

# Mustard Seed

Kalona Mennonite Church

## You Are Appreciated

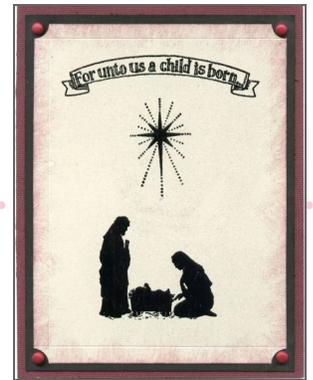
Recently I mentioned that good leaders/bosses do three things. They recognize, appreciate, and reward those they lead. In Psalm 113:5-6 we read, "Who is like our God...who looks far down on the heavens and the earth." Isaiah also describes God who one who recognizes and cares for His people. Isaiah 40:11, "God will feed his flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs in His arms and carry them in His bosom and gently lead the mother sheep."

What we see in these two passages is a picture of God being a leader who recognizes, appreciates, and rewards us. As we enter into another Christmas season, we are reminded once again of God's love shown to us by coming in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. In Christ, the words of Isaiah 40:11 are now realized. Christ as Shepherd, who came from afar, has gathered us in His arms. In other words, we are known and loved by the One who came and dwelt among us

in human flesh. This is also seen in the words of John 1:12, "To those who received Him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

This Christmas season take time to give thanks to God for coming from afar to dwell among us. May our actions this season let others know that Jesus, who came, dwells within our hearts and lives. We are now the ones who are given the mission to let the love of Christ become known to the entire world. As Ina Duley Ogdon wrote in a song in 1912, "Do not wait to shed your light afar, brighten the corner where you are, someone far from harbor, you may guide across the bar, brighten the corner where you are." May this be our mission and song during this advent season, that of brightening our corner of the world with the love of Jesus.

*Scott Swartzendruber*



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### Special points of interest:

- I cannot imagine living with the fear that each time I got together with a group of Christians, there would be the possibility of police coming in and using violence and imprisonment to break up our meeting.
- God loved people so much that He shared the coming of His Son with all types of people.

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### MINI MUSTARD SEED

A "Mini Mustard Seed" will be printed in January, which will include the January Calendar. Look for the full size Mustard Seed again in February.

# BEYOND OURSELVES

Last winter men from Kalona Mennonite Church that had been in Civilian Public Service were interviewed about their CPS experiences. CPS was a program that created alternative service for persons who could not participate in military service during World War II due to their Christian faith. Mennonite Central Committee was instrumental in helping create and run these CPS programs. After World War II the military draft was not used until the Korean conflict. However, even before World War II was over the Christian Peace churches (Quaker, Mennonite, and Brethren) voluntarily had persons in Eastern Europe working to alleviate the tremendous hardships of the Wars aftermath of starvation, disease and physical destruction.

In 1951 MCC created the PAX program to help meet the needs of war torn Europe. Many of our young people were ready to help with this project and began to arrive in war torn Europe in 1951. Sometime after the MCC PAX program started, the US Selective Service System did accept the PAX program as an alternative military service option. Cal Hochstedler from KMC was a former PAX volunteer. Read his recollections in the following article.

On another note about Jesus' work beyond KMC and the Kalona community, Ronnie Miller just returned from a 2 week trip to Haiti and the Water For Life project that Troy, his son, is working with. Fannie was unable to go due to a recent surgery. I am anxious to hear about the current work there. A January 27, 2012 work trip to Haiti is being planned. Please pray about this project and the trip! Perhaps the Lord wants you to think outside of your "day to day Kalona walk with Him" and go to Haiti this winter. Think seriously about going to Haiti on this trip. They could use a few more workers.

*In Christ, dave koerner*

## My PAX Service Experience

In 1951, after World War II, our Mennonite churches supported Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) financially to fund the PAX program for Conscientious Objectors (CO's) for the young men who were drafted and wanted to help people in other countries instead of serving in the military. PAX, meaning service and peace, was functioning until 1976. During more than two decades, PAX sent more than a thousand young men to over thirty countries to alleviate human need and build bridges of understanding and peace. These PAX men came from many denominations, including Amish, Mennonite, and Brethren in Christ, and most were between the ages 18-22.

Growing up in church and Sunday School, I sensed God calling me to serve in the PAX program. In looking back I'm very grateful for this opportunity. My life and attitude changed during this time of

service.

