

January 2017

**Hutterthal
Mennonite Church**
Freeman, SD

CONNECTION!

Making a CONNECTION with one another

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1) Beth Wilson
- 1) Ardella Gross
- 1) Tristan Kellar
- 4) Melvin Glanzer
- 5) Mercedes Hofer
- 5) Brandon Waltner
- 7) Amy Hofer Vetch
- 8) Egan Mettler
- 10) Ethan Waltner
- 12) Joline Thomas
- 13) Ruth Pollman
- 16) Bruce Hofer
- 18) Randy Glanzer
- 19) Pam Tieszen
- 22) Melvin Hofer
- 23) Les Rensink
- 27) Phil Thomas
- 30) Derrick Preheim

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 8) Gary & Jennifer Tschetter
- 26) Cameron & Rina Hofer

JANUARY CALENDAR

- 1 2nd Sunday of Christmas (NEW YEAR'S DAY)
9:45am Worship & Sunday School
- 3 7:00pm Deacons Meeting
- 6 EIPHANY
- 8 EIPHANY SUNDAY
9:45am Worship with Communion & Sunday School
- 9 7:00pm Prayer Shawl
- 11 10:00am Freeman Ministerial @ (Parsonage)
- 15 9:45am Worship & Sunday School
- 16 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY
- 18 12:00pm Freeman Network for Justice & Peace @ Freeman Library
6:30pm Soup Fellowship
7:00pm Midweek Bible Study
- 19 7:30pm Church Board
- 22 9:45am Worship & Sunday School
- 24 9:15am Pastor-Peer (Sioux Falls)
- 25 12:00pm *Connection!* Deadline
6:30pm Soup Fellowship
7:00pm Midweek Bible Study
- 29 9:45am Worship & Sunday School
2:30pm Worship (Oakview Terrace)
- 31 7:00pm Deacons' Meeting (Hofer Residence)



I would like to take this time to say thank you to my church family for all the prayers, cards, flowers/plants, meals, and comments/questions of concern during my dad's long illness and his eventual passing. Your thoughtfulness and care have been uplifting and encouraging this past year. Also, I would like to thank the Church Board for the lovely tree given in honor of my dad. Thank you for the love that has been shown.—Jill Hofer

Pastor Todd, Kim, Hannah, Felicity, and Nathanael would like to thank the members and friends of Hutterthal Mennonite Church for their generosity this Christmas season. For the outpouring of Christmas cards, gifts, and cheer, we thank you, giving praise to God as we remember you in our prayers. May God bless you with the presence and power of His Holy Spirit in this New Year.

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Connection! Editor: Jill Hofer

Advisory Board: Rebecca Hofer, chp.,
Marcia Schrock and Twyla Hofer

HMC Links

Website - <http://hmcfreeman.org>

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Pastoral Links

Facebook – [www.facebook.com/
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[MennPastor](#)

Twitter – @MennPastor

Blog – mennpastor.blogspot.com

TIP FROM TWYLA
(things that work for her household)

Take a permanent marker and make about a 3" line along the long edges (both of them) of fitted sheets. Much easier to get the sheet on right first time, every time.

**COMUNION & BENEVOLENT
FUND**

On Sunday, January 8, 2017, we will celebrate **Communion** together. The Deacons would like to encourage you to enter prayerfully into this celebration, asking for God to move in and through the time we share together that we might be both refreshed and renewed.

The Deacons would also like to encourage you to consider giving a gift to **the Benevolent Fund**. On January 8, 2017 an offering basket will be placed in the foyer to receive gifts for this ministry. The Benevolent Fund is overseen by the Deacons and is used to offset the financial strains caused by ill-health, work loss, etc. If you know of someone who may benefit from the ministry of the Benevolent Fund we ask that you speak with one of our Deacons: Todd Koerner, Monica Clem, or Monica Hofer. All disbursements are handled confidentially.

Hutterthal Library News!

Christian's Hope, Return to Northkill
Book 3 by Ervin R. Stutzman

When Christian Hochstetler returns to the Amish after seven years in captivity; he finds that many things have shifted. Captured as a child during the French and Indian War , Christian has spent much of his life among Native Americans, who cared for him and taught him their ways. Now that Christian is home, his father wants him to settle back into their predictable Amish life of farming. Christian's budding friendship with Orpha Rupp beckons him to stay as well.

