

## **BETHESDA MENNONITE CHURCH HISTORY**

### **1874 - Present**

- 1874** October 14: Arrival of the first 35 families from Molotschna, South Russia. Ministers were Benjamin Ratzlaff and Heinrich Epp.
- 1874** October 30: Reverend Benjamin Ratzlaff died.
- 1875** January 6: Elder Isaac Peters joined the group.
- 1875** May 16: First baptismal services were held.
- 1875** August: Reverend Gerhard Epp of Klippenfeld arrived.
- 1877** Fifteen families organized separately. Existed as a separate organization two years.
- 1878** Ministerial election. Elected were Cornelius Wall and Johann Kliever as ministers, Heinrich Pankratz as deacon.
- 1880** Summer - first church building erected.
- 1882** A group with Elder Isaac Peters, Reverend Heinrich Epp and Reverend Cornelius Wall separated to organize a new (Ebenezer) Church.
- 1883** Reverend Johann Kliever joined the (Ebenezer) Church.
- 1883** Ministerial election. Elected were Peter J. Friesen, Cornelius Regier and H.H. Epp.
- 1884** February 24: Peter J. Friesen and Cornelius Regier ordained as ministers and H.H. Epp as deacon. (Reverend Cornelius Regier served about two years.)
- 1885** October 25: Rev. P. J. Friesen ordained as elder.
- 1886** Election of Jacob Friesen as minister.
- 1888** December 26: First mission collection was taken.
- 1891** Church joined the Northern District Conference.
- 1891** March 8: Peter H. Pankratz elected as minister.
- 1891** August 16: Dietrich Peters elected as minister.
- 1892** Reverend Jacob Friesen moved to Minnesota.
- 1892** First Sunday School of Henderson community met in District 31 (Section 8, Henderson Township). It had four teachers and sixty pupils.
- 1893** Beginning of Sunday School in the Bethesda Church. First sessions were held in the afternoon.
- 1893** September 21: Reverend Gerhard Epp died.
- 1895** April 15: H. H. Epp, former deacon elected as minister, and Johann Abrahams as deacon.
- 1895** December 29: Organization of first Young People's Society. This society existed for only a few years.
- 1898** January 11: organization of the Mission Sewing Society.
- 1901** November 1: D. A. Janzen elected a deacon, Johann Abrahams having joined the M. B. Church.
- 1902** May 18: D. A. Janzen ordained as deacon.
- 1902** The parochial school was built.
- 1903-04** First year of instruction in parochial school. Rev. C. Hege and J. J. Friesen were the first teachers.
- 1904-43** During these years the following served as teachers in the parochial school: F. G. Pankratz, J. S. Regier, Rev. C. Hege, H. D. Epp, Albert Dahlke, A. W. Friesen, Johann Siemens, G. J. Toews, J. R. Barkman, Cornelius Wall, Ted Schmidt, John R. Dueck and A. H. Schultz.
- 1904** July 30: J. H. Epp ordained as missionary to the Indians in Oklahoma.
- 1904** December 26: Reverend Dietrich Peters died.
- 1906** Erection of new church building in the town of Henderson.
- 1906** July 31: Laying of cornerstone for the new church.
- 1906** First church choir organized.
- 1906** December 16: Dedication of new church.

**1908** December 1: Twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of Reverend P.J. Friesen as minister and elder.  
**1908** December 4: Ministerial election; elected were H. D. Epp and F. G. Pankratz.  
**1909** March 20: Elder P.J. Friesen died.  
**1909** June 6: Ordination of F.G. Pankratz.  
**1910** January 9: Reorganization of the Young People's Society.  
**1910** June 5: Ordination of H.D. Epp as assistant minister.  
**1910** June 6: Election of H.H. Epp as elder.  
**1910** August: F.G. Pankratz moved to Kansas.  
**1910** November 6: H.H. Epp ordained as elder.  
**1915** September 19: P.J. Boehr ordained as missionary to China.  
**1916** March 19: Ministerial election, J.F. Epp and A.W. Friesen as assistant ministers.  
**1916** October 1: Ordination of J.F. Epp and A.W. Friesen as assistant ministers.  
**1917** May 28: The Selective Service Act was passed by Congress. This act contained no definite provision for the conscientious objector.  
**1917** June 5: Registration of all young men between the ages of twenty-one to thirty inclusive. Under the above act twelve, (eight members and four sons of members) left home for service. All of these were privileged to return safe and sound.  
**1921** June 26: Ordination of H.D. Epp, John F. Epp, and A.W. Friesen into the full ministry.  
**1923** June 24: John D. Epp, ordained as an elder, being called to serve the church in Inman, Kansas.  
**1924** Reverend H.H. Epp resigns as elder.  
**1924** March 16: Reverend J.F. Epp elected as elder.  
**1924** November 23: Reverend J.F. Epp ordained as elder.  
**1925** January: Organization of Junior Mission Society, now Young Women's Mission Society.  
**1928** October 28: Organization of a Junior Young People's Society.  
**1930** D.A. Janzen resigned as deacon.  
**1930** February 4: B.A. Friesen elected as deacon.  
**1930** April 18: B.A. Friesen ordained as deacon.  
**1931** March 16: Enlarging of church, excavation of basement began.  
**1931** May 1: Cornerstone laying for the new addition.  
**1931** August 28: Church burned. Fire discovered at 1 a.m. Carpentry work had been completed and painters had worked one day.  
**1931** September 24: Cornerstone laying for new church after the fire.  
**1932** March 6: New church dedicated.  
**1933** March 13: Reverend H.H. Epp, former elder died.  
**1933** May 10: Reverend Peter H. Pankratz died.  
**1934** January 1: Reverend J.F. Epp resigned as elder.  
**1934** July 24: The trustees proposed the following recommendations: After this, the elder of our church is not to be elected for an indefinite time, but instead for a period of three (3) years. This recommendation was accepted by vote instead for a period of three (3) years. This recommendation was accepted by vote (Translation).  
**1935** March 4: Reverend A.W. Friesen elected as elder.  
**1935** May 5: Reverend A.W. Friesen ordained as elder.  
**1937** August 19: Dedication of Immigration Marker.  
**1938** December 29: Reverend A.W. Friesen elected as elder for another period of three years.  
**1939** February 15: D.A. Janzen, former deacon, died.  
**1940** September 14: Burke-Wadsworth Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 was passed by Congress. This act contains definite provisions for the conscientious objector.

**1940** October 16: Registration of all male citizens between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-six with local Selective Service Boards.

**1941** December 11: Reverend A.W. Friesen elected elder for another period of three years. Under the Burke-Wadsworth Selective Training Service Act of 1940, seventy-seven (sixty members and seventeen sons of members), were called into service. Of these, all except one were privileged to return uninjured. One lost his life when the allies entered Europe.

**1942** February 8: The Mennonite Hymnary was officially adopted as regular song book of the church.

**1942** November 8: Hugo Mierau ordained as an elder.

**1943** August 8: Arnold Epp ordained as an elder accepted the charge in the church at Burrton, Kansas.

**1944** June 18: The church constitution as revised and translated into the English language was presented to the congregation as a whole and accepted.

**1944** August 10: Memorial services for Herbert Kroeker who was killed in action in France on July 9, 1944.

**1944** August 20: Alfred Regier ordained as Minister of the Gospel, having accepted the pastorate in the Calvary Mennonite Church, Mechanics Grove, Pennsylvania.

**1944** December 12: Reverend A.W. Friesen was elected for a further term of three years.

**1946** June 9: The loudspeaker system was dedicated and used for the first time in church service.

**1946** October 8: Special church meeting was held in which the proposal was made by the Ministerial Council to have during the regular Sunday School hour, a class in Religious Instruction (age 15), a class in Church History (age 16), and a Teacher's Training class (age optional). This proposal was accepted.

**1947** October 1: The Bethesda Church library opened in the evening for the purpose of loaning books and also of offering an evening for reading in the library. The library is to be open every Wednesday evening.

**1947** October 19: Aaron Epp was ordained as an elder. He has accepted a charge in Inman, Kansas.

**1947** November 30: Reverend A.W. Friesen requested not to be considered as a candidate for reelection. Reverend Friesen has served as elder since 1935.

**1948** January 1: Reverend J.F. Epp was asked to serve as temporary elder until the position can be filled with a regular elder.

**1948** April 18: Farewell service for Reverend and Mrs. A.W. Friesen, who were about to leave for Paraguay, South America, was held.

**1948** June: Reverend Arnold Nickel was engaged to serve as assistant minister for the months of June, July and August.

**1948** June 24: The Selective Service Act of 1948 became law. This law specified that men between the ages of 19 through 25 may be called for service.

**1948** August 12: At a special church meeting Reverend Arnold Nickel was elected to serve as elder for a period of three years beginning September 1.

**1948** August 12: Decided to build a parsonage.

**1948** Erna Friesen has been appointed to serve as General Director of the General Conference Voluntary Service projects.

**1948** September 12: At the regular morning hour, installation service for Reverend Arnold Nickel as elder was observed.

**1948** August 30 to September 18: Men born after 9-30-22 and before 9-30-30 were asked to register under Selective Service Act of 1948.

**1949** May 15: Dedication of parsonage.

**1949** July: The Christian Youth Fellowship was organized.

**1949** October 23: Reverend and Mrs. A.W. Friesen's first Sunday at home after their return from an 18 month service in Paraguay, S.A.

**1950** September 1: Reverend Arnold Nickel was granted a nine months leave in order to finish his seminary course.

**1950** September 3: Reverend John Thiessen, missionary to India and on furlough at present, has been granted permission to serve our church during the absence of Reverend Arnold Nickel.

**1950** November: The Men's Brotherhood was organized.

**1951** June 3: Reverend Arnold Nickel has finished his seminary course and is continuing his work as pastor of the church.

**1951** August 7: At a special church meeting, arrangements were made concerning the financing of a Bible School. The plan is to offer to 8th grade graduates a term of nine months instruction in Bible, church history and related subjects.

**1951** August 7: Reverend Arnold Nickel was elected pastor by a large majority for another term of three years.

**1951** October 17: Reverend John F. Epp died suddenly towards evening. In the afternoon he had taken part in the funeral services of Mrs. John Gade.

**1951** December: The Junior Youth Fellowship was organized.

**1952** February 5: A special church meeting was held concerning questions arising with the continuance of the Bible School and more intensive religious instruction for the young people. To aid in the offering of more religious instruction, Arthur Isaak was elected to serve as assistant to the pastor.

**1952** July 13: Arthur Isaak was installed as assistant to the pastor.

**1952** December: To accommodate a greater number and to distribute the work more widely, the Young Women's Mission Society was divided into two groups. These two groups are known now as Mission Circle II and Mission Circle III respectively. The Senior Mission Society is now known as Mission Circle I.

