



**Illinois
Mennonite
Conference**

An area conference of
Mennonite Church USA

Missional CROSSROADS

Through Missional Crossroads, the Illinois Mennonite Conference will seek to build relationships, report missional activity and focus on congregational stories expressing how we speak and live the reign of God.

June 2009

In this Issue

2 Menno Haven

3 Unfolding Ministry

4 Check it out..

8 Thank You, Virgil!

 indicates more information on our website: www.illinois.mennonite.net

Co-Pastors LeRoy and Pauline Kennel in Transition

By Daniel Hostetler



After having ministered for more than sixty years, LeRoy and Pauline Kennel have chosen to transition away from their latest creation, the “church in a barn”, which they founded more than 20 years ago. Christ Community Mennonite Church (CCMC), currently located in an artfully refurbished dairy barn at 888 S. Roselle Road in Schaumburg, IL was their latest, and perhaps greatest, accomplishment after having built the congregation “from scratch”. CCMC

Continued on page 2

IMC licenses first Cambodian pastor on Pentecost Sunday

By Sally Schreiner Youngquist



Illinois Mennonite Conference Associate Minister Virgil Vogt hands Samrach Nuth his certificate of licensing to the ministry in Mennonite Church USA on May 31. Photo: Patty Peebles

Samrach Nuth, Cambodian pastor at Living Water Community Church, Chicago, IL, was licensed for ministry in Mennonite Church USA by Illinois Mennonite Conference Associate Conference Minister Virgil Vogt on Pentecost Sunday, May 31, 2009.

Continued on page 4

Annual Assembly - March 5-7, 2010 - Amor Viviente- Living Love Ministries - East Peoria, IL

by Chuck Neufeld, IMC Conference Minister

IMC's diversity is stunning! IMC's diversity is exciting! IMC's diversity is God-given. Since one third of IMC's membership is Hispanic, plans are being considered to make next year's Assembly fully bi-lingual. In response to IMC's missional policies, we must demonstrate our commitment to “fair and full access” to all members of our constituency. IMC is a privileged and obligated conference; i.e., given the diversity that is ours, we are both privileged to bask in its richness and obligated to make certain that it is truly honored and utilized.

From Chuck Neufeld: “I am thrilled that the

conference will be gathering at Amor Viviente (Living Love Ministries) in East Peoria where MLT member Maria Hatfield is pastor. More details will be posted as they become available, but for now just take note of the dates and begin praying that the Holy Spirit would guide every detail in preparation for this good event.”

If anyone has ideas, questions or concerns about next year's Assembly, please let us know. The dates of March 5-7 were chosen to avoid times of heightened field work and harvest. If there are reasons to reconsider this matter, we should do so post haste.

Seniors, Sunshine, and Spring! *by Jennifer Kaufmann*



Menno Haven's 3rd Annual May Day Senior Get-a-way happened on May 5, 2009. The day began at 8:00 with a light breakfast and a welcome presentation. Participants came from all around the state, including Princeton, Normal, and Morton. After a Hayrack tour of Menno Haven's 231 acres, Robert J. Day, Goshen College, came and spoke with the group about "Making Peace with Money: A Third Economic Way." His talk discussed how, in these hard economic times, people can begin to think of money in a different way. He also challenged us to look at another option for our economy; the idea being to give people ownership of where and how they work. It was a very thought

provoking topic, asking each participant their thoughts and ideas.

The afternoon was spent in fellowship and activity with each other, encompassing events like Morel mushroom hunting, a Hymn sing, paddle boating, fishing, and eating tasty Menno Haven's homemade over a fire Kettle Corn. Participants also enjoyed virtual bowling on a Nintendo Wii. Overall it was a beautiful relaxing day spent in God creation! You are invited to join us annually on the first Tuesday in May for our May Day Senior Get-a-way event. If you find that is too long to wait, please join us for three days of fellowship and service at Fellowship 55 on October 6-8, 2009.

