FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH OF REEDLEY

February/March 2013

VOX SIMONIS
“The Voice of Menno Simons”
Volume 57, Issue 1
The *Vox Simonis* is published bi-monthly. The *Vox Simonis* is designed to inform the FMC Congregation and friends of the congregation of “God’s work” through the individuals, families, church groups, and the greater community.

“Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.”

*Mark 12:29-31*

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Individual submissions are welcome. Please bring contributions to the church office. You may also email submissions to fmcreedley@juno.com

You may now read this newsletter on our website at: www.fmcreedley.org/Worship/Newsletters

**WEB SITE INFORMATION**

First Mennonite Church now has a website on the internet.
This publication may be viewed on our website at:
www.fmcreedley.org

You may email the church office at: fmcreedley@juno.com

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*Submissions are accepted and are used by discretion of the editor.*
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Immigration Talk Fills the Air

Immigration is a hot topic. With the November election in mind, representatives from both the Republican and Democratic parties seem intent on fast-tracking some kind of comprehensive immigration form. A bi-partisan group of Senators has come up with a plan. President Obama has offered his own ideas which he touts as very close to what the Senators are saying. As I understand it, the points of congruence include the following:

- A path to legal status, including citizenship, for the 11 million undocumented folks living in the country. Undocumented people would need to undergo background checks, pay their taxes and penalties, and begin to learn English.
- Tighter border enforcement
- Allowing employers access to databases to check the status of possible employees

We’ve talked about immigration issues from time to time across the years at our church. We’ve wanted our church to be a safe place for anyone who passes through our doors, whether documented or not. We want people to know they are welcome here. That is not to condone illegal activity but we accept the reality that our stories are myriad as we enter the doors of the church. Once here, we trust that the Spirit of God will lead us, speaking to us through the brother and sister, helping us to know how to speak with compassion into each other’s lives.

Over the years at FMC, we have individually or collectively offered some forms of practical assistance to undocumented members and active participants in our church. I think we have also done well at creating a welcoming environment.

So what now? One particular hope I have is that someday a few people from our church will take part in the Migrant Trail Walk which occurs every year down near the border in Arizona. This is a 75 mile walk sponsored by Coalicion de Derechos Humanos and it will take place this May 27 – June 2. Over these days participants walk and along the way learn about the complex border issues. You can learn more about the walk at this web site: http://derechoshumanosaz.net/

As God’s children, we put our hope, finally, in God. But the laws of our country do impact the lives of people who live here. Immigration reform could better the lives of people we know, right in our church, and make straight, as Isaiah says, their paths. This is the kind of reform I can support.
Our current memory verse in Sunday school comes from Mark 1:17b. Jesus has been walking along the Sea of Galilee. Seeing Simon Peter and his brother Andrew mending their fishing nets, Jesus says to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” As the story goes, they immediately leave their nets and follow Jesus. Jesus continues around the lake, calling two more fishermen, James and John, who also leave their father Zebedee in the boat and follow Jesus.

As we recite this verse each Sunday in our preschool class, one of the four year olds turns to me and says, “That verse doesn’t make sense.” We have had this discussion several weeks now. Fishing is not unknown to us. We go out with a fishing pole and bait, put the bait on the hook, and throw it into the water. Our hope is that the fish will see the bait, think “food”, and bite the hook so we can reel it in. Of course in Jesus day these fishermen were using nets from boats to catch fish, but the idea is the same. We fish for fish, not for people.

So what does Jesus mean when he says, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people”? We catch fish; do we also catch people? So one Sunday we had a brief discussion about “catching people” for God. We know God loves people and wants people to follow Jesus and live in right ways. But what is our role in this…do we “catch” people? And isn’t the fishing pole or net a bit coercive as a metaphor? I doubt that the fish want to be caught!

Jesus’ words do not always leave us comfortable. “Follow me and I will make you fish for people” is a challenge to us. Does it require us to actively call people away from their current status and belief structures? Does it call us to challenge world views that exclude God? Does it require us to use “bait”, whatever that bait might be, to get people to listen and join us? It seems coercive, contrived, maybe even disrespectful. Scams on the internet are even called “phishing”—perhaps a play on words!

I don’t believe that is what Jesus intended. “Follow me and I will make you fish for people” is a statement that reflects God’s great compassion and love for people. In Mark the calling of the fishermen is immediately followed by an incident at the synagogue in Capernaum. A man with an unclean spirit enters, Jesus casts the spirit out, and everyone is amazed. Then Jesus leaves the synagogue and goes to Simon’s house, healing his mother in law of fever. That evening the people bring many more who were ill or who possessed demons, and Jesus healed them.

