

Tidings

“No other foundation can anyone lay. . . than that. . . in Jesus Christ”

May, 2009

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PENSIVE

That's the operative word this month. I've become more pensive. . .perhaps as an alternative to fire-breathing angry or sick with worry over our collective economic failure, or just completely indifferent. And in that mind-frame - of being more thoughtful - a couple of things have come to the front.

My dad - he's been gone now two years (on May 24) and I wonder, have I served his memory well enough? I executed his will (WHEW!), and I'm spending his money. What ways could I have eased his passing during those long days of pain and loneliness and humiliating incapacity? Others of you have parted with wives and husbands and fathers and mothers whom you dearly miss. There's no fault here (at least not with my dad) - no reason to exercise guilt or rail and wail at God. Cry, yes. Cry a lot, as much as you want. Then remember. Once you've settled, your memories will speak to you of your loved ones. When I smell the dirt of spring, my dad's back in his garden tending peas or corn or gladiolas (always at turtle speed!) When I look at the picture of him and his good friends on their horses at forest's edge, I smell the sweat and leather . . . and the rhododendron. . .

The other pensiveness arises from the mystery about my own future. What shall I do (or be doing) with the rest of

my life? Does it matter whether we're 56 (like me) or 86 or 26? The only difference I see is that for some the end is a bit more compressed. "Retirement" has always seemed a bit of a misnomer. Maybe "redirection" is preferable. How will I (you) allow God to redirect my priorities? What good works have I been blessed yet to do? In a weird way, you old ones have it best - less time to become undone, unfocused, trapped by common cares, even unfaithful. . .

In whatever time I have until I, too, join the cloud of witnesses, I'm coming to view salvation not as a single, life-changing event for ME, but as my entering into the stream flowing (in Ezek. 47) from the temple of God, and from which all things (incl. me!) take life. . . and the best part is that we get to bring others to the river to be refreshed and redirected.

peteb, editor

This *Tidings* is in tribute to my good friend Elsa Arbogast, who celebrated her 97th birthday on April 27, with red velvet cake! She and husband Olie, now gone a few years, have travelled this world with their eyes open and their hands available always to help others. They are part of the bedrock under this church, and my life would have been much the poorer had I missed their pleasant instruction. I give these lines to Elsa with my appreciation. . .

(From Wendell Berry's *SABBATHS*)

“. . . for every year is costly, as you know well.
Nothing is given that is not taken, and
Nothing taken that was not first a gift.
The gift is balanced by its total loss, and yet,
Yet the light breaks in, heaven seizing its moments
That are at once its own, and yours.

The question before me, now that I am old,
Is not how to be dead, which I know from
enough practice,
But how to be alive. . . as this mere singing wren,
Who thinks he's alive forever, this instant,
and may be.

She says to thank everyone for the cards!!!!

Rovin' Tobins

Bin grew up in southern Laos in the Laven tribe, who held to animist and ancestor ritual. . . but had seen prayers answered and has been reading her bible and passing the stories to her younger brother. God is reaching out to Bin! She came to speak to the Isaan church, who affirmed her new faith.

Our (Tobins) plan is to return to Harrisonburg as soon as Melody and Jessa finish the Hebron School year. We are ending another deeply satisfying service term. We don't know what's ahead - but anticipate the next three years in Harrisonburg. We're grateful for your faithful support. We are also grateful for new workers - a whole new generation! - who will work here in Thailand. We are hopeful that the water filter factory in Laos is only a few hurdles from happening! We're grateful for the believers here. They now pray faithfully for us and ask for us and our family when we return from travels (27 nights in 2 1/2 months). This church IS the gospel! We sing, we celebrate, we work, we forgive and are forgiven.

We return to the US on June 20. God willing, there will be funds for regrouping in "home leave" into November. Then God will redirect to new work / ministry.

Skip and Carol

Meserete Kristos - Carl and Vera Hansen

The building began in 2004 has become the "boom" of Debre Zeit, with a town and residential community taking shape. The College is now adding a men's dorm of 90 rooms. Another long awaited container arrived from "Equipping the Saints" in Weyer's Cave, Va. It brought dorm beds, furniture, 75 boxes of books, a sound system, etc, etc. Thanks to all who collected, packed and shipped. Besides regular instruction, in January 18 evangelist were trained on campus. There is great need for native Somalis to witness to their own people. Please help MKC build this ministry.