**1953** Early Spring: The Young Married Couples Fellowship was organized.

**1953** May 10: The electric organ was dedicated in a special evening service. Walter Jost, music instructor from Freeman College, performed at the organ.

**1954** At the annual business meeting, January 1, the church extended a call to Reverend Arthur Isaak to serve another year beginning July 1 as assistant to the pastor.

**1954** July 18: Harold Thieszen was ordained as Minister of the Gospel. He is serving the Bethel Church in South Dakota.

**1954** August 24: Reverend Arnold Nickel was reelected by a good majority for another term of three years.

**1955** January 1: At the annual meeting the church voted by a large majority to continue the position of assistant to the pastor from which Reverend Arthur Isaak has resigned.

**1955** March 25: At a special church meeting, John Gaeddert was elected assistant to the Pastor for a term of two years beginning sometime in July.

**1955** August: Don Klippenstein and his wife Elisabeth left for a three-year term to serve in Korea.

**1955** August 21: Reverend John Gaeddert was installed as Assistant to the Pastor during the morning service.

**1955** August 24: William P. Siebert, member of the Spiritual Advisory Committee, was killed in a tractor accident.

**1956** March 6: At a special church meeting, the congregation voted for the building of a new sanctuary. The vote was 162 for and 129 against.

**1956** April 8: Reverend Arnold Nickel tendered his resignation this morning at the close of the service. The resignation to become effective August 15. He has accepted a position at Freeman College as instructor in Bible.

**1956** September 16: Dedication service for a second parsonage (a gift by a church family).

**1956** December 23: After the morning service the congregation by a large majority vote, invited Reverend and Mrs. J.R. Duerksen to serve as interim pastor.

**1957** January 3: Ground-breaking exercises for the new church were conducted in the afternoon.

**1957** April 25: At a special session of the congregation Reverend John Gaeddert was reelected by a large majority to serve as associate pastor for a term of three years.

**1957** July 21: At 7:00 p.m. the cornerstone for the new Bethesda Mennonite Church was laid.

**1957** September 23: At a special session of the congregation, Reverend John Gaeddert was elected to serve as elder and Reverend J.R. Duerksen to serve as associate pastor of the church. Each received a large majority vote.

**1957** December 8: Reverend John Gaeddert was ordained as elder in an afternoon service. His uncle Reverend Albert Gaeddert officiated.

**1958** May 4: Dedication services of the new church were conducted. A short service was held in the old church in the forenoon. Reverend Abe M. Wiebe, president of the Northern District, spoke on "God Met Us." Then the congregation went to the front of the new church, the presentation of the keys was made, and the congregation moved into the new sanctuary. In the afternoon Reverend Erland Waltner, president of the General Conference, spoke the dedicatory sermon, "A Spiritual House of God." The theme for the evening service was; "The Church in the World." Reverend Erland Waltner and Reverend John Thiessen were the speakers.

**1958** June 2: The final dismantling of the church school house was completed and the material was sold by auction. The proceeds from the sale were \$1,280.00. This building was built in 1902. Its purpose as stated in the catalogue of 1904-1905 was: "To give our youth an opportunity to expand in the knowledge already obtained, to acquaint it with the duties of life and through the acquisition of accurate knowledge, prepare it for the same, to retain and to promote Christian religion, and to prepare suitable teachers for our community" (Translation).

**1958** August 11: At a special church meeting Reverend J.R. Duerksen was elected by a good majority to serve as associate pastor for another year.

**1958** November 23: Reverend J.R. Duerksen's resignation as associate pastor was read after the service on Sunday morning. He has accepted the call to the Willow Creek Church near Paso Robles, California. When Reverend Duerksen was elected for another year of service as associate, it was understood, that if a call to some other needy church came, he would not need to feel bound to fill out the year.

**1958** December 26: Reverend J.R. Duerksen gave his last sermon. On the following day they left for Moundridge, Kansas, en route to Paso Robles, California.

**1959** April 4: With a vote of 4 to 1 it was decided to continue the order of Sunday service, worship service first and Sunday School second.

**1959** May 26: Bernhard Ratzlaff arrived in our community. He will be assistant to Reverend John Gaeddert during the summer months.

**1959** October 2: The church voted almost unanimously to call Reverend Paul Isaak as associate pastor of our church for a period of two years.

**1959** October 2: The revision of the church constitution was presented for adoption. The vote was 222 for and 5 against its adoption.

**1959** December 27: Installation of Reverend Paul Isaak as associate pastor was observed during the morning service.

**1960** June 16-19: The 67th session of the Northern District Conference met in our church.

**1960** August 23: At a church meeting Reverend John Gaeddert was elected, with a large majority vote, for another term of three years.

**1960** August 23: At a church meeting, by a small majority, it was decided to have our morning service broadcast over York, KAWL. The financing was left on a voluntary basis.

**1961** April 9: The church bulletin reported this morning that the special collection of last Sunday overpaid the church building debt by \$903.00.

**1961** August 8: Reverend Paul Isaak was reelected, by a good majority, as associate pastor for a period of three years.

**1962** August 20: At a special congregational meeting, the preliminary building committee presented their report on the educational building. The vote 232 in favor and 159 opposed was for the building of this unit as soon as possible.

**1962** September 7-8: Fellowship was organized.

**1963** March 11: Service of Dismantling and Cornerstone Opening of former church.

**1963** March 17: Ground-breaking service after the morning service for the Educational Building.

**1963** May 3: At a special church meeting Reverend John Gaeddert was elected, with a majority well above the two-third vote specified by our constitution, for another term of three years.

**1963** June 16: Clayton Peters commissioning service. He will serve under the MCC as dentist in the Congo, Africa.

**1963** July 28: Commissioning service for Evelyn Fast who will serve in Quito, Ecuador.

**1963** August 11: Date stone and Cornerstone service for the Educational Building.

**1963** August 19: Reverend John Gaeddert and family left for 9 month leave to attend the Mennonite Biblical Seminary at Elkhart, Indiana.

**1963** September: Reverend John Thiessen accepted to serve our church during the absence of Reverend John Gaeddert.

**1964** February 16: Commissioning service for Gladys Siebert who will serve in Taiwan.

**1964** June 14: Reverend John Gaeddert and family returned from Elkhart, Indiana, after nine months of study.

**1964** July 5: Dedication of the Educational Unit. Reverend Arnold Nickel gave the message and Reverend John Gaeddert spoke the dedicatory prayer.

**1964** September 14: At a congregational meeting Reverend Paul Isaak's term of service was extended from December, 1964 to August 15, 1965.

**1964** October 11: Reverend Paul Isaak's resignation was read from the pulpit this morning to be effective January 15, 1965. He is going to the First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kansas.

**1965** March 8: At a special congregational meeting the church invited Reverend Abe Krause to the position of Associate Pastor for a period of three (3) years.

**1965** March 28: The resignation of Reverend John Gaeddert was read this morning to be effective July 31. Reverend Gaeddert is planning to go to Africa under the direction of the MCC.

**1965** June 4: At a special congregational meeting the church invited Reverend Walter H. Dyck to the position of Pastor for a period of three (3) years.

**1965** August 1: Installation service for Reverend Walter H. Dyck as pastor and for Reverend Abe Krause as Associate Pastor.

**1967** June 15-18: The 74th session of the Northern District Conference met in our church.

**1968** March 26: At a special congregational meeting the church extended the call to Reverend Walter H. Dyck to serve as pastor and Reverend Abe Krause to serve as associate pastor for another three years.

**1968** May 26: Dedication service for the new Smith pipe organ (installed in January). The dedicatory recital was played by Philip Kroeker.

**1968** May 27: Final payment made for the Educational Unit.

**1968** June 7: At a special congregational meeting the church decided to add an associate pastor; one of the associates to serve as Minister of Christian Education.

**1968** September 22: Following the morning service, the congregation voted to engage Reverend Willard K. Claassen as Christian Education Consultant (served from September 29 to November 7).

**1970** February: C.C. Siebert retired after 14 years of service as church custodian.

**1970** February 23: Reverend Heinrich D. Epp, retired minister, died.

**1970** May 14: Gladys Siebert arrived home on furlough after serving six years at the Mennonite Christian Hospital in Taiwan.

**1970** July 26: Darrell Fast was ordained as an elder by the Reverend John Gaeddert.

**1970** November 8: At a special congregational meeting, the church invited Hedy Sawadsky to the position of Director of Christian Education for an initial two (2) year term.

**1970** December: The residence of Mrs. C.A. Peters has been given to the church to be used as a parsonage.

**1971** February 21: Hedy Sawadsky was installed as Director of Christian Education during the morning worship service.

**1971** April 18: At a special congregational meeting, the church extended the call to Reverend Abe Krause to serve as Associate Pastor for another three years. Reverend Walter H. Dyck's term was not renewed.

**1971** May 2: A dedication service for the new Mennonite Hymnal with J. Harold Moyer as guest speaker and Mrs. Esko Loewen as organist.

**1971** May 2: Farewell service for Gladys Siebert who is returning to Taiwan for a second term of mission service. Her departure was delayed until August, due to the illness of her father.

**1971** June 13: A dedication service for the newly acquired parsonage. (The former parsonage No. 2 was sold with proceeds given to missions.)

**1971** July 5: The Ministerial Council asked Pastor Abe Krause to assume all pastoral responsibilities when Pastor Walter H. Dyck's term expires.

**1971** July 11: Farewell for Reverend and Mrs. Walter H. Dyck, who are moving to another pastorate in Illinois.

**1971** November 28: Commissioning service for Clarence and Amanda Rempel who are entering a short term mission service in Europe serving under the Gospel Missionary Union.

**1972** January 2: The church invited missionary Benjamin J. Sawatzky to serve as Assistant Pastor from January 15 to August 31.

**1972** January 23: Pastor Benjamin Sawatzky was installed as Assistant Pastor.

**1972** May 7: The church elected Pastor Benjamin Sawatzky as pastor for a three-year term beginning September 1.

**1972** June 15-18: The 79th session of the Northern District Conference met in our church.

**1972** June 18: Reverend Benjamin Sawatzky was ordained as an elder with Reverend Walter Goering officiating.

**1972** October 1: The church extended the call to Hedy Sawadsky to serve as Director of Christian Education for another term of two years.

**1972** December 27: The revision of the church constitution was presented for adoption. The vote was 163 for and 52 against its adoption.

**1973** July 1: Delvyn and Lucille Epp were commissioned for missionary service in Japan.

**1973** September 23: Hedy Sawadsky submitted her resignation to be effective at the end of the year.

**1974** Centennial year of celebration.

1974 February 24: Centennial pageant: "By Faith they went Forth," written by H.D. Epp.

**1974** March 31: Centennial Community Chorus with brass and organ accompaniment.

**1974** August 11: Homecoming Sunday.

**1974** October 13: Henderson Centennial Memorial Service and unveiling of Historical Marker.

**1975** A year of Jubilee celebrating 450 years of Anabaptist heritage. (Members were encouraged to reduce food consumption by 10% and donate this amount to the world hungry).