Kennels Continued

first met in Schaumburg High School in October of 1988 and subsequently, under the "hands on" direction and leadership of the Kennels, acquired and remodeled (with over 11,000 volunteered hours), one of Schaumburg's original dairy barns, carefully maintaining the barn's historical characteristics.

The Kennels transformed this massive structure, which was in poor repair when it was acquired, into a thriving Mennonite mecca for those who seek a simple life, peace on earth, and social justice. In addition to worship and Christian education in the "church in the barn", other ministries for the Schaumburg, and local Mennonite community include: The Big Barn Preschool (full-day and half-day), Transitions Counseling Center, and Gifts of the World Store which markets beautiful handmade arts and gifts from 40 developing countries.

Building a congregation was not a new venture for the Kennels, having started a Mennonite Church

in Lombard, IL and served various church wide ministries. LeRoy has also served Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, American Baptist, Methodist, and Church of the Brethren Congregations as an interim pastor, and Pauline served two Presbyterian churches. In addition, Pastor LeRoy has served as Chaplain at Friendship Village, as volunteer Police Chaplain, is the current President of Chicago Area Mennonites and has served twice as a candidate for U.S. Congress during the 1980's.

The Kennels have four children (two sons and two daughters) and eight grandchildren (four boys and four girls) of which they're very proud.

An emotional "Transitional Celebration" was held on June 7, after a potluck and the Kennels were honored for their many years of selfless giving. There wasn't a dry eye in the congregation as LeRoy refused to say "goodbye" stating that he had a sense that he could return to serve his beloved brothers and sisters of CCMC in a new role in the future.

Unfolding Ministry – Ten Thousand Gardens and the Mission of God

By Roland G. Kuhl

Pastor at North Suburban Mennonite Church, Libertyville, IL

This is a story about a conversation that connected with other conversations, that connects with people's passions and concerns, that is connecting with God's mission, that is birthing a ministry to feed those in need, and is birthing an awareness of God's presence in those who are being drawn into this story by the Spirit of God.

There is no identifiable starting point for this story because the Spirit of God is always weaving God's Story through our stories and our stories through God's Story. However, there is a point in the Spirit's wondrous weaving that served as a catalyst for this unfolding story of God's mission.

This story begins on a Saturday morning over breakfast at a restaurant in Libertyville, IL back in February 2009. No one else showed up for the monthly men's breakfast except for Dale and me. Over breakfast Dale began sharing about a book he was reading, *Peak Everything*. One of the themes in this book described how our present agricultural methods are highly petroleum dependent and, therefore, unsustainable. This got us talking about how we need to move away from agribusiness to growing organic produce in smaller local farms, even urban farms. That conversation brought other conversations to mind.

Back in September 2008 in North Suburban Mennonite Church's adult Sunday School class, we hosted a series on living sustainably which challenged us to include more whole foods in our diet and less processed foods for healthier lifestyles. That connected to a conversation my wife Lynne, who is an ICU RN, and I had in relation to our concern to provide healthier food alternatives for those in need in Lake County, IL, rather than the normal food pantry fare of processed foods which are often high in fats, carbohydrates, sugars, and calories – a diet which could lead to serious health issues. That connected to conversations we had in exploring how we might provide produce, rather than processed foods, for those in need – a conversation which led Lynne to talk with a person whose name she took off of an internet list of farmers focused on sustainable methods, who happened to be a farmer of an experimental farm

near Madison, WI, who was also a professor at UW-Madison involved in helping young farmers get started, who also happened to serve on a UN committee to foster sustainable farming practices in the world.

That Saturday morning conversation connected to all those conversations that went on before. Dale's and my conversation now turned to how we might be involved in ministering in Jesus' name feeding those in need right here in Lake County. We first thought about how we might go to local produce farmers to convince them to let us come in and glean their produce between the time they harvest and the time they plow their fields under. But then the Spirit of God opened up another idea to us – a simple idea really, not requiring much sacrifice – just a way to provide produce to people in need.

A number of people in our church have backyard vegetable gardens. A member of our congregation organizes community garden plots in a conservation community in Lake County where people from all over Lake County grow vegetables. Yet, not all that produce is harvested – some rots on the vine because families go on vacation or other things vie for time.

