

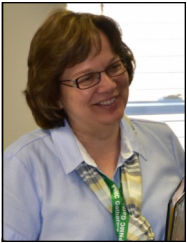
Evangel

the tri-annual newsletter of Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference

Autumn 2015

Volume 70, Number 2

By Katherine Jameson Pitts



It's been a long hot summer here in the Pacific Northwest. There are major forest fires burning in all of our states. Most of us have had days of breathing smoke and seeing an

orange sun through hazy clouds.

It's been a long hot summer for Mennonite Church USA as well. From our conference meeting in Lebanon, to the national meeting in Kansas City, to the pages of our magazines and postings on social media, Mennonite conversation has flared with tension and burned with passion. And there have been times when our vision has seemed obscured by haze.

But today my youngest daughter is heading back to college and rain is forecast for this evening. Summer is winding to a close. We remember again the rhythms of life -- that seasons change, that children grow, that we are all on a journey. We remember that conflict flares up and dies down, that tension rises and releases, that we fall and rise and fall again. And rise once more.

When I first read a draft of what became the "Resolution on Forbearance in the Midst of Differences" I thought "this is what PNMC is all about!" I did not see how controversial it might prove in our polarized times.

As I have gotten to know the various congregations and leaders in this conference, I have known PNMC as a place where *"While acknowledging different interpretations, we affirm the centrality of Jesus Christ and the authority of Scripture as an essential part of our collective discernment"*. And I know PNMC as a place where we *"offer grace, love and forbearance toward conferences, congregations, and pastors in our body who, in different ways, seek to be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ"*. We regularly live in the tension of seeking to be faithful in different ways. Many aspects of our church life -- in our understanding of our peace witness, in the calling of women to leadership, in our understanding of divorce and remarriage, in the ways we use our wealth and respond to the poor, in our practice of spiritual gifts, and yes, on matters related to same-sex covenanted unions. But still we keep coming back to our Lord Jesus Christ as the center of our shared faith and the testimony of Scripture as essential to that faith.

I often describe PNMC as *"a small conference of committed Mennonite Christians thinly scattered over a vast geography"*. That vast geography is sometimes a blessing giving us space to discover God's call in different ways in different places, but sometimes it is a hindrance, making it difficult to spend

time hearing one another's stories and gathering for worship and work together on a regular basis. That kind of time together, as God's people, apart from the conflicts of the day is something we need to nourish our faith and to remind us why we are committed to one another across the miles.

The Pastors Retreat, **November 3-5**, is one place where our stories can be shared among PNMC leaders. I encourage you to make it a priority for your pastor to attend this year. As we plan for the Conference Communications Council meeting on **January 9, 2016**, we are focusing on worshipping together and telling stories to strengthen our relationships. But these are not enough. I challenge you, this year, to find new ways to partner with other PNMC congregations. To plan times to sit face to face with

Continued on page 2...

Our Vision: Healing & Hope

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

In This Issue

Moderator's Notes	3
Salem Youth at MWC	4
Harold Hochstetler Tribute	5
EMU Student / ZMC VBS	6
Treasurer's Report	7
Church Connections	8
Calendar & Directory	9

Reflections from Our Executive Conference Minister

Continued from page 1...

leaders from other congregations and listen to one another. To dwell in the word together. To invite someone you don't know to worship with you. If you are not sure how to connect, please contact me. I believe that *"the Holy Spirit will be faithful in completing the good work being done within and through Mennonite Church USA"* and in PNMC. I don't believe God is finished with us yet! There are seeds getting ready to germinate in the scorched earth of our forests, and I believe there is new growth already unfolding among us even after the long hot summer.

Thanks be to God!

Follow [this link](#) to the forbearance resolution.

"Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" Luke 24:32



Lamps, representing each congregation, at the PNMC Annual Assembly in Lebanon.



"What a great blessing to host the annual gathering of the PNMC at Lebanon Mennonite!

One of the highlights for me as a pastor is to renew old acquaintances, to meet people new to our conference, and to hear the unfolding story of God's people. I also think being able to worship together is a futuristic glance of what 'fullness of life' holds for all Followers of Jesus.

-Brent Kauffman,
Lebanon Mennonite Church

Essential work takes place at our conference gatherings when folks join in a circle and engage in important conversations.

To view Don Bacher's entire collection of Annual Assembly photos, follow this [link](#).