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Denlingers - Israel

Greetings of Shalom from our home in Haifa. Our focus in this letter is on one of Garry's students at Israel College of the Bible. . . Although SN had been raised by a Christian Arab family in one of the small villages in northern Galilee, he had rejected everything he had heard from his parents about faith in God. So by the time he was sixteen years old, he was a nervous, violent, and tough young teenager. Responding to the invitation from his parents, SN felt completely out of place in the church. Much of what he heard he didn't understand. But he found there was some part of himself that seemed to be getting something from the sermons and the prayers. He listened to every word. The Word began to nourish his spirit. So he went back to church with his parents again and again. After visiting the church a few times SN started to read the Bible. Scripture took on greater meaning. Through continued reading of the Bible he found fellowship with God. Finally without the prodding of anyone he confessed his sins and gave his life and his will to the Lord. SN knew that faith changes lives. He knew because faith had changed his. As an Arab believer sharing with Israeli Jews he needed to learn to cope with taunts and insults. He learned to get his strength from Psalm 56:11, "In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?". Garry was instrumental in SN's acceptance at Israel College of the Bible. Now as a great testimony to

the reconciling power of the gospel an increasing number of Arabic students have joined our programs at ICB. At one time these students were on different sides of two peoples who are enmeshed in hatred, polarization and conflict. Now they are coming together for studying, worshiping, singing, and praying. As Jews and Arabs they are accepting their unity in the Messiah and their call to serve Him together in the bond of peace. In a couple of months SN will be receiving his BA in Biblical Studies. Pray for SN as he and his fiancée marry this summer and seek God's direction for the future.

Also remember Garry that he would be given grace and wisdom in order to impart to his students a passion for the Lord, for the Word and for witnessing to unbelievers. Join Ruth in praising God for his goodness as she helps our daughter Sheri prepare for her wedding in September to Steve, a young man who loves the Lord and who came from Canada to work at Sheri's place of work. Thank you for being part of our team. Your support and your spiritual strengthening of our endeavors are playing a major role in the victories we enjoy.

The Denlingers

FAITH STATEMENTS

Maurita Eberly I grew up in a Christian home, the daughter of parents whose heart and mission was to serve God and to reach the Italian people with the love of Jesus. I never doubted that Jesus was the only Way to the Father and that the Holy Spirit had power to change lives. I witnessed this in the lives of many people that came in and out of our home. I waited till the age of fourteen to dedicate my life to Jesus.

Walking with Christ over the years and through many circumstances has taught me countless truths about myself, others and Who God is. I have experienced His grace in my life and the mystery of that deep peace that passes all understanding. I'm learning how much I need Him. I have chosen a life that seeks to please Him and to bring glory to Him, through loving people around me, filling my mind and heart with beauty, and making music for Him. I long to experience His love more fully each day.

Marvin Lorenzana My first encounter with God happened at an Evangelical service meeting conducted by a Mennonite missionary who was doing a church planting in Tegucigalpa, Honduras in 1975. My participation in that peculiar meeting, which was full of lively music and dynamic speakers who boldly talked about God and the Christian faith, is probably the earliest truly spiritual experience I had in my life.

After graduating high school I found a strong sense of calling towards Christian ministry. I was encouraged by several people in the church who would eventually become key players in affirming and nurturing my sense of calling. The path that led me to pastoral ministry some 15 years ago has been rocky at times; however even when things have not been necessarily smooth all the time, there is no doubt in my mind that it was God who called me to a pastoral ministry.