Jesus himself shows us what it is to fish for people. At core it is simply to invite people to follow Jesus along with us. After all, that is what Jesus did when he called the fishermen—he simply invited them to follow; becoming “fishers of people” as the result. Jesus “fished” with compassion. He cared for troubled people. He visited the sick in their homes. He offered healing and restored people to community. He shared the good news that God had not forgotten them in their distress.

To “fish for people” is to actively engage with those around us, sharing God’s love, serving to bring healing and hope through the words we speak and the deeds that we do. It is living redemptively, actively working towards reconciliation. It is peacemaking. There is an attractiveness to living this way that is invitational; genuine love and compassion draw people.

“Follow me and I will make you fish for people,” Jesus said. The mental image of fishing for people with nets or poles does not make sense to us. But to the fishermen who knew both the hard work and the joy of a great catch, these were enticing words, invitational words. Let us join them to discover both the effort required and the joy of the “great catch” that Jesus invites us to participate in!
REEDLEY PEACE CENTER
CALENDAR

Friday, February 1, 6:30-8:30
Documentary: Harvest of Empire is a feature-length documentary that examines the direct connection between the long history of U.S. intervention in Latin America and the immigration crisis we face today. Based on the book by Juan Gonzalez, this documentary looks at the role US military actions and corporate interests played in triggering waves of immigration from Latin America.

Friday, February 8, 6:30-8:30
Speaker: Tom Willey, CSA farmer (T&D Willey Farms), passionate advocate for responsible farming and eating.
Topic: Everyone Who Eats Is a Farmer

Friday, February 15, 6:30-8:30
Terezin: Music of the Holocaust for Violin/Violoncello Duo. Dieter Wulfhorst and Susan Doering (members of the music faculty at Fresno Pacific University) will play compositions by Zikmund Schul and Gideon Klein who were interned at the Terezin (Theresienstadt) concentration camp. The life, suffering, and death in the Terezin camp will be portrayed using music, poetry, and visual art.

Friday, February 22, 6:30-8:30
Speaker: Vida Samiian, Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities, CSU Fresno

Friday, March 1, 6:30-8:30
Speaker: Hyun Hur, pastor of Korean Mennonite Church

Friday, March 8, 6:30-8:30
Speakers: Dick and Karen Peterson (members of Reedley Peace Center) and Steve Ratzlaff, life-long war tax activist, will speak about War Tax Resistance.

Friday and Saturday, March 22 and 23
Tenth Annual Reedley Peace Center Retreat at St. Nicholas Retreat Grounds

Rumblings Around the Campus
by Paul Reimer, Custodian

The weather was cold for a couple of weeks with lows in the mid-20’s. We need rain which we received for a couple of days.

Several projects have occurred this month. First a new shower was installed by the Trustees in the men’s restroom in the basement. Also a water heater was installed in the basement closet by the old kitchen because the old heater needed replacing. Lastly, a new vanity sink was put into the men’s restroom in the basement.

The fall leaves are gone and the lawns are in dormancy for the winter. The oranges and pecans are still on the trees on the playground. Frank Riffle picked some oranges last month, which he does every year.

That is all for now. . . Paul Reimer
Events in our FMC Family and Beyond~~~

- Caught in the act of reading: David Krehbiel is reading *A Team of Rivals* by Doris Kearns Goodwin.
- Sharon Reimer arrived in Phoenix just in time for the birth, on January 21, of her grand-daughter Neriah Iolani.
- Somehow, Paul Reimer managed to trip over his tractor. He’s doing fine. And so is the tractor.
- Recently, Dave Hasegawa missed several makeable putts on his way to a fine score of 83 at Sherwood Golf Course.
- Karen Peterson spent a weekend in Portland with her daughters just prior to her knee replacement surgery.
- Noticed on Facebook: Larry Harder looking pretty lonely in an In n Out Restaurant in Kettleman City.
- Caught in the act of reading: Glena Penner is reading *The Round House* by Louise Erdrich.
- Cool and confident on the drums: Noe Hernandez.
- Not so long ago, Katy Wall spent time studying in India.
- Roger Zimmerman and Dick Peterson both worked hard to install a new shower in the men’s restroom down in the church basement.
- Our old friend Yunju Sol is now living in China.
- Cool and confident on the drums: Christian Hernandez.
- Caught in the act of reading: Christine Moyer is reading *Lacuna* by Barbara Kingsolver.
- Caught in the act of reading: Mary Lou Martens is reading *The Long Road to Freedom* by Nelson Mandela.
- Not so long ago, Laura Penner took part in an Fresno Pacific class in India.
- Noticed on Facebook: Derrick and Michelle Ramer have been in India with a group from their church, Emma Mennonite, in Indiana.
- Brent Auernheimer may have just gone through a significant medical procedure but he is still teaching online courses.
- Caught in the act of reading: Rusty Moyer is reading *FDR* by Jean Edward Smith.
- Fran Loewen recently caught up with old high school friends during a coastal retreat.
- Nohelly Hernandez and others from our church recently ministered at the Evangel Home in Fresno.
- Not so long ago, Gail Harder went on an MCC learning tour to India.
HAPPY BIRTHDAY

