



PASTOR'S CORNER

After the terrorist attack on the world trade center our president declared, we will find and punish those responsible. To this our president added, those who are not with us shall

be considered to be against us and will also have to face the consequences. Our president expressed a wide spread trait of American people, we see one side of a situation and hold our opinions as absolute truth. It would seem that the fear from the terrorist attack has polarized our nation even more. We are not agreed on how to fight terrorism and divided over the war in Iraq. When one reads the readers say section of our church periodicals one can see that this kind of divisive thinking is wide spread in our churches as well.. This is the kind of world Jesus was born into and the context in which Jesus taught about living in the kingdom of God. Jesus grew up among a people governed by a foreign occupation and deeply divided on how to deal with the painful conditions they were forced to live with.

People have asked me ,what would you do if you faced a life threatening situation. If you are searching to know divine, eternal truth, what I would do is immaterial. I am not the center of truth. If, as the question implies, I am naive about the threat of violence in the world, that assumption is correct. I have lived most of my life in relative safety. But I must add, according to the testimony of some who experienced violence committed against them, safe times are also the best times to think seriously about a righteous response. The pain and anger that rise up in us from unjust treatment can paralyze us in that moment and prevent us from making good and right choices. In our experience in Central America we saw ordinary people take risks to do the right thing, risks as great as the risk of death. I have had doubts that I could take such a risk but I have come to believe that I could, but I know I must think about the way I must go now in the safe time, and I must do this with great humility.

After I have said this I confess I feel strongly about my view of war and violence and I believe it is right to hold issues of faith strongly, but I also understand that I must rise above the need to win as if our conversations were a debate. The need to win is that age old human desire to dominate others. When Jesus gave his disciples what he called a new commandment, that you should love one another as I have loved you, it was just such a situation as we face today. the need to be right, the need to win and the desire to dominate my brother or sister. We note that these words were given as a command, not good advice. This suggests to me that the kingdom people Jesus envisioned could not take root and grow without this kind of loving acceptance of each other being practiced in this new community

and that the desire to dominate and the lack of respect for the other was still present among his disciples. One can be passionate about faith and relationship to the Lord, and practice radical discipleship without feeling compelled to mould others to believe like me. This is what our Lord hoped for in the new community.

May God give us grace to be passionate without the desire to dominate and win.

Moses Mart

May Revisited

Well as usual, we have had a busy month. May 18th, we had a pot-luck at the church for our graduates, Scott Bliss and Chris Jennings. Later that same week, the Bliss family hosted a graduation dinner for Scott at their home in Chandler, followed by graduation ceremonies at the high school there. A surprise for everyone invited was the attendance of Bill & Thea Klassen from Kansas. What a treat to catch up with old friends.

Scott's sister Hayley Bliss Anderson, has been visiting from Germany. Hayley's husband , Travis, is stationed there. It is so nice to see her again.

Memorial Day weekend was the annual Paseo Arts Festival here in OKC. This year Joy Mennonite Church had a table there to inform attendees of efforts for Iraqi relief. Lots of donations were received and later in the week, an anonymous donor gave several thousand dollars to the matching fund. This is an ongoing concern of Joy Mennonite Church and MCC.

Congratulations to Sue Laws on her new home. This has been a stressful time for Sue and we rejoice in her success in finding a new residence.

Our annual campout was, as always, a time of fun, food and fellowship. Friday turned out to be very hot, 100 + degrees, which kept attendance down some what. Saturday and Sunday were much cooler and several families came out to join in the festivities. Warkentines came with Gabe Bliss, and Jared and Trish Austin were there also with their three daughters. Just amazing how fast those little girls grow up.

Our featured speaker for Sunday was retired priest, John Vrana. Wonderful experience listening and fellowshiping with him. We are so thankful that so many people join us for our campouts. Everyone is invited and we always find something to talk about , fun and games to participate in and of course, delicious food to share.

This week, the Bliss family and Jessie Warkentine are

leaving for Minnesota to work at a camp for children with various disabilities. This is a project that the Blisses participate in every year. We wish them all the best in their journey there and the weeks that follow.

We rejoice with Terry and Donna Hostetler on the return of their son, Jacob, to the US from the Mideast. Many prayers have been answered for his safe return. Many more still go out for the service men and women far from home and their families here and abroad.

Upcoming Events

Preaching schedule for the month of June is as follows: Moses Mast - June 8th & 15th, Karin Evans - June

22nd & 29th.

June 2nd, Moses and Sadie Mast attended the Pastor/ Spouse meeting at Bethel Mennonite in Hydro, OK. June 9th, Moses will be at the Home Missions meeting in Moundridge, Kansas.

Cheryl Critchley will be our delegate to Mennonite Church USA convention in Atlanta, GA. I'm sure that will be an inspiring and growing experience for all attendees. Should be lots of good stories when she returns. Specific dates to be announced later.

August 1st & 2nd, Western District and South Central Conference get together in Moundridge, KS for their annual meeting.

September 19th & 29th will be our Oklahoma convention, more information will follow on that in the next issue.

Go check out our web-site at www.joy.us.mennonite.net. I can promise you will find something of interest. If you would like to add something or make a comment, you can contact us through the web-site or e-mail Cheryl Critchley at storyweaver@swbell.net or me at memoing@t11.com.net. Make sure if you e-mail me that you use the one key and not the L key.

Final Thoughts By Deborah O'Neal

Ever have a job or project that you actually wanted to do and things conspired against you?

I mow yards part time and I am so behind because of the weather its not even funny anymore. Anyone who knows me, knows that that is my favorite thing in the world to do, MOW. Put me on a mower with a big cup of ice water and turn me loose. No one bothers me and the rider, I have time to think and the smell of fresh cut grass is so good. Whoever invented riding mowers should receive an award just for giving me quiet time to myself.

I think everyone needs lots of quiet time. Time for reflection, time to regroup, time to just commune with God. Me personally, I like my mowing time.

What about you? What is your time, washing dishes, washing the car, taking a walk? It can be anytime you know. Think about it and let me know. I'm curious about how other people spend their down time.

Anyway, you know what comes next. Yes, yes, it's the bit about Relief sale in November. My pet project. This year I hope to contribute more than just money. Jack and I have been blessed with a bumper crop of grapes and I think I may try my hand at grape jelly again. Last time I made jelly it turned out very well. So cross your fingers and pray hard that I don't mess it up. See you at the sale!

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



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