



March 2019

HIVELY AVENUE MENNONITE CHURCH

Happenings



Thoughts on Lenten Theme: Blessed Hunger, Holy Feast

Tim Stair, pastor

When we feast, we also fast. Conversely, when we fast, we may also feast. How so? When I feast on something—food, time spent with someone special, binge watching a favorite TV series—I, of necessity, fast from other things (time or other things and activities) in order to feast. When I fast from something —food, TV, etc.—it is usually to be able to focus on something else in its place. Hungering (which is often tied to the concept of fasting) and feasting go together in many ways.

As Lent has begun with our theme for this year, I have found a song going through my mind. It was written by a priest named Dan Schutte, and is entitled, “Table of Plenty.” While I’d love for all of you to be able to hear it (maybe I’ll find a way for that to be possible), I can at least provide the lyrics and a bit as to why I’ve been hearing it in my head.

Refrain: “Come to the feast of heaven and earth! Come to the table of plenty! God will provide for all that we need here at the table of plenty.”

When we come to God’s feast of the incarnation (God coming to us in Jesus), Jesus’ journey to the cross (Jesus being willing to suffer with us), and Jesus resurrection (the overturning of the powers of violence, sin, and death), we come to a table of plenty, where all of life—its ups and downs, joys and tragedies—are embraced, and God’s promise is to walk with us through all of it.

Verse 1: “O come and sit at my table, where saints and sinners are friends. I wait to welcome the lost and lonely to share the cup of my love.”

All of us are both saints and sinners. At God’s table we sit with each other, but also with all the parts of ourselves—the good, the bad and the ugly—and are embraced by God’s love.

Verse 2: “O come and eat without money; come to drink without price. My feast of gladness will feed your spirit with faith and fullness of life.”

When we eat at God’s table with all the other saints and sinners, God provides and we feed each other and that increases our faith and our “fullness of life.” This is part of why we are asking all of us to participate in eating rice and beans (a simple meal) once a week, or finding some other way to “fast,” then put aside a little “saved” expense, and, with our sisters and brothers in the Tanzanian Mennonite Churches, share what we put aside with the children of Lahash International, so that they can feast at God’s table as well. (See page 2.)

It is a very different way of operating than “empire”—the dog-eat-dog way of life that surrounds us so much of the time. It is a very different set of values. Our Lenten theme, “Blessed hunger, Holy feast,” is meant to put us in touch with God’s very different way of operating.

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Rice and Beans Month

An invitation to simplicity, solidarity, sharing

We at Hively are encouraged to make a commitment over the next few weeks to some concrete way to simplify our lives ... and then to contribute what we save to help vulnerable children in East Africa.

Esther Muhagachi shared with us in the Ash Wednesday service and the first Lent Sunday worship service about how the concept of Rice and Beans Month began. In 2010, she met several Mennonite Central Committee workers in Tanzania, and they caught the vision of eating meals similar to those of the people with whom they worked. They did this during March or the season of Lent and then contributed toward food for children who are HIV positive—a special need that Esther felt was not being met in her community.

The concept of Rice and Beans Month has continued to grow over this last decade with the goal of putting love into action through three core themes: simplicity, solidarity and sharing. The organization of Lahash (Hebrew word for *whispered prayer*) collects the funds

and sends them on to Grace and Healing Ministries in Dodoma, Tanzania. The funds help children with AIDS get good nutrition, attend school, receive health care and “fill the halls of a local church with laughter on program days,” according to the Lahash website. (Read more at lahash.org/ghmd/)

Esther encouraged us to find our own ways to simplify our lives as we participate in Rice and Beans Month. We could, as the name suggests, simplify meals—for a month, or for one day or one meal a week. We could cut down on how much we purchase during or eat out, or we could ride public transportation instead of driving.

If you join in this solidarity with those that Grace and Healing Ministries serves, collect your contributions. There will be ways to turn these in and then we will make a congregational gift when we come to the end of the Lent season.