Evangel is the tri-annual newsletter of Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference. Newsletter submissions, feedback and subscription information can be sent to: *Evangel* Editor brenda@pnmc.org or PO Box 301036, Portland, OR 97294

In an effort to be environmentally and fiscally responsible, this newsletter is issued electronically. If this creates difficulties, hard copies are available by request. The next deadline for submissions is October 20, 2015.

Grab a warm beverage and enjoy archived issues here: <http://www.pnmc.org/Resources/Evangel>.

Visit the [PNMC Facebook](#) page for photos and upcoming events.

**Pacific Northwest
Mennonite Conference**

Finding Hope

By Jennifer Delanty, Conference Moderator

I am feeling very hopeful in the wake of this year's PNMC's annual meeting, hosted by our Lebanon Mennonite Church brothers and sisters. This may sound strange given that the manner in which we engaged left many wondering what will become of our conference.

We were blessed to have our own Leo and Iris de León Hartshorn guiding us in Dwelling in the Word and the delegate process concerning same-gender attraction. Both did a marvelous job. Iris helped us put into visual form a snapshot of personal opinions regarding same-gender attraction. Our delegates bravely shared where they stand. The dot matrix posted on the walls of the room showed what many of us have long known: we are not of common mind across our conference on this particular issue. And days later, the United States Supreme Court legalized gay marriage nationally.

Our delegate session room buzzed as we gazed at the feedback. Some noted this has been one of PNMC's strengths, a witness to the rest of our denomination that we can "hang together" amidst our differences. CIHAN, our Hispanic constituency group, declared they are forming a commission to study this information and discern their next steps regarding continuing membership in our conference. This saddened some out of fear they would lose relationship with PNMC sisters and brothers. But each congregation in PNMC is free (and encouraged) to undertake this discernment.

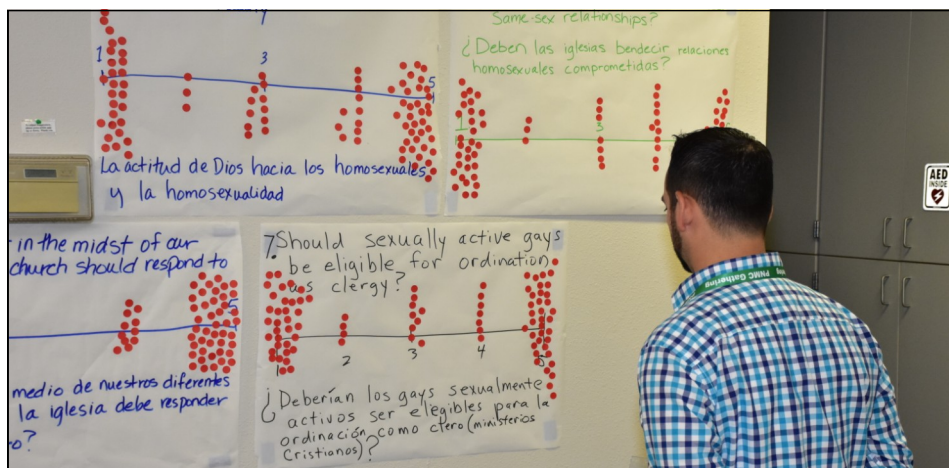
This is where my hope lies: the outcome of what your congregation discerns will be blessed by the Holy Spirit as you listen and pray together for God's leading. **We are all helped by our faith in Jesus!** I want you to know I trust your congregational process, whether you affirm your membership in PNMC and Mennonite Church USA, or decide to withdraw out of a calling to a different path. Whether or not your congregation undertakes this process, know my prayers are with all of you, for *you are us* -- and I am grateful to be *us* with you.

Following our Lebanon conference, Katherine Pitts, Samuel Moran, and I served as PNMC delegates at the subsequent Mennonite Church USA convention in Kansas City. I was very happy to find so many PNMC volunteers and delegates throughout the week, friendly faces in a sea of many, many Mennonites. The delegate sessions were very long and intense but I was grateful to be part of them, too. Amongst other resolutions, we passed forbearing with each other and keeping

the membership guidelines in place for four years. Will this be sufficient to keep us in relationship? I for one hope so.