Yet Christian feels restless, and misses his adoptive Native American family who raised him as their own son. Will Christian choose the Amish identity that his father desires for him? Or will he depart from his family and faith community yet again?

Christian's Hope tells the story of the younger brother of Joseph and the son of Jacob, whom readers have come to love in the first two books in the Return to Northkill series. Based on actual events and written by a descendant of the Hochstetler family.

During this French- Indian War Jacob Hochstetler's farm was destroyed by fire by the Indians and killed Jacob's wife, another son and daughter and took Jacob and two sons Christian and Joseph captive. Jacob was able to escape one year latter to return to what was left of his farm. When the war was finally over the American government made the Indians return all the captives seven years later.

This book was just added to our library as it was very recently published. I have never read or studied about the French & Indian war so it was informative to learn about this sad time in American history.-LeRoy Hofer

	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Offerings</u>
November 27	105	\$2,346.00
December 4	92	\$2,934.50
December 11	117	\$3,115.00
December 18	Church cancelled	
December 25	101	\$4,415.00

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY **SCHOOL PROJECT**

Winter (Dec., Jan., Feb.)
MCC Congo Project

Congregational Ministries **January Project**

Blankets, sheets & towels

- Twin or full size lightweight and medium-weight blankets are requested by MCC.
- NEW flat twin sheets are needed for hospitals, schools and orphanages.
- NEW bath and hand towels: Good quality, dark or bright colors, medium weight preferred. (Fingertip towels and wash cloths are NOT needed.)



• Visiting Mildred Hofer for Thanksgiving was her daughter and her husband, Karen & Chuck Wittenberg, and her grandson Grant Wittenberg. Grant received his Master of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, CA on June 11, 2016. He is now working for EcoVox, an energy analytics and consulting company in San Luis Obispo as an energy engineer.

- Amos & Kathryn Kleinsasser moved from their home in Walnut Street Village, Freeman, to the Diamond Care facility, Bridgewater, and have since moved to Oakview Terrace in Freeman.
- Lee Dockendorf's (Ashton Hofer) mother, Carolynn Dockendorf, passed to her heavenly home on November 25. Memorial services were held in Emery on November 29.
- Lyndon Hofer is recovering from rotator cuff surgery done on November 23.
- Moses Glanzer's sister, Mary Ruth Hoffman, age 94, a resident at Oakview Terrace, had surgery to install a stent in her heart at the end of November. She is back home and doing fine.
- Marcella Glanzer was hospitalized with a heart problem at Thanksgiving time.
- Joline Thomas along with Pastor Todd and Kim are assisting the youth in a fundraiser. Cheese spreads in a variety of flavors were served during coffee time on December 4. Orders were taken for two Sundays with delivery on Sunday December 18. Something special for Christmas.
- Cookie walk was held at the Senior Center in Freeman on Friday, December 9. A nice variety of cookies and candy were brought together for eager buyers. Thanks to all who contributed either by bringing goodies, purchasing, and/or helping in any way.
- The HMC family increased by 2 in little over a week. It was ladies first when Avery Nichole was born to Kylea and Brandon Waltner on December 2. Siblings welcoming her are Isabel, Addison and Ethan. Grandparents Lori & Darnell Tschetter and Great-Granma LaVonne Tschetter are her HMC family.
- On December 9 Amanda and Rodney Mettler welcomed Otto Lee into their family making it "My Three Sons" including Egan and Isaac. HMC family includes Lyndon & Barbie Hofer (whose birthday is the day before baby Otto's) and Great-grandparents, Melvin & Emma Hofer.
- Jill Hofer spent most of November in Manitoba with her family as her father, Frank Wiebe, was ushered into glory on December 2 after a valiant fight with pancreatic cancer. Stan, Cole & Ian drove up for the funeral service, which was postponed 2 days because of a winter blizzard.
- Larry Hofer was able to return to his home on December 7 after 44 days of hospitalization following surgery on October 25 for cancer and hernia repair. Various set backs accounted for the long stay. He is still weak but will have adjustments to his pacemaker and placement of cancer markers before he starts 30 radiation treatments followed by 8 rounds of chemo. He was able to attend Christmas Day services at HMC. Welcome back, we missed you!
- On January 8 there will be a congregational meeting to approve the purchase of a new furnace for HMC.
- Ian Hofer, a student at NorthWestern College in Orange City, Al, is planning a spring service trip to TX to serve in prison ministries. He is fundraising to make this trip possible.
- Willis Leader, Moses Glanzer's brother-in-law, passed away on December 23.

