

THE OLYMPIC NEWS

The Monthly Newsletter of the Olympic View Community Church of the Brethren
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June 2007

Called into Mission to learn a better way

by Ken Miller Rieman

No single event of my life signaled a 'call to mission,' but a few influential experiences gave me purchase as I navigated the cultural crosscurrents my youth:

At the 1984 Annual Conference Roger Schrock, newly returned from Sudan, led a Junior High session. Divided into continents taped off on the floor, most of us stood shoulder to shoulder in Africa and Asia. The lucky few in North America had several chairs apiece. Being good Brethren, we grasped the lesson and played along, until Roger broke out the M&M's. The playing stopped and the fighting began. The unwillingness of the rich to share their candy with us seemed to leave us no option but resistance. On the world stage, the unfair distribution of life's most basic resources leads to much more serious violence. I learned that being in mission means bringing justice to the poor and oppressed.

With eyes opened to injustice, I soon learned of the CIA's mining of Nicaraguan harbors. I

struggled to understand why my nation would support the 'contra' insurgents in their violence against teachers, pastors and health care workers. A few years later, I traveled to Nicaragua with other Brethren. We didn't go to build a church or distribute Bibles, but to learn to know our brothers and sisters. We spent three weeks with peers from *Misión Cristiana* and *Iglesia Cubana Pentecostal* and came to see that in the effort to eradicate the 'cancer' of communism, US intervention was widening desperate social iniquities. Together, we harvested coffee on a cooperative farm. Many workers were on the war's front lines and every family's income depended on what their members could pick, so we picked the least productive plants and left the most productive for those with greater need.

Working together, we discovered that each of our denominations had been forged by leaders who stood courageously against cultures of greed and violence. Each had survived persecution to proclaim a Gospel of love for all people; each had claimed the responsibility of living according to Jesus' example. The cultural differences between us were greater than those which create high

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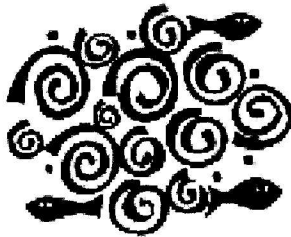


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tension within the Church of the Brethren; yet working together was one of the most joy-filled experiences I've ever had. Being in mission gave me the courage to come home and add my voice to the growing number of Christians calling on our government to end its violent intervention.

The call to love all requires a radical transformation, a surrendering of our pursuit of ideological uniformity, political expediency, and social privilege. When our culture stands silent in the face of injustice and human tragedy, the call to mission requires that followers of Jesus allow God to begin that change in us. We don't need to know in advance what that change may be. Our brothers and sisters near and far can help us learn a better way.



Reminder:

No Executive Committee,
Board of Administration,
or Deacon Training meetings
will be held during June.

Thanks for your service!



Living Peace Church News & Notes

Focusing on the
peace & reconciliation
ministries of the church.
Greetings from On Earth Peace!

Making Meetings Go Better Part I: A Great Start

Recently, I sent friends an informal survey about meetings. I asked, "What contributes to the kind of meetings you hate?" Answers: *unclear goals, loose agenda, pointless discussion, a sense that one's contribution doesn't matter, latecomers.* Then I asked, "What contributes to the kind of meetings you love?" Answers: *written agenda, on-task and supportive discussion, accomplishable goals, ending on time, hospitality.* These revealing answers point the way to concrete practices for making meetings go better:

- 1) Have a clear, written agenda. Plan for accomplishable goals. Send the agenda out early. Stress the courtesy of punctual arrival.
- 2) Make sure the room set-up is hospitable. Schedule breaks and have cold or hot drinks available for longer meetings.
- 3) Begin the meeting with brief prayer. Light a candle and/or set up a simple worship center. This practice honors Christ, brings the sacred into the ordinary, and may nudge those participating into a perspective bigger than their personal wants, needs, or agenda.
- 4) Following prayer, review the agenda. This step allows participants to suggest amendments to items of business. As facilitator, decide if suggested amendments are appropriate and can be handled within the time frame. If not, place them on the agenda for the next meeting.
- 5) Once the agenda has been amended, stick to it as closely as possible. Keep the meeting moving and on schedule.

