



Joy Mennonite Church

Mailing Address:

4708 Outpost Drive
Spencer, OK, 73084
(405) 799-7836

Church Telephone No.:

April 1995

During Lent, we are looking at the road that leads to the cross. We confess that Jesus was uniquely the Son of God. We must not err however in the belief that the cross and the way that leads to the cross only pertains to Jesus. Jesus said that anyone who wishes to follow him must go the same road of the cross.



The cross has become such a revered symbol of the Christian faith, that we have made the cross an end in itself. The cross cannot be understood as an end in itself. It is the way of the cross, a life of choices that lead to the cross. The cross is the price we pay for remaining faithful and staying on the way.

One way to understand the meaning of the cross is to understand what Jesus did while he was on the way. The gospel writers describe Jesus as one who healed the sick and went about doing good. When Jesus was threatened with death, he said he must continue this ministry regardless of the consequences (Luke 13:32). Such a ministry of healing and doing good would be applauded by the powers if it was directed to people like ourselves. Jesus' ministry, however, was focused on the rejected of society. We can see in our time that the modern martyrs are also those who ministered to societies' rejected ones.

The road to the cross is not a commitment to die, it is a commitment to faithful ministry of healing and doing good. It is, however, acting out of faith rather than that of a do-gooder spirit. Even evil societies like do-gooders because it makes up for their sins. Faith is a sense of how it should be under the rule of God. When we act out of faith, the roots of the suffering of the rejected are exposed. In Jesus' ministry, the cleansing of the temple exposed the structured or institutionalized evil. Instead of finding healing in the temple worship, the masses were being victimized. If this had not been true, they could have tried Jesus fairly in their courts. But because it was true, they had to get rid of the one who exposed them.

The Lenten season is a good time for us to search our hearts and renew our commitment to continue on the way of the cross. We of course must remember, for us it does not end on Good Friday. We must continue on this road. We hope all of you have a blessed experience this Easter season and pray that God will give us courage to remain faithful on the road always.

Mona Mast

Dear Friends,

Hope all of you who wished, did have a beautiful St. Patrick's Day for getting your potatoes and peas planted. Those are the days and times (among others) that really take me back in memory to my Dad. Oh did he love his garden - all acre plus of it - and gardening. It was work, lots of hard work, and looking back, we (!) were probably more of a hindrance than help in that arena, and what we did eventually do was not always cheerfully done. Dad did dearly love his family (even the lazy ones) and managed for the most part to get all the garden tended, and the lawn and yard work also. We may have recognized his disappointment often for our lack of interest, but we didn't recognize it thru anger.

Not being a parent, I have not faced parenting problems from that side, but it's probably safe to say that in most cases parental love is still present - maybe shown in different ways in this day and age. Much more important than recognizing disappointments, is for young people to recognize and respond to that parental love to make a family "function" properly and efficiently.

This Lenten season, now coming down the home stretch to Good Friday and Easter, has also provided opportunity for reflection and meditation. Typically reflections produce an image of how it really is. Occasionally one receives a reprieve in being able to project images of the past, through the present and into the future. When that is too frightening an experience to deal with, we can make midcourse corrections and avert disaster. But a much better way is to recognize and respond appropriately to our Heavenly Father's love shown to us in Jesus' life, and now at Easter the meaning and significance of his death for us.

As with gifts that can be accepted or refused, God's Love and Salvation is constantly there, held out to us for our acceptance - the choice is ours. Our Lenten services have been geared in that direction, and it has been very fitting to wind down our study of the book of Mark at this time of year. The book deals with Jesus' life - baptism, temptation, teaching and ministry; Jesus' death - triumphal entry, betrayal, trial and crucifixion; and the bottom line - Jesus' resurrection and his eternal promise.

Spring is the time for living, growing things to revitalize - there's lots of evidence out there already and the calendar even confirms this. We also hope to be growing in our spiritual lives, and what better time than in the Lenten season - the spring of our church year - to be revitalized and committed or recommitted. Have a beautiful and inspiring Easter.

