



LANCASTER MENNONITE CONFERENCE

# Shalom NEWS

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2016



As People of Christ's  
peace, we *experience*  
new life!

## EDITORIAL



BY CONRAD KANAGY

I find it interesting that every spring we speak of “new life” as if we never before experienced green grass, baby bunnies, and flowering bushes. Perhaps this just proves our resilience in pushing back the darkness, dampness, and death of the past months. Nevertheless, I suspect more is involved than a gladness to see winter fade.

Rather, I suspect the secret to all of the “newness” that we celebrate each spring lies in the reality of a God whose mercies are new every morning. The amazing and miraculous nature of God’s life is that it flows ever anew, just as it did yesterday, a year ago, and the years before that.

At a recent EVANA Network retreat for pastors and spouses, Reggie McNeil shared something I have not been able to shake: from the tree of life in the garden of Eden until the tree of life in the eternal city of God, life has characterized God’s kingdom. “Life,” said Reggie, “bursts from the Godhead.”

Perhaps we insist on calling it all new again every spring because what we see is again life, and the life of God is always new. It was new in the garden, remains new each day, and will be new in the eternal city. Why should we be surprised by the One who “makes all things new”?

As such, you and I live as the children of the new. In the midst of changes in our conference, congregations, communities, the world, and even in the format of this magazine, the life of the Godhead flows anew. Truly, this remains new news and good news! ■

*Conrad Kanagy is pastor at Elizabethtown Mennonite Church and is on staff at Lancaster Mennonite Conference.*

*From the tree of life in the garden of Eden until the tree of life in the eternal city of God, life has characterized God’s kingdom. “Life,” said Reggie, “bursts from the Godhead.”*



July – September 2016

Issue 3 / Volume 36

L. Keith Weaver, Moderator

### Shalom News Team

Joselyn Santiago, Managing Editor  
Brinton L. Rutherford, Contributing Editor  
L. Keith Weaver, Guest Team Member

Magazine design by Greg Yoder Graphic Design

*Shalom News* is published quarterly by Lancaster Mennonite Conference.  
2160 Lincoln Highway E. #5  
Lancaster, PA 17602

717-293-5246 / 800-216-7249  
[www.lancasterconference.org](http://www.lancasterconference.org)

*Shalom News* (ISSN 0747-2706) is published by Lancaster Mennonite Conference, 2160 Lincoln Hwy E., Lancaster, PA 17602, quarterly for free distribution to all congregations in the Conference. Individual subscriptions are \$15 per year. Periodicals postage paid at Lancaster, PA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Shalom News*, Lancaster Mennonite Conference, 2160 Lincoln Hwy E., Lancaster PA 17602.

© 2016 Lancaster Mennonite Conference.  
All rights reserved.

Questions or comments can be directed to [information@lancasterconference.org](mailto:information@lancasterconference.org)

 [facebook.com/LancasterMC](https://www.facebook.com/LancasterMC)

**ON THE COVER:** Baptism photo from Groffdale Mennonite Church. Plants stock photo by Pascal Frei (unsplash.com)

# The Three Most Important Words for the Church Today: Tension, Tension, Tension

BY L. KEITH WEAVER

**Israel is in trouble, but God pays no attention!** As the enemy advances, Israel ramps up their religious activities and cries out to God for help. However, God takes no notice. Through the prophet Isaiah, God pronounces judgment on his blind and rebellious people. God wants none of their hypocritical religion. They claim a love for God and his righteous judgments, but refuse to attend to the needs of those around them. Relentless pursuit of self-interest leads to their demise.

This somber warning from Isaiah 58 seems relevant for the church today. It reminds us not to forget that God’s economy extends beyond the church. If we forget, we risk the kind of self-absorption that doomed Israel.

Nevertheless, there is also astoundingly good news in Isaiah 58. There is promise of healing and new life. God pours out blessings upon his people when they spend themselves for their poor, hungry, and hurting neighbors. This is the vision God offers Israel. God’s people will find new life by laying down their own lives in service to others. God invites the people of Lancaster Mennonite Conference (LMC) to embrace a similar vision and to live into it as we dwell together in Isaiah 58, the text chosen for this year. How will we respond?

How we respond and who we become as a people of God are important topics of discussion in LMC these days, especially in this season of denominational realignment. The Board of Bishops commissioned a task force to help LMC discern strategic direction going forward. Will we pull back and become inward-focused isolationists? Or, will we redouble our commitment to embody and proclaim the good news of the Kingdom in a world God loves?

