



JOY MENNONITE CHURCH NEWSLETTER
AUGUST 2002



Thanks again to the few of you that wrote! Thanks also to those who sent donations to the church and for Afghan Relief Fund. Remember that your dollars are matched dollar for dollar and will be for quite a while. We are still far from reaching the matching fund limit. We do not send out invoices (someone had inquired about that), our newsletter is free - any donation is accepted and appreciated!

You may want to keep the address this newsletter, in case your name is dropped from the mailing list next month because we haven't heard from you. If you wish to continue to receive the newsletter, PLEASE let us know. Our address and phone number are on the mailer portion and if we don't answer the phone in person, the answering machine is on. ALL letters will get a response. We will continue to send to all the churches in OK and KS, unless you let us know otherwise. Remember if we haven't heard from you in four to five years, do write us a note or call if you want to stay on our mailing list. Thank you!

Sadie Mast

PASTOR'S CORNER

At our last meeting for Afghan Relief, Michael, the son of Jewish holocaust survivors, met with us. As a child, Michael knew the experience of his parents was extremely painful. For that reason, he did not talk to them about their experience. His parents, however, interpreted this as not being interested in their story. After Michael was married, and at the urging of his wife, he hesitantly asked his parents if he could write their story. With their consent and the help of a friend, they wrote the book titled, *Until We Meet Again*, by Michael Korenblit and Kathleen Janger.

Michael's father and a brother who fled to Russia were the only survivors in his family. Michael's mother thought she was the only survivor in her family until 37 years later, in his research to write the book, Michael discovered his mother's brother, one she had been very close to, had also survived. This brother also believed for 37 years that he was the only survivor. One can only imagine the initial shock and then the joy of being reunited.

Reading the book makes you feel the unbelievable brutality of the Nazis. This war and the urgency to stop such brutality are the classic justification for war. If reading the book stirs your emotions, can you imagine the emotions of writing such a book? Not only do you hear your parents' account of brutality; you interview countless people, most with horror stories. Yet, Michael says, "I did not come away from this experience with

hatred, rather a commitment to devote my life to prevent such an event from ever happening again, not by joining violent resistance, but an effort to stop hatred from sprouting and growing." This reminds me of the words of a Muslim in response to the bombing of the Murrah building in Oklahoma City. "We must work," he said "to prevent bitterness from growing out of this awful deed done to our city." Michael and his wife have devoted their lives to preventing hatred from sprouting and growing, mostly with children and youth. He says, "If you hate one person for one reason, you can hate anyone for any reason."

The magnitude of World War II has not been repeated since, but the brutality has been repeated many times in many places. After the war, there was Stalin and terrible brutality. Communist powers improved the science of revolution and control of the masses with brutality. The free world responded in kind. To brutally hurt those branded as the enemy seems to be considered normal behavior by all nations.

I have thought of this in regards to raising money for aid to refugees. Not that we must stop this effort. Jesus said that when you see the hungry and suffering and do nothing, for this you will be judged. Remember, our nation can make refugees and deplore their condition, and support your effort to alleviate their suffering, while they continue to create more refugees. Jesus also challenged the people of the Kingdom to be peacemakers. In Matthew, chapter five, Jesus concluded the profile of the Kingdom people with the challenge to be peacemakers, but warned: for this you will be persecuted. This is exactly how it is. If you do not join the hatred for your enemy, you will be hated.

Giving aid to the suffering seems to be easy part. Peacemaking, the action that prevents hatred from escalating to a brutal war is hard. What can one do? One effort we made was urging people to pray and include prayer for your enemy. There are many good stories, but it is also true that even among people of faith, praying for your enemy is not understood to be normal. The puzzling part is that the more you openly declare that the Bible is the literal word of God, the more likely you are to turn to the brutal stories of the Old Testament to discern God's way and ignore the words of the God-sent One who asks you to pray for and-bless your enemy.

I am aware that I say these things, sheltered from violence, very naively. But there are those who have come through the fire, like Michael's family, and refuse to join the violence to prevent it from ever occurring again. Instead, they put their efforts into preventing the sprouting and growth of hatred. God bless them and all those who take the risks of being

peacemakers. Peace and blessings to all of you, our readers.

Moses Mast

July Revisited

Last month, Karin Evan, Cheryl Crichley, and Moses and Sadie Mast traveled to Plano, TX for the Western

District/ South Central Conference meeting.

Grace Roley had some visitors the weekend of July 21st. Her daughter, Sandy, granddaughter, Jenny, and great-grandson, Carter, were in town for several days. Give Grace a call and catch up on the news. ,

Martha Shoemaker could be out and about as much as she wanted last month due to some continuing health problems. She is in our thoughts and prayers daily and would welcome a call or visit from everyone. Martha is one of our best loved members and we miss her.

August Happenings and Coming Events

Well, here it is August already. Can anyone tell me what happened to June and July? It seems like just last week school let out for the summer and now summer is almost gone. This month will include

some travel for Moses and Sadie Mast. They will be heading for Colorado Springs for a family reunion. We wish them safe journey and a good time.

Preaching schedule for this month is as follows: Aug. 4- Karin Evans, Aug. 11 & 25- Moses Mast, Aug. 18 - Cheryl Crichley. There will be a potluck after services on the 11th.

Crop Walk will be Oct. 27th this year. Yes, I know that's 2 1/2 months away, but a little lead time is a good thing. Make plans to join us that Sunday and walk that afternoon.



Joy Mennonite Church
4708 Outpost Dr
Spencer, OK 73084-2722 (405) 236-4938
Moses & Sadie Mast 771-4743

And last, but not least, my favorite cause, MCC Relief Sale. Now only 13 weeks away and time goes fast when we get to the end of summer. Please remember these folks and all the work they do, both here and abroad. MCC has taken Jesus' words to heart to love your neighbor as yourself and help those in need. Now it's our turn to help MCC. If you can't donate something for the sale, come buy something. There is food, handicrafts, food, quilts, some more food, Ten Thousand Villages items, and did I mention really good food? Please plan to attend and join me in supporting this wonderful group.

Final Thoughts Deborah O'Neal

My children and I were going through the school supplies for this next year and making our shopping list. Jack wrote down pencils and paper, Anna added a new coloring book and I said it was time for Jack to get his own Bible for school. He has a little one that he shares with his sister, but he will need one for Bible class.

When we decided to home school, I was a little scared of teaching my kids about God. What do I say? How do I say it? What is the right way to go about bringing up the subject? Know what? I didn't have to start, they did. Mom, does God love us all the time or only when we're good? Mom, do dogs go to heaven if they were really good dogs? Mom, did God see me take the popsicle and if He did is He mad at me too?

No one is ever too young or too old to talk about and with God. Try it, I bet you'll like it.

Come see us, we miss you.

JOY MENNONITE CHURCH
504 NE 16TH OKC OK 73104
Sunday Services 10:00 am Sunday School 11:30
All are welcome, please join us as you are able

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
OKC OK
Permit No. 2545

Address Service Requested

MOSES & SADIE MAST
4708 OUTPOST DR
SPENCER OK 73084