



Joy Mennonite Church Newsletter

PASTOR'S CORNER

Thanksgiving Meditation

In the first chapter of Romans, Paul says the Wrath of God is revealed against those who suppress the truth they know. They know God but do not give glory to God or give thanks to Him. According to this scripture, God is not only offended but is angry with ungrateful people. To be ungrateful may not be as harmless as we imagine, just a result of thoughtless living. We seem to be more affected in our inner being by ungrateful people than we are by those who lie and steal. Ingratitude for a kindness performed

wounds us deeply and breaks apart relationships. Just as ingratitude breaks us apart, gratitude binds us together. Recently we helped a single mother remove a huge tree that had fallen on the roof of her house. This person was truly grateful, not only in words but in her eyes and everything about her said thank you. We were the privileged of society and she was a victim of circumstances. Her gratitude broke down all these barriers and we were one humanity. We have also had the opposite experience of persons not responding with gratitude for a kindness performed. The message we got was: I am a victim of society and you

are the privileged of society. Therefore, for you to give and me to receive is the way it should be. Her analysis may have been right but it still remains that for one to be ungrateful is wrong. Everyone was wounded by this spirit of ungratefulness and what could have been a beautiful relationship was ruined. Another example of ingratitude that parents know all too well, after much hard work and sometimes sacrifice we are faced with ungrateful recipients. They are ungrateful for shoes because they do not just want shoes, they want Nikes.

This Thanksgiving season let us think about this. Just as in the human experience

where gratitude binds the needy and privileged together so also the thankful person and the God of creation can be bound together. Think about the way we may nourish a victim mentality and miss the beautiful relationship we can have with God. In our land of abundance it is certain that we may be more like the Nike generation than we imagine. This Thanksgiving season let us repent from all attitudes of ungratefulness and practice thankful living. We hope you will all have a happy and joyful Thanksgiving.

Moses Mart

Sticks and Stones By Cheryl Crichley

We recently witnessed images of young boys flinging rocks at heavily-armed soldiers in Palestine. Certainly, the analogy of David and Goliath, especially in this area, was lost on no one. At the same time, among the international community, stories and accusations were flung back and forth by the use of computers, the internet, and email.

These gaps in technology, yet with similar purposes, set me to thinking. The computer is simply the latest in a long line of technological "advances" humans have made over the last several thousand years. For many years the earliest tools were thought to be stone ones, which included scrapers, spear and arrow points, and so on. Stone signifies strength and endurance, and these qualities made it the only item left in the archeological record, in many cases. Later, studies

of less-developed societies led to the hypothesis that the earliest tools were probably slings to carry babies, and sticks to assist in digging for roots in the ground. These things may have existed earlier, however, they did not survive in the record. They also seem to better signify nurturing and providing for one's family. The computer is neither a stone nor a sling, and only time will tell how it will survive to carry our stories. The Bible contains various references to stones, in the

cornerstone, upon this rock I will build my church, even the rocks will cry out, and many others. These give us glimpses into God's plan for the world, yet we also find numerous examples of the creator nurturing and caring for humankind. By way of the computer, I have received stories from various people involved in the struggle now taking place in Israel. Some seem willing to use these as weapons, as rocks being thrown, as ways to prove how much worse one side



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**In Touch With
History**

is than the other by telling of the atrocities they have committed.
(By my own, unscientific, count, there seem to be enough atrocities to go around!) I prefer to see them as stories of people who are hurting, of a record they want to be preserved, of the failure of humans to follow our God's example of caring for and loving each other. In a conversation about these stories, my mother said that there is just too much hatred in the world. As children of God, we should see this as the evil, not the people involved. Sticks and stones *and* words can be fashioned to hurt one another. If we believe that God is love, that there is faith, hope, and love, but that love is the greatest, we need to let this guide our response to whatever weapons we see being used

US Seventh Cavalry of the 1860s. From Fort Larned, KS, through Fort Supply and Woodward, OK, and the Washita battlefield site where General George Custer massacred many people of the peaceful Chief Black Kettle as they camped and slept there on 27 November 1868. Present Cheyenne Peace Chief Lawrence Hart made a presentation there before the tour continued on to Fort Reno, OK. After presentations and brief tours at the fort, the group continued on to El Reno to the Canadian County Historical Society Museum there. The building of the first Mennonite Church in Indian Territory/Oklahoma, Mennoville Mennonite Church founded in 1891, was moved to this museum site in 1997 to be restored and perpetuate its own history and legacy of ministry to the Native Americans in the area. The renovation and restoration will include collecting original furniture and artifacts of the church, built in 1893, in its heyday. It is being funded by many private parties and

**Comments from
those on the Crop
Walk, Oct. 22**

supported by Oklahoma Mennonite Churches, Western District Conference and many others. The original church site and cemetery north of El Reno was the last stop on the tour before heading home through the first territorial capitol of Oklahoma, Guthrie. *This article was submitted by Bill Klassen. The Masts and the Klassens joined the tour at Fort Reno.*

- It was good to walk with people who shared concern for the hungry.
- It felt good to do something good. Instead of being part of the problem, I was part of the solution.
- I was glad to be part of the wider faith community addressing hunger
- I was happy to complete the entire walk.

News

Oklahoma Mennonite Relief sale at the fairgrounds in Enid, OK. Wedding bells are ringing! Hayley Bliss and Travis Anderson are planning their wedding for Saturday November 18th.

Coming Events

- I learned as we walked and talked.
- I was happy to participate with other churches who helped in their own way, serving the walkers.
- I enjoyed the walk so much, I was sorry when it ended.

Stan and Marlene Smucker, former pastor and voluntary service directors visited Joy Mennonite on Sunday October 29. Stan brought the Sunday morning message. Joy Mennonite Church is located at 504 NE 16th Worship is at 10:00 am