



Youth Breezes

Winter 2008

Upcoming Events Invitation to Follow Jesus

February 8-10 Winter Peace Retreat at Spruce Lake

Youth program: Living with Diversity, led by pastor Scott Hutchinson who has worked in Nicaragua and El Salvador and organizes annual youth workshops on peacemaking.

February 22-24 Anti-Racism Analysis Training

Check out <http://www.mcc.org/damascusroad/> for more information.

March 14-15 Jr. High Lock-In at Christopher Dock High School

Watch for more details! <http://franconiaconference.org/>

March 29 YouthWorkers Conference at Messiah College

“Raising the Bar”

7:30 am-4:30 pm

This conference is designed to empower and encourage youth pastors, lay and volunteer youth group leaders, student leaders (high school and college-age) and youth ministry teams from churches. Keynote speakers are Kenda

The New Year always brings with it the amazing possibilities for a new start. New Year’s resolutions seem to come and go—some we remember and keep that help us change and others fade away and are forgotten.

Are our spiritual lives, that include a commitment to follow Jesus, resolutions that we make in a random way or do we think through this significant choice? Do we wait to make the commitment until we are truly sincere about this faith and life choice?

Invitations to follow Jesus are sometimes based on the emotional moment. For others it is more important that life choices have been tested. Youth watch adults to see what the decision to follow Jesus means. Baptism is then a time for truly committing oneself to a life of discipleship.

The invitation to follow Jesus is extended in a variety of ways in each congregation. Some congregations put an announcement in the bulletin inviting youth to a faith exploration class while others call it a membership class with the silent understanding that baptism will be attached. Some congregations send out letters to those of an age that might be interested in baptism. Others know when youth are open to the possibility because of their relationship with youth. Then there is the altar call where persons are invited publicly to make a commitment to follow Jesus.

Recently, Curt Weaver, Leadership Retreat speaker, shared his faith story in chapel at Christopher Dock. He grew up at a Mennonite camp and each Friday he was “saved” during the altar call along with the kids that were attending camp. As he reflects on those campfire nights, could it have been more about experiencing healing from the week rather than salvation? He asked the audience, “Would it make a difference in the decision to follow Jesus if heaven and hell were taken out of the decision? Would it then be more about a commitment to a journey of following Jesus and being a God-bearer?” Perhaps this would change how we walk with young people and extend the invitation to follow Jesus.

How does your congregation invite youth to be a follower of Jesus and a part of God’s Kingdom?

Do you focus on relationship building that gives youth a window into the adults who have elected the Jesus way? What do you do to prepare youth to step into this intentional journey? What does church membership mean? Is membership seen as an added blessing that comes with making a decision to follow Jesus?

Let’s invite youth to make a New Year’s resolution that will be remembered. Responding to the call to follow Jesus inspires life change and is a commitment worth keeping!

There are many resources included in this issue that may help as your congregation invite, disciples, and walks with youth through this important life decision.

~Marlene Frankenfield



Creasy Dean and Steve Gallaher. Early registration fee is \$45. www.messiah.edu/youthworkers/

April 26

The CORE 2008

Youth Ministry Training for Adults and Student Leaders

Philadelphia, PA

Explore how students want their world to be different and learn how to help them reach their dreams. Listen to each other's ideas, welcome their doubts, and celebrate their successes.

<http://core.go.youthspecialties.com/index.php>

April 28-May 1

Princeton Forums on Youth Ministry

Princeton, NJ

"And You Will Be My Witnesses..."

The era of Christendom is over and Christians throughout North America are wrestling with what it means to be the church today. This year the forum will explore the implications of Acts 1:8 for the church and for youth ministry, examining what it means to bear witness to Christ beyond the walls of the traditional church.

Complete brochure and registration available at <http://www.ptsem.edu/ijm/>

May 18

Rain date: June 1

Couch Derby at Line Lexington

<http://www.llmc.org/couchderby/>

June 29-July 4, 2009

Youth Convention Columbus, OH

Faith Formation class Resources



*Blooming Glen
Baptism*

God's Story, Our Story: Exploring Christian Faith & Life by Michele Hershberger is an important introduction to Christian faith from an Anabaptist perspective. It can be used in a group of people considering baptism, or by people who just want to mull over faith questions on their own before-or-even-after they say "yes" to God's Story.

Making Disciples: Preparing People for Baptism, Christian Living, and Church Membership by April Yamasaki gives congregational leaders a wealth of ideas and tools for calling and integrating believers into the church. Primary focus is on discipleship of older youth and the manual has plenty of ideas

for adult discipleship as well. It is organized around four ministries:

- 1) Inviting people to consider Christian faith commitment.
- 2) Instructing those who are considering Christian faith, baptism, and church membership. Includes a study plan that links with the bold *God's Story, Our Story* and with the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*.
- 3) Baptizing those who are ready to say "yes" to Jesus and his mission.
- 4) Following up with those who are baptized.

Faith for the Journey: Youth Explore the Confession of Faith

by Ann W. Becker is designed to support young people, their pastors, and leaders together on a journey through the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*. With a session on each article in the *Confession*, this resource helps youth explore what it means to live as a person of faith in today's world.

"The Amazing Grace Club" by Curt Weaver is a fresh and creative approach to exploring faith intergenerationally. This resource will provide an intentional place within the life of the congregation where youth and adults join on a common journey of exploration of faith. Go to <http://franconiaconference.org/> and click on *Youth Ministry* to download the resource.

The Mennonite Handbook by Herald Press provides an essential field guide for all things Mennonite, combining reliable, historical, and theological information, alongside some fun facts.

Soul Tending: Life Forming Practices for Older Youth and Young Adults

by various authors. Forward by Kenda Creasy Dean and Ron Foster. This book will complement any of the above resources for faith formation. This offers ways to tend the fires of your soul and meet God in a new way through the practices of Christian faith in your everyday life.

