

NEWS & NOTES DECEMBER/JANUARY

GLENNON HEIGHTS MENNONITE CHURCH

2015/2016



December 4

Putting up the greens, 5:30 p.m.

December 6

Hanging of the Greens, 6:30 p.m.

December 12

VORP benefit concert, 7:00 p.m.

December 20

Christmas caroling, 4:00 p.m.

January 8

Taking down the greens, 5:30 p.m.

January 24

Congregational business meeting, noon

February 7-14

Family Promise rotation



FROM THE



PASTOR

For years Bruce and I sent out a Christmas letter (though it usually appeared well into the new year) with information on what had happened in our family in the year just passed. Lots of folks do that, I know. I like to be on the receiving end of these letters. It's good to catch up with friends' lives, to know what their kids are into and/or what life has thrown their way. Thinking about this got me to wondering: If we were to write a Christmas/New Year's letter for Glennon Heights, what would we have to share? What would we write for the year just passed?

Many good things continued this year. We met regularly on Sunday mornings for worship, fellowship, learning and the occasional potluck meal. This has been and continues to be the cornerstone of our community. In addition, we found ways to nurture friendships and support each other. Daytime Mennonite Women gathered once a month to quilt and knot comforters and, perhaps most importantly, to talk, laugh and eat together. The Bipolar/Depression Support Group met twice a month to help each other stay on an even keel. Four Friendship Groups convened periodically to eat, share and build relationships. Many, many notes of encouragement and appreciation were written and received. Many visits were made to those who were sick or home-bound. Many comforting words were said.

We worked together to respond to the needs of the world. This year we revamped the way we organize ourselves for Family Promise. Bruce McCrae worked long and hard to set up a new system for finding and coordinating the many volunteers that are needed to fill all the slots for each of the four weeks during which we – with the help of Lakewood Christian Church and others – host and care for homeless families. Many of us have been and continue to be involved with this. We filled backpacks for



ANNIVERSARIES:

19 - Audrey & Don Ruth
19 - Jason & Rachel Stutzman
23 - Bob & Jody Bertsche
31 - Ellen & Nathan Graber-McCrae

BIRTHDAYS:

2 - Linda Welty
5 - Margo Wiebe
5 - John Franz
6 - Don Ruth
7 - Jeff Bontrager
12 - Nina Hoffert
13 - Karen Penner
17 - Peggy Owen
21 - Charmaine Burbank
22 - Larry Rudnicki
25 - Shanna Rocovits
29 - Tim Hoffert

**BIRTHDAYS:**

3 - Andy Yoder-Horst
5 - Shane Blough Simpson
7 - Larry Kennell
10 - Jan Hussey
13 - Eva Freeman
14 - Dave Yoder
14 - Jody Bertsche
15 - Claire Wiebe Franz
16 - Rhoda Blough
20 - Doris Hjelmstad
20 - Cindy Yoder
24 - Luke Fox Rasquinha
29 - Virginia Stone
31 - Frank Bontrager

From the Pastor, continued

men coming out of prison – 56 this year! We also provided support for The Second Chance Center through personal involvement and financial gifts. As a congregation and as individuals we remain involved in many good causes.

We grew as a congregation. This year we received eight persons into membership and welcomed others who have come to regularly be part of our worship and activities. We raised money through a successful yard sale and financial pledges to replace the roof. Our kitchen was renovated. We grew copious amounts of produce in the church garden, some of which was shared with The Action Center food pantry.

We remained connected with the larger church by participating in Mennonite World Conference, Mennonite Church USA Convention and Mountain States Mennonite Conference Annual Assembly. It was a difficult year for our denomination with sharp disagreement over whether gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender folks can be fully included or not. Here at GHMC we are not all in agreement but it has not torn us apart. Thanks be to God!

We looked to the future. In September Jeff Bontrager, our congregational chairperson, challenged us to think about where our passions lie. What is it that gives us energy and hope as we live out our commitment to follow Jesus? That conversation will continue....

As this year draws to a close and a new one begins we give thanks for all the ways we have been and will continue being a church together. We prepare to participate in our annual Hanging of the Greens extravaganza with happy, hopeful hearts, knowing that the future is in God's hands and that, no matter what, it will be good.

Your pastor,

Betsy

How to live a happy life
Proverbs by Anthropologist-linguist Don Jacobs

- Ponder the dynamics of your situation. Choose very carefully the battles you wish to spend your strength on. Occupy the space given to you.
- Enjoy and affirm people. Let everyone share his/her life with you. People were meant to enrich your life. Each person is God's gift to you.
- Refuse to be a carrier of negative feelings. Do not let the dye of one problem rub off on the next.
- Invest your energies in people.
- Don't brood; ponder.
- Your joy is a state of your spirit.
- If you can smile inwardly when things are "dumb," you are near to the Kingdom.



