

Joy Mennonite Church



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December 1994

PASTORS
CORNER

I would like to write a little about our recent elections. I do not want to write about election results but about the perceptions and attitudes that surround the elections.

From the media and private conversations we hear that winners are right and losers are in error and should have known better. We are a little like the little boy who said he knew how to tell the sex of the goldfish their classroom had acquired. The teacher knew it was risky but allowed the little boy to give his suggestion. "We will vote on it," the little boy said. We are not innocent children, and we are not voting on the sex of goldfish. We are adults and voting on serious matters. But we use the same mentality. We think we can vote on what is right and true. We have a mentality that winners are right because they have more votes.

Should the church teach its people how to vote? The answer is probably a qualified yes. I will give my suggestions of how. I welcome any response anyone may have.

First, money wins elections. In America it takes lots of money. It is an evil system, but real. The church should teach its people how our large financial institutions manipulate elections.

Not only do political candidates bow to money but people vote for their pocketbooks. There are other issues, of course, but the economy is usually the number one issue. Most voters vote for their own best economic interests even though most of us are only marginally affected by the outcome. We may lose at the edges but will continue to have food and shelter. There are people who will be affected on the basic level of human need. In the past election we had a candidate who was known for his concern for the disadvantaged. We had another candidate who favored pressuring our government to shift funds and prioritize the funding of the United Nations Children Emergency Fund. We voted for our concerns. The church should guide its people to lose our selfish concerns for frills to the deep human needs of others. It may affect the way we vote. The church should teach that there is truth, there is a way that is right. We may not always know what it is, but we must search for it. It is not something we can vote on. The masses can be wrong, and the lonely voice of the prophet may be right. We make knowing what is right more complex because we want an economic advantage at the same time.

Finally, the church should teach its people not to invest too much in government. Idolatry and nationalism are connected in the scriptures. The goals of government are not those of the Kingdom of God. It is political suicide to ignore the wishes of the wealthy and focus on human need. We should not invest so much in politics that we fall into their schemes, but we

can expect much and should hold our leaders responsible to do what is right. The next elections are nearly two years away, but the politicians are getting prepared, and so should we. The politicians will try to get us to focus on what they call our best interest. It is probably their interest. As people of faith we must focus on what is right, not just for me but for all of God's world.

Moses Mast, Pastor



Dear Friends,

Many of you may believe that you have "heard me" say some of these things before. I will attempt to keep them down to a minimum, but in reflecting on values there are so many facets - many of which nearly defy definition. Things of the heart and soul may frequently be left up to feelings and opinion - both based on lessons and impressions out of the past - from childhood.

I love this topic, for it allows me to reflect on my parents, realizing how much they loved us and how important it was to them to be role models in hopes that we also would develop or acquire honorable "values."

When I contemplate some attributes that they felt were values, it becomes clear that most were funnelled into strengthening a family circle. They include tolerance, patience, understanding, encouragement, support and, of course, love and forgiveness. The degree to which the first five of the above are present, tests the success of the last two.

Especially now, coming out of a period of thanksgiving and praise, and attempting to continue that theme for Christmas, these are weeks of thought and memory of family, and of present family experience. Truly a time when only peace and good will can express honestly what we all profess as Christians, in love and forgiveness. Love your family more.

Let us be aware this season of the act of giving of ourselves more than the material gift, and a proper attitude in accepting God's gift(s) to us.

Have a beautiful and meaningful Christmas season, coming out vibrant and alive to begin the New Year.

Best wishes to all, Bee Klassen



F·E·L·L·O·W·S·H·I·P



Our Workday at the church on Sat., 12 Nov., was well attended by members to clean up yard and grounds, with lots of help from our renter Eric - a good day of fellowship all the way around. A number of us had a good time participating in the Oklahoma City Peace Fest on Sat. 19 Nov. 94

The service of Holy Communion will be observed at our regular 10:00 a.m. Sunday worship on 11 December, 1994. All are welcome at the Lord's table.

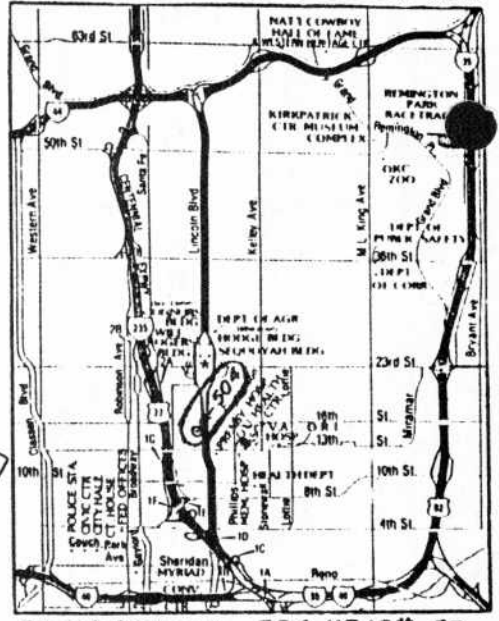
As we have fellowshipped with our west neighborhood community residents through the year, we hope to continue in praise and song with them at a Christmas social/carolling party at 6:00 p.m. on Sat., 10 Dec., at the church.

On Sun., 18 Dec., residents of the Lincoln Terrace Association will join us for our second annual Christmas social and carol singing party at 6:00 p.m. in the church.



THE YEAR AHEAD

WORSHIP SERVICE EVERY SUNDAY AT 10 O'CLOCK A.M.



Church Address: 504 NE 16th St.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sun., 4 Dec. Second Sunday in Advent
Sat., 10 Dec. West Neighborhood Community Christmas Caroling Party @ 6 p.m.
Sun., 11 Dec. Service of Holy Communion
Sun., 18 Dec. Lincoln Terrace Assn. Caroling Party @ 6 p.m.
Sun., 25 Dec. Christmas Day
Sat., 31 Dec. Last Day of 1994
Sun., 1 Jan. '95 Begin of a New Year



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