**1975** January 19: Congregation voted upon recommendation of Ministerial Council to grant Pastor Benjamin Sawatzky a four month leave to serve under Mennonite Central Committee, India. At the

same meeting congregation voted to call Reverend Waldo Kaufman to serve in the absence of Pastor Sawatzky.

**1975** February 1: Pastor Benjamin and Mrs. Sawatzky together with Margaret and Monroe left for India for a four month assignment under MCC to assist in relief work projects.

**1975** February 1: Mahendra Kumar, pastor from General Conference Church in India, came as guest pastor for four months to gain practical in-service experience under auspices of Commission on Overseas Missions.

**1975** April 20: Congregation approved recommendation of Business Administration Board to cancel unpaid church assessments in keeping with the spirit of the Year of Jubilee.

**1975** June 17: At a congregational meeting, Pastor Benjamin Sawatzky was reelected to continue service as pastor.

**1975** June 17: Reverend Waldo Kaufman elected to a three year term beginning September 1.

**1975** July: Gladys Siebert arrived home on furlough after serving four years as missionary at Mennonite Christian Hospital in Taiwan.

**1975** July 8: Former long-time deacon, Bernhard A. Friesen, died suddenly.

**1975** September 14: Pastor Waldo Kaufman formally installed as pastor during Sunday morning service.

**1975** October 31: Dennis and Shirley Ries left for their first term of mission service in Zaire under African Inter-Mennonite Missions.

**1976** April 4: Pastor Abraham Krause submitted resignation to accept a call to the Buhler Mennonite Church, Buhler, Kansas.

**1976** May 30: The former Bethesda Cemetery Association transferred their property to the Bethesda Mennonite Church. It is now known officially as Bethesda Mennonite Church Cemetery.

**1976** June 17-20: The 83rd session of the Northern District Conference convened in Bethesda Mennonite Church.

**1976** July 11: Farewell for Pastor and Mrs. Abraham Krause and daughters who are moving to Buhler, Kansas.

**1976** August 30: Gladys Siebert returned to Hwaiien, Taiwan for her third term as a missionary nurse.

**1976** October 3: Brian Epp was ordained as Elder in the Halbstadt Mennonite Church, Manitoba. He is serving the Halbstadt and Rosenfeld Mennonite Churches, Manitoba, Canada.

**1976** November 10: At a special congregational meeting, Reverend Russell Mast was extended a call to serve as co-pastor for a period of three years.

**1977** April 24: Reverend Russell L. Mast was installed as co-pastor during the morning worship service. A reception was held in the afternoon for Reverend and Mrs. Mast.

**1978** May 28: At a congregational meeting following the regular Sunday morning worship service it was decided not to extend Pastor Waldo Kaufman's service another term.

**1978** May 28: Rosella Epp was installed as Associate Pastor in the Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kansas.

**1978** August 27: Farewell for Pastor and Mrs. Waldo Kaufman.

**1978** December 3: Maranatha Fellowship in Lincoln had charter membership service, Clarence Rempel installed as pastor.

**1978** December 24: Reverend Russell Mast submitted his resignation to accept a call to the Salem Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD.

**1979** January 7: Pastor Benjamin Sawatzky submitted his resignation to be effective April 15, 1979.

**1979** February 9 and 10: Mid-triennium Conference of the General Conference held in Minneapolis, MN, to consider Christian avenues in regard to taxes used for military purposes.

**1979** April 10: Board of Deacons appointed Reverend Ward Shelly to serve Bethesda as interim pastor for two years beginning approximately July 1. Congregation indicated support.

**1979** April 22: Evening of appreciation for Reverend Benjamin and Mrs. Sawatzky.



**1979** May 27: Farewell for Reverend Russell L. and Mrs. Mast.

**1979** July 8: Reverend Ward W. Shelly installed as Interim Pastor.

**1979** August 12: Board of Deacons appointed Reverend Brian Epp as interim Youth Pastor for two years beginning September 1. Congregation indicated support.

**1979** September 9: Installation of Brian Epp as Interim Youth Pastor.

**1980** February 13: Reverend Albert H. Epp elected as Senior Pastor for a three-year term to begin March 1, 1981.

**1980** March 1: Mr. and Mrs. Carl Epp left for a year of voluntary service in the Dominican Republic rebuilding a town destroyed by hurricane.

**1980** March 14: James Hieb left for voluntary service in St. Louis, Missouri.

**1980** June 1: James Janzen left for two years voluntary service in Atlanta, Georgia.

**1980** July: Young men born in 1960 or 1961 are by law required to register for peacetime draft. There is no provision on the registration form to indicate conscientious objection to war.

**1980** August 3: The 100th anniversary of the building of our first church structure was observed.

**1980** August 4: Victoria Peters left for a year of voluntary service in Markham, Illinois.

**1980** November 9: Mr. and Mrs. Randy Franz left during the week for a year of Mennonite Disaster Service at Lake Elsinore, California.

**1981** January 5: Pastor Brian Epp was elected to a three-year term as Youth Pastor.

**1981** March 1: Pastor Albert H. Epp installed as senior pastor. Reverend Roland Goering of Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, South Dakota officiated. In the evening a welcome social for the Epps was held.

**1981** April: Parsonage number one sold.

**1981** July 12: Gladys Siebert left for Taiwan for another term as nurse under Commission on Overseas Missions.

**1981** November: The bell tower completed using bell from the former parochial school.

**1982** January 29-30: Mennonite Central Committee Annual meeting held in Bethesda.

**1982** April 25: Pastor Ward W. Shelly's resignation effective November 1.

**1982** June: Randall Quiring left for two-year voluntary service with Eastern Mennonite Mission Board. Calvin Ott left for one-year term of voluntary service with General Conference at Seattle, Washington. Cordell Ratzlaff left for one-year term of voluntary service at Markham, Illinois General Conference Voluntary Service Unit.

**1982** September: Ivan Friesen left for two-year voluntary service term with Mennonite Central Committee Canner.

**1982** September 21: Charles Epp was indicted by a Grand Jury in Kansas City for refusing to register for the draft even though for reasons of conscience.

**1982** October 31: Farewell service for Pastor and Mrs. Ward W. Shelly.

**1982** November 14: Reverend Benjamin and Leona Sawatzky, former pastors, commissioned for Mennonite Central Committee work in India, left during week of Nov. 18.

**1983** June 16-19: The 90th session of the Northern District Conference met in our church.

**1984** January 15: Pastor Albert H. Epp elected for another three-year term as Senior Pastor; term begins March 1, 1984.

**1984** June 3: Pastor Brian Epp elected for another three-year term; term begins September 1, 1984.

**1984** June 25: Halfway through the trial of the government vs. Charles Epp for refusing to register under the selective service act, the government requested the case be dismissed.

**1984** July: Dennis and Shirley Ries returned from Zaire after two terms as medical missionaries under African Inter-Mennonite Missions.

**1984** August 1: Eugene Thieszen left for Botswana, Africa for a three-year term as a pilot under "Mennonite Ministries" a joint ministry of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Central

Committee. He will be seconded to "Flying Missions" a missionary organization set up by the Scottish surgeon, Dr. McArthur.

**1984** September 1: Charles Epp entered a two year voluntary service term with Mennonite Central Committee to work in Washington, D.C. for the World Peace Tax Fund and the National Interreligious Service Board for conscientious objectors.

**1984** November 13: Reverend A.W. Friesen, long time elder, actively serving Bethesda Church for 32 years, died Tuesday, November 13.

**1985** January 20: A recommendation to call Bernard Thiessen as minister of visitation did not receive a two-thirds majority vote of the congregation.

**1985** February 5: Carl and Ruth Epp left for a term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Honduras working with Salvadorian refugees.

**1985** June 2: General Conference 125th anniversary observed.

**1985** June 3: Nancy Buller left for a one year voluntary service with General Conference in Wichita, Kansas.

**1985** First week in July, Gladys Siebert returned from Mission field in Taiwan.

**1986** January 12: Congregational meeting called to act on recommendation from Board of Deacons to add Bernard Thiessen to pastoral staff. Recommendation failed to receive two-thirds majority.

**1986** December 1: Gladys Siebert returned to mission field in Taiwan.

**1987** January 11: A Community Centennial Worship Service was held at Bethesda with the pastors and choirs of the four local churches participating.

**1987** January 18: Pastor Albert H. Epp reelected for another three years.

**1987** February 22: The Herman J. Epps resigned as janitors after 22 years of service.

**1987** June 7: Pastor Brian K. Epp reelected for another three year term.

**1987** August 2: Seven former pastors attended Homecoming Sunday: Art Isaac, John Gaeddert, Walter Dyck, Abe Krause, Waldo Kaufman, Ben Sawatzky and Ward Shelly.

**1987** August 30: Nancy Peters left for two years of voluntary Service in Atlanta, Georgia under Mennonite Central Committee.

**1987** October 1: Robert O. Epp left for a year of service in Nicaragua and Guatemala under WITNESS FOR PEACE.

**1988** January 15: Eugene Thieszen, mission pilot, returned to Botswana.

**1988** May 1: Huldah E. Friesen left for a 5-week visit to Bogota and Cachipay, Colombia, S.A. where she once served seven years with COM.

**1988** June 19: The first joint conference of Northern District and the IA-NE Conference of Mennonites was held at Bethesda.

**1989** January: Darrin Preheim left for a 9 month term of VS in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada.

**1989** April: Carl and Ruth Epp left for a 9-month term of service with MCC in Nicaragua.

**1989** Matthew Friesen, Junior at Bethel College from Dallas, Oregon, served as Summer Intern.

**1989** November 6: Gladys Siebert, COM-missionary to Hualien, Taiwan since 1964, died of cancer.

**1989** November 26: Pastor Albert Epp announced that he was not a candidate for reelection in 1990. Board of Deacons announced the extension of his term of service to Pentecost Sunday, June 3, 1990.

**1990** February: Gladys Siebert Memorial Fund Drive for Mennonite Christian Hospital, Hwalien, Taiwan.

**1990** May 13: The church elected Pastor Jason Martin to serve as Interim Pastor for approximately 18 months, beginning August 1.

**1990** June 3: Farewell for Pastor Albert and Joan Epp.

**1990** June 10: Pastor Brian Epp elected as Associate Pastor for 2-year term.

**1990** June 10: Matthew C. Friesen began serving as Summer Youth Intern, for the second summer.

**1990** August 19: Pastor Jason Martin was installed as Interim Pastor, with Reverend Ernest Neufeld, Conference Minister, officiating. Reverend Orlando Goering representing Northern District Committee on Ministry gave the message.

