

# Koinonia's Extra News

March 2009

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## Church Activities

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**Four dozen mini sculptures** are displayed at the front of the sanctuary. We created them from small balls of clay on the first Sunday in Lent. They remind us throughout Lent that we are "like clay in the hand of the Potter." (Jeremiah 18:6)

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**Getting ready for company** We expect lots of visitors in March and April. A team of dedicated weed pullers, fence painters, trash haulers, junk sorters and drain cleaners spent a large part of Saturday getting ready. The job is never done, though. Please help keep the church property looking nice. When you see something out of place, make it right. If you don't know what to do ask Tony L. or a member of the facilities committee.

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**Heads up, chili lovers!** Your favorite chili supper will be on the table tomorrow evening at 5:00pm. This year the MYF is making the supper a Chili Competition. Who will win the big chili trophy? You and your friends will decide.

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**Last call for KMC yard sale items.** Please bring sale items to the church today for the sale tomorrow. We will store things on the stage area in the multi purpose room. Monies raised will help the younger kids go to church camp and the MYF kids go to conference this summer. If you would like to help in any way; set-up, sale or take down, please contact Kristen F. 480-899-7242 thank you.

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**If you don't do yard sales ... how about yard clean up?** We'll be pulling weeds, trimming trees, picking up trash, cleaning and painting tomorrow morning. Any questions? See Tony L.

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**Spring picnic.** The spring picnic is taking shape as a "picnic style fellowship meal" on Sunday, March 29, after Sunday School. Please bring sandwiches for yourself/family and salad or desert to share. Questions? Contact Kristen F or Rachel S.

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**Meeting by the pool.** Last Sunday worshippers used their imaginations to enter the Biblical story of a man who waited by the pool to be healed. Rachel S. guided the congregation through this exercise in

visualized prayer and invited participants to meet Jesus by the pool. Prayer is one of the means God uses to transform those who trust in him. They are transformed "like clay in the hand of the Potter."  
(Jeremiah 18:6)

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**And the big chili pepper goes to .....** Mel B for his delicious concoction, "Mel's Chili." The runners up were Lisa R and Eric S. Thanks to all nine contestants, the MYF parents, the MYF students and all the enthusiastic chili consumers who made the Chili Competition a fun and profitable evening.

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**Refreshed for Service.** Last Sunday worshippers had the opportunity to be refreshed in their commitment to serve the Lord and serve in the Lord's name. Elders poured water over willing hands as the music team sang "Cleanse Me."

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**Picnic Time!** This Sunday we will shift our regular morning schedule so that we can enjoy a picnic lunch together. All are welcome – please bring sandwiches for your family and a salad or dessert to share.

10:30-10:45 – Coffee Break

10:45-11:30 – Sunday School

11:30 – Set up for the picnic and Choir Rehearsal

12:00 – Fellowship Picnic on the lawn

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**Holy Week** begins next Sunday. We are planning special activities for Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Resurrection Day.

Palm Sunday – 9:30 AM – We conclude Lent with a time of celebration in testimony and song.

Good Friday – 7:30 PM – “He Loved to the Last” - a service of Scripture narrative and song, with Holy Communion.

Resurrection Day – 7:30 AM – Sunrise service with invited guests, followed by breakfast on the lawn.

The regular worship service will begin at 9:30 with no Sunday school following.

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## **News from members and mission partners**

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**Hallo,**

Praise the Lord and i hope you are fine. We are fine in Jesus name. I am very grateful for your constant prayer especially the period i had a patient in the hospital. Today my daughter has been discharged from the hospital after stay in the hospital for 17 days and the bill has risen but am grateful because she is feeling abit well though she is still under medication. God bless you always.

I remain yours in Christ

Bishop Domnic Ochieng Opondo  
Hi all,

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**Stones. Walls. Checkpoints. Living stones.**

First, the stones. They're everywhere. Large and small stones that make rough walking paths. Stones that are used to separate one orchard from another or to build terraces. Stones that are strewn all over the ground in the midst of farmers' fields, making walking more difficult. This is the land known as both Israel and Palestine.

Walls: Although fences may make good neighbors, walls rarely do. We have gone to several parts of the so-called Separation Wall that Israel has built. In some places, it cuts through the middle of an Arab village, while in others it winds around several houses, cutting them off from not only from their fields, the family, their schools, hospital care, etc. In Hebron, which we visited last week, people who want to bury their dead have to travel several miles to reach the cemetery which is only a few feet on the other side of the wall.

Checkpoints: We travelled north from the Bethlehem region twice over the last couple of days. We encountered several checkpoints each day. It took us two hours to make the normally half-hour journey of about 20 miles to Ramallah, and four hours to make the usual two-hour trip to Jenin. When we wanted to visit the Samaritans in Nablus, we were delayed by an Israeli checkpoint for an hour, until the son of the Samaritan patriarch, himself a leader of the sect, came to instruct the soldiers that we were his special guests and were to be admitted.

