

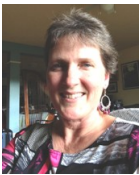
Evangel

the tri-annual newsletter of Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference

Winter 2015

Volume 70, Number 3

-By Jennifer Delanty, PNMC Moderator



My life started big -- 10 hefty pounds at Sacred Heart Hospital in Eugene, OR. Many decades and pounds later, I am still big, size extra-large to be exact.

Perhaps that's why I was destined to serve as Moderator of this big Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference. Our geographic range encompasses six big states, including Alaska, the biggest of all! Bigness becomes us.

When I was a teenager, my father and I hiked up to Angel's Rest near Larch Mountain. Upon reaching the promontory, we turned to survey the grandeur of the Columbia River Gorge the elevation gain provided. "It's hard to believe Heaven will be even greater than this," I remarked to Dad. Our remarkable Creator fashioned all of this for us, and much, much more. God is in the magnificent vistas and microbial plankton, flinging the stars across the cosmos and birthing a tiny Child to redeem us all.

Now in our Advent rhythms and year-end rituals, it is undeniable 2015 has been a challenging year for our national denomination. As congregations and conferences announce their pending departures, there is

significant anguish. The largeness we have known is surely diminishing.

PNMC is also in pain. A few of our congregations are indicating they will eventually withdraw from our conference. As we ponder our collective identity, please join our Board in prayer for all our congregations that make up the constellation of PNMC.

The recent resignation of Pastor Samuel Moran, our Moderator-Elect affirmed by delegates in 2014, is a costly loss for PNMC. Prior to his departure, Pastor Moran provided dedicated leadership to our Board and conference with his wisdom and gifts of teaching and discernment. We respect and accept his decision, and he is dearly missed.

Our longtime Board member, Jack Swaim, has been appointed to complete the Moderator-Elect term, which concludes in June. Jack will serve as Moderator for the upcoming 2016-18 term. A member of Hyde Park Mennonite Fellowship in Boise, Jack brings a wealth of non-profit board and corporate experience to this new opportunity. Our Board has high confidence Jack will provide the leadership PNMC needs for this upcoming term.

For those planning to attend the **January 9th Conference Communications Council** meeting at Salem Mennonite Church, please welcome our new Moderator-Elect.

MC USA is changing, and PNMC is changing, too. But we celebrate and worship God undiminished, God bigger than our imaginations can comprehend or divisions can divide. Our congregational number may reduce, but our bigness of heart, generosity of spirit, quantum kindness and unfettered love for Christ must remain undiminished.

Bigness becomes us. May the same sweet mercy Jesus lavished into our overflowing cups continue to captivate and pull us into the magnificent work that brings the Incarnate ever closer. And may God's will be done in your lives, your congregation, and PNMC!

In This Issue

Peacemaker Tour	2
Family Choices	3
MCC Material Resource Report	4
Pastors' Retreat / EMU Award	5
Treasurer's Report	6
Calendar & Directory	7

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.

Raw Tools Peacemaker Tour Visits Seattle

By Deren Kellogg, *Seattle Mennonite Church*

On November 19, I was privileged to see a literal representation of this passage (right) at a ceremony held at Queen Anne United Methodist Church in Seattle. Raw Tools is an organization dedicated to opposing gun violence by acting out the vision shared by the writers of the books of Isaiah and Micah. One of the ways that they do this is to **transform guns into garden tools**. On a chilly evening I sat with several dozen other people in a church sanctuary while, outside, blacksmiths used a portable forge to transform a weapon of destruction into an implement of life and growth. The other attendees and I watched the progress of the transformation on a video screen while singing hymns, hearing songs from local songwriters, viewing representations of peace from local artists, reciting liturgy, and listening to pastors and victims of gun violence speak about peace and reconciliation. At the end of the ceremony, we all went outside to view the newly forged tool.

The speakers, musicians, and artists were challenging because they reminded us all that we are living in a world that cries for peace on many different levels. Of course, international violence has been prominent in the news, and in political discourse, lately, as has violence in our public spaces, often perpetrated with official sanction. To be reminded of the scope of these challenges is often sobering, but I felt hope in the presence of so many dedicated people working toward peace and reconciliation. I was

“THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR
SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES
AND THEIR SPEARS INTO
PRUNING HOOKS. NATION
SHALL NOT LIFT UP SWORD
AGAINST NATION: NEITHER
SHALL THEY LEARN WAR
ANY MORE.”