My delegate table was made up of a diverse group of people who genuinely cared and listened to each other. It was **grace in action** when I saw a young conservative male pastor and middle-aged female inclusive pastor embrace after sharing their differing perspectives. The young pastor later said, "I left that [delegate] table able to call and see you all not only as friends, but also as brothers and sisters. Although we are clearly at different places, I am not ready to say as some who hold to a conservative stance like mine that we are not brothers and sisters in Christ. ... I believe your love and response to be the faithful and steadfast love of Christ is at work in you. ... I do hope that the Lord brings us together again."

This too, dear sisters and brothers, is my unfettered prayer. I do hope the Lord brings us together again. *May you find grace and the peace of Christ in this season of our common life.*



*Lebanon Mennonite Church
is grateful for the opportunity
to have hosted the
PNMC Annual Meeting.*

*While the delegate meetings focused on one
topic, evoking a range of thoughts and
emotions, it was a powerful testimony to the
love of Jesus to see how members from
congregations across the pacific northwest
could stand side-by-side and worship our
Risen Lord as one body.*

*-Mark Diller,
Lebanon Mennonite Church*



Walking with God, Reflections of a Youth Pastor

By Brice Larson, of Salem Mennonite Church

This summer eight high school youth, myself, and a chaperone made the trip to Mennonite World Conference in Harrisburg, PA. The conference theme was “walking with God.”

When I reflect on walking with God, a couple models come to mind. The first comes from the first chapters of Scripture where Eve and Adam walk with God in the Garden. This sort of walking is not purposeful. It is not a journey. Instead, it's simply taking pleasure in the richness of creation, of one another, and of the presence of the Living God. This, I confess, is my favorite kind of walking.

The second model comes from the Exodus. God called the people of Israel out of Egypt and they, with much grumbling, followed God through the desert. In the same way, we walk with God together out of broken selves, families, and world systems as we journey toward Shalom. This journey is not always pleasant and I often find myself grumbling that I was better off before the journey started with at least as much gusto as the Hebrew people of Scripture.

A third model can be found in the disciples extended internship with Jesus in the gospels. Here, the disciples are not only called out of their old ways of being, they are called to participate in the redemptive work of God in Christ. In the same way, God invites us to partner with both God's work and with one another in the healing of our neighbors, our neighborhoods, our cultures, and our earth. Of course, joining God in this work hardly means that we always know what God is up to. Like the disciples, we might mistake allies for enemies (Mark 9:38-41) or fall into arguments that betray our lack of understanding in of what Jesus is all about (Matthew 18:1-5). Often, walking with God together means reorganizing our priorities and taking off the lenses we use to judge one another.

As I reflect on our little group's time in Pennsylvania, I see bits of all three of these models for walking with God together. If you ask any of our youth about what they appreciated most about the conference, I am confident one of the first things they would mention would be the music. There were times as the last measures of a song played themselves out that we could feel our souls

being nourished by rhythm, harmony, and the power they have to draw people of different languages and cultures together in worship.

I also found our times of group reflection in the dorms after the day's activities to be rich times of enjoying a sense of community with one another and with God. Each person would share the conversations, songs, and experience that had brought them life that day and talk through the things that they felt had taken life from them. As a contemplative, I particularly appreciated the nights when everyone was too tired to want to leave after we'd offered our experiences to God and the whole group lingered in that space of prayer and sharing.

Of course, our time walking with God together was not all pleasurable meanderings beside still waters. We are also called to continue the difficult journey out of our own “Egypt.” These journeys can be made even more difficult when we discover that Egypt is not somewhere out in the world, but inside us. I was reminded of this difficulty when I attended a workshop that dealt with the Mennonite church's relationship with the Native peoples of North America. History reminds us that the rich farmlands many Mennonites settled in the “New World” were taken from Native communities by treaties that were not kept or, in many cases, by force. It also reminds us of our participation in Indian boarding schools where Native children were stripped of culture and identity. Unfortunately, the unjust swindling and conquering of lands that found their way into our hands and the war against Native identity waged in compulsory boarding schools are only parts of larger patterns of exploitation embedded in our history. Walking together with the God of the Exodus means exposing these patterns to the harsh light of the desert and setting off together for the land of Shalom where honor replaces fear and exploitation, and where the abuse of power is undermined by authentic mutuality.