By God’s grace, LMC hopes the missional shift continues in the days ahead. Over the last decade,

LMC congregations embraced a missional vision. In addition to global missions, in which LMC congregations have participated for much of the last century, this missional vision includes an understanding that God sends all his people as messengers (missionaries) into their setting to announce the rule and reign of God in word and deed. It includes growing interest in engaging the needs of local communities. This is a remarkable shift for a people called the “quiet in the land.”

If LMC nurtures and sustains this missional shift, LMC will grow as a fellowship of congregations. Such a church will baptize new people and start new churches. It seems reasonable to anticipate the Holy Spirit’s help to reach a portion of the 50 million people who live in the Northeast corridor.

As LMC faces a new season of growth and multiplication, it will be important to maintain a healthy tension with two critical points: 1) being at the same time a culturally relevant and contrast community, and 2) emphasizing evangelism and social action with equal urgency.

*God’s people will find new life by laying down their own lives in service to others.*



## 1. CULTURALLY RELEVANT – CONTRAST COMMUNITY

LMC already values this tension. Our core values identify it. However, as we engage our neighborhoods in relevant ways, we quickly encounter a competing value of religious pluralism. This value holds that different religious views are true even if they contradict each other. For example, the notion that faith in Jesus is the only way to be saved from the righteous judgment of God is not an acceptable claim by many in our pluralistic society. As we pursue the mission of God, we will need to tend our identity as the children of God, confessing that Jesus alone is Lord! As people of God, we live as a contrast community owing ultimate allegiance to the kingdom of God. Otherwise, the cultural trends co-opt us easily into the same religious pluralism.

At the same time, we cannot retreat into a separatist community, returning to our comfortable “quiet in the land” history. We need to find culturally relevant ways to engage our neighborhoods. Our Isaiah 58 text may provide counsel for living in this dynamic tension – spend ourselves on meeting the needs of those around us. One need not look very far to discover deep social needs in our neighborhoods. This approach holds promise

to build relationships with the people in our communities as we work with others to meet needs.

## 2. EVANGELISM – SOCIAL ACTION

LMC must hold evangelism and social action in careful tension. As a sign of the reign of God, the church must resist the temptation to emphasize one side more than the other side. We need to be, at the same time, a Matthew 25 church and a Matthew 28 church—a great commandment church and a great commission church.

In 2012, after a decade of research, sociologist Robert Woodberry published numerous articles describing the effect of missionaries on the places they served. In his thesis, Woodberry contends that the work of missionaries turns out to be the single most critical factor in the development of healthy nations. Nevertheless, Woodberry goes on to describe an important nuance



Volunteers serving at Erisman Mennonite Church's annual Community Day in 2014. Cross image by iStockphoto.

a LMC a discernir la dirección estratégica hacia el futuro. ¿Nos echaremos para atrás volviéndonos aislacionistas ensimismados? ¿o redoblabamos nuestro compromiso de encarnar y proclamar las buenas noticias del Reino en un mundo al que Dios ama?

Por la gracia de Dios, LMC espera que continúe la metamorfosis misional en los años próximos. A lo largo de la década pasada las congregaciones de LMC se han entregado a una visión misional. Además de las misiones globales, en las que congregaciones de LMC han participado durante gran parte del siglo pasado, esta visión misional entiende que Dios envía a todo su pueblo como mensajeros (misioneros) en nuestros respectivos entornos para anunciar con palabras y hechos el reinado y gobierno de Dios. Incluye un creciente interés en tratar las necesidades de nuestras comunidades locales. Esto es un cambio notable para gente considerada como “los quietos de la tierra”.

Si LMC nutre y mantiene este cambio misional, crecerá como una confraternidad de congregaciones. Una iglesia así, bautizará a nuevas personas y empezará nuevas iglesias. Y sería razonable contar con que el Espíritu Santo nos ayudará a alcanzar una parte de los 50 millones de habitantes de este sector del nordeste de Estados Unidos.



to his findings – these positive holistic effects apply only to “conversionary Protestants.” In other words, those missionaries who cared about the great commission, who believed that individuals needed to choose Jesus as Lord and live transformed lives, were the missionaries who influenced the nations they served with the greatest long-term results in all areas of life.

The point is clear! Feeding the hungry and clothing the naked are important social actions. If we stop there, however, we leave people short of the new, eternal life that God offers the world in Christ. We need to be, at the same time, a Matthew 25 church and a Matthew 28 church.

