

Calendar of Events

W.A.T.E.R.	June 26 - Aug. 4
Family & Youth Week	Aug. 7 - 11
Staff Retreat.	Sept. 21 - 22
First Term	Sept. 23 - Nov. 2
Post-Term Opportunities.	Oct. 23 - Nov. 2
Anabaptist History Study Tour.	Oct. 21 - Nov. 1
Wrap-up.	Nov. 2
Second Term	Nov. 6 - Dec. 15
Christian Nurture Conference	Nov. 17 - 19
Thanksgiving Vacation.	Nov. 23 - 24
Choir Tour	Dec. 15 - 21

Notice:

There are still openings for men, ladies, and couples in the Anabaptist History Tour, First Term Enhanced, second and fifth terms.

Family & Youth Week
August 7 - 11, 2017

Arrival: Sunday Evening Aug. 6
Classes start: Mon. Aug. 7, 8:40 a.m.
Dismissal: Fri. Aug. 11, 12:00 p.m.

During the morning, child care is provided for the 0-5 year-olds, and there are classes for the 6-12 year-olds, youth, and parents. In the afternoon, there are additional activities, free time and more, with chapel and recreation in the evening.

Unfortunately, delivery of the brochures has been delayed. If you have not attended family week previously or do not receive a brochure by mid-June, please contact the office for a brochure or find it at www.smbi.org.

Touring in Haiti

By: Evan Byler
(Sharon Singers choir member 4th term, 2017)

The heap of grey, fuming trash in the middle of the intersection made my jaw drop. Then it instinctively closed as I gagged at the smell. The sidewalks crawled with masses of people stepping over and through the rubbish. As the SMBI choir wound our way through the city, we were immersed in the hopelessness of Haiti. The country is home to over ten million people with Port-au-Prince claiming around 3 million. There is blatant need in Haiti and we got to see the real life ministry of meeting some of that need.

The darkness in Haiti surely could have drug us down and hindered our ministry, but the intercession of many friends and families through prayer created a protection for us. The Moravians and their one hundred year-long prayer service, which we learned about during term, inspired a student to ask the group if we wanted to try it for tour. The slots on our Moravian prayer chart filled up, and this non-stop prayer, we know, made a difference on our tour and we attribute how smoothly the trip went to our prayer support.

The trip didn't progress without a few trials; however, like when the air conditioning failed on the bus in the States. God's timing was for our good again though, because the suffocating heat we swam in as we slithered down through the southern States made the semi-hot temperatures in Haiti seem like a breeze. We made goals for ourselves as a choir, one of which was flexibility. I was very impressed with the group we had and how they used innovative ways to survive and keep the attitude strong. At one point, we had grocery bags full of ice being worn as hats for personal climate cooling. Also, the guys almost always had the emergency hatches in the bus roof open with cardboard crafted into air scoops held in place with duct tape.

It seems like God honored our hard work on our goals while we were in the States by granting us quite a smooth time in Haiti. Maybe it was the prayers. Either way, we marveled at God's plan and humor and felt very blessed.

Right now, I'm in my dad's 2012 Honda Pilot and we're cruising down a smooth asphalt road at a healthy fifty-five miles per hour. But there are four of us in the back seat and my left thigh is being pinched under the hip of my sibling who is next to me. Is there reason for me to complain or have a bad attitude? It's at times like this that I consider the living conditions of both the Haitian believers and general population of Haiti, and my complaint-uttering mouth snaps shut.

The Haitian believers truly did bless us and their churches opened our eyes to the reach of the universal church. A choir song speaks of Christ as the rock that the church is built on. It is exciting to see the Kingdom of God alive down in Haiti with Haitian pastors leading Haitian congregations.

Tour was covered with prayer and I was encouraged so often by friends approaching me, putting their arm around my shoulder to pray for me. Keeping a worshipful attitude before and during the intermission of a program was one of our goals. Prayer, relaxing, and encouraging each other is mostly what this consisted of. I can't thank the group enough for their maturity and genuineness in this area. It makes a huge difference in how much the program can speak to you the choir member. Continued on p. 3



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Haiti continued...

The group started to feel a little bit like a beautiful working church. There's an intensified state of day to day closeness compared to what you have at a local church (for example, you all eat together and are with each other every day). Also, there is a lot of openness in the group manifested in the sharing and edification.

We also did most activities together. One highlight for the group was a mountain hike (four miles one way) to a church where we gave a program. The views from the magnificent mountains caused us to marvel at the greatness of God's creation.

I'm very excited about the choir members going back to their home communities and churches to experiment with the things that they learned on tour. Working together and keeping each other accountable is what it took for us to meet our goals on tour. We learned about looking out for each other on the hike and helping each other make it through the hard times. It's not going to be easy to carry what we learned on tour over to everyday life, but I'm convinced that if we make manageable commitments and turn them into habits, our life can be changed and we can change the world for some of those around us.

Still Time!!!

40th Anniversary Celebration

May 26-28, 2017

Supper Fri. May 26, 5:30 p.m.
Welcome/ Singing Fri. May 26, 6:30 p.m.
Chicken Bar-b-que Sat. May 27, 3:30-5:00 p.m.
Supper/dismissal Sun. May 28, 4:30 p.m.

For a full schedule of events and a registration form, contact the office or see the Jan.- Mar. 2017 newsletter at smbi.org.

We welcome your attendance for all or any part of the weekend. However, we do ask that you register in advance.

Anabaptist History Study Tour

October 21-November 1, 2017

16 seats are still available for singles or couples on this study tour to Switzerland, Germany, and Holland. (Yes, there will be ample sight-seeing opportunities as well.) For full benefit, this tour may be combined with the Anabaptist History class during First Term Enhanced. Application deadline for the tour is July 1.

For full tour information and application contact the office or see the Jan.— Mar. 2017 newsletter at smbi.org. **For First Term Enhanced class schedule, other post-term opportunities, and application materials** contact the office or visit smbi.org.

~Births~

Matt & Krissy (Esh) King

~Zaden Matthew

Philip & MaryEllen (Vanderbosch) Nissley

~Alayna Kate

Clifford & Melody (Bontrager) Schrock

~Brigitta Hope

Johnny & Gloria (Yutzy) Stoltzfus

~Eric Riley

~Evan Patrick

Jared & Carmen (Stoltzfus) Stoltzfus

~Riley Paige

Lamar & Rose (Stoltzfus) Stoltzfus

~Micah Andre

Kevin & Krista (Riehl) Yoder

~Colin Grant

~Weddings~

Ian Miller & Marci Siegrist ~ 3.25.17

Nathaniel Toews & Dawn Burkholder ~ 4.22.17

Damien Good & Tiffany Weaver ~ 5.5.17

