

Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? — Matthew 6:26

The Sower

a newsletter for Central Plains Mennonite Conference leaders and pastors

October 9, 2013

Growing in holistic witness to God's reconciling mission in the world through fellowship, discipleship and leadership.

Please forward this newsletter to (or print it for) these congregational leaders:

Pastors, Elders or Deacons, Central Plains Delegates, Church Moderator, Treasurer, Christian Education Chair, Church Librarian, Missions Committee, Worship Committee, Youth Sponsors

For Your Prayers: weekly bulletin announcements

Here are weekly prayer requests for each week between now and the next issue of *The Sower*. Please share them with your congregation by whichever method works best, whether it be in your bulletin, in the pastoral prayer or some other way. *Thank you!*

For Sunday, October 13

Pray for White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church in Busby, Montana, and associate pastor Scott Schreffler who is being licensed towards ordination today.

For Sunday, October 20

Pray for Tim Detweiler, David Boshart and Shana Peachey Boshart as they take a retreat day on Tuesday to reflect, pray and plan for the future of our conference.

For Sunday, October 27

Pray for the new Conflict Management Support Team which is prepared to help congregations in conflict and plans to provide training workshops for Central Plains folks.

For Sunday, November 3

Pray for Christ Community Church in Des Moines as lead pastor Kent McDougal takes a year-long sabbatical.

Finance Update

The conference had a real slow September with total income coming in at \$24,337.80. Expenses were also lower than usual at \$32,579.15, which helped offset a potentially larger monthly deficit. However, the overall fiscal year deficit is now \$28,571.04. We are thankful for your continued support and ask for your prayers in these coming months as we look to decrease this deficit.

—*Stewardship Task Group*

Staff News

October 10-15 Tim is in Montana to install Scott Schreffler as associate pastor at White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church.

13-16 Dave is at Constituency Leaders Council near Sturgis, Michigan.

20 Dave is at Shalom Mennonite Church, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

22 Dave, Tim and Shana have a planning retreat.

25-27 Dave speaks at a Western District Conference Reference Council gathering.

28-30 Tim attends the Clergy Clinic at Lombard Mennonite Peace Center.

November 3 Dave preaches at Christ Community Church in Des Moines.

4 Tim attends a Lombard Mennonite Peace Center Board meeting in Lombard, Illinois.

8-10 Dave and Shana speak at a youth leadership retreat for Hmong Mennonite Church of St. Paul.

Following up from Annual Meeting table groups

At our 2013 Annual Meeting, we posed the following question to our delegates: *“What do you believe are the most pressing matters of faith and life where the church needs to do spiritual/biblical discernment in order to have an effective witness in the world?”* The written responses from the table groups can be summed up in the statement **“We are concerned about how the faithful church discerns the way of Jesus as we engage the culture in which we find ourselves.”**

At Conference Board meeting in September, the board decided to appoint a task group to develop a study document for congregations with a study guide for 4-6 sessions. This document would provide specific steps for biblical discernment in an Anabaptist/Mennonite perspective for congregations to learn from and practice applying to specific issues of our time.

The goal is to have this study ready for congregations to use by January. We would like ten congregations that would be willing to use it and give feedback on it by May 31. (The study can be provided in other languages.) **If your congregation is willing to pilot this study between January and May, please call Shana Boshart to let her know.** (See contact info below.)

Amanda Beachy, pastor at Washington (IA); Seth McCoy, pastor at Thirdway (St. Paul); Nathan Ramer, pastor at Wellman (IA); Nick Detweiler Stoddard, pastor at Salem (SD); and Matt-Troyer Miller, pastor at Wood River (NE) have agreed to serve on the task group. Shana Peachey Boshart will represent the ministry staff on the team.

Find a summary of the table group responses and the proposal for the task group on the [For Delegates page](#) under the CPMC at Work tab.

New at www.centralplainsmc.org

The formation resource library has been updated! Thanks to pastor Amanda Beachy volunteering her time, the formation library is now updated with new books and a new list. It is located in the Kalona offices. Find the list of items and how to check them out on our [Resource Libraries page](#) under the Resources tab.

The [Committees pages](#) (under Our Organization) have also been updated with descriptions of the work of the committees, a list of the members, photos and links to the committee's resources.

Been wanting to go to Ecuador?

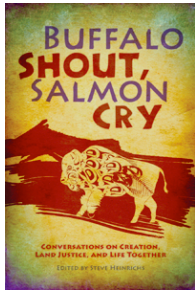
Anyone interested in going on a Fellowship and Learning Tour to Ecuador the last half of January 2014 contact Don Kempf at donaldekempf@windstream.net or telephone at 402-759-1285.

Quito Mennonite Church is seeking applicants for a full time pastor. Interested persons should contact Don Kempf.

“They Like Jesus but not the Church”

Titles like this one are popular, and reflect an on-going awareness that all is not "right" with our churches. What it means to "be church" is in flux, and as always, change is an opportunity to update, shift, adapt or become obsolete. We have dozens of current resources that are helpful in navigating our changing ecclesial terrain. All of them are available to you, Central Plains Mennonite Conference pastors and leaders, courtesy of your subscription to the Western District Conference Library. www.mennowdc.org / 316-283-6300/ crlib@mennowdc.org —*Marlene Bogard, WDC Library Director*

New book and study guide: *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry*



How can North Americans come to terms with the lamentable clash between indigenous and settler cultures, faiths, and attitudes toward creation? Showcasing a variety of voices—both traditional and Christian, native and non-native—*Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry* offers up alternative histories, radical theologies, and poetic, life-giving memories that can unsettle our souls and work toward reconciliation.

This book is intended for all who are interested in healing historical wounds of racism, stolen land, and cultural exploitation. Essays on land use, creation, history, and faith appear among poems and reflections by people across ethnic and religious divides. The writers do not always agree—in fact, some are bound to raise readers' defenses. But they represent the hard truths that we must hear before reconciliation can come.

Find the book [in the MennoMedia online store](#). The study guide [is available here](#).

MEDA Convention

Join Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) for four days of inspiration, information and networking in Wichita during November 7-10, 2013. “Cultivating Solutions: Harvesting Hope” is the convention theme. Plenary sessions feature topics on global food issues, the importance of networking and collaboration and overcoming barriers to hope.

Go to www.medaconvention.org for full descriptions of the plenary sessions, seminars, tours and on-line registration, or call 1-800-665-7026 for more information.

Upcoming Events

Conference Board and Committees meet together November 15 & 16 at Swan Lake Christian Camp, Viborg, South Dakota.

Conflict in the Church: Entrusted with the Message of Reconciliation

will be offered November 8 & 9 at Wood River, Nebraska.

Conflict Transformation Skills for Churches will be offered February 8, 2014, in southeast Iowa.

Church Planters Gathering will take place March 11-12.

Annual Leaders Retreat for pastors and spouses will take place April 25-27 at Schuyler, Nebraska

Central Plains Annual Meeting will take place June 19-22 at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.

Youth Escape 2014 will take place the weekend of August 1-3, 2014, in central Iowa.

The Sower is published the second Wednesday of each month for Central Plains pastors, delegates, conference leaders and other interested persons. Please include items from this newsletter in your church bulletins and newsletters. Find back issues at www.centralplainsmc.org. Click on Publications.

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The mission of Central Plains Mennonite Conference is to create settings for our congregations and partners to grow in holistic witness to God's reconciling mission in the world by developing leadership, encouraging fellowship and promoting lifelong discipleship.