

# Joy Mennonite Church Newsletter

August 1996

## Pastor's Corner

According to the gospels, Jesus believed the giving of our tithes and offerings can lead us to God and the kingdom or can make us more pagan. Jesus noted how some very religious people were giving their offerings and said they were no different than their pagan neighbors. They gave out of their abundance and were giving to be seen by others. Mark tells us the story of Jesus observing the people

putting their offerings in the temple treasury. After some rich people put in large amounts of money, a poor widow put in two copper coins. Jesus said she put in more than all the others. Jesus said she gave more than all the others because the rich gave out of their abundance and the widow gave sacrificially.

As I reflect, I have only given what I did not need for myself. To

give up luxury is not the same as sacrificial giving. Gandhi once said that religious people who pay no price or make no sacrifice for their faith will become idolatrous. To give out of abundance could make us believe we have done well when in reality our hearts' desires are far from God. Idolatry.

Recently the needs of a family was brought to our attention. We decided to take a love offering. Then someone mentioned

fasting as a spiritual discipline, give up something in order to give. I must say for us overweight people we probably did not give up anything. The point we want to make is this, real meaningful giving has to be more than giving what we do not need, it needs to be sacrificial. Only giving what we do not need can just as easily lead to idolatry. Giving as the widow in the story in Mark, sacrificially, leads to God and the kingdom.

*Moses Mart*

## Member Profile

*Thea I. (Janz) Klassen, by Bill Klassen*

Late in the same year that Hitler came to power in Germany, Thea Janz was born in East Prussia, Germany, the eleventh of twelve children.

It was in the rural farming community of Klein-Marienwalde between Tilsit and Koenigsberg (now Sovetsk and Kaliningrad). Her home church was Adlig Pokracken which, because of transportation, family size, etc., she/they attended as often as they could.

Devout Christians, Thea's parents started her in the direction of Christian commitment before her otherwise normal childhood was interrupted by the approach of the Russian army late in 1944 of World War II.

Believing they would return later, taking only necessities, they stayed ahead of the Russians, first over the frozen waters near the Baltic seacoast, then inland, ending up seven months later in what would be called West Germany in Lauenburg on the Elbe River.

Thea, with her family (by now parents, blind aunt, one sister and kid brother) waited anxiously for word of her four brothers who had been in the army. During this period they heard of a Mennonite church and minister in Hamburg where Thea went for two weeks of catechism before baptism late in 1948.

Thea's brothers did eventually all get reunited with the family

*Note: In our July issue, we asked Thea Klassen to write about her experiences with MCC in Germany after World War II. Now we are including a "profile" of Thea, like we have been doing with our other writers. We hope that you, our readers, are getting to know who we are at Joy Mennonite Church through these personal stories.*

after the war, and some soon moved to Canada and laid groundwork to sponsor Thea, parents, sister and kid brother to follow in 1954. Rejected for that move, and after high school graduation and attending commercial school, Thea stayed on as secretary for MCC, waiting for her papers to be processed and approved.

Fate? During this holdover period, a PAX boy from Newton, Kansas, met Thea, and as she then left to join her parents, it was "Auf Wiedersehen" -- not farewell, and Bill Klassen courted Thea by mail until their engagement Christmas Eve of 1955 and marriage New Year's Eve that same year. In May of 1959 Thea

passed the test and became a citizen of our USA.

"Whither thou goest, I will go," and that Thea did, whether for whatever reason, or professional development/ advancement (she is a certified medical transcriptionist), she stayed with Bill in Newton, West Germany, Hutchinson, KS, Oklahoma City, New Jersey, back to Oklahoma City where they now reside, becoming charter members of Joy Mennonite Church in December of 1990. Still active in JMC, Thea is presently secretary for this small loving family fellowship group.

### Fellowship News:

Moses & Sadie Mast traveled to Ohio, July 6-7, to meet with the Amish men they took on an MCC-sponsored trip to Mexico last year. They are continuing discussions about how they can help the Mennonite colonies in Mexico.

Bill & Thea Klassen attended the Western District Conference sessions in Dallas, July 5-7. They gave a report to the church during the SS hour on July 28, mentioning several ideas for our church to explore.

Our bowling social on Saturday, July 20, was well attended.

### Calendar

- Aug 25 Back to School Sunday
- Sept 7-8 WD Women's Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
- Sept 14-15 OK Convention, Herold Menn. Church, Cordell, OK
- Oct 6 World Wide Communion Sunday
- Oct 6 CROP Walk

Laura Powers returned home Friday, July 26, from a great week with her friends from Wichita, KS, on their service trip to San Antonio, TX. We wish to thank the Lorraine Ave. Mennonite Church for inviting her to come along.

We have heard from Shirley Watkins, who recently moved to Gulfport, MS, that she has found a good job. Praise the Lord!

Sadie Mast attended the MCC Relief Sale meeting, held here in OKC, on July 27, and has suggestions about how we might get involved this year. Give her a call if you are interested.

### Business Meeting News:

The revised Constitution and Bylaws were adopted at our quarterly business meeting, July 20. We hope and pray that this document will serve us well.

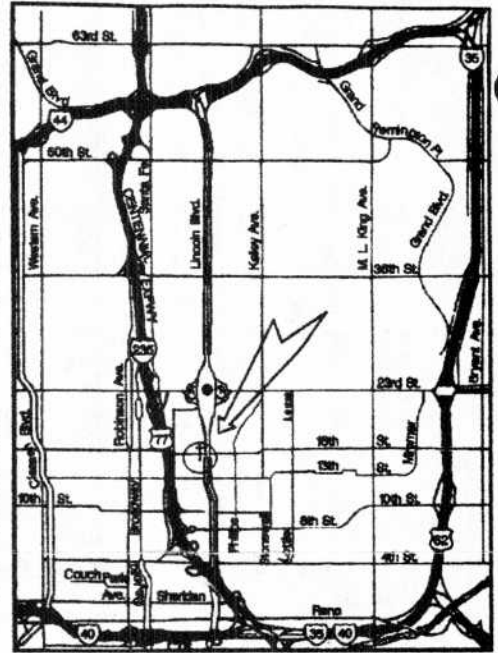
### Worship News:

In Moses & Sadie's absence July 7, we enjoyed watching one of the tapes of Peter Dyck's stories, during the worship service.

The Deacons (formerly Worship Committee) have been asking different persons

### Worship Service:

Every Sunday at 10 O'clock A.M.



**Church Address:** 504 NE 16th St.  
(Just west of the oil derrick on Lincoln Blvd.)

to serve as Worship Leader each month. Recent leaders have been Kay Brueckner, Bill & Thea Klassen, and Terry Hostetler.

**Reminder:** September newsletter items are due by August 21. Give to Mike or Darlene Powers.

*Newsletter Contributors: Moses Mast, Pastor's Corner; Bill Klassen, Writer & Mailing; Darlene Powers & Sadie Mast, News Items; Mike Powers, Publisher.*

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