As one of many PAX men, I volunteered from November 1962 to November 1964. After 2 weeks of orientation in Akron, PA, our group of ten fellows boarded a German ship, the "MS Berlin", in New York City, and spent ten days on the ocean. During a week in Frankfurt, Germany, our director, Peter Dyck, decided where each of us could serve best. I spent the first winter in Berlin, Germany, just one year after the Berlin Wall was built. I worked at the Menno Heim, (the Mennonite church), which provided food and supplies for the people who could not come through the Berlin Wall. That first Christmas was very difficult, in a foreign country and away from home and friends. During that time I turned to my Bible and experienced God and His Word in a new way.

During the two years I worked mostly on building construction in Germany, Austria, France and (what was then) Yugoslavia with several other PAX men from Ohio, Kansas, Pennsylvania and other states. Part of this time I lived with a German family with five children. Most of the refugee housing (begun after World War II) was being completed during this time, so some fellows went to Greece and Algeria to help in agriculture development programs working with local people in those countries.

I believe the most meaningful project I worked on was in Chatenay-Malabry, a suburb of Paris, France. France had a lot of mentally challenged young people and the country lacked a facility to provide a supervised work place. The French Mennonite Mission Church decided on a trial experiment, using the lower level youth facilities as a workshop for these young people. In 1963 the mission church, along with the larger French Mennonite Church, decided to build a separate larger building behind the church to expand the work place.

Another PAX fellow and I were asked to help Pastor Robert Witmer to construct this building from ground up so I was there part of 1963 and into 1964. After digging the footings by hand, we ordered ready mix concrete only to have it come in a dump truck. You can imagine the rest! As the cement block building was being built, we had several young French volunteers, and later an older gentleman helped build the roof trusses on site and set them into place. At the time I didn't realize the importance of this project.

(Continued on page 3)



## Keeping Up With the MYFer's

Looking at the calendar, it's hard to believe the holiday months are already here! Football has given way to basketball and the air is getting cold. As MYF has continued, we have enjoyed watching the progression of the team of teens in Vietnam, through the Voice of the Martyrs DVD series.

I have personally been inspired by the faith I see played out in the lives of the persecuted Vietnamese Christians. I cannot imagine living with the fear that each time I got together with a group of Christians, there would be the possibility of police coming in and using violence and imprisonment to break up our meeting. This is the reality that thousands of people live with every day. We have gotten to see how those Christ followers continue to grow in their faith anyway. They look at each day as an opportunity to respond the way Jesus would, no matter what comes their way.

The MYFers had an opportunity to reach out when we went to Crowded Closet. The group was made up of 28 youth and 4 adults. We were put to work setting out Christmas decorations, organizing clothes, tagging items, and a variety of other projects. Everyone

worked quickly and before we knew it, we had accomplished everything on our list of things to do. Afterwards, we enjoyed some time of fellowship at Dairy Queen.

*Nicole Murray*



(Continued from page 2) The French President became very interested in this project since his son was also mentally challenged and needed a supervised work place. The government observed this work and decided they needed more of these opportunities for the many challenged youth in the country. From 1970-1974 a larger group of PAX men helped build another larger building with a large workshop on first floor and apartments on the second floor. Since then the French government and the French Mennonite churches have continued to expand these services around Paris and all of France. Together they now operate more than 70 establishments, staffed by over 2000 trained personnel. I feel privileged to have been part of those humble beginnings in Paris.

We also participated in a silent march in Paris in support of conscientious objectors, during which time the government was considering recognizing alternate service for their young men who requested it. It took the government several years before they would consider alternate service instead of serving in the military.

My world view was really expanded during the two years in Europe. While observing the churches in those countries where I worked, I appreciated the churches in my home community and the support they gave me, both financially and especially the encouragement I received. It helped me to grow in my spiritual walk with God

and to encourage young people to serve in our church programs that are available, either short term or longer term assignments. It is a church mission that changes lives.

September, 2001, fifty years after the PAX program began, many former PAX men gathered for a time of remembering and sharing experiences. Several quotes from the book, *Reflections from PAX After Fifty Years*, sum up my experience, and that of many others: "We admitted that we got more out of PAX service than we were able to give. The PAX experience shaped our lives; it was a life changing experience." One PAXer said, "Because of PAX I am what I am today." "Most went into their PAX assignment with a dedication and desire to serve the world 'In the Name of Christ'. Nearly all returned with deepened convictions, spiritual growth, and healthy ambitions. In time both the church and the world would benefit from their influence and leadership."

