

# Community News

A newsletter for members, attenders and friends of Joy Mennonite Church

February 20, 2011 Issue #1



## Introduction

I decided to go ahead to put together a print newsletter instead of just the email newsletter. I hope folks like it. If you have any thoughts or comments, please let me know at church or send me an email.

Also I would like to include more pictures in future newsletters. If you have pictures of church events or of members of our community, please email them to joymenonite@gmail.com

James

### 1 Congregational News

- \* Happy News from Zach & Brittany
- \* Parking Warning
- \* Pastoral Search Committee News
- \* Preaching & Worship Schedule
- \* A sweet dog that needs a new home
- \* Lent is just around the corner
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## Congregational News

### Happy News from Zach & Brittany

Zach Gleason & Brittany Hopkins are pleased to announce that Brittany is pregnant!

### Stefan is back!

We are quite happy to have Stefan Warner back with us after completing training as a CPT reservist in Chicago. He will likely be going on a delegation to Iraq in the fall, so we are encouraging folks to continue to give to help him raise the funds that will be needed for this trip.

### Parking Warning

One of our members got a \$100 ticket for a parking on the grass at Joy Mennonite this week, so we wanted to remind folks not to park on the grass but rather to park on the street on NE 16th St.

### Pastoral Search Committee News

Members of the pastoral search committee will be meeting with members and regular attenders to get input on both the issue of pastoral leadership but also to explore more fully what the vision of our church should be.

### Preaching & Worship Schedule

*Not all of the upcoming slots are filled. Please see Paul Reggier if you want to be worship leader or to preach on one of the open Sundays.*

\* February 20—7th Sunday after Epiphany:

Worship leader: John Walters

Preacher: Stefan



### Community News

**DISCLAIMER:** I try to include stories, opinions, and information that would be of interest to our members and reflect Mennonite values, however, inclusion of a story or link in this email does not necessarily mean that it is endorsed by Joy Mennonite Church.

**Contact us:** If you have news, photos or other items that you would like see in the next issue, please email us at:

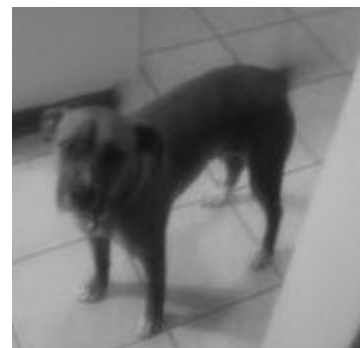
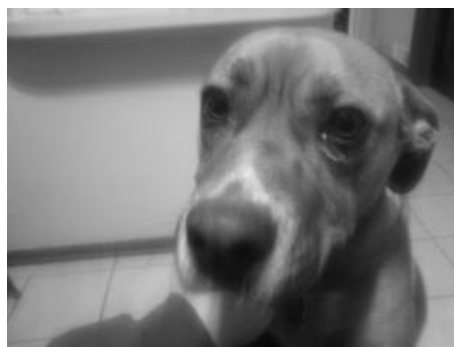
joymennonite@gmail.com

**Joy Mennonite Church  
504 NE 16th St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73104**

Gypsy is a very sweet-natured and enthusiastic boxer-mix. She is mostly housebroken and would do best in a household with other dogs or where she would get lots of attention from people.

She has all of her shots but is not fixed. (I'm offering to give \$50 to whoever can adopt Gypsy to help pay the cost of getting her fixed.)

If you are interested in adopting Gypsy, please call me (James) at 476-5620 or email me at giright-lawyer@gmail.com.



#### Continued from page 1—Congregational News:

- \* February 27—8th Sunday after Epiphany:  
Worship leader: Aaron  
Preacher: Terry
- \* March 6—Transfiguration Sunday:  
Worship leader:  
Preacher: James
- \* March 13—1st Sunday of Lent:  
Worship leader:  
Preacher:
- \* March 20—2nd Sunday of Lent
- \* March 27—3rd Sunday of Lent

#### A sweet dog that needs a new home

I am looking for a new home for one of my dogs, Gypsy. I'm sad to do this, but feel it is the best since I'm going to have to travel a lot this year and I can really only travel with one dog in the car (and can't afford to board Gypsy all of the time when I'm gone).

#### Lent is just around the Corner

Lent (the season of the church calendar that remembers the final days of Jesus here on earth) begins on March 13th. If you have ideas on special things we can do for the season (decorations, special worship or music, etc.) please share your ideas with the congregation.

#### Thursday Night Book Discussion Group

Our Thursday book discussion group is nearing the end of its study of Wendell Berry's *Sex, Economy, Freedom and Community*. If you have ideas for what book we should study next, please let Stefan know. He is asking especially for books by women and/or people of color, since all of our past book study selections have been written by white men.