The idea that was formed in our minds was, what if at the beginning of the season we invite people in our church and those growing vegetables in community gardens to think about donating the surplus or a portion of their garden produce throughout the season to North Suburban Mennonite Church so that we could distribute it to the Northern Illinois Food Bank and/or local food pantries.

What a simple idea, what an easy idea, what an easy way of increasing the amount of produce that could nourish families in need. Though this might not yield much this year, but a pattern would be established that could eventually grow to include residents from all over Lake County – *ten thousand gardens* – all donating surplus produce to provide food for those in need.

Well, we took this as the Spirit's leading and we have begun to set this idea in motion (see the web site: www.lovingneighbor.org to find out more).

☺ *Read the complete story on our website at: www.illinois.mennonite.net*



Illinois Mennonite Conference is a community of churches who will faithfully speak and live the reign of God by discerning and fulfilling our God-given vocation in a manner consistent with the values to which God has called us.

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Check it out...We welcome aboard Lynette Miller



Lynette Miller serves as Illinois Mennonite Conference Resource Advocate and can be reached by emailing: dlmiller@frontiernet.net

I happen to think that libraries are one of the world's greatest ideas. Where else can you indulge your passion about whatever topic you enjoy, be able to take it home to enjoy and use, and then return it when you are done without having to take care of one more thing taking up space in your house? That is the best of both worlds, in my opinion. Our church libraries are valuable resources in your churches for guidance, inspiration, instruction and wholesome entertainment. If you are involved in your church library, I'd like to highlight some resources and helps to enhance your library.

Some persons from Eastern District of Mennonite Church USA publish a quarterly newsletter entitled Library News & Views. The newsletter features various church libraries, their facilities, and services. Another column provides ideas for different ways to promote and enhance your library. A regular feature lists reviews of recommended resources for children, teens and adults for use in church libraries. Resources include Mennonite materials as well as other sources. The eight-page newsletter uses color photos and is attractively designed. Subscription rate is \$10.00 per year. Anyone interested in receiving this publication can e-mail Bux-MontChurchlibrarians@hotmail.com or call 215-699-5646. Sample copies are available upon request.

Mennonite Publishing Network has included

librarians in their Ministers and Church Librarians Book Club. From time to time, MPN offers resources from Faith & Life Resources and books from Herald Press, or books they have co-published and/or distributed with other publishing partners at a special book club price. To become a member, call 1-800-245-7894. Books that are currently offered at the book club rate are available at the website <http://www.faithandliferesources.org/mbc/>. This can be a great way to get Mennonite publications for your library at a lower cost.

Finally, the Conference Resource Library of the Western and South Central Conferences has a website with a section entitled Helps for Church Librarians at <http://www.mennowdc.org/LibrarianHelps.html>. At this site are a number of free articles for librarians and library committees to read and download. Articles include ideas for planning a church library, promoting and displaying materials to maximize usage of the library, policies for selecting materials and how to weed out books that are outdated or to create additional space (the most difficult aspect of the job, in my opinion). Since most church libraries use volunteers to staff their libraries, these articles give some direction and instruction to help those volunteers create a library that is appealing, user-friendly and a vital resource for inspiration and help in the life of the church community.

Cambodian Pastor Continued →

Kuaying Teng, Mennonite Mission Network pastor for Asian congregations came from St. Catherine's, Ontario to preach the licensing sermon. To his knowledge, Samrach Nuth is the first Cambodian to be licensed for ministry in the Mennonite churches of North America.