Sometimes, walking with God means finding out that, just as Jesus' disciples never really figured out what he was all about despite following him to and fro across the Galilean countryside for a couple years, so we often struggle to see what exactly God is doing with our own

communities of Jesus followers. This is particularly true when we find that the people we are walking alongside do not share our convictions. I found myself reflecting on this truth when our little group found itself in disagreement as some members chose to advocate for the LGBTQ community in our churches and at least one strongly disagreed with that decision. What happened next was truly remarkable. **The youth talked about it.** They looked each other in the eye and allowed themselves to feel the depth of the disagreement within their community. Then, without anyone having to prove that they were “right,” they **kept walking with God together.** I believe they came to know one another more authentically in the process.

I don't want this little story to trivialize the depth of the conflict that we face. I don't want it to keep us from considering how “conservative” churches might be experienced as making many LGBTQ individuals feel dirty, unwanted, and unloved by telling them they are acceptable to neither God nor their community. I don't want it to keep us from understanding how “liberals” might be experienced as making “conservatives” feel misrepresented, judged, or silenced by seizing the moral high ground and using it to dismiss their neighbors as hateful. I certainly do not want to fail to acknowledge the depth of our convictions about the truth of Scripture and the love and acceptance of Jesus. I suppose what I do hope is that we, like our youth, might find a way to bring this conflict into the open, recognize the depth of our disagreement, and still walk with God together a little further.

Perhaps I'm being naïve, but I believe that the unity we experienced in Harrisburg as people from of different cultures, languages, and convictions from around our world were drawn together in worship by our **shared commitment to Christ** was as real as the conflicts that divide us. I believe that we are still invited to amble together through gardens of simply enjoying one another's company. I believe that we are still invited to journey together through difficult deserts of exodus, repentance, and restoring community. And I believe that when we, like the disciples, find ourselves in places of disagreement and conflict, the most important thing remains the simple fact that we are still walking with Jesus. *Together.*

Honoring Harold Hochstetler

By Meghan Good,
Pastor of Albany Mennonite Church,

Harold Hochstetler and I first met in February of 1987. Harold was presiding over the ordination of an ornery 20-something in his first pastorate. That young pastor, whose call to ministry had been discerned at Harold's side over the preceding months, was my father. Probably nobody present that day would've guessed that the two-year-old girl-child toddling beneath the conference minister's feet would be his own pastor at the end of his life. God clearly has a sense of humor.

I mention this bit of history because, most of the time, when I have the privilege of standing in this pulpit to honor someone's life, I am reflecting primarily from my experience as their pastor. But my relationship with Harold has always been a bit more complicated. I was blessed by the exceptional openness with which Harold welcomed my ministry to him. (*The image of him at 90 years old, madly scribbling notes during my Bible studies, will stay in my mind.*) But I am also one of the countless people impacted by Harold's own ministry. I think it would be fair to say that Harold was always much more than a pastor, but he was never less. The deep thoughtfulness and the nurturing spirit that grounded his formal ministry continued to mark his character to the last days of his life. It was simply who he was.

Harold's grace, wisdom, and kindness are almost legendary. You can sense them in the stories told by his family. They left an impression on my father as a young adult that he recalls clearly almost 30 years later. Many members of this community have told me through the years how they looked to Harold and Lydia as key models of aging gracefully and faithfully.

About a year ago I visited Harold and Lydia after they'd received some tough health reports. I asked Harold how he was feeling about the news, and he replied, "Well, we try to learn what we can from these things. You only get old once, you know." This statement made such an impression I rushed to my car and wrote it down. My seminary professor used to say, "Wisdom isn't the product of experience but reflection

on experience, which is probably why so few people ever get it." One of the things I most admired about Harold was the way he was constantly mining the depths of experience, searching for deeper truths.

Many who knew Harold at different stages of life have mentioned how much he valued good, hard questions as well as how forward-looking he was. Fledgling seminarians are often warned about the hazards of crotchety retired pastors in churches who undermine leadership and resent all change. Harold was precisely the opposite. **He was constantly peering around the corner, watching for the next thing God would do.** I was often startled by his astute insights about the church, past and present, and his faith that the best wasn't past, that the Spirit had more still to do. In a time of great stress and anxiety across the church, he continued to believe in the future, in the next generation, and the God who went ahead. I experienced Harold as an almost relentless encourager for the next generation of leadership and gentle agitator for the next great Wind of God. His talk about the church was marked not by the dread and despair so often heard but by patience, acceptance, and openness. He was a humble and gracious a follower as he was a leader and, one pastor to another, that is one of the highest compliments I know how to give.