LMC must maintain a healthy discipline between these points of tension to grow as a church with the kingdom impact God intends. While not easy, Jesus promised us the Spirit as a helper. The Holy Spirit stands ready and eager. Are we? ■



L. Keith Weaver is moderator of Lancaster Mennonite Conference. He is a member of Blainsport Mennonite Church in Reinholds, Pa.

Al enfrentar LMC una nueva temporada de crecimiento y multiplicación, será importante mantener una tensión saludable en dos puntos críticos: 1) ser una comunidad culturalmente relevante y a la vez de contraste, y 2) enfatizar con igual urgencia el evangelismo y la acción social.

## 1. CULTURALMENTE RELEVANTE – COMUNIDAD DE CONTRASTE

LMC ya aprecia esto. Es uno de nuestros valores fundamentales. Sin embargo, al entrar en relación más estrecha con nuestros vecinos, pronto nos vemos confrontados y compitiendo con otro valor: el del pluralismo religioso. Este valor mantiene que diferentes perspectivas religiosas son verdaderas aun si se contradicen. Por ejemplo, la noción de que Jesucristo es el único camino para salvarnos del justo juicio de Dios no es una aseveración aceptable para muchos integrantes de nuestra sociedad pluralista. Al entregarnos a la misión de Dios, necesitaremos cultivar nuestra identidad como hijas e hijos de Dios, ¡confesando que solo Jesucristo es Señor! Como pueblo de Dios, vivimos como una comunidad de contraste que debe lealtad última al reino de Dios. De lo contrario, las corrientes culturales fácilmente nos arrastrarán hacia ese mismo pluralismo religioso.

Al mismo tiempo, no podemos recluirnos en comunidades separatistas, y volver a nuestra cómoda historia de “los quietos de la tierra”. Necesitamos encontrar formas culturalmente relevantes para involucrarnos en nuestra vecindad. Nuestro texto de Isaías 58 quizás nos ofrezca un consejo para vivir en esta tensión dinámica – gastarnos en suplir las necesidades de quienes nos rodean. No hace falta mirar muy lejos para descubrir profundas carencias sociales en nuestros vecindarios. Este enfoque posibilitará que forjemos relaciones con los integrantes de nuestras comunidades al colaborar con otros para suplir las necesidades de otros.



## PUTTING LOVE INTO ACTION

**Cocoa Stand at Community Mennonite Fellowship**  
Seven-year-old Isaac Martin raised \$1,000 this year for “My Coins Count,” from personal donations and hot chocolate sales at his cocoa stand in West Milton, Pa. The local newspaper nicknamed Isaac the “Cocoa Kid!” and gave his venture extensive publicity. Isaac is the son of Bryce and Kitty Martin. Isaac’s family attends Community Mennonite Fellowship in Milton, Pa.

Did your congregation recently host an outreach event in the community? If you’re interested in sharing, please submit photos with a 1-4 sentence story to Joselyn Santiago ([jsantiago@lancasterconference.org](mailto:jsantiago@lancasterconference.org)), to be included in a future issue of *Shalom News*.

## 2. EVANGELISMO – ACCIÓN SOCIAL

LMC debe mantener el evangelismo y la acción social en cuidadosa tensión. Como señal del reino de Dios, la iglesia tiene que resistir la tentación de enfatizar una cosa más que la otra. Necesitamos ser, simultáneamente, una iglesia de Mateo 25 y de Mateo 28 – una iglesia del gran mandamiento y una iglesia de la gran comisión.

En el 2012, tras una década de investigación, el sociólogo Robert Woodberry publicó numerosos artículos describiendo el efecto de misioneros sobre los lugares donde sirvieron. En su tesis, Woodberry postula que la obra de los misioneros resulta ser el factor más determinante en el desarrollo de naciones sanas. Sin embargo, el autor prosigue describiendo un detalle importante en sus hallazgos – los efectos positivos de desarrollo integral solo se observaron en relación a misioneros “protestantes conversionistas”. En otras palabras, los misioneros que se preocuparon por la gran comisión, que creían que cada persona necesita entregarse a Jesucristo como Señor y vivir una vida transformada, fueron los misioneros que más influyeron en las naciones donde sirvieron, con significativos resultados a largo plazo en todas las áreas de la vida.

¡La lección es clara! Alimentar a los hambrientos y vestir a los indigentes son importantes acciones sociales. Pero si nos quedamos allí, dejaremos a las personas sin alcanzar la vida nueva y eterna que Dios ofrece a todos en Cristo Jesús. Necesitamos ser, al mismo tiempo, una iglesia de Mateo 25 y Mateo 28.