Interviewed by Living Water Senior Pastor Sally Schreiner Youngquist, Nuth shared his testimony with the congregation as one saved by God from the killing fields of Cambodia in 1979. Upon reaching Chicago, he learned through reading the Gospel of John that Jesus was the Messiah Buddha had pointed to in the Buddhist scriptures. Nuth learned from Mennonites that forgiving enemies is an important part of following Jesus. He has forgiven the Khmer Rouge for the atrocities committed against him and his country. He calls other Cambodians to do the same, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Nuth became a Christian in 1990 and was baptized in 1993, as a result of the mentoring he received at Reba Place Church in Evanston, IL. Together with a core group of members from Reba Place, he helped found the multi-cultural daughter congregation now known as Living Water Community Church on Chicago's north side in 1995. A growing group of 30 Cambodian adults join the English-speaking congregation for the first hour of worship, and depart for worship and teaching in the Khmer language the second hour. Nuth has been leader of this group since 2001.

Featuring joyful worship in English and Khmer, the licensing service was followed by a sumptuous feast of Cambodian food enjoyed by some 200 folks in attendance. Nuth plans a trip to Cambodia in October with Moses Samol Seph, a Cambodian Baptist pastor from California, to minister to some of the 700 young churches there who are sharing the good news of Jesus

Conference student part of Goshen College Study-Service Term unit to Nicaragua

An Illinois Conference student is participating in the Goshen (Ind.) College Study-Service Term (SST) in Nicaragua during this summer, along with 22 other students. This is the second group to return to that country after 30 years. In 1978, the college stopped sending students to the Central American country because it was experiencing great civil unrest that would result in 12 years of war and a devastated economy.

Sophomore Jacki Moser, daughter of Keith and Carrie Moser of Libertyville, is majoring in nursing. She is a 2007 graduate of Libertyville High School and attends North Suburban Mennonite Church. She left for Nicaragua April 29 and will return to the United States on July 28. Associate Professor of Art Gwen Penner and Director of the Good Library Lisa Guedea Carreño are leading the unit.

Web updates and photos from the group are available from Goshen College's SST Web site: www.goshen.edu/sst/nica09. Letters can be directed to: P.O. Box 5, Jinotepe, Carazo, Nicaragua, CENTRAL AMERICA.



Read more college news on our website at: www.illinois.mennonite.net



Graduate from seminary

Christina Litwiller graduated May 23 with Master of Divinity a degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Litwiller began as pastor of Salina (Kan.) Mennonite Church on May 31. She has been a member of Mennonite Church of Normal, Normal, Ill. She is the daughter of Floyd and Lona Litwiller of Hopedale, Ill. She previously earned an M.S. Education Curriculum and Instruction at Illinois State University, Normal, Ill., and a B.A. from Goshen College, Goshen, Ind.

Litwiller said, "I was privileged to be able to study, work, and live on campus. My job in the bookstore enabled me to interact with many of the AMBS faculty, staff, and students as well as with people from the wider community."

Life in the congregations

Arthur

Each Sunday in March following the "Children's Time" the children passed around empty baby bottles to collect change for the Crisis Pregnancy Center in Mattoon.

Twenty-four ladies attended a guest sewing day and worked on several quilts for the Mennonite Relief Sale coming up in August. Also in conjunction with the relief sale this year a reunion is being organized by several people who formally lived in the Arthur area. This reunion is especially for those who attended any of the Mennonite churches in Arthur from 1955-1975.

Arthur Mennonite hosted a community town hall meeting with Dave Ramsey live via the internet on April 23. Many community people attended.

The youth served a breakfast on Easter Sunday morning. Many of the people who came for breakfast had been at the community Easter Sunrise Service at the Arthur First Baptist Church.

Glen Rhodes, Jeff and Jenni Marner and Matt Lane attended the Illinois Mennonite Conference Assembly in Libertyville on April 24-26.

Esther Helmut

Cazenovia, Lowpoint

The mission Task Force held a meeting on March 17. They learned about ministry to Muslims through a work called the Crescent Project; also learning a little about the Islamic faith and how to relate to Muslims. They also sent \$900.00 to Alan and Sheri Shea as they continue their ministry in West Africa.

A spaghetti dinner and bake sale was held at the fellowship hall on April 5. This event was held to raise funds to send children to summer camp at Camp Menno Haven or Miracle Camp in Michigan.

Communion was celebrated on Maundy Thursday evening as part of Holy Week activities. We celebrated the risen savior on Easter morning.