ISAIAH 2:4 & MICAH 4:3



also touched by the opportunity to write on a small piece of flash-paper an aspect of my own life where I felt that I had “taken up a sword”. At the end of the ceremony, the attendees were encouraged to burn these pieces of paper in a candle flame, as a symbol of

our desires to bring peace to our own relationships.

It is easy for me to (inaccurately) deny complicity in the violence perpetrated abroad and in our neighborhoods, less easy perhaps to deal with a lack of peace in my own life and relationships. The ceremony was effective in reminding me of Christ’s call to us all to be **peacemakers**; and gave me energy to put forth greater efforts to live out that calling. In that sense, I truly felt the presence of the Spirit that evening.

The timing of this stop on Raw Tools’ Peacemaker Tour, which is sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee, was perfect. As a reaffirmation of our commitment to peace, reconciliation, and non-violent justice, it was incredibly timely in the face of recent instances of horrifying violence in several places in the world. It was also a perfect way to start the Advent season, because it encapsulated the season’s message of **hope and reconciliation for a fallen world**. I found the experience of this ceremony incredibly moving and meaningful, and, leaving the ceremony, felt a sense of hope and renewal.



To learn more, visit:
www.rawtools.org

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 February 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**

One Family's Season: *Opting Out of Sports*

By Cynthia Hockman-Chupp, Zion Mennonite Church



For the past 18 years, fall Saturdays have been predictable in our family. From the time our oldest was seven, most weekends could be found on the soccer field. With multiple kids playing, it wasn't unusual to find our family split—with one adult taking a child to a game while the other took another child in a different direction. Some days we needed grandparents to help make all the connections. Although I hesitate to even guess, with five kids, it's likely that we've attended a couple hundred games over the years and transported kids to three times that many practices.

This fall, with only two children left at home, we contemplated what to do. Both boys have always played soccer, but we knew that another year's commitment would mean another season of our family split in opposite directions. After a great deal of thought, we decided to opt out of organized sports this fall. With most of the season behind us, all four of us agree that it's one of the best family decisions we've ever made. My only regret? That we didn't do it sooner. We've found the numerous benefits both rewarding and surprising.

Free Play—This fall, instead of going to practices and games after school, the boys have invited neighborhood kids to play. Our backyard often fills with kids, running, climbing, yelling, inventing, and imagining. No adults manage the play; rather kids negotiate the agenda and, more often than not, the rules. On the nights when neighbors are unavailable, brothers play, help make dinner, practice instruments or enjoy family time. This fall we read books aloud, watched episodes of *Little House on the Prairie*, played board games; activities that would have suffered from time crunch had the boys been committed to fall sports. Recently, one child's prayer began, "Dear God. Thank you that we get to start *Anne of Avonlea* tomorrow."

Culture for Service—Sports, *often fairly rigid in participation requirements and obligations*, create schedule conflicts when it comes

to family service. We haven't always done a good job instilling the motto of my alma mater, Goshen College: "Culture for Service." It's been more like a culture of kids and teams and competition. And trash. Team soccer requirements for little kids include juice boxes and snack packs.

This fall, without a team commitment, we've been free to participate in other endeavors. For the first time, we attended a Bridging Cultures picnic in our community, eating beans, rice and hamburgers, with a Mariachi band playing in the background as we sipped Horchata and chatted with new friends and old, sometimes with rusty Spanish.

And although we've always made it a priority—skipping soccer to do so—this year we could attend the MCC Festival, guilt-free. The boys enjoyed helping their aunt and uncle sort dozens of boxes of reading material for the book sale the day before the auction. That night they relished a special time of Chinese food, games and a sleepover, before waking up early to partake the MCC French toast breakfast and get first dibs on the baked goods, apple cider, and peppernuts. One boy gained experience in customer service, making change at the sausage booth.

