Also on September 29, we dedicated 12 new hymnals that have been given to us. A man who visited us briefly this past summer from Mississippi sent us six copies of *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, and two members bought another six copies. We are grateful for these gifts!

Our quarterly offering for MCC has been postponed to Oct. 6, to coincide with the CROP Walk that Sunday. Pledges for walkers can be designated for MCC. Also

Oct. 6 is World-Wide Communion Sunday. Let us prepare our hearts and minds for this service.

Troy Wedel, MMA representative, will be talking to us about wills on Oct. 13, in the evening.

*Newsletter Contributors: Moses Mast, Pastor's Corner; Profile by Grace Roley and Kay Brueckner; Bill Klassen, Mailing; Darlene Powers and Sadie Mast, News Items; Mike Powers, Publisher.*



MOSES & SADIE MAST  
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