

And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. — Philippians 1:9-11

The Sower

a newsletter for Central Plains Mennonite Conference leaders and pastors

June 17, 2015

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, Mennonite Women.

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, June 21

Pray for Shana Peachey Boshart as she gives leadership to AnabaptistFaithFormation.org, a new website designed to be a central hub for Anabaptist faith formation resources.

For Sunday, June 28

This week from Tuesday through Sunday, youth and adults from across Mennonite Church USA will gather in Kansas City for convention. Pray that many youth will accept the call of Jesus to follow him, and that the Holy Spirit will lead the delegate body toward God's will for our church.

For Sunday, July 5

Pray for the leading of the Holy Spirit in the final worship service of Mennonite Church USA convention in Kansas City this morning. Pray also for the many delegates from Central Plains traveling home today.

For Sunday, July 12

This week, Anabaptists from all over the world will gather in Harrisburg, Pa., for Mennonite World Conference. Pray that this gathering will glorify God and enrich the global Anabaptist church.

Next month, *The Sower* will be dated **July 15**. Send submissions to Shana by **July 7**.

Finance Update

Central Plains started the new fiscal year on a good note, mainly from the contribution of early registration fees coming in for Annual Meeting. Income for the month was at \$37,014.12. Expenses for the month were at \$35,934.06, providing a slight surplus of \$1,080.06 for the month. We look forward to seeing you in Minneapolis for Annual Meeting and are very grateful for the support you have given. —*Stewardship Task Group*

Staff News

June 18-21 All staff will be at Annual Meeting in St. Paul.

23-July 11 Monica Clem will be out of the office and on a heritage tour in Europe.

28 Dave will preach at the Hmong Mennonite Church in St. Paul.

June 30-July 5 Dave, Shana and Tim will be at Mennonite Church USA Convention in Kansas City.

July 12 Tim will ordain Matt Troyer-Miller at Wood River (NE) Mennonite Church, and Dave will install Gordon Scoville as transitional pastor at First Mennonite Church, Iowa City.

July 15 Dave begins a sabbatical which concludes October 15.

David Boshart begins sabbatical July 15

At Annual Meeting this year, David Boshart is completing five years in his role as Executive Conference Minister. The Conference Board has granted him a three-month sabbatical beginning July 15 and ending October 15. During these three months, he will focus on getting oriented to the responsibilities of his role as moderator-elect of Mennonite Church USA which includes chairing the Constituency Leaders Council. He also plans to read scripture for pleasure and spend time with family. Dave will be present for the Council of Committees meeting August 28-29. While Dave is on sabbatical, Shana Boshart will be acting executive conference minister.

Max Villatoro Family

Please continue to pray for Max and Gloria Villatoro, their family and their congregation, Torre Fuerte. Max is still staying with his sister's family in rural Honduras while he gets his Honduran documents. Gloria continues to lead the church in Iowa City, work full-time and care for the children. Max would appreciate your notes of encouragement at max73villatoro@gmail.com.

You may also show your support for Max & Gloria by following [Friends of Pastor Max](#) on Facebook or donating to the Villatoro Family Fund at www.centralplainsmc.org/donate.

Shalom Readers: Reading in the way of Jesus

We've made it easy for you to start your own Shalom Readers group! Look in the brown bag from Annual Meeting for a packet which includes brochures, a flyer, and all the info you need! Questions? Call or email Ellen Miller at ellenkmiller@gmail.com or (319) 235-9130.

See also www.centralplainsmc.org/shalom-readers.

New in the Central Plains Formation Resource Library

How to Understand the Bible by David Ewert. A very practical and readable book giving the basics on how we read and interpret the Bible. An excellent addition to every church library and great for a study on biblical interpretation.

Love is an Orientation by Andrew Marin. With an approach that is both compassionate and biblical, Marin proposes helpful ways to build a bridge between evangelical Christians and the gay community. Highly recommended for leaders and study groups.

Sticky Faith: 10 lessons to nurture faith beyond high school by Dr. Kara E. Powell and Brad M. Griffen. A teen curriculum designed for seniors to address how they can keep their faith after they graduate from high school.

To check out these books, contact Shana at 319-936-5905 or shanaboshart@centralplainsmc.org.

WDC Library

How do we make sermon points stick in the brains of congregants?

In *Truth That Sticks: How to Communicate Velcro Truth in a Teflon World*, authors Avery T Willis, Jr., and Mark Snowden propose different methods of storying (the entire process of oral and visual communication; engaging the memory senses) and discipling (individual, small group, large group).

