



Annual Assembly Coming

We are looking forward to an inspirational and challenging weekend, July 20-21, when persons from congregations across South Central Conference gather at Journey@Yoder Mennonite Church for the annual assembly. We especially encourage persons to attend for whom this would be a new experience, believing that this opportunity to fellowship with persons outside the home congregation can be an enriching experience and view of the wider church.

The principal resource person will be Alan Hirsch, a native of Australia who is in demand across the country as a preacher and teacher who is a strong proponent of the missional church. He is the co-author of a recent book entitled *ReJesus: A Wild Messiah for a Missional Church*, which will provide the basis for four messages. He will focus on the person and message of Jesus, on discipleship, on mission, and on how to organize to be effective messengers, carrying on the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

In addition to Alan's messages, there will be time for informal fellowship, a delegate session to conduct essential business at the start of a new fiscal year, and eating and sharing together around tables. An important focus will be on where Jesus is leading South Central Conference as we re-imagine ourselves as a network of churches intent on being faithful at a time of social, political and religious upheaval across our country. Children of all ages are invited to accompany their parents; there will be Christ-centered programming for them.

There is no registration charge, although free will offerings and donations will be welcome. All attendees are requested to register, preferably on line, by accessing www.sccmenno.org/annual-assembly. A paper registration form is also available on the same website.

Vision 2.0 Gathering Summary

Participants from across the conference gathered on Saturday June 2nd at Pleasant Valley Mennonite Church in Harper, KS to work together on discerning a clearer SCC identity. The representatives sought to identify who we are, where we are going, and what we sense emerging in SCC. Pastors along with one lay leader from each congregation in SCC were invited to attend. The group began their gathering with a devotional time focusing on Acts 2 which was led by Greensburg Mennonite Church pastor Jeff Blackburn. They then spent time sharing stories with one another around tables, reviewing work that had been done at a similar gathering in October of 2017. Kurt Horst (regional conference minister and SCC Pastor) presented a summary of a Confession of Faith Questionnaire that had been sent out to each congregation in SCC and a short explanation of the three basic forms of church leadership structure; hierarchical, Presbyterian, and congregational.

(continued on page 2)



a note sheet doodle

In This Issue

- SCC Mennonite Women
- Vision 2.0 (cont.)
- Pastor/Cong. News
- Do You Know?
- Executive Committee Activity
- SCC Calendar
- Pulpit & Pew Exchange



Growing in Jesus Christ through
discipleship, shared fellowship,
worship, and service.

SCC Mennonite Women Ending??

Leadership of SCC Mennonite Women continues to be of great concern. The Executive Committee has been in search of a President and Vice President since June of 2017. SCC is also short three individuals to serve on the planning committee for the Women and Girls Retreat that happens this fall. We ask for your prayerful consideration to become an active member of the SCC Mennonite Women group. As leadership of this group has moved on and continued to leave vacancies that have not been able to be filled, the work this group has completed in the past has not been continued. One example of this is that the SCC Mennonite Women's Luncheon which usually took place on Saturday of SCC Annual Assembly has been cancelled for this summer since there is only one person left to plan this event. If no additional volunteers step forward to lead this organization or work with Myrna in reimagining how it can function differently, it will soon cease to exist. If you would be interested in helping Myrna determine the future of SCC Mennonite Women please contact her at

Myrna Cherry, SCCMW Treasurer cherry.blossom@cox.net

Vision 2.0 Gathering Summary (Continued from page 1)

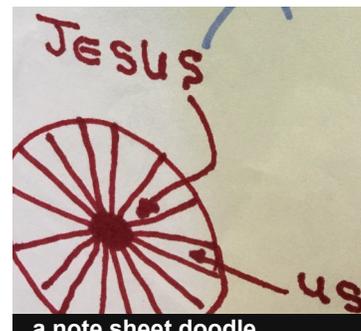
Following these presentations, table groups spent time discussing what this survey says to us as a conference and how it could help us define who we are. After some time processing at tables, each group shared a few comments that had emerged or came out as themes from their individual tables.