Susie Jauch

Champaign-Urbana

The Venture Club has now completed a six-month period of offerings for purchasing materials for assembling MCC Relief Kits. Their offerings for the next six months will be for the Central Illinois Food Bank, which serves thousands of hungry people in Champaign County. On March 4, speakers from Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, and Muslim traditions shared on

the topic, "Life after Death," at the Interreligious Dialogue Series at the University YMCA. First Mennonite pastor, Janet Rasmussen, served as the Christian speaker.

The Peace and Justice Initiative of First Mennonite is exploring a two-year period of education and activities related to the challenges of being a Peace Church in the 21st Century. A Topic Night on the topic was held for everyone on Sunday evening, March 11. On Sunday afternoon, March 15, the film, "Soldiers of Conscience," about conscientious objectors in the military was shown at the Channing-Murray Foundation, with First Mennonite's Peace and Justice Initiative as a co-sponsor. That evening, the MYF and JYF joined with youth from New Covenant Fellowship and the local Mosque for a Hunger Banquet.

First Mennonite hosted the program, "In Defense of Iran: Notes from a U.S. Delegation's Journey through the Islamic Republic," presented by Phil Wilayto on March 17. The program was sponsored by the Peace and Justice Initiative, along with other local peace and social justice organizations.

Following our Palm Sunday service on April 5, the MYF served a meal as a fund-raiser for their trip to the Mennonite Convention this summer. They also raised funds with a pie and service auction. Later in the same afternoon, First Mennonite hosted a Sacred Harp singing. On Maundy Thursday evening, April 9, First Mennonite observed a love feast, feet-washing, and communion service. A noontime Good Friday service was held on April 10. Worship at First Mennonite on Easter Sunday was marked by celebration with singing, scripture, and sermon about resurrection. The service concluded with a large group singing the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's "The Messiah."

In honor of our relationship with First Mennonite's sister-church, El Divino Redentor in Bucaramanga, Colombia, the service on April 19, was a Day of Prayer and Action for Colombia. Included were scripture and singing in Spanish and English and sharing by several from our sister church committee on the topic, "Reflections on Colombia."

The MYF and Young Adults participated in a service project on April 9 at the Champaign Forest Preserve. That evening the Associate Pastor Discernment Committee led a Topic Night for the congregation.

For the second year in a row, a tree dedicated to "Peace on Earth" was planted at Parkland College on Arbor Day, April 24. Jan Sabey and Conrad Wetzel participated in the dedication service.

First Mennonite hosted a presentation on April 25 by Anna Baltzer on the topic, "Life in Occupied Palestine." Anna is a Jewish-American granddaughter of Holocaust refugees and a volunteer for the International resistance to Occupation in Palestine.

Conrad Wetzel

Freeport

Freeport Mennonite participated in the Stateline Community Lenten services during March. Nathan and Jennifer Hostetler shared their call to mission in Galesburg, IL under Southern Illinois Mission Partnership (SIMP) in our Worship March 1. WMS sponsored "Tie & Pie", an enjoyable time of tying comforter knots, food and fellowship on March 6. Juan Sieber, of Choel-Choel, Argentina, brought the message March 22, challenging us to be involved with the mission of sharing God's love and grace daily. Roy Jimenez, MCC Great Lakes Regional Associate IL-WI, shared about current MCC topics during the Sunday school hour and brought the morning message on March 29 during Worship.

Rosedale Bible College Chorale presented *When God Spoke* for Worship, April 5. Communion and Footwashing followed a Maundy Thursday supper, April 8. The evening of April 18 began with a meal followed by the first of the DVD series *In the Dust of the Rabbi: Becoming a Disciple*, taught by Ray Vander Laan. The Saturday evening event will continue for 5 weeks. Our MYF had a Potato Bar Lunch following Worship April 19 – a fundraiser for Columbus Convention. Our Worship included interviews with two women in our congregation on April 26 who are exploring God's call to a special ministry in their lives – one in mission work with Southern IL Mission Partnership (SIMP) and one with a passion for daycare.

