

March 2017

**Hutterthal  
Mennonite Church**  
Freeman, SD

# CONNECTION!

Making a CONNECTION with one another

## MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1) Denise Friesen
- 4) Vernon P. Hofer
- 4) Shirley Hofer
- 6) Donovan Friesen
- 6) Jessica Preheim
- 7) Kevin Pullman
- 10) Mildred Hofer
- 11) Charlene Friesen
- 12) Rina Hofer
- 13) Eric Friesen
- 13) Todd Koerner
- 14) Hannah Jones
- 16) Savanna Timmerman
- 20) Cole Hofer
- 24) Isabel Waltner
- 24) Bonita Hofer
- 25) Haley Preheim
- 26) Jaden Thomas
- 27) Vernon J. Hofer
- 28) Amos Kleinsasser
- 28) Jackson Preheim
- 29) Adeline Friesen
- 31) Jordyn Hofer

## MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 3) Brandy Hofer & Sergio Lima
- 23) Melvin & Emma Hofer
- 25) Delmer & Shirley Hofer

## MARCH CALENDAR

- 1 10:00am Freeman Ministerial  
(Parsonage)  
6:30pm Midweek Bible Study
- 5 FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT  
9:45am Worship  
11:10am Sunday School
- 6 8:00pm Rural Revival (Freeman  
Public Library)
- 8 12:00pm FNJP (Freeman Public  
Library)
- 12 SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT  
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS!  
9:45am Worship  
11:10am Sunday School
- 13 7:00pm Prayer Shawl
- 16 7:30pm Church Board
- 19 THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT  
9:45am Worship  
11:10am Sunday School
- 19-21: CPMC Annual Leaders Retreat  
(Schuyler, NE)
- 24: Schmeckfest (Freeman Academy)
- 25: Schmeckfest (Freeman Academy)
- 26 FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT  
9:45am Worship  
11: 10am Sunday School
- 29 12:00pm *Connection!* Deadline
- 31: Schemckfest (Freeman Academy)
- Apr.1: Schmeckfest (FA)

### ***Reasons for Thanks & Praise!***

The Everence Sharing Fund provided \$1,391 in matching funds to support special needs in our church and in the Freeman community in 2016. John Clem serves as the Everence advocate for our congregation. Please contact John for more information.

Praise from Mennonite Mission Network: Thank you, Hutterthal Mennonite Church, for giving \$16,775.40 to MMN in 2016! Your donations, prayers, participation, and enthusiasm for mission play a vital role in our global church. Thank you for doing your part!

Thank from the Bethany Food Pantry: Thank you so much for your donation to Bethany Food Pantry. We appreciate your generosity and most of all we are glad that to see that people in need will benefit as a

“Our nation needs to see an alternative: churches full of Christians for whom Jesus is Lord, period, no matter what personal sacrifice has to be made to exalt His Lordship in our lives and families and communities. The triumph of the Gospel in the world awaits the triumph of the Gospel in the church. But as things stand now, the nation can't see an alternative to Self, because there isn't any to be seen.”

Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr.

### **CAN YOU HELP?**

The hospitality committee at North Church is asking for help from Hutterthal in hosting 52 people from Bethel College on Sunday, March 19, following their choir concert that evening at North Church. An offering will be taken to benefit Mennonite Central Committee. Responsibilities include Sunday overnight lodging, breakfast and a sack lunch for the road on Monday. There is a sign-up sheet in the foyer with a response needed **by March 6**. [Please note that Hutterthal will be joined by *Open Road*, a Bethel College Men's Ensemble, on Sunday morning, March 19!

***Connection!***: published since April 2000

***Connection!*** Editor: Pastor Todd Jones

**Advisory Board:** Chair-Rebecca Hofer, Marcia Schrock and Twyla Hofer

#### **HMC Links**

Website - <http://hmcfreeman.org>

“Like” Us on Facebook – [www.facebook.com/hutterthalmennonitechurch](http://www.facebook.com/hutterthalmennonitechurch)

#### **Pastoral Links**

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

Twitter – @MennPastor



I (Pastor Todd) would like to personally thank you those who rose up to meet the churches need for not 1, but 3, new furnaces. Your financial assistance was a blessing to

Hutterthal Mennonite Church and will continue to be for years to come. I praise God for you!