**1990** November: Victoria Epp entered a two-year MVS term with Victim Offenders Reconciliation Program in Seattle, WA.

**1991** April 21: Steering Committee led church in a questionnaire evaluation.

**1991** June 2: Congregational decision to create a fourth pastor position, Family Life Minister.

**1991** June: Matthew Tschetter, Freeman, SD Junior at Eastern Mennonite College, served as Summer Intern.

**1991** July 14: Congregational decision to eliminate mandatory dues and assessments and to use a voluntary system of giving.

**1991** August 22: Joel Schroeder begins 2-year term as Youth Minister.

**1991** November 17: First deacon election under new system where congregation is nominating body.

**1991** November: Congregational goals were set, and assigned to our council, boards, and committees.

**1991** Roy Smith served seven months with MDS in South Carolina and Louisiana.

**1992** February 2: Congregation called Pastor Brian Epp for an additional two years as our Associate Pastor until September 1, 1994 with Lead Pastor's duties until a new Lead Pastor is found.

**1992** March 8: Congregation called Pastors John L. and Marcia Yoder-Schrock for a three year term as our new Family Life Ministers until April 14, 1995.

**1992** March 22: Congregation adopted a revised Constitution and By-Laws which provides for a congregation moderator and a congregation secretary, to be elected by the congregation and to become members of the Church Council.

**1992** March 29: A farewell service was held for Jason and Mary Martin. Pastor Martin concluded his term as Interim Pastor.

**1992** June 7: Installation services for John L. and Marcia Yoder-Schrock were held with Robert Hartzler, ND Conference Minister and Orlando Goering, ND Conference Ministerial Committee Representative, officiating.

**1992** July 26: The congregation decided to implement a computerized central treasury system by 1993. Berdine Buller was hired as Central Treasurer.

**1992** Summer: Former missionary Eugene Thieszen returned to Botswana, Africa, under COM serving as Bible teacher to pastors of the African Independent Churches. Service workers leaving for a one year assignment were Carmen Pauls to Israel, and Patrick Preheim to Germany. Leaving for a four month period at MCC-Akron were John and Susie Buller. Robert O. Epp served various lengths of time delivering relief supplies with Pastors for Peace caravan to Nicaragua and Cuba, and as a Peace witness in El Salvador helping resettle refugees.

**1993** January: A new pictorial church directory was printed.

**1993** January: Jac Thiessen began a position with the UNL Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship in Lincoln.

**1993** February: Northern District LIFE process adopted. Coordinators: Phyllis and Eugene Friesen, Connie Friesen, Vernelle Epp and Pastor Brian Epp.

**1993** February: Voluntary offering schedule adopted; assessments dropped.

**1993** February: \$20,000 was collected for a truck for Eugene Thieszen's use in Botswana.

**1993** April: Joel Schroeder's Youth Minister position was extended until August 21, 1996.

**1993** August 22: Ground breaking/dedication of MCC House Against Hunger at 703 Parkview Court, Henderson.

**1993** September 1 - December 31: Carmen Pauls served as Children's Pastor in a Ministry Inquiry position.

**1993** September: A Women's Choir was organized with Sandra Quiring as director.

**1993** September: Patrick Preheim began an Interim Youth Ministry position at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS.

**1993** Fall: Alvin Doell retires as missionary in Spain.

**1993** October: Tara (Siebert) Swartzendruber began a one-year term with the Inter-Menno Program in Enkenbach-Alsenborn, Germany.

**1993** November: Dr. Merlin and Rita Friesen and daughters began a two-year VS service assignment at Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

**1994** May: **Hymnal, A Worship Book** song book was dedicated. Pastor Brian Epp reelected to serve a 2 year term as Associate Pastor.

**1994** June: ND IA/NE Conference at Bethesda.

**1994** July: MCC "House Against Hunger" sold for \$95,000. "Mirror of the Martyrs" displayed in Fellowship Hall.

**1994** August: Ruth Peters hired as Office Manager.

**1994** September: Children's Jubilee Sunday School curriculum dedicated.

**1994** October: Pastors John and Marcia Yoder-Schrock reelected as Family Life Ministers for 3 years. Ruby and Bernard Thiessen participate in the 30th anniversary of Mennonite Church at Kobe, Japan.

**1995** January: Youth Minister Joel and wife Kay Schroeder attended Interterm at AMBS.

**1995** May: "Welcome to Our Worship" pads introduced to congregation. Weldon Martens elected as Lead Pastor for a 3-year term beginning Sept. 1 to Aug. 31, 1998. Tina Doell, a junior at Bethel College, participated in the "Ministry Inquiry" program at Bethesda.

**1995** June: Robert O. Epp participated in Christian Peacemakers Team in Haiti.

**1995** July: Eugene Thieszen arrived home from Botswana mission field for North American assignment. Mary Franz left for a 1-year term of voluntary service with "Common Ground" at Dallas, TX.

**1995** August: Peter J. Dyck was our special speaker to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of MCC.

**1995** September: Weldon Martens installed as Lead Pastor at Bethesda. Christopher Epp ordained as Minister of the Gospel at Youth with a Mission, Elm Springs, AR.

**1995** October: Eugene R. Thieszen ordained to the Ministry of the Gospel at Bethesda. He is serving as a missionary in Botswana, Africa.

**1995** December: Pastor Joel Schroeder elected to serve his second 3-year term as Youth Minister until August 21, 1999.

**1995** December: Dr. Merlin and Rita Friesen completed a 2-year term of service at Porcupine, SD.

**1996** February: Missionary Eugene Thieszen returned to Botswana, Africa.

**1996** February: Ruth Peters resigned as Office Manager.

**1996** March: Tara Swartzendruber hired as Office Manager.

**1996** March 17: Pastor Brian Epp submitted his resignation effective August 31.

**1996** April 28: Service of Licensing held for Youth Minister, Joel Schroeder.

**1996** July 24: Youth and six sponsors spent a week of service in Denver working with the DOOR Project.

**1996** August 1: Martha R. Friesen resigned as part-time custodian.

**1996** August 25: Pastor Brian Epp preached his farewell sermon, followed by a service of closure and dinner in Fellowship Hall.

**1996** September: Pastor Joel & Kay Schroeder left for a semester of study at AMBS, Elkhart, IN.

**1996** September 8: Carmen Pauls commissioned for a 3-year term of service in Jerusalem with MCC as a Peace Development worker.

**1996** October: Communication via e-mail can now reach Bethesda staff at [bethesda@mainstaycomm.net](mailto:bethesda@mainstaycomm.net)

**1996** November 1: Carmen Bowen hired as part time custodian.

**1996** November: Robert and Carl Epp spent 3 weeks in Chiapas, Mexico with Christian Peacemaker Team delegation leaders.

**1996** December 1: Dedication Service held for south transept Stained Glass window.

**1997** April: Audrun and Wanda Siebert are the first delegates for the Mission Inquiry Program of Bethesda. They visited Eugene Thieszen in Botswana, Africa.

**1997** May: Derek Yoder serves at Bethesda for eleven weeks under the Ministry Inquiry Program.

**1997** August 9-20: Robert O. Epp leads a 12 member Christian Peacemaker Team to Chiapas, Mexico.

**1997** November 2: Pastors John and Marcia Yoder-Schrock accept a call for their third three-year term as Family Life Ministers.

**1997** November 23: Patrick Preheim, former member, licensed for Pastoral Ministry. Patrick and his wife Patty Friesen an ordained pastor, serve as Co-Pastors at Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, MN.

**1997** November: Jacob E. Friesen, head custodian for 12 years, resigned his position.

**1997** December: Denese Hiebner hired as full time custodian beginning January 1, 1998.

**1998** January: Pastor John Yoder-Schrock and Keith Hiebner went to Israel with a Bethel College study tour.

**1998** January: Kevin J. Friesen left for 11 weeks of language study in Guatemala.

**1998** February 3-9: International Visitor Exchange Program Conference at Bethesda.

**1998** April: Established fund for pick-up truck for Kek'chi Mennonite Building Project in Guatemala.

**1998** April: Mission Inquiry and Emissary (MIE) funds were used to send Pastor Weldon Martens and daughter Laurel to Botswana.

**1998** August 30: Sonya Pauls commissioned for Mennonite Voluntary Service at a Day Care in Hutchinson, Kansas.

**1998** September: The Bethesda Preschool began with 16 students. Gina Mestl is the director/teacher and Tami Peters is also a teacher.

**1998** September 6: Pastor Joel Schroeder, Youth Minister, ordained to the Ministry.

**1999** January 3: Sara Thieszen commissioned for a 2-year term voluntary of service with "For the Love of Children" in Washington, D.C.

**1999** January: Fund for roof repair for the sanctuary established.

**1999** January 5: Sylvia and Daniel Rogers begin assignment in Quito, Ecuador for three-year term.

**1999** February: Eugene Thieszen returns home from Botswana Africa for a 4 month North American assignment, followed by one year Sabbatical. During this time he was hired by Bethesda to establish a prayer ministry beginning August 15. On December 5, Eugene was elected as Interim Pastor to serve until June 30, 2000.

**1999** February 28: Joel Schroeder reelected for a third three year term as Youth Pastor.

**1999** March 7: Carmen Pauls returned home from her service assignment in Israel and left for a MCC assignment in Baghdad on April 10.

**1999** March 25: Audrun Siebert approved by Board of Deacons as an unpaid pastoral ministry apprentice for 1 year.

**1999**, April: Susan Hiebner was hired as Statistical Secretary, working part-time.

**1999** June 20: Presentation of Gladys Siebert Memorial Scholarship fund by Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

**1999** August 16: Andrea Thieszen commissioned for MVS with Doorstep, Inc. Topeka, Kansas.

**1999** September 5: Celebration of 125 years of Mennonite families living in the community.

**1999** October 3: Pastors John and Marcia Yoder Schrock resign as Family Life Ministers with the last service being December 31, 1999.

**1999** October: Bethesda Historical Committee organized with Kathleen Koop Friesen as chairman and Robert O. Epp and Beverly Mae Friesen as committee members.

**1999** December 12: Patrick Preheim, former member, ordained to the ministry at Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**2000** A celebration of "A Century of General Conference Overseas Missions" was celebrated throughout the year.

**2000** March: Mike and Tina Yutzy began service with the Mennonite Brethren Mission Services, U.S. Center for World Mission in Pasadena, CA.

**2000** January 18: James Hiebner began service with MVS, Habitat for Humanity at Americus, Georgia, for 2 years.

**2000** June: At the Northern District/Iowa Nebraska Conference sessions held June 22-25 at Freeman, SD by delegate vote of 231 to 1, the conferences were joined to become the Central Plains Mennonite Conference.

**2000** July 13: Eugene Thieszen left as a mission worker in Maun, Botswana, in a new position as a youth worker with the Aids Intervention Program and a continuing ministry with African Independent churches. Eugene has served two MCC terms and is currently on his third AIMM term.