Priest and author Richard Rohr often speaks about the indispensable role of "true elders" in Christian community. True elders, he says, lower the anxiety of the system by witnessing to younger generations about the "okayness" of it all. They have learned to be at peace in tensions the rest of us can't stand. They have seen enough to say with authority "it will work out because God is always faithful." Rohr notes that true, mature elders are increasingly rare in a time when most people resist growing up. There is no doubt that in Harold, we have known one. In the last year of his life, when the arthritis in his neck grew severe, I would often sit at Harold's feet during my visits so he could see me better. It strikes me now what an appropriate act this was, as in biblical times, sitting at someone's feet was the posture of a disciple.

The last time I spoke to Harold was the night before he died. We talked about the future of the church, which doesn't always seem so clear today. We talked

about the veil of death his beloved Lydia had passed beyond, and the pain not being able to see our way through it. We confessed all we didn't know about what the future holds. But the last words I heard Harold speak were words of gratitude. Gratitude that God is raising up leaders for the next age of the church. Gratitude that God is holding Lydia's life and his own toward some new chapter.

Today's passage from 1 John 2:8-3:3 reflects, Harold-style, on some of the great (and unanswerable) questions of faith. We don't know what we will someday be. We don't know what the church will become. We don't know exactly what lies on the other side of death. We don't really even know what lies on the other side of this present day of life.

But there are a few things we do know. We know we are God's children, dearly loved. We know we will see Christ with our own eyes. We know when we do we will be transformed to be like him. We know that someday, we as Christ's people will stand together before him without fear or need of shame. This is our confidence in our asking, and waiting, and hoping.

In his Bible, Harold's family found a few scraps of paper with notes on them. On top of one he'd written a verse from Rev. 3: "I have set before you an open door." Underneath he had outlined a mission: to get through the open door. And ever the pastor, he had then recorded a list of 4 things he considered essential duties of a pastor: (1) to teach and correct with longsuffering; (2) to tend God's flock; (3) to study Scripture deeply; (4) to set example by following the example of Christ. By all accounts, this is an accurate representation not just of Harold's ministry but of his entire life. On the back of the page he'd written just a few words: "Reward: 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' Enter the open door."

I know we here today are not the ones Harold was waiting to hear these precious words from. But still, for what it's worth, from earth to the ears of heaven, I find this is exactly what I want to say on behalf of all of us: "Well done, good and faithful servant of God. May your entrance through that open door bring you more joy than you possibly could have imagined."

EMU Student Reflects on New Situations

When people would find that I'm not from Virginia, I would tell them I was from "Oregon, which is by California," because most people know where California is. And then we had something to talk about right from the start, because with my seven-hour flight [from California to Virginia], we had travelled about the same distance to get to SPI, [*Summer Peacebuilding Institute at Eastern Mennonite University*](#).

I was on my cross-cultural semester to the Middle East in the spring before SPI, so I really hoped that SPI would help with the transition back to the U.S. and to campus. And it did. At SPI, there was first a professor from Palestine and then later a woman from Jerusalem. Talking to them, it was amazing how familiar they felt, even though I didn't know them personally. The woman from Jerusalem knew the people in the town I stayed in during my cross-cultural. She knew my host family and the places we visited, and that was really helpful.

One thing that struck me was that these people have all accomplished a lot, yet when coming into a new situation, they all have fears ... **they're all new here and vulnerable**. But they all found ways to relate beyond language and culture, especially I think because they are people striving for the same common goals.

It can be overwhelming to learn about so many issues that need work, but it's inspiring seeing people working in these areas. Many are coming to the US for the first time, and English isn't their first language, and they are struggling, but because they're so passionate about what they're working for, they're willing to cross all those spaces to learn skills to help bring peace.



Bethany Hockman-Chupp, a junior psychology major with minors in art and theater, is from Canby, OR and attends Zion Mennonite Church. Bethany spent last year as a community assistant in Residential Life on campus and also worked several summers at Drift Creek Camp on the Oregon coast: in both positions, she helped to acclimate sometimes disoriented and bewildered newcomers. Bethany plans to pursue a degree in counseling, with the goal of specializing in art therapy with children who have experienced trauma in foster care and adoption.