February Birthdays
8—Alex Boldt
8—James Isaacs
8—Andrea Romero
10—Mildred Ewy
10—Lois Strole
14—Jorge Romero
15—Katy Wall
19—Ro Linscheid
19—Cathy Ratmeyer
23—Michael Linscheid
24—David Boldt
24—Krista Howard
25—Robert Ewy
26—Ruth Buxman
27—Wyeth Buxman
27—Jean Unruh

March Birthdays
2—C Jay Page
5—Aidan Zimmerman
6—Rusty Moyer
6—Paul Ruth
9—Blanca Romero
19—Brad Blake
19—Thomas Janzen
22—Travis Oberg
23—Kim Bergen
23—Zak Blake
24—Jordan Penner
28—Juan Mireles
29—April Santa Cruz
31—David Linscheid

Happy Anniversary

February Anniversaries
22—Manuel & Guille Otero (11 years)

March Anniversaries
7—Juan & Sylvia Gomez (12 years)
8—Jess & Evaline Preheim (61 years)
22—Rosny & Erika Aguilar (10 years)
22—Paul & Ruth Buxman (19 years)
24—David & Dorothy Boldt (28 years)
25—Bruce & LaVeta Auernheimer (20 years)
27—Nathan & Rachel Boldt (5 years)
If there is something you would like to post on "The Bulletin Board," please call Dee in the church office, 638-2917, or send her an e-mail at fmcreedley@juno.com.

Church Directory Changes
Dave & Melinda Hasegawa
hasegawa.dave.melinda@juno.com
Please DO NOT send a message to their old address. It got hacked.

Women’s Bible Study
Held the First Friday of the Month
9:00 a.m.
Location varies—check the bulletin for details
or call Ruth Buxman 897-7547
Using the book—Let Justice Roll Down—Women Engaging the World by Rebecca Seiling
February 1—Chapter 7—True Worship & Chapter 8—Let Justice Roll Down
March 1—Chapter 9—Complacency and Lavish Lifestyles & Chapter 10—Turning Back
April 5—Chapter 11—Feasting for All
May 3—Chapter 12—Naming the Hope
June 7—Chapter 13—Joining the River of God’s Justice
(Closing Worship)

“Times when Mennonites just can’t sit”
Excerpted from a column written by Charles M. Madigan, Chicago Tribune, September 13, 2005.

MDS “has three teams of volunteers in the disaster zone. They are from Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsylvania. They sleep and bathe at Mennonite churches in the disaster zone. They help anyone who needs help.

Just now, Mennonite chain-saw crews are cutting trees away from homes and putting tarps over damaged roofs, just so people can have some protection.

It will get a lot more complicated later, when the Mennonites move in to help rebuild, one house at a time. That’s what they do very well. Why are they doing this? It doesn’t even take a breath for (Kevin) King to deliver the response.

‘We do it out of compassion, out of our obedience to scripture and out of our gratefulness to god for what we have,’ King said. ‘It’s hard for Mennonites to just sit. Our gospel often wears overalls.’

It’s a very effective system.”

WEST COAST MENNONITE MEN’S CHORUS SCHEDULE

Sunday, March 17, 6:00 PM
Laurelglen Bible Church
Bakersfield

Saturday, April 6, 7:00 PM
Reedley MB Church

Sunday, April 7, 6:00 PM
Riverpark Bible Church
Fresno

Sunday, April 21, 5:00 PM
Grace Bible Church
Arroyo Grande
Consider a Summer of Service and Fun in 2013!

