

Connecting with Doug and Melanie Baer Drescher

Melanie and Doug met in the AMC assembly room under a most unusual matchmaking effort. Two friends from house church, Gladys Claassen and Nancy Drescher, thought they had the best plan ever. Doug and Mel will be happy to tell you the details. Fifteen years of marriage and they can thank Mom and Gladys for their ingenuity.

Doug and Melanie were married in 2002 at Akron Mennonite Church with Jim Amstutz officiating at his first marriage in his new role as our pastor. A quartet provided the wedding music: Cheryl and Daryl

Eshelman, and Ron Guenther from their house church, joined by Dawn Yoder Harms

Their families are quite similar with parents being the same ages and each having one sibling of opposite gender.

Doug came to AMC in his elementary years with parents Jim and Nancy and sister Lori.

Born in Annville, Doug moved with his family to Marietta Avenue in Lancaster. He attended Farmdale Elementary in Hempfield school district until third grade. When they moved to Witmer, he attended Conestoga Valley schools, graduating from CV in 1980. Doug's MYF years were at Forest Hills.

Dad was a schoolteacher and Mom was an OB nurse at Lancaster General. Doug grew up playing with many Amish children as well as his English friends. He has warm memories of family trips as a child to visit relatives in Virginia, western Pennsylvania and Ohio. However the trip to Ohio seemed like a very long one to this young boy.

Melanie Baer was born in Harrisburg. Her family attended Steelton Mennonite Church in her early years. When they moved to Elizabethtown, her school years were at Elizabethtown Mennonite Church where she enjoyed activities with the MYF.

Mel grew up with one brother and her parents, Glenn and Lucille. Dad worked in the transportation industry and Mom worked as director of food services in the local school district. Glenn enjoyed an antique business on the side.

School began at East High Street Elementary School, and continued through middle school to first year high school in Elizabethtown. Mel transferred to Lancaster Mennonite for her last three years.

Mel's first real job was at Hershey Park. This was only the beginning. One year she had nine W-2 forms, with jobs in Pennsylvania, California and Virginia during school and breaks.

Then she was off to EMC where she majored in psychology. Mel was ready to view the world from a different perspective, so she chose the west coast for graduate school. She enrolled in the Rosemead School of Psychology at Biola University in California.

Melanie experienced being Anabaptist in a new way as she was immersed in an evangelical university setting. Her friends referred to her as the "social activist" when they noted that she cared deeply about social issues that were not commonly discussed on this campus.



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Worship Schedule

Apr. 2	Kevin Ressler
9	Rachel Nolt
13	Maundy Thursday
16	Rachel Nolt
23	TBA
30	Rachel Nolt

While in southern California, Melanie became part of the LA area Mennonite student and young adult group. This group was her community, and stability during her four years of graduate school. Her house church comprised many from this group. She was part of the planning process for birthing Pasadena Mennonite Church, being a part of this congregation before they had their own building.

With an MA in clinical psychology and a doctorate of psychology under her belt, Melanie came back east to intern at Howard University in Washington DC. A year of private practice followed as she stayed in the area.

Melanie attended Washington Community Fellowship and Hyattsville Mennonite churches. When she moved back to Pennsylvania in 1989, she found AMC to be a good fit for where she was in her spiritual journey.

Meanwhile Doug had various experiences in the work world. As a teenager, he worked at Plain and Fancy. From there he worked at ServiceMaster Company for fourteen years. He chose to stay in Lancaster when the company moved to Chicago. High Food Services was his next employment before taking a position at Ten Thousand Villages. He worked at TTV for ten years.

Doug's life was interrupted in 1987 when he was diagnosed with brain cancer at age 24. He had surgery to remove the tumor and was off work for several months. The surgery affected his motor skills and he had to learn to walk again through physical therapy.

Doug was eventually able to return to his job at ServiceMaster. Later when Melanie and Doug were dating, she learned that her primary care doctor had been Doug's doctor during his cancer. This doctor commented to Mel concerning Doug's form of cancer, "He was one of the lucky ones."

Doug recovered well from his cancer. However, beginning in his forties, the impact of the brain cancer and surgery started to take its toll. He began having more trouble with balance and motor skills. He was prone to falls and bumping into things. These changes related to the combination of the brain injury and the aging process.

Doug retired on disability at age fifty because of these increasing health issues. It was not easy for him to accept giving up work at a relatively young age. It took time to adjust to early retirement.

Now Doug has established a meaningful schedule of activities that include volunteering at Landis Homes and participating in the activities at the fitness center, where he has made friends and built a community. He thoroughly enjoys his time spent at Landis Homes.

At home Doug gets lost in crossword puzzles. He is an avid football fan of the Oakland Raiders. He was thrilled to see them play in Baltimore in October. He also enjoys movies and pizza.

Travel is life giving for Melanie and Doug. They love the mountains, ranging from trips to the Rockies as well as the Pennsylvania mountains. Colorado and the Southwest are frequent destinations. Doug and Mel plan trips with friends who formed a travel group. Their most recent memorable trip was to Alaska last year.

