



e-Bulletin

Providing bi-weekly communication for PNMC

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Our Ever-Changing Church

Eric Massanari, Executive Conference Minister

My first year serving as the PNMC Executive Conference Minister continues to be a vital and eventful experience. As I write I'm once again packing bags and making final preparations for a trip, this time a 12-day road trip to visit our congregations in Idaho and Montana (August 3-14). I'm excited to meet more people and hear many more stories from our PNMC community, and to see more of the beautiful landscapes that comprise the Pacific Northwest.

In my travels I'm learning what I already suspected to be true: PNMC is a vibrant communion of congregations, new and old, urban and rural, small and large, **and we are all seeking to center our lives on the love of God in Christ**—the love that connects us to one another and with the world as a whole. Though our ways of being and doing church vary widely, our commitment to discipleship and forming beloved community is held in common and finds many vibrant expressions across the conference.

Each of our congregations, our conference, and our denomination as a whole, are part of the ongoing emergence of God's love in this world. Right now, especially in the midst of this time of great unrest and uncertainty in our nation and our global community—a time when the very health of our planet is fundamentally altered and threatened by our human consumption and actions—we are called to trust in this ongoing emergence of God's love and know that we are participants in it.

One of the highlight trips of my summer was attending the Mennonite Church USA MennoCon '23 gathering in Kansas City in early July. I had not attended a national convention for more than 12 years, so I was surprised by many changes, including the fact that this year's convention was notably smaller than the ones I attended previously. Mennonite Church USA is now less than half the size it was when it first formed more than twenty years ago. That change in size brings a greater sense of intimacy to our gathering, as well as increased opportunity for intergenerational connection as the youth and adults worship, eat and sometimes participate in workshops together.

A second change that I noted was the fact that there was no contentious and potentially divisive issue that we were asked to struggle over, discern and then vote upon. For many years running our Mennonite conventions have held a degree of heaviness and foreboding, especially for delegates who've been asked to do the courageous work of deep listening and discernment on behalf of the rest of us. It was refreshing to take part in a convention that was largely free of this burden, and that allowed for a more joyous practice of loving presence with each other.

The most significant change I experienced at MennoCon '23, and the one that brought me greatest joy, was witnessing the increasing diversity among those who organized, led and facilitated the many facets of the event and those of us who participated. The racial, ethnic and cultural diversity represented on the convention stage and in our denominational leadership, the growing efforts to center the voices of those who've previously been silenced and marginalized because of their sexual orientation and gender identity, the wisdom shared from varied ages and generations, all helped create a remarkable and beautiful expression of the Body of Christ in our gathering. The MennoCon gathering was a momentary expression of what remains true within us and among us as the church.

Long, long ago, the Apostle Paul wrote to a group of Christians in Corinth who were having a difficult time seeing Christ in their neighbor, and in those who had different perspectives, gifts and insights. Perhaps they were struggling with some of the same human tendencies we are seeing today in our society where we seem so intent to cast blame, shame and aspersion on anyone with whom we disagree or who we perceive as a threat to our way of looking at the world. Perhaps the Christians of Corinth were also living in turbulent times when fear threatened faith. So, maybe it was with a bit of frustration that Paul wrote to them:

Do you not know that you are God's temple, and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

1 COR. 3:16

Then, in that very same letter, perhaps after Paul had taken some deep breaths and calmed a bit, he composed one of the most beautiful and poetic passages of scripture as he described for them the sort of love that lies at the root of the Way of Christ and that nourishes the life of the constantly changing church:

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious, or boastful, or arrogant, or rude.

It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;

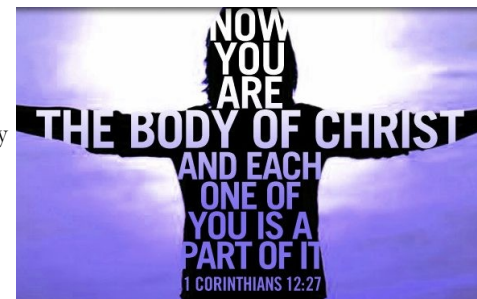
It does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends.