Adult Sunday School schedule

December 2015 – January 2016

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| December 6 : | Intergenerational experience led by Travis Hale |
| December 13: | "Wrestling with the Bible," led by Bruce McCrae |
| December 20: | Singing Christmas carols |
| December 27: | Christmas holiday – no Sunday School |
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| January 3: | New Year's holiday – no Sunday School |
| January 10: | Church Family Forum: To fund or not to fund scholarships |
| January 17: | "Encountering our mortality," led by John Franz |
| January 24: | Church business meeting – no Sunday School |
| January 31: | Church Family Forum: Sowing in Peace, part 2 |



Freedom Bound

Advent 2015

This year the Advent season will be for us a time of reflection on how God's coming in Jesus releases us from personal, social and historical chains that bind us. Our theme is "Freedom bound." We live in the paradox that we are both bound and free, on a march to freedom but encumbered by the burden and sin we carry; we are carrying the scars of struggle but living with a new hope. God's freedom takes us down pathways of justice, mercy, trust, love, service and inclusion. "Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths" (Psalm 25:4). In Advent we are walking, moving, travelling toward greater freedom even as we loosen ourselves from the chains that bind us.

During the Sundays of Advent our worship services will include some special elements: The altar table display will remind us of the chains that bind us and, as the season progresses, how those chains are taken away. Each Sunday we will read a litany as the Advent candle is lit and one of the chains is removed. Each week we will pray these words: "Liberating God, set us free. As we walk this road of freedom, give us more love, more hope, more peace and more joy." We will sing our Advent theme song, "There is more love somewhere," STJ #109.

Advent 2, December 6: "Freedom bound: The Path of Mercy"

Texts: Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Luke 3:1-6; Philippians 1:3-11

Focus statement: In this second week of Advent, images of God's mercy wash over us. The most striking image is of light that enters the darkness – dawning on us, illuminating our darkness, and giving us the strength to make the changes we need to be on this freedom way.

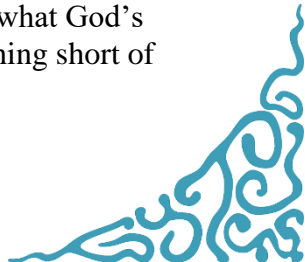

Advent 3, December 13: "Freedom bound: The Path of Trust"

Texts: Isaiah 12:1-6; Zephaniah 3:14-20; Luke 3:7-18; Philippians 4:4-7

Focus statement: Fear of the unknown, fear of the past, and fear for our security entangles and paralyzes us. On this third Sunday of Advent we bring our fears to God. We long to be released from their power over our lives. Instead of life-denying servitude or a joyless acceptance of fate, our passages counsel God's people to an impassioned, joyful and trusting response to life.

Advent 4, December 20: "Freedom bound: The Path of Love"

Texts: Psalm 80:1-7; Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:39-56; Hebrews 10:5-10



Focus statement: From the smallest tribe in Israel, from a poor teenager, from the margins God is bringing real and unexpected freedom. The fourth Sunday of Advent explains what God's labor of love will mean for the world. The upheaval that Mary sings about is nothing short of revolutionary.

Psalm for November 13, 2015

By Ann Hostetler, Professor of English at Goshen College

This is an abecedarian poem; each line starts with a letter of the alphabet. It incorporates titles of the songs from Godspell.

After *Godspell* I went home singing
Bless the Lord oh my soul
checked the computer,
discovered terrorist attacks in Paris
everywhere people crying out—I
feared the apocalypse.

God of goodness, how can such
hatred exist, children bearing bombs embedded
in their bodies, hoping to blast themselves to heaven?
Justice is complicated today,
kindness a luxury. Yet, the psalmist reminds:

Learn your lessons well, trust the
Merciful one, who does
Not count the sins of our youth against us.
Open our hearts to compassion,
Prepare the way of the Lord
Quiet our anguish
Restore our trust in you.

Save the people:
turn us from urge to
understanding, move us beyond
vengeance to wisdom.
We beseech Thee
x-tinguish our fear with
Your peace. Let us share it
zealously

November Worship





December 2015-January 2016 Calendar

Tuesday, December 1	Bipolar/Depression support group, 7:00 p.m.
Friday, December 4	Putting up the Greens, 5:30 p.m.
Saturday, December 5	Hanging of the Greens choir practice, 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 6	Hanging of the Greens choir practice, 5:30 p.m.
	Hanging of the Greens, 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, December 12	VORP benefit concert, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 13	Leta Bontrager's students' piano recital, 4:30 p.m.
Tuesday December 15	Daytime Mennonite Women, 9:30 a.m.
	Bipolar/Depression support group, 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, December 16	Elders meeting, 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, December 19	Men's breakfast, 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 20	Christmas Caroling, 4:00 p.m.
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Tuesday, January 5	Bipolar/Depression support group, 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, January 6	Church Council meeting, 7:00 p.m.
Friday, January 8	Taking down the Greens, 5:30 p.m.
Saturday, January 16	Men's Breakfast, 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, January 19	Daytime Mennonite Women, 9:30 a.m.
	Bipolar/Depression support group, 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, January 20	Elders meeting, 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, January 24	Congregational Business Meeting, noon

GLENNON HEIGHTS MENNONITE CHURCH

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Pastor Betsy Headrick McCrae

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303-985-3930; Cell 303-716-2890

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Kate Rempel

Administrative Assistant

Office Hours: Wednesday, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Thursday, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm



Our Mission

To be a faithful community of Jesus Christ

Our Vision

Empowered by the Holy Spirit,
We envision growth;
building a community of faith which practices
constructive responses to conflict;
and, in a world driven by fear, promoting a
Christian voice of love and nonviolence.

NEWS & NOTES

Compiled by Betsy Headrick McCrae and Kate Rempel

Layout by Kate Rempel