And finally, rather than stressing about missing the last game of the season, we enjoyed Drift Creek Camp's Annual Meeting, complete with rounds of ping-pong, carpet ball, and treks through the old growth forest. **The fall has been rich.** I think the boys would agree with the words of Francis of Assisi, "For it is in giving that we receive." And receive. *How fortunate our family has been.*

Balance in Family Life—I sometimes wonder how things can change so much in such a short time. When my husband and I were kids, we played a handful of sports, but they didn't begin until upper elementary or early middle school (in contrast to how our kids started in primary school), nor did they take a commitment on the part of the whole family. I don't remember my parents ever coming to watch one of my tennis matches, nor do I remember caring. Yet in our family, with 16 years between siblings, on any given evening or weekend, all of our attention would turn to just a

small percentage of our family: those playing sports. We'd drop everything and focus on the individual. Inevitably, that meant dragging along an uninterested party. Although it was a last resort, I confess to occasionally handing a child an electronic device so I could focus on the game—not exactly a stellar picture of family togetherness. Or parenting.

This fall, we rediscovered balance. Suddenly, family life—our ability to do something together—did not revolve around weeknight practices or depend on one small child's middle-of-a-Saturday game. Our evenings and weekends, once committed to exercise for only a kid or two, now include exercise for the entire family as we hike or bike. We've explored new trails, even adding an enthusiastic dog on occasion. On one bike trek, we explored the outer reaches of bravery, confronting a large crawdad on the path that, although snapping, needed to be returned to his watery home. Mom did the deed.

Rest...aka Time to "Be"—Throughout our children's years in sports, we've tried hard to minimize or eliminate Sunday games. Thankfully, we haven't been alone in our pursuit. One year, my daughter's soccer team signed up for spring competition, only to learn that 50% of the games would take place on Sunday. 50% of the families said, "no thanks," and the team withdrew. But we aren't guilt-free when it comes to occasional Sunday games. Sometimes one parent has transported a child to an early morning or midday game, leaving the rest of the family at church. We've also run out with the Doxology barely dry on our lips, hoping to make it to an afternoon tournament. This year, we're free to rest and take time to "Be."

Years ago, I wrote about something I observed when my older children began homeschooling called the "boredom blessing." [Home Education Magazine, The Boredom Blessing, July/August 2011.] This fall, the boys have benefited from an unscheduled environment in which they are sometimes bored. But it's through those moments of boredom that children learn to *be*. In the quiet, they take time to pursue interests and talents that time may not have previously allowed. One child tried his hand at sewing;

[illegible]

4

2015 Pastors' Retreat

By Kathy Bilderback, Pastor at Evergreen Heights, Caldwell, ID

"Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story" Psalm 107:2

As pastoral storytellers, we gathered from Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, to embrace our call to ministry and our call to fellowship with one another. Pastors and spouses from PNMC were invited to a retreat on the hilltop at Menucha Retreat Center in Corbett, OR, **November 3-5**. The setting was stunningly beautiful as the fall colors enlightened our sight of the land and the intricate craftsmanship in the old but well kept home, cabins, and land, all overlooking the Columbia River. The setting was also beautiful in fellowship, worship, conversation, good food, and warm thoughts of God's presence in our story telling.

The rhythm of our two days called us to morning and evening worship when Marlene and Stanley Kropf graciously led with song, scripture, personal reflection, and attentively guided meditations. As the story of God's people was recalled from Psalm 107, we met

God in our own story. Our minds were called to God as the candles were lit in the call to worship: *We light a light for God who gives life, for the Son who loves life, and for the Spirit who is the fire of life. One God, now and forever.*

We explored our own pastoral calling as Larry Hauder led our discussions on Wednesday while also sharing from his newly published book *Called to be a Pastor; Why It Matters to Both Congregations and Clergy*. We reflected on how our calling has been shaped by our family of origin, how it continues to be shaped by those we serve, and how we can help shape other's calling, all within the constantly molding and shaping of God's touch.

We opened our understanding of money while Rhoda Blough from Everence led us through a thoughtful money autobiography. What lessons from our family background, from our "growing up" experience, and our church experiences influence our relationship with money? Later some of us explored long term financial planning as directed and guided by an Everence planner.

