

You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.
—1 Peter 1:23

The Sower

a newsletter for Central Plains Mennonite Conference leaders and pastors

September 11, 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, September 15

Pray for those gathered for the Central Plains Mennonite Women retreat next weekend at Swan Lake Christian Camp near Viborg, South Dakota.

For Sunday, September 22

This week the Central Plains Christian Formation Committee meets to plan the coming year. Please pray for them and for Formation Minister Shana Peachey Boshart.

For Sunday, September 29

Pray for Rochester (Minnesota) Mennonite Church as they welcome Galen Penner as their new pastor and engage in strategic planning for their future.

For Sunday, October 6

Pray for Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, South Dakota, as they welcome Bob Engbrecht today as pastor for senior ministries.

Finance Update

We had another strong month in August, with an income of \$41,851.29. Expenses were also higher than usual, however, due to final expenses from Annual Meeting and other infrequent items that came due this month. Expenses came in at \$44,866.44. With this net loss \$3,015.15 for the month, our overall net loss for the fiscal year comes to \$20,329.69. Thank you for your strong support!

—*Stewardship Task Group*

Staff News

September 15 Tim will be at Rochester Mennonite Church to install Galen Penner as pastor.

September 14-17 Dave attends Mennonite Church USA Executive Board meeting.

September 24 & 25 Shana attends Christian Formation Committee planning retreat in northwest Iowa.

September 28 & 29 Tim is with the Rochester (Minn.) Mennonite Church to lead a workshop for strategic planning.

September 30-October 2 Dave is in Lancaster, Pa, for the Everence Development Conference.

September 30-October 2 Shana is in Ocean Grove, New Jersey for a meeting of conference youth ministers.

October 3-8 Dave and Shana are on vacation.

October 5 & 6 Tim is in Freeman, South Dakota, to install Bob Engbrecht as pastor for senior ministries at Salem Mennonite.

An update from Pastoral Leadership Committee

Recently, the Pastoral Leadership Committee met with Joetta Schlabach to begin the process of reviewing her credentials. This review stems from Faith Mennonite's adoption of a policy that would offer same-sex ceremonies as a ministry of the congregation. Beginning the review now, before a same-sex marriage blessing occurs, enables us to be proactive instead of reactionary.

We had very open, honest, and direct conversation on how the Biblical texts inform and shape Joetta's and Faith Mennonite's ministry with LGBTQ persons and also the implications this has with Joetta's credentials. God's Spirit enabled us to listen, share openly and honestly with each other with care and compassion and to talk about the hard issues at hand. We understand that this was the first conversation in a process.

We continue to ask for your prayers for wisdom, clarity and the leading of the Holy Spirit in our work. May God grant us to live in harmony with one another in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together we may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.
— Susan Janzen, PLC Chair, and Tim Detweiler, Conference Minister for Ministerial Leadership

Have you checked out our new staff pages?

There is a page for each staff member on our site at www.centralplainsmc.org. Hover over "Staff" under "Our Organization," then click on a title. Or, click on these names: [David Boshart](#), [Tim Detweiler](#), [Shana Peachey Boshart](#) and [Ramiro Hernandez](#). Please call on us—we are here to help you.

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 donaldkempf@windstream.net or telephone at [402-759-1285](tel:402-759-1285).

Mennonite Women Fall Retreat

Remind the women of your congregation to register for the Mennonite Women Fall Retreat **by September 14**. To do so, they simply contact Esther Jane Buller at hebuller@gmail.com or [507-427-3064](tel:507-427-3064). The retreat is September 21 & 22, 2013, at Swan Lake Christian Camp near Viborg, South Dakota. The cost is \$75.

Elisabeth Harder Schrock and Charlotte Loewen, both of Mountain Lake, Minnesota, will speak on the theme, "Power Made Perfect: How's a Woman to Live?" Elisabeth and her husband recently completed a four-year MCC term working with Old Colony Mennonites and indigenous communities in Bolivia. Charlotte is a seminary student and a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker who has her own mental health private practice.

Planning for Fall Faith Formation?

These two places are ready to help you with a wide variety of resources. The Western District Conference Resource Library offers over 12,000 print and DVD resources in the form of curriculum, small group studies, devotional life, Christian education, children's literature and so much more. Marlene Bogard, director would love to chat with you and make suggestions on what might be helpful as well as pack of a stack of great stuff and mail it to you.

The Year of the Bible website is packed full of ideas, links and documents to assist you plan your own YOB. Visit it at: www.yearofthebiblenetwork.org

Youth workers, Save this date: May 12-15, 2014

Mennonite Church USA youth ministry leaders are planning a gathering for youth ministry workers across the church. Youth pastors, youth sponsors and other Mennonites connected to youth ministry are invited to the gathering in Kansas City, May 12-15, 2014.

Meeting at the site of the 2015 convention gives participants a chance to see the convention site and have input into the convention planning.

“We are always looking at ways to improve the convention, and this meeting will be a great time to hear from youth workers and test a few ideas with them,” says Glen Guyton, Director of Finance and Convention Planning.

Participants will also be introduced to new resources and hear input from youth ministry experts. Youth workers, mark your calendars for the May 12-15 gathering and watch for more information in the coming months.

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.

STAR Training to be offered in St. Paul

The STAR Training, Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience, will be offered in Saint Paul, Minnesota, in the fall. Registration is now open for two 4.5 day trainings:

Mon-Fri, September 16-20, 2013 www.starmpls3.eventbrite.com

Fri-Sun October 11-13 & Sat-Sun Oct 26-27, 2013 www.starmpls4.eventbrite.com

For more information, please contact Donna Minter at 612-377-4660 or STAR.Mpls@gmail.com.

Upcoming Events

Church Planting Strategy Team meets September 12 in Rochester, Minnesota.

Women's Retreat will take place September 21 & 22 at Swan Lake Christian Camp, Viborg, South Dakota.

Christian Formation Committee meets September 24 & 25 in Central Iowa.

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

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.