1 COR. 13:4-8

This love that is of God—that *is* God—is the one power we can trust as we continue to evolve as the church, and expand who we are as the Body of Christ.



From the PNMC Office



The [Mennonite CommonRead](#) program is a joint effort by Mennonite Church USA, Mennonite Church Canada, and Herald Press; its intent is to foster conversation about issues impacting the church, and to curate books that congregations can read together. This year, Melanie Springer Mock's book, [Finding our Way Forward: When The Children We Love Become Adults](#), has been chosen for the common reads program.

The book is designed for people who parent or mentor young adults, or who want to learn more about what motivates and challenges members of Gen Z. Melanie has opened her fall and spring calendars for speaking engagements, including preaching on Sunday mornings, visiting with book groups (virtually or in real life), and sharing at retreats. If you are interested in having Melanie speak in your church or with your organization, please contact her directly at mmock@georgefox.edu.

PNMC CONGREGATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & MINISTRIES

Pacific Northwest Mennonite Historical Society

Voices of Conscience: Peace Witness in the Great War (VOC) exhibit

The VOC exhibit is now installed and available for self-guided viewing **through September 23rd** on the 2nd floor in the Watzek Library on the campus of Lewis & Clark College, 615 S Palatine Hill Road, Portland, OR. Please note these updated hours from previous communications. Hours during August are; Monday – Friday, 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. Closed Saturday and Sunday. Parking is free on weekdays through August. September hours are; Monday – Friday, 8:00 am to 10:00 pm. (Closed on Labor Day) Beginning in September, parking fees will be required on weekdays. Saturdays, 11:00 am – 7:00 pm. (Best to avoid September 9 due to a home football game) Sundays, 9:00 am – 10:00 pm. Parking is free on Saturdays and Sundays in September. More information and a campus map with the location of the library and parking can be found at pnmhs.org.



The VOC Exhibit en route from KS.

MENNONITE CHURCH USA & OTHER CHURCH AGENCIES



Mennonite Insurance

Mennonite Insurance is pleased to announce that **Sam Nofziger**, from Seattle Mennonite Church, Seattle WA, has been awarded an academic scholarship from Mennonite Aid. He is a senior studying International Studies and attends George Fox University. Nofziger states “I love the study of economics and its intersection with public policy. I want to do something to help provide access to housing and healthcare for Americans.” Students must be members of an Anabaptist church, be at least a junior at a West Coast college or university and have a GPA of 3.0 or better. Each recipient receives a \$1,000 scholarship. Application forms and scholarship rules are available at mennoniteinsurance.com or on the Mennonite Insurance [Facebook page](#).

Mennonite Disaster Service

Jodell Payseno was curious about the goings-on at **Camp Palisades**. As a high-end remodeler and builder in Jackson, Wyoming, he tends to notice construction projects. What he found when he stopped by the camp was a group of MDS volunteers busily rehabbing camp structures, clearing trails, and making the camp look better than Payseno could remember. The **MDS Family Project**, currently operating at the camp this summer, is hosting families who work and play together to breathe new life into the camp.

Payseno, who attends New Hope Fellowship Church not far from the camp, had an idea. “I get access to a lot of leftover building materials all the time,” he said. “I decided to get in touch with the Mennonite camp, and be a part of it.” He was delighted to see the camp becoming a place where people could go for spiritual retreats. “I contacted MDS and it blossomed from there,” he said. “I have wood, doors, sinks, tile, and just all kinds of electrical and plumbing—and they can have whatever they need.” Read the full story [here](#).

Mennonite Church USA

Follow this link for the latest edition of [PeaceMail](#).

Upcoming e-Bulletins:

Aug 21 (submissions due by 8/14)
Sept 4 (submissions due by 8/28)
Sept 18 (submissions due by 9/11)
Oct 2 (submissions due by 9/25)

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>