Only with a strong sense of calling and the affirmation of several brothers and sisters, I decided to embark in an adventure that has brought a great deal of tears to my eyes and suffering to my soul as well as wonderful moments full of joy and content. I decided to come to seminary (EMS) in 2004 after 10 years of continuous ministry. My chief goal was to understand my Anabaptist roots; roots that had been sowed in me by Ed King some many years before. The decision to come to seminary was definitely a difficult one to make. . In retrospect I can see how the Lord was in the middle of this difficult decision giving me guidance and wisdom particularly using the voices of people who loved me. Today we have found in Harrisonburg Mennonite Church a place to fellowship with brothers and sisters that share the same set of Christian values and faith.

Mariana Lorenzana In several ways my own journey is somehow similar to my husband's. We both were born and raised in a Roman Catholic expression of the Christian faith. We both became aware of our need to know God in a more profound, intimate way at a very young age, and we both ran into a rather Protestant expression of the Christian faith early on. Once I realized that God was to be found not in cathedrals or in empty rituals, I began to forge a more meaningful relationship

with the Lord; a relationship that I had thirsted for many years. Today, we are here in Harrisonburg on the verge of starting yet again an exciting new church planting effort. I can only recognize that God created me for the only purpose of giving him Glory and Honor. I confess today that Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. My sole devotion is to Him, the Father and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

These others were baptized on Easter Sunday:

Logan Stoltzfus (karl and Laura)
 Eric King (Marty and Sharon)
 Tyler Eshleman (Rod and Cindy)
 Kara Hostetter (Loren and Glenda)
 Caitlin Holsapple (Wanda and Jeff)

CLASS AND CLUB NEWS

Sr. MYF Ben Trost and Stephen Gibbs have been leading the youth during the Sunday School hour. We continue to explore our theme, "Who are we in Christ"?

Once a month we gather with the Jr. MYF for worship and then separately for Bible Study. Also monthly, Clusters meet at various youth's houses. Two youth lead their cluster through a short devotional/book study. We are currently working through the book Me-Ville. In January the youth group traveled to Laurelville MC Center in Mt. Pleasant, PA, for the Allegheny Conf. SnoKamp. This was a great weekend with lots of snow and making new friends. Peter was the Bible teacher for the weekend and Jeremy Kempf led worship! Jeremy will also be leading worship at the National Youth Convention in Columbus, OH, this summer! In February, the youth sponsors attended the Youth Workers' Retreat in Williamsburg, VA. It was a good weekend away and we enjoyed Michelle Hershberger's message about technology and how it is affecting our youth and church today. The youth also enjoyed ice skating in Charlottesville. They would like to thank all who helped make the Potato Bar successful.

Several members are in the Touring Choir at EMHS and several are involved in musicals at Harrisonburg High School, Broadway High School, and T.A.

Friendship Circle International Sunday School lessons with teacher Gerald Brunk.

Shelly and Evie Wenger's daughter, Marcia Summers came from New Jersey for a visit in March. With her came her daughters, Elyse Summers, and Jennifer Dierker and her granddaughter and ten-month old Peyton Diereker. With Shelly as chauffeur the four generations attended the Maple Sugar Festival at Monterey, even though it was a cold, rainy day. Of course, even the weather couldn't spoil the delicious buckwheat pancakes with real maple syrup that they enjoyed while there! H. L. and Cindy Wenger and Ron and Joyce Wenger joined their sister for dinner at home that evening. On Saturday, March 21, Kathryn Suter and her daughter, Jewel, went to Dover, PA to visit Kathryn's sister, Emma, who had suffered a stroke and lost her ability to speak. They also visited a sister-in-law, Grace Landis, in York. Over a six-week period in March and April, Sam and Lila Mae Janzen rejoiced in the privilege of having three of their daughters visit them. Lois J. Preheim came from Freeman, SD for a week; Deanna and Marlo Kauffman came from Goshen, IN and spent time cooking and cleaning. How nice! Margaret and Mustapha Abderrahmane came from Oakland, CA and divided their time between visiting her brother, Melvin, in Waynesboro and at VMRC with Sam and Lila Mae. Mustapha ran a marathon in Charlottesville on April 18. We sympathized with Paul T. Yoder on suffering the loss of two siblings within a three week period. His oldest sister, Ruth, died March 15 in Delaware and his younger brother, Luke, died April 4 in Michigan. Paul attended both funerals, with Daisy joining him on the trip to Michigan. Ken and Ruth Heatwole recently returned from a 12-day trip to Mexico with a Mennonite Your Way group of 30 Mennonites (4 different kinds, as well as others with Mennonite connections) from British Columbia, Manitoba, and in USA from WA, OR, CA to PA & VA. Of special interest was the Copper Canyon of Mexico (6 gorges covering 25,000 square miles, larger, deeper, and different from our Grand Canyon), the history and culture of natives of northern Mexico, including the 80,000 Old Colony Mennonites. They traveled by bus and train through the large Sonora and the Chihuahua deserts, canyon, and Sierra Madre mountains. They visited the homes of a Yaqui Indian family, the