I (Pastor Todd) would also like to thank Michelle Hofer and Jill Hofer for rising to the challenge of leading our Midweek Bible Study, Courage for the Journey. Our time together was refreshment for the soul and spirit as we were encouraged and shaped through your leadership.

### **WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

- 1) The Church Board is currently seeking 4 adult delegates for the CPMC Annual Meeting, June 15-18, 2017 in Sioux Falls, SD. Those interested in attending as a HMC delegate are asked to speak with Dennis Schrock. (The Registration Fee is covered by the church.)
- 2) The Church Board is currently seeking 1 adult delegate for the MCUSA Biennial Convention in Orlando, FL, July 4-8, 2017. Those interested in attending as the HMC Delegate are asked to speak with Dennis Schrock. (The Registration Fee is covered by the church and Registration is currently open.)
- 3) The Deacons at Hutterthal are asking for those interested in participating in worship during Pastor Todd's Sabbatical (April 17-June 18) to prayerfully consider signing up on the worship schedule located in the church foyer. Both worship leaders and song leaders are needed.

	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Offerings</u>
February 5	89	\$4,284.00
February 12	104	\$3,000.00
February 19	98	\$2,458.46

### CHILDREN'S SUNDAY

#### SCHOOL PROJECT

Winter (March, April, May)

Swan Lake Christian Camp

### Congregational Ministries

#### March Project

Soap & Hygiene Kits for MCC





## ECUADOR PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

We are constantly reminded of the need and reality of having God's continued presence in our lives. I would first like to share some from Pastor Luis' sermon from a few Sundays back and then we have a list of prayer requests.

Jesus asked that Peter leave the work and the way of life that he was used to. Peter and the other disciples could survive on their own, they had regular day jobs, if you will, and now Jesus had asked them to "follow me." Jesus in his wandering and teaching did not rely on his own work as the disciples had, but instead relied on God and those around him. Mathew 4:18 Tells us: leave your families your way of life, follow me.

Here in Ecuador we see how we must rely on God. We also rely on all of your prayers and support from the different families and churches. Thank you.

We haven't commented through this medium about certain political issues that are going on in the US. But last week we found out that two Colombian refugee families here; that have been going to the Mennonite church in Quito were supposed to leave for the U.S. shortly, to be resettled as refugees, since they have small children and have been fleeing violence in Colombia. They were called up by the UNHCR (UN High Commission on Refugees) telling them that the process for their resettlement had been postponed, they would be in touch. This is very terrifying and heart wrenching since they are in real danger, last night (Friday, Feb. 3) with the court order from Seattle, the processes for refugees are supposed to continue as they were before Jan. 27. But we shall see how quickly UNHCR and the State Department will be able to get the process going again and we hope an pray that the process for refugees, from around the world, continues swiftly and safely. The church here is still in a transitional phase. We ask for prayers that this process is a learning and growing process and that it will make the church stronger.

The Journey International volunteers are about halfway through their time here as volunteers. We recently had a retreat for them. We are very thankful for their great attitudes and hearts for service. We pray the rest of their time here is even more exciting for their work. Here they are in a photo with Sharon N., their supervisor in the US. The Ross-Richer family has returned to Ecuador after a small delay due to medical reasons, they are all healthy now and we pray for continued good health for them. They are on their third semester in the Amazon and we pray for strengthening relationships with the different churches and communities they work with.

Our family has had colds recently so we pray for good health, especially for Aliyah, and we want to start her in pre-school, so we pray that we find an adequate school and that that transition goes well.

Thank you all for your support. Please feel free to contact us, we enjoy having conversations.

