



**Central  
District  
Conference**

A conference of  
Mennonite Church USA

# focus

APRIL 2013

**KNOWING  
CHRIST'S LOVE  
- ANSWERING  
GOD'S CALL**

## Gathering started at Hively's peace pole **Palm Sunday peace parade**

**Story by Louise Claassen**

**Photos by Mary Klassen**

It was Palm Sunday, cold and blustery, when an enthusiastic group from various area Elkhart churches gathered at Hively's peace pole for the third annual peace parade.

Wendell Wiebe Powell gave instructions and offered a prayer before we began our walk "from the fringes of the city to its center." A drum choir from First Congregational Church kept up the beat. Palm branches and signs with messages of peace, justice and God's love for all humanity proclaimed to passersby the reason for the parade. Along the way, we stopped at Prairie Street Mennonite where others joined the group.

Another stop was at the inspiring mural on the corner of Prairie and Main where Mary Klassen took some photos. About 50 people gathered at the Elkhart Civic Plaza.

Singing was led by James Krabill. Jason Moreno spoke about peace - the Jesus way. We joined in the Litany of "Resistance to Violence," led by Juanita Shenk. For a closing, Nelson Kraybill distributed "Christian Pledge of Allegiance" cards, and together we committed our allegiance to Jesus Christ. The parade was organized by the Elkhart Advocates for Peace and Justice of which Megan Whitacre and Louise Claassen are members.



## 22 CDC congregations receive Everence Sharing Fund grants

Twenty-two Central District Conference congregations were recipients of Everence Sharing Fund matching grants in 2012. The grants provided money to match what these congregations donated to help people with basic needs in their communities. Sharing Fund grants are made possible by members who do business with Everence. CDC congregations receiving grants follow:

Assembly	First, Nappanee	North Danvers
Carlock	First, Sugarcreek	Oak Grove
Chicago Community	Hively Avenue	Shalom Community,
Cincinnati	Lima	Ann Arbor
Community, Markham	Madison	Shalom, Harrisonburg
Faith	Mennonite Church of	Silverwood
First, Champaign-Urbana	Normal	Southside
First, Bluffton	Morning Star	St. John

## Weaver Bluffton University commencement speaker

Dr. J. Denny Weaver, a professor emeritus of religion at Bluffton University and member of the Madison congregation, will deliver the Bluffton University commencement address on May 5.

In his speech, Weaver is expected to encourage graduates to apply their investment in education to help “bend the arc” that the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. said is long but bends toward justice. Weaver joined the Bluffton faculty in 1974 and served for 31 years in the Department of History and Religion, including nine years as department chair.

## JP Masih Pentecost Sunday guest at Atlanta Mennonite

Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship will host JP Masih on Pentecost Sunday, May 19. Masih will share about his ministry with Asian Community Mennonite Church, Chicago, and his trip to India with Palmer Becker. The India trip helped provide training to church leaders there on what it means to be an Anabaptist.

## Two Assembly youth MCC Washington Office essay winners

Two Assembly youth were prize winners in the MCC Washington Office annual essay contest. Maddie Gerig won the grand prize for her essay on immigration, “Roots in Fear.” Natalie Thorne received honorable mention for her essay on creating a resolution to the Colombian conflict. The essays are printed in the April 18 “Washington Memo” ([washingtonmemo.org](http://washingtonmemo.org))

## Over \$8,000 raised by First, Champaign-Urbana, youth

MYF members at First, Champaign-Urbana, raised over \$8,000 during a March auction to generate funds for the youth to attend the MC USA convention in Phoenix.