

GRACE HILL MENNONITE CHURCH

March 21, 2010

Whitewater, Kansas

Worship 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School 10:45 a.m.

Pastor: Peter Goerzen

Associate Pastor: Katherine Goerzen

Keyboard: Sara Unruh

Chorister: Gladys Reimer

Worship Leader: Pastor Katherine

When we resist God, attached to our own way,
we find ourselves wasting away in silence.
When we see ourselves as God sees us, love is ours

Gathering and Holding On

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

During this time we spend a few moments introducing our guests. We're glad you have come to worship with us. May you sense God's peace and direction as we meet together with our Creator and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

* Call to Worship

One: Come nearer to God; return from the far country, from self-exile, from selfish desire. God awaits our return.

Many: God meets us on the way; God's arms are open to welcome us.

One: God welcomes the lost and celebrates our return.

All: Let us worship our God, whose lavish love awaits our homecoming, who rejoices when the lost is found!

* Gathering Prayer

* Gathering Hymn No. 559 *O thou, in whose presence*

Affirmation of Faith

One: We are not alone, we live in God's world.

*All: We believe in God,
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus to reconcile
and to make all things new.*

*We trust in God,
who calls us to be the church;
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in creation,
to love and serve others,*

*to seek justice and to resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.*

Hearing God's Word

Old Testament Reading Psalm 32 Levi Goossen

Special Music *Softly and Tenderly* Samantha Claassen

* Hymn No. 139 *Far, far away from my loving father*

Children to age 5 may be dismissed to the library for child care

New Testament Reading Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 Pastor Peter

Sermon *Found in Love's Embrace* Pastor Peter

* Hymn of Response No. 491 *Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling*

Letting Go

Prayer of Confession

Loving Father, some silences are nourishing.
But there are also silences in which our spirits waste away,
times we feel unloved, useless.

Silence.

Bring us back and restore us to your blessing. Amen.

Words of Assurance Hymn No. 706

Offering our Gifts Grace Hill Youth Group

Congregational Sharing and Prayer

Sending

* Hymn of Praise for a Forgiving Father No. 65

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven!

* Benediction

Postlude

*Indicates those comfortable in doing so, please stand

At the conclusion of the worship service we invite the adults to be seated and take a few moments to greet one another while the children are dismissed to their Sunday school classes.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES BEGIN AT 10:45 A.M.
EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

For Sharing and Prayer

Western District Conference: Pray for the Program Committee as it plans for the summer WDC annual conference (July 9-11) in Waxahachie, Texas. Pray for your congregation's delegates and youth who will attend this important event.

Mennonite Mission Network: Mey Aruan and Nora Iwarat minister to Indonesian and Filipino domestic workers at Cheung Chau Christian Center in Hong Kong. Pray that these women may find strength and abundant life in God's word.

About the Worship Theme of Lent: "Holding on and Letting Go":

While the scripture readings in Lent always bend toward repentance, this year's texts focus particularly on calling back believers who have fallen away. In these passages we see two parallel invitations:

- 1) to hold on to what is most important and
- 2) to let go of what is peripheral or gets in the way of further growth.

Sometimes we release the ungodly ways of the culture we so easily take for granted. Sometimes we let go of familiar religious beliefs because they are more human creation and habit than essentials of the faith. At times, it is sin that gets in our way. We may hold on to our pride rather than apologize, or clutch resentment rather than forgive, or defend our own rights while others suffer worse conditions. And sometimes we must let go of something that is truly good - a loved one, a hope for the future, our idea of who we are - to continue to grow and develop as God wishes. We look to Jesus as our model, the one who made himself usable for God by letting go of his very life, entrusting himself to the height and depth, the breadth and width of God's love.

~ From the MCUSA "Leader Magazine" Worship Resources for Lent 2010

Church Events

Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. Spiritual Council meets at church.

Wednesday **7:00 – 8:15 p.m.** Children's and Youth Programming
7:00 – 7:40 p.m. Adult Choir
7:45 – 8:15 p.m. Adult Bible Study with Pastor Peter

Next Sunday morning Children and Youth (Junior and Senior High) are invited to come at 9:10 a.m. on Palm Sunday morning to receive your palm branches to herald Christ's entry into Jerusalem.

Next Sunday at 7:00 p.m. Holy Week Services: Palm Sunday evening we will have a worship service at Grace Hill at 7:00 p.m. The speaker will be Wes Bergen.

Thursday, April 1 A Maundy Thursday worship service will be at Zion Mennonite Church at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday. Communion will be celebrated. All are invited to participate in both worship services as we prepare for the celebration of resurrection on Easter Sunday.

