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From Our Executive Conference Minister, *Katherine Jameson Pitts*

This will be the first Christmas that our youngest daughter will not be with us. She's staying where she lives to keep us, and her community, safer. It's a small thing compared to all the "firsts" this Christmas will bring for so many. For some, this will be the first Christmas without a loved one who has died, for others the first Christmas with a new baby or in a new place. For many, this is the first Christmas without a Christmas eve service lit by candles flickering in a dim sanctuary as voices join in ancient hymns. The rhythm of our lives, of our traditions, has been upset. And yet (there is always an "and yet"!)" isn't that the way the first Christmas was? Everything upset and changed in the lives of Mary and Joseph as they traveled to Bethlehem. Clinging to hope and trust in the messages they had heard taking step after step into an unknown future with this surprising newborn child. May hope and trust in the gospel you have heard, in the steadfast love of God, be yours this year, a year of many firsts, as we too step into the future God holds. *O come, Immanuel!*

From the PNMC Office

As you plan for the new year and hang your 2021 calendars, mark the following dates:

- Conference Communications Council, **Feb. 6, 2021**, from 8:30 PST to 12:00 PST. *Registration opens Jan. 4, 2021.*
- PNMC Annual Meeting, **August 20-21, 2021.**



There will be something bright about 2020 after all! Don't miss tonight's (**December 21**) rare chance to view the "Star of Bethlehem" in the night sky for the first time since the Middle Ages. This Winter Solstice brings a one-in-ten-lifetimes opportunity to see this rare astronomical phenomenon, officially known as the Great Conjunction, but also referred to as the Christmas Star. Tonight, beginning at twilight and until just after sunset, Jupiter and Saturn will form the closest visible conjunction seen in 800 years. The two planets will align so closely that they appear as one. Let's hope for clear skies and the opportunity to see this bright sign of hope when the world has felt especially dark this year.

A blessed Christmas and New Year to all from PNMC staff.

MENNONITE CHURCH USA & OTHER CHURCHWIDE AGENCIES

listed alphabetically by organization

Mennonite Church USA

Eric Massanari and Yolanda Kauffman served as caretakers at Drift Creek Camp in the mid-1990s. They now live in Newton, KS where Yolanda serves at Showalter Villa and Eric is chaplain of Kidron Bethel Village in North Newton. Eric is a member of the Mennonite Spiritual Directors Network steering committee and serves on the Coordinating Council of Spiritual Directors International. Read Eric's recent contribution to the Menno Snapshots blog entitled [The inexorable darkness: A reflection for this season of longest nights](#).



MennoMedia

The *Voices Together* dedication launch held on Sunday, December 13, can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/8ru5E1yBcI.Y>.

Take a look and find some familiar faces!

Upcoming e-Bulletins:

- Jan 4 (*submissions due by 12/28*)
- Jan 18 (*submissions due by 1/11*)
- Feb 1 (*submissions due by 1/25*)
- Feb 15 (*submissions due by 2/8*)

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>