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Celebrating All of Our Ministry Leaders in PNMC

October is Ministry Appreciation Month, and PNMC is full of so many gifted people who have committed their lives to serve in ministry, and I count myself fortunate to work alongside these colleagues. I am Celebrating All of Our Ministry Leaders in PNMC to the people you know who are serving as pastors, chaplains, spiritual directors/companions and in other ministry leadership roles. As sometimes happens with people in service vocations, the compassionate and supportive presence of pastoral leaders in our lives is something we appreciate but also take for granted. We don't always pause to express our affirmation openly.

Please do, and know that it makes a difference!

-Eric Massanari, Executive Conference Minister

Special Recognition of Our Newest Credentialed Leaders in PNMC

The Pastoral Leadership Team is excited to share that we have two new credentialed ministry leaders within PNMC. **Susan Lanford**, a member of Portland Mennonite Church and an experienced health care chaplain and administrator, requested transfer of her ordination credential from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship to PNMC and MCUSA. The PLT met with Susan in September and unanimously affirmed this transfer of her ordination. **Barry Bartel**, together with his wife Brenda, recently returned to Oregon and PNMC after a number of years living in Kansas and Colorado. Barry is a retired lawyer and also served as President of Bethel College (North Newton, KS) and on the conference ministry team with Mountain States Mennonite Conference. Barry's ordination credential (inactive status) has now been transferred from Mountain States to the PNMC. Welcome Susan and Barry! We are excited to receive your many gifts!

"Strong Back, Soft Front and Open Hands" Guided Meditation Resource

Eric Massanari, PNMC Executive Conference Minister, recently published a guided meditation resource in both print and video format in the online journal [Vita Poetica](#). Eric first offered this reflection at the Spiritual Directors International (SDI) conference in Niagara Falls earlier this summer, and more recently offered a shortened version at the Mennonite Action Courage School training held a week ago at Seattle Mennonite Church. [You can find the meditation here](#). Please feel free to use and share!



First Mennonite of McMinnville Hosts Food Pantry

Information Submitted by Byron Shenk

The Unitarian Universalist Church (UUC) of McMinnville (OR) approached me last spring. They were looking for a location in a low-income area of McMinnville to establish a food pantry. Since the UUC group does not own its building, they wondered if we, and our sister congregation, Rio de Vida, would consider housing the pantry. Leaders from all three congregations met. We agreed to use our facility to host this effort for several reasons. We want to help meet the physical needs of the community. We hope to encourage community people to visit our congregation. We hope that we can lead community folks to a personal saving relationship with Christ Jesus. While we and the UUC church do have differing theologies, we are working collaboratively to reach the community.

Structure: 1. Any member of the three congregations are invited to bring food and place in the Pantry any time. 2. Different members from the involved churches have signed up to be responsible one day per week to check the Pantry to be sure there is no trash, spoiled food, and no property damage occurring. 3. UUC personnel handle the scheduling and daily organization of the Pantry project.

So far, the project seems to be working very well. I am amazed by the amount of food that is donated daily! We hope that trash accumulation will be minimal. (Thank you to our brothers at Rio de Vida who have worked together to keep the property clean due to other vandals.) We pray that the Lord will use this effort to meet the physical needs of our community, but ultimately, our hope is that we can be an instrument to meet the spiritual needs of people in our community.

PNMC CONGREGATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & MINISTRIES

Menno Mennonite Church

You are invited to celebrate with Menno Mennonite Church on **Sunday, November 16**. The church is celebrating **Menno's 125th anniversary** as well as Anabaptism 500 with a special Harvest Fest worship service followed by a catered meal. The celebration's special guest will be **John D. Roth**, known for most recently being the director of the Anabaptist Community Bible project. If you would like to attend, please RSVP to Menno by November 12. Menno Mennonite Church: 509-659-0926 or pastor@mennomennonite.org.

Portland Mennonite Church

Anabaptism @501: Practicing Faith - Weaving the Work of Justice; Nov. 7-9, Portland Mennonite Church

Please join as we host special guests, **Nekeisha Alayna Alexis** and **Jamie Pitts** from AMBS (Elkhart, IN) for a Symposium. We intend to look critically at how the stories we tell ourselves impact the present and the ongoing life of Anabaptism, with an eye to how we remain open to those who are different from us and the work of the Holy Spirit. We'll explore these questions:

Anabaptism @ 501: As we both celebrate and critique our 500 year history, what is central to our identity as Anabaptists?

What would we like to hold onto or let go as we dream into the future?

Practicing Faith: What does it mean to follow Jesus today? How do we balance practices of thinking (theological study), being (being in relationship to God, listening to the Holy Spirit), and doing (action for peace & justice) in our faith?

Weaving the Work of Justice: How do we engage those who are different from us, perhaps those with different cultural backgrounds or different experiences of inequality? How can we listen to the Holy Spirit and build up our institutions to do the long-term work of seeking peace & justice?

And use these tools:

Anabaptist history & theology

Intercultural competence & undoing racism

Worship practices & discussion time

Learn more and register on our webpage: <https://www.portlandmennonite.org/anabaptism501.html>

Healthy Boundaries Training

Saturday, November 15, 2025 on Zoom, 8:00am—2:00pm, PST

Fundamentals of Healthy Boundaries; Self-Care; Safe Church Policies and Boundaries; Trauma and Boundaries.

Facilitated by **Michael Danner** and **Nancy Kauffmann**.

The cost is \$55 for PNMC members; otherwise \$65/person.

Please pay by check. Send payments to: PNMC Office, 22455 Finn Road, Sheridan, OR 97378.

The registration deadline is **November 1, 2025**.

For information or to register, contact Eric Massanari at eric@pnmc.org.