Zion's VBS Program Supports Mennonite Organizations

By Jana Gingerich

What a great week Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, OR, experienced welcoming children to annual Vacation Bible School, July 26-30. This summer's theme was: Exodus: the Great Escape; Average attendance was 115 children; DCC campships awarded -103; Number of families reached: 88; Offering total for Burkina Faso Young Women's Seminar: \$1,139.02. Participants gave generously for such a seminar when Becky Swora, a former missionary to Burkina Faso, explained the need for it. It also helped that, in the last three evenings of VBS, we were graced with the presence of Pastor Fabeadama Traoré, from that very country, visiting with us after the Mennonite World Conference assembly. He taught and led a children's song in the language of Jula, which our talented musicians learned and played on the spot, and told West African folktales with spiritual lessons that related to the theme of the week.

Another activity included completing MCC Relief Kits. This wonderful outreach could not happen without the tireless dedication of 70 plus volunteers from Zion and additional young people from our community who have attended DCC!



Halle Steingass, (Center) of Bluffton, OH, is a Social Work major at Goshen College. Halle participated in Goshen's Ministry Inquiry Program which allowed her to spend 10 weeks in Oregon this summer interning at Zion Mennonite Church. Her responsibilities included preaching one sermon, helping with youth group activities, attending commission meetings, helping with and doing visitation, attending regional district conference, serving at DCC one week, plus serving with Zion's local ministry partners, such as The Canby Center and Bridging Cultures.

Women discussing theology: Look for meetings being scheduled soon. The desire for a women's group to discuss theology grew out of table conversations at the Oregon Mennonite Women's Retreat. The hope is for women from around the conference to consider participating as well. The intent is that these gatherings to be a safe place to share varying perspectives. Want to know more, talk with [*Rose Marie Zook Barber*](#), [*Juel Yoder Russell*](#), or [*Pat Hershberger*](#).



Treasurer's Report, *By Brett Tieszen, PNMC Treasurer*

Feb-August 2015	Actual	Budget	Difference	Percent
Church Contributions	\$ 64,931.70	\$ 74,160.00	\$ (9,228.30)	87.56%
Other Income	\$ 37,510.68	\$ 38,691.13	\$ (1,180.45)	96.95%
Total Income	\$102,442.38	\$ 112,851.13	\$ (10,408.75)	90.78%
Total Expenses	\$ 120,407.64	\$ 125,156.00	\$ (4,748.36)	96.21%
Net Income	\$ (17,965.26)	\$ (12,304.87)	\$ (5,660.39)	146.00%
Designated Contributions	\$ 2,175.00			

SOUL CAKE, a women's a cappella ensemble from Corvallis Mennonite Fellowship (CMF), includes Erin Bontrager, Hannah Field, Jaqui Eicher and Ellie Smith. The four performed at the South Valley Picnic in July which helped raise \$7,278 for Water Projects for MCC.

CMF's Convention Reflections

By Christine van Belle

Upon arriving in Kansas City, we headed to the most important tour stop of the week: Kansas City BBQ at Jack Stack's. After stuffing ourselves and licking our fingers, we headed to convention. Here are a few reflections on our experience.

The speakers: The speakers pivoted talks around **Luke 24**. The students unanimously spoke very highly of Pastor Cyneatha Milsaps. She seemed to speak from an authentic place as she described the women who went looking for Jesus in the empty tomb. She wondered aloud with us how we might engage in similar behavior—*looking for life in places where there are only empty tombs*. She challenged us to stop returning to places that offer nothing and start looking to the One who points the way to real Life. As I listened to the youth share how they were moved by her, I was struck that they connected so deeply with a speaker so different than them. Pastor Milsaps is an African American woman with 7 children and 19 grandchildren. The youth I attended convention with seemed to have little in common with her. But her clear grasp of Jesus' story and what his story might mean for each of us created an intimate bridge between her and all her listeners.

The Singing: The singing was described as a high and a low. One commented on how powerful it was to see so many praising God. But some grumbled about the loud, repetitive and unfamiliar songs. We are more accustomed to hymn singing at Corvallis Mennonite Fellowship. But we encouraged the kids to be open to different worship experiences. I described it like being at a buffet table; *taste a bit of everything and you might find some new tastes surprisingly agreeable*.

I heard Glen Guyton, Chief Operating Officer, speak in a breakout session. He reported that the primary convention complaint is the music. "People say they want to worship with music like they hear at home," he said. "*But what home should I choose?*" A diverse crowd attends the Mennonite conventions and people are used to different styles. Some have worship bands, others are dedicated to hymn singing, while some sing in a gospel style. The choice was made to have many styles represented in each session. Hearing the strategy helped us appreciate the worship even more. We sang with gusto on songs we knew and worked on holding ourselves open during unfamiliar tunes.

