

The Meeting Place

From the Editors

A new look and mode of access.



We hope you enjoy the new format of *The Meeting Place*. We also hope many of you are taking advantage of the new way to access the newsletter. The Website is not just a place to introduce people to TMC. It is a place for the members of TMC to

access important content. Bookmark [Church Website](#). You can also set up a RSS feed for live updates to new additions. Comments on the new format and the webpage are always appreciated.

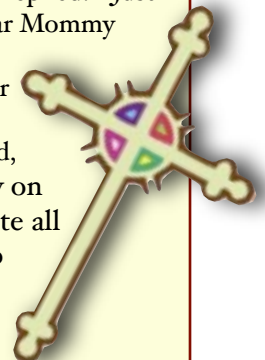
Love to Laugh??

- Young Bobby knew exactly what Jesus would drive: “a van that has 12 seats, and can pull a boat!”

- After the service, Johnny asked his mother, “In the preacher’s sermon on Acts today he said the apostles were all in one Accord. Did they really have cars back then?”

- My wife and I invited several people to dinner. At the table, she turned to our 8-year-old daughter and said, “Would you like to say the blessing?” “I wouldn’t know what to say,” she replied. “Just say what you hear Mommy say,” my wife encouraged. Our daughter bowed her head and said, “Dear Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?”

from Church Chuckles



TOLEDO MENNONITE CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is:

- to know and love Christ
- to be a caring family of God
- to minister to a needy world



“They continually devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles, fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to times of prayer.”

Acts chapter 2, verse 42

SIMPLICITY

In the last year, we have watched gas prices soar, and in recent weeks, we have watched the markets tumble. Now, we hear the bad news that banks are tightening up lending. If I remember correctly from my college macroeconomics course, this will have an adverse effect on our materialistic, driven economy, which is based on credit. This in turn will affect most of us.

As I have seen all these problems, my thoughts drifted to our commitment to simplicity. As I talked to a local school, one of the questions asked was what was the difference between Mennonites and the Amish. I stated that theologically we are very similar. It is in our application of our theology that we differ from each other. I stated that both groups believe in simplicity, and if a physical object got in our way of our relationship with God or created difficulty in our community then we as believers would willingly get rid of the object. By doing this, we would be focusing on the higher principle. The Amish put rules around their community life, i.e. not having electricity, where Mennonites believe that we can live **in** the world but not be **of** the world (John 17). I often wonder if we are fooling ourselves.

As I was thinking about simplicity, I asked myself, "What are some of the basic or simple things that bring joy into our lives?" One definition of simplicity is "the condition, or quality of being simple or uncombined." Here are some reasonably priced things that bring me joy:

- Reading a great book that takes you on an adventure and often, in the process, teaches you a little about the world or about yourself. (Price 20 cents. Often I will need to pay a 10 to 20 cent fine on books from the library, which is a tax I like.)
- Having a great conversation over a good cup of coffee with a long time friend or a new acquaintance. Where you can challenge each other, disagree or agree, but the conversation leads towards deeper thoughts on an interesting topic. (Price three to four dollars. If it is a great conversation, buy the friend a cup of coffee.)
- There is nothing like going to a local high school event to watch the kids play a sport or put on a production. School events are a place where you get to see some amazing performances and a

wonderful cross-section of our community. It is a place where the left, right, and indifferent can focus on the future of the community and have a fun time while doing it. (Price five to ten dollars a ticket, snacks extra, but that hot dog goes to



supporting the band, so eat up!)

- I like listening to a sermon on the radio. For me it is often helpful not to be able to see the preacher so that I can concentrate on what he/she is saying. (So when you close your eyes I know you are really concentrating.) There are times when God really speaks to me through these unknown preachers. I also disagree strongly at times, but it makes me think. (No cost.)
- Exercising by running or walking. I am not sure it brings me much joy while doing it, but I love the feeling that I get once I am done. (Get good shoes and your feet will thank you.)
- Hitting that snooze button and staying in bed those ten extra minutes in a warm bed, especially now that it is turning colder.
- Few things bring me as much joy as assisting someone with a real tangible problem. A couple of weeks ago, some vandals knocked down mailboxes in my neighborhood. Another neighbor and I helped fix some of the older people's mailboxes. (Cost -- time.)