# News from the WDC & MCUSA

## Explanation for anyone new to Joy

*Joy Mennonite Church is member congregation of the Western District Conference (WDC) of Mennonite Church USA (MCUSA). WDC is composed of more than 60 congregations in Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas and Colorado. We also are part of the Oklahoma Convention, a group of Mennonite Churches that administers the Oklahoma Mennonite Retreat grounds in Hydro.*

## WDC Men & Boys Weekend

The annual men and boys weekend at Camp Mennoscah is an event that is the envy of many conference leaders throughout the country because of its attendance and longevity. We are grateful to our grandfathers who started this tradition and to those of you who have helped keep it going for over 50 years. We are looking for a few men to help plan and coordinate the event this year, would you be willing to help? Don't put it off...contact Kevin Neufeld at (316-284-0450) or Brent Voran (316-284-2657) today.

## Youth Call to Peace in Moundridge, Kansas

*Editor's note: I realize it is likely too late for anyone to make the trip up to Kansas for tomorrow night, but I wanted to share this news so we can pray for the event.*

Jr. high and high school youth, and young adults are invited to a special "Youth call to Peace" event at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kansas on Sunday evening, February 20 at 7:00 pm. Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove is an author, speaker, and new monastic. Jonathan is an Associate Minister at the historically black St. Johns Baptist Church, and is engaged in peace-making and reconciliation efforts in Durham, North Carolina. The Rutba House, where Jonathan lives with his family and other friends, is a new monastic community that prays, eats, and lives together, welcoming neighbors and the homeless. Music will be offered by the Camp Mennoscah Sr. high camp reunion band and friends. Learn more at [jonathanwilsonhartgrove.com](http://jonathanwilsonhartgrove.com).

## Scrapbooking Retreat at Camp Mennoscah

Camp Mennoscah is hosting a scrapbooking retreat on March 4-6. This is a time for you to work on albums, learn new techniques, and spend time with friends. See brochure at [www.mennowdc.org](http://www.mennowdc.org).

## WDC Library News

"Toward Health, Hope and Healing" is the theme of the February *Check It Out* from the WDC Resource Library. Featured are resources on church based health ministries, responses to domestic violence, terrorism and catastrophe and info on how faith communities can work towards ending child abuse and neglect. Find this listing on our website at [www.mennowdc.org/2011-02-CIO.pdf](http://www.mennowdc.org/2011-02-CIO.pdf)

--Marlene Bogard, Director of WDC Resource Library

## WDC Annual Assembly

Looking ahead... put the dates July 29-30 on your calendars. The WDC Annual Assembly will be at Bethel College and Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS. Start planning for this highlight in the life of our area conference. Churches may send one delegate for every 30 members or fraction thereof.

## WDC Volleyball and Basketball Tournaments

Get ready to play ball! The dates for the annual WDC tournaments are March 18-19 at Hesston College Yost Center (volleyball); and March 15, 17, 18, 19 at Bethel College (basketball). More information will go to churches and tournament contact persons soon.



Camp Mennoscah is a special place. Help celebrate camp and care for its future by joining fellow campers and former music directors for a Camp Sing at Memorial Hall at Bethel College, in North Newton, KS on May 1, 2011 at 6:30 PM. A free will offering collected at the event will go towards the construction of a new camp pool. Funds will go through WDC Vision 2012.

Continued from page 3—WDC & MCUSA News:

### Bethel College February Newsletter

The Bethel College *Thresher* can be read online at [www.bethelks.edu/bc/news\\_publications/thresher\\_eview/index.php](http://www.bethelks.edu/bc/news_publications/thresher_eview/index.php)

### Kansas Death Penalty Alert

A vote in the Kansas Senate last year to repeal the death penalty resulted in a 20-20 tie, one vote short of passage. A bill will be introduced in the Kansas House this year. You will be hearing more from your Western District Conference Task Force on the Death Penalty when contacts with legislators are needed. Would your S.S. class or peace and service committee be ready to promote discussion and letter writing when the appeal is made? Our witness can make a difference.

### It's time to start thinking about sending a delegate to the Pittsburgh 2011 MCUSA Convention

WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR VOICE! It is time to start thinking about choosing your congregation's delegates for the Delegate Assembly at Pittsburgh 2011.

NEVER HAD DELEGATES? For those congregations that would like to send delegates to the Pittsburgh 2011 Delegate Assembly, but have not sent a delegate to one of the last four Mennonite Church USA conventions (Atlanta 2003; Charlotte 2005; San Jose 2007 or Columbus 2009), we would like to make it easier for you to participate.

