



Mennonite Church
Of the Servant

Newsletter

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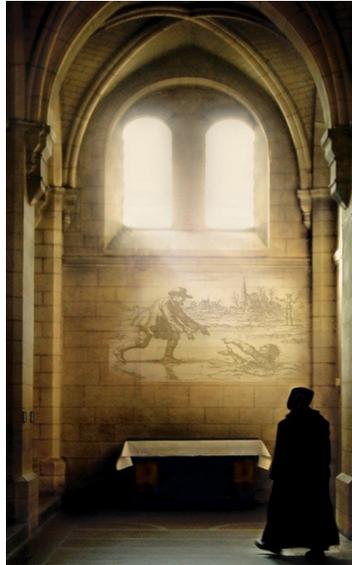
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Announcement!
Potluck June 12
With Guests!

A MONASTIC ANABAPTIST MANIFESTO

By Pastor Jerry Truex



A manifesto is a public declaration of intentions. This is a Monastic Anabaptist Manifesto for the Mennonite Church of the Servant. It articulates our Anabaptist identity and our intention to identify with the new monasticism.

Our church spent several months in conversation about our life together and our unique identity during 2008. As a result of that conversation, we crafted three statements that described and prescribed our Anabaptist identity.

- We commit ourselves to radical and biblical spirituality
- We live in relational and accountable community
- We seek Christ's peace within and in the world

Following our conversation about identity, we recognized that we had affinities with the emerging new monasticism. So we decided to study monasticism. We found that early Anabaptist leaders, like Michael Sattler and Leonard Schiemer, were former monks. We saw that we shared similar practices and convictions with monastic communities, including costly discipleship, disciplined spiritual life, covenanted community, peacemaking, and reaching out to the poor and marginalized.

This article, therefore, is the first of a four-part series declaring our Anabaptist and neo-monastic intentions. In this part, I will talk about our commitment to *radical and biblical spirituality*. In part two, I will expand on what we mean by *relational and accountable community*. In part three, I will explicate our dedication to seeking *peace within and in the world*. In the last part, I will correlate our practices and convictions with *neo-monasticism* and argue that monasticism offers solutions to modern problems. Along the way, I will identify our specific *community practices* and more individually stylized *spiritual disciplines*

(A Monastic Anabaptist Manifesto continued from page 1)

RADICAL AND BIBLICAL SPIRITUALITY



We are committed to radical and biblical spirituality. Simply put, this means we are dedicated to knowing and encountering God through Jesus Christ and the Bible.

1. By **radical spirituality** we mean our spirituality—our encounter with God and participation in the divine nature—“comes from the source,” namely, Jesus himself. The word radical derives from the Latin word, *radix*, meaning “from the root or origin.” Just as tree roots anchor the tree in the soil, keeping it straight and stable, providing it water and nutrients, so Jesus Christ anchors our spirituality.

Radical spirituality means we follow Jesus, the source of our life and faith. We go to the source and draw from the source, especially highlighted by Jesus’ teachings in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7). We walk as Jesus walked (1 Jn. 2:6). We take Jesus as the model for our actions, attitudes, and values (Jn. 13:34-35; 1 Jn. 3:18). We conform to Christ, not the world (Rom. 12:2; 1 Jn. 2:15-16).

Radical also means “extreme” or going beyond expectations. Both Jesus and the 16th century Anabaptists, such as Conrad Grebel and Menno Simons, went beyond the religious expectations of their time. For example, Jesus agreed with Moses that we should love God and neighbor (Deut. 6:4; Lev 19:18), but he went beyond Moses by teaching us to love our enemies and pray for those who intend to harm us (Matt 5:43-45). We want to be as radical in our time as Jesus was in his and Grebel and Menno were in theirs.

2. By **biblical spirituality** we mean the Bible is the primary source for our understanding God, Jesus, and ourselves. Of course, tradition, reason, and experience have a role to play, but we view the Bible as the primary catalyst for our spiritual growth and transformation (2 Tim. 3:16-17). When we read the Bible with faith, it becomes a source of encouragement, inspiration, transformation, enlightenment, comfort, and divine encounter.

Simply put, reading the Bible with faith moves us to experience and express God’s love (1 Jn. 4:7-8). By grace, we are moved to cultivate the character of Christ or fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16-24), to develop Christ-consciousness (Phil. 2:5), to continue the incarnation of Christ in the world (1 Cor. 12:12-28), and to worship as a pledge allegiance to God alone (Deut. 6:4-5; Matt. 4:10).

3. How do we nurture and express **radical and biblical spirituality**? We do it by keeping certain *community practices* and *spiritual disciplines*.

Community practices refer to group activities that root us in Christ and the Bible. These practices include participating in our Sunday worship and teaching, servant groups, Lent seminars, and annual retreat.

There are also specific, more individually stylized, *spiritual disciplines* that connect us to Christ and the Bible, such as Missional-Bible Study and Scripture Memorization-Meditation.

"the restoration of the church will surely come only from a new type of monasticism ... lived in accordance with the Sermon on the Mount in the discipleship of Christ."

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Extract of a letter written by Bonhoeffer to his brother Karl-Friedrich on Jan. 14, 1936.

(To be continued in the July Newsletter; “A Monastic Anabaptist Manifesto: Part Two - Relational and Accountable Community.”)