The days were an excellent mix of fellowship and offerings of silence. It was

great to pick up conversations around the family style meals, during coffee/tea time breaks, before and after our worship or during relaxing down times. Some thought the puzzle we put together must be tossed because it was missing 14 pieces! We laughed, shared deeply, and became better acquainted. We treasured the stories of God and one another.

Thanks to Katherine Pitts for her leadership and the conference for offering this space amidst the demands of pastoral leadership. Our lives were enriched because of this short but meaningful time with God and our colleague friends. We hold the stories we heard as prayerful treasures knowing that our great storytelling God weaves heartache, joy, and blessings into our stories enriched by a mighty call of God that has touched our hearts.



2015 EMU Outstanding Alumnus Awarded



By Steve Shenk, EMU Writer
When he was young, Martin Histand may have been the only kid in America who didn't like peanut butter. Who would have thought that he would be part of an

effort to save Africa's malnourished children through peanut butter?

Histand, 31, is the operations manager for [Project Peanut Butter \(PPB\)](#), an 11-year-old nonprofit agency based in St. Louis. He spends about one-third of his time at PPB factories in Ghana, Sierra Leone and Malawi.

"He oversaw the establishment of a factory in Ghana," says his sister, Maria Histand Daly. "He was in charge of everything from obtaining the facility and getting all necessary machinery ready to ensuring that the local staff had proper training and support." And that was before he turned 30.

Project Peanut Butter is the brainchild of pediatrician Mark Manary, a professor at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. After many years of treating malnourished children in Africa, he became convinced that a ready-to-use therapeutic food, also known as RUTF,

could save a lot of lives. His preferred RUTF is peanut butter fortified with milk powder, vegetable oil, vitamins, minerals and sugar.

Histand heard about PPB from his brother Mark, who was a member of the Mennonite Voluntary Service unit in St. Louis and attended St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship, where Manary and his family worship. PPB needed more staff, Mark told his brother.

Martin Histand moved to St. Louis in 2010 to volunteer with PPB, living at the Voluntary Service unit. After a year, his job became a paid position. He now specializes in peanut processing and RUTF production.

"Around the world, severe acute malnutrition is the largest killer of children under five years of age, contributing to nearly half of all childhood deaths," says Histand. "The problem occurs mainly in families suffering from the impact of grinding chronic poverty."

When he's home in St. Louis, Histand is an active citizen of his adopted city. In the bitter aftermath of the killing of a young black man by a white police officer last August in nearby Ferguson, he participated in several peaceful rallies that promoted racial equality and social justice.

Histand's first contact with needy people overseas was through his EMU cross-cultural experience. He spent the summer between his junior and senior years in Guatemala, studying Spanish and going to a remote area for service learning in an indigenous community. "There was no electricity, and we slept on the ground with tarantulas and snakes," he says. "It was pretty wild, but the experience helped shape my worldview and has impacted the decisions I've made since college."

After graduating with a degree in history and social studies and a secondary-education teaching license, Histand went to Ethiopia under the Serving and Learning Together (SALT) program of MCC. He worked for a year at a school for orphans and other underprivileged children. "It's difficult to ever let go of an experience like that," he says, "and it piqued my interest to remain involved with work in Africa."

"Martin is a champion of the marginalized & voiceless," says Jason Good '05, a friend from their days at EMU. "He connects with people across cultural, linguistic and socio-economic divides in a genuine way that is vitally needed in our world today."

Does Histand still hate the taste of peanut butter? "No," he says. "I'm a born-again peanut butter lover!"

Washington Mennonite Men's Retreat



By Michael Bade
Every December Mennonite men from across Washington meet at Camp Camrec,

near Leavenworth, WA, for a time of fellowship, fun and great food. This year's retreat brought together young men as young as 12 on up through men in their mid 70's. They played board

games and hiked in the snow while some spent hours sliding down the inner tube run. Folks talked about things like church, world issues, farming, computer applications and travel.

The retreat focus is to provide a low stress relaxing time together. Over the years this retreat served to break down barriers and create bonds between urban city-dwelling Mennonites and rural Mennonites from farming communities.

Many have in common overseas service with MCC, local service with MDS and Mennonite Church related activities.