In a very readable book that sparks ideas, the authors help pastors and other leaders fire on all cylinders as they share the message.

Check out the growing lists of books by subject at the [WDC Resource Library](#)! At the homepage, click on the List tab. New lists include: [Faith Formation--Leadership](#) ; [Faith Formation--Family](#) ; [Fathers--Picture Books](#). Copy and distribute to your teachers, facilitators and families or share the links. We would be happy to mail resources upon request!

Contact us at crlib@mennowdc.org / 316-283-6300.

Roy Kaufman can speak on Israel-Palestine

Roy Kaufman, a recently retired pastor living in Freeman, South Dakota, is available to speak to churches and groups on topics related to Israel-Palestine. He recently spent five weeks traveling and studying there. He spent two weeks on a pilgrimage walk in Galilee and a week touring historical and archaeological sites. For the last two weeks, he joined a Christian Peacemaker Team delegation which heard from Palestinians and Israelis working to resolve the conflict, and participated as activists and international observers in the West Bank.

Kaufman is eager to share his experiences and learnings with church, community, civic, and school groups who want to learn more about this important part of the world. Contact Roy at 605-925-7430 or lorokauf@gwtc.net.

Anna Groff to lead Dove's Nest

The Dove's Nest board of directors is pleased to announce that it has named Anna Groff of Tucson, Ariz., to the role of executive director. Groff currently serves as the executive director of The Mennonite, Inc., and will transition out of this role to Dove's Nest in early fall.

Groff, originally from Lancaster, Pa, graduated from Goshen (Ind.) College in 2006 with a journalism degree. She earned a Master of Public Administration (Nonprofit Management focus) from Arizona State University in May 2013. She also worked as grant director for the White Mountain S.A.F.E. House in Pinetop, Ariz., in 2013.

Groff serves as an elder at Shalom Mennonite Church and is married to Brian Miller, a family doctor with the Indian Health Service. They have a one-year-old daughter Ella. She will work from her home office in Tucson. [Read more here.](#)

Philemon and Forgiveness blog series

A running blog on "Bible and Conflict" themes now features a series on Philemon and Forgiveness in Ted Lewis' Restorative Trainer website. This content can easily be adapted for sermon illustrations and class presentations when application areas have to do with matters of conflict resolution, communication styles, peacemaking, and third-party intervention. To get monthly posting announcements by email, sign up in the box on the homepage: www.restorativetrainer.com.

Trauma Awareness Training

STAR-Lite Training: Learning Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience in a Single Day. Saturday August 15, 2015 8:30am-4:30pm, Minneapolis STAR-Lite is a single-day training integrating Neuropsychology, Trauma Healing & Resilience, Restorative Justice, Nonviolent Conflict Transformation, and Spirituality. STAR-Lite is for individuals who wish to learn the basics of becoming trauma-informed and resilience-oriented within a shorter-time frame than the four-and-a-half-day [STAR Training](#). Optional 6.5 hours of Continuing Education (CEs) approved for Nurses, Educators, and Mental Healthcare Professionals and 5.5 hours CLEs for Attorneys. Early tuition is \$99. Group discounts/scholarship assistance available.

Details: www.starliteAug2015.eventbrite.com Sponsored by the [Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute](http://www.minneapolispeacebuilding.org).

Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience – the STAR Training Mon-Fri Sept 14-18, 2015, Minneapolis. The 4.5 day, evidence-based, multi-cultural STAR Training has a 13-year reputation of national and international success teaching practical strategies to transform psychological trauma into nonviolent power. STAR integrates neurobiology, psychology, trauma healing & resilience, restorative justice, nonviolent conflict transformation, and broadly defined spirituality setting the stage for authentic reconciliation for individuals and communities. STAR was created at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University. Laypersons and professionals are welcome at STAR. Optional 27-29 hours of Continuing Education credit are available for Mental Health Professionals, Nurses, and Educators. Early tuition is \$698. Group discounts/ scholarship assistance available. Details at: www.starSept2015.eventbrite.com Sponsored by the [Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute](http://www.minneapolispeacebuilding.org).

Upcoming Events

Mennonite Church USA Convention and Delegate Assembly will be held June 30 to July 5, 2015, in Kansas City.
Mennonite World Conference Assembly Gathered will take place July 21-26 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
Conference Board and Council of Committees will meet August 28-29 at Swan Lake Christian Camp, Viborg, S.D.
Youth Escape 2016 will take place July 15-17, 2016 in central Iowa.

The Sower is published the third 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.