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Filer Mennonite Church Disaffiliates from PNMC and MC USA

Eric Massanari, Executive Conference Minister

Filer Mennonite Church (Filer, ID), established in 1914, has been engaged in an extended discernment process concerning their affiliation with Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference (PNMC) and Mennonite Church USA (MC USA). This process began in the wake of the MC USA Special Delegate Session in Summer 2022, and the passing of the Resolution on Repentance and Transformation.

The congregation's process was exemplary for the way it honored diverse voices within the congregation, made space for prayer and reflection, investigated varied options and possible outcomes, and welcomed PNMC leadership, particularly myself and District Pastor Jack Swaim, into ongoing dialog. I have great respect for Pastor Ron Hershey and the Filer community for the way they have listened deeply for the leading of God's Spirit throughout their discernment.

In June, the Filer congregation voted to disaffiliate from PNMC and MCUSA and to become members of the [Rosedale Network of Churches](#). Rosedale delegates met in early August and voted to accept Filer Mennonite into membership. Jack Swaim and I will be traveling and joining the Filer congregation in worship on **Sunday, September 29** to mark this threshold with a service of releasing and blessing. Filer Mennonite's letter to the PNMC community announcing their decision was sent out to all PNMC churches. If you would like to see a copy of the letter please contact the PNMC office.

This outcome brings losses to be grieved, and it also brings clarity for which prayers of gratitude may be offered. **May we give thanks for the love of Christ which binds us as one Body**, no matter the structures by which we affiliate and organize ourselves. Our deepest identity, our most enduring and inseparable ties, are found in the ground of **God's love that is revealed through Christ**.

From the PNMC Office

As **Barb Buxman** prepares for her well-deserved retirement, the details of the upcoming transition are emerging. The Portland PO Box will close in October and office-related mail should be directed to: Brenda Kauffman, 22455 Finn Rd, Sheridan, OR 97378. Office calls should go to 541-921-5866. The office@pnmc.org will now be used for all office and communications-related correspondence. The brenda@pnmc.org address will be retired. **There is still time to send a note of gratitude to Barb** for her years of dedicated service. She will continue to receive email through September or you may send her a note of thanks to 11424 NE Skidmore St., Portland, OR 97220.

In addition to staff transitions, we'd like to recognize the work of outgoing PNMC Board Members, **Julia Todd** (Secretary) and **Kiara Yoder** (At-Large). *Thank you for your years of service!*

In turn, we welcome the following new board members:



Dan Smith Derksen – Evergreen Mennonite Church, Kirkland, WA (Serving as Board Secretary)

Dan Smith Derksen is a Midwest transplant, having grown up primarily in Tiskilwa, IL at Plow Creek Fellowship, and after moving to Iowa graduating from Iowa Mennonite School, where both his parents taught. With his wife Kathryn, Dan has had three stints of service with a Peacebuilding focus in different parts of Africa; through MCC in Uganda 2000-2003, and Chad 2006-2009, and then in South Africa with Mennonite Mission Network 2016-2019.

Dan and Kathryn have two adult children, daughter Claire who lives in Seattle, and son Jacob, who is a student at Manchester University in IN. They have been members of Evergreen Mennonite Church in Kirkland, WA since 2003. Dan is currently working for the Seattle Housing Authority in their Housing Choice Voucher program.



Libbie Lapp – Mountain View Mennonite Church, Kalispell, MT (Serving as At-Large Board Member)

Libbie joined Mountain View Mennonite Church, in 2000. She has served as Leadership Team Board Chair, Elder, Treasurer, and Youth Group Leader. She is currently facilitating the Peace Garden/Bike Station project. Libbie and her husband live a mile from the church in Creston, MT. They have two grown children who live in Minneapolis and Denver.

Libbie attended South Dakota State University, attaining her pharmacy degree in 1988, and Rocky Mountain College for her Physician Assistant degree in 2004. Her career as a physician assistant will end in October, 2024, when she will enjoy an active retirement. Her interests include bicycling (bike-packing), hiking, and cross country skiing, which are all easy to do in this beautiful corner of Northwest Montana. She has written two screenplays, and has many more literary ideas that are waiting to be transformed into written word.

PNMC CONGREGATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & MINISTRIES

Albany Mennonite Church

AMC hosted its 2nd Annual Vacation Bible School in August. While AMC has done VBS in the past, there were many years without it, so we are trying to bring it back to life! Our theme was "Seekers in Sneakers" from the 2024 Shine Curriculum. The geocaching focus allowed kids to learn about the bible and find the way to Jesus, through various clues and puzzles that took them to different activity stations. Our verse for the week was John 13:13,15 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord', and you speak correctly, because I am. I have given you an example: Just as I have done, you also must do." Kids learned things such as working together with Jesus by their side, letting their light shine, following Jesus' example of serving others, and trusting Jesus when things go wrong.

There were 21 children from birth through 8th grade. We held off on community participation this year, because we are still getting our bearings on hosting VBS after so many years. We hope to advertise and open it up to community members and local churches in the future! -*Director Anja Schaeferkofer & Assistant Director Jessica Farwell*



Brett Tieszen with AMC children.

Portland Mennonite Church

On August 25, **Rod Stafford** preached his last sermon at PMC. 270 people attended the service and potluck brunch that followed. Rod's last words to his beloved congregation were, "love always".

The church wishes Rod a meaningful retirement as he ends his role at PMC and his work serving on conference committees.



Rod Stafford with PMC children.



Alvin Nisly leading outdoor worship.