Karen Pfife

Hopedale

During March and April Levi and Grace Litwiller, Taylor Mathews, Claire and Jacqueline Springer were presented with pins for memorizing the required verses for the Bible Memory Program.

Spring Missions Sunday was March 29. Juan Sieber from Argentina who works with the Arm In Arm Program was the morning speaker. Neil Richer spoke during the Sunday school hour about the programs and service opportunities available through Mennonite Missions Network for people of all ages.

Community Easter services included a Good Friday service at the Open Bible Church, a sunrise service and breakfast at Hopedale Mennonite.

During the Mission Moments presentation on April 19, Ray and Karen Nachtigall shared about the mission work at Pana, Mt. Vernon, Galesburg, and *The Bridge* in Hopedale and Arm in Arm.

Wilma Colter

Madison, WI

The worship theme framework for the next year is "The Prayer Jesus Taught Us." In this, Names for God, Communion, Peace, and other areas of interest will be explored.

Adult Christian Education had a guest lecture on "What Ever Happened to Good and Evil," the creative process related to percussion and non-fiction writing, vocational reflections and reflections of a Congo experience.

The Gifts Discernment process is finished for the start of a new church year on April 1.

Fellowship groups again met this year and are being evaluated for the fall.

A graduation party was held for four high school graduates, three baccalaureate graduates, and two master's graduates.

Madison Mennonite is exploring possible collaboration with the congregation, Orchard Ridge UCC, who owns the church in which they worship.

Kathleen Garber

Morton

World Day of Prayer was held at our church on March 6 with local churches participating in the service written by women of Pampus, New Guinea.

A free tennis camp focusing on the fundamentals, for girls 4th through 8th grade was held on March 8 in our family center. Twelve girls participated and 7 persons from the congregation helped with staffing the camp.

We had "Stuff The Church Van" food drive for We Care, a local food pantry, which filled the van with

hundreds of items of all kinds on April 5. The Service and Fellowship Committee hosted a Palm Sunday brunch that morning for us. In the afternoon 6 teams of 6 people played dodge ball in the family center with a number of people from the congregation as watchers enjoying popcorn and lemonade.

Our sanctuary was decorated with Easter Lilies and red tulips on Easter that were designated in remembrance of others. A Red Cross Blood Drive in our family center garnered 43 donors who gave blood on April 6.

Dustin and Tiffany Wyse-Fisher arrived back home on April 3 from Korea with their 10 month old son, Miles. A special welcome for him was held on May 3 with a "Welcome Home" shower. Andy and Katie Roth told of the preparations they are making to serve a 2-year term with Canaan Land Ministries in a children's home in Brazil.

Randy Miller and Peter Wiebe of Mennonite Mission Network were our guests on April 26. Randy shared some stories of mission ministry in the fellowship hall, and Peter brought the message. In the Beginning Baseball Camp for forty-nine third through fourth grade boys was held April 26 by Pete Smidt and 6 teammates from Olivet Nazarene University providing the instruction. Twelve persons from the congregation were helpful with staffing.

Lavonne McGuire

Normal

Our worship services during Lent from March through Easter focused on the theme, "Our Lives are in Your Hands", through prayers of confession, music, visuals and the sermons. Pastor Matt Hickman led Lenten Prayers late Wed. afternoons based on the book of prayers, Take Our Moments and Our Days. A Maundy Thursday night communion and foot-washing service was held April 9. An Easter Breakfast at the church preceded our Easter morning worship service.

Again this year, many members from our congregation donated many hours and materials toward the Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale held at the Interstate Center in Bloomington, IL, March 20-21. Included in the pre-relief sale activities was a Pie Crust "Seminar" for seven eager learners. A Relief Meal was furnished Sunday noon following the sale as a thank-you to the volunteers for their contributions.

Doris Shoemaker

Prairieview, Flanagan

We re-dedicated the Family Life Center and celebrating God's goodness on March 1. Mennonite Women met on March 4. "Power, Wealth and Poverty was the devotion titled, lead by Linda Stalter. Work was done on the Relief Sale quilt and 3 comforters were knotted.

