



e-Bulletin

Providing bi-weekly communication for PNMC

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From the PNMC Office

Pastors, board members, and lay leaders representing our PNMC congregations gathered at Zion Mennonite Church on February 2 for the 2019 Conference Communications Council. This annual winter gathering began in 2013 with the intention of creating an opportunity for conference leaders to connect with one another, to process collective challenges and for natural face-to-face dialogue to make way for creativity and fresh ideas. Of the sixty attending this year's event, including some electronically from Idaho, seven were first-time attendees, including Peter Epp who recently began serving as pastor at Albany Mennonite Church. Participants traveled from as far away as Anchorage and Kalispell! While new faces were celebrated, space was also held to remember and honor Pastor Rick Troyer, whose absence was felt. Time was spent in prayer for the Western Mennonite Church congregation, and for Rick's family, as they grieve the loss of their pastor and dear friend.



Executive Conference Minister, Katherine Jameson Pitts, warmly welcomed the group with a challenging call for the delicate balance between treasuring the old, *our traditions, our culture, our familiar ways of doing things*, and embracing that which is new. *It can be painful to let go of the past and frightening to embrace that which is unfamiliar.* Board members, Twila Lehman, Dianna Eshleman, Jan Yoder and Gary Martin presented a reading followed by Jennifer Gingerich leading two hymns, *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* and *Sing a New Church*, representing the struggle for balance.



Michael is an engaging speaker who intertwines self-deprecating humor, making him easy to listen to. Follow [this link](#) to hear him teaching at the Conference Minister's meeting, focusing on leading well within the MC USA structure.

Michael Danner, MC USA Associate Director for Church Vitality and Engagement, provided the dynamic morning presentation. He encouraged churches to think about how to **grow as both followers of Jesus and congregations engaged in mission to local communities**. Most church leaders want to do good, but today's challenges in "doing church" are different from those in previous generations, leaving many asking, *"How do I get there? How do I do this?"* We may even look to solutions that worked in the past, but those answers may no longer be relevant. Michael challenged pastors to let go of any self-imposed pressure to "fixers" and instead to become "curators" who empower congregations to develop unique and creative solutions to today's challenges. The process requires the church to do the hard work of **identifying purpose**. This requires that we **begin asking different questions, shifting from asking broad *hows* to specific *whats***. Shifting from pragmatics to collaboration requires leaders to empower congregations to take the time to listen, wisely discern, then courageously be willing to try new things—which may sometimes fail and as a community, we must learn to let go when necessary! Leaders who are willing to take risks can release expectations and take an honest look at results through careful reflection, apart from ego, and then move forward making more informed decisions about what works, and what doesn't, in ministry.

Following a tasty lunch, generously provided by ZMC, delegates shared a new practice implemented within the last five years. It was a time to learn from one another and exchange ideas. Katherine also shared a list of resources and upcoming events. Information was distributed about the **Healthy Congregation Grants** available through PNMC. (*Learn more [here](#).*) Marisa Smucker, from Mennonite Mission Network, shared many opportunities for both youth and adults. Steve Kimes reflected on his twenty years of ministry with Anawim and about having to let go... Then the group was introduced to Tasha Norton, an enthusiastic representative from a start-up church in Olympia, WA, called "Church of the Wandering".

Seattle and Albany Mennonite Churches



Discovery: A Comic Lament, performed by Ted and Co. TheaterWorks, is coming to the Northwest! Shows will be in **Seattle, WA** on **Saturday, February 16** at 7:00 pm at **Seattle Mennonite Church**, 3120 NE 125th St., Seattle, WA, and in **Albany, OR** on **Saturday, February 23**, at 7:00 p.m. at Albany Mennonite Church, 3405 Kizer Ave NE, Albany, OR. Admission is free (but donations are welcome) and is open to the public! The performance, starring Ted Swartz and Michelle Milne, and produced by Ted & Co, is a play about the Doctrine of Discovery, the legal framework that justifies theft of land and oppression of Indigenous Peoples. It finds unexpected humor at the crossroads of justice and land use, offering both comic and challenging glimpses into the absurdity of white settler oppression of Indigenous Peoples and the land we live on. A show about love, and loss, of land, Discovery nudges us to question our stories with honesty and integrity.

What happens when we find out there is a problem with the ground under our feet? When we acknowledge that the land we want to reconnect with was violently and unjustly emptied of indigenous peoples? When we learn about their continued oppression? And, what is our role, as people of faith, and inheritors of a system of land ownership based on theft? This is a play about a big, foundational problem: how the land under our feet came to be under our feet. And it is about learning to face that problem with the energy that only shared laughter can create, so that we can move forward.

Zion Mennonite Church

Plan now to attend the **47th Annual Quilting Workshop** at **Zion Mennonite Church**, **February 21-23, 2019**.

Portland Mennonite Church

John Roth, professor of history at Goshen College and editor of the Mennonite Quarterly Review, is coming to **PMC**, **February 23 & 24**. Roth will narrate the unique history of Anabaptist Christians, give insight into an increasingly global Anabaptism, and show the lasting relevance of our Mennonite calling.

Saturday Evening 2/23:

4-5:30: A Story Shaped People: The Burden and Gift of the Anabaptist Tradition

5:30-6:30 Break for Dinner on Hawthorne

6:30-8: What Hath Zurich to do with Addis Ababa? Reframing the Anabaptist Story as if the Global Church Mattered

Sunday Morning 2/24:

10:45: "By Whose Authority? Sharing the Anabaptist Story in the 21st Century"



Drift Creek Camp

The 2019 Women's Retreat will feature former camper, author, and Professor, Melanie Springer Mock. In *Worthy*, she sifts through the shape and weight of expectations that press Christians into cultural molds rather than God's image. Mock offers life-giving reminders that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. Set free from the anxiety to conform to others' expectations, we are liberated to become who God has created us to be. If you're worn out from worrying that you've missed God's One Big Calling, and if you're tired of trying to fit yourself into some cookie-cutter Christian mold, step away from the expectations and toward God's heart. Check www.driftcreek.org for details.

Attention Local MDS Volunteers:

The All-Unit Meeting (AUM) is MDS' annual gathering in which all units, volunteers, and MDS staff come together to worship, learn, and fellowship. Anyone is welcome to attend. The next AUM will be held on **Friday and Saturday, February 8-9, 2019** in Tucson, AZ at the beautiful Double Tree Suites near the Tucson Airport at 7051 S. Tucson Blvd. To register online, [click here](#) or you may complete the paper registration [here](#). For a complete list of volunteer opportunities, click [here](#).

Upcoming e-Bulletins:

Feb 18 (submissions due by 2/11)

Mar 4 (submissions due by 2/28)

Mar 18 (submissions due by 3/11)

Apr 1 (submissions due by 3/25)

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>