With skilled preparation and a smooth start, chances are that your goals for the meeting will be accomplished. Next month: handling discussion, and tips for difficult meetings.

~ Annie Clark
Coordinator of Ministry of Reconciliation

*On Earth Peace: An agency of the
Church of the Brethren helping people discern
the things that make for peace*

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Red Hatters: Summer Events

by JoAnn Shoemaker



- June 7th, 10:00 am—2:00 pm Visit Flower Farm in Maltby. See JoAnn for details.
- July 14th is **Red Hat Race Day** at Emerald Downs. Cost is \$18.00 - includes lunch. RSVP by June 3rd with money for tickets.
- August 23rd—ride the Duckmobile!
- August 25th—wear your Red Hat attire to the Bowers' BBQ.
- September: have lunch on Camano Island and shop the outlet stores.

Flower Arrangement Volunteers

If you want to learn to make a silk flower arrangement, have flowers in your yard you want to donate or arrange yourself, or would like to learn the basics of arranging, then please contact Cathy Oberg so she can schedule a class. If you are willing to come on Saturday and help beautify the altar, please let her know. She can arrange transportation if you need it.

There is a new calendar for 2007 posted in the Narthex. You may choose any Sunday for a memorial or other special event. Please write the date on the line beside your name and the name of the person who you are celebrating.

Donations to the Altar Fund of money (whatever you can afford), flowers, vases, containers, baskets, and time are greatly appreciated. Please show your support for our great group of flower arrangers by contributing to their efforts however you are best able.

Shared Prayer Requests

In our community...

For Kathy Edmark's brother, **Don**,
being treated for Multiple Sclerosis. For a quick recovery from shingles for **Barbara Anderson**.

For Edmarks' birth granddaughter,
Amber Compton, recovering
from an infection on her foot.

Ongoing prayer requests:

Keith and Olive White; Elaine Rankin;

Mike Titus; Tom Snyder

Russell Jarboe; Jeff Keuss Sr.;

Bill Case's daughter, Carol Kamada;

Dick Nash; Richard Shoemaker,

Bill Shoemaker's brother;

Gene Harnden; Charles Walker;

Frosty Wilkinson; Adam Ford;

Eileen Birkey's mother; Ernie Ricketts;

Tim Bisterfeldt's aunt, Diane Peters;

Lew Fortin's nephew, Michael Rogers;

Mike Helmuth's father, Bill,

and nephew, Ryan Halifax;

Alvida Fite; Sharon Haley's brother, Mark

In our state, nation & world...

That we offer a vision of justice, peace, and healing which will form the basis of a bi-partisan commitment in our nation to work together for the common good.

For an end to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; and for the safety and return of all combatants, and for the difficulties which their families face in their absence.

For a revitalization of our District churches and a deepening sense of our unity in Christ.

For safe and peaceful conditions for the people of the Middle East.

For the growing humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Sudan and refugees settling in Chad.

For the Smith-Derksen family, now working with MCC in Chad.

For the people of Zimbabwe seeking democratic change in their government.



Missing Library Book

If you have seen or accidentally picked up a copy of *The Way I Found Her*, by Rose Tremain, please return this book to the church office. It is a library book checked out by a member of the congregation. The book was left in the Social Hall during coffee hour on Sunday, May 20th. Thanks for your assistance.

G.U.I.L.D.—give up inactivity and live with dignity!

Guild's next women's breakfast and program will take place **Wednesday, June 20th, at 7:30 am.**

Call the church office—206 525-8900—for information.

Olympic View Book Club

Time: the club will meet at 10:30 am

Date: Friday, June 22, 2007

Place: Dorothy Johnson's

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We welcome you to our services.