cave home of some Tarahumara Indians and several homes of Old Colony Mennonites. They visited their churches, and walked in a large apple orchard with rolled plastic tents to protect from hail, and enjoyed their hospitality and "Mennonite Cheese. They talked with MCC workers about immigrants, saw "the Wall," many cacti, mesquite bushes and how Mennonites made the desert bloom.

SALT Dave Eshleman has been leading the class in study of sections of the life of Christ, using the Gospels and excellent short videos in his collection. Many of them were filmed on location. Next week we will be exploring the adventures of David. Many in the class have helped as they were able in the last months of Carol's (Heatwole) life. We grieve with the family and other friends. She passed peacefully into God's care on Good Friday. Carol's quiet presence and skills will be missed, not only in SALT, but by the Women's Sewing Group and the Wednesday night hospitality teams, among others. The loss of her friendship leaves gaping holes in many lives. We ask God's comfort and healing for each one.

Many class members enjoyed hospitality at the Holsopple's home following the Ted & Company performance. Marv's shoulder is healing well. Red Hats and Hard Hats continue to meet once/month on Thursday evenings. As most of our members are working people, the evening get together is easy and enjoyable. The Spring Retreat at Camp Overlook is in early May. Janet Hostetter is planning the program. As our Class/Church activity, we plan to tackle some repairs in the kitchen. The group who went to Knoxville last month to help with church repairs—Ron, Elam, Steve from SALT and also Mike Brunk—was gratefully received, and rewarded with a mammoth original card and verse.

Mary Yoder returned safely from OH. She was happy that all of her siblings were together part of the week. Marty and Jim Snavelly returned safely from the burial of Marty's brother. Many questions remain after this sad accident. Marty says that the presence of other family was a great comfort. Wendy Rohrer says son Jesse and a friend are hiking a major section of the Appalachian trail—challenging under the best of conditions. God speed, Jesse. We

grieve with Fred, whose father died in OH this week. His mother died just last month. Fred's parents were together for 68 years. Grand parenting is in full swing among SALT members. Dave Eshleman has just returned from OR and Joyce is still there. Susan Guengerich is in Texas with daughter, Melani, awaiting the birth of another grandchild. She flew down shortly after the safe arrival home from Nepal of daughter, Gail Guengerich Miller. Denny Rohrer is again participating in "Pedal the Peninsula" fund raiser for the Williamsburg Retreat Center. He welcomes your pledge of support. April 19 we welcomed Leo Heatwole back to the class, and several others who have been travelling. Anne Nielsen says the recent Mennonite/Brethren "Green Faith" conference was very good and well-attended. The speakers, David Radcliff from the New Community Project in Elgin, IL, and Luke Gascho from the Merry Lea Environmental Center in Goshen, IN were both excellent. The workshops were useful and full.

From Micah & Charlotte Keller Shristi letter:

MCC Nepal - Charlotte and I have been very busy settling in to our new home and starting work. We are sleeping well under our mosquito net. We have been given full reign over the garden and have already planted a bunch of stuff. I constructed probably the nicest looking compost bin in the world out of a bamboo mat that I bought at the local bi-weekly "haat bazaar". We are battling ants in our kitchen - so far we are losing.

