

JOY MENNONITE CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Pastor's Corner

This letter begins with the understanding that Jesus expected His witnesses to be martyrs... This month we had a man from South Africa, John Mkhize, speak at our church. Like the stories from Acts, with great power he gave witness to the truth. John lived, but he always knew he could die for his witness. He could be called a martyr witness.

The missionary trek from American to Africa must now be reversed. We need this witness in America. Even though Mennonites have a

martyr heritage it is buried in our past. We have become part of the rich and successful Christian tradition in America. We no longer understand martyrdom. Because we do not understand martyrdom we are confused about the truth we are called to give witness to. Too much effort is given to persuade people to leave their religious tradition and join ours. This can get us involved in religious controversy and in some cases can bring us persecution, but this is not the martyrdom Jesus said believers could expect. The great commission Jesus gave to the believers was to ask people to stop sinning, repent, and do

right, rather than change from one religious tradition to another.

I would not understand this if I had not seen it in Central America. In countries with great human rights violations, and there are many, missionaries with a message urging a religious experience but which leave the evil untouched are welcomed. In contrast, the believers who give witness to the love and concern of God for those oppressed peoples and who ask those who sin to stop sinning and do what is right, these are martyr witnesses.

It is easy for us in America to fall into the

trap of thinking that the martyr witness only belongs to countries with grave human rights abuses. We must acknowledge that this problem of human rights abuses can often be traced back to the developed countries. The charge to be martyr witnesses is relevant to Christian America. To be such a witness we must shift our effort to get people to leave their religious denomination or tradition and join ours, to urging people to stop sinning, repent, and do what is right.

Moses Mast

Editorial...

by *Peter Brueckner*

The recent talks of curtailing benefits to legal aliens is disturbing to me, and I cannot help but wonder if the marvelous concept of the "melting pot" is being eroded. How easy it seems to be to erect

barriers between people and to put individuals into boxes where they are isolated from each other. Differences in language, customs, race, and religion are sometimes being used as reasons to segregate, discriminate, and alienate.

Growing up in Germany

during the war, one of my earliest memories was seeing Polish POWs being marched through my village on the way to work while the townspeople lined the streets yelling insults, and young children were throwing stones. At the time it seemed so easy to rationalize this behavior. After all, these people

were the enemy, and no one thought about it.

It was the normal, reasonable thing to do. It was probably expected. After the bombing incident in Oklahoma City, one of the first suspects was a man from

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the Middle East, a Muslim. How easy it is to place blame on someone different from us and to expect the worst.

Perhaps we cannot change society, but I believe that Christians by their behavior and by their willingness to speak out against injustice and intolerance can do their part. Certainly, Christians would not want to be swept along on the tide of nationalism and xenophobia.

NOTE: Several people wanted to tell Tyan how much they enjoyed last month's article. She agreed to let us publish her summer address:

Tyan Carter
3401 Tamarack
Boise, ID 83703
(WE MISS YOU!)

News & Concerns:

Martha Shumaker has been in the hospital recently. We pray that God will continue to be with her, and we wish her a speedy recovery.

Several people from Joy attended the graduation of Jacob Hostetler on May 27th. Jacob is graduating from Southeast High School. Congratulations and best wishes for a great future!

Some faithful members and friends of our church gave up part of their Memorial holiday to repair a roof for a woman in need...faith in action at Joy!

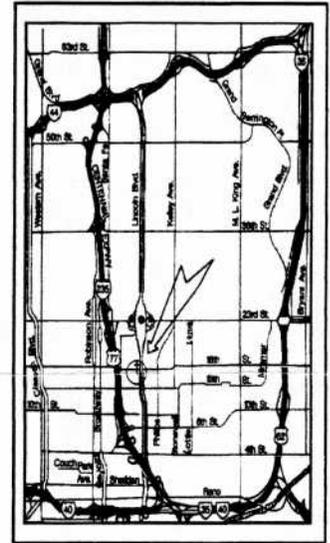
The Oklahoma Pastors and Spouse's Retreat will be June 2nd at Hammond, OK...Moses and Sadie will begin a vacation around June 9th. Mike Powers, Judy Menadu, and Cheryl Crichley will be filling the pulpit those Sundays.



ANNUAL CAMP-OUT

Joy Mennonite Church will hold its annual camp-out from Friday, June 6th through Sunday, June 8th, at the Little Axe Campground at Lake Thunderbird, outside of Norman, OK. This is always a good time, and this year we understand that there will be some special music and storytelling. Please contact Moses or Sadie so that the food "assignments" can be made. If you lack camping equipment and would like to come, contact them also...sleeping arrangements can probably be made. "Day" visitors are also welcome! Mark your calendars now!

Many people will be out on the road, doing their vacation things. We ask for God's protection and safekeeping.



Joy Mennonite is located at 504 NE 16th (just west of the oil derrick on Lincoln Blvd, south of the State Capitol.)

**Everyone is welcome!
Worship is at 10:00am.
Phone: (405) 236-4938**

MOSES & SADIE MAST
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