Kindly,  
Peter, Delicia and Aliyah



\* The Elementary Honors Choir presented a concert in Brookings, SD on the SDSU campus on Feb. 9, 2017 at 4:45pm. This auditioned group included two singers from HMC: Felicity Jones, daughter of Pastor Todd and

Kim Jones, and Jada Koerner, daughter of Todd and Suzanne Koerner. Both girls are students at Freeman Academy. Congratulations and keep singing!

- \* Sannie Byler's grandfather passed away on Feb. 4, 2017.
- \* Larry Hofer spent time in the ICU at Sanford due to various health problems including pneumonia. They did get the pneumonia under control, but the cancer treatments continue to cause complications (especially related to eating—lack of appetite and trouble swallowing) and physical weakness. In Mid-February Larry completed all of the prescribed radiation treatments and has transitioned to physical, occupational, and speech therapy. Prayers and support for Brigitta and the family are important during this stressful time.
- \* Amos Kleinsasser had Influenza A in early Feb.
- \* Lance and Lacey Friesen welcomed Elias Peter into their family on Feb. 9. Elias has an older brother, Henry. His HMC family includes Great-Grandma Mildred Hofer, Grandparents Steve and Charlene Friesen, Uncles and Aunts: Ben, Dave (Brandy), and Becky (Doug).
- \* On Feb. 12, HMC was privileged to help dedicate our two newest "babes in arms" to the Lord. During the worship service Avery Nichole, daughter of Brandon and Kylea Waltner, and Otto Lee Mettler, son of Rodney and Amanda Mettler, were presented for dedication. Their siblings and numerous visiting family were also in attendance.
- \* Renee Neufeld has been transferred to the VS Unit in Atlanta, GA to help stabilize the unit after the tragic, recent death of one of the young leaders there.
- \* Bill Jones, uncle to Pastor Todd, had a triple bypass surgery and is in recovering in Anderson, IN where he resides.
- \* Darlene Hofer spent about a week in Sanford Hospital due to pneumonia. Their son Galen flew in from Denver to spend some time with his parents.
- \* Phil Thomas' father Robert has had numerous falling episodes and was placed in the Thiezen Memorial Home in Marion for an unspecified time as the family consider the next step for both Robert and his wife, Jane.
- \* Melvin Glanzer, age 88, a resident at Oakview Terrace, passed into eternity on Feb. 18. Visitation was held at the Walter Funeral Home (Freeman) on Tuesday, Feb. 21 with a memorial service at HMC on the morning of Feb. 22. His wife, Rosella, of almost 62 years, continues to reside at Oakview Terrace. Daughter Linda (Dennis) Schrag live in rural Freeman.
- \* Chris and Melissa Hofer flew to Denver, CO to seek help for their crisis pregnancy. Melissa is carrying twins and they were not growing evenly. The doctors in Denver were able to perform a procedure to assist both babies who are now doing much better. The couple flew back home in late Feb.
- \* **Things to Watch For in March:** Two couples are privileged to celebrate over 50 years of marriage this March: On Mar. 23 Melvin and Emma Hofer will celebrate 70 years of marriage; and on Mar. 25 Delmer and Shirley Hofer will celebrate 61 years of marriage! Praise God and congratulations to both couples!

**Visitors to HMC:**  
Feb. 12—Carol Mettler

## ***Community News & Announcements***

**Wellspring Wholistic Counseling** announces a part-time job opening for its administrative position. This position serves as secretary and treasurer for the Wellspring Board and includes the coordination of billing information among the counselor, billing agency, and Board as well as other administrative tasks. Interested individuals should contact Dr. Dennis Ries, Wellspring Board president, at 925-7788 for more information. Wellspring is a church supported, non-profit counseling service located in Freeman and serving the surrounding community areas. The holistic concept of Wellspring supports each individual's physical, emotional and social well-being by providing a supportive environment and empowering individuals and families to experience safe, productive and positive life changes.