The Healthy Boundaries trainings are required of our credentialed ministry leaders at least once every three years.

We also encourage lay leaders in our churches, especially our congregation-led churches, to take part in these trainings. This opportunity is open to all who would like to attend.

SAVE THE DATE: The 2026 CCC will be on Zoom, January 31 beginning at 8:30am.

Western Christian School

Western Christian School (formerly Western Mennonite), located in Salem, OR is seeking additional board members. Board members are individuals who have an interest in serving the school and providing oversight to its mission and vision. If interested, please reach out to **Eliza Burkholder** for more information at eliza@wcpioneers.org, or 503-302-6203. (Application link [here](#).)

MENNONITE CHURCH USA & OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Mennonite Central Committee

Western States MCC Bike Ride 2026: Enjoy a scenic and impactful cycling experience through the breathtaking landscapes of the Flathead Valley and Glacier National Park! From **July 26 to 31**, based in Kalispell, MT, we will cycle together to support MCC's development and reconciliation work around the world. A \$500 entry fee covers food, sag vehicles, a jersey, and direct support to MCC. Limit of 40 riders. Contact Bruce Kuhns (kuhns.bruce@gmail.com) for more information.

Mennonite Mission Network

Faith, Family, and Frying Pans: Ten Years at Drift Creek Camp

In 2013, our family took a leap of faith and signed up for a trip through Mennonite Mission Network's SOOP program. We were matched with Drift Creek Camp. Three of our children, Sydney (8th grade), Ivan (5th grade), and Garrison (3rd grade), joined us, while Emma (9th grade) attended Mennonite Convention. The week was spent in the kitchen, preparing meals for campers and staff. Our experience working as a family was unforgettable. We have made ten more trips since that first week, deepening our connection to DCC. Powered by batteries and a generator, Drift Creek Camp taught us the value of simplicity, teamwork, and service. Every trip has stories of funny mishaps, quiet moments, and small lessons which linger long after each departure. Our time spent at DCC has grown from an annual short-term mission trip to a cherished family tradition.

The first year was an initiation into camp life. We cooked from scratch for over a hundred people. Sydney joined us in the kitchen while our younger children, Garrison and Ivan, spent their days exploring the forest with staff kids. We never quite knew what adventures they got into, but they always managed to show up for meals, covered in what could only be described as "camp." Mud, dirt, and pine needles followed them like a trail, a small but constant reminder of the freedom and wonder of camp life.

In the kitchen, we were under the watchful eye of **Glen Oesch**, the food service director, who carefully assembled menus and offered advice in the busy kitchen. We didn't know it that first week, but Glen became one of the many unexpected gifts God gave us. His guidance and wisdom helped us survive our first week and shaped how we approached each subsequent visit.

Over the years, Glen became more than a mentor; he became part of the DCC family we grew to love. Many of Glen's recipes showcased his signature humor. According to the recipe, we needed to say, "I love you, little guys," while placing dinner rolls in the oven, to "agitate until thoroughly annoyed (either you or the ingredients, whichever happens first)" while making a favorite breakfast casserole. He was meticulous about portions, too, and always gave tips on how to ensure we had enough food.

By the end of our first week, we were exhausted and exhilarated. But as we packed up to leave, one thought kept returning: Emma needed to experience this, too. Emma loved to bake and had shown an interest in becoming a dietitian. What better place to nurture that passion than in a bustling camp kitchen where everything was made from scratch? We left Drift Creek the first year, sensing God was calling us back with our entire family.

We returned two years later with all our children, who each had their own role, but when Emma met Glen, something shifted. Upon learning Emma was interested in becoming a dietitian, the kitchen hierarchy changed instantly. Glen saw a fellow foodie in her, and from then on, she became the head baker. He treated her as an equal, not just a volunteer. That recognition sparked a close relationship between them that would continue to grow in the years ahead. **It reminded us that God sees our children's gifts long before they are fully formed, and places mentors in their path to nurture them.**

In the kitchen, our family learned to work as a team, each contributing differently. We can all tackle anything from washing lettuce and chopping onions to sautéing and roasting. Emma typically takes the lead on the yeast breads and desserts, though she happily shares some cookie-baking duties with her siblings. Together, we've discovered that **even in the busiest kitchen, there's room for each of us to serve and learn as we work together.**



These personal journeys were encapsulated two years ago when Garrison was baptized in the camp creek, a moment that felt like the heart of DCC: simple, sacred, and surrounded by God's creation. **That creek is more than water; it's a holy place where God met our son.** I truly believe our children encounter God at DCC, through the forest, water, work, and relationships that make it such a special place. Each experience, whether in the kitchen or the woods, has become an avenue for God to teach, guide, and meet us as a family. Our children have all encountered God in their own way through Drift Creek Camp, as each memory and story ties us closer to the camp. **It's a place where our family has grown in faith, skill, and love for one another.** Looking back over the years, it's incredible to reflect on how much Drift Creek Camp has shaped our family story. What began as a short-term mission trip has become an intertwining of service, relationships, and renewal. We don't know how many more times we'll take the winding road to camp, but we know DCC will always be part of our faith and family. In the end, it's not only

our story, but God's story. One that has taught us that when serving with open hands, God gives us joy, found in the dough, the sound of the creek, and the faces of God's people.

-Written by Jenn Cobb, Archbold, Ohio

Jenn & her family have served at DCC through MMN's SOOP (Service Opportunities with Our Partners) program almost annually for a decade.

Upcoming e-Bulletins:

Nov 3 (submissions due by 10/27)

Nov 17 (submissions due by 11/10)

Dec 1 (submissions by 11/24)

Dec 15 (submissions due by 12/8)

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!*

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