**2000** August 13: Sonya Pauls commissioned for one year of voluntary service with MCC in Cairo, Egypt.

**2000** September 1: Kevin J. Friesen left for a three year term of MCC service in Nicaragua, Central America.

**2000** September: Carmen Pauls returned from her MCC service in Baghdad.

**2000** September: Outer roof of the Bethesda Church sanctuary and adjoining flat roofs were replaced.

**2000** Audrun Siebert continues his pastoral ministry apprenticeship by developing a Young Adult Ministry.

**2000** November 13: George Kaufman began serving as Associate Pastor. Installation services for George and Naomi were held November 26.

**2000** December: The church pipe organ underwent major repair.

**2000** December: Stained glass window depicting Jesus' ascension into heaven was installed in the balcony.

**2001** January: Robert Hiebner hired as full time custodian. Denese Hiebner is now part time custodian.

**2001** January 24 to February 4: Robert O. Epp was a part of Christian Peacekeepers Team protesting the use of the Vieques Island for bombing exercises by the U.S. Navy.

**2001** March: Eugene Thieszen returned home from his Botswana assignment with COM and AIMM, after serving one year of his three year term.

**2001** April 4: Kevin J. Friesen returned home, due to illness, from his MCC 2 year assignment in Nicaragua, having served 6 months.

**2001** June 3: Pastor Weldon Martens was elected and accepted the call to serve another three year term with a vote of 98.1%.

**2001** June 13 to July 25: Robert O. Epp was a member of the CPT team in Colombia, South America, providing international accompaniment to Colombian peasant farmers.

**2001** June 15 to August 15: Jai Prakash Masih from India, a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, served as summer intern at Bethesda.

**2001** August 5: Balcony stained glass window, "The Ascension" was dedicated.

**2001** September 24: Rachel Thieszen began a one year assignment with Mennonite Voluntary Service at Hutchinson Child Care Center, Hutchinson, Kansas.

**2001** August 15: Audrun Siebert, who assisted the Bethesda staff by working with young couples, left August 15 to attend Hesston College, pursuing ministerial studies.

**2001** August: James Hiebner ended his MVS service in Americus GA, but continued on with Habitat for Humanity in a paid position.

**2001** September: Eugene Thieszen resigned from the Commission on Overseas Missions.

**2001** November: Denese Hiebner resigned as part time custodian.

**2001** November and December: Repainted the sanctuary. Services were held in Fellowship Hall for four weeks.

**2001** December 3: Keith Hiebner left for a 2-year assignment with Voluntary Service at St. Louis, Missouri, Mennonite Peace Center as Executive Director of the MVS unit.

**2002** February: The General Conference Church and the Mennonite Church were officially merged to create Mennonite Church USA. Offerings will now be directed to new offices. Offerings formerly sent to Commission on Overseas Mission and Home Missions will go to Mennonite Mission Network. Offerings formerly designated for Commission on Education will now be sent to the office of Congregational Life. Offerings formerly given for the Northern District are given to Central Plains Mennonite Conference.

**2002** Church maintenance projects completed recently included replacing the sanctuary roof, and replacing many windows and doors with more energy efficient ones.

**2002** March 24: Stained glass window "Jesus Blessing the Children" was dedicated.

**2002** April 14: Pastor Joel Schroeder reelected to a 4<sup>th</sup> term as Youth Pastor.

**2002** April: Lori Friesen was hired as part-time custodian. She resigned in August and in September Holly Bailey was hired for this part-time position.

**2002** June 24: Eugene Thieszen leaves for a term of mission work in Botswana, sponsored by Dayspring Christian Ministries International, Inc.

**2002** July: The new marquee was installed on the east side of the church.

**2002** July 21: The Board of Outreach along with the Deacons decided to discontinue the "Welcome to Worship" pads.

**2002** October 1: Susan Hiebner began working part time as Youth Pastor Secretary.

**2003** January 6: Brent Swartzendruber began a 6 week Ministry Inquiry Term.

**2003** January 13: Mark Epp, Cathy Wismer and Hannah and Carlin left for a 3-year term of service with MCC in Santa Cruz Bolivia.

**2003** A new pictorial church directory was printed.

**2003** June and July: Pastor Weldon and Jenny Martens were awarded the Clergy Renewal Grant funded by the Lilly Foundation. The \$30,000 grant was used for an Anabaptist History Tour throughout Europe, time at a Christian Retreat Center in Mittersill, Austria, a visit to London Mennonite Center and a visit to Rome. It also paid Harold Thieszen, interim minister, for his services during Weldon and Jenny Martens absence.

**2003** June 19-22: Bethesda hosted the Central Plains Mennonite Conference.

**2003** July 20: Pastor George Kaufman was elected to serve another three year term as assistant pastor.

**2003** July 20: Audrun Siebert was licensed and ordained to ministry at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Milford, Nebraska.

**2003** August 17: Timothy Friesen was commissioned for two years to work with the MCC Canner.

**2003** September 2: Brett Klingenberg, Elbing, Kansas, a recent Bethel College graduate, began four months with the Ministry Inquiry Program at Bethesda.

**2003** December: Susan Hiebner resigned as statistical secretary and youth pastor secretary.

**2004** February: Tammy Ott was hired as part-time secretary three days per week. Alice Buller reduced her time to three days per week.

**2004** March 7: Pastor Joel Schroeder resigned as Youth Pastor to be effective in July. A farewell was held July 11.

**2004** March 14: Sara Ulrich left for a 1-year assignment with Mennonite Mission Network in Hertford England.

**2004** June 13: Weldon Martens was elected for a fourth term to run until August 2007.

**2004** November 28: Jeff Selzer from Alva, Oklahoma, received a very favorable vote to become the Youth Minister, beginning in 2005.

**2004** December: Alice Buller resigned as office secretary following 21 years of service.

**2005** January: Tammy Ott was hired as full-time secretary to replace Alice Buller.

**2005** January 9: Jeff Selzer was installed as Youth Minister.

**2005** June 5: Shawn Rath, a Bethel College Student from the Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS, served as a Ministry Inquiry Student for three months.

**2005** June 5: Wes Goertzen began a two-year term with Word Made Flesh in El Alto, Bolivia.

**2005** September: Michaela Martens left for Glendale, AZ to serve one year with Discipleship, Encounter and Outreach (DEO).

**2005** August 7: Jeff Selzer was licensed into the Ministry at Bethesda.

**2005** August 23: Laura Steingard resigned as Director of Music after serving the congregation for 30 years.

**2005** Jennifer Buller was hired to replace Laura Steingard as Director of Music.

**2005** September 4: Tim Friesen extends his service with MCC for another three year term, now as canner coordinator.

**2006** February: Eugene Thieszen, who completed 21 years of Mission work in Botswana, was installed as minister at the Herold Mennonite Church, Cordell, Oklahoma.

**2006** May: Sara Ulrich left for a 2-year service assignment with Young Life in Hertford, England.

**2006** July 10: Mark Epp, Cathy Wismer, Hannah and Carlin returned home after a 3 ½ year assignment with MCC in Bolivia.

**2006** September: Ian Huebert left for an MVS assignment in Bradford, England for one year.

**2006** September: Janene Goertzen left for a 10 month service assignment in Guinea Bissau, Africa

**2006** October 8: Pastor George Kaufman was elected to serve another 3-year term as Associate Pastor.

**2007** April: Resignation of Pastor George Kaufman from the Associate Pastor position, effective June 30.

**2007** June 24: Farewell service for George and Naomi Kaufman.

**2007** June: Wes and Heather Goertzen continue to serve with Word Made Flesh in El Alto, Bolivia.

**2007** July 15: Pastor Rachel Friesen began as Interim Associate Pastor.

**2007** August 12: Pastor Weldon Martens reelected to serve another 3 year term as Lead Pastor.

**2007** August: Scott and Christa Janzen to serve 1-year with MVS in Tucson, Arizona.

**2007** August: Brett and Cassandra Klingenberg to serve 8 months as group leaders with YES in Venezuela.

**2007** August: Abbie Friesen began a voluntary assignment at Western Mennonite School in Salem, Oregon as a dorm leader

**2007** September 30: Ordination of Pastor Jeff Selzer to Christian Ministry.

**2007** November/December: Photos were taken for the new church directory.

**2007** November 18: Pastor Jeff Selzer reelected to serve another 3 year term as Youth Pastor.

**2008** May 4: Celebration of 50 years in our current sanctuary

**2008** April 8: Jeff Selzer resigned as Youth Pastor.

**2008** July 27: Farewell service for Jeff and Dana Selzer family and for Rachel and Ivan Friesen

**2008** August 3: Vernelle Epp was installed as a lay assistant to fill the position of Pastor of Congregational Care (formerly Associate Pastor).

**2008** August 3: Cathy Wismer was installed as a lay assistant to fill the position of Pastor of Discipleship and Witness (formerly Youth Pastor).

**2008** November 9: Andrea Wall was called to fill the position of Pastor of Discipleship and Witness, to begin March 1, 2009.

**2008** November 30: James Voth was called to fill the position of Pastor of Congregational Care, to begin March 22, 2009.

**2009** January 26: Jonathon Larson was the Interterm speaker.

**2009** January: Tammy P. Ott resigned as secretary effective February 1.

**2009** March 1: Andrea Wall began as Pastor of Discipleship and Witness.



**2009** March 22: Jim Voth began as Pastor of Congregational Care.

**2009** March 22: Installation of Pastor Jim Voth and Pastor Andrea Wall.

**2009** March: Diane Buller was hired as full-time secretary to replace Tammy P. Ott.

**2009** August: Tara Swartzendruber resigned as Office Manager/ Assistant to the Lead Pastor.

**2009** August: Tammy P. Ott was hired as Office Manager/Assistant to the Lead Pastor to replace Tara Swartzendruber.

**2009** August 15: Rebecca Friesen to serve 10 months in Bradford England with Radical Journey.

**2009** November: Diane Buller resigned as secretary.

**2009** November: Tanya Thieszen was hired to replace Diane Buller as secretary.

**2010** January – December: Monthly Birthday Parties for all women of Bethesda during the month of their birth date, hosted by volunteer women of the congregation.

**2010** January 31: Bethesda Bible Series with Ivan Friesen on *"The Vision of Isaiah"*.

**2010** February 7: Annual Business Meeting of the congregation.

**2010** May – August: Doran Stuckey served in the Ministry Inquiry Program.

**2010** May 30 - June 5: High School Service Trip to Minneapolis, MN.

**2010** June 7-11: Daily Vacation Bible School, "High Seas Expedition".

**2010** May 24-27: Central Plains Mennonite Conference.

**2010** September: The Deacon Board, by 2/3 majority voted to not call Pastor Weldon Martens for another term.

**2010** November 29 - December 2: MCC Meat Canner in Henderson.

**2010** December 8: Steering Committee met to plan for a new women's organization to replace the age-related Mission Circle I, II and Sisters in Mission, formerly known as Mission Circle III.