Melanie has been to Europe a couple of times, enjoying an Anabaptist history tour with a girlfriend to celebrate their fortieth birthdays. In the USA, Mel has been to all but four of the states.

Melanie has varied interests and hobbies such as canning, planning meals, scrolling through recipes and cookbooks. She finds satisfaction in hiking, walking, travel, eating in restaurants, date night with Doug.

Mel is inspired by her opportunity to be involved with young professionals in her position at Philhaven Hospital where she has worked since 1988. Her current job responsibilities include outpatient psychotherapy, directing a doctoral psychology internship and serving as psychology discipline chief. Mel is energized by choosing interns and guiding them by teaching, training and mentoring them in their formative years of career choice.

Doug and Mel will celebrate their fifteenth anniversary in April. They are currently having fun planning a trip to mark the special occasion.

~Priscilla Ziegler



Pastor's Perspective



We are a congregation that knows how to care for each other. We cared for each other well during the past transition period and we continue to care for one another in this new season as a congregation.

Deacons connect with congregational attenders as desired by the attenders. House churches walk with each other through life—times of joy and times of challenge. If you don't have a deacon or a house church and would like to participate in these formal ways of caring in our congregation, please contact Melody Rupley or me through the church office.

We also have other ministries of care—the Agape Fund and prayer shawls. The Agape Fund provides financial aid to congregational attenders that have or are experiencing an unexpected and overwhelming financial burden. If you have such a burden, you may contact your deacon, Melody Rupley or me. Members and attenders can contribute to this fund at any time during the year but a special opportunity to give is a part of our Maundy Thursday service, April 13 at 6pm. As attenders contribute to the fund and other attenders receive gifts from the fund, we share our gifts and care for one another, re-enacting Jesus' care for his disciples at the last meal with them before his death when he knelt and washed their feet.

Prayer shawls are another quiet way we care for each other. Beautiful shawls are knitted or crocheted by congregational attenders, then stored in my office closet. I give the shawls to other attenders (men, women and children) when they are experiencing a difficult time in their life and need to feel the physical care of the congregation. You can also give a shawl to someone outside the congregation; just ask for a shawl to give. (Instructions for knitting or crocheting a shawl can be found on the Mennonite Women USA website: search mennonitewomen-usa.org or you can contact the church office and we will connect you with Helen Peifer who has been making shawls for years.) We don't have a lot of shawls right now so please consider making one during these wet days of spring or in the evening after a long day of work outside. It is a sacred time when I wrap someone in a beautiful shawl and pray a blessing with them.

I also am available to visit with you in your home, at your work place, a restaurant or coffee shop, or in my office. You do not need to wait for something bad to happen in order to stop by my office to visit. I love to hear your stories and learn to know you. If you are experiencing a difficult situation or health concern, please let me know. I will not know what is happening to you unless you tell me. (Unlike Jesus, I do not know what is happening in your life without you sharing with me ☺.)

Thank you for being a congregation that cares for each other—sharing meals, visits, prayers and gifts.

Lectio Divina, "sacred reading" or "divine reading," is a contemplative spiritual practice or prayer form centered on scripture. You are invited to join Rachel Nolt in her office each Monday at 7:30am to pray with her. The prayer time is usually finished by 8am. We gather around the table, light a candle, and quiet ourselves with deep breaths and silence. Then Rachel reads a short passage from the scripture text that will be used in the worship service on the following Sunday. After a time of silence, you are invited to listen to a word or phrase the God gives to you, something that stands out. Rachel will read the text again, after a time of silence you are invited to share your word or phrase. This is repeated two more times: once to share the emotions or feeling that the text draws from you and then an invitation for the day or coming week. The pattern is to listen to the text, to meditate in silence, then to share aloud with the group as you are comfortable. The pattern is repeated three times. At the end of our meditation, we then pray for each other in silence or aloud. We depart with a blessing for the day. If you are unable to join the group at the church, you can pray at your work or home. If you would like more information, contact Rachel Nolt at the church office.



A Third Way

As winter draws to a close, we walk with each other through Lent, a time of waiting and preparing for God to surprise us. As we wait expectantly in faith together, God's creation around us also moves toward a not yet visible change. A dead seed buried in moist earth waits inert until the sun's warm rays bring a third force—something separate from the seed and the soil—which pushes up a new thing, a *sprout*.



Cynthia Bourgeault uses the sprout image to illustrate the idea of the pattern of three—how a third something—in this case, the sun—can bring new and surprising life to what is static and stuck. She studies the pattern of three to help us realize that an idea or force which seems opposed to our own is never actually the problem; it is, instead, an opportunity—an opportunity to interact with that resistance so we can all get to something new. When our conversations and relationships are caught in two opposing positions, for instance, a third way may bring powerful energy and surprising outcome. She counsels that instead of trying to eliminate or overcome the opposition, we move toward working collaboratively for a more spacious solution.

