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From our Conference Moderator, *Jeryl Hollinger*

About 70 church leaders from across Mennonite Church USA gathered at Camp Hebron March 11-13. It was the convening of the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) and Katherine Jameson Pitts, Jennifer Sololano and I represented PNMC. Iris de Leon Hartshorn was also present as MC USA staff. As our conference resource advocate, Charlotte Derkson joined the first morning. CLC is sometimes referred to as the "elders of MC USA," providing guidance to the work of the denomination but holding no decision-making power. At these meetings the worship is lively and the agenda is full with many issues brought for discussion. This meeting dealt with polity issues and preparation for Phoenix 2013. Reports of the CLC meeting will likely appear in the wider church press. Those of us who were present are also available to give more information on the items discussed.

The gathering concluded with a communion service. We stood in a large circle as leader, Elizabeth Soto Albrecht, reminded us that we are Christ's body and our labor is that of Christ's body. She reminded us that Christ's Spirit in us, and among us, is the One who takes our efforts and brings them alive. As the cup and the bread nourished our body, we said good-bye to one another and headed home. Being a body takes effort and I left feeling exhausted. But deeper than exhaustion, I felt wonderfully blessed to have worshiped and deliberated with those committed to Christ and his church!

From the PNMC Office

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and [Dove's Nest](#), a non-profit organization informally related to Mennonite Church USA, is pleased to offer useful materials for congregations. The kit includes an in depth resource list; a press release; a bulletin insert; information about child and youth protection policies; a Power Point file and a bulletin board flyer. Information is also included about the following two resources designed to assist congregations with protecting the children and youth in their care: "[Let the Children Come: Preparing Faith Communities to End Child Abuse and Neglect](#)," by Dr. Jeanette Harder, Herald Press, 2010, and "[Circle of Grace](#)," curriculum that helps educate children and youth about the value of positive relationships with God and others. Visit www.DovesNest.net to access the kit or contact Program Coordinator [Jon Stanton \(402\) 577-0866](#) if you have questions. Dove's Nest strives to offer assistance to Mennonite Church USA congregations on issues related to child and youth protection. *Your helpful feedback is welcome.*

Otoniel Soto, representative from our sister congregations in Northwest Mexico, will attend PNMC's Annual Meeting June 21-22. He will be available to speak in local churches for about 3 weeks around that time. If you are interested in inviting him to share at your congregation, contact [Simon Rendon](#) at (503) 472-0217.

PNMC CONGREGATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & MINISTRIES

Listed chronologically, then alphabetically by organization



Idaho Mennonite Relief Sale

The 2013 Idaho Mennonite World Relief Festival will be held **April 19-20** at the College Church of the Nazarene in Nampa. The Festival begins on Friday evening at 5:00 p.m. with supper and a concert featuring traditional African music supplied by Global Lounge. Shops and the Silent Auction will be open for sales while the quilts and live auction items will be available for preview. *Featured this year is a fully restored turn of the century surrey.* Saturday begins at 7:30 a.m. with breakfast. Children's activities begin at 9:30 followed by the opening of food booths at 10:00. A children's auction will start at 10:30. The live auction opens at 11:00. **Proceeds support Mennonite Central Committee projects worldwide.**

Mennonite Disaster Service

The MDS Oregon Unit has its annual meeting **Friday, April 5**, at Portland Mennonite Church (1312 SE 35th Ave.). Plan to be there at 6pm for dinner. The meeting will begin at 6:45 pm and will feature a recap of an eventful year for MDS. There will be an update on present needs for volunteers and the outlook for the rest of 2013. For details, call Bob Smith at [541-231-3875](tel:541-231-3875).

MENNONITE CHURCH USA & OTHER CHURCHWIDE AGENCIES

listed alphabetically by organization

Anabaptist Biblical Mennonite Seminary

A new **Master of Divinity program** will begin at AMBS in August and will provide options to study locally or from a distance.

[MDiv Connect](#), the distance option, includes online learning and brief visits to campus.

[MDiv Campus](#), for residential students, adds community living practices to the long-standing strengths of AMBS's program.

AMBS is eager to provide resources to new students who previously would not have been able to participate. *Also, former students who discontinued seminary may find the new distance option an opportunity to complete their studies.* [Program overview](#).

Mennonite Disaster Service

MDS is tackling the rebuilding lives in Crisfield, Maryland. In addition to the labor volunteers provide gutting and repairing homes, they also strive to give hope to survivors. Crisfield, with a staggering unemployment rate of more than 90%, is located in one of the poorest parts of the state. Even with MDS assistance, uncertainty about the future reigns in this maritime town, which was built on oystering. In its heyday, Crisfield's population rose to 24,000. In 1904, it was Maryland's second largest city, after Baltimore. Today it has 2,700 inhabitants. After oysters succumbed to overfishing and disease in the 1920s, blue crabs replaced them as the area's cash crop. Crisfield thrived on crabbing until pollution and overharvesting took their toll in the early 1990s. No major economic activity replaced shellfish, and Crisfield struggles to survive. Although oyster and crab populations are reviving, few people can make a livelihood solely on the water. Residents with skills and education seek employment elsewhere. Those who leave Crisfield leave behind the neediest and most vulnerable, including the elderly. Ken Wermuth, a contractor from Glen Allen, VA, has been serving as MDS project manager there since mid-January. He anticipates that work will continue into 2014. Visit www.mds.mennonite.net for details.

Mennonite Education Agency



After six years as its chair, James L. Rosenberger will step down and Malinda Berry has been appointed as chair-elect. Berry, an alum of Bethany Christian Schools, Goshen College and AMBS, is an instructor in theological studies and director of the master's program at Bethany Theological Seminary in Richmond, IN. "As my time on the MEA Board is coming to an end," said Rosenberger, "I'm heartened that one of our youngest board members has been selected. Malinda has a broad understanding of Mennonite education, is currently engaged in Anabaptist theological education, and brings a thoughtful approach to understanding how MEA can provide value to the educational mission of the church." Berry added, "If there is one thing my time on the Board has shown me, it is that the role our educational institutions play in the daily lives of U.S. Mennonites keeps changing. None of us can conduct business as our forerunners did. We are in a time when the task of MEA's staff, board and affiliated institutions is to offer *everyone* (including 'our' young people) a chance to encounter the Christian gospel mediated by the dynamic intellectual life of Anabaptism."

Mennonite Women

Remember co-facilitators Rhoda Keener and Carolyn Heggen in prayer as they continue to equip women for caring ministry through [Sister Care](#). They will meet with women in California **April 12-14** before heading to Bluffton, OH, **April 26-27**.

MennoMedia

Looking to expand your cookbook collection? Order before **May 8** to receive a 30% discount on all [cookbook titles](#)!

In Other News

Performance dates for the **Oregon Sacred Festival Chorale**, directed by Louie Lehman, are as follows:

Friday, May 3, 7 pm. First Assembly of God Church, 726 W. Oak, Lebanon, OR 97355

Sunday, May 5, 6 pm. Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1770 Baxter Road, Salem, OR 97306

Based on songs of hope and adoration, the repertoire includes classical music from the masters, hymns, spirituals and gospel song arrangements. Arrive early to enjoy an outstanding brass quintet performance for 20 minutes prior to each concert.

Upcoming e-Bulletins:

April 15 (submissions due by 4/8)

May 6 (submissions due by 4/29)

May 20 (submissions due by 5/13)

June 3 (submissions due by 5/27)

If you would like to contribute, please send a brief announcement in Spanish & English with website links to 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!*

For more PNMC updates: <http://pnmc.org> e-Bulletin Archives: <http://pnmc.org/Resources/eBulletin>