LMC tiene que mantener una disciplina sana entre estos puntos de tensión para poder crecer como la iglesia que Dios desea, de impacto para el reino. Aunque no sea cometido fácil, Jesús nos prometió su Espíritu como ayudador. El Espíritu Santo está más que dispuesto. ¿Lo estamos nosotros? ■

L. Keith Weaver es el moderador de la Conferencia Menonita de Lancaster. Es miembro de la Iglesia Menonita de Blainsport en Reinholds, Pensilvania.

## Las tres palabras más importantes para la Iglesia de hoy: tensión, tensión, tensión

POR L. KEITH WEAVER (traducido por Andrés Prins)

Israel está en problemas, ¡pero Dios no hace caso! A medida que avanza el enemigo, Israel aumenta sus actividades religiosas y clama a Dios por ayuda. Pero Dios ni se fija. A través del profeta Isaías, Dios pronuncia juicio contra su pueblo ciego y rebelde. Dios detesta la religiosidad hipócrita de ellos. Dicen amar a Dios y sus justos juicios, pero rehúsan atender a las necesidades de sus prójimos. La búsqueda implacable de sus intereses egoístas los está llevando a la ruina.

Esta advertencia sombría de Isaías 58 es relevante para la iglesia de hoy. Nos insta a no olvidar que la economía de Dios se extiende más allá de la iglesia. Si olvidamos esto corremos el riesgo de caer en la misma clase de ensimiamiento que arruinó a Israel.

Sin embargo, hay también asombrosas buenas noticias en Isaías 58. Hay promesas de sanidad y nueva vida. Dios derrama bendiciones sobre su pueblo cuando se desviven por el bien de sus vecinos pobres, hambrientos y heridos. Esta es la visión que Dios ofrece a Israel. El pueblo de Dios encontrará nueva vida a medida que entreguen sus vidas en servicio a los demás. Dios nos invita como integrantes de la Conferencia Menonita de Lancaster (LMC) a apropiarnos de una visión similar y encarnarla al meditar juntos sobre Isaías 58, el texto escogido para este año. ¿Cómo responderemos?

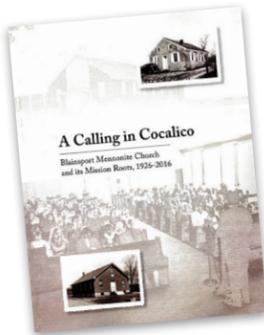
La manera en que lo hacemos y la clase de personas en que nos volvemos son importantes temas de discusión en LMC, especialmente en este tiempo de reajuste denominacional. El Consejo de Obispos ha nombrado un grupo de trabajo para ayudar

# FROM AROUND THE CONFERENCE

## APPRECIATION LUNCHEON

On April 15, the Board of Bishops and Conference Executive Council held a catered luncheon in honor of Joanne Dietzel's 21 years of service to Lancaster Mennonite Conference. Joanne's last day was Friday, April 29. Joanne, we wish you all the best in your new role!

## BLAINSPORT 90<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY



Blainsport Mennonite Church will take time to look upon the stones that past generations arranged as memorials and teaching aids. This is the 90th year that Blainsport has existed as a church in northern Lancaster County. Plans are taking shape to remember the amazing history of people committed to reaching people far from God in this rural community. The first activity to celebrate this anniversary was on April 1 with the release of the book, *A Calling in Cocalico: Blainsport Mennonite Church and Its Mission Roots, 1926-2016* by Philip Ruth. The schedule includes two more events: On August 7, the 90th Anniversary Song Service will take place. Then on October 1-2, the Homecoming Weekend will include a bus tour, special speakers, and meals.

## TREE OF LIFE QUILT

In December of 1978, Geraldine Lehman Ebersole's mother, Dora Kosler Lehman, purchased the "Tree of Life Quilt" kit at Watt & Shand for \$16.99. Geraldine's mother passed away in April 1979 before she had a chance to work on the quilt. After several years of the kit sitting on

Geraldine's shelf, she decided to donate it to the Mount Joy Mennonite sewing circle. The completed quilt went to Harrisburg to be sold at the MCC relief sale. Geraldine's husband, John, purchased the quilt for \$4,400 to keep it in the family. The quilt represents five generations in this family.

