

# PNMC e-BULLETIN

providing bi-monthly communication for Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference



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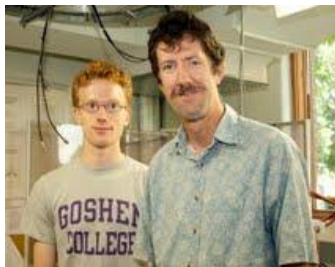
## From the PNMC Office

For pastors and others who are interested ~ Attached are the instructions and registration forms for **PNMC Course Offerings for 2010-2011**. The first class is in September so we need your response **by August 15**. Please look over the information and respond directly to me ([office@pnmc.org](mailto:office@pnmc.org)).

The courses are offered to anyone in the conference. Those who need these courses to complete their credentialing requirements will be given preference. Please don't hesitate to ask questions of Iris or myself if this is not clear. *Barb Buxman*

## PNMC CONGREGATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & MINISTRIES

listed alphabetically by organization



Abe Pauls with Professor Meyer Reimer

**Abe Pauls**, from Dallas, OR, is participating in **Goshen College's Maple Scholars program**. Students have the opportunity to participate in research projects alongside GC faculty who serve as both colleague and supervisor.

Pauls, a physics and math double major, is doing X-ray studies of calcite growth with Associate Professor of Physics Paul Meyer Reimer. Pauls, son of James and Linda Pauls, is a 2008 graduate of Dallas High School and attends Salem Mennonite Church.

The program runs from June 6 to July 30. Students share their work in a weekly colloquium and engage other students across disciplines. For more information, contact Jodi H. Beyeler (574/535-7572; [jodihb@goshen.edu](mailto:jodihb@goshen.edu)).

### Sister Care seminar equips women for effective caring.

Women have tended to care for each other throughout the various stages of life. Sister Care acknowledges women's gifts of caring and equips them to respond more effectively and confidently to the needs of others in the congregation. Seminar includes worship and small group interaction with topics focused on: Claiming our identity as God's beloved, Caring for self and others, Compassionate listening, and Transforming grief and loss.

**October 8-9, 2010** at Evergreen Heights Mennonite Church, Caldwell, Idaho

**October 15-16, 2010** at Salem Mennonite Church, Salem, Oregon

**October 22-23, 2010** at Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville, Washington (to include Montana)

Each seminar is offered from Friday (7-9 p.m.) through Saturday (8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) To register, visit [http://www.pnmc.org/Calendar/Special\\_Events](http://www.pnmc.org/Calendar/Special_Events).



**Presenters: Rhoda Keener (left), Shippensburg, PA, and Carolyn Holderread Heggen (right), Corvallis, OR**, will lead these two-day seminars. Rhoda is executive director of Mennonite Women USA and Carolyn serves as West Coast representative on the MW USA Board. Carolyn and Rhoda have worked in the mental health field and each brings years of experience in caring for others in the church. Local women will share how the congregation was/can be most helpful during a difficult life experience.

**Sister-Care is provided by Mennonite Women USA and hosted by Pacific Northwest Mennonite Women.**

**Western Mennonite School** offers **Sports Camps** for all ages during August for: soccer, baseball, softball and volleyball. More information: [www.westernmennoniteschool.org](http://www.westernmennoniteschool.org), or call Dora (503/363-2000).

## MENNONITE CHURCH USA & OTHER CHURCHWIDE AGENCIES

### Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS)

AMBS is seeking two full-time professors: **Christian Proclamation** and **Old Testament/Hebrew Bible**. AMBS is also seeking a three-quarter time **administrative assistant for the Church Leadership Center**. If you have qualifications and interest, please see full job descriptions at <http://www.ambs.edu/employment>.

### Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)

A word of deep gratitude and thanksgiving to God and to the churches of the PNMC for their varied participation in the MCC Benefit Concerts promoted over the weekend of July 16, 17 & 18, in Seattle, Portland and Albany respectively. **Thank you** for your prayers, gifts, interest, and for many in attendance. The events were rich in music by Kim Thiessen and Darryl Neustaedter Barg, and rich in content regarding the work of MCC with HIV/AIDS in Africa, presented by Abe Janzen. The three events raised more than \$55,000 for the Women's Income Generation work of MCC in Nigeria. In addition, the purchase of CDs added \$2,425, all of which goes to MCC's *Generations* Program. A special thank you to the three committees who did the leg work on the local events. THANK YOU!! Grace and Peace, *Bob Buxman, MCC NW Rep.*

### Mennonite Church USA

#### God's love has no borders

*Ervin R. Stutzman, executive director, Mennonite Church USA*

In the last few weeks, debates about immigration have flared up all across the United States. The passage of the SB 1070 immigration law in Arizona has prompted other states to consider similar measures to control immigration. In response to the strong feelings across the nation, President Obama recently took action to secure the border between the U.S. and Mexico. I grieve that these actions deeply affect my brothers and sisters in the congregations of *Iglesia Menonita Hispana*, a valued part of Mennonite Church USA. I have been hearing stories from congregations that are losing many beloved members because of pressure from the government.

As a church leader, I rely on our denomination's 2003 statement on immigration to guide my response to this situation. Also, the following words from hymn 374 in *Hymnal: Worship Book*, (a Mennonite Church USA English hymnbook) echo my own prayer for Mennonite Church USA and our nation: "Forbid false love of country, that blinds us to your call, who lifts above the nations the unity of all. Create in us the splendor that dawns when hearts are kind, that knows no race nor station as bound'ries of the mind; that learns to value beauty, in heart, or mind, or soul, and longs to bind God's children into one perfect whole."

The Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA recently voted to use money from the building campaign for Racial/Ethnic groups, including Hispanics. We will designate 10 percent of any money coming to our office building fund after the ground blessing, which took place on June 15. This money can be used for immigration concerns, education, or help with church facilities.

Currently, we have plans to meet in Phoenix, Ariz., for the 2013 convention of Mennonite Church USA. Because of the new law in Arizona, we are reconsidering this choice.

Glen Guyton, associate executive director of constituent resources, guides intercultural relations in our national conference. Glen has prepared the following announcement about the decision to be made:

Mennonite Church USA is very concerned about what is happening in the state of Arizona and the precedent it may set for other states. A just and humane immigration policy is needed in our nation and the passage of Arizona SB1070 may be a tipping point in our country. Only God knows which way our country will lean.

The question on the minds of many in the Hispanic community is, "Why hasn't Mennonite Church USA made a decision to move the 2013 convention to another city?" To many of our Hispanic brothers and sisters, the decision is easy: "Don't go to Phoenix, because we will not go. We do not feel safe." *Iglesia Menonita Hispana (IMH)* has made its position clear, and the leadership of the church has heard the message. While we truly have love, respect and empathy for the Hispanic members of our church family, there are several reasons why the church has chosen to take some time to make a decision about the location.

- 1. Exposure to all Mennonite Church USA members.** We believe the issue of immigration is far greater than the location of our 2013 churchwide convention. This decision will provide an opportunity to bring immigration to the forefront of our

church. For many years, Mennonite churches in Arizona and in our Hispanic communities have been dealing with immigration issues. Our Hispanic churches are losing members in great numbers because of the poor economy and the changing political climate. Deciding on a convention location will expose the broader church to the negative effects of current U.S. immigration policy and the proposed Arizona law, which many feel will lead to racial profiling.

**2. Discussion and discernment.** Because this decision affects our entire church family, it requires discussion and discernment by leaders all across the church. A gathering called the Leaders Forum had already been planned for September 2010, and now the 2013 convention location will be a central topic of discussion and discernment. Nearly 250 leaders from conferences, agencies and Racial/Ethnic constituency groups will be involved. When we gather together face-to-face in worship and prayer to discuss things as Christian sisters and brothers, a clarity often comes through the power of the Holy Spirit. We need to hear the hurts, fears, hopes and dreams of all who will be affected by the passage of this law in Arizona. The leadership of the church feels that using the next few months to discern and discuss immigration, the new Arizona law, and the historical circumstances surrounding the passage of SB1070 will ultimately facilitate a sense of synergy around the final decision. It is important that we understand “why” when the final decision is announced.