Swan Lake Christian Camp will be holding its Annual Meeting and Appreciation Dinner on Saturday March 4 at 6:00 pm. Doug Peterson, University of Sioux Falls Cross Country Coach, will be the featured speaker. All are welcome to attend whether you are a long time supporter or just want to find out how you can be part of the ministry at Swan Lake. Please RSVP by February 26 to [campoffice@myslcc.com](mailto:campoffice@myslcc.com) or 605-326-5690.

## ***Twila's March Tip: Foaming Hand Soap***

Make your own foaming hand soap instead of buying mostly water!

I use a 1/2 galloon juice jug with a handle because it makes refilling the foaming dispenser easier. Measure 4 cups water, pour into jug and mark with a permanent marker. Then add 2 cups more and mark again. Mark the first line "4 cups: Water to Here" and the second line "2 cups: Soap to Here." Then, when you make a batch you won't have to measure each time. Now that the container is marked, pour the two cups off the top and add soap to the "2 Cups" line. (Hint: Always add the soap to the water as there is less foaming this way!) Any liquid hand soap works, even the cheap stuff.

I keep a jug under every sink for easy refill as needed.



## STRAIGHT UP...

“In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.’ Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

2 Corinthians 6: 2, NKJV

God’s timing is perfect! When He speaks (and He *is* speaking), the time to respond in surrendered obedience is not when it is convenient, but *now*. As Henry T. Blackaby and Richard Blackaby have noted, “We often act as if we have all the time in the world to obey [God], but history doesn’t wait on our commitments.” In our economy of anemic discipleship, “if not now, when” too often becomes “if not now, never.”

But, that’s not the way it works, at least not according to Scripture. In the pages of the Bible, the message is clear that we are faced with a singular decision: obedience or disobedience. It is either belief or unbelief.

In 2 Corinthians when Paul proclaims God’s message that “now is the accepted time,” he is not inviting us into deeper contemplation of the mysteries; he is calling us to respond, because he knows full-well that what we do next is critical. Will we follow hard after Him or will we look for another way? Will we, like a child, run into the arms of our Father, seeking His good and perfect will or will we, as jaded adults, try to compromise and offer to God our excuses: I’m too busy, to tired, to old or young, to broken, to ... [*insert excuse here*]?

I think we forget that God is all-sufficient — that Paul’s declaration is a word for us as well: “I *can* do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4: 13, NKJV). I think we forget that, if God calls us, He will equip us, and even more, He will go with us. And, if God goes with us, we do not have to have all the answers; we need only a willing heart. For, His resources far outweigh our limitations.

What is God calling you to do *today*? What is God’s “now” for you? What excuses do you need to repent of as you take those first tentative steps into a fuller obedience?

In Christ,  
Pastor Todd

## Mennonite Mission Network Prayers

Week of **March 5**: Pray for the joint MHS Mennonite Health Assembly and Mennonite Education Agency Education Leaders Gathering taking place March 9-12 in Jacksonville, Florida. Health care and education professionals from Anabaptist-related institutions across the country will be gathering to learn, network, and share. The MHS Board will also be meeting prior to and during the conference.

Week of **March 12**: Please pray for the Constituency Leaders Council meeting, which takes place in Elkhart, Indiana, March 16-18.

Week of **March 19**: Pray for the Future Church Summit will add a new dimension to this summer’s Mennonite Church USA **Convention**, inviting participants to envision an Anabaptist future for the church.

Week of **March 26**: Pray for the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board as it meets March 30-April 1 in Kansas City, Missouri, to worship, discern and care for the business of the church.



\*Photos courtesy of Rebecca Hofer



“Suffer the little children to come to Me,” Jesus said. So, It is good and right that we bring our children before God as an act of faithful dedication. Thus, in celebration of the births of Avery Nichole Waltner (daughter of Brandon and Kylea) and Otto Lee Metter (son of Rodney and Amanda), and in recognition

that we are not our own, but belong in body and soul in life and in death to Jesus Christ, on February 12, we celebrated the dedications of these precious ones. We covenanted to walk with them and to help shepherd their way. May it be so! May we fulfill this beautiful call to these and all God’s children.