Bourgeault suggests that to move beyond an impasse, we need to create a new field of possibility large enough to hold the tension of the opposites and launch them in a new direction. This requires that we move beyond our pre-formed judgements so we can develop the capacity to look directly at a situation. We may not always find a solution. We may simply be able to see the real meaning of the situation more clearly.

Pastor Rachel spoke one Sunday about the way in which our differing, opposing ideas may cause us to rub against each other in an uncomfortable way. She pointed out that when we make ourselves vulnerable to one another by sharing honestly, we often open ourselves to new respect for an opposing position and a new understanding of the person who holds that position. That's when we often see a third way open a path for more spacious relationships.

Perhaps as Jesus' followers we are called to be present with each other, with work colleagues, with neighbors and to serve as midwives, holding the tension of opposites to facilitate third way births in a whole variety of contexts. Perhaps we are called to be part of a transformative power available when we don't take sides, when we look beyond the either/or approach and set our sights higher than "winners and losers" (or even negotiated compromise) to find an often ignored third way. Sometimes it seems that our world is moving backward—away from justice and peace. Even at those times, let's be alert to finding a third way that can open us to God's surprises.

~ Melody Rupley

Cynthia Bourgeault is a scholar and teacher. Her *The Holy Trinity and the Law of Three* is a source for many of these ideas which I discovered through reading Richard Rohr's daily meditations.



Loving Our Enemies



Feel free to stop by the craft room (Room 133) to see Freddy for yourself!

Several Sundays ago the children's Bible story was about loving our enemies. For the craft segment of the lesson, the kids worked together to create a classroom pet "Freddy the love bug". Freddy is a caterpillar-like creature designed on the wall of our craft room. Being a love bug, each segment of Freddy's body is made out of a heart. Each heart names somebody whom we are called to love. . . some who are easy to love as well as some who are hard to love. The kids did an excellent job helping Freddy grow that Sunday morning as they quickly filled many hearts with descriptions of people they can love. What struck me, however, was the difficulty they had in thinking of "enemies", or those who are hard to love. Within minutes they had filled numerous hearts with people they find easy to love, but they really had to think in order to come up with people who they find difficult to love. As I reflect on that lesson I find myself amazed at the forgiving love that children exhibit, and I am challenged to learn from them. Will you join me in accepting the challenge?
~Jessie Buckwalter

*"While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life is all about."
~Angela Schwindt*



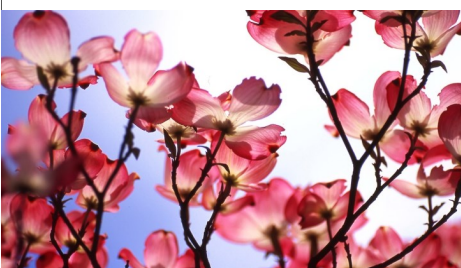
Pray For One Another

James 5:16

The purpose of "Pray For One Another" is to help us be aware of and pray for members of AMC who, for whatever reason, are unable to participate in Sunday morning worship services on a regular basis. Scripture **admonishes** us to pray. It is one of the joys of the Christian life and part of what makes us community. The names of people listed may change from time to time. If you know of someone you would like to be included with those named here, please be in touch with the church office.



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|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Charlotte Biris | Al Claassen | Carolyn & John Horst |
| Becca Martin | Paul Martin | Philip Rutt |
| Amela & Randy Puljek-Shank | | |



*Please send your submissions for the May newsletter to the church office by Monday, April 24.
Thanks.*

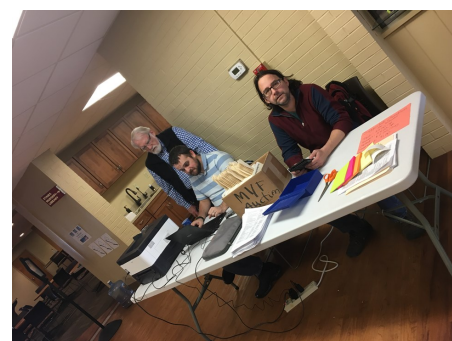


Keeping up with AMC's Youth

MYF

The 2017 MYF/Scholarship Fund benefit auction was a great success. A big thanks for the generosity of the congregation in donating items, bidding ridiculously and also enabling the event (from kitchen to bid system). The event raised more than \$25,000 to support scholarships for those attending Mennonite colleges and the MYF's activities including this summer's trip to attend the church conference in Orlando. We confirmed that Ken and Yvonne have been doing the auction for more than 30 years. In all, what a statement about how AMC values and supports its youth. Thanks!

—David Wise on behalf of the MYF and the Scholarship Fund committee.



Connect!

An Uno Madness Tournament was held Wednesday evening, March 29 after a delicious meatball sub dinner with the Connect! Program. Gloria Forrey took home first place over all, followed by Isaac Nancarvis in Second place and (friend) Connor Martin third place. Congratulations to our lucky winners. Prizes were given for all participants.

Come join us for more Connect! Fun in our community!