Living Stones: The living stones are what we really came to see. I am looking forward to being home in about 10 days, at which time I will begin to put together presentations during which I can introduce various groups to some of the real human beings we have been meeting and tell you their stories. There is an amazing thread of agreement here from people representing all factions: Peace is essential. It needs to come with justice. And it needs to be negotiated honestly. How these people think peace should look always includes these basics. The way to get there differs somewhat, but only slightly. They are relying on us to tell their stories, to make the stones come alive for you, and to help their dreams to come true. I will send one more report before I get home.

For peace, Barbara T

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**Heading home.** *(Barb T. arrived home Monday; this is an excerpt of her last report from Israel. The full report is available from*

[office@koinoniamennonitechurch.com](mailto:office@koinoniamennonitechurch.com). *We look forward to a live report when Barb is ready to make public presentations.*)

The group has headed for home. Since I'll be home in a few days, I will soon be able to fill in the details of the trip. Group members are arranging speaking engagements and we will all be writing more as we process the information we gathered. It won't be an easy task, as we spoke in our 39 meetings with 42 people representing a variety of groups and a variety of opinions. (This does not include the personal contacts we made or our delightful host families in Beit Sahour near Bethlehem). on the other side of the wall.

We learned about non-violent resistance among the Palestinians and about the brave Israelis who defy their own government to make peace with those who they believe are their cousins, the Arabs. We met with officials of the Palestinian Authority and with the Governor of Jenin region. We learned about the role that water plays in the region, and we also went into an Israeli settlement and had a meeting with one of the settlers. We also met with human rights and civil rights groups and with the American Friends Service Committee representative. On that same day, we met with the group Combatants for Peace, those who had learned through their participation in violence that this sort of behavior will not lead to peace.

We heard personal stories, learning how people had experienced being deprived of their land, their homes, and their rights, and yet resisted it all steadfastly. And we heard encouraging words from those who still believe, despite all of the pain and the animosity, that the people can learn to live together. We witnessed some experiments in living this way, and heard people who many think are enemies call one another friends. We all resonated with Bishop Elias Chakour, a Melkite, who told us that what was needed was for the people to really remember their past, and that they had lived in peace before. That is what we pray for as we return to our homes and look forward to sharing some of our many photos with you, as well as the words that we heard, whether sobering or of hope.

For peace, Barb

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### **Lenten Giving Blog**

A blog site at <http://lentengiving.wordpress.com>, hosted by Mennonite Mission Network, will allow participants in the Lenten giving process to share stories, support one another and interact around the concept of giving during difficult times. Consider exploring this blog, interacting with the posts, or starting the discussion among your own congregation.

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**PSMC SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK**

You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:13-16

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**From New Orleans Bible Fellowship.** I greet you in the matchless name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

To tell you that I have been busy would be an understatement. Not only have we continued our homeless feeding program, we've added a nursing home visitation to our outreach ministry package and will soon be going into the hospitals to pray and care for the sick this spring. We have also been able to restore our music ministry back to our worship services. We have now secured an organist by God's grace and a drummer as well. We recently hosted over 200 AFL-CIO labor union members for a sit-in service while they were in New Orleans for a convention. Needless to say, it was a tremendous success and blessing. Our membership is growing strong spiritually and the numbers are growing as well. In Oct. of 2006, we restarted the ministry with 12 members who returned after the storm. Our church roll now stands at 51 members. God is truly in the blessing business! We solicit your continued prayers for the ministry as we reintensify our efforts to possess the land that I feel God has waiting for us. Finally, be in prayer for me, as I am scheduled to have laser surgery on my left knee on Good Friday morning. Doctors say it's a simple repair for a torn cartilage in my left knee. We trust that your families are all doing well and are blessed of the Lord. Once again, please forgive me for the tardiness, charge it to my head and not my heart. Hope to speak to you soon.

In His Service, Leonard M. Parker, Jr.

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**From Bishop Opondo (Kisumu, Kenya)**

Praise the Lord,

I hope you are fine and doing well, Kisumu West Diocese are sending their sincere gratitude to you concerning the help financially and prayers that you have been offering to us during famine and sickness. We have received the money that will help the tailoring centre, MWC, and for Bishop Opondo. We are very grateful for this help may the Lord bless you. In Kenya we have a lot of famine but we are still praying for the Lord.

The money for tailoring centre we have paid the teachers money and the watchman, the remaining amount have been used to build kiosks that is 15ft x 17ft consisting of iron sheet both the wall and the roof. This building will be for making nursery school uniforms if we get the orders, and those passed in the training centre will be taken to work there. The

money that will be generated here will be used to pay the centre training teacher.