### **Family Time:**

You can nurture your families faith at home this Lent and Easter with family worship. “**Restore Us, O God,**” a devotional resource can be picked up in the church foyer (or print your own from the website: [www.anabaptistfaithformation.org](http://www.anabaptistfaithformation.org)). This resource is for use beginning March 1 (Ash Wednesday) and running through April 16 (Easter Sunday).

“Guilt is appropriate if you choose to share the truth about Jesus without living it.”

Rick McKinley



## EIGHTY YEARS OF LIVING AND LEARNING

By Shirley Hofer

I was born on a farm near the Salem Mennonite Church to Felix and Selma Preheim on March 4, 1937. Two sisters, Patricia and Collette and a brother Randall soon joined the family.

I attended a country school and then went on to Freeman Academy where I met the love of my life, Delmer Hofer. It was his big brown eyes that hooked me. We were married on March 25, 1956. We were blessed with two precious children, Brent and Charlotte. From Brent I have learned that living simply and frugally are important values. Charlotte is teaching me to keep on walking even if the road is rough.



Life-long learning has been very important to Delmer and me. He went on to complete his doctorate in Educational Administration and I graduated from Mount Marty College with a degree in music and minors in psychology and art. For many years I taught piano, organ and calligraphy. Teaching my students and also learning from them gave me great joy.

I am deeply grateful to my church family who has taught me many things and has helped me grow closer to God. Perhaps the most profound concept I have learned from the congregation is the great power of prayer. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to the many people who have befriended me at the various places that I have lived. They have taught me to recognize the value of others and that there are good, kind people everywhere.

My five grandchildren are a wonderful blessing in my life. I have learned much from each of them: from Katie: to suffer without complaining and to focus on the blessings that remain for her; from Alex: that money doesn't bring happiness but helping people does; from Scott: that loving and learning are what life is all about; from Shannon: to live each day with gladness and thanksgiving; and from Emily: when she was four she and I went to visit my mother, Selma. On the way home we talked about the nice time we had and I asked Emily if she knew that Grandma Selma was my mother. She looked surprised and replied "I did not know that. I have so much to learn."

We all have much to learn. As I look back on 80 years of living I am reminded that every day is a gift of grace for me to learn, to love as Christ loves, to share with others, to praise God and to live each day to the fullest for His glory!

HMC Library News:

**H** by

These

by Shirley Hofer

## Restore Us, O God: 2017 Lenten Devotional

You can nurture your children's faith at home this Lent and Easter with family worship. "Restore us, O God," a free guide for family worship provided by Anabaptist Faith Formation, is available in the church foyer for those who interested. This free resource is for use between March 1 (Ash Wednesday) and April 16 (Easter Sunday). It includes a daily Bible reading, a short litany, songs, hands-on activities, and questions to ponder together as a family. We encourage you to pick up your copy today!

### Empower Me

by Marian Brendle Hostetler

Merciful God,  
your compassion touches me,  
consumed in my own agenda;  
my outlook is refreshed, making  
me whole.  
Show me the way of mercy for  
others.

Gracious God,  
gently you accept the broken  
fragments I offer,  
weaving them into your global  
work of reconciliation.  
Increase my capacity to grace  
others.

Faithful God,  
as you constantly attend to my  
journey,  
your familiar voice strengthens,  
challenges and consoles.  
May I also walk faithfully with  
others.

Forgiving God,  
you offer pardon freely,  
moving me on to new levels of  
commitment.  
Empower my heart to forgive  
others.

Loving God,  
your steadfast, unending care for  
me  
is overwhelming!  
Walk with me to live in harmony  
and love with all people. Amen.