*Calvin Hochstedler*

*(If you wish to learn more about the PAX experience, ask Cal to borrow "The PAX Story, Service in the Name of Christ 1951-1976" by Calvin Redekop, or "Reflections on PAX after 50 years" edited by Ray Kauffman & Al Keim. Also available is a DVD "PAX Service, an alternative to war".)*

# In Pursuit

Matthew 22:36-37 *"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.*

*LOVE GOD. LOVE PEOPLE.*

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Excerpts from Exodus 20:3-8 *"You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy."*

*LOVE GOD*

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Excerpts from Exodus 20:12-17 *"Honor your father and your mother. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony. You shall not covet anything your neighbor has."*

*LOVE PEOPLE*

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Luke 1:28 *"The angel went to Mary and said, 'Greetings, you who are highly favored? The Lord is with you.'" God loved Mary.*

*LOVE PEOPLE*

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Luke 1:38 *"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Mary loved God.*

*LOVE GOD*

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Matthew 1:24 *"When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife." Joseph loved God, so he loved Mary.*

*LOVE GOD*

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Luke 1:39-41 *"At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit." Elizabeth's baby loved God.*

*LOVE GOD*

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Luke 2:8-11 *"And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the Glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you: he is Christ the Lord.'" God loved the shepherds.*

*LOVE PEOPLE*

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Luke 2:13-14 *"Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying. 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.'" The angels loved God.*

*LOVE GOD*

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Luke 2:26-27 *"It had been revealed to Simeon by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required," God loved Simeon.*

*LOVE PEOPLE*

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Luke 2:28 *"Simeon took him in his arms and praised God." Simeon loved God.*

*LOVE GOD*

~~~~~

Excerpts from Luke 2:36-38 *"There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old. She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem." Anna loved God and so she loved people by sharing God with them.*

*LOVE GOD. LOVE PEOPLE*

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(Continued on page 5)

(In Pursuit, continued from page 4)

Matthew 2:1-2 *"After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod. Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." God loved the magi.*

*LOVE PEOPLE*

~~~~~

Matthew 2:10-11 *"When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh." The magi loved God.*

*LOVE GOD*

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God loved people so much that He shared the coming of His Son with all types of people . . . the young (Mary and Joseph), the old (Simeon and Anna), the lower class (the shepherds), the wealthy (the magi , who were also foreigners) the Jews at the temple (through Anna's speaking), and even the government when the magi spoke to Herod. God loved people enough to try to let them know about the coming of the Messiah.

Everyone who accepted what God showed them gave praise and obedience to God. They loved God. It did not matter if they were young, old, rich, poor, Jew, Gentile, a scholar or uneducated. Their response to God's love was to love God and to love people. They praised God. Joseph protected Mary. Anna and the shepherds told others about the Christ child. The Magi went home by a different route.

Jesus tells us that the most important thing we are to do is to love God. The second most important thing we are to do is to love people. If we try our best to be obedient to these things in that order we will please God. The Bible confirms time and time again what Jesus told us so plainly in Matthew 22:36-37. Jesus gave us our directions. So let's go out and love God and love people. It's God's way for us to live.

*As always, in pursuit. Dawn Wyse*



## Library Notes

Following is a list of new additions to the library, either donated or purchased. Stop and check out the good books and DVD's the library has to offer!

**For the younger set:** The Snowy Day; Love you With All my Hearts; I Spy Super Challenger; Blackberry Stew; Where is Baby Bear; and Time for Bed.

**For middle readers:** More in the Animal Ark Series: Collie With a Card, Piglet in a Playpen; Hound at the Hospital; Hamster in the Holly; Husky in a Hut; Polars on the Path; Cub in the Cupboard.

**For those who like memoirs, biographies, and other nonfiction:** A Life Displaced by Edna Schroeder Thiessen; Soul Surfer by Bethany Hamilton; A Love that Multiplies by Michelle and Jim Bob Duggar; The Love Languages of God by Gary Chapman; and Nearing Home by Billy Graham.

**For the sports lover:** Through My Eyes by Tim Tebow; Coming Back Stronger by Drew Brees; and The Sacred Acre, the Ed Thomas Story by Mark Tabb.