To watch the video that Esther featured in her presentation on March 10 (so you can see the subtitles), visit <https://bit.ly/2VXoRpN>

Exploring financial dimensions of biblical stories

In the final session of this year’s Spiritual Emphasis, Lane Miller helped us to explore and understand how financial themes are important facets of the Bible’s teachings.

Looking at Jesus’ parables and teachings in Luke 15 and 16—particularly the story we call the

Prodigal Son—Lane pointed out how we often misinterpret aspects of the stories and miss the lessons in financial issues that we can learn.

To listen to a recording of Lane’s presentation and the discussion, contact Mary Klassen.



Journeying through grief

Among the various things that the Deacon's Council does, one is to walk with attendees and members when they are going through difficult times, such as a death of a loved one. Several years ago the top book shelf in the hallway was designated for books that deal with death and grieving. We hope these books can be helpful personally and also in learning how to better support others who are grieving.

In addition, this past year the deacons began providing a series of books, entitled "Journeying through Grief" from Stephen Ministries, to those in our church who have lost a loved one. The series is a set of four books that are given in three-month intervals through the first year. The titles are *A Time to Grieve*, *Experiencing Grief*, *Finding Hope and Healing*, and *Rebuilding and Remembering*.

The deacons have received the following comments since this practice began:

Joyce Frey says, "Many thanks for the books.

They were very helpful. I especially liked the 4th book, as it dealt with the whole first year. I have shared it with others here

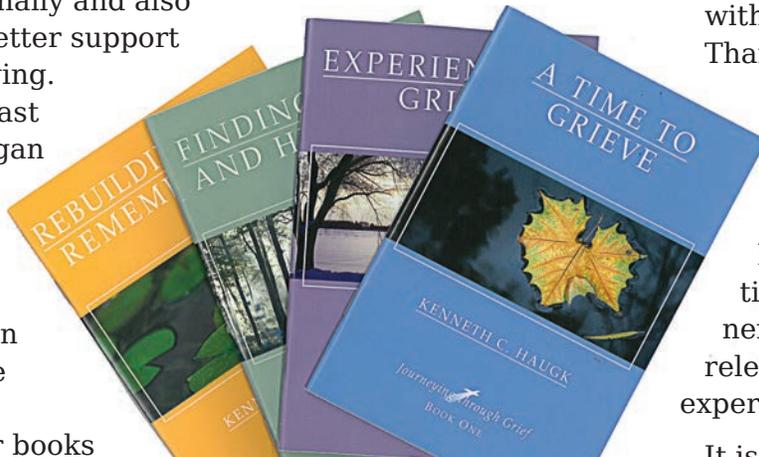
at Southfield Village and they have said how much they appreciated them."

Ellene Miller comments, "Each person grieves in his or her own way. I allowed myself time to grieve with things like the book series and listening to good harmony songs, giving me strength. I start each day with a gratitude list. Thank you."

Carol Troyer shared, "It wasn't that I learned so much that I didn't know before, but each time I received the next book, it was so relevant to what I was experiencing at the time."

It is the hope of the deacons that the "Journeying through Grief" books will continue to serve our congregation in the months and years to come.

The deacons—
Winifred Saner, Amanda Fast, Greg Suderman 



Thank you from MCC

We are grateful for your generous support of the work of Mennonite Central Committee, as we provide hope, healing and comfort around the world in the name of Christ. Thank you, friends and supporters at Hively Avenue Mennonite Church for the ways you contribute to the work of MCC through volunteering time, creativity and energy at thrift shops, relief sales, meat canning and in assembling material resource kits. We were

also blessed by your financial support of \$552 in 2018.

Keep us in your prayers and we collaborate with our 508 partners in 57 countries who are sharing God's love and compassion through relief, development and peace in the name of Christ. To read about specific partners and projects, please visit mcc.org.

