



Mennonite Church Of the Servant

Newsletter

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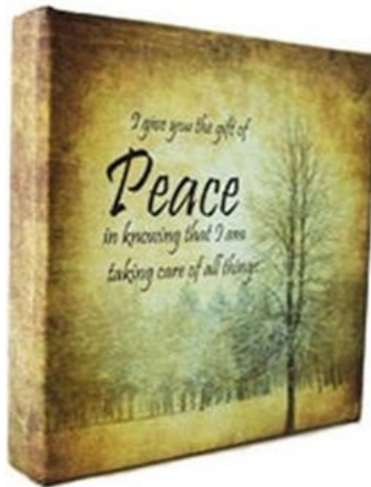


Spirit Life

Do you think outside the box? Then this might be for you. You are invited to participate in a 2-yr process of spiritual formation sponsored by Heartland Center for Spirituality in Great Bend, KS. Classes are held one Saturday per month, beginning Aug 27. A wide range of courses are offered and can be taken individually or as part of the 2-yr program. See www.heartlandspirituality.org/spiritlife or ask Jerry how his class went.

A MONASTIC ANABAPTIST MANIFESTO:

PART THREE



By Pastor Jerry Truex

What follows is part three of a Monastic Anabaptist Manifesto for the Mennonite Church of the Servant. A manifesto is a public declaration of intentions. In this case, it is a proposal for envisioning our identity as both Anabaptist and neo-monastic.

In parts one and two, I talked about our first two of three identity statements.

- We commit ourselves to radical and biblical spirituality
- We live in relational and accountable community
- We seek Christ's peace within and in the world

Parts one and two can read online at www.mcswichita.net/newsletters.htm in our June and July Newsletters.

CHRIST'S PEACE WITHIN AND IN THE WORLD

Here I will look at the third identity statement and propose how we might interpret what it means *to seek Christ's peace within and in the world*. At the most basic level, I believe it means seeking inner serenity and outer harmony with God's purposes. We pursue inner psycho-spiritual serenity so that we might have the wisdom and energy to pursue outer socio-political justice. In this way, the active life of social transformation proceeds from an abundance of contemplation and inner transformation.

Christ's peace within

Every action becomes a prayer, every effort an act of worship, every endeavor a meditation.

Seeking *Christ's peace within* involves a disciplined pursuit of physical wellness (*sōma*), emotional serenity (*psyche*), and spiritual submission (*pneuma*). It is an inner alignment of body, mind, and spirit with the divine energy and purpose of Christ. I believe this is

nurtured by various spiritual disciplines, but especially nonattachment and submission (*Gelassenheit*). Nonattachment refers emptying our lives of everything contrary to God's will; submission to trusting God enough to do what is right irrespective of the outcomes of our action. In this way, nonattachment and submission transforms every action into a moment of prayer, worship, and mediation. (Continued on page 2)

CHRIST'S PEACE WITHIN & IN WORLD

(Continued from page 1) Every action becomes a prayer, every effort an act of worship, every endeavor a meditation. All acts of submission become opportunities for inner transformation.

I think of this transformation as a movement from *relinquishing* the False Self or ego—with its attachments to pleasure, possessions, and power—toward *realizing* the True Self or the character of Christ (see Col. 3:5-11).

Some of the great spiritual masters have taught that this spiritual transformation emerges in three stages. In the first stage, known as purgation, we practice disciplines that help us relinquish the False Self with its harmful attachments, habits, and behaviors. In the second, known as illumination, we work at restoring our True Self by realizing the character of Christ within. In the third, called unification, we practice disciplines that move us toward union with God in prayer and oneness with the divine will in daily life.

Christ's peace in the world

I believe that when we begin to develop inner peace we removing the splinter of inner conflict and then we are able to see more clearly how to pursue *Christ's peace in the world*. For Anabaptists, it is a resolute pursuit of a just and peaceable world

Our commitment to social transformation depends on our audacity to enact the future Reign of God here-and-now.

through nonviolent interventions. And, just as inner peace requires inner transformation, so also peace through justice requires social transformation.

I am convinced that our commitment to social transformation depends on our audacity to enact the future Reign of God here-and-now. Audaciously, we anticipate God's future Reign by promoting just legal, political, and economic structures. We care about the common good. We take risks to love others, including enemies. We work at peace and reconciliation, forgiveness and trust, humility and generosity. In this way, we become "ambassadors for Christ" by being a living message of reconciliation to a world estranged from God (2 Cor. 5:18-20).