## LMC YOUTH WORKERS MONTHLY BREAKFAST

On the 4th Tuesday of each month, youth ministry workers gather at 8:00 a.m. at Lyndon Diner in Lancaster, Pa. to share ideas, and encourage and support one another through conversation and prayer. Anyone involved in leading youth ministry in any way in Lancaster Mennonite Conference is welcome! Please RSVP on the LMC Youth Worker's Facebook page if you are coming. [facebook.com/groups/LMCYouthWorkers](https://www.facebook.com/groups/LMCYouthWorkers)

## PRAYER DRIVE-THRU

Stop! We want to pray for you! On April 23, El Buen Pastor in Lancaster, Pa. hosted a "Prayer Drive-Thru." The group made up of children, youth, and adults prayed for over 100 people. "This work is highly effective and there is much need in our communities," said a member of El Buen Pastor.

## SERVI-CARRO DE ORACIÓN

¡Detente! Queremos orar por ti! El 23 de abril, El Buen Pastor en Lancaster, Pa. organizó un "Servi-Carro de Oración." El grupo formado por niños, jóvenes y adultos oraron por más de 100 personas. "Este trabajo es sumamente efectivo y hay mucha necesidad en las comunidades," dijo un miembro de El Buen Pastor.



## NANTICOKE CHURCHES HOST ECUMENICAL SERVICE.

On May 15, Pentecost Sunday, an evening Ecumenical Service celebrated the birth of the Church on Pentecost at Patriot Square in Nanticoke, Pa. The Nanticoke Clergy Group held a worship and teaching service on the "Gifts of the Spirit." Clergy from St. John's Lutheran, St. Faustina Roman Catholic, First United Methodist, Nanticoke Christian Fellowship and St. Luke's United Church of Christ jointly led the service. The local Christian group "The Here and Now Effect" and local Christian singer Jaelyn Victor provided music before and after the service. This service was just one of several gatherings by churches in Nanticoke. Dave Pegarella and Michael Deckman lead Nanticoke Christian Fellowship Church, a Lancaster Mennonite Conference Church in the Weaverland Northeast district.



## BETHLEHEM COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP

Bethlehem Community Fellowship, featured as one of the congregational profiles in this issue, plans to plant another church in the near future. With a full building, their thought is to plant rather than expand facilities. They have attended recent multiplication events like the Church on the Other Side "Dreaming"

seminar in November and Celebration of Church Life in March. Pastor Jim Weick invited conversation in May with the new LMC-EMM partnership to discuss multiplication possibilities. Josh Rivera, at that meeting, indicated the congregation has caught a "multiplication virus."

## TWO SAFECHURCH COHORTS CONCLUDE CHILD PROTECTION WORK

The Harrisburg and Lancaster SafeChurch cohorts completed policy development, training, and compliance with the new Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law. This 11-month process included 25 hours of training for the child protection teams, two hours of congregational training, and three hours of training for volunteers and staff. A total of 15 congregations participated. Congratulations to teams and congregations who invested much to provide a safe environment for children.

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Twenty-two congregations have completed child protection policies through a new LMC process that brings them into compliance with the new Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law. This 4.5 hour, two-meeting process allows child protection teams to get training and write a policy. When approved by the congregation, they get the policy reviewed by legal counsel and then implement the policy in the congregation. If you have interest in developing a child protection policy, contact Joselyn Santiago ([jsantiago@lanasterconference.org](mailto:jsantiago@lanasterconference.org)).

## NEW HOLLAND SPANISH MC

Last year NHSMC began a campaign to raise funds for a new roof, new doors, a new parking lot and an addition to the

building. Currently the roof has been replaced and new doors installed.

## LANCASTER CONFERENCE YOUTUBE CHANNEL

 The LMC Youtube channel contains six playlists with 67 videos. The missional church playlist tells some LMC stories of the missional church in action. The *Explore the Core: reheated and Sowing Shalom* playlists provide the video for both of these curriculum packages. The study guides for these packages are located on the resources page of the LMC website. ([lanasterconference.org/resources/conference\\_developed\\_resources.php](https://www.lancasterconference.org/resources/conference_developed_resources.php)). Can you locate the video with the highest and second highest number of views?

## CELEBRATE WHO WE ARE

In a one-day seminar for leaders of conference-related ministries, conference leaders, and pastors, Lancaster Mennonite Conference and Atlantic Coast Conference celebrated ten years of gathering together. The day-long seminar on April 22 at Garden Spot Village hosted 16 ministries. Rick Stiffney was the resource speaker.