- ⇒ April 19 - square dancing with Dave and Sally Wise
- ⇒ April 26- Fire safety- getting to know our neighbors, the Akron Fire Company
- ⇒ May 3 - Flag football clinic held by Dylan Nolt and Isaac Nancarvis (we need cheerleaders too!)
- ⇒ May 10 - final weaving loom celebration with our tapestry removal ceremony led by Nancy Chapman followed by an ice cream social with Daryl Mack



Seen at AMC...



*Photos courtesy of
(left) Jim & Sara
Wiegner*

*(right) Karyn
Nancarvis*



These two "greeters" met Karyn and Isaac Nancarvis at AMC one Sunday morning

Pictured above are Mara and Lisa Zimmerman and Abby Buckwalter gazing at their coin donations as they flip through the clean water. Their generous donations will go to MCC's My Coins Count program which will support water projects around the world. Daryl Mack kindly agreed to deliver the THREE full buckets of dollars and coins to the MCC relief sale on April 1st. No fooling!
(Wondering what happened to Penny Power? The U.S. and Canadian effort was renamed My Coins Count after Canada took the penny out of circulation.)

MYF: Looking Ahead...

April 29: Supper Club Hosted by Sandi & Norm Wood

May 5-6: Lock-in at AMC (rescheduled from April 7-8)

May 7: Mug washing/dessert fundraiser

June 4: Senior recognition and lunch (rescheduled from May 21)

June date TBD: Supper club hosted by Anne Weaver & Esther Hostetter of Landis Homes

July date TBD: Supper club hosted by Steve Zook & Charity Shenk



March, 2017

Dear Friend,

We are writing to suggest that you do something that you may have never done in your life. This is a historical moment that you can be an active part of shaping. Here is a snapshot of the current political scene:

- A ban on Muslims
- Plans for a complete wall along the border we share with Mexico
- The dismantling of environmental protections
- Billions added to US military spending and cutting almost everything else

We know about slippery slopes, about things getting worse not all at once, about the frog that didn't escape the heating water because it was being heated so gradually. We all know the stories of people who committed atrocities and said, in their defense, that they were following orders.

When does what happens cross the line? You may know the famous words of Martin Niemöller:

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

We signed this letter because we want you to consider joining others this year to take a stand. We can non-cooperate with this government which is not of, by and for all the people. As a first step, we can refuse at least a token amount of our taxes to this government. Specifically, we want to suggest that you consider the action we are taking of withholding and redirecting a small amount of your taxes. How much? Many select a symbolic minimum of \$10.40.

Others refuse to pay 50% of their federal tax bill, the amount that goes for war and preparations for war. All of us signing this letter are redirecting some tax money, either for 2016 if we haven't prepaid all our taxes, or through changing our allowances to reduce our estimated taxes for 2017, or are choosing to live below the taxable level in order to refuse paying taxes for war. Will you join us?

Anxious? Thousands of people before you have done this. The National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee has an impressive array of resources to help: written materials, videos, webinars, and one-on-one support in some cases. Reach out to them at www.nwtrcc.org. Or talk to friends, and perhaps create a group of people who will support each other. If you choose to resist, we ask that you redirect these funds to a cause that matters most to you.

If tax resistance is not the right choice for you, consider other ways to pursue civil disobedience and non-cooperation. We can begin our non-cooperation with the Trump government by engaging in this symbolic act. If you decide to join us, please let us know by sending an email to 1040forpeace@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Arun Gandhi, Peace Farmer

David M. Gross, Picket Line Press

David McReynolds, War Resisters League, former staff

Harold A. Penner, 1040forpeace.org

Jodie Evans, CODEPINK

John Lindsay Poland

Kit Miller, MK Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence

Marie Dennis, Pax Christie International

Michael Nagler, Metta Institute for Nonviolence Edu.

Sam Koplinka-Loehr, National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee

Susan Quinlan, Northern California War Tax Resistance

Tatanka Christopher (Kit) Bricca, Resource Center for Nonviolence

Carol Loewenstein, Resource Center for Nonviolence

David and Jan Hartsough, Peaceworkers

Don Moseley, Jubilee Partners

Joanna Macy, The Work That Reconnects

John K. Stoner, 1040forpeace.org

Kathy Kelly, Voices for Creative Nonviolence

Louie Vitale, OFM, Pace e Bene

Medea Benjamin, CODEPINK

Miki Kashtan, Bay Area Nonviolent Communication

...and then one day...

**I stopped
paying for war.**



nwtrcc.org

(SAMPLE OF LETTER TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ABOUT RESISTING \$10.40 OF FEDERAL TAXES)
YOUR NAME
YOUR ADDRESS

April __, 2017

Committee on Ways and Means
 c/o Representative Kevin Brady, Chairperson
 U.S. House of Representatives
 301 Cannon House Office Building
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Brady:

I object on religious grounds to the payment of that portion of MY federal income taxes that supports war making and militarism—44% of the U.S. budget for the 2017 fiscal year according to the War Resisters League (https://www.warresisters.org/sites/default/files/resources/fy2017_pie_chart_-_high_res.pdf). According to the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, the U.S. currently spends four times what China does and 10 times what the Russians sink into their military. Rather than "draining the swamp" of special-interest advocates, it appears that that the "military-industrial-congressional-complex," not the white working class, is the real winner of the 2016 presidential election.