Salem Mennonite Church

Salem Mennonite Church experienced "Wild Church" on August 18 with an outdoor service led by interim pastor **Marlene Kropf**. The purpose of meeting outside was to intentionally reconnect our faith with God's creation. The service included a responsive reading that ended with "If the grace of seeing were mine this day, I would glimpse You, God, in all that lives. Grant me the grace of seeing this day. Grant me the grace of seeing. Amen." We also spent time wandering and wondering about what we saw, heard, and smelled and what attracted our attention. Was there a "burning bush" present here that represented God speaking to us?

Mennonite Country Auction

[Mennonite Country Auction](#) in Ritzville, WA is **October 5, 2024**. Planners are seeking non-quilt goods to sell. Hand-crafted items, event tickets, and antiques are always popular. If you have items of interest to share, contact [Cleon Claasen](#) at 509-760-3579.

[Oregon Mennonite Relief Sale](#) | **October 12, 2024**, Linn County Fairgrounds, Albany, OR.

Join us for a live auction*, kids' activities, baked goods, breakfast, lunch, and all kinds of booths: handmade goods, fabric & craft supplies, used books, and fair trade items. Proceeds support world relief through the work of MCC. *Auction includes quilts, experiences, handcrafted items, tools, furniture, and more. An additional online auction will also be available October 5-9. More information [here](#).

Drift Creek Camp

Visit www.driftcreek.org to sign up for the 2024 Fall Quilt Retreat, **October 17-20!**

Camp CAMREC

Pitch in and enjoy fellowship at [Camp CAMREC's Fall Gathering, October 18-20, 2024](#). A variety of projects will be available for all ages, abilities, and interests. There will be plenty of time to catch up with friends, connect with new folks, get in a few card games and go on a hike or two! Visit www.camrec.org for more details or to register.

MENNONITE CHURCH USA and Other Organizations

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Online Symposium: Practical Theologies / Wisdom Traditions in Spiritual Care: Sept. 24–26, 2024.

The field of spiritual care continues to grow in both theory and clinical practice across traditions and spiritual care disciplines. The goals of this online symposium of the International Association for Spiritual Care are to consider how diverse wisdom traditions connect with resources from the social and behavioral sciences and to foster reflection and dialogue among representatives of those traditions for further collaboration. Co-sponsors: the Society for Intercultural Pastoral Care and Counseling and Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. The symposium is free of charge; [registration is required](#).

West Coast MCC

There are several upcoming learning opportunities to consider:

- **Biblical Justice Peace Camp: At home as it is in Heaven - Portland, OR** This Peace Camp will be **September 29—October 5** in conjunction with the Christian Community Development Association (CCDA) Conference. We will focus on learning what the Bible says about justice, how the Church is called to live justly, and what it means for our lives today. \$250 registration fee and all other expenses, including travel, are covered! Register [here](#).
Part of this event will take place at Drift Creek Camp. Volunteers are needed to cook for participants. To lend a hand, please contact info@driftcreek.org or call 971-600-1244.
- **Join MCC Great Lakes: Dismukes Project Learning Tour, October 9-13.** This learning tour provides a unique experience to learn more about Black history and experiences in the coalfields of Appalachia while also learning the incredible story of Dr. Henry Dismukes, an African American physician in the early 1900's. Participants will visit various historical sites, hear from local speakers, learn about MCC's work to preserve Black history in the area and attend the Dismukes Gala featuring John Ellison. Register [here](#). Learn more about Dr. Dismukes and the project, including a video and [podcast](#).
- **Register for a border learning experience in Tucson, AZ:** Join West Coast MCC for a three-day hands-on and in-person learning tour at the Arizona-Mexico border, **October 24- 28, 2024**. Participants will engage in educational activities, site visits, and discussions led by knowledgeable MCC partners. Scholarships are available. [Learn more!](#)

West Coast MCC has a variety of employment opportunities currently available:

Transformative Justice Coordinator, Reedley, CA: For details, click [HERE](#).

Quilting and Arts Coordinator, Reedley, CA: For more information and to apply, please click [HERE](#).

Legal immigration Caseworker, Reedley, CA: To learn more, click [HERE](#).

Mennonite Church USA

To read the interesting stories included in the latest edition of *PeaceMail*, follow [this link](#).

Safe Church Training: How to Recognize and Interrupt Possible Signs of Grooming | September 16 @ 4pm PT on Zoom

Join presenter Ross Erb, associate director of the Collins Center, and host Nancy Kauffmann, interim denominational minister of Church Safety, for an informational webinar on the vital importance of recognizing possible signs of grooming that lead to abuse. Grooming often goes undetected until abuse has caused significant harm and damage. With years of experience in dealing with this issue, Ross will provide a better understanding of what grooming is, how to identify it, and how to prevent it. Register [here](#).

Save the date! Feb. 28-March 2, 2025 | Join MC USA for the 30-year celebration of Damascus Road in **Goshen, IN**.

This event will be in place of Hope for the Future 2025. More info to come!

Mennonite Action

Mennonite Action WA is hosting a gathering September 20-22 in the Seattle area! We welcome Nick Martin and Adam Ramer, co-directors of [Mennonite Action](#), to join us for training in grassroots organizing, connecting with Mennonite Action participants and allies, and community building through prayer, learning, song, and art for Palestine and for a sustained liberation movement.

The weekend will begin with a Friday evening hymn sing. Saturday will include workshop trainings, lunch and an art project. There will be an adult study session connecting Palestine and Anabaptist history followed by worship on Sunday. Please [register online](#) to help with planning and to determine how we can support you in attending. Registration is by donation to help cover costs; all are welcome! More information will be distributed with session details closer to the weekend. Questions? Contact MennoniteActionWA@gmail.com.

Upcoming e-Bulletins:

Sept 16 (submissions due by 9/9)
Oct 7 (submissions due by 9/30)
Oct 21 (submissions due by 10/14)
Nov 4 (submissions due by 10/28)

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>