## EMM YES PROGRAM ENDS

On May 21 at Lancaster Mennonite School, Eastern Mennonite Missions eulogized its YES short-term sending program, which is ending after 35 years. Staff and partici-

pants gathered to celebrate, lament, and remember. EMM's YES program served as a place where people encountered God and God's people in fresh ways. Learn more at [emm.org/35years](https://www.emm.org/35years). Now EMM is transitioning into new ways of catalyzing missional discipleship, including a revamped mission internship program. Mission internships offer opportunities to learn cross-cultural disciple-making skills that will launch you into a lifetime of ministry. Learn more at [emm.org/internship](https://www.emm.org/internship).

## LIFETREE VIDEO

In April Roger Weaver hosted a showing of the LifeTree Café documentary film *When God Left the Building* at the Lancaster Mennonite Conference office. The documentary claims the majority of churches in USA are in decline. Weekly church attendance has dropped to 20% of the population. The film prominently featured the unconventional work of churches and organizations that are working to change this trend. Discussion followed the film. The LifeTree café ministry provides some of the organizational framework for the LifeTree Café ministry at Mellinger Mennonite Church. For more information contact Roger at [thecrazy5@comcast.net](mailto:thecrazy5@comcast.net).

## FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

In April, Willow Street Mennonite Church hosted a Feed My Starving Children Mobile-Pack Event. The final totals exceeded the goals set for the event: \$45,000 was raised to cover the cost of the meals! 1,181 volunteers packed 217,728 meals! This will feed 596 children a nutritious meal a day for an entire year!





Left: Pastor Weick speaks to the church during a recent baptism service.



**CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE:**

# Bethlehem Community Fellowship

**DISTRICT:** Weaverland NE-PA

**LOCATION:** 1417 Marvine St, Bethlehem, PA 18017

**DATE OF FOUNDING:** 1988

**AVERAGE SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE:** 70

**SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE:** 10:15 a.m.



**PASTOR:** James W. Weick

Howard Rice founded Bethlehem Community Fellowship in Bethlehem around 1988. Rice led the congregation until the mid 1990s when he left for missionary work in China. The congregation installed Jim Weick in August 2011. Weick serves with his wife, Alison, and son, Joshua. A core group of about 12 people has grown to more than 70 since that time with a concentration of single “millenials” comprising a large portion of the growth. Bethlehem Community Fellowship prepares young people for vital roles in ministry, and we have already sent out one young couple as “intern pastors” to a nearby congregation. Some former and “becoming former” addicts attend, and the honesty and commitment to Christ and to one another brings freedom and purpose to many.

Recently, one single mom from the community committed her life to Jesus and overcame drug addiction. She found freedom from several prescription drugs and now holds a job. With the help of the Lord and the community, she is an important presence in her children’s lives again! We baptized seven new believers in April, and we are excited to see what is next.

BCF plans to collaborate with a local school this coming academic year in order to help families find Christ and wholeness. In addition, the congregation plans to plant another church in the near future. With a full building, our thought is to plant rather than expand facilities. ■

Participants at Groffdale’s 2014 Congregational Retreat  
Far right: 2014 Easter Service



**CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE:**

# Groffdale Mennonite Church

We believe God is calling our congregation to be a blessing especially to those living within a square mile of our building. Several of us prayer-walk and meet people in our neighborhoods. We experience a warm reception. God calls us to pray for and bless our neighbors whether or not they ever set foot in our building. We view our neighborhood as the parish in which God placed us. God calls us to pray and act as God’s *shalom* for these people. Some are Old Order Mennonite and Amish. Others come from very different backgrounds, or recently moved into local neighborhoods from urban areas or other countries.

When Andres Prins and Tom Eshelman walked the neighborhood meeting people, a Muslim woman came to the door. We learned that she had moved to the U.S. recently from Morocco. Andres began speaking to her in Moroccan Arabic, a language he speaks after living there for twenty years. A look of amazed delight spread across her face as she heard a greeting in her mother tongue. In this event, Tom glimpsed the surprising encounter of a God who comes near to us through Jesus. When we least expect it, God comes to us and calls out to us in the language of our hearts.

A year ago, we faced a significant need for youth leadership in our congregation. We prayed about this need for an extended time and were blessed to see God’s provision of our youth pastor Austin Horning and for junior youth leaders Brian and Krista Snader. We are experiencing renewed vitality among our youth ministry. We continue to be greatly blessed through a youth ministry partnership with New Holland Spanish Mennonite Church and New Holland Mennonite Church.

Over the past several years, we increased our connections to missionaries serving around the world by hosting families on home-leave in our missionary house. This opened up the world to us in new and energizing ways.

Several years ago, we entered into a partnership with several local counselors who sought to establish a clientele among our Amish and Old Order Mennonite neighbors. Tom Horst and Carol Gingrich meet clients in our building throughout the week. It is not uncommon to see horse and buggies and scooters parked at our building as persons come to receive counseling.

