



Second Century Chronicle

June, 2013

EAST UNION MENNONITE CHURCH

Vol. XXIII,

No. 6

Notes From Past Bulletins:

60 years ago: 1953

June 7 – James Snyder will speak this morning of his work in Puerto Rico.

The Literary Society will meet on Monday evening at 6:45 pm to hoe popcorn for our Missionary Project on the J. John J. Miller farm.

June 14 – The Sandtown workers wish to express their thanks to Nettie Yoder, Vera Bender, Phyllis Yoder, and Jennis Hershberger for their help in teaching Bible School.

June 21 – Evening Service – Paul T. Gingerich will be guest speaker.

50 years ago: 1963

June 2 – Notice to all sisters who are interested in our Gold Bond Stamp Book. Now you can give your Gooch's Red Circle stamps to our WMSA officers and they can be redeemed to add to our Gold Bond Project.

June 9 – John C. Yoder of this congregation has been elected president of the senior class at Goshen College. Their motto is "To Know Christ and Make Him Known".

June 16 – Tuesday evening there will be a farewell picnic supper for Mr. and Mrs. Schmidt at IMS. Everyone is welcome.

June 23 – Evening service: The Miller-Hershberger Boys Quartet will present their program.

June 30 – The MYF group is in a weekend outing at Savannah, IL State Park. They will be returning this evening. The sponsors are Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Duane R. Yoder, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Litwiller, and Mr. and Mrs. J. John J. Miller.

40 years ago: 1973

June 3 – Morning commissioning service for Bible School teachers and officers.

June 10 – Dedication services for the new Mennonite Museum and Archives Building will be held this afternoon at the Junior High School Gym. Melvin Gingerich, Goshen, IN, will give the dedication address.

Becky Guengerich and Dean Rhodes were married yesterday at the Wellman Mennonite Church.

30 years ago: 1983

June 5 – Morning services included Baby Dedication of Children:

Vanessa Lynn daughter of Allen/Kathy Schrock

Shantell Marie daughter of Larry/Carolyn Detweiler

Erika Rachel daughter of Ken/Wanda Yoder
Austin Cain son of Clayton/Tina Hershberger
Carmen Rane daughter of Norman/Joyce Schrock

June 12 – Evening speaker: Rev. John Gallagher of Holy Trinity, will give an illustrated talk on the Vatican.

June 26 – Church Council Notes: Lonnie shared his second statement with the council.

An acknowledgement of thanks has been sent to Harold and Jan Peterseim for the gift of an organ to East Union.



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CHOW is Coming Back

Mark your calendars, CHOW (Church Happenings On Wednesday) will be back this fall. Plans are being made to bring CHOW back beginning in September 2013. CHOW will happen on the first Wednesday of September, October, November, January 2014, February, March and April.

Sunday School classes will take turns coordinating a meal and activities (one month the meal, and the next the activities) - so each class will only have to do a meal and plan activities once this year.

Lots of people are needed to make CHOW a success and we are in the beginning process of plans. If you would like to help, please talk with Lauralee Kauffman, Loretta Kauffman, Sally Miller, Grace Rempel, or Judy Yoder.

Watch your mailbox for a questionnaire on attendance, we need this information to plan for child care, children activities and meals.



Mennonite Women

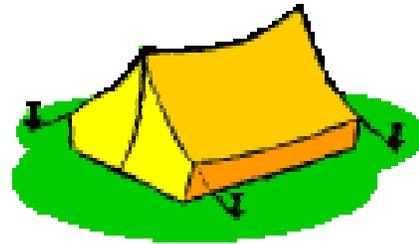
June 4, 2013

Turning Back: Amos 7:1-6

Devotional leader: Charlene Rhodes

Project: Sewing Kits for MCC

Sack Lunch



Camp East Union

Saturday, June 29:

6:30 pm – yard games

7 – 7:45 – bonfire and S'mores

8 pm – movie in church basement

Sunday, June 30:

Time to be determined – walk/run

Time to be determined – bike ride

Bible School program – 10 am in tent

Meal at noon – bring salad or dessert

More information will be coming later.

Remember Bible School on June 28 & 29 at East Union. Pray for students, teachers & staff and good weather.

A New Review of a Not-So-New Book by Verna Zook

Human Sexuality in the Christian Life - A Working Document for Study and Dialogue was written by a committee of persons from the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church (now Mennonite church USA) in the early 1980's - before merger - and published in 1985, in response to growing concern about increasing sexual permissiveness in the larger culture and the issue of homosexuality. The document does not revolve around homosexuality; rather, the subject is included as part of a much broader picture. At that time, all congregations were strongly encouraged to study the entire document, in keeping with the Anabaptist principle of the gathered body studying the Scripture and interpreting together under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. To its credit, East Union did so - I (Verna) recall Nyle Kauffman being the leader of that Sunday School elective. Unfortunately (in my opinion), some churches in what was then the Iowa Nebraska Conference took the attitude "We don't need to study because we already know what the Bible says!" When it was suggested that perhaps we could invite someone from the LGBT community to speak to the class at EU, the response was similar: "We already know what the Bible says, so why would we want to listen to 'them'." Regrettably, in the deliberations surrounding merger and the writing of the new confession of faith, the document was largely ignored. Since then, much has transpired, the issue has not gone away, nor has it been resolved. Instead, polarization has increased, causing division and ill feeling among us. Our church behaviors at times resemble those of quarreling children. Other denominations and congregations are experiencing similar struggles. And the subject has become politicized, yet another battle in the culture wars, which has muddied the waters even more.

I was impressed, as I scanned the document again, at its moderate stance, appeal to reason, yet reflecting an honest desire to be faithful to Scripture and to the Spirit of Jesus. In other words, "speaking the truth in love to one

another". This is in marked contrast to some of the more recent "Christian" media literature which comes across as arrogant and self-righteous. In the years since 1985, many more of us know persons who self identify as LGBTQ. "They" are our children, our siblings, relatives close and distant, friends, classmates, coworkers, neighbors, acquaintances, and brothers and sisters in our church family.

I'm proposing that all of us need to calm down, slow down in our rush to judgment, take a very deep collective breath, and start over, approaching this issue again with a humble and teachable spirit. Even though this document is 25 plus years old, and thus somewhat dated, reading it again, along with other more recent resources, would be a good start. Instead of being motivated by fear and then drawing hard boundary lines, can we not be motivated by love? Perhaps acknowledging that we "see through a glass darkly" may be the best we can do, and then leave our struggles in God's hands. Absolute clarity on this, as well as many other issues, is an illusion. And meanwhile, can we not respect other congregations who may be at a different place than where we are, accepting their desire to be faithful to God's will and way as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Some of us who have been around awhile remember church legalisms of the past, often with pain, and ask, "What were they - the people in charge at the time - thinking" !?! Will future generations ask the same question of us?