With sincere thanks, Les Gustafson-Zook,
MCC Great Lakes 

Announcements

Mennonite Central Committee

Beating Guns: Join MCC in welcoming Shane Claiborne and Mike Martin, authors of the new book *Beating Guns: Hope for a people who are weary of violence*, on Wednesday, April 10, at 6 pm at Maple City Chapel. Inspired by the biblical call to “beat swords into plowshares,” the 90-minute event will feature speakers, music, stories and a live transformation of a gun into a garden tool. Tickets are free, but register at beatingguns.com/tour by clicking on the Eventbrite link for the Goshen location. Direct any questions to Jes Stoltzfus Buller, MCC Peace Education Coordinator, at JessicaBuller@mcc.org.

Young Adult Peace Camp: MCC Great Lakes is offering a Peace Camp for young adults ages 18–22 who are interested in a biblical approach to peace and justice. The week includes a trip to Chicago with MCC partners working with gun violence prevention. Other topics include conflict transformation, anti-racism, bystander training and restorative justice. For information and registration, see mcc.org/gl_peace_camp.

Pipeline to Prison learning tour: Join MCC Great Lakes for a week-long learning tour August 4–9. Based in Goshen, Ind., the tour will focus on the challenges and complexities of the U.S. criminal justice system and include day trips to South Bend, Elkhart, and Bunker Hill, Ind. Participants will journey from the local community level through the criminal justice system, learning about law enforcement, sentencing, incarceration and re-entry. All who are interested in learning about disparities in the justice system, including those working in or seeking to develop a prison/re-entry ministry, are welcome. For more information and registration visit mcc.org/gl-pipeline-to-prison or contact Juan Sebastian Pacheco Lozano at JuanPacheco@mcc.org or 574-534-4133.

Goshen College

International Student Club Coffeehouse, Saturday, March 23: Enjoy delicious home-made food from more than a dozen countries and a performance of music and dance from around the world. Dinner is at 5 pm in the Church Fellowship Hall, and the performance is at 7:30 pm in the Music Center. Tickets for the dinner and performance are \$20 for adults (\$14 performance only), and \$14 students/children (\$6 performance only). www.goshen.edu/tickets

Spring Musical, “Bright Star”: This is an uplifting musical journey featuring the Grammy-nominated score by Steve Martin and Edie Brickell. Set in 1940s North Carolina, after a chance encounter with a young, aspiring author just home from World War II, literary editor Alice Murphy relives the harrowing journey that helped shape her. The Umble Center performance is March 15, 16 and 22 at 7:30 pm and March 17 and 24 at 2:30 pm. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$7 for students/seniors. www.goshen.edu/tickets

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Intensive Term courses at AMBS. Hybrid and campus options beginning in May and June include Ethics and Care: Living and Dying with Purpose; Christian Leadership in the 21st Century; The Spirit World and the Global Church; The Religious Other in the Bible; and more. Nonadmitted students get 50 percent off their first class! ambs.edu/onecourse

Elkhart County Jail Ministry

The Elkhart County Jail Ministry annual dessert banquet is scheduled for Tuesday, April 30, from 7–8:30 pm, at Maple City Chapel in Goshen. It features stories of people who have been blessed by this ministry.

There is no cost to attend but there is an opportunity to make a contribution. If you are interested, contact Jake Hess. He suggests this would be an inspiring event for mentors and mentees to attend together. 

Mennonite Women plan upcoming events

Learning about women in Tanzania: On Wednesday, March 20, at 7 pm, Esther Muhagachi will share with Hively women about women in Tanzania with whom she has worked and built relationships. She will share about the needs of the women and families in the area where they live. All women are invited. Refreshments will include a taste of Tanzania.

An afternoon service project for anyone interested is planned for Wednesday, April 3. Plans are to meet at the church at noon, then proceed to Panera Bread for a nice lunch before going to the MCC Resource Center at the Goshen Depot. We will spend two hours there working on one of the MCC projects.

SPRINGFEST! We know spring will be coming, so why not have an evening of fun and entertainment on Wednesday, May 1. A salad supper will begin at 6:30 pm. You are encouraged to bring a favorite salad to share with everyone. You also will want to enjoy a dish of ice cream with a variety of toppings. This event is for women, men, young people and children. Hillary Harder will provide the evening program, sharing about her work in the schools and intertwining the talk with her original musical pieces. Mark your calendars now and plan for that fun evening. 🍃

Spring fund-raisers

Support Hively's youth

Hively's youth have begun raising funds for their trip to Kansas City this July to participate in the MC USA Youth Convention.