Several years ago, our congregation sponsored a refugee family from Iraq. Over the years, this family established itself and settled in the community, and we see them less often. It was a wonderful surprise to see this family at our recent Christmas Eve service and to have them joyfully participate with us in celebrating Christ’s birth. Our relationship with this family continues, and we pray they would come to celebrate the fullest meaning of God’s gift of Jesus for the whole world. ■

**DISTRICT:** Groffdale

**LOCATION:** 168 North Groffdale Road, Leola, PA 17540

**DATE OF FOUNDING:** 1717

**AVERAGE SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE:** 140

**SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE:**  
Sunday school: 9:00 a.m.  
Worship: 10:00 a.m.



**PASTORS** (pictured left to right):  
Kathy Weaver Wenger, Associate Pastor  
Austin Horning, Youth Pastor  
Tom Eshelman, Lead Pastor



## PARTNERS IN MISSIONAL MULTIPLICATION

A small group of leaders gathered to continue the process of teasing out a new partnership between Lancaster Mennonite Conference and Eastern Mennonite Missions at the Spring Leadership Resourcing Day on May 12, 2016. The group gathered in the gym at Alive Church Ephrata. Gerry Keener and Brinton Rutherford reviewed the “Pathways” concept that was introduced at the Celebration of Church Life in March. (“Pathways” is only a temporary marker to describe this concept.) Then the assembled groups rotated through a “World Café” in order to provide responses to the following questions and statements.

1. What other qualifications and skills do the facilitators need to have?
2. Suggest names of potential facilitators.
3. What parameters need to be put around “Pathways” for it to function well?
4. What other questions might you have and how would you answer them?
5. What would people need to know to be attracted to use “Pathways”?
6. Who do you know that would be a good candidate for using “Pathways” and how might this help them?

In reviewing the feedback, the group gave overwhelmingly support for the “Pathways” concept. The responses to the first two items provided a large list of facilitator skills and people to consider. Question 3 generated a lot of counsel for how to make “Pathways” function well. The question about “other questions,” item 4, did not generate as much of a response as expected. But Question 5 provided an immense amount of information to consider. The potential users, item 6, identified by the group was very broad.

### Here are some summaries of the feedback.

- facilitators need to be good listeners, have strong discernment skills, have ministry experience, and be passionate about mission.
- keep this a process and prevent it from becoming a program or institution.
- suggested users of the process could be high school seniors, college students, young adults, small churches, families who want to be missional, family ministries, empty nesters, retirees, congregations trying to start new ministries, those wanting to start new communities of faith.

### A few questions raised that underscored core issues appear below.

- How are the facilitators vetted? By whom?
- Is there a confessional framework?
- What will be social media’s role or opportunity?
- What is the role of the EMM Board and the Board of Bishops?
- How do you qualify each request to determine if its missional or internal nurturing?
- How will the resource database be accessed and who can access it? ■

*Information and questions about “Pathways” can be directed to Gerry Keener, 717-898- 2251 ext. 223, [gerryk@emm.org](mailto:gerryk@emm.org) and Brinton Rutherford, 717-293-5246 ext. 111, [brutherford@lanasterconference.org](mailto:brutherford@lanasterconference.org).*

## NEWS NOTES

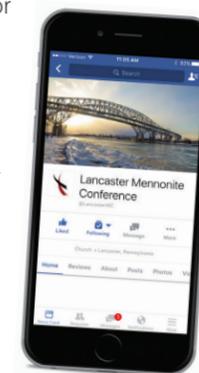
### LEBANON-MANHEIM DISTRICT BISHOP SEARCH

The Bishop Search Committee of the Lebanon and Manheim districts is now receiving applications for the role of bishop-overseer. We are looking for two or more part-time bishops, possibly working together as a team, to serve the two districts. Responsibilities will include an emphasis on being a pastor to pastors and on empowering congregations for missional engagement. Persons interested in applying can please contact Keith Weaver at [kweaver@lanasterconference.org](mailto:kweaver@lanasterconference.org) or 717-293-5246 ext. 101.

### FACEBOOK PAGES

Did you know that LMC has several Facebook pages? Conference congregations may post events, notices, and other useful information on the pages. Browse by and Like the pages.