The breakout sessions: There were many seminars the youth could attend. All manner of topics were addressed—*faith and science, prayer, pacifism, organizing your room, selecting a college, the transforming power of Jesus and more*. In addition to attending seminars, the youth participated in a Learning Experience called the Anabaptist Game. The Anabaptist Game lacks definition—*nothing has been done like this before at convention*—to some degree it was a form of Live Action Role Play. The kids were told that it was the mid-1500s and they were young Anabaptists. Their mission was to move between safe houses stationed all over the convention center. At each safe house, they would meet actors representing past and current day Christians who were either killed for their faith or experiencing suffering because of their commitment to Jesus. They told their stories to the kids who made it to their locations. As the kids roved actors playing the role of police hunted the Anabaptists and threw them in jail. The

CMF kids reported that they were quickly arrested and put on trial. They were brought to a mock courtroom and one student was chosen to represent the group. That student was coached by another actor who represented the "Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit guided the kids through the trial even into another room where a make-shift dungeon awaited them. The experience was great fun, but it was also poignant as they heard real life stories of people who followed Jesus, often to the very end of their lives.

Other Mennonites: Ours is a small congregation—*about 70-80 people gather on a given Sunday*. There are only 6 in the youth group. They all attend public school. Given this life experience, our teens were amazed to see so many others who were Mennonites. **There was a feeling of not being alone.** This prompted brainstorming how we might connect more meaningfully with youth from other parts of the country at the next convention. Given the size of the gathering, it was difficult to create intimate connections with other groups, other than just eyeing each other in the worship sessions. We are still talking about this. All in all, the high school students reported having had a very positive convention experience. Several of them already have their eye on Orlando. My own personal hope was that the high schoolers would walk away with a deeper connection to our Lord and have a broader, more complex view of what it means to be a Mennonite. And from what I hear, I think both aims were achieved.

Stories from Seattle

By Jonathan Neufeld, Pastor of Community Ministries at Seattle Mennonite Church



This past May, Seattle Mennonite celebrated the ‘new’ God’s Lil’ Acre (GLA)! For 8 years, Seattle Mennonite Church along with many neighborhood partners, has offered companionship and stabilization to people experiencing homelessness in Lake City. Laundry, showers, personal storage, community kitchen and other supportive opportunities have made GLA a critical place for healing and recovery. The ‘new’ is that together with Community Psychiatric Clinic, Seattle Mennonite has seen the construction of 21 units of HUD-funded permanent supportive housing for US military veterans next door to the church, with a new 1400 sq/ft drop-in center on the main floor of the apartment building. Seattle Mennonite sold land to the Psychiatric Clinic to build the Valor Apartments, and used the money from the sale, alongside

grants, donations and volunteer labor (over 1000 hours!) to complete the new day center. Since May 1st, community members have been enjoying the space that has been designed with their daily routines in mind. SMC is grateful for all the people who invested in this 4 year journey from idea to finished building.



Megan Ramer, pictured left, joined the ministry team of Seattle Mennonite Church as Lead Pastor in early September, after a decade of pastoral ministry in Chicago. A graduate of Iliff School of Theology in Denver, CO, and Goshen College before that, in between she lived (and milked cows!) in Germany and Switzerland for one year through the Intermenno Trainee Program and spent three glorious years living in Seattle, exploring all the beauty the city and its surrounding natural landscapes have to offer. Having grown up in Wakarusa, IN (population 1500) and having made Chicago home for the past 10 years (population 2.7 million), Megan has experienced the joys and struggles of both small town and big city living. She is excited to be back in the Pacific Northwest, and eager to bring her passions for worship and preaching, pastoral care, and building collaborative connections within the city and across the wider Mennonite church to the SMC pastoral team. Reading and hiking are some of her favorite restorative activities. She also enjoys making baby quilts, going to concerts, frequenting the theatre to see her actor husband, Jon Stutzman, perform, and going on traveling adventures both large and small.



Goshen College students, including Nate O’Leary, (left) a sophomore molecular biology and biochemistry major from Seattle, WA, are working with Andy Ammons (center), associate professor of biology. Within bee communities, there is a specific behavior called “drifting,”

when bees enter the wrong hive or end up in the wrong location after having been collecting food for a while. This behavior can lead to colonies dying off, so the goal for students Genis (right) and O’Leary is to minimize this behavior.