Martin Luther King, Jr. in a sermon at Riverside Church on April 4, 1967, said, "*A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.*" I do not want my federal tax dollars to be used to underwrite an out-of-control military machine that is destroying God's creation at the same time that legitimate human needs go unmet. A study by University of Massachusetts economists indicates that infrastructure spending creates one and one-half times the number of jobs per dollar invested as in the Pentagon.

To symbolically express my conscientious objection to war, **I am withholding the payment of \$10.40 of the amount that my 2016 federal income tax forms indicate I owe.** I am donating that amount to the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund.

With this letter, **I am urging you and the U.S. Congress to pass the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill (H.R. 2377, in the 114th Congress)** that would restore the constitutional right for individuals to practice religious beliefs according to their consciences. I am not opposed to paying taxes. I willingly pay that portion of our tax liability that goes toward peace-oriented systems and supports life. But I am a conscientious objector to the death and destruction that the military apparatus represents and am compelled to take this action.

Militarized America wants to make war our method and weapons our instruments. While we live in a troubled and dangerous world, neither handguns nor nuclear arsenals are the way to solve human problems. Our children are mimicking the behavior of adults who kill to solve their problems resulting in the violence found in our homes, in our schools and on our streets. I invite you to join the movement of conscience that is turning the world toward nonviolence as its method of dealing with conflict.

Please do everything in your power to enact laws that will restore the constitutional right for persons to practice religious beliefs according to individual conscience. To that end I welcome dialogue with you.

Sincerely, U.S. Taxpayer from 16th Congressional District of Pennsylvania

cc: John Koskinen, Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service, 1111 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20224
 -National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, 2121 Decatur Place NW, Washington, DC 20008-1923
 -President Donald Trump, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC 20500
 -Representative Lloyd Smucker, House of Representatives, 516 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515
 -Senator Pat Toomey, U.S. Senate, B-40B Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510-3802
 -Senator Robert P. Casey, U.S. Senate, 393 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510-3802

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."—Former General and President Dwight D. Eisenhower

Friendship Benches

Because I had lived in Zimbabwe for a year and because I am very interested in mental health, a recent article caught my attention. It was about “Friendship Benches” located in the grounds of health clinics around major cities in Zimbabwe. The practitioners are lay health workers known as community Grandmothers,” trained to listen to and support patients living with anxiety, depression and other common mental disorders. This innovative approach holds the potential to significantly improve the lives of millions of people with moderate and severe mental health problems in countries where access to treatment is limited or nonexistent.



Six months after undergoing six weekly “problem solving therapy” sessions on the Friendship Benches, participants showed significant differences in severity of depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts based on locally validated questionnaires.

"Common mental disorders impose a huge burden on all countries of sub-Saharan Africa," says Dr. Chibanda. "Developed over 20 years of community research, the Friendship Bench empowers people to achieve a greater sense of coping and control over their lives by teaching them a structured way to identify problems and find workable solutions."

"In developing countries, nearly 90 percent of people with mental disorders are unable to access any treatment," says Dr. Peter A. Singer, Chief Executive Officer of Grand Challenges Canada. "We need innovations like the Friendship Bench to fill the gap and go from 10 percent of people receiving treatment, to 90 percent of people receiving treatment."

Regardless of one's access to professional help, it is clear that friendship we extend in the church, neighborhood, school, or place of employment, has a big impact on people who are experiencing mental illness. ~ Marilyn Langeman



More about the Friendship Benches is at:

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-12-friendship-bench-effective-alleviating-mental.html>



Diamond Street Early
Childhood Center

DIAMOND STREET EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER (DSECC) has positions open for Early Childhood care providers. Please share this information with anyone you think might be interested. Volunteers are also needed to assist with office tasks. Contact Stephanie Thomas, Executive Director, at (717) 859-4272 or execdirector@diamondstreet.org

Harmonies Workshop Hymn Sing: Sing favorites and bring yourself alive this Sunday at 6:30 p.m. at Blossom Hill Mennonite Church, Delp Road, Lancaster, Pa. You will sing with Mike Burkholder, Stan Godshall, Glenn Lehman, David Sauder, and Gretchen Thomas, as they take an exciting tour of the hymnal. See www.harmonies.org for details. There is no charge. An offering will benefit Harmonies Workshop.