Practices & Disciplines

How do we nurture and express peace? We do it by keeping certain *community practices*. For example, to manage disputes among ourselves, we practice "the Rule of Christ" (Matt 18:15-20). To foster an egalitarian community, we make decisions by consensus. To advance the peaceable and inclusive Reign of God, we exercise hospitality (Heb. 13:2), advocate immigration

reform by "welcoming the stranger" (Lev. 19:23-24), and are helping to plant a Hispanic church as a way to tear down the "wall of separation" (Eph. 2:14). We are also committed to specific *spiritual disciplines* that foster inner peace, such as Meditation, Lectio Divina, the Examen, as well as health related practices fostering healthy exercise, eating, and sleeping.

(The fourth and final part will be continued in the September Newsletter: "A Monastic Anabaptism for the 21st Century.")

MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE NEWS

"Just Peace Congress" launches Chair for Peace Theology and Ethics

Amsterdam, the Netherlands – The academic Congress on Just Peace, held June 23 and 24 at the Free University of Amsterdam, marked the official launch of the university's new Chair of Peace Theology and Ethics.



The chair, funded by the Algemene Doopsgezinde Sociëteit (Dutch Mennonite Conference, member of Mennonite World Conference), will be occupied by Mennonite theologian Dr. Fernando Enns, who in recent years has led a number of peace initiatives, most notably the World Council of Churches' Decade to Overcome Violence. Enns's speech at the Congress closing, "Towards an Ecumenical Theology of Just Peace," was also his inaugural address as chair.

Keynote speakers came from five continents, and more than one hundred participants attended, of whom twenty were from outside the Netherlands. The group was interdisciplinary and ecumenically oriented, which was the goal of the Doopsgezind Seminarium (Mennonite Seminary) and the Free University, co-sponsors of the Chair.

At the Amsterdam Congress, the main focus was on three themes ... as follow-up issues for peace work: the role of peace and justice for the unity of the churches; the intercultural context of peace with justice; and the interdisciplinary context.

During the festive inauguration ceremony, Fernando Enns was invited to present his lecture. Referring to the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation, Enns laid out a wide range of contexts for peacemaking: peace within communities, peace among peoples, peace in economic relations, and peace with the environment. The biblical understanding of peace (*shalom*) and (saving and transformative) justice allow no subordination of peace and justice but include them as one.

Selections from article by Dirk Visser, Algemene Doopsgezinde Sociëteit (Dutch Mennonite Conference) www.mwc-ccm.org 20 July 2011 Submitted by Jeanette Stucky.

Worship in August

Worship Themes

In the first 2 weeks of August, we complete our series on *1 Thessalonians*.

Beginning August 21, we will begin a series of select topics, including the new monasticism, spiritual gifts, thinking about military spending, prayer, virtues and vices.



Potluck BBQ on Sunday, Aug. 7 at noon. Invite friends and neighbors. Bring side-dishes. Burgers and buns will be supplied.

Worship Leaders & Teachers

Aug 7—Worship leader, Doug; teaching by Lois; Communion; potluck (1 Thess. 5:1-11)

August 14—Worship leader, Belinda; teaching by Pat (1 Thess. 5:12-28)

August 21—Worship leader, Vangie; teaching by Jerry (New Monasticism)

August 28—Worship leader, Doug ; teaching by Jerry (New Monasticism), healing prayer

Mission Focus

Aug 7: WDC: July 29-30 Assembly: Immigration discussion

Aug 14: MCUSA: Overview of Pittsburgh Assembly

Aug 21: WDC: July 29-30 Assembly: Homosexuality discussion

Aug 28: MCUSA: Denominational overview

Upcoming Agenda for August 28 Church Life

Regarding our Immigration Focus, the Missions and Services Committee recommends the following:

The Immigration Focus should continue with these emphases:

1. The primary emphasis should be on walking with new immigrants, probably including these aspects:
 - a. The New Church Plant, including joint worship and other joint activities,
 - b. Family Support Network.
2. The secondary emphasis should be on justice and advocacy, probably working with these groups:
 - a. Western District Conference Immigration Task Force,
 - b. Sunflower Community Action.
3. Regarding both emphases, visual tools should be developed (like a bulletin board).

This recommendation was developed after our last church life discussion. It will be taken to church council, modified as they see fit, and then presented/discussed at our next Church Life meeting on August 28.

THANK YOU!

Thanks to all who assisted with Jackie's funeral. I really appreciated it!
Sally

Sharing Fund

There are changes to our Sharing Fund Policy: "To request financial assistance people should contact one or more members of the Church Council (excepting the pastor and the treasurer). If the request is approved by at least two members of the Church Council (excepting the pastor and the treasurer), the treasurer will make the funds available." They will attempt to have an answer within 24 hours of a request.

Health Kits

Please bring the following items:

1. One toothbrush (adult size)
2. One squeeze-tube toothpaste (minimum 6 oz.)
3. One large bar bath soap
4. One fingernail clipper
5. One hand towel (dark color)

Thanks to Sally for organizing work crews to put these together.