This year's speaker was Michael Bade, who with his wife, Lisa, served with MCC in Cambodia from 2010-2014. Michael, who served with MCC as a video producer in Akron for 3 years and then the last 4 years in Cambodia, showed videos about the people of Cambodia and MCC's work with Cambodian partners. *These videos can be seen [here](#).*



The [Pacific Northwest Mennonite Historical Society](#) hosted a story-telling workshop on **Sunday, October 18** at the Ivan and Pearl Kropf Heritage Center in Hubbard, OR. Approximately 20 people attended with ages ranging from 14-90.

The presenter, Gloria Nussbaum, had everyone team up with another person. She passed around a basket with strips of paper, each containing a different

question, and asked partners to share their responses with each other. Gloria joyfully recalled that the room buzzed with conversation as people shared. A few of the questions were: What do you wish you knew about your ancestors? *If I could ask God a question it would be... As a child, what did/ do you play with or do during the worship service?* To read more about this event, read Melanie Mock's article [here](#).

On Saturday, January 16, the PNMHS will hold its **Annual Meeting** at Zion Mennonite Church in Hubbard, OR. Guest speaker, **Marlene Kropf**, will share stories in a talk entitled "*Full Circle: Leaving Home & Returning.*" There will be a light lunch at noon and then Marlene will begin. Lunch is \$10/person, payable at the the door. Please RSVP to [Gloria Nussbaum](#) by **January 8** or call her at [503-645-0616](tel:503-645-0616) for more information.

Everyone is welcome!

By Brett Tieszen, PNMC Treasurer

Giving from member churches is under budget due to the timing of when payments were received from congregations and, to a lesser extent, loss of income from congregations which have stopped giving to the conference. On the expense side most staff costs have come in under budget due to staff not working as many hours as had been budgeted. Specific line items of note include District Pastor travel expenses (at only 55% of the \$12,000 budget) and annual meeting expenses (at only 70% of the \$10,850 budget). At present I expect the conference's fiscal position to improve by the end of January but anticipate FY 2016 will still be a deficit year.

Looking farther ahead, at the PNMC board's meeting on December 11 a budget for FY 2017 was approved. (This is the budget for February 1, 2016 through January 31, 2017.) It's a smaller budget which projects reduced giving from congregations and reduced spending on District Pastors. Although FY 2017 has a deficit budget the net effect of these changes has been to bring the budget closer to being balanced.

PNMC's Treasurer's Report

Budget vs. Actual Feb 15-Nov 16	Actual	Budget	Difference	Percent
Church Contributions	\$ 96,487	\$ 108,270	\$ (11,783)	89.12%
Other Income	\$ 48,181	\$ 48,887	\$ (1,706)	96.58%
Total Income	\$144,668	\$ 158,157	\$ (13,489)	91.47%
Total Expenses	\$ 165,319	\$ 173,930	\$ (8,611)	95.05%
Net Income	\$ (20,651)	\$ (15,773)	\$ (4,878)	130.93%
Designated Gifts	\$ 2,400			

PNMC FY16-FY17 Budget Comparison	FY16	FY17	Change
Church Contributions	\$ 130,988.00	\$ 126,954.00	\$ (4,034.00)
Other Income	\$ 57,871.13	\$ 56,400.00	\$ (1,471.13)
Total Income	\$ 188,859.13	\$ 183,354.00	\$ (5,505.13)
Total Expenses	\$ 206,625.00	\$ 196,033.00	\$ (10,592.00)
Net Income	\$ (17,765.87)	\$ (12,679.00)	\$ 5,086.87

To include PNMC in your year-end giving, send checks to:
PO Box 301036, Portland, OR 97294,
or give on-line at www.pnmc.org/.

PNMC Board of Directors

Jennifer Delanty
Moderator, 2016

Jack Swaim
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



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*

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

January 16, *Pacific NW Mennonite Historical Society Annual Meeting*, (Speaker: Marlene Kropf, "Full Circle: Stories of Leaving Home and Returning") Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, OR

April 8-10, *Oregon Mennonite Women's Retreat*, (Guest speaker: Marlene Bogard), Drift Creek Camp, Lincoln City, OR

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

May 7, *Western Mennonite School's Annual Benefit Auction*, Salem, OR

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/>