**2010** December 1: A Celebration of Gratitude for Pastor Weldon Marten's 15 years of faithful service was held.

**2010** December: Jennifer Buller resigned as Director of Music

**2011** January 4: Bethesda Women's Ministries began meeting, replacing Circle I, Circle II and Sisters in Mission.

**2011** February: Annual Congregational Meeting.

**2011** February: New deacons elected in December were installed: Marlene Ott 3 years, Brent Swartzendruber 3 years, David Quiring 2 years. Ron Friesen and Brent Swartzendruber, co-chairs for one year.

**2011** February: Rod Drews began as Director of Music.

**2011** February 27-28: Conrad Kanagy spoke at the Bethesda Bible Series, using the book of Jeremiah to look for signs of God's Kingdom at Bethesda.

**2011** March: Brent Swartzendruber resigned from Board of Deacons.

**2011** March: Gina Mestl resigned as director/teacher of Bethesda Preschool.

**2011** March: Blakely Schwenk left for service in Honduras with the YES team.

**2011** March: Arlin Hiebner elected to serve on Deacon Board, replacing Brent Swartzendruber.

**2011** April: A welcome reception was held for Pastor Mim Book and Pastor Jim Lapp, Transition Pastors.

**2011** May 1: Resignation of Central Treasurer, Berdine Buller.

**2011** June: Central Treasurer, Penny Buller hired.

**2011** June 16-19, CPM Conference met in Moline, IL.

**2011** June: Nicole Quiring hired as Preschool teacher for 4/5 year old classes.

**2011** July: Erin Sams hired as Preschool Director and teacher for 3/4 year old classes.

**2011** July 4-9: MC USA Conference in Pittsburgh, PA.

**2011** September: Tammy Ott resigned as Office Manager and Administrative Assistant.

**2011** September: Tanya Thieszen resigned as Secretary.

**2011** September 4: Blakely Schwenk in Voluntary Service Unit at Harrisburg, PA Discipleship Center through EMM.

**2011** September 18: Erin Sams assumed duties as Office Manager/ Administrative Assistant.

**2011** September 25: Carrie Bergen assumed duties as Office Secretary.

**2011** December 10: New Deacons, Carol Janzen and Blaine Friesen, elected to fill positions vacated by Kim Siebert and Ron Friesen.

**2011** December 18: Handel's Messiah was presented, Director Rod Drews, Chancel Choir and Lincoln Symphony Orchestra.

**2012** February 5: Annual Congregational Meeting.

**2012** February 18-19: Interterm Sessions with David Boshart, Conference Minister, *"God's Mission and Call of the Church,"* determining God's call at Bethesda.

**2012** April 24: Wedding Coordinator, Kelsey Bergen, was appointed.

**2012** April 1: Erin Sams resigned as Office Manager/Administrative Assistant.

**2012** May 1: Cynthia A. Friesen hired as Office Manager/Administrative Assistant.

**2012** May 13: Mission Statement affirmed by the congregation:  
"A community caring for all God's people,  
being transformed by Christ's love,  
serving others as a witness of God's grace and peace."

**2012** May 20: Morning worship and congregational meeting *"A Celebration of Grace and Forgiveness"* with a commitment to move forward from past differences.

**2012** June 4-8: Daily Vacation Bible School, "Anything is Possible with God."

**2012** June 28-July 1: Central Plains Mennonite Conference held in Henderson.

**2012** July 8: Reception held for Brandon Rader, who will return to mission work in East Asia.

**2012** August 3-5: Youth Escape to Dayton, Iowa.

**2012** August 12: Baptized eight individuals and accepted them as members.

**2012** September 9: Congregational meeting to review changes to pastoral reviews, review job descriptions for the pastors and review the process to select deacons.

**2012** September 16: Dedication of remodeled Power House Youth Rooms and Crossroads Coffee House.

**2012** September 23: Farewell for Pastor Jim Lapp and Pastor Mim Book, Transition Pastors.

**2012** November 5: Pastor Sherman Kauffman and wife Betty arrive, to serve as Interim Pastor.

**2012** November 27-30: MCC Meat Canner in Henderson.

**2012** December 9: Congregational meeting for final Deacon Selection vote: David Quiring affirmed for first term; Laura Steingard elected to first term.

**2012** December 30: Welcomed five new members to Bethesda.

**2013** January 5: Pastor Andrea and Mike Wall attended AMBS, studying Anabaptist History and Theology.

**2013** January 13: Deacon Installation for David Quiring and Laura Steingard.

**2013** February 2: Deacon Retreat at York Holiday Inn.

**2013** February 3: Annual Congregational Meeting.

**2013** February 9-10: Bethesda Bible Series with Ted and Company: "Peace, Pies and Prophets."

**2013** February 11: Monroe Sawatzky was welcomed to the staff and assumed duties as Head Custodian.

**2013** February 15: Robert Hiebner resigned as Head Custodian. Martha Hiebner resigned after all the years volunteering as Assistant Custodian. We thank them for their many years of service to Bethesda.

**2013** March 24: Ray and Aki Epp visit and report on Menno Village Japan.

**2013** March 28: Maundy Thursday Communion.

**2013** April: Updated website, powered by Clover Sites, Inc.; became operational at [www.bethesdamc.org](http://www.bethesdamc.org)

**2013** April 7: Dr. Sam and Sherri Evans visit and report on their work and the devastation in the Philippines from 2012 typhoons.

**2013** April: Hired Kori Lewis as Preschool Teacher/Director.

**2013** April 7: Catechism Retreat on Bethesda Mennonite Church history.

**2013** April 14: Bethesda Preschool Trike-a-thon.

**2013** April 19: New phone system installed by AC Technologies.

**2013** April 28: Catechism Retreat to work on testimonies.

**2013** May 5: Leadership Workshop by Pastor Sherm Kauffman on "Congregation Journey Wall Exercise."

**2013** May 5: Baptized and welcomed three new members to Bethesda.

**2013** May 6: Bethesda Women's Ministries fourth annual "Celebrate Women" event was held. Michelle Hofer spoke on "Iconic Art in the Church."

**2013** May 12: Baptized and welcomed one new member to Bethesda.

**2013** May 13: Josh Janzen joined the staff as part of the AMBS! Explore program.

**2013** May 15: Preschool Graduation.

**2013** May 19: Pentecost/Communion.

**2013** May 26: Dedicated three children at Parent Child Dedication service.

**2013** June 2: Trenton R. Friesen report on service with CRU at Colorado State University.

**2013** June 3-7: Daily Vacation Bible School, "Athens: Paul's Journey to Share the Truth." Welcomed representatives from Templo Alabanza Church in Moline, IL.

**2013** June 10: Berdine Buller is welcomed back to the staff on an interim basis while Penny Buller takes a family Medical Leave of Absence.

**2013** June 16: Baptized and welcomed four new members to Bethesda.

**2013** June 16: Continuation of May 5, 2013, Leadership Workshop by Pastor Sherm Kauffman.

**2013** June 16: Sending of Thayne and Janene Sparke to Denver Seminary.

**2013** June 18: Group of seven volunteers left for Philippines to work with Dr. Sam and Sherri Evans with Reach International.

**2013** June 20-23: Central Plains Mennonite Conference annual meeting at Ashland, Montana; "Guided by the Spirit, Knowing God's Love."

**2013** June 30: Baptized and welcomed four new members to Bethesda.

**2013** July 1-6: Mennonite Church USA Conference at Phoenix, Arizona, "Citizens of God's Kingdom."

**2013** July 14: Brandon Rader report on work in Southeast Asia with CRU.

**2013** July 17: Kevin Goertzen gave an update on Mennonite Mission Network.

**2013** July 28: Renee Neufeld report on "Hiking the Appalachian Trail" to raise funds for Swan Lake Christian Camp.

**2013** September 1: Hannah Epp report on service in South Africa.

**2013** September 8: First graders received Bibles on Christian Formation Sunday.

**2013** September 8: Congregation Meeting to have dialogue on the implementation of Child Protection Plan and Safe Congregation Limited Access Policy.

**2013** September 15: Congregational Meeting to vote on changes to By-Laws related to the Lead Pastor job description and to review two trends (declining attendance and Lead Pastor turnover patterns) identified in the Congregational Journey Wall Exercise.

**2013** September 15: Began limited points of access to the church according to the Safe Congregation Limited Access Policy (adopted by Church Council June 28, 2013).

**2013** October: Updated logo for Bethesda Mennonite Church was adopted. Work completed by Blakely Schwenk, Peek Designs.

**2013** October 5-6: Pat and Rad Houmphan visit and report on work in Thailand.

**2013** October 6: Congregational Meeting held to affirm Arlin Hiebner as Deacon for another three year term.

**2013** October 6: Worldwide Communion hosted by Bethesda.

**2013** October 20: Dedicated four children at Parent Child Dedication service.

**2013** October 20: Congregational Meeting held to accept nominations for the position of one Deacon.

**2013** November 3: Packed 1,047 school kits. Youth served the evening meal.

**2013** November 10: Dr. Jeanette Harder and Jon Stanton joined our morning worship service and spoke on helping faith communities keep our children and youth safe.

**2013** November 12-15: MCC Meat Canner at Bethesda.

**2013** November 17: Congregational Meeting held to vote for two names on the Deacon Nominee Preference ballot. During Sunday school hour conversation continued with Pastor Sherm Kauffman on the question, "What will contribute to a longer term, more mutually respectful Lead Pastor's service?"

**2013** November 17: Dedicated on child at Parent Child Dedication service.

**2013** December 8: Congregational Meeting held for final Deacon selection vote. Joh Huebert elected.

**2013** December 25: Gathered 99 Infant Care Kits for MCC.

**2014** January 4: Deacon/Church Council Retreat at Aurora Leadership Center.

**2014** January 5: Epiphany Sunday Communion.

**2014** January 17-28: Mark Epp and Cathy Wismer served with CPMC in Ecuador on a Fellowship and Learning tour.

**2014** January 19: Declared 2014 as "Year of the Bible," placing special emphasis on engaging scripture for all ages.

**2014** January 19: Deacon Installation for John Huebert and Arlin Hiebner.

**2014** February 2: Annual Congregational Meeting. Youth served meal as fundraiser.

**2014** February 4-8: Kori Lewis, Tara Swartzendruber, Carrie Epp from the Preschool Committee and Pastor Andrea Wall attended Mennonite Educators Conference in Washington, D.C.

**2014** February 8-9: Bethesda Bible Series featuring Shane Claiborne from "The Simple Way" in Philadelphia, PA. First live streamed event at Bethesda.

**2014** February 23: Congregational Meeting with Pastor Sherm Kauffman to answer the following questions: 1.) what are 3-5 contributing factors for attendance decline over past 35 years? 2.) how can we cultivate a vibrant spirituality, hospitality and a sense of community at Bethesda?