April (and beyond) at AMC & In the Community

APRIL UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 31, April 1 & 2 MYF retreat @ Kings' Cabin**
- April 1 Spring mulching @ AMC @ 8:00 am**
- 1 Guess Who is Coming to Dinner?**
- 4 Lunch Bunch @ Oregon Dairy @ 11:30 am**
- 5 Library Committee meeting @ 6:00 pm**
- 6 Men's Breakfast @ Udder Choice @ 7:00 am**
further discussion on immigration history
- 6 Outreach Commission meeting @ 7:00 pm**
- 6 Council meeting @ 7:00 pm**
- 8 AMC Women's Retreat 9:00—1:00 @ AMC**
- 8 Bangladesh fundraising dinner @ 5:30 pm**
- 13 Maundy Thursday service with meal @ 6pm**
- 14 Good Friday prayer vigil @ noon @ Lancaster County Prison**
- 15 Share-a-Life service project @ MRC 9 to 12**
- 16 Easter Dawn Service @ Roland Park @ 7 am**
- 16 Easter Breakfast @ AMC @ 7:45 am**
- 19 Connect! @ AMC @ 6 pm; square dancing**
- 22 Anton Flores to speak at AMC in pm; TBA**
- 26 Connect! @ AMC @ 6 pm; fire safety**
- 27 & 28 Theatre of the Beat's "This will lead to dancing" performance @ AMC @ 7 pm**

SAVE THESE DATES

June 9-11 Annual AMC Camping Weekend
Locust Lake State Park

Good Friday Prayer Vigil

You are invited to join a Good Friday Prayer Vigil around the Lancaster County Prison (LCP) on April 14th at noon led by Pastor Matthew Lenahan of Zion Lutheran Church, Akron, PA. In this "Way of the Cross," the community walks together around the prison, following a processional cross, stopping 14 times to hear the passion of our Lord and to pray for the criminal justice system (CJS) and all who are impacted by it. For Christians, our holy days surround the arrest, trial, and execution of Jesus. His cross is our symbol of hope and salvation. When we visit the prisoner, we meet Jesus, according to Matthew 25. Rather than ignore or avoid the CJS and those affected by it, we are invited to pray for and serve them. LCP houses about 1,000 inmates a day. Our gathering is a witness to them and the community that we do not forget them, that we believe in the forgiveness of sins, and we work toward reconciliation and amendment of life. If you know someone who is currently incarcerated or a family going through the CJS, you are especially invited to attend. For many people in our community, faith is found and/or tested by a walk in the CJS. For more information, speak to Pastor Rachel Nolt.



**Good Friday
Prayer Vigil**

Attention AMC Women

2017 Half-Day Women's Retreat

Please plan to join the 2017 AMC Women's Retreat on Saturday morning, April 8. Here are some details:

- Date and Time:** **Saturday April 8, 2017**
9:00 AM-12:00 PM-Program and Coffee/Tea Break
12:00 PM-1:00 PM-Lunch
- Location:** AMC Assembly Room
- Guest Presenter:** Karen Sensenig, Chaplain at Philhaven & Former Pastor of Habecker Mennonite
- Title:** ***Stepping into a Whirling World with a Centered Heart***
- Registration Info.:** Brochure and Registration forms have been distributed in mailboxes. Return Registration forms to Elaine Brubaker or contact her directly (elainebrubaker@gmail.com) to sign up
- Additional Info.:** Karen will use clay as a metaphor during the presentation. If you wish to try your hand at the potter's wheel, please inform Melanie Baer in advance to schedule.



Please remember to bring a mug or cup that has spiritual significance to you.

Retreat Planners: Melanie Baer, Jane Hartzler, Elaine Brubaker, Agnes Hacker

Update on the Bangladesh Shambhuganj Project

We are grateful to Akron Mennonite Church and everyone who has been supporting the Bangladesh project for the last six years. Since we started the project in 2011, God has blessed us abundantly. The school has grown from 65 children to 195 this year. We have added one grade and one teacher each year from the beginning. More than 200 women were trained in sewing, many of whom are able to earn additional income for the family. A few women were able to get jobs in the nearby garment factory. We distributed about two dozen sewing machines to those who did well during the training which helped them to start their own home based business.

Most of the families from our Christian community and many from the Muslim families from the surrounding villages received low cost sanitary latrines which improved the sanitation in the community. Other ongoing programs include scholarships to high school and college students to continue their education; distribution of rice, lentils and cooking oil to all widows as monthly food ration; computer training to teachers, high school and college students; and distribution of baby female goats to widows who are able to take care of them. The primary health care project continues to meet needs of the local community. A school children's nutrition program will start from April 1 this year. We are also sharing our blessings with a neighboring church beginning this year.

The management and church in Shambhuganj extended their helping hands to the remote and needy Hindu village of Dhorer Bangla by starting a community development project there.

—*Report and photos by Richard Sarker*



Above: widows receiving goats



Left: children in a school classroom

BANGLADESHI MEAL & FUND RAISER

Saturday April 8, 2017 5:30pm.

AKRON MENNONITE CHURCH

1311 DIAMOND STREET, AKRON.

Appetizer

Samosas

Baked Vegetarian Pastries.

Main course

Chicken Korma

Boneless chicken breast cubes in a creamy sauce with onion, fresh ginger, cumin and exotic spices

Pulao Rice

Long-grain Basmati rice steamed with aromatic spices

Naan Bread.

Clay Oven baked Indian bread.