Thanks and God Bless you, Bishop Dominic Opondo, Kisumu West Diocese

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### **Holy Humor**

There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. 'Is there anything breakable in here?' asked the "postal clerk. 'Only the Ten Commandments.' answered the lady.

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## **Events with Neighboring Churches**

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### **Women's Spring Retreat**

March 13 - 15

at Prescott Pines

Registration deadline is March 7.

Call or e mail the church for registration information.

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### **5th Sunday Sing**

March 29, 2009, 6 pm at Grace Mennonite Church

We hope to have details soon.

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**Koinonia** is **postponing** the community wide fund raiser for Churches Supporting Churches that was planned for April. Our missions commission still plans for a showing of "**Hurricane on the Bayou**" at the IMAX theater in Tempe sometime this year. All profits will go to Churches Supporting Churches.

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## **Other Events and Information**

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### **Centennial Cookbook**

All Hesston College alumni and friends are invited to submit recipes for the Centennial Cookbook as a part of the college's "Living The Vision" Centennial Celebration during 2009-10. Recipes can be submitted until March 31 on-line at <http://cookbook.hesston.edu> or mailed to: Centennial Cookbook, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. More information is available at [www.hesston.edu/centennial](http://www.hesston.edu/centennial).

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**Mennonite Church USA** requests that every congregation and individual keep the current search for a new Executive Director in prayer. Please pray for God's wisdom and the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit throughout. Remember the committee, potential candidates and current staff who continue their work while anticipating transition.

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**FUND EDUCATION - NOT OCCUPATION!**

## End the Wars in Iraq & Afghanistan

VIGIL & MARCH at the ASU Tempe Campus on THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2009  
5:00 p.m. Vigil with signs during rush hour traffic at University Bridge,  
located at 458 E.University Drive (just east of College Ave, between  
College & Rural)

6:30 p.m. Candlelight march through campus to the School of Music  
Building.

7:00 p.m. In light of the economic crisis and the \$100,000 a minute cost  
of the unnecessary Iraq war, attend the free talk at the School of Music  
by Robert Reich, the progressive Secretary of Labor under President  
Clinton, entitled "*Will our Children Live as Well*"

For information call 480-894-2024 or e-mail [endthewarcoalition@cox.net](mailto:endthewarcoalition@cox.net) or  
visit [www.azpeace.org](http://www.azpeace.org)

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**West Coast MCC** announces a job opening for a Director of Mission  
Initiatives, a new position responsible for designing and implementing  
initiatives that advance the mission, values, goals, strategies, reputation  
and resources of WCMCC. Qualifications for this full-time position  
include a graduate degree (doctorate preferred), 5 years experience in  
program development, ability to relate with diverse constituent groups  
and knowledge of Anabaptist theology. Interested applicants should  
send a resume and letter of interest to Kristen Gilster, [krig@mcc.org](mailto:krig@mcc.org) by  
Friday, March 20. For questions e-mail or call Kristen at 930-2767.

A draft job description is available online at <http://domino-18.prominic.com/A5584F/SOLtoWeb.nsf/d0b0a8838c88417885256aa1005a5f52/01ccaa1144ad87da85257570002c090e!OpenDocument>.

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**Bethany's Job Networking Group** is open to all to assist with your job search.  
It doesn't matter if you are in-between jobs, anticipating a lay off or want to  
improve your job search skills to look for better employment. We offer a chance  
to network; pick up contacts and information on what's going in the job market in  
the valley. Each week features a speaker on a different topic such as:

Thursday, April 2 is Nadine Cummins, transitions specialist formerly with Right  
Management speaking on transitioning

## **Bethany Job Networking Group - Thursday evenings 6-8pm - Room E-6**

Contact **Linda Whipple**, Care Ministries Director, Bethany Community Church,  
[www.bethanycommunity.com](http://www.bethanycommunity.com)

"We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to His  
purpose." Rom 8:28

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**Extra News is** information and announcements that don't fit in our Sunday bulletin or need wider publicity than our Sunday morning gathering. We send Extra News to members and friends of Koinonia by email every Friday. For a paper copy contact Alysia L. via [office@koinoniamennonitechurch.com](mailto:office@koinoniamennonitechurch.com)

To learn more about Koinonia, visit our web site,  
[www.KoinoniaMennoniteChurch.com](http://www.KoinoniaMennoniteChurch.com)  
Koinonia Mennonite Church - 2505 N. Dobson Rd - Chandler AZ 85224 -  
Tel. (480) 963 2416  
SEEKING the will of God, FOLLOWING the teachings of Jesus,  
BUILDING his Kingdom