Work started out well for each of us with a whirlwind tour of partner organizations and stakeholder communities. I met a happy woman whose United Mission to Nepal supplied sow had 12 piglets, and another very inspiring entrepreneur who is raising vegetables on 3 or so acres and making a very good living selling them here in town. Three days a week we have power during office hours for only one hour, the other three days we have power for 2 hours. Voltage fluctuations mean that desktop computers work maybe 25% of the time. I understand the Nepali language swirling around us about 75% of the time. Charlotte has a considerably harder time, although our coworkers are happy to translate key details for her.

LOGOS Gordon Weirich is leading and using the NOOMA video series.

“We” graduate four from college: Jen Dayton (Robin and Kent), Kelsey Miller (Lois and Craig), Josh Dean (Sue and Greg), and Caitlin Helmuth (Sylvia and Les).

Barb and Gordon Weirich are looking forward to the summer wedding of son Gordon, Jr., to Sarah Beth Gaylord. She is a first grade teacher at Spotswood Elem. The wedding is June 20 in madison, VA. Caitlin Helmuth’s degree from Goshen is social work / youth ministry. Eugene and Annette Ritter are excited about being grandparents to Adam Scott, born march 23 to Ryan and Melissa.

Genesis This quarter we are led by Tom Buskirk who is leading us through the quarterly lessons.

Jim Weaver is enjoying tilling gardens and operating his new business repairing Steiner and Ventrac tractors. He is also glad for the warm weather to ride motorcycle. Angela continues teaching literacy to two young men through Skyline Literacy, witnessing these men improve reading skills. Steve and Nancy Heatwole enjoyed riding motorcycle to visit their daughter, Sherri, at Concord University one recent weekend. Then Steve took a week and rode motorcycle to New Orleans with friends. It was a wonderful, relaxing week.

Jubilee Cheryl Mast taught the quarterly last quarter. Now Steve Yoder is teaching Creation Care.

For Super Bowl 40 gathered at Jake and Char’s house for the snacks and game. We had a couples only retreat in January at Camp Overlook. It was a great time of fellowship, games and food. Many of the women enjoyed a weekend in Cape Charles, Va, scrapbooking, reading and relaxation. Jubilee men went to Highland for a work day on a cabin update. Several moms and kids helped clean HMC Sunday School rooms.

Woody Driver spent a week in LA / MDS to rebuild houses damaged by hurricanes. Kim, Wyatt, and Madaline Bollinger and Rene, Erin, Bailey, and Sidney

Rhodes went to D.C. to visit the Air and Space Museum. Jeremy Litwiller traveled to Ark. with friends trout fishing. Rob and Lisa Roeschley and boys traveled to Ohio to visit Lisa’s family. Mark and Beth Bergman and boys went to Nags Head where Mark is working on a house.

Open Circle Marvin Weaver will be leading “The Agape Road” from using video and workbooks.

The class had lunch at Wood Grill Buffet on January 11, and a Valentine Party at HMC. It was prepared and served by the Junior MYF and sponsors as a fund raiser. We enjoyed the music by Dale and Sharon Wenger after the meal. In March we contributed money towards the MCC canning project and participated in the HARTS project at HMC. We served the evening meal one day, assisted with laundry, and ate with the group. On April 30 we cleaned some class rooms at HMC and helped with mulching the trees in the Memorial Garden. We also sent money to Jan Emswiler Mturi to provide tailoring/sewing training for three persons in the Community Health Program who will then train others.

Mahlon and Gloria Rissler enjoyed a surprise visit from Mahlon’s nephew in February. He came from Kentucky for the ordination of a new bishop in the Old Order Church. Mahlon and Gloria’s children are planning a bus trip for their 50th wedding anniversary this summer. Milton and Mary Ethel Heatwole sold their house on Switchboard Road and moved into an apartment in Park Gables. Avinell Weaver took several mini-vacations in January - a long weekend with her sister in Williamsburg, a few days at Canaan Resort during major snow and cold, a Super Bowl party weekend in “Steeler Country” with her son Herb, and family. Everett Suter and Bill Wenger spent February 12 at the cabin in the mountains. They enjoyed stoking the stove, drinking coffee, and watching the wild-life (5 deer and 2 turkeys). They are hoping Dean Smith can join them to make this a weekly ritual. Bill Wenger is still waiting for the healing of his eye from a detached retina, and hoping for improved vision. Gerald and Shirley Brunk plan to travel to San Antonio, TX, in March to visit their son, Kevin. Joe Brunk is recuperating in Florida from hip replacement surgery. Stanley and Nancy Cline and Harold and Mickey Eby enjoyed a month camping in