**2014** March 9: Congregational Meeting – Pastor Andrea Wall affirmed for additional five year term.

**2014** March 23: Congregational Meeting – Pastor Jim Voth affirmed for additional five year term.

**2014** April: Wolfe Drywall completed kitchen ceiling repairs.

**2014** April 4-5: Nebraska MCC Relief Sale.

**2014** April 29: Annual "Celebrate Women" event hosted by Bethesda Women's Ministries.

**2014** May 4: Leadership Workshop led by Elizabeth Troyer-Miller.

**2014** May 14: Preschool Graduation.

**2014** May 17-18: Twelve 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders and three sponsors worshipped with Templo Alabanza Church in Moline, IL.

**2014** May 18: Dedicated one child at Parent Child Dedication service.

**2014** May 20: Thayne Sparke hired as Interim Lay Pastor through August 20, 2014.

**2014** May 25: Youth went to our sister church, Ashland Christian Fellowship Church, Ashland, Montana, on a service trip.

**2014** May 25: Dr. Sam and Sherri Evans report on work with Reach International in Philippines.

**2014** June 2-6: VBS "Wilderness Escape – Where God Guides & Provides" 121 children attended.

**2014** June 11 – July 2: \*Megan Boardman served in Quito, Ecuador.

**2014** June 15: Baptized seven youth and held communion.

**2014** June 16: Congratulations to Pastor Andrea and Mike Wall on birth of baby girl, Jacinta Danae! Pastor Andrea was on maternity leave from June 16 through September 22, 2014.

**2014** June 19-22: CPMC held at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.

**2014** June 22: Began sermon series on "Fruit of the Spirit."

**2014** June 23: Carlie Weisheit left for Philippines with Reach International to care for Flora Mae Evans, daughter of Dr. Sam and Sherri Evans.

**2014** July 6: Dedicated two children at Parent Child Dedication service.

**2014** July 6: Sidney Dick, Leah Friesen and Paige Mestl left with Youth Venture to Spain.

**2014** July 26: Clothing Exchange held at Bethesda.

**2014** July-August: Asbestos ceiling abatement of second floor completed by B2 Environmental. Swede Capital Drywall replaced ceilings. All second floor classrooms and hallways repainted by Ely & Company.

**2014** July-August: Worship service and Sunday school were combined for the summer in the Fellowship Hall.

**2014** August 1: Luann Yutzy from Minneapolis, Minnesota, hired as Interim Pastor through December 31, 2014.

**2014** August 1-3: Two youth attended CPMC Youth Escape in Dayton, Iowa.

**2014** September 7: Eight first graders received Bibles. Teacher Appreciation luncheon held. New "SHINE" Sunday school curriculum introduced.

**2014** September 14: Cemetery Walk and Talk was held at Bethesda Mennonite Church Cemetery in honor of 140<sup>th</sup> year of first Mennonites coming to York and Hamilton counties.

**2014** September 28: Guest speaker, Pastor Sherm Kauffman, gave morning message. Congregational prioritization to shape our church's ministry was led by Pastor Andrea and Pastor Sherm. Bethesda Preschool Carnival held at Heartland Community School.

**2014** October 5: Guest speaker, James Krabill, gave the morning message. Communion offered on World Communion Sunday.

**2014** October 5: Congregational Meeting to affirm Blaine Friesen and Carol Janzen as Deacons for additional three year term.

**2014** November 2: Packed 1,026 school kits and sent to MCC. Youth provided evening meal as fundraiser.

**2014** November 25, 26 & 28: MCC Canner held at Bethesda.

**2014** November 30: Dedicated four children at Parent Child Dedication service.

**2014** December: Replaced eight courtyard doors.

**2014** December 21: Messiah presented by Bethesda Chancel Choir and Nebraska Symphony Chamber Orchestra.

**2014** December 24: Christmas Eve service – 95 Infant Care Kits dedicated and sent to MCC.

**2014** December 31: New Year's Eve Communion Service held.

**2015** January 11: Pastor Andrea ordination service and meal of celebration.

**2015** January 23-25: Bethesda Bible Series – Michele Hershberger, Hesston College Bible & Ministry Professor – "God's Story, Our Story."

**2015** January 31: Church council, Board of Deacons, pastors, office Staff Retreat @ Aurora Leadership Center Aurora, NE.

**2015** February 1: Church and Annual Congregational meeting postponed due to snowstorm.

**2015** February 8: Annual Congregational Meeting.

**2015** February 15: Deacon installation of Blaine Friesen and Carol Janzen (reaffirmed for additional 3-year term).

**2015** February 18: Ash Wednesday Service.

**2015** March 4: Bluffton University Camerata Singers concert.

**2015** March 27-28: Nebraska MCC Sale.

**2015** April 2: Maundy Thursday Communion.

**2015** May: All downstairs hallways painted by Ely & Company.

**2015** May 10: Graduation breakfast for high school graduates and families.

**2015** May 12: Preschool graduation.

**2015** May 17: Guest speaker Gregg Kanagy, Gator Wilderness Camp, Punta Gorda, Florida.

**2015** May 24: Congregational meeting to affirm and call Seth Miller as pastor of Preaching & Outreach. Pentecost Communion.

**2015** May 31: Parent Child Dedication service – two children dedicated.

**2015** June 1-5: Vacation Bible School “Hometown Nazareth, Where Jesus was a Kid” – 114 attended.

**2015** June 7: Penny Buller tendered her resignation as Central Treasurer.

**2015** June 19-21: Central Plains Mennonite Conference annual meeting at St. Paul, Minnesota.

**2015** June 30 – July 5: Mennonite Church USA Convention at Kansas City, Missouri.

**2015** July 1: Seth Miller, hired as Pastor of Preaching and Outreach, arrived at Bethesda with family wife, Kristie and daughter, Abigail.

**2015** July 10: Cathy Wismer hired as Central Treasurer.

**2015** July 12: Community worship in the park.

**2015** July 21-26: Mennonite World Conference, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Nineteen youth and sponsors attended.

**2015** July 25: Community Clothing Exchange held at Heartland Community School.

**2015** August 16: David Shenk Quito, Ecuador sharing.

**2015** August 23: Seth Miller installation service as Pastor of Preaching & Outreach.

**2015** August 23: Sabbatical sending service for Pastor Jim Voth – September 1 – November 30, 2015.

**2015** August 23: Josh Janzen, Ministry Inquiry Program sharing.

**2015** September 13: Congregational conversation regarding Child Development Center at Bethesda. Promotion Sunday and Teacher Appreciation Luncheon.

**2015** September 13 & 20: Nine First graders receive Bibles.

**2015** September 19-20: SLCC Women’s Retreat.

**2015** September 27: Baptized two youth and held communion.

**2015** October 11: Guest Pastor Eugene Thieszen.

**2015** October 25: Guest Pastor J. Epp.

**2015** October 27-28: Community Harvest for Dale & Laura Steingard.

**2015** October 31: Community Garage Party held in partnership with Henderson Ministerial Association as a fall celebration for children and youth.

**2015** November 8: Parent Child Dedication – three children dedicated.

**2015** November 14-17: ARKOS Design, Inc. at Bethesda to perform study of facility needs, including a possible Child Development Center.

**2015** November 15: School Kit Assembly Night, approximately 1,000 packed and sent to MCC.

**2015** November 15: Jerry Kroeker, Swan Lake Christian Camp Director, served as guest speaker.

**2015** November 22: Guest speaker Alan Janzen.

**2015** November 23-25: MCC Meat Canner and Faith & Life Bookstore at Bethesda.

**2015** November 29: Technology Management Committee begins gathering funds (approx. \$70,000 needed) to replace sanctuary sound system.

**2015** December 6: Preschool and children’s Sunday school program.

**2015** December 13: #. James Friesen and Jeff Peters affirmed for a 3-year term as Deacons.

**2015** December 15: LeRoy Peters resigns after 25 years as sexton for Bethesda Mennonite Church Cemetery. Mark Friesen will replace his as sexton.

**2015** December 20: Chancel Choir program.

**2015** December 24: Christmas Eve service – 83 infant care kits collected.

**2015** December 31: New Year’s Eve Service and communion.

**2016** January 9: Church Council, Board of Deacons, Pastors, Board Chairs, Office Staff retreat @ Aurora Leadership Center, Aurora, Nebraska.

**2016** January 17: Bethesda Preschool Carnival @ Heartland Community School.

**2016** January 24: Guest Pastor Brett Klingenberg, First Mennonite Church Beatrice.

**2016** January 29-31: Bethesda Bible Series "Communities Caring for all God's People" featuring Dr. Nate Stucky, Elizabeth Troyer-Miller, Live Yes! Studios, Mark Smesrud, co-founder Purple Door Coffee, Denver, CO, Kara Tofte, Lutheran Family Services, Howard Wagler, Lead Pastor Journey Mennonite Church. Special trip to South Street Temple Lincoln, NE Rabbi Craig Lewis.

**2016** February 3: College care kits packaged for college students.

**2016** February 5: Spaghetti dinner benefit held for Jay and Elizabeth Goertzen following house fire.

**2016** February 4-7: Kori Lewis, Preschool Director/Teacher attended Mennonite Educators Conference in Washington D.C. as well as Abbie Rempel, parent representative to Bethesda Preschool Committee.

**2016** February 7: Annual Congregational Meeting – youth fundraiser meal.

**2016** February 7: Deacon installation of E. James Friesen and Jeff Peters for three-year term.

**2016** February 10: Ash Wednesday service and Lenten prayers.

**2016** February 20-21: Firman Gingerich met with pastors and deacons to assist in setting up shared ministry team model.

**2016** March 13: Marriage enrichment class held for six weeks by Pastor Andrea Wall.

**2016** March 22: Bethel College Choir concert.

**2016** March 24: Maundy Thursday communion.

**2016** April 1-2: Nebraska MCC Sale.

**2016** April 24: Guest speakers Cleo Koop and Austin Braddock while pastors attended CPMC Annual Leaders Retreat.

**2016** May 1: Meet and greet for former Pastor's Mim Book and Jim Lapp.

**2016** May 8: 2016 graduates were honored at a breakfast provided by the Board of Education and given Faith Journals.

**2016** May 11: Bethesda Preschool graduation. Twelve children graduated.

**2016** May 15: Parent Child Dedication - three children dedicated.

**2016** May 22: Communion held on Trinity Sunday.

**2016** May 28: Carrie Bergen resigned as Office Assistant.

**2016** June 5: Sabbatical sending service for Pastor Andrea Wall.

**2016** June 6-10: Vacation Bible School – Egypt: Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace. Ninety-six children attended.