For you, we are offering to waive the registration fee for your delegate(s) to attend Pittsburgh 2011! For more information about how to obtain a waiver of registration fees, please contact our office 574-523-3048 or e-mail Carol Epp: [CarolE@mennoniteusa.org](mailto:CarolE@mennoniteusa.org).



### February 2011 Prayer requests

#### February 6

Pray for the church in Côte d'Ivoire as Christians seek the courage to live God's way in an ethnically-charged political atmosphere following contested presidential elections two months ago. Martine Audéoud and Gary Wittig with Mennonite Mission Network minister as teachers in this tense situation.

#### February 13

Thank God for SOOP participants serving at the Hopi Mission School in Kykotsmovi, Ariz., through Mennonite Mission Network. Pray that the SOOPers may be blessed as they support the ministry of the school through tutoring, maintenance and office assistance.

#### February 20

Thank God for the many lives touched through Third Way Media's *Shaping Families* radio programs and the accompanying website, [www.ShapingFamilies.com](http://www.ShapingFamilies.com). Pray for sponsors and a radio station to air the program in northern Indiana.

#### February 27

Mike and Teresa Sherrill and their three children have ministered in Japan through Mennonite Mission Network for the past decade. Pray for them as they share Jesus' message through teaching, music, and daily involvement in the lives of their neighbors.

### WDC prayer reminders

Feb. 6 – Pray for strong faith, clear vision, and patient endurance for the pastors of Western District Conference.

Feb. 13 – Pray for God's guidance in the appointment of a church planter for the new Hispanic church in Wichita, KS. Pray for our Missouri church plant now called Peace Mennonite Church with a new focus on Columbia.

Pray for the new church plant getting underway in Oklahoma City called Metro Mennonite Church.

Feb. 20 – Pray for strong giving for and safe construction of a new swimming pool for Camp Mennoscah. Pray for Olivia Bartel, Camp Director, as she prepares programming and staffing for summer 2011.

Feb. 27 – Pray for the three seminars this next week to help members, pastors, and congregational leaders with money matters – wise Christian stewardship in challenging times.

**Opinion****Oppression is Bad, Now What?**

by **Tim Nafziger and Mark van Steenwyk**

We have both spent time analyzing the ways in which we are part of the dominant culture in the United States. We know that, as heterosexual white men, we benefit from a system that is racist, sexist, and heterosexist and that we are against oppression.

However, we want to move beyond analysis and become allies to people who are not part of the dominant culture. In studying Anne Bishop's *Becoming an Ally*, we have noticed some interesting parallels between the practice of becoming an ally and what Jesus is trying to do in the Sermon on the Mount.

Naming the ways we see oppression operating in a group is part of becoming an ally.

"Naming" is the practice of unveiling a truer narration than that which identifies only blatant bigotry and chauvinism as the problem.

"Naming" means noticing when members of the dominant culture are the only ones speaking in a mixed group and pointing it out. It means confessing those times when we have dismissed people because of our unintentional prejudices. It means honoring the moments when members of an oppressed group name oppression rather than responding with defensiveness. It means making sure it isn't the women in a group who have to call out a man for making a sexist remark, intentional or not. It means breaking ranks with other members of the dominant culture. It is risky.

"Naming" happens when we bring hidden things to light, speak truth in the midst of error, or confess our complicity in systems that devalue others. It is about unlearning the lies, and binding the reality with our attention, presence, words, and actions. We are moving beyond mere symbolism to real praxis – acting in a way that unveils oppression and co-creates liberation.

Isn't this what Jesus was doing in the Sermon on the Mount? In the Beatitudes, Jesus is "Naming" the truth, thereby opening the space for a new reality.

He said "Blessed are the poor." In that moment of "Naming," he unveiled lies, and, with his fellow poor, co-created a new reality – a new moment in which previously entrenched realities broke open so that a new future was possible. "Blessed are the poor" is revolution-speak. It is about the in-breaking of God.

Being an ally involves a commitment to move past defensiveness when we are challenged on our own oppression. If we are open to recognizing our own complicity in oppression, members of the dominant culture (be it heterosexual, white or male) have a lot to gain, both socially and spiritually. Our relationships with those not part of the dominant culture can deepen. And when we are in deeper community with our brothers and sisters, we take a step closer to the vision of the beloved community and our mutual liberation.

*Sources for this article include Ervin Stutzman, Glen Alexander Guyton, Joanna Shenk, Sylvia Morrison and Anne Bishop. For the entire article see <http://goo.gl/6UuIi> - From CPT.net (used with permission)*

**Coming in March...**

*Create Space for Peace: 40 Years of Peacemaking* draws directly from Gene Stoltzfus's experiences around the world and contains pictures and stories of direct peace actions, along with critical assessments of current political and military trends. It also documents the challenges and ecstasies on the inner journey of a passionate and joyful peacemaker. This collection of Gene's writing and poignant reflections by others impacted by his life, will inspire those who wish to travel further on the road to global peace.