AZ with Harold's brother and family. Catherine Mumaw continues to have her ups and downs with chemotherapy treatments at UVA. Orden and Reba Harman spent two months in their motor home in Sarasota. Reba enjoyed it so much that they returned for another month after coming home for the funeral of Reba's sister. Our sympathy to Evelyn Suter, Mickey Eby, and Reba Harman on the death of their sister, Edith Baber in February. Edith was the oldest of the eight children in the Rhodes family. Also our sympathy to Cleo Weaver and family on the death of his wife, Edie, after years of living with cancer. Wayne and Doris North, Ken and June Marie Weaver, Bobby and Lorriane Good and Mervyl and Linda Miller are planning to participate in a week's train trip in Mexico's Copper Canyon the first of March. The "snowbirds" returned from Florida—Joe and Mary Louise Brunk, and Randy and Elly Moyers. Elly and Randy returned from three months in the sunny south. Their daughter, Kelly, has recently become engaged and they are planning a late September wedding. Jay and Geneva Suter attended a Joyce Meyer seminar in Hampton April 16-18. We welcome the return of Cleo Weaver to class, after months of absence during the final days of his dear wife Edie.

Seekers The Seekers class continue to take our turns teaching about God's world.

On April 4th we had a Laotian pastor named Kuaying Ten who came from Canada. We had a good time. He shared about God's world. Some people have an interest in him, and on April 12 two members from the class were baptized, Say Chanthachaem and Kim Boupharak. Both of them were so proud.

Sinapi Summer quarter we will be joining the combined sanctuary Sunday School class.

Sinapi is excited to announce the upcoming high school graduation of Caitlyn Suttles, Jacob Bucher, Annie Brunk and Nels Akerson. We also celebrate college graduation and graduate level accomplishment of David Showalter, Kathryn Hamilton and Jacob Brenneman.

Craig and Bonnie enjoyed a relaxing weekend in Va Beach/Norfolk over spring break, attending a concert

with Michael W. Smith and Steven Curtis Chapman, and touring the Cape Henry Lighthouse. It was a beautiful time to spend on the beach as well.

The Green Page, from the Creation Care Group

We hope you are enjoying the daffodils on the lower edge of the campus, and the newest additions to the shade garden from Doris Lefever. Some of you have asked about plant donations, thank you! This is a good time to mark daffodils that need thinning. But unless you marked them earlier, they can be hard to find! We are also looking for donations of August or Resurrection lilies. These are tougher, as the window of opportunity to dig them (after the leaves are gone and before the bloom starts) is quite small. Mark them now, and dig them then and replant immediately. As we are watering by truck, we are adding plants very slowly, and none that are very thirsty--thank you! Check our bulletin board in the mission hall at HMC for news.

The Second Time Around, or More Thoughts on Recycling Darlene Keller and Ruth Heatwole

Prom and Spring banquet season is just around the corner. How about doing as one of my (Darlene's) very fashionable 16 year old clients is doing and swap slightly/lightly worn dresses with someone who has a dress you love. My client is having a few alterations done to a gown she swapped so that it fits her perfectly. For the price of a few alterations, she's wearing a gown she loves to the HHS prom. I also read on the Massanutten Regional Library bulletin board that Clementine's downtown is organizing a clothes swap. Could we HMC women hold a swap sometime? What about a tie swap for the HMC men? Ruth knows one family whose men have done this for years. Of course many of us already shop the recycled clothes racks at Gift and Thrift and Tried and True. How about shopping for our homes? Thrift stores and antique malls and good old Hess's Furniture downtown are always places to find a good deal - you have to love the hunt, of course. For you weekend DIY (do it yourself) warriors, there's The Friendship Store at 960 Acorn Drive, right off N. 42 near VMRC for finding small quantities of paint (both interior and exterior), (pg 8)