Jumbo Shrimp in Coconut milk

Winter squash and jumbo shrimp Simmered in fragrant spices

Mixed Vegetable Curry

Mixed vegetables sautéed with mild spices, onion and fresh ginger

Dessert

Tropical Fruit Salad

Ice Cream

Bangladeshi Hot Tea.

Join us for a Bangladeshi dinner to raise funds for the expansion of the Shambhuganj project in Bangladesh. Additional space is needed to accommodate increased number of school children. We have three rooms for seven different grades with 195 children. Land has been purchased with the funds we raised in 2016 year. Our goal is to raise \$50,000 to construct additional rooms for future expansion and add additional floors for various program activities. So far, we received around \$25,000.00 in donations and pledges requiring additional \$25,000.00.

Richard Sarker will report after dinner with a power point presentation followed by an offering to receive your gifts to support the project.

RSVP to rassar+47@hotmail.com or 717-733-4014 or 717-271-1585 (cell) by Wednesday April 5 to make sure Richard knows how much food to prepare.

The dinner will be donated by Richard and Mary Ann so that all contributions support the project.

Please make checks payable to "Conscience International" and write "For Bangladesh" in the memo line for tax receipt

Theatre of the Beat to perform “This will lead to dancing” at AMC April 27 and 28 at 7:00 pm. Hosted by the Welcoming Dialogue Group.

The acclaimed Canadian Theatre of the Beat troupe uses drama to engage communities on difficult issues. After playing across Canada, the troupe will now cross the border to bring their show to the USA. Their play, “This Will Lead to Dancing” (written by Johnny Wideman) will debut in the USA at Akron Mennonite Church on Thursday, April 27, at 7:00 pm. A repeat performance will occur on Friday, April 28, also at AMC, at 7:00 pm.

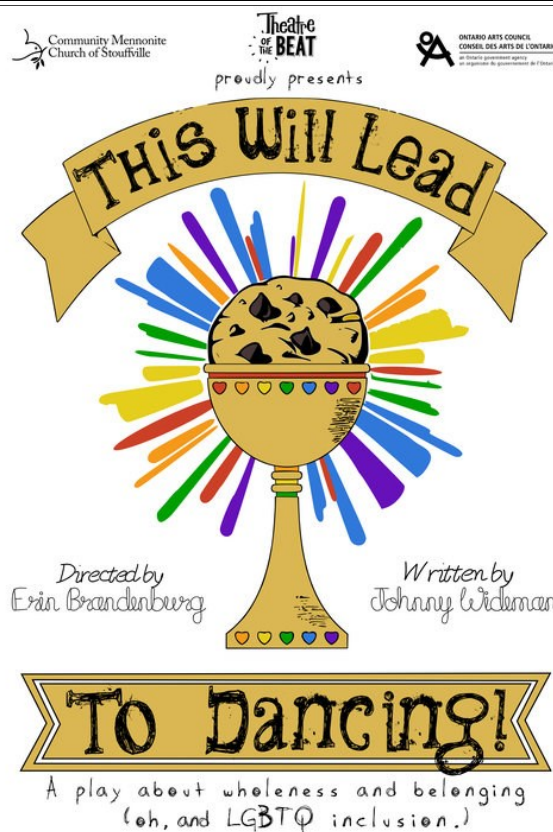
The members of the troupe prefer staying in homes of church members rather than going to a motel. Hosts are still needed for a man and his wife, and three single women. They will need lodging April 26, 27, and 28. If you are available to provide lodging, please contact Rebecca in the church office. The Akron/Ephrata area is preferred, but other areas within 5 to 7 miles would be acceptable.



Audience Responses: "Thanks so much for this amazing conversation about a difficult topic for the church. Your ability to tackle it with humour, directness, and a clear love for the church was inspiring."

"As a LGBTQ person this [play] was very refreshing to see. I am very hopeful for the future of the Mennonite church."

"I laughed, I cried, it became a part of me."



Synopsis: Teenagers Sam and Alex are sick and tired: they're tired of their church's exclusive stance on homosexuality, and sick due to a week-long hunger strike to protest it. But when word finally gets out, it becomes clear that their cause has struck a chord in their small Mennonite community. Crowds begin gathering outside their church, national news crews begin following the story, and Sam is visited by the ghost of Menno Simons, who claims he has been sent to help her. Awaiting their church's decision, Sam and Alex must decide whether sticking up for a community who has been spiritually starved is worth the risk of physically starving themselves.

JOB OPENING: The Columbia Re-Uzit shop is currently seeking to hire a full time Thrift Shop Manager. The manager is responsible for seeing to the day-to-day operations of the thrift shop and activities that support volunteer efforts. The re-uzit shop is located 363 Locust St, Columbia, PA 17512. If interested, please stop by the shop or call 717-572-7189 or email Robert at rakanagy@gmail.com.

Benefit Concert: Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster is holding a concert on April 22, 2017, 7 p.m. to benefit its Refugee Support Fund. CMCL is currently sponsoring its 4th refugee family, who joined the Lancaster community December, 2015. The evening of celebration will feature music of various styles from local musicians and possibly the refugee family. Please join us! CMCL address: 328 W. Orange St., parking available in the Covenant UMC lot across the street.