The Youth Group participated in a 30-hour famine on March 14-15, part of their time was spent serving in the community and on Sun. after worship service they provided a baked potato bar.

We met Illinois Mennonite Conference Minister, Chuck Neufeld during joint adult classes and he gave the morning message on March 15.

The movie Fireproof was shown on March 29, with desserts being served from 5-6, with time to see the fire/rescue equipment the Flanagan-Graymont Fire Dept. had on display in the parking lot. A drawing was held and three DVD's were given out.

The Mennonite Women met on April 1, Kathy Weichmand had devotions and told of their experience doing MDS work.

We were encouraged to bring salt and pepper shakers and friends to Bi-Folkals meeting on April 3. A "Simple Love Feast and Foot Washing" service was held on April 5, with a simple meal consisting of a Moravian bread roll, butter, jelly served with tea, coffee and water. The intention of this service was to celebrate the fellowship of believers and follow up on the morning worship theme of servanthood and humility.

The Living Last Supper Portrayal was given on April 9. Soup, Sandwiches and dessert were served from 4:30-6:00pm. Stepping back in time when we entered the service, we were asked to observe and leave in silence as we meditated and reflected on the portrayal of the Last Supper, when Jesus was sharing the last meal with the disciples on the night before His crucifixion.

Prairieview's new web site:www.prairieviewmc.org
E.M. Erb

Roanoke

Our church planned and provided the service for the men at the Peoria Rescue Mission on March 31. Several people from our congregation participated in the Walk for Life April 29 for the Pregnancy Center and Esther House, which are both ministries of the Peoria Rescue Ministries.

We gathered in our own college apparel on April 5 to pack items

to send to our college students and mission workers who are away from home. We received reports that the recipients and their friends were delighted with the care packages.

Nate and Jennifer Hostetler shared of their experiences on April 19 while on a mission trip in Argentina over the winter months. They also shared that the Lord is calling them into the mission field and they will be moving to Galesburg later in the fall to become local missionaries in the SIMP project there.

Our MYF went to Maple Lawn Homes on April 22 to do a variety of service projects. Maple Lawn recently had their annual beautification day where 38 volunteers from supporting churches and general community came to clean up yards, stain decks, and paint trellises. A tremendous amount of seasonal work was accomplished. We had our Women's Spring Brunch on May 2 with guest speaker Rachel West Kramer. Rachel is from Hands of Love Ministries, Germantown, IL and she shared on the theme "Bloom Where You Are Planted." (Living a life that makes a difference right where you are.)

Pat Graber

Science Ridge, Sterling

At our March MW meeting there were 9 in attendance along with 2 visitors. Items packed for MCC were 2 blankets, 11 towels, 1 comforter, 54 bars of soap, 17 baby blankets, 4 newborn kits also 2 partial kits, 25 white bandages were sent to Global Health Ministries. They reported that they are in need of bandages from white sheets and are happy to receive them. Preparations for the MCC sale at Bloomington were chartering the bus to take passengers to the sale. This was the 9th year this has been done. We were asked to furnish 25 Dutch Apple pies. The pie bake was held on March 19. Items were donated for the booths and auction, and the usual quilt was again sent.

The Library Corner informed us that new books are being added to our library and we were invited to play Bingo by reading books from various categories. This resulted in Elsie Long and Mary Helen Wade having Bingo for the length of the contest.

We rejoiced in the Risen Lord on April 12. We observed the sharing of the bread and cup as well as Foot Washing. Arnie's meditation was "The Joy of the Resurrection."

Elsie Long was our speaker for one Sunday. We enjoyed some special music that Sunday. A mixed quartette sang, "Sing oh sing of my

Redeemer" and "There is Power in the Blood."

Also enjoyed was a violin solo by Philip Shipley "It is I Lord". David Scholl was also a guest speaker.

Brandon Long graduated from Goshen College with a B.S. Degree on April 26. Congratulations, Brandon.