April 4 - Easter Sunrise Service: This service of celebration for Christ being raised from the dead will begin on Easter morning at 6:55 a.m. Weather permitting, it will be held outside on the hill facing the East. All are invited. A light breakfast will follow.

April 16-17 Mennonite Relief Sale in Hutchinson
Chris Wiebe and DuMont Schmidt will be participating in the Run for Relief – if you would like to sponsor them please talk to them or sign the sheet on the Relief Sale table in the foyer. Checks should be made to the KS Mennonite Relief Sale and labeled Run for Relief on the memo.

April 18 Bethel College Sunday – there will be an all church carry-in meal following Sunday School.

Announcements

Lost and Found: Please check the room next to the kitchen for any items that may be yours.

You're invited to join "Prayers of the Church" each Sunday morning from 9:00 – 9:10 a.m. in the classroom next to the kitchen. Please feel free to place prayer requests in the prayer box in the foyer.

Nursery This Sunday: Deb Regier and Katie Regier
Nursery Next Sunday: Kaye Penner and Camille Claassen
Ushers Next Sunday: Caleb Regehr and Rob Schunn

Preaching Next Sunday: Pastor Katherine
Keyboard Next Sunday: Pastor Katherine
Special Music Next Sunday: Praise Team

Offering Last Sunday: Local Church \$4,802.00
Offering Next Sunday: Western District Conference

CHURCH OFFICES

Pastors' Office Hours:

Tuesday-Friday 9:0

0 a.m. – noon, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. or by appointment

Pastor: Peter Goerzen

E-mail: pastor@gracehillmc.org

Youth Pastor: Katherine Goerzen

E-mail: youthpastor@gracehillmc.org

Church Secretary: Debbie Claassen

Secretary's E-mail: secretary@gracehillmc.org

Church Website: www.gracehillmc.org

Et Cetera

All are invited to First Mennonite Church, Halstead, for a Celebration of Music this evening at 7 p.m. They are celebrating their 135th anniversary. A social time will follow the program. For more information: 316-835-2282.

You are invited to attend a farewell reception for the Pastor Willmar Harder and family on March 28, 1:30-4:00 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman. A time of sharing will be at 1:30. Pastor Willmar and family are leaving for a MCC assignment in Bolivia.

Remington High School Community Service Day is April 21. If you have a job such as yard work, painting, or cleaning - Remington students would be glad to help. Contact Pam Harber by April 9th at 799-2123.

Kansas Mennonite Disaster Service would like to have groups of volunteers travel to Holly, Colorado to help install sheet rock and tape the sheet rock in a small Baptist church that is being built new. The old church was mostly destroyed during a tornado on March 28, 2007. Groups will be needed the last week in March and the first week in April. The church does have a project director on site; therefore volunteers need to come ready to work. Many volunteers are welcome and needed! Church members of that small congregation of about 40 are willing and eager to have volunteers stay in their homes and will feed them. We would like to have volunteers be in Holly for five days at a time, or if you are just passing through, you could work for fewer days. MDS vans could be used for transportation if needed. Call Gordon Unruh (620-834-2319) if you can help out with this project.

Calling all heroes! Summer camp registration forms are available for all you superheroes and Camp Mennoscah fans. Our Bible Study theme is Be a Hero: Living Like Jesus. And, parents and friends, don't forget that you can take part, too! Kitchen staff volunteers get to take part in kitchen shenanigans and receive a discount of up to full camp fees for your camper. Paid positions of nurse and head cook still needed. Contact Camp Mennoscah at campmno@mennowdc.org or 620-297-3290. Hooray for camp!

What an opportunity! We've had cancellations for some of our summer dates, which means we have some weekends and weekdays available for you! It's an opportunity that doesn't happen very often. Some dates are available for annual reservations, some are a one-time shot. Contact Camp Mennoscah at 620-297-3290 for more information.

Mennonite Central Committee Central States is currently recruiting for a Resource Generation Assistant to work out of the North Newton office. Please see the job description listed on the MCC website www.mcc.org/serve/positions/employment, or contact Melissa Waltner, HR Coordinator (mwaltner@mcc.org / 316-283-2720). E-mailed resumes & cover letters will be accepted until March 26.

Thank you for the wonderful response to the Haiti earthquake. However, due to a decrease in general giving in the last two years, Mennonite Central Committee has been forced to make cuts to vital programming around the world. As part of these budget reductions, **the MCC Central States offices, workroom and warehouse in North Newton will be closed on Fridays, effective April 2010.** An "After Hours Donation Drop-Off" room is always open for you to leave material aid donations. Please consider giving a "where needed most" donation to support MCC's work. Send checks to MCC Central States, PO Box 235, North Newton, KS 67117 or donate on-line at mcc.org.