Visitors to HMC:

- Brian, Maria, & Trevor Pfaff, Chicago, IL
- Bernice Fiest
- Darin, pril, Greta, Holly Fiest, Cologn, MN
- Brad Kohlman, N.Newton, KS

Reflection on Pilgrimage: Finding Abundance in Worship

"...if one looks long enough at almost anything, looks with absolute attention at a flower, a stone, the bark of a tree, grass, snow, a cloud, something like a revelation takes place. Something is 'given...'" – May Sarton, *Journal of a Solitude*

A pilgrimage to sacred places will no doubt afford worship opportunities to refresh and revive the soul. Our days were sprinkled with beautiful Celtic prayers and poetry. We sang in ancient cathedrals and beheld breathtaking vistas. We learned to write praise poetry and gazed on the work of an illuminator's hand. In all of these, joy and delight filled our hearts. It was refreshing and wonderful as to be expected. Praise and thanksgiving flowed freely. I began to wonder if it was possible to live this exuberantly once I returned home...once I came back to the life I know with its many challenges and struggles. **Does daily life have the potential for awe-inspiring, soul captivating wonder and worship?** The answer is *yes*.

I had an epiphany on this pilgrimage journey. Wisdom came to me in learning the Celtic Christian tradition's perspective concerning day-to-day living. It holds there is one principle that is to permeate all of life for the believer - *worship*. This concept is rooted in the understanding that **all things and all moments are infused with God's presence and blessing**. It gives way to a mindset that goes deeper than holding gratitude in one's heart. The Celtic Christian knows the secret of how to live day and night in a continual outpouring of worship to God. These believers embody what it is to have life, and have it to the full.

All of the created order is ever exuding praise and glory to God. It is the song the birds sing from sun up to sun down. Are we humans *not* to join in the chorus? The Celtic Christian understands that we must awake and even shout, as one poem begins, "Glorious Lord, I give you greeting!" **This tradition says living a life in continual worship results in be changed, transformed, renewed**. How can anger and bitterness coexist in the heart that is flowing with praise? Should it surprise us that in the Celtic Christian tradition there exist poetry, songs, and some of the most exquisite illumination of Bible text the world has ever known? These are a people attune to life as worship.

A new way of thinking about blessings is here as well. Author Esther De Waal writes that to understand blessing in the Celtic context is to see that it is not something to be asked for. Rather, it is to "recognize what is already there, already given, waiting to be seen, taken up, enjoyed. What a waste to go through life surrounded by all the good gifts that God showers on me, 'gently and generously' yet blind and deaf to his presence hidden in all things, human and nonhuman...In the face of such amazing grace and generosity, the only possible response must become that of continuing and ever-deepening praise." (*The Celtic Way of Prayer*, 1997)

I found examples of worship being synonymous with life along the entire pilgrimage. It was at the center of each saint's story, and was manifest at the locales we visited. I learned the desire to worship is found in your heart, at the core of your being. You can discover it when you stop to reflect on the goodness that is right before you and remember the God who has graciously provided.

May I encourage you?...**Look closely. Pay attention. See and receive God's gifts in and around you this day. Live each day with joy and abundance.** You do not need to travel to a far-off land on pilgrimage to find the song that is in you...the song of all creation...the music of the spheres. – Michelle L Hofer

To see this reflection with photos visit the Hutterthal website [LINKS](#) page.

Straight up by Todd Jones

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, o God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. ~ Psalm 51: 7-13, NKJV

As I look back now on the year that was I can see that God has been leading me through a wilderness — a dry and barren spiritual place. And, I found myself thirsty for God and the things of God. I had wandered far from Him, not all at once, but (as is typical) in small, slow turnings, a degree at a time until my face was no longer toward the Son and shadows and deep darkness had begun to cover me. In that season of dryness, as I look back, I struggled even to pray and everything became a wearying burden. The only sustaining element was worship....

