

ROCHESTER MENNONITE CHURCH

Sunday Morning Worship
February 21, 2010 – 9:15 am

First Sunday in Lent

Kurt Kennel, Worship Leader
Lois R. Kennel, Song Leader
Rev. David D. Brunner, Pastor



Holding on, letting go

*With God as our dwelling place
and the Holy Spirit empowering us
and revealing the way,
we learn to trust the Word within our own hearts.*

GATHERING

Welcome and Greetings

Call to Worship

Leader: We live in shelter of the Most High,

People: *we place our trust in the Almighty,*

Leader: we claim with confidence God's protection.

People: *When we call out, our God will answer.*

All: *In our trouble, God will be near.*

Prayer of Invocation

Hymn #32 HWB (Blue) Our Father God (vv. 1&4)

Announcements, Sharing and Prayer

HOLDING ON

The Psalm: Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

Affirmation of faith: #710 HWB (Blue)

Hymn #162 HWB (Blue) The God of Abraham praise

Children's Hymn #489 HWB (Blue) O little children, gather

Children's Time

HEARING GOD'S WORD

The Old Testament Reading: Deuteronomy 26:1-11

The New Testament Reading: Luke 4:1-13

Reader's Theater

Message: "Who Can We Trust Anyway?"

LETTING GO

Prayer of Response

The Epistle Reading: Romans 10:8b-13

Confession

Hymn #63 SS (Purple) God, fill me now (insert sheet)

Assurance: #709 HWB (Blue)

Hymn #162 HWB (Blue) I know not why God's wondrous grace

Offering

Offertory Hymn #384 HWB (Blue) We give thee but thine own
(vv. 1-2-5)

Offertory Prayer

SENDING

Benediction

Leader: May your journey be one of joy.

People: *Thank you, Lord, for joy.*

Leader: May your journey be one of peace.

People: *Thank you, Lord, for peace.*

Leader: May your journey be one of love.

People: *Thank you, Lord, for love. Amen*

The Doxology #119 HWB (Blue)

Holding On, Letting Go ***An Exploration of Our Lenten Theme***

The season of Lent in the Christian church has traditionally been a time of reflection and soul searching, an opportunity to meditate on the life of Jesus and cast a critical eye on our lives and actions to see where we have missed the mark. Like the first disciples, we follow Jesus, watching what he does, listening to what he says, and learning to know both who he is and who we are in relation to him.

Thus Lent is an opportunity to draw near to God, to ponder God's words to us in scripture, to hold close what we value, and to identify with Jesus in his mission. Jesus' self-giving on the cross is a powerful metaphor for our call to turn away from the temptation to make ourselves the center of the universe and choose instead a life of sacrificial love in the world.

While the scripture readings in Lent always bend toward repentance, this year's texts focus particularly on calling back believers who have fallen away. In these passages we see two parallel invitations: (1) to hold on to what is most important and (2) to let go of what is peripheral or gets in the way of further growth.

Sometimes we release the ungodly ways of the culture we so easily take for granted. Sometimes we let go of familiar religious beliefs because they are more human creation and habit than essentials of the faith. At times, it is sin that gets in our way. We may hold on to our pride rather than apologize, or clutch resentment rather than forgive, or defend our own rights while others suffer worse conditions. And sometimes we must let go of something that is truly good—a loved one, a hope for the future, our idea of who we are—to continue to grow and develop as God wishes. We look to Jesus as our model, the one who made himself usable for God by letting go of his very life, entrusting himself to the height and depth, the breadth and width of God's love.

A prominent story this season is the familiar parable of the son who leaves home and the father who waits for his return. This story reminds us of the human condition: of our tendency to wander away from our home in God, sometimes without realizing it, and of God's longing for reunion with all who have strayed. When we remember the prodigal love of our heavenly Parent, we can examine and confess the reality of our lives. As we see God's longing and acceptance, we are drawn into celebrating our relationship with this party-throwing God who takes such delight in our return.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mennonite Mission Network Prayer Request

Pray that God may strengthen and guide Alyssa Hostetler, Kelli Yoder, Allen Slabaugh and Richard Aguirre of the Americus, Ga., Mennonite Voluntary Service unit as they serve the local community.

NEXT SUNDAY

Responsibilities for – February 28

- Set-up –
- Worship Leader – Kurt Kennel
- Adult SS – David Brunner
- Children's Story – Kurt Kennel
- Snack –

FYI

A class titled: "World of Islam" in community education starting next Tuesday night. It is a four week series

Location: Northrop-Rm. 109

Time: 7:00-8:15 PM

Starts Feb 16

Class Description:

"Topics covered include the pillars of Islam; impact on the daily lives of its believers; Islamic law and its philosophy; position of women; concept of Jihad; differences with other Abrahamic faiths; and, finally, the religious upsurge in the World of Islam, and its consequences for both the domestic politics of Islamic societies and their relationships with the Western World. The target audience includes all persons having an interest in religion and culture, educators, health providers, and persons with business interests in Islamic societies. Students can attend an optional tour of the Mosque and open discussion after class."

Resident But Alien

The last session of this series takes place Wednesday evening, 7:00 pm, at Art and Lois Kennel's home

Worship Arts Tour

February 25 is the registration deadline for the Worship Arts Tour to be held in the Twin Cities on Friday and Saturday, March 12 and 13. Visit churches to get ideas for worship visuals and get to know other worship planners from Central Plains churches. See

www.centralplainsmc.org/Events/Worship_Arts_Tour for a brochure with registration form.

Next Congregational Meal—Thursday evening, February 25, 6:00 pm, at Leichtys.

Men's Breakfast this **Saturday, February 27**, will be held at Phil Leichty's home at 8:00 am. All men are welcome and expected.

Gus Schwen will be given his Bible on the occasion of his 13th birthday. It will be given during **the morning service on Sunday, March 7**. Let's join with Gus and his family in celebrating this milestone in his life.