Mothers 4 Mothers News

1. We cancelled our picnic in the park in June because of the heat. Instead, we joined Fairview Christian Church in their neighborhood movie and game night. It was a lot of fun.
2. Cindy Mayo's baby, Salvador, is already here. We welcomed three new baby boys in July.
3. We will have our annual 'Back to School Celebration' in August.

Why I Am A Member of MCS

By Sally Huber

There are four reasons why I'm happy to be a member of Mennonite Church of the Servant:

1. Members show up to support and help others.
2. We participate in meetings that are exciting enough to attract protestors.
3. We practice and believe what we preach.
4. We preach the Gospel of Jesus

Servant Groups



A servant group is an intentional face-to-face group (3-12

people) who meet at a regular time (often twice a month) to grow in Christ and actualize God's reign. We have seven groups.

NT Greek Reading Group. This group focuses on reading and translating the Greek New Testament. Currently, we are working through Luke's Gospel. Each person reads a verse in Greek and then translates into English, using "whatever it takes," including computer programs (Bible Works and Logos), interlinear Bibles, and other helps. We meet on Wednesday from 1:30 to 3:00 pm at LAMC. Contact Jerry (263-0204).

Psychosynthesis Study Group. Currently, we're reading *Psychosynthesis*, by Will Partfitt and *Natural Spirituality* by Joyce Hudson. We discuss the books and

talk about the spiritual exercises we practice. We meet on the 2nd the 4th Wednesday of each month. Contact Cindy (832-0050 or Jerry (263-0204).

Servant Group: We meet for worship, study, sharing, prayer, and focus on its "outward" mission as well as bringing a religious perspective to immigration issues. This group plans to meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, 7:30-9:00 p.m. In July, they will meet July 12 and July 28. They are currently studying the book: *Christians on the Border* by Daniel Carroll. For more information, contact Pat (371-8274).

Ladies Reading Group. This is a women's reading and discussion group that meets on alternate Saturday afternoons for about 90 minutes. Currently, we are studying *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor. We invite women who want to nurture their faith through intentional, focused discussion on faith issues to join us. Contact Vangie (263-0204).

Women's Discipleship Group. This is a women's group focusing Bible Study, discussion, and prayer. We meet on the 4th Sunday of every month after church at Cindy's home. Contact Cindy (832-0050; cgswriter@aol.com).

The Path of Discipleship. We meet to encourage each other in the life of discipleship, learning about Jesus' transformative vision of the future for present action. Currently, we are reading *Renovation of the Heart* by Dallas Willard. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 pm. Contact Randy (243-7314) or Jerry (263-0204).

Hospitality Group. Although we are not technically a servant group, our purpose is to serve people by making people feel at home at MCS. We are responsible for greeting people on Sunday morning, organizing "coffee time," inviting newcomers, organizing potlucks, and providing meals on special occasions. Contact Geneva (262-2544), Doreene (265-3848), or Vangie (263-0204).

Childcare

- Aug 7—
- Aug 14—
- Aug 21—
- Aug 28—



Attendance in July

July 3	30
July 10	26
July 17	24
July 24	26
July 31	

MCS August 2011

For more complete event details see:

www.mcswichita.net/calendar.htm

Verse of the Month: ¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thess. 5:16-18)

Song of the Month: "Lo He Comes With Clouds Descending"

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 1:30 pm Greek NT Reading Group 7:00 pm Psycho-synthesis group	4	5 12:30 pm Shepherds	6
7 10:00 am Worship; Doug leads; Lois teaches on 1 Thess. 5:1-11; Communion. BBQ - noon	8	9	10 1:30 pm Greek NT Reading Group	11	12	13 4 pm Ladies' Reading Group
14 10:00 am Worship; Belinda leads; Pat teaches on 1 Thess. 5:12—28	15 7:30 pm Worship Committee Meeting	16	17 1:30 pm Greek NT Reading Group 7:00 pm Psycho-synthesis group	18	19	20 6 pm—Body Life Event—Baseball at the Kansas City Royals vs. Red
21 10:00 am Worship; Vangie leads; Jerry teaches on New Monasticism	22	23 <i>Happy Birthday, Lisa Mayo</i>	24 1:30 pm Greek NT Reading Group <i>Happy Birthday, Erna Jeffries</i>	25	26 <i>Spirit Life</i> — Heartland Center Great Bend 5 pm Fri to 5 pm Sat <i>Happy Birthday, Belinda Cheaney</i>	27
28 10:00 am Worship; Doug leads; Jerry teaches on New Monasticism; healing prayer	29	30	31			



Mennonite Church Of the Servant

Our mission is to welcome all people into a community covenanted to follow the way of Jesus Christ through

- Practicing peace and reconciliation,
- Sharing our lives in love and accountability, and
- Bringing the good news of the reign of God to the world.

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