Baptism and Membership: Why is it a Question?

http://franconiaconference.org/resources/reference_documents/2006fall/G50_FLAC-Baptism_and_Membership.pdf

Pastoral Guidelines for Baptism and Church Membership

http://franconiaconference.org/resources/reference_documents/2006fall/Pastoral_Guidelines_for_Baptism_and_Church_Membership.pdf

Apprentices in Faith: Ten Proposals for Our Day, Inspired by Ancient Baptism Practices (Leader Online)

<http://www.leaderonline.org/Archives/Summer2004/FeatureSummer04.htm>

WITH: The Magazine for Radical Christian Youth

Published four times a year, this magazine seeks to empower youth to be radically committed to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, to peace and justice, and to sharing God's good news through word and action.



The Winter 2007 issue of *WITH* features **Technology**. This issue of *WITH* could be a valuable resource to your student leadership team. Check it out!

WITH costs \$22/yr. Group subscriptions are \$20.50/yr (min. of five). *WITH* is a publication of Faith & Life Resources.

To order contact Kathy Shantz at Mennonite Publishing Network <http://www.mph.org/> or by email hpcan@mph.org.

Spring 2008 issue to feature **Reconciliation**.

Student Leadership Opportunities

Who in your youth group has leadership potential and has a desire to be stretched and challenged as they explore their faith in a group setting?

Last year, Franconia Conference had four youth that participated in !Explore and one who participated in LEAP. Both are excellent programs.

!Explore information: <http://www.ambs.edu/explore>. Application deadline is February 29.

LEAP information: <http://leap.emu.edu/>.

Helpful Resources

Lent is approaching fast and begins with Ash Wednesday on February 6. Check out these **Lent resources** to use in Sunday school or Bible Study/Small Group sessions.

WORSHIP FEAST LENT & EASTER (BOOK)

Complete Worship Outlines for Lent & Easter
Worship Feast Lent *takes youth groups from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunrise with creative, experiential worship outlines. The book also contains seven worship openers for Sunday school classes and other settings. To deepen the Lenten journey even more, Worship Feast Lent, includes seven original Lent-themed worship songs on audio CD and printed lyrics with chords.*

Order at <http://www.cokesbury.com/forms/home.aspx>

SACRED SEARCH: ENCOUNTERING GOD DURING LENT (BOOK)

By Angela Reed

Today's youth seek intimacy, identity, and a greater spiritual awareness of what lies beyond themselves. This resource invites youth to know God, themselves, and others in deeper ways by doing a kind of "internal housekeeping" during Lent. This Leader resource outlines six Lenten exploration sessions and an Easter celebration.

Order at <http://www.faithandliferesources.org/sacredsearch.htm>

Other Resources

MARKING MILESTONES AND MAKING MEMORIES FOR YOUTH: LOOKING FORWARD (BOOK)

By Jason Schultz

Gives youth workers idea after idea to create faith memories and affirm the big occasions in the lives of youth, creating a spiritual scrapbook for youth along the way. The ideas will help youth groups to look back and celebrate and look forward with joy, fun, and excitement.

Order at <http://www.cokesbury.com/forms/home.aspx>

FACEBOOK

Facebook is a **social utility** that **connects you** with the people around you.

Sign up for a Facebook account at <http://www.facebook.com/> and join the "Mennonite Church USA Youth Workers."

This site could connect you with other youth workers and be a place where you can find resources and add things that you find helpful.

Jr. High Information and Resources

EVENTS

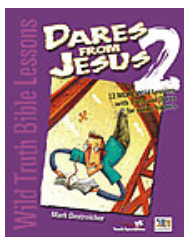
Jr. High Lock-In - March 14-15, 9 pm-7 am at Christopher Dock Mennonite High School

Watch for information about online registration coming in early February. This event is sponsored by Franconia and Eastern District Conferences and Christopher Dock and is for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students and sponsors.



Leadership Retreat

RESOURCES



Wild Truth Bible Lessons: Dares from Jesus 2 (Youth Specialties) by Mark Oestreicher

12 active Bible lessons that send junior highers straight into the words of Jesus to discover the truth—then dares them to live that truth in their own worlds.



The sequel to *Wild Truth Journal—Dares from Jesus*, these new lessons explore a dozen explicit or implicit dares found in Jesus' teaching—about money, forgiveness, humility, peace, and eight other topics that define your students' lives.

Useful teaching tools overflow for you—easy-to-prepare lessons that speak to your kids in real ways; tips, insights, games, and worksheets. Plus you can make student handouts and worksheets by either photocopying the book's pages, or by downloading them from the Youth Specialties Web site in a format that lets you edit and customize the handouts to your heart's content.

Challenge the way your students think about their commitments, their lives, and the Bible. Unleash on them some dares from Jesus.

Order at <https://shop.youthspecialties.com/store/product.php?productid=167&cat=318&page=1>

Menno Lens by Eleanor Snyder

A tool for evaluating Christian resources with a Mennonite eye. Offers a quick overview of criteria to consider as you select Christian resources. Use it to help your congregation choose materials that will form and reinforce strong Anabaptist/Mennonite faith among your children, youth, and adults.

Visit http://www.faithandliferesources.org/pdf/MennoLens_Aug04.pdf for more information.

Attention: Franconia Conference Youth Leaders

Continue to keep me informed of upcoming youth Sundays or events that I could attend. I am open to helping with youth ministry needs and concerns that develop in congregations. I would also appreciate if you could keep me informed of sponsor changes so everyone involved in youth ministry can receive mailings. **Marlene**

Youth Breezes is designed and edited through Franconia Mennonite Conference, Souderton, PA.
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