



LMC *a fellowship of anabaptist churches* Shalom NEWS

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2019

Breaking New Ground *Expansion and Multiplication*



CONGREGATIONAL PROFILES

Krall's Mennonite Church | North Lima Mennonite Church



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- Increase your ministry capacity
- Practice personal and spiritual formation

Classes are forming for the new school year. Contact Brinton Rutherford (brutherford@lmchurches.org) or visit lmchurches.org/ministries/step.

STEP provides three years of non-traditional ministry leadership training. Training occurs through online assignments and one class meeting per month for nine months for each of the three years. Students travel together through the three years in a cohort model.

Graduates earn a Certificate of Ministry from LMC and 30 undergraduate credits from Eastern Mennonite University for completing the 3-year program.



Marcia Mylin, newly appointed Director of the STEP program, will take over in August of 2019, replacing interim Director Brinton Rutherford. She will work with three STEP Course Instructors, William Higgins, Krishana Suckau, and Lynn Shertzer.



lmchurches.org/ministries/step



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ON THE COVER:

Pastor Tuyen prays with people in North Carolina outreach. Photo by Danh Ho.



The Hidden Soil

A fruitful harvest among Vietnamese people

BY DANH HO

Our Lord told the parable of the farmer scattering seed in Luke 8:4-15 (Matthew 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20). Jesus used this parable among others to teach His disciples about the Kingdom of God.

Jesus told the parable to a large crowd that gathered. In the story, a farmer scattered seed. As he scattered the seed, some fell on the footpath, some among rocks, some among thorns, and some on fertile soil. The result was that only the seed on the fertile soil produced a harvest.

In the gospels, we have both the parable and Jesus' explanation of what the parable meant. Jesus explained that the seed is God's word. The footpath, the rocky soil, the thorny soil, and good soil represent different responses people have to hearing God's word. Jesus represented the farmer. When the people listened to Jesus, the readiness of their hearts determined whether God's word would take root in them or not. Only the ones who heard God's word, understood it, accepted it, and began to act accordingly, became converted and produced good works.

Looking back at my life at different points in

God has placed not one, but many different people like Paul and Apollos into my life.



Ministry in North Carolina. Photos provided by Danh Ho.

time, I can see examples of these different responses to God's word in my life. Growing up in a family with the tradition that believes in worshipping idols and ancestors, I did not accept any other religion. God had sent many Christian ministers to speak God's word to me. At first, I would not listen and nothing took root. Later, I was like the footpath. I listened but the devil came and stole the Word as soon as I heard it. Then I was like the rocky ground. God's word sprouted, but doubt would take over, and the seedling wilted. Finally, the word took root, grew, but then the thorns of life choked out the growing plant. Worries, riches, and the pleasures of life prevented growth to maturity.

But with God everything is possible. The ground can change. Rain can soften hard ground. On the surface, the ground can look hard and dry, but underneath the surface there is good soil.

The ground can be covered with rocks and thorns, but ground can be cultivated, turning up good soil and removing the weeds.

As Paul said to the Corinthian church: "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow" (1 Corinthians 3:6 NIV). God has

placed not one, but many different people like Paul and Apollos into my life. The seed of Christ was regularly planted and replanted into my heart and mind until it took root. Then it needed watering and God's nurture for it to grow up.

In the parable, we read about the seeds that fell on the fertile soil and produced a great harvest. But how long did it take to produce? What happened in between planting and harvest? It took a lot of time and hard work by the farmer to care for the field.

In my case, it took time and work by different people to nourish me toward maturity. I accepted Christ and got baptized in 1992. After many different storms of life, I fully committed my life to God in 2009. The same year, I enrolled in STEP, a leadership and ministry training program of LMC. While attending STEP, I began to travel to North Carolina as part of the ministry outreach of Upper Darby Mennonite Fellowship and the Vietnamese Mennonite Church. That ministry involvement was part of my field education assignment for STEP.

There is a small community of Vietnamese people living in Camden Point and Columbia, North Carolina about 300 miles and 350 miles away, respectively. We have two main teams that take turns traveling there to preach and nurture believers. Some Christians from the Philadelphia area also moved to the area because of job opportunities. Some of the local people also became new believers through our mission work. Since 2009, about

I awakened to the spiritual condition of many of my extended family who still lived in Vietnam. They still lived with the practices of worshiping idols and ancestors.

66 people accepted Christ. We continue to travel to North Carolina to train leaders.

During the first year of STEP, one of the assignments for each student was to work on his/her genealogy. That was when I awakened to the spiritual condition of many of my extended family who still lived

in Vietnam. They still lived with the practices of worshiping idols and ancestors. That STEP assignment took me back to Vietnam in March 2010.

I returned to Vietnam to gather the information I needed for the STEP assignment and to bring the Good News of Jesus to



Above and Right: Ministry in Vietnam. Photos by Danh Ho.
Left: Prayer and Worship in a house church. Photo provided by Crystal Nguyen.



my family who still lived there. At the time I returned, both of my grandfathers had already passed away. Both of my grandmothers were quite elderly, so I did not want to miss the opportunity of presenting Jesus to them. Because I was only at the beginning of my STEP studies and felt I was inexperienced in sharing the gospel, I asked God to send someone with experience leading people to Christ along with me. I prayed that God would send Pastor Tuyen Nguyen along with me. Pastor Tuyen was my STEP mentor and pastor at the Vietnamese Mennonite Church in Philadelphia.

About a week after my prayer, Pastor Tuyen approached me and asked if I would go to Vietnam with him. LMC leadership had asked him to travel to Vietnam and assist in the ordination of 26 new pastors. After hearing his invitation, I wanted to confirm that God was actually answering my specific prayer. "I will go if you travel with me to my hometown and pray for my family to receive Christ," I responded. He immediately agreed!

Romans 10:9 says: "If you declare with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." That was how my family, my grandmothers, uncles, aunts, friends, and neighbors accepted Christ.

A total of 72 people made a commitment to follow Jesus on that trip. Since that day, the believers continue to gather at different houses to worship God and study the Bible together. They are led by evangelist Huong Nguyen, Pastor Tuyen's aunt.

Since then, Upper Darby Mennonite