Mary Helen Wade

Seasons of Life

Anniversaries

Cazenovia
Eldon and Mary Alice Kennell, 50, April 2
Metamora
Willis and Esther Sutter, 52, April 6; Ken and Irma Weaver, 67, April 9; Steve and Julie Zoss, 40, April 12; Don and Nell Schertz, 63, April 28; Don and Caroline Schertz, 50, May 28
Roanoke
Art and Luella Eigsti, 50, March 14; Wilfred and Betty Ulrich, 65, May 2
Science Ridge
Leonard and Judy Long, 51, April 19

Birthdays

Metamora
Chris Ulrich, 92, Feb. 14
Science Ridge
Clifford Witmer, 94, March 16

Births

Freeport
Emily Claire, to Donald and Sarah Graybill on April 16
Metamora
Maggie Ann to Jim and Bethany (Hostetler) Cleary on March 17
Morton
Emery David to Amie and Jason Pearce on March 26

Deaths

Arthur
Fern Helmuth, 91, April 19
Champaign-Urbana
Mamie "Beth" Elizabeth Miller, 87, March 12
Metamora
Harold Neumann, 75, Feb. 12
Morton
Velma Hirstein, 83, March 17; Mary Lou Ackerman, 93, April 9
Roanoke
Mary Porzeliuz, 96, March 31
Science Ridge
Anita Oberg, 83, March 16; Aaron Nice, 99, March 31; Dorothy Ebersole, 95, April 28

Read more on our website at:
www.illinois.mennonite.net

Thank you, Virgil!

On May 30, 2009 people gathered at Living Water Community Church to celebrate the amazing gift Virgil Vogt has been to the Illinois Mennonite Conference. Over the years he has served as Moderator of IMC, Pastor of Reba Place Church, President of Chicago Area Mennonites, Chicago Urban Mission Director, and most recently as Associate Conference Minister of the Chicago area. Many other assignments and accomplishments could be listed.

A rich array of desserts were offered during the afternoon's program. Many stories of appreciation in honor of Virgil were shared. Jim & Janalee Croeggaert shared several songs in tribute of Virgil's ministry. The celebration ended with a time of prayer and blessing for Virgil and Joan. In particular we prayed for Virgil's health as he continues to live with Parkinsons.

"What a rich blessing it has been to work alongside Virgil" said Conference Minister Chuck Neufeld. "Although the current situation calls for a new staff arrangement,



I will always treasure the time we had to work together. I have learned so much and have so deeply valued Virgil's wisdom. I am comforted to know from him that I am welcomed to seek his counsel whenever I feel in need of it. Thank you, Virgil."

When reflecting on his many years of ministry, Virgil quipped that he may be

ending this particular assignment, but "resigning from Kingdom work" was not in his plans.

Included in a card that was presented at the celebration were these words:

Virgil:
Our sage
Our guide
Our friend
Our pastor
Our teacher
Our advisor
Our brother
Our corrector
Our encourager
Our fellow traveler
Our comrade in following Jesus!

You have been this and so much more!
The treasure you have been to us will never be forgotten.

Virgil continues to be a much-valued advisor and prayer partner of our Conference Minister, Chuck Neufeld.

"I had the privilege of being with the Community Mennonite Fellowship of Sterling on Pentecost (May 31) to celebrate Dan Rusmisl's Ordination and to confer IMC and MC USA Credentials on him. Praise God for this pastor and his joy-filled congregation. Just look at them!" — Chuck Neufeld

IMC Calendar

July

- June 30-July 5 MC USA Convention
- 4-8 (Menno Haven Family camp)
- 12-17 (Menno Haven High School camp)
- 17-19 Rehoboth "60 Anniversary" Celebration
- 19-24 (Menno Haven Adventure camp)
- 26-29 (Menno Haven Cottontail camp)
- 30-31 (Menno Haven Staff Disorientation)

August

- 15 Missional Crossroads articles due
- 28-29 Arthur Mennonite Relief Sale, Arthur, IL
- 30 Roland Kuhl's Installation