The first public fund-raiser is Nelson's Golden Glow chicken and Pit-Tatoes. The event is Saturday, March 23. Items will be available beginning at 10 am and presold tickets are honored until 12:30 pm.

The sale will continue until 2 pm, or until the chickens are sold out. So if you did not purchase tickets from a member of the youth

group, you can still help. Come to Hively on March 23 between 10 am and 2 pm to get your food.

The price for chicken halves is \$6.50 and the price for a container of Pit-Tatoes is \$4.00.



The funds will help pay for registration, transportation, lodging and meals as the youth and sponsors join in the biennial convention. The cost for the

youth to attend is shared among the church budget, fund-raising and the families. Hively has applied for a scholarship to help offset some of the costs.

Help the Preschool

Hively Avenue Preschool's spring fund-raiser has two components: Wakarusa Dime Store's famous jumbo jelly beans and Rise 'n Roll's famous buttery nut crunches.

See the bulletin board in the foyer for details. You can record your order there or place your order with someone involved in the preschool:



Student: Billi Jo Grouette

Board members: Leanne Farmwald, Melody Claassen, Crystal Underwood, John Alter.

Orders are due Monday, March 25, and can be picked up on April 12. 🍃



Buzzing at the Hive

Spring is a busy time at Hively Avenue Preschool!

Our Spring fund-raiser begins on March 8. Wakarusa Dime Store Jumbo Jelly Beans and Rise 'n Roll Crunches will be available to order until March 25. Orders can be picked up on April 12. Please see a preschool board member to place your order, or you can order on the sign-up sheet on the foyer bulletin board.

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled for March 19 and 21. This is an important time for teachers to communicate with parents about their child's progress.

Re-enrollment has begun for fall classes, and we will open enrollment to the public after Spring Break. Our schedule of

classes is changing a little next year with the addition of a four-day Full Day class (MTWF).

A look ahead: On Friday, May 17, we celebrate our last day of preschool with our Awards Chapel in the morning. The Stevens Puppets are returning this year to present "Goldilocks and the Three Bears." This special version of the story takes place in Alaska and is a brand new show with beautifully carved marionette puppets. One of our parent board members has been instrumental in bringing the Stevens Puppets to us for Awards Chapel. You are invited to join us on May 17 for this special presentation.

— Julee Hay, director 

Hively calendar

March 14 and 28

6 pm
Pasta with the Pastors
at Tim and Jan Stair's home
1415 Wilson Ave, Goshen

March 23

10 am—2 pm
Youth Group fund-raiser
(See page 5)

March 24

April 14 and 28
5:30 pm
Spaghetti and Scripture

March 27

April 10 and 24
6 pm
Prayer Choir

March 20

6:30 pm
Mennonite Women program

April 18

6 pm
Maundy Thursday meal and service

April 21

Easter services

Thank you messages

Lois Barrett, whose mother, Audrey Barrett, died on Saturday, Feb. 23, sent a note of thanks for flowers Hively sent to the visitation and funeral. "It was good to be remembered," Lois wrote.

Jacob Underwood wrote, "I miss you guys a lot. Thank you for yall's letters of love and prayers. I'm doing really good."

Lent image: Our theme for Lent is "Blessed Hunger, Holy Feast." The worship table on March 10 (shown on page 1) reminds us that God's Word is our most nourishing food. Our Lent banner (at right) was painted by Saejin Lee, and Elaine Frey and Annie Mohr added the theme text.

Personal news note

Walter and Margaret Sawatsky's grandson, Lukas Sawatsky, will graduate from high school in Winnipeg, Man., in June. He has been offered strong scholarships for a four-year music program at the Music School of the University of Manitoba, starting next fall. His major is in vocal performance.

Hively Happenings
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