Camp Keola is a Mennonite Christian camp at Huntington Lake, California with a mission to bring people closer in relationship with Jesus Christ and with each other.

We are currently seeking persons willing to serve in a variety of positions at Camp Keola this Summer and Fall.

Positions available from mid-June to mid-August and weekends through mid-October:
- Summer Manager
- Head Cook
- Assistant Cook
- Cooks Helpers
- Maintenance Staff
- Lifeguards

Positions available from July 11-27:
- Counselors
- Counselors in Training
- Camp Nurse


Questions? - [galen@campkeola.org](mailto:galen@campkeola.org).
Write today’s special message using the decoding box. Each kind of fish represents a letter of the alphabet. Your teacher has the answer.

How do you obey this message? Use colored pencils to write a combination of letters and draw fish to show your answer. For example, you might answer

\[ \text{W} \quad \text{F} \quad \text{O} \quad \text{R} \quad \ldots \]

Decoding box

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### Calendar of Events for February 2013

#### Sunday, February 3
- **9 AM** Women's Bible Study
- **12 noon** MYF Super Bowl Subs Fundraiser
- **3 PM** Super Bowl

#### Monday, February 4
- **7 PM** PIM Leadersh-ship Team Mtg

#### Tuesday, February 5
- **7 PM** Deacons Meeting

#### Wednesday, February 6
- **6:30 PM** Trustees

#### Thursday, February 7
- **7 PM** Council

#### Friday, February 8
- **5PM** Education Committee

#### Saturday, February 9
- **2PM** PIM Anniversary Party

#### Sunday, February 10
- **9AM** Women’s Bible Study
- **PSMC Winter Assembly in LA**

#### Monday, February 11
- **12 noon** MYF Super Bowl Subs Fundraiser
- **3 PM** Super Bowl

#### Tuesday, February 12
- **7 PM** PIM Leadersh-ship Team Mtg

#### Wednesday, February 13
- **6:30 PM** Trustees

#### Thursday, February 14
- **7 PM** Council

#### Friday, February 15
- **5PM** Education Committee

#### Saturday, February 16
- **2PM** PIM Family Revival Service

#### Sunday, February 17
- **9AM** Women’s Bible Study
- **PSMC Winter Assembly in LA**

#### Monday, February 18
- **12 noon** MYF Super Bowl Subs Fundraiser
- **3 PM** Super Bowl

#### Tuesday, February 19
- **7 PM** PIM Leadersh-ship Team Mtg

#### Wednesday, February 20
- **6:30 PM** Trustees

#### Thursday, February 21
- **7 PM** Council

#### Friday, February 22
- **5PM** Education Committee

#### Saturday, February 23
- **2PM** PIM Family Revival Service

#### Sunday, February 24
- **9AM** Women’s Bible Study
- **PSMC Winter Assembly in LA**

#### Monday, February 25
- **12 noon** MYF Super Bowl Subs Fundraiser
- **3 PM** Super Bowl

#### Tuesday, February 26
- **7 PM** PIM Leadersh-ship Team Mtg

#### Wednesday, February 27
- **6:30 PM** Trustees

#### Thursday, February 28
- **7 PM** Council

#### Friday, February 29
- **5PM** Education Committee

#### Saturday, February 30
- **2PM** PIM Family Revival Service

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**SUNDAY**
- **5:00 a.m.** Men’s Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
- **8:45 a.m.** Prayer Time in Room B4
- **9:30 a.m.** Worship Services in English
- **11:00 a.m.** Christian Education
- **12:00 p.m.** Spanish Worship Services
- **7:00 p.m.** Red de Apoyo/Network of Support

**MONDAY**
- **12 noon** AA Meeting in the Library

**TUESDAY**
- **6:15 a.m.** Anabaptist Prayer Gathering in the Library
- **6:00 p.m.** Prayer Meeting in the Basement

**WEDNESDAY**
- **9:30 a.m.** Needles & Notions
- **6:00 p.m.** Los Amigos / AA Meeting in Spanish
- **7:00 p.m.** Kids Club & MYF
- **7:00 p.m.** Alabanza y Oración
- **7:00 p.m.** Marriage & Family Class in Rm. 5
- **7:30 p.m.** Choir Practice

**THURSDAY**
- **12:30 p.m.** OA Meeting in the Library

**FRIDAY**
- **6:30 p.m.** Peace Center

**SATURDAY**
- **4:00 p.m.** PIM Worship Team Practice
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**March 2013**