Worship fuels me. It enlivens my soul and brings the rain to my dry places. I am a worshipper; that's where my heart is, as was spoken over me many years ago: A truth that resonated deep in my spirit. Still, I began to notice that Sunday worship could only sustain me into the first hours of the burgeoning week. So, feeling more and more lost, weak, and wearied, I (finally) turned my face again toward the Son. I got down on my face in prayer and cried out to God for a fresh outpouring of His Spirit — a fresh experience of His presence. And, immediately, I began to feel revived. That day, I wrote in my journal: "God happened today, so unexpected and so welcome! I had no idea how dry I had become — no idea how far I had wandered — but when I couldn't get back to God, God ran to me. For the first time in a great while, I feel I can see...."

Since that day, I have been undergoing an extensive "spiritual audit" — allowing God to speak into my heart and life regarding anything that is not of Him. I have been asking God to reveal those things that are broken in me and need His healing — those things in me that must be not merely healed, but removed. It has been a most terrifying and wonderful journey! And still, it continues ... and I invite you to join me on this way. I invite you to seek God with a fresh fervency — to ask God the bold and difficult questions; to lay yourself bare before Him; to address any and all spiritual dryness, any and all spiritual complacency; to seek a fresh outpouring of God's Spirit even as David did. Broken as he was, he turned to God and cried out not merely for forgiveness, but to be made new. "Create in my a clean heart," he cried, as he underwent an extensive "spiritual audit." What is the cry of your heart as we enter into this New Year? Do you desire to press in nearer to God? Is the cry of your heart, "More of You, Jesus, and less of me?"

God *is* with you ... but He asks for you to be with Him as well. He asks not for "some" space in your heart, but for all of it in which to abide. Do you need to "clear some space" for Him? Do you need to turn back to the Son — to undergo a "spiritual audit?" I encourage you to meditate on the words of David in Psalm 51. Make these words your prayer as you surrender all you are to Him.



2016 Christmas Program

On December 11 HMC gathered to watch and listen to the children bring a program celebrating Christ's birth. There were pieces recited, songs sung, and skits performed. A job well done! Family Christmas treats were enjoyed by all after the program.



Midweek Bible Study 2017

The Deacons would like to invite you to our annual Midweek study beginning January 18, 2017! These Wednesday studies will include opportunities not only for adults, but for children as well. Beginning with soup fellowship at 6:30pm, we will gather together as a church family before breaking into groups – child care (ages 0-pre-k), children's ministry (K-6th grade), and youth-adult Bible study – at 7:00pm. A *sign-up sheet* is in the foyer to help us better plan for our time together.

Adult Study: Courage For the Journey - led by Jill Hofer and Michelle Hofer

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." – Joshua 1:9

Have you been feeling weary, worn out, heavy-hearted or discouraged? Consider coming out this winter for Hutterthal's Midweek Bible Study. Drawing from Jill's current seminary studies and Michelle's Celtic pilgrimage experience, "Courage For the Journey" will guide you in finding needed refreshment in your daily walk with God. A series of six sessions filled with Biblical wisdom, practical guidance and light-hearted inspiration will prepare you for facing life's challenges with courage and strength:

1. Wed., Jan 18th – The Way: Who is God?
2. Wed., Jan 25th – The Traveler: Who are we?
3. Wed., Feb 1st – The Restful Path: Sabbath
4. Wed., Feb 8th – The Shared Path: Soul Friends
5. Wed., Feb 15th – The Quiet Path: Solitude
6. Wed., Feb 22nd – The Joyful Path: Worship

Children's Ministry: The Parables of Jesus – led by Kim Jones

"And the disciples came and said to [Jesus], 'Why do you speak to them in parables?' He answered and said to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven....'"

Matthew 13: 10-11, NKJV

K–6th Grade students are invited to take part in our Midweek Children's Ministry! Following our soup fellowship in the church basement, the K–6th grade will move to the Sunday School wing to explore the parables of Jesus. The parables are central to understanding the ministry of Jesus and who He is calling us to be. Engaging these stories together, we will learn together what the Kingdom of heaven is life and how that helps us know how to follow Jesus *today*. Over our six weeks together, we will be challenged by the following parables:

1. Wed., Jan 18th – The Parable of the Sower
2. Wed., Jan 25th – The Parable of Rich Farmer
3. Wed., Feb 1st – The Parable of the Talents
4. Wed., Feb 8th – The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant
5. Wed., Feb 15th – The Parable of the Tower Builder
6. Wed., Feb 22nd – The Parable of the Yeast