**For fiction lovers:** Hatteras Girl by Alice Wisler; A Song I Knew by Heart by Bret Lott; White Christmas Pie by Wanda E Brunstetter; Amy Inspired by Bethany Pierce; and Painted Dresses by Patricia Hickman.



**New DVD's:** Mandie and the Forgotten Christmas; Soul Surfer; Like Dandelion Dust; Heidi; Anne of Green Gables; Anne of Green Gables, the Continuing Story; Anne of Green Gables, The Sequel; Christy, (TV series) Discs 1 & 2; and Christy, Discs 3 & 4.

Books are due back in 3 weeks, DVD's may be checked out for 1 week. There are some books currently missing from the library and others very overdue. Please check your bookshelves to see if one of the KMC Library books has found a new home there! Thank you!

*Shirley Hochstedler, librarian*

## Kalona Mennonite Church

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING!!!

As I look out the window and write this column I can't help but be thankful for even the littlest things in my life. The Goldfinches at our feeder make me smile. The holidays are here and it will be a very busy time. Slow down, take the time to please God and you will be happy. Now for the news...

Gary & Sylvia Erb are grandparents for the first time! Veronica & Justin Schweitzer have a new little son, Jackson Douglas born on Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. Bernice Miller is the great grandmother. Congratulations to all!

Merlin & Monica Miller took a trip to Albuquerque, New Mexico to meet their new grandson, Iggy Santino. This is Matthew & Meg Miller's second little boy. Their oldest son is Boris, who is three years old. Congratulations to the Millers!

Merlin & Monica have more good news in that their daughter Martha & her husband Tim Andrews have moved from Wisconsin back to a job & home in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. This is good news, after all who wants to be a Badger!

KMC had several counselors that helped staff the recent Bible Memory Camp at Crooked Creek Christian Camp on November 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>. Counselors were Michelle Lehman, Nicole Murray, Reggie Hostetler & Chase Murray. The KMC campers included Summer, Joya, & London Schrock, Karlee & Katelyn Lehman, Emma Beachy, Cole & Kennedy Roth, Lauryn Weiss, Cody Schillerstrom and Jordan Murray. It had to be a fun time!

Ez Schrock and his cousin Devon Schrock went elk hunting near Craig, Colorado again this year. They have made about 20 trips to Colorado over the years. They both got their elk and had a great time with their other hunting buddies.

Ed V. Miller took a trip down to his home territory of Harper County Kansas to go quail hunting with Daisy. However due to the "drought", they only found coveys of 4 & 5 quail. So instead of quail hunting they did some critter control and no they didn't get "skunked",

thinning out badgers, armadillos and other varmints. Ed did a lot of socializing with family & friends and still had a great time!

There was another KMCer that went elk hunting this year. Ken Bender went on his very first elk hunt near Buena Vista, Colorado and shot a big bull elk. I am sure he would be glad to show you the picture.

Fred & Judy Yoder took the month of October and drove out east to visit their son, Scott and his wife Annie in New Jersey. Their trip included visiting New York City, Vermont & finally Acadia National Park in Maine. We are glad you had a safe trip. Welcome home.

Phil Ropp recently took a trip to Canada for a software meeting. He flew into Detroit, rented a car and set out for London, Ontario. Phil realized he would be fairly close to Leamington, Ontario. So he decided to pay a "surprise visit" to Dave & Mary Groh. Thanks to GPS he drove right to the Groh's apartment complex. Phil punched the intercom button and asked if they would like to visit with someone from Kalona! Well they all had a great 45 minute visit! They said their goodbyes and Phil drove on to his software meeting and arrived with 10 minutes to spare! This story reminds me of the paraphrased verse, "Happy are those who take the time to please God."

A sidelight to the previous story is the fact that Mary Groh is the proud steward of a certain "lift chair." Phil recognized the chair because you see this chair has been in the KMC family for years. The chair was first used by Nettie Yoder, it was then used by Ardith Ropp (Phil's mother), next was Grace Tiessen, then came Dick Couch (June Miller's father) and now the chair is with Mary in Canada. That chair has quite a heritage!

Well, folks that about does it for this month. Now it's back to spending time with our Pennsylvania grandkids, which includes Elmo the Muppet, Thomas the Train and lots of Miller family time.

*Blessings to all, Ed V. & Carol Miller*