



Central  
District  
Conference

A conference of  
Mennonite Church USA

# focus

AUGUST 2012

KNOWING  
CHRIST'S LOVE  
- ANSWERING  
GOD'S CALL

Fall program planning underway

## Many CDC congregations hold summer-end weekend retreats

**Assembly** members were encouraged to act out James 2:2-4 as a follow-up to the Aug. 19 worship service. The following message is from *AssemblyLine*, the church newsletter: "As a worship follow-up, play the role of someone who is rich, someone who is poor, and someone going to church. Make brownies and divide them fairly. When have you have been in a situation where someone played favorites instead of treating everyone fairly? Every friend or stranger is precious to God. How can we pay attention to the way we treat others and make sure we give them the respect they deserve."

**Elder Appreciation Day** will be celebrated Sept. 9 by the **Grace** congregation. The sermon, by Ivan Friesen, will focus on gratitude for our elders.

**Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship** will soon begin a regular prayer group. The fellowship is also beginning its second Friday movie nights. Over the next months will be shown "Hugo," "All the President's Men" and "Proof." The group "Faith in Ferment" continues to meet. A recent discussion topic was "Faith and the Body."

**Salem** recently held an outdoor baptism service of three young members. The worship service began at Salem and concluded with baptism and communion at Lake Harmony. Fall Sunday school electives include a class called "The Nazareth Jesus Knew." Lessons contain re-enactments of stories or parables from the Gospels, filmed on location in Nazareth Village in Israel.

**Faith** will explore the topic "Healthy Sexuality and the People of God: Body and Soul" this fall. This topic will be part of four worship services, Wednesday night study groups for four weeks, junior high Sunday school, take-home materials for families with younger children and the topic of a Sunday morning retreat series during the year.

**Oak Grove** is preparing for its Harvest Home celebration on Sept. 30.

## Fall program planning underway - *continued*

**Topeka** members met at the church on Aug. 19 and then went to visit and sing with some of its members. During the final stop, members held a light supper.

**Shalom, Harrisonburg**, will embark on a series of sermons and discussions on the theme of lifestyle choices. The series includes such topics as: How do we make our lifestyle choices? What influences us in our decision making? What does the Bible call us to do? How does our church community play into our decision making? How central do we want our church community to be in our lifestyle choice? How do we prepare for retirement within the church community context?

**Paoli** held its fall retreat at Tipsaw Lake with a worship and meal. Small groups are organizing for the fall.

**Ben Breckbill** spent the summer at **Silverwood**, in the Ministry Inquiry Program (MIP). During the summer he participated in what he called “a broad experience of church work.” The congregation held its annual church retreat at Camp Friedenswald in late August. During the Sunday worship service three young members were baptized.

**Members of the First, Wadsworth**, participated in reading the letter to the Ephesians this summer. Using the theme “Growing in Faith,” once a member finished the reading, the member added a “leaf” to the Reading the Bible Plant in the church. Other ways members were able to add leaves to the plant were through sharing peace with others and through acts of service.

**An** all-church retreat by members of **First, Champaign-Urbana**, is planned at Allerton 4-H Camp, Monticello, Ill., Sept. 22-23.

**On** Oct. 13-15 the **Mennonite Church of Normal** will hold “From Helpless to Hopeful: A Practical Guide for Christian Peacemakers.” Rachele Lyndaker Schlabach, director of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Washington office, will be the facilitator.

**Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship** members hosted a peace church brunch in August with Elizabeth Groppe, associate professor of systematic theology at Xavier University.

**Lima Mennonite** will hold the eighth annual Fiesta Familiar Sept. 9. The event includes musicians, Mexican and American food, children’s games, crafts, lawn games and other cross-cultural events.

**Milwaukee** held a pizza in the park worship service in July.

**Two** members of the Bluffton University faculty will preach at **Emmaus Road** in September. George Lehman will preach Sept. 2 and Gerald Mast on Sept. 30.