There are discounted prices for early pre-orders of the book. For more information go to: [www.createspaceforpeace.info](http://www.createspaceforpeace.info)

# OCC News

## Introduction:

OCC (Oklahoma Center for Conscience) is proud to be fiscally sponsored by Joy Mennonite Church. This brief report will tell about some of our recent activities for JMC members. For more in-depth information on OCC's work, please pick one of our quarterly newsletters, or talk to James, Moses, Sadie, Aaron, Stephan or Danielle.

## Our New Executive Director

We are proud to announce that we have given Rena Guay the title of Executive Director. She was really already doing the work, so we thought it was time to give her the title too. We so appreciate her work in both the administrative tasks, but also in providing leadership in helping us to develop our strategies to do our work. She is also on the board of the national GI Rights network.

## New Surge of Volunteers

We have had a good last few months with regards to recruiting new people to be involved. They include Danielle Furstenberg (who was our intern for the fall semester of 2010), as well as Kenneth & Javier (both students at OCC).

## Oklahoma GI Rights Hotline

After a slow time for the previous few months, Moses reports a dramatic uptick in calls for January (7 calls). We continue to help servicemembers with lots of needs, including combat-related PTSD, physical health issues, family hardships, and of course issues of conscience.

We expect the coming months to be even busier, as 3,500 troops of the Oklahoma Army National Guard will be completing their pre-deployment training between now and May (before they will be deployed to Afghanistan). We plan to be ready to assist even their soldiers who might call us who need assistance.

We hope to attend the national GI Rights Network conference in Albuquerque later this spring.

## GI Rights Training at Under the Hood Café

James reports that a very successful GI Rights counselor training was held at Under the Hood café

([underthehoodcafe.org](http://underthehoodcafe.org)) in Killeen, Texas to train volunteers to be able to help soldiers at Fort Hood with their needs. The end result of the training was 5 people who are now trained and committed to doing on-going GI Rights counseling.

## Two Major Victories for GI Rights

James reports two recent cases that have gone in a positive direction.



SPC Jeff Hanks was a combat veteran from Fort Campbell, KY who was suffering from severe PTSD and TBI (traumatic brain injury). Despite these injuries his command attempted to deploy him, so we had to pull out all of the stops in mounting a public campaign to keep him home. Jeff's story was covered by multiple media outlets (including the CBS evening news), but it wasn't until thousands of members of the public wrote his commander that the deployment was called off.

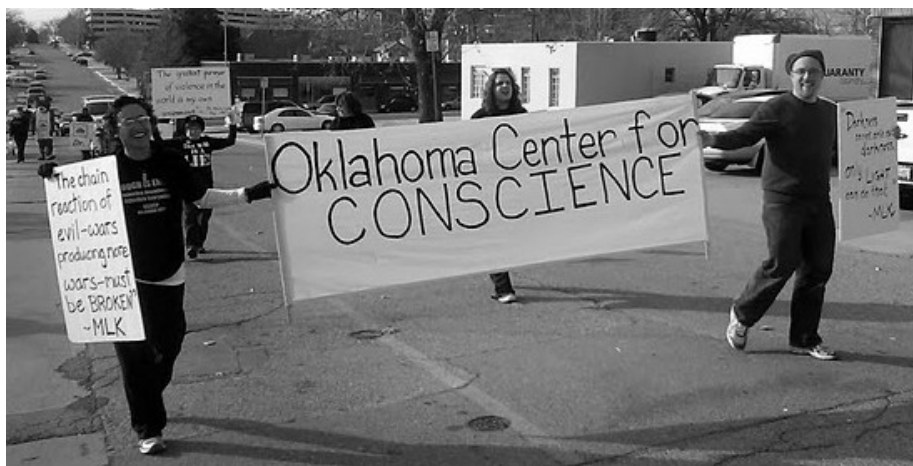
We are currently still fighting to make sure that Jeff gets a good discharge from the Army with decent benefits.



I'm out of space to tell Kyle Wesolowski's story, but I will say that after working with him for more than a year, he **finally** was recognized this week as a conscientious objector by the authorities at Fort Hood and at HQ Dept. of the Army! He should be out of the Army by early March. For more information on his story, please go to: [freakylewesolowski.wordpress.com](http://freakylewesolowski.wordpress.com).



## Photos from OCC's Presence at Oklahoma City's Martin Luther King Day Parade



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