Out of this sharing, one outcome that was discussed was to formulate a SCC statement of position regarding the Confession of Faith. A smaller representative group including Dick Aldis, Gabe Pennington, and Eric Miller was asked to draft a statement that incorporated the themes of the day's discussion to be presented to the Executive Committee and possibly shared with delegates at Annual Assembly. Some discussion item themes that came out of the table group sharing were:

- to focus on Jesus as the center of our conference. If we only focus on the boundaries that define who is in and who is out, we could miss out on opportunities for authentic relationship with others. We affirm that we all want to be moving in the same direction—toward Christ.
- a goal of finding an identity and call in our mission both as a conference and for each local congregation. We believe that God is calling us to move past stagnation. We want to covenant together and work toward what we agree to do and be.
- acknowledgment that while there is strong affirmation of our shared values as shown in the COF survey. We also recognize that each individual, congregation, and our conference prioritizes certain articles and statements in the confession of faith. We do not view all the articles with the same intensity or prioritization.
- There was also discussion about the focus of the identity of SCC and whether that should be centered around a direction of mission or a set of boundaries. The question of what holds us (SCC) together was raised.

Following this time of sharing the group fellowshiped over lunch which was followed by a critical look at the current SCC mission statement. Tables spent some time again processing what had been heard in the morning session and how that may inform the mission of SCC and gave some input about how the mission statement may need to be updated or reworded to reflect where SCC is headed now. Some re-wording of the current mission statement was compiled using the table group responses and will be presented to the Executive Committee. They will be discussing these possibilities and may decide to bring a new mission statement to annual assembly.

The day ended with a short time of Clarence Rempel sharing a suggested document outlining Missional Tasks for SCC which in some ways included many of the topics that were discussed throughout the day. Participants will be receiving notes from the day along with a copy of the proposed mission tasks document to review and process how it may be used and adapted for SCC.



a note sheet doodle

Pastor/Congregation News

- > Pastors currently on sabbatical leaves include Clayton Gladish, Hesston Mennonite Church; David Roth, Kingman Mennonite Church; Jeff Selzer, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, Oklahoma; and Judy Miller, Journey@Yoder Mennonite Church
- > Pleasant View Mennonite Church celebrated the completion and occupancy of their new sanctuary on May 27.
- > Eden Life Church in Kansas City, pastored by Omot and Hanna Aganya, celebrated the “official” dedication of their building with three worship services on March 25. Bethel Mennonite Church in Inman, Kansas, has entered into a partnership relationship with Eden Life.
- > Amy Nissley Stauffer has submitted her resignation as pastor of Hesston Mennonite Church, effective September 9.
- > Ron Moyo, outreach pastor at Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston, received his M.Div. degree from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary on May 13. Ron and his wife Sue plan to spend the month of August in their native country of Zimbabwe. With changes in political leadership, Ron is now able to return to the country after many years of absence; Sue has been able to return for occasional visits with family.
- > Roger and Cynthia Neufeld Smith, pastors of Southern Hills Mennonite Church in Topeka, Kansas (an associate member of South Central), are retiring after 30 years of ministry at the church. They plan to undertake a leadership position this summer in a Service Adventure unit of Mennonite Mission Network in Jackson, Mississippi.
- > John Otto, former pastor of Faith Mennonite Church in South Hutchinson, KS, died on June 16.



DO YOU KNOW?

By Joyce Zuercher; Conference Resource Advocate

It's the first day of summer, which means high time to order fall Sunday school material! If your congregation is not using *Shine*, the material from Menno Media, consider it again.

Although *Shine* is going through its second 3-year rotation, the material is prepared by different writers, artists, and designers, so only the themes and Bible stories are the same. The emphases on peace themes and creation care are two reasons making it especially appropriate for Mennonite children.