Best wishes to all,

Bob Klassen

FELLOWSHIP NEWS:

Pastors for Peace passed through OKC and were hosted at our church, March 10-11. We also collected rice, beans and cooking oil to send along with them.

We have been a part of assisting a couple from Guatemala, who had to leave their home because of death threats, get settled in OKC.



"Wanderer, Come Home," and has involved a number of our members participating in the worship services as leaders, readers, musicians, dramatists and children's story tellers. The Worship Committee thanks COE (Commission on Education of the General Conference) for the excellent resource material.

COMING EVENTS:

Saturday, April 1, will be our next "workday" at the church, and in the neighborhood, as well. All are welcome to come, any time after 9am.

The Maundy Thursday service will be April 13, at 7pm, concluding with the service of Communion. All of our fellowship and friends are invited to attend.

Our Westside neighborhood community is scheduling a "clean-up" day for Saturday, April 22. All who wish to be a part of this activity are invited.

The Social Committee has given us two choices this month: go see the Prince of Peace Easter Pageant in Lawton on Saturday, April 15; and/or tour the Harn Homestead, one block west of our church, on Sunday, April 23.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

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| April 9, Sunday | Palm Sunday |
| April 13, Thursday | Maundy Thursday |
| April 14, Friday | Good Friday |
| April 16, Sunday | Easter |
| April 22-23, Sat-Sun | Men & Boys
Retreat, Camp Mennoscah, KS |

SS NEWS:

The Adult SS class finished the study of Mark, using Willard Swartley's book, Mark: The Way for All Nations, as a guide. Thanks to Mike Powers for leading the class. On March 26, the adult class began a study Mennonite/Anabaptist History, led by Mike Bartley, pastor of Clegg United Methodist Church, at 6pm Sunday evenings. Sunday morning class time will be spent discussing the morning's sermon, led by Ralph Ediger.

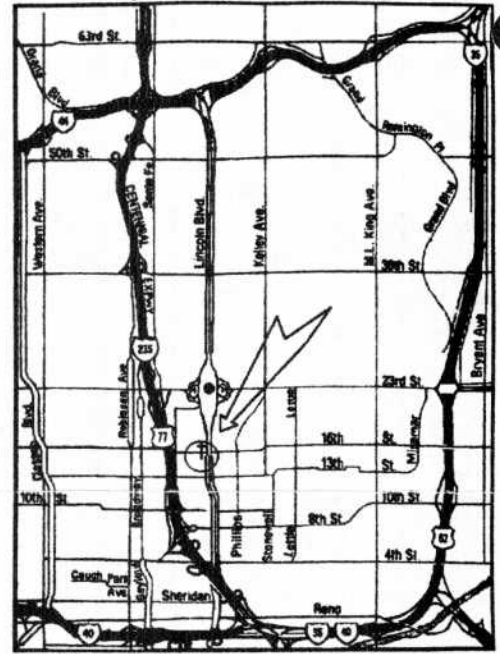
We have formed a SS Committee to help organize our children's classes. Currently we have about eight regular attenders, grades 3-9, a diverse range in ages and abilities! So we are trying three classes: "elementary" (gr. 3-5), taught by Sadie Mast; "middlers" (gr. 6-8), taught by Darlene Powers, and a new "high school" class, taught by Judy Perkins, for our two 9th graders. Classes will be adjusted as attendance hopefully increases. We are in need of Foundation Series student books, however. Any churches wishing to donate unused student materials, please contact Darlene at (405) 787-6433. We appreciate the donations we have already received!

WORSHIP NEWS:

The theme of our Lenten services has been

Worship Service

Every Sunday at 10 O'clock A.M.



Church Address: 504 NE 16th St.

(just west of the oil derrick)

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| May 14, Sunday | Mother's Day |
| May 29, Monday | Memorial Day |
| June 18, Sunday | Father's Day |
| July 25-30 | GC/MC Joint
Conference, Wichita, KS |

Wichita '95



NOTICE:

OKC-area Readers: If we have not had contact with you lately, and you wish to continue receiving this newsletter, please call and let us know.

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SPENCER OK 73084

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