Worship in May

Theme	Worship Leaders & Teachers	Mission Focus
<p>We continue with this theme of <i>Turn to Jesus; Go with the Spirit</i> until Pentecost, June 12.</p> <p>June 12 is a special event. We have invited Casa Batania with Pastor Jaime from Newton to join us as well as their contacts in Wichita. Note that this is an opportunity to practice our spiritual discipline of hospitality! Therefore, we will move potluck to this Sunday. Let Geneva know what you can bring.</p> <p>Beginning June 19 and spreading throughout the summer, we will be studying the book of <i>Thessalonians</i>. Try to read ahead. We have not studied this book together in a long time.</p>	<p>June 5—Worship leader, Doug; teaching by Jerry Truex; Communion</p> <p>June 12—Worship leader, Nita & Steve; teaching by Jerry Truex; potluck</p> <p>June 19—Worship leader, Vangie; teaching by Pat Cameron</p> <p>June 26—Worship leader, Doug Von; teaching by Lois Barrett</p>	<p>June 5: Peace and Social Justice Center—Jeanette</p> <p>June 12: none</p> <p>June 19: “Fear Not” MCC Peace Campaign—John</p> <p>June 26: Peace and Social Justice Center—Pat</p>

Mennonite World Conference News

On May 4, the MWC Executive Committee formally appointed César García of Bogotá, Colombia, as General Secretary-elect, to succeed Larry Miller on January 1, 2012. This is the first time a leader from the global South will become the General Secretary of the Mennonite World Conference (MWC).

Also included in the Executive Committee action was the plan to move the location of the MWC head office from Strasbourg, France, to Bogotá.

García, who was chair of the Iglesias Hermanos Menonitas de Colombia (Mennonite Brethren Churches of Colombia) from 2002 to 2008, is currently completing masters studies at Fresno Pacific Biblical Seminary in Fresno, California. García is married to Sandra Báez, who is also completing studies in Fresno. They have two teenage daughters, María and Paula.

www.mwc-cmm.org 4 May 2011

Prayer Requests

1. Please pray for Erna and Russell as they manage their health issues.
2. Please pray for MC and family for health issues (Toby) and parenting issues and strength.
3. Please pray that we, as a church, will align ourselves with what God is doing in regards to the new church plant. Pray for the hiring process for the new church planter.
4. Pray for those injured in the wake of storms hitting the US.

Baptism



On Sunday, May 8, Kierra Celeste Montgomery took an important step of faith and was baptized by Pastor Jerry Truex and her Sunday class teacher, Vangie Truex in the Ninnescah River at Camp Mennoscah during the church’s annual retreat.

Servant Groups



A servant group is an intentional face-to-face group (3-12 people) who meet at a regular time (often twice a month) to grow in Christ and actualize God's reign. We have five groups.

NT Greek Reading Group. This group focuses on reading and translating the Greek New Testament. Currently, we are working through Luke's Gospel. Each person reads a verse in Greek and then translates into English, using "whatever it takes," including computer programs (Bible Works and Logos), interlinears, grammars, hand books, and other helps. In this way, we are able to include both beginners and advanced students. We meet on Wednesday from 1:30 to 3:00 pm at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church. Contact Jerry at 263-0204 (jtruex1@cox.net)

Psychosynthesis Study Group. This group meets on the 2nd the 4th Wednesday of each month. We are currently reading two books, one by Will Parfitt entitled, *Psychosynthesis*, and the other by Joyce Hudson entitled, *Natural Spirituality*. At the meetings, we discuss the books and talk about the spiritual exercises we practiced. Between meetings we practice the various exercises from dream journaling to meditation to guided imagery. Contact Cindy Snider at 832-0050 or Jerry Truex at 263-0204.

New Servant Group: After two organizational meetings, a new servant group has begun. The group will meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, 7:30-9:00 p.m. This group will meet for worship, study, sharing, prayer, and focus on its "outward" mission as well as bringing a religious perspective to immigration issues. For more information, contact Pat at 371-8274.

Faith Issues Group. This is a women's reading and discussion group that meets on alternate Saturday afternoons for about 90 minutes. Currently, we are studying *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor. We invite women who want to nurture their faith through intentional, focused discussion on faith issues to join us. Contact Vangie at 263-0204.

Lectio Divina Servant Group. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 8 pm at the church. We read scripture using lectio divina and also examine our day. Accountability, sharing, singing, and prayer is also part for practice. For more information, contact Nita at 620-217-0249.

Womens' Discipleship Group. This is a women's group focusing Bible Study, discussion, and prayer. We meet on the 4th Sunday of every month after church at Cindy's home. Contact Cindy at 832-0050 (cgswriter@aol.com).

Childcare

- June 5--Jennifer/MC
- June 12--Alex/Terry
- June 19--Alex/Doreene
- June 26--Jennifer/Geneva



Attendance in May

May 1	27
May 8	24
May 15	30
May 22	24
May 29	29

MCS June 2011

Verse of the Month: John 20:21-22
 Song of the month: Through Jesus,
 death and night are gone

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 <i>Happy Birthday, Tom Mierau!</i>	9	10	11
12 HOSTING CASA BETANIA! POTLUCK	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 <i>Happy Anniversary, Jerry and Vangie</i>
26	27	28	29	30		



Mennonite Church Of the Servant

Our mission is to welcome all people into a community covenanted to follow the way of Jesus Christ through

- Practicing peace and reconciliation,
- Sharing our lives in love and accountability, and
- Bringing the good news of the reign of God to the world.

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