As a Sunday school teacher myself, I especially like the weekly one-page “dig deeper” adult Bible study essay on the Bible passage for each Sunday. The Bible essay writers for the summer quarter are Jennifer Halteman Schrock, Herb Smith, William Abshire, David A. Leiter, and Michael McKeever. I try to find time on Sunday afternoon or evening to read the essay for the coming lesson, so when it's time for lesson preparation it will have been working in my brain--that's just the way my brain works!

I also greatly appreciate the spiritual practice suggestions. Many creative ideas are given for helping children develop their understandings of God and when and how to pray, making prayer a part of their daily life. Spiritual practice and peacemaking become closely aligned in the emphasis on paying attention to others and their needs and ways to respond, both spiritually and socially.

For the length of our Sunday school session, in the teacher's guide and the leaflets, I find many more and varied suggestions than I can use—after all, each level is written for 3+grade levels of children. I choose the most appropriate for my class, but might use suggestions from other lessons, even from a past quarter that worked especially well, or an idea of my own. A case in point is in suggestions for sharing the story. Very creative ideas are given, but occasionally I do something different. Classes differ from year to year, and even from Sunday to Sunday, as we know.

Sunday school is an important mission for our church, so let's give it our best!

Executive Committee Activity

The Executive Committee has met three times since the last issue of the Messenger. Discussion and decisions included the following:

- > Met with Dwight Regier, Youth Ministry Network Team leader (including both South Central and Western District Conferences)
- > Heard a report from the March meeting of the MC USA Constituency Leaders Council in Pennsylvania
- > Considered requests from five congregations to affiliate with South Central Conference
- > Received a report from Omot and Hanna Aganya, who attended the SENT church planting conference sponsored by Mennonite Mission Network
- > Continued to deal with the matter of naming a moderator-elect, combined with a review of the current leadership structure
- > Named Bill Zuercher to the Schowalter Villa Advisory Board, representing SCC
- > Spent an extended meeting time to work with issues and questions to be included in the agenda of the daylong visioning meeting scheduled for June 2 in Harper, KS (see separate article)
- > Reviewed a preliminary draft of the operating budget for the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2018, and scheduled a dedicated budget meeting for early July
- > Developed agenda for the delegate session at the annual assembly in July
- > Reviewed the assignment of Regional Conference Ministers to our congregations, including the need for coverage for newly-affiliating congregations
- > Began the process of reviewing the services provided member congregations from the conference—a matter of continuing importance as we create an updated mission and vision
- > Authorized the sale of a church property in Mathis, Texas, which no longer is connected to a functioning congregation
- > Authorized the sponsorship, along with other organizations, institutions and agencies, of a Generosity and Estate Planning Workshop being conducted by Everence on September 25.

2018 Calendar

July

20-21 SCC Annual Meeting
Journey@Yoder
Yoder, KS

September

18 Northern Region
Pastor Peer
Journey@South Hutch
South Hutchinson, KS

October

11-13 CLC in Chicago, IL

21 Proposed Pulpit and Pew Exchange Day

November

2-3 UCIM Annual Meeting



PULPIT & PEW EXCHANGE

You're invited to join an SCC congregational exchange of **pastor(s) accompanied by at least four other members**. Visiting pastors will preach on the conference-wide theme scriptures and focus. Host congregations will facilitate a Sunday school discussion with visiting congregants and if possible have a fellowship (pot-luck) meal.

Pulpit Exchange Date: October 21, 2018

Sign your congregation up to participate in the exchange at <https://tinyurl.com/PulpitExchangePLUS>

Theme: Jesus is the Center focus on the centrality of Jesus in our life together and in our lives as followers/disciples of Jesus.

Scriptures: use one or a combination of the following texts

- John 14:6-7
- 1 Corinthians 3:11
- Colossians 1:15-20

Sign up to participate by August 12
Receive your congregation's Match by September 9
Pulpit and Pew Exchange Date October 21, 2018

The mission of South Central Conference is to produce healthy missional congregations by resourcing, connecting and empowering them to be Christ in the world.