**2016** June 16-19: Central Plains Mennonite Conference at Des Moines, Iowa.

**2016** June 19: Josh Janzen guest speaker.

**2016** June 20-September 19: Pastor Andrea Wall on sabbatical.

**2016** June 26: Henderson Ministerial Association formed Fusion, a community youth group.

**2016** July 9-17: Youth service trip to Ashland, Montana. Four youth attended with sponsors Brian and Mariah Leisher.

**2016** July 10: Community worship in the park.

**2016** July 17: Bev Quiring hired as Office Assistant.

**2016** July 17: Journey of Hope, which empowers murder victim's family members and exonerated death row survivors shared personal experiences with capital punishment - Bess Klassen and Landis and Sandrine Ageorges Skinner.

**2016** August 2: Bev Quiring begins as Office Assistant.

**2016** August 21: Henderson Ministerial Association hosted Fusion with VOTA in concert at Jim and Nora Ohrt's barn.

**2016** August 28: Youth Ashland, Montana trip reporting.

**2016** September 11: Promotion Sunday – two first graders receive Bibles.

**2016** September 11: Teacher appreciation lunch.

**2016** September 18: Board of Deacons held cookie social to welcome Pastor Andrea Wall back from sabbatical.

**2016** October 2: World Communion Sunday. 2016-2017 catechism class begins with six students.

**2016** October 23: Congregational meeting held to nominate 15 individuals for Deacon positions of John Huebert and Arlin Hiebner.

**2016** October 31: Henderson Ministerial Association host Community Garage Party as a fall celebration for children and youth.

**2016** November 1-2: Pastors met with Lee Schmucker for consultation about the shared ministry team.

**2016** November 6: Tenth Annual School Kit night - 1,028 school kits packed. Youth provided meal as a fundraiser.

**2016** November 13: Parent Child Dedication – six children dedicated.

**2016** November 24: Thanksgiving Day service.

**2016** November 30-December 2: MCC Meat Canner and Faith & Life Bookstore at Bethesda.

**2016** December 11: Congregational meeting held to elect two deacons. Kathryn Goertzen and Kim Siebert were elected for a three-year term.

**2016** December 11: Preschool/Sunday School Christmas program. Kindergarten through grade six performed “An Unplugged Christmas.”

**2016** December 18: The A\*Men Christmas concert.

**2016** December 24: Chancel Choir Christmas Eve program.

**2016** December 25: Eighty-eight infant care kits dedicated at Christmas day worship service.

**2016** December 31: New Year’s Eve service and communion.

**2017** January 22: Deacon installation of Kathryn Goertzen and Kim Siebert.

**2017** January 24: Board of Service and Outreach cleaned up fallen limbs from an ice storm in three yards in Henderson.

**2017** January 28-29: Bryan Moyer Suderman from Kitchener, Ontario was our guest speaker for the Bethesda Bible Series on the theme “Reading the Bible with Jesus.”

**2017** February 5: Annual Meeting – approved Facility Renovation for Sanctuary: Sound Upgrade \$70,000; Sanctuary Lighting \$20,000; Carpet \$56,000; Paint/Scaffolding \$89,000; Roof/Education Wing \$35,000 for a total of \$270,000.

**2017** February: Bev Quiring resigned as Office Assistant.

**2017** March 14: Tara Swartzendruber hired as Office Assistant.

**2017** March 31-April 1: Nebraska MCC Sale was held in Aurora, Nebraska.

**2017** April 30: Congregational Meeting to vote on pew replacement.

**2017** April 20: Holly Bailey resigned as Assistant Custodian.

**2017** April 24: Sharlene Doell hired as Assistant Custodian.

**2017** April 30: Congregational Meeting to finalize layout for sanctuary seating. Consensus was to keep old pews and re-space the pews.

**2017** May/June: Pastor Seth and family to Europe where Pastor Seth led classes for Eastern Mennonite University students.

**2017** May 14: Six catechism students were baptized and communion was observed.

**2017** May 14: Hesston College Bel Canto Choir gave a concert at Bethesda.

**2017** May 21: Lyle Miller, Stewardship Consultant for Everence was guest speaker.

**2017** June 26: Renovation begins in the sanctuary and the church office.

**2017** July 2-8: Seventeen youth, three sponsors (plus three family members) and three delegates attended the MC USA Delegate Assembly in Orlando, Florida.



**2017** August 20: Congregational Meeting – vote passed to purchase new pew cushions for sanctuary and choir loft with money pledged for the project.

**2017** September 10: Three first-graders receive Bibles on Christian Formation Sunday.

**2017** November 6: Returned to the sanctuary for worship services.

**2017** November 27-29: MCC Meat Canner was held at Bethesda.

**2017** December 10: Handel’s Messiah presented by Bethesda Chancel Choir and Nebraska Symphony Chamber Orchestra.

**2017** December 24: Christmas Eve program presented.

**2017** December 31: New Year’s Eve Communion postponed due to weather.

**2018** January 7: New Year’s Eve communion held.

**2018** January 14, 2018: Sara Wenger Shenk, President AMBS, special speaker.

**2018** January 24, Board of Business held pew/furniture/miscellaneous auction. Proceeds went towards facility renovations.

**2018** January 27-28: Bethesda Bible Series: Dr. John D. Roth, professor of history at Goshen College. Theme for the weekend was “Text and Tradition: Encountering the Bible as an Anabaptist Community.”

**2018** February 4: Deacon installation of Linda Goertzen and Laura Steingard. Annual Meeting held. High school youth fundraiser meal.

**2018** February 11: Les Horning, Director of Admissions at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, was special speaker this morning.

**2018** February 18: Congregational meeting to vote on parking lot project. Passed by 99%. Project includes replacing current parking lot with concrete, including curbs, sidewalks and handicap accessible curb cutouts and ramps.

**2018** February 25: New membership class began with Pastor Jim Voth during Sunday School hour.

**2018** March 11: Bethesda Preschool Kid’s Night Out!

**2018** March 18: Pastor Seth Miller ordination service by Tim Detweiler, Central Plains Conference Minister, followed by meal of celebration.

**2018** March 21: women’s group began a 9-week Bible study on book of James with Jerri Janzen leading.

**2018** March 22: Bethesda Preschool enrollment night.

**2018** March 22-23: Annual Nebraska MCC Sale.

**2018** March 29: Maundy Thursday Communion held. Passover Seder held for Midweek children and families.

**2018** April 8: Woven, a student directed women’s ensemble from Bethel College joined us for worship.

**2018** April 17: Bethesda Women’s Ministries sponsored a road trip to MCC Resource Center in Newton, Kansas.

**2018** April 22: Catechism Testimony Retreat held at Holy Family Shrine.

**2018** April 24: Prayer at Heartland playground sponsored by Henderson Ministerial Association.

**2018** April 29: Graduate celebration potluck held to honor high school graduates.

**2018** April 30: 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebrate Women’s Event for Bethesda Women’s Ministries with speaker Sharon Kennel talking on “Never too Late – Discovering and Rediscovering your Gifts and Calling.”

**2018** May 6: Graduation Sunday.

**2018** May 13: Parent Child Dedication held with four children dedicated.

**2018** May 20: Five youth baptized during worship service with cookie fellowship following.

**2018** May 28: Memorial Day services held at Friesen Cemetery, Bethesda Mennonite Cemetery and Mennonite Cemetery.

**2018** June 3: Pat and Rad Houmphan from Philippines joined us for worship.

**2018** June 4-8: Vacation Bible School traveled to Babylon with Daniel to witness his courage during captivity, with 96 children attending.

**2018** June 17: Freeman Academy 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students shared instrumental and vocal talents during worship. Two new members were welcomed to the Bethesda family, Lisa Friesen and Hillary Lee.

**2018** June 21-24: Central Plains Mennonite Church Annual Meeting at Capitol City Christian Church and First Mennonite Church in Lincoln, Nebraska.

**2018** July 11: Women's Bible study began on "Technology" from the Upside-Down Living Series, with Jerri Janzen as leader.

**2018** July 15: Community worship in the park.

**2018** July 15-22: six youth and sponsor Tara Swartzendruber, went on a service trip to Montana Junior Camp at Crazy Head springs to hold a junior camp for youth.

**2018** July 20-22: "Choose Joy!" Youth Escape held in Dayton, Iowa, with two youth and sponsor Kara Janzen attending.

**2018** July 26-27: Pastor Andrea Wall presented in Omaha "Empowering Women: Claiming Healthy Personal Boundaries" with Mennonite Women USA and Dove's Nest.

**2018** July 29 – August 4: MDS youth service trip to Texas.

**2018** August 15: Prayer at Heartland playground sponsored by Henderson Ministerial Association.

**2018** August 19: VOTA concert Fusion event at Jim and Nora Ohrt's home held for junior high and high school youth and families.

**2018** August 30: Bethesda Preschool open house.

**2018** September 6: Tara Swartzendruber resigned as Office Assistant. Cindy Friesen as Office Manager will assume the additional duties of the Office Assistant.

**2018** September 9: Christian Formation Sunday with four first graders receiving Bibles.

**2018** September 12: Women's eight-week Bible study held on the book of Philippians with Jerri Janzen as leader.

**2018** September 23: Bethesda website now offers online giving.

**2018** September 30: Congregational meeting to affirm Jeff Peters for an additional three-year term as deacon.

**2018** October 7: Bethesda Preschool hosted Kids Night Out! New artwork installed in narthex designed by Kerri Pankratz, Mike Wall and Custom Wood Products.

**2018** October 10: Fields of Faith held for junior high and high school students at Heartland football field.

**2018** October 14: Pastor Seth Miller led Bethesda bible Series on the Gospel According to John. Completed seven Sunday evening sessions with a soup supper served before each session.

**2018** October 21: congregational meeting to nominated individuals to fill the term vacated by E. James Friesen as deacon.

**2018** October 31: Garage Party hosted by Pastor Andrea Wall and other churches held for Henderson youth.

**2018** November 4: School Kit Night – Packed 1,000 school kits. Youth fundraiser meal.

**2018** November 8-9: Joined with other Nebraska congregations to can meat at Newton's MCC Resource Center.

**2018** November 14: Midweek students collected and assembled Infant Care Kits for MCC.

**2018** November 18: Bel Canto Singers of Hesston College presented choral music during morning worship service. Congregational meeting to narrow list on deacon vote to two individuals.

**2018** November 22: Thanksgiving Day service.

**2018** November 29-December 2: Christmas Market/Faith & Life Bookstore/youth fundraiser held.

**2018** December 9: Arlin Hiebner affirmed as deacon for a three-year period. Dedicated one child at Parent Child Dedication. Preschool and K-6<sup>th</sup> grade presented the Christmas musical "Crazy, Busy, Peaceful, Holy Night" with cookie social following in the evening.

**2018** December 23: Dedicated Infant Care Kits.

**2018** December 24: Christmas Eve evening service.

**2018** December 25: Christmas Day brunch and reading of the Christmas story. Approximately 100 attended.

**2018** December 30: Pastor Jim Voth submitted his resignation to the Board of Deacons and announced he will be retiring as of March 31, 2019.

**2018** December 31: New Year's Eve Communion held.