Marian Hostetler grew up in eastern Pennsylvania, is married to Darrel, and they have four living children, ten grands and five great-grands. They live at Greencroft in Goshen, IN. She is retired from various pursuits, the most recent being as a spiritual director. She served as Executive Secretary of WMSC from 1987 to 1996. She is also a contributor to the winter issue of *Timbrel*.



## Prayers for our Journey Together

### Week of February 26:

In this time of upheaval where immigration is concerned, pray that the religious worker visa for Pastor Max Villatoro will be approved so that he can return to his family and leadership position at Torre Fuerte.

### Week of March 5:

Prayer for the Mennonite Education and Health leaders of Mennonite Church USA who will be gathering in Jacksonville, FL for the annual convention.

### Week of March 12:

Pray for the Tim, Margie Mejia Caraballo and Sid Burkey who will be gathering for the Constituency Leaders Council in Elkhart, IN next weekend. Also pray for Dave Boshart as he leads these meetings.

### For March 19:

Pray for our conference pastors, chaplains, and spouses who will gather for the Annual Leaders Retreat in Schuyler, NE today through Tuesday noon. Pray that this will be a time of renewal and mutual support.

### Week of March 26:

Pray for the outreach ministries of our conference congregations as they seek to offer grace, joy and peace to their neighbors.

*One thing I have desired of the  
Lord, that will I seek ... to behold  
the beauty of the Lord.*

*Psalm 27: 4, NKJV*

## MCUSA NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) Every two years, at the Mennonite Church USA convention, the Delegate Assembly convenes to tend to the business of Mennonite Church USA. However, at convention in Orlando, Florida – July 4-8, 2017 – the role of delegates will be anything but business-as-usual. This year we will be trying something new – the **Future Church Summit** – in conjunction with the regular Delegate Assembly. Follow this link to find out how it will work: [http://mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Information-for-Delegates\\_Final.pdf](http://mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Information-for-Delegates_Final.pdf)
- 2) **MCC Material Resource needs:** The Workroom at the MCC Material Resource Center in North Newton is a busy place! So busy, that we are running very low on the following items: men's deodorant (min. size 2.25 oz), men's briefs (white), size L or XL only, men's crew neck undershirts (white), size L or XL only, lotion (max. size 2 oz), bath towels (med. weight, dark colors), fingernail clippers, shampoo (13-24 oz). You are welcome to shop [Amazon Smile](https://www.amazon.com/registry/wishlist/17TB7GOT33OVJ/?ref=cm_sw_r_cp_ep_ws_70dwybJSDP1DX) ([https://www.amazon.com/registry/wishlist/17TB7GOT33OVJ/?ref=cm\\_sw\\_r\\_cp\\_ep\\_ws\\_70dwybJSDP1DX](https://www.amazon.com/registry/wishlist/17TB7GOT33OVJ/?ref=cm_sw_r_cp_ep_ws_70dwybJSDP1DX)) for easy shopping and the ability to ship it directly to MCC in North Newton, plus a small portion of your purchase is donated back to MCC by Amazon. Items can be brought to MCC at 121 E. 30th in North Newton, KS 67117 and left in the After Hours Donation Drop Off at anytime. Thank you for your continued generous support!

# Courage for the Journey

A Midweek Bible Study co-led by Michelle Kofer and Jill Kofer



Kicking off January 18, 2017, “Courage for the Journey” took us on a 6-week pilgrimage that included both laughter and tears. Along the way, we discovered the spiritual practices of the Celts and had the opportunity to not only hear from our co-leaders, but from other members of our congregation as well as from one another during times of sharing. A special thanks for Michelle and Jill who poured themselves into this time and encouraged us all along the way!

Photos courtesy of  
Marcia Schrock



## MIDWEEK CHILDREN’S MINISTRY

The Midweek Bible Study also included a study for the children led by Kim Jones. The children went on their own journey through the parables of Jesus with hands-on, interactive lessons that were geared to help them engage the Bible as the living Word of God.



Jesus said,  
“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”  
Luke 8: 8c, MEV