Matthew Shedden departed Lebanon Mennonite Church to become lead pastor in Glenwood Springs, CO, August 16, 2015.

Rachel Ringenberg-Miller left Portland Mennonite Church to become a lead pastor in Newton, Kansas on August 31, 2015.

Brie Kruger started as Transitional Community Life Coordinator at Portland Mennonite Church in September 2015.

Megan Ramer joined the pastoral team as lead pastor at Seattle Mennonite Church on September 8, 2015.

**PNMC
Ministerial Updates**

PNMC Board of Directors

Jennifer Delanty
Moderator, 2016

Samuel Moran
Mod-Elect, 2016

Tom Brenneman
Secretary, 2018

Brett Tieszen
Treasurer, 2017

Nelly Ascencio
CIHAN, 2016

Kathleen Aeschliman
At-Large, 2019

Sarah Hooley
At-Large, 2016

Todd Lehman
At-Large, 2018

Matthew Yoder
At-Large, 2017

Jack Swaim
At-Large, 2016



Find us on
Facebook - click the
above icon.

PNMC Staff

Katherine J. Pitts
Exec. Conf Minister
kjpitts@pnmc.org
P: 503-349-5420

Barbara Buxman
Admin Assistant
office@pnmc.org
P: 888/492-4216

Brenda Kauffman,
Communications, Editor
brenda@pnmc.org
W/H: 503/921-5866

PNMC District Pastors

Wendell Amstutz: Jerusalén Iglesia Menonita, Ministerios Restauración, Iglesia Menonita Pentecostés, Warden Mennonite

Victor Vargas: Centro Cristiano Pentecostés, Comunidad Cristiana de Vida Nueva, Iglesia Menonita Roca de Salvación

Dave Stutzman: Corvallis Mennonite, Lebanon Mennonite, Logsden Neighborhood Church, First Mennonite of McMinnville

Gary Jewell: Evergreen Mennonite, Hyde Park Mennonite, Menno Mennonite, Prince of Peace Mennonite, Seattle Mennonite

Brent Kauffman: Albany Mennonite, Bend Mennonite, River of Life Fellowship

Al Lind: Calvary Mennonite, Eugene Mennonite, Pacific Covenant Mennonite, Portland Mennonite

Bob Buxman: Salem Mennonite, Zion Mennonite

Cecil Miller: Mt. View Mennonite, Shalom Church, Spring Valley Mennonite

Renee Johns: Emmaus Christian Fellowship, Evergreen Heights Mennonite, Filer Mennonite

Rose Marie Zook Barber: Anawim Christian Community, International Bethel City Church

Tim Gascho: First Mennonite of Aberdeen

Unassigned: Western Mennonite Church, Menno Meeting (SLC)

Our Mission Statement is to:

Promote personal spiritual development,

Nurture healthy congregations,

Make strong connections, and

Call each other to fulfill God's purpose for the world.

PNMC CALENDAR OF EVENTS*

October 2-3, *Mennonite Country Auction*, Ritzville, WA

October 9-10, *Oregon Festival for World Relief*, Albany, OR

October 15-18, *Fall Quilt and Scrapbook Retreat*, Drift Creek Camp, Lincoln City, OR

October 23-24, *Mushroom Workshop*, Drift Creek Camp, Lincoln City, OR

October 18, *Fall PNMHS Workshop, Your Story Matters*, Kropf Heritage Center, Hubbard, OR

Nov. 3-5, *PNMC Pastor's Retreat*, Menucha Retreat Center, Corbett, OR

Nov. 13-15, *Annual Members' Meeting*, Drift Creek Camp, Lincoln City

January 9, *Conference Communications Council Meeting*, Salem Mennonite Church, Salem, OR

April 15-16, *Idaho Mennonite World Relief Festival*, Boise, ID

June 24-25, *PNMC Annual Assembly*, Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, OR

* Details for the events above can be found on the PNMC Calendar (pnmc.org/Calendar) or in archived e-Bulletins (pnmc.org/Resources/eBulletin).

The PNMC e-Bulletin is distributed bi-monthly and includes information about PNMC and church wide agencies. To subscribe, send an email to brenda@pnmc.org with "Subscribe e-Bulletin" in the subject line.



Pacific Northwest
Mennonite
Conference

PNMC Conference Office

PO Box 301036, Portland, OR, 97294

T: 888.492.4216

Frequently updated, bookmark this page:

<http://www.pnmc.org/>