**3. Contracts.** While some want a quick decision to send a message to the state of Arizona, the financial impact of staying in or leaving Phoenix will not be affected by a few months. The 2013 convention is more than three years away. Making an announcement now will not benefit our Hispanic community any more than making an announcement in early 2011. A formal announcement would trigger contractual obligations, numerous inquires, and limit the ability of our staff to negotiate with the various entities involved. There is not just one contract to cancel, but multiple contracts that would need to be changed. The liquidated damages of canceling these contracts could possibly exceed \$500,000. In addition, at least 10 other states are considering legislation similar to Arizona’s. In some ways, announcing a decision too early could be reckless. It is not as simple as picking another city. Currently, the convention planning staff and the Office of Intercultural Relations are exploring all options, so that everyone in our church understands the impact of the final decision. The decision, whether it is to stay in Phoenix or move to another city, will have a serious impact on the church—spiritually, relationally, and fiscally.

**4. City of Phoenix.** The city of Phoenix is paying attention to Mennonite Church USA. Recently, I visited the city of Phoenix with Rachel Swartzendruber Miller, director of convention planning. We met with the city manager, the chief of police, the vice-mayor, the convention bureau, and the three hotels with whom we have binding contracts. Since Iglesia Menonita Hispana forwarded its formal request to change the convention location, the staff of Mennonite Church USA has been working at providing information to everyone involved and seeking a solution that will benefit the entire Mennonite Church USA family, of which *Iglesia Menonita Hispana* is a very important part. We shared with the city officials the concerns of IMH. We explained to them the concern about safety and the fears of what the law will mean. The city of Phoenix and its large Hispanic population have great disdain for SB1070.

**5. Next steps.** In the next step of our discernment process, members of the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA and members of the Executive Committee of *Iglesia Menonita Hispana* will travel to Phoenix to meet with city officials and local Latino community leaders to assess what is happening in the area.

We have to trust God that our discernment process will work in this matter. As an African-American, I am no stranger to discrimination. I empathize with my Hispanic brothers and sisters, and I cannot imagine what it feels like to live in fear of being deported from the country I love and call my home. I hope that everyone in the church understands that the pain and fear felt by our Hispanic constituency will not end with the decision of where we hold our 2013 churchwide convention. No, in the grand scheme of things, the decision of whether or not to go to Phoenix is quite small.

The bigger issues are: What are the guiding principles that will help us make this decision? How do we resource and care for Hispanic Mennonite congregations who are losing hundreds of members? How do we as a church make tough decisions, even if they only directly affect a small percentage of our members? What can we as a church do about immigration reform and the care for the stranger in our land? How committed are we to the priority of anti-racism in the church? Are we willing to sacrifice to become an anti-racist church? Can we as Racial/Ethnic people and Anglos still walk together in love and trust one another after the final decision is made?

Ultimately, the decision where to spend five days in July 2013 will not mean much if we don't do the hard work now. Now is the time for wisdom and understanding (Proverbs 24:3). Now is the time for all members of Mennonite Church USA to dwell together in unity and in prayer to begin the journey toward sharing a holistic witness to the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Glen and I welcome your response to this way of working to make this important decision about a possible change of location for the convention. If you have comments or questions, please contact Glen Guyton at [GlenG@MennoniteUSA.org](mailto:GlenG@MennoniteUSA.org) or 1-866-866-2872, ext. 23044.

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**Upcoming e-Bulletins:**

- August 2 (*submissions due by 7/26*)
- August 16 (*submissions due by 8/9*)
- Sept 6 (*submissions due by 8/30*)
- Sept 20 (*submissions due by 9/13*)

If you would like to contribute, please send a **brief announcement** in Spanish & English with website links to [brenda@pnmc.org](mailto:brenda@pnmc.org). Our goal is to provide a valuable resource, not an In-Box jammer. If space is tight, we may omit announcements that are not as pertinent to PNMC. Announcements will run ONE time only, unless specified otherwise.  
*We welcome your feedback!*