



Out & About

April 12 — Northwest Ohio
Pastor Peer Meeting,
Archbold

April 13 — Central District/
Ohio Conference Pastor
Meeting, Bluffton

April 13 — Leadership
Team Meeting

April 17 — Salem
Mennonite Church,
Wooster

April 21 — South Union
Mennonite Church, West
Liberty



Going Organic

Organic is in! Everywhere we look new organic approaches to life are being touted as the healthy, the natural, the most environmentally friendly ways to be and live. So, I began pondering ... Did Jesus espouse an organic approach to spirituality and discipleship? And, if so, just what exactly might that mean?

On the last day, the great day of the festival, Jesus stood and cried out: "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me! Let anyone who believes in me come and drink! As scripture says, 'From his heart shall flow streams of living water.' " He was speaking of the Spirit which those who believed in him were to receive; for there was no Spirit as yet because Jesus had not yet been glorified. Some of the crowd who had been listening said, "He is indeed the prophet" — John 7:37- 40 (NJB)

I would argue that these verses among others suggest that all spirituality is "organic" — a living extension of the core energies of an individual's or even of a group's life. And the pattern seems clear enough in both Jesus' sayings and the writings of Paul. Those whose life force is limited to human strength, capability and endeavor will produce a spirituality of the "flesh"— that characteristic of fallen humanity living by its own "devices."

Those who wish to transcend this limited and frankly futile spirituality must imbibe the new organic life of Jesus through the Spirit. Such themes are common in John's Gospel in particular. (See John 3: 5, 6; John 6: 32 ff; i.e.) Certainly Paul contends in Galatians and I Corinthians that even believers can fall into "living only in the flesh."

"And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations?" — 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (NRS)

Speaking to those he consistently approaches as "believers," Paul says clearly that certain behaviors reveal the organic origins of "fleshly dependence." But Paul also clearly declares to all believers: "... walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh." — Galatians 5:16 (NAU)

So, spiritually speaking, it seems we will always be engaging in "organic spirituality" —both as individuals and also as the body of Christ. Isn't it wonderful that despite the cautious warning given us about our human tendencies, we are promised over and over the magnificent possibility of Holy-Spirit empowered "organic spirituality?" By the work and gifts of Jesus the Christ, our fellowships become "fountains of living water" as the Spirit conveys through us the life that God has organically and instills in us by grace.

So I say to us each and all, "Organic is in!"
And by that we are indeed blessed!