- [facebook.com/LanasterMC](https://facebook.com/LanasterMC)
- [facebook.com/ChurchOnTheOtherSide](https://facebook.com/ChurchOnTheOtherSide)
- [facebook.com/groups/LMCYouthWorkers/](https://facebook.com/groups/LMCYouthWorkers/)
- [facebook.com/ExploreTheCoreReheated/](https://facebook.com/ExploreTheCoreReheated/)



### LMS SEEKS SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOL

Lancaster Mennonite School is seeking an energetic and dynamic leader for the Superintendent position. Founded in 1942, Lancaster Mennonite School is a comprehensive preschool-12 school system rooted in the Anabaptist Mennonite tradition. The school system currently enrolls about 1,500 students on five campuses in Central Pennsylvania. The ideal candidate will demonstrate clear commitment to Anabaptist faith and practice; show excellence in leadership; be oriented to effective listening, communication and collaboration; foster healthy diversity in community; show evidence of personal and emotional maturity; and act as a bridge builder. The Superintendent is expected to assume office sometime in 2016.

Persons of underrepresented racial/ethnic groups are encouraged to apply.

To view application process, position profile and job description visit [www.lanastermennonite.org/superintendent](http://www.lanastermennonite.org/superintendent).



### 2016 STEP GRADUATES

The STEP Class of 2016, from left to right: Jade Nhan, Jeremy Molligan, Amy Le, Anthony Garcia, Jay Nevin Hurst, Thomas Tran, Donna Curran, Thomas Bechem, Jamie Horning.

### CHURCH VIOLENCE: THINKING AHEAD

**Wednesday July 20, 7:00–9:30 pm**

Lancaster Mennonite Conference office, 2160 Lincoln Hwy E., Lancaster, Pa. 17602

Shootings and other violence in a church or during a worship service attracts media attention. Lancaster Mennonite Conference will focus attention on this troubling aspect of the contemporary world. Local law enforcement will address the topic of violence in a faith setting. Pastor Tracy Brown (retired State Police) will provide a peace church context for the presentations. The speakers will provide practical suggestions to reduce threats and describe resources available to churches to increase safety. A time for Q & A is scheduled for the evening. Light refreshments will be served. Please RSVP to Joselyn Santiago ([jsantiago@lanasterconference.org](mailto:jsantiago@lanasterconference.org)).

Discover the first Mennonites in Lancaster and their neighbors



With the Lancaster Longhouse at the  
**1719 Hans Herr House & Museum**  
 1849 Hans Herr Dr., Willow Street, Pa. • (717) 464-4438 • [www.hansherr.org](http://www.hansherr.org)

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Complete calendar and more details available at [lancasterconference.org](http://lancasterconference.org).

## Monday Night Prayer Gathering Every first Monday of each month 7–9 p.m.

Conference office, Lancaster, Pa.  
717-293-5246

## Worker Commissioning Jul 10, 6:30 p.m.

Willow Street Mennonite Church,  
Willow Street, Pa.  
[www.emm.org/events](http://www.emm.org/events)

## Church Violence: Thinking Ahead July 20, 7–9:30 p.m.

Conference office, Lancaster, Pa.  
717-293-5246

## Bookworm Frolic August 10–13

Lanc. Menn. Historical Society,  
Lancaster, Pa.  
[www.lmhs.org](http://www.lmhs.org)

## New York City Learning Tour October 8–9

Bronx and Flushing NYC  
[www.emm.org/events](http://www.emm.org/events)

## EMM Vision and Fundraising Banquet October 21, 6:30 p.m.

Yoder's Restaurant & Buffet  
New Holland, Pa.  
[www.emm.org/events](http://www.emm.org/events)

## Friendship Community 44th Anniversary Celebration Dinner October 21, 6:30 p.m.

Shady Maple Banquets, East Earl, Pa.  
[www.friendshipcommunity.net](http://www.friendshipcommunity.net)

## Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses (ARMS) Retreat October 25–26

Black Rock Retreat, Quarryville, Pa.  
717-355-0454

## Women's Regional Assembly

November 12, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon  
Stumptown Mennonite Church  
Bird-in-Hand, Pa.  
[stumptownmc.org/get-connected/wra/](http://stumptownmc.org/get-connected/wra/)

Join us at these two summer events!

### Global Fair

July 9, 2016, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Hans Herr House, Willow Street, Pa.  
[emm.org/globalfair](http://emm.org/globalfair)

### Worker commissioning

July 10, 2016, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.  
Willow Street Mennonite Church, Willow Street, Pa.  
[emm.org/summercommissioning](http://emm.org/summercommissioning)



**EMM**  
Going where the church is not... yet.



*Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?*

— Isaiah 58:6-7 (NIV)