Check out these upcoming events at Hinkletown Mennonite School:

- Tuesday, April 11: Open House for Prospective Families & Students in PreK-Grade 12; 1 pm-8 pm
- Thursday, April 20: HMS Business Networking Breakfast at Sight & Sound Theatres; 6:45-9 am (reservations required)
- Wednesday, May 10: Open House for Prospective Families & Students in PreK-Grade 12; 9 am-1 pm
- Tuesday, June 13: HMS Benefit Golf Tournament at LedgeRock Golf Club

For more information about HMS and these events, contact 717-354-7100 or office@hmsk8.org, or check out www.hmsk8.org.

MEDA Chapter Breakfast and Tour at Clark Associates, one of Central PA's fastest growing companies. Saturday, April 22, at 8:00 am for Breakfast and Q & A with Steve Leaman of The Restaurant Store. Tour follows. 2207 Old Philadelphia Pike, Lancaster. Cost: by donation, accepted at the door. RSVP by April 18: Allison Nafziger at 717-560-6546 or chapters@meda.org.

From the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society: **Moving into the City, Moving out of the City: What Makes People Move**—Join the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society at Jesucristo es el Señor (New Holland Spanish Mennonite Church), 24 N Roberts Ave, New Holland, PA, at 7 p.m. on Monday, April 3, for an evening looking at migration. Steve Nolt, Senior Scholar at the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, will explore the movement of Lancaster Mennonites from the country into the city in the 50s and 60s. Christine Baer of Church World Service, will lead an accompanying panel discussing the current movement of Mennonite-connected immigrants from the city to the country.

Employment opportunity with No Longer Alone Ministries: Mental Health Professional: Responsible to assist adults with mental illness in achieving their recovery goals in the community. Job responsibilities include assessment, goal setting, home visits, and coordination of services. Position is part-time, flexible schedule. Bachelor's Degree required with at least 2 years of related experience. Must have own vehicle. EOE

Please send resume to: Patricia Wolf, pwolf@nlam.org or fax 717-390-4894.

Our Mission: Inspired by Christ's love, No Longer Alone provides professional services that build hope and empower individuals and families experiencing mental illness.

From Kairos School of Spiritual Formation: A Retreat for your Lenten Journey: "A Life of Prayer" led by Mark Beazley. Saturday, April 8 from 9 am to 4 pm at the Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth in Wernersville, PA. *Consider how prayer can become the very essence of a life of communion with God. Discover prayer as a way of being rather than something to do.*

APRIL Birthdays

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	FRI	SAT
						1
2 Amy Siefarth Priscilla Ziegler	3 Michael Forrey	4	5 Nancy Drescher	6 Tonya Wenger	7 Gerald Shank	8 Marion Schrock
9 Ann Zimmerman	10 Barry Nolt	11 Christina Bowman Peter Clemens	12 Jake Leaman	13	14	15 John Weber
16 Claire Magill	17 Deb Sprunger	18 Ellie Burkholder Aubrey Haller	19	20 Zem Martin Peter Passage	21 Marian Rutt	22 Lynne Brubaker Marvin Nolt
23	24	25	26 Marilyn Langeman	27 Roger Weaver	28 John Stoner	29
30 Dot Hershey						

Akron Mennonite Church

1311 Diamond Street
Akron, PA 17501
P: (717) 859-1488
E: amc@akronmench.org

www.akronmench.org

- ◇ Worship @ 9:00 am
- ◇ Coffee/Tea Fellowship from 10:15-10:40 am
- ◇ Christian Education & Discipleship Hour from 10:40-11:40 am

Staff

Rachel Nolt
Pastor

rnolt@akronmench.org

Karyn Nancarvis
Interim Director of Children & Youth Ministries

knancarvis@akronmench.org

Melody Rupley
Director of Equipping Ministries

mrupley@akronmench.org

Patricia Martin
Minister of Music and Worship

pmartin@akronmench.org

Rebecca Pereverzoff
Administrator

rpereverzoff@akronmench.org

amc@akronmench.org



Contact Updates

Please note this new cell number for John Stoner:
(717) 803-6020

Gladys Gingerich has moved to Cedar 66 in Landis Homes.

AMC Vision Statement

Akron Mennonite Church will be fully engaged in God's mission in a broken world as we are called, equipped and sent by the Holy Spirit to follow Christ in life. Shaped by the gifts and vision of our members, we will keep Christ and church at the center of our lives as we reach out to neighbors near and far and witness to the world around us through an Anabaptist-Mennonite expression of faith.

Statement on Human Sexuality

We are a community of believers seeking to respond with God's love to all people. We celebrate the strength of our unity in the midst of our diversity of experiences, perspectives and understanding of Scripture. We seek to be a community of grace and reconciliation and so welcome into membership all who confess faith in Jesus Christ, including those in same-gender covenant relationships. We are committed to engaging in God's mission in a broken world through an Anabaptist-Mennonite faith perspective.