



JOY MENNONITE CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Pastor's Corner

Alex, the young boy from Honduras who stayed with us for four months while receiving medical treatment left us this month. We miss him, but we also feel a sense of relief. We think the role of grandparents fits our age better than the role of parents. Because of his invalid condition, Alex needed special care and it did interrupt our schedule a lot. Caring for an invalid in many people's minds seems to be an act of service. We do not think we can answer the questions put to us. It causes us to ponder what the faithful servant should look like in our affluent time and place. In Matt. 25, Judgement Day is described as a time when God will divide the good from the evil as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. The measure of good or evil is based upon the response to those who are hungry or

thirsty, naked, sick, or imprisoned. Jesus noted not only the physical response to the suffering, but the attitudes. The faithful servant thought of these acts of mercy as part of normal living and was unaware of any heroic deed. On the other side were those who were unaware of the suffering peoples. Lazarus was lying at their gate and they didn't notice. For them the world was normal, and just as it should be, even with misery all around the.

I know I am not the perfect servant, but I can still be counted as a faithful servant. I do not do service in as selfless a manner as Jesus described, but I am moved by the needs of persons around me. How would this parable look to the modern person of America and how should we respond?

One: We must not participate in the denials and excuses we hear that seem so right to so many for not responding to the cries of the needy.

Two: The faithful servant must not accept the boundaries

secular society sets for those worthy of our kindness. It is a normal development of any society to call people to abandon their concerns for self and strive instead for the common good of all, but always with boundaries.

Three: The faithful servant must keep the focus on suffering persons and resist the tendency to focus on the act of mercy. The secular state also does acts of mercy, but always with concerns about public image and being politically correct. We should think very soberly about how we use public figures or famous persons to endorse out acts of mercy.

Four: the faithful servant must act responsibly to aid those in need, resisting the political pressures to cater to and support certain ideologies. Mahatma Gandhi said that to give bread to one who could work but chooses not to violates his belief in non-violence, and is not consistent with his faith in a just God. In spite of the talk we hear about

undeserved welfare, the person who acts out of faith that moves one to act compassionately with not attention to the boundaries and not thought to what is politically expedient will be criticized and likely punished by society.

Now after I have said all this I must tell you that to understand the faithful servant you must know someone who has paid a price for their commitment. My experience is sharing my over-flow. The faithful servant Jesus describes shares their resources of living. I hope you are having a good summer, and not wilting in this heat...107 degrees today. Sincerely,

Moses Mart

Editorial... by Terry Hostetler

I've really had a hard time coming up with an article this time that I felt would be a good thing for me to write. I've actually written 3 so far, but none really made me happy. So I am going to attack this from another angle.

In recent months in our adult Sunday School classes and conversations amongst our group I've heard some

comment that really disturbed me. And I've heard of situations that people handled where I really had to remind myself that these are people who believe in God and are Christians. I'm not going to get into exact dates and situations. It's too late for that to be useful anyway.

But instead, I want you to remember the New Testament. Remember the Scribes and Pharisees? Sure you do. They strictly followed the law but they missed the message of

Christ. Please don't get so caught up in being correct that you forget the love and compassion Christ has for us all, and that we should share with each other. And also remember Faith...sometimes people have to make decisions that come down to either doing the safe thing or the right thing...please have Faith that God will give you strength and wisdom to see it through (because He will) and do the right thing.

Credits...

The next newsletter will be edited and published by a new team, Damon and Nicole Tabor! Thanks to all who have helped with this effort to date. Bill Klassen will continue to be in charge of mailing, and Sadie continues to be a faithful news gatherer. Please help by submitting news, articles, and address changes as early as possible. Thanks, Cheryl Crichley

An opportunity...

How would you like to help out a worthy cause, and have it cost you nothing? Judie Menadue would like us to be aware of such an opportunity. By calling 1-800-354-8800, ext. 39216, you can help the Chicago Mennonite Learning Center. AT&T will award them points for every dollar spent on long distance bills, and this will not impact your rates or calling plans. The account number you need to give is 05473550. These points will be used to help the school acquire technology products. You do have to be a residential AT&T customer. The Chicago Mennonite Learning Center is an inner city project, which helps many children in need. If you would like to support them directly or learn more, their address is 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632, and their phone is (773) 735-9304. It is good to find ways to direct some of the money we are already spending toward worthy causes.

An omission...

The Newsletter and the church apologize to the family of Judy Perkins for not including them in our list of concerns last month. Judy's father, Bob Standingwater, had been hospitalized for an extended

period for heart surgery and subsequent complications. You were all in our thoughts and prayers, and we rejoice with you that he is home in Hammond and doing well.

With God's help...

We are happy to see Ethel Posar and Grace Roley back in church, and to see that they are feeling better. Please continue to remember them in your prayers.

Summer travels...

Bill and Thea Klassen went to New Mexico where they visited an Navajo friend. They reported to us about the joy of meeting his family, and of participating in a 4th of July celebration with the Navajo people.

Peter and Kay Brueckner traveled to Tennessee for a family reunion and to return their grandchildren, Michael and Rebecca to their parents. On the way back, they met a relative of Moses Mast in a bakery in Tennessee!

Moses and Sadie Mast went to Virginia to visit family members and attend a family reunion.

Nicole Tabor recently gave a report to the church of her trip to Chiapas, Mexico. This was sponsored by the Sisters of

Benedict, here in the Oklahoma City area. We hope to have a report from her in next month's newsletter. There are many ways to be a witness, and one is to go and witness the mistreatment of others, and to report it. We thank Nicole for sharing her story and her pictures with us.

Alex Cortez, who had been staying with Moses and Sadie, has already returned to Honduras, to his family. We will miss his smile in our midst. Hopefully, we were able to plant some good seeds for him to take home, and he will be able to feel our continued prayers and concern. We pray for continued strength and healing for his body, and keep his well-being, and that of other children and youth in Central America in our hearts.

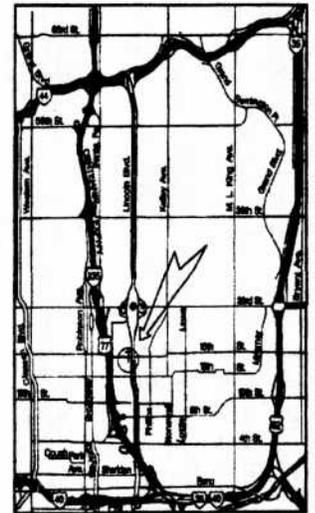
Parting thoughts...

I love good quotes, and this one was used in my talk last Sunday at Joy. It seemed to be well received, so I thought I would include it in this newsletter for those who would like to have a copy. I have enjoyed publishing this paper, but my studies out of town limit the amount of time I can contribute to such projects. The quote is by Martin Luther King, and I include only the last few lines:

Love is identified as a resignation of power and power with a denial of love...What is needed is realization that power without love is reckless and abusive and that love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice. Justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love.

To me, this gives the term, "The Power of God," new meaning.

Note: Quarterly Business Meeting will be August 29th...mark your calendars!



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