I would love to hear what simple, inexpensive things bring you joy. For the Psalmist said, "It is the joy of the Lord that is our strength, not the size of our portfolio."
Mark Bartsch

BEHIND THE SCENES: CHURCH COUNCIL

Have you ever wondered how decisions are made on the administration of TMC, or how the practical concerns of the church are addressed? Have you ever wondered who makes decisions on the care of the building itself? Behind the scenes, the Church Council works to administer the financial, legal, and practical matters that we, as a congregation, depend on to carry out our mission.

The members of the Church Council, who began their terms for the 2008-2009 church year in September, are busy networking with the committees of the church. Amy Bennett, the Chairperson, presides during the bi-monthly meetings, and has some duties as one of the legal representatives of the church. John Taylor, of the Finance Committee, has the heavy responsibilities of receiving church income, keeping careful legal records, and paying the salaried staff as well as the bills. The educational part of church ministry is carried out by the Nurture Committee, and Carol Nofziger guides that group of 8 persons, bringing their reports and requests to the Council. Karen Kruzell speaks for the main outreach of TMC, the tutoring program, bringing news and seeking guidance. The Trustees, people responsible for the building and grounds; safety; and maintenance, also send a representative, often on a rotating basis. Pastor Mark is an *ex-officio* member.

The Member-at-large, Mike Peeters, acts as Vice-chair of

Council as needed. He is one person to whom TMC participants can go to have concerns or problems raised for the discussion and resolution by the Council. As are all the members of Council, he is expected to voice opinions and present ideas in the solving of problems.

Stefani Hathaway, Secretary of Council, keeps records and minutes, the accuracy of which may have legal implications at times. Stefani sent the following summary of the first meeting of this year's Council, held on Oct. 2nd.



At the first meeting, new council members were welcomed and given an overview of the workings. They talked about goals and vision for the coming months. Council prepared the agenda and set the time and date for the upcoming congregational meeting, at which the year's budget will be reviewed and adopted. They discussed ways to encourage better attendance at those business meetings, and would like to have input from more people about the business matters of the church.

Reports on the process of the Tutoring Program becoming a registered nonprofit organization were discussed. Other reports included plans for the Harvest

Festival just before Thanksgiving, the Christmas Eve Service planned by the Worship Committee, and a church retreat for the congregation in February. The Council members reported on the activities of their particular committees.

At TMC, members, whether official or unofficial, have unusual opportunities for input, discussion, decision-making, and ministry creation. We should take our participation in such activities as God-given responsibilities. We owe our co-workers, such as Church Council members, our support and gratitude.

Barbara Hodel

MEETING GOD ... IN HARD TIMES

It is in the little things that we do for each other where we find God speaking to us. Sometimes it is from a stranger, who later becomes a friend. It was at my first or second surgery for my bladder cancer that we met Jill.

Jill is a nurse in the recovery area at the surgery center. Since Judy and I are both nurses, we view the care that is given from a professional level. I never really saw the care that Jill gave me because I was always coming out of anesthesia. However, Judy was able to see her at work. Judy told me how Jill was very caring and very competent at what she did. Judy was impressed by her work.

This was all I needed to know. After each of my further surgeries, I knew that I was in good hands as soon as I saw that Jill was taking care of me. I do not know if it was by chance or by choice that Jill was my nurse, but I like to

think that God led her to me so that I would not have to worry about anything but getting better.

I have had the chance to meet her when I wasn't coming out of anesthesia and tell her how much I appreciated the care that she gave me. I hope that I can share the same level of care with my patients in home care.

I saw a sign once that read, "We see what we do for each other, God sees why we do it." I try to do for others the way God would want me to do it. In that way, I hope I can give to others what I received from Jill.

Keith Bauman

LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT ...

Ketsana Phommalee wrote:

"My children, A.J. and Savun, my mom, and I went to the Dominican Republic for a week this summer. It was great fun. A.J. and Savun got to share a room. My mom and I shared a room for the week. We got close -- really, really close, and feel that God blessed us with the joy of relaxation and fun. We had not traveled with my mom before - much less for a whole week!" NOTE: Ketsana adds that she now has an empty nest, as A.J. and Savun are both away at college. She is enjoying teaching.

Alice Schmucker wrote:

"We spent time in the Smokey Mountains with family, where we enjoyed our times together and appreciated each other as well as God's wonderful creation.



Jesus tells us He loves us, giving us early morning mist in a valley surrounded by mountains, and then a sunrise. There were rushing mountain streams, bears, stillness, memories, and much more."

NOTE: Alice works four afternoons a week providing snacks for the children who come to the Tutoring Program. The Number One Rule, there, is: Be polite and kind to Miss Alice!

Kate Hillard reports:

"I have been so blessed this summer as I made the joyful choice to be baptized into the loving arms of God on June 22. I felt as if I turned towards the light that day, yet with the honest realization that this was not necessarily an easy journey. I knew it would no longer be alone -- I have Christ. Knowing God is there to turn to and ask for strength has helped me in my troubled relationship with my friend, Mindy. A blessing coming up is the wonderful fact that I am getting another assistance dog. I must come up with a large amount of money on the first day of class. Somehow I know God will help me with this if it is His will; I have trust in the Lord." NOTE: Kate's need was wonderfully answered since writing this. An acquaintance gave her a large gift for that very purpose.



Marla Folkerts wrote:

"Of course, the high point of our summer was giving birth to Jonathan, our second son. God kept me safe through the pregnancy and delivery. Michael and I have been more supportive of each other, even in our sleep deprived state, than after our first son was born. We have learned from the past and prayed more." NOTE: Marla has the awesome responsibility of being a full-time stay at home mom and a part-time nursing student at Owens.



LIVE SIMPLY THAT OTHERS
MAY SIMPLY LIVE: A
MEDITATION

Ten times a day to men and women
Comes a moment to decide
How to conquer over-consumption -
Should we walk, or bike, or ride?

Should we buy or rent or borrow?
Re-use, re-cycle, or give away?
On our decisions hinge the future,
Hang the fate of human clay.

Then it is that courage is needed;
Then it is that we're put to the test -
Can we notch our comfort lower?
Can we let our egos rest?

Should we lower fuel and fuel bills
As soaring prices dictate we must?
Sacrifice and self-restraint are
What our Scriptures teach us to trust.

Ten times a day to men and women
Comes a moment to decide:
Will this act please earth and heaven?
Or would it be something to hide?

Thus it is the brave soul chooses
How to live with something less;
That the others of this earth can
Live, and eat, and praise, and bless.

Susan Searles

POLITICIAN MEETING

What would you say to the next
president if you had an hour to meet
with him? What if you had several
days? I can sense the wheels spinning
in your heads. Would you discuss
some pressing issue: abortion, welfare
reform, racism, social justice, or
homosexual marriage? Would you
push for an agenda favorable to you
like Joe, the plumber? Would you try
to learn about the man or woman
behind the politician?

Consider for a moment
what Paul talked about when
given the opportunity to
speak with a public official.
(Acts 24:24-25 -- "Some days
later, Felix arrived with his
wife Drusilla, who was
Jewish. He sent for Paul and
listened to him talk about
faith in Christ Jesus. As Paul
talked about righteousness,
self-control, and the coming
judgment...")

Paul talked about faith in
Christ. Really, that is not
surprising. Paul was almost
always talking or writing
about faith in Christ to
anyone he could, whether it
was a merchant, a
philosopher, or a head of
state. Paul did not waste his
time discussing key issues or
ways to make this world a
better place. He spoke of
how to become a servant of
Jesus. He offered Felix the
opportunity to be saved.

Paul doesn't stop there.
He starts to get personal. He
makes Felix uncomfortable
(Felix stole his brother's wife
or something like that) by
talking about righteousness,
self-control, and the coming
judgement. Jesus continued
to be a stone that makes men
stumble and a rock that
makes men fall in the words
of His faithful servant, Paul.
It is no surprise to read of
Paul's approach. He knew
there was no use in changing
how Felix ruled until he had
changed who Felix was ruled
by.

Michael Folkerts

Calendar

For a complete list of dates
and events go to the [Church
Calendar](#).



Editors

BARBARA HODEL



Barbara
provides the
newsletter
with
leadership and
planning. She also contributes
written materials.

DRU CUNNINGHAM



Dru provides
the newsletter
with
leadership and
planning. She
also contributes written
materials.

MICHAEL FOLKERTS



Michael
provides the
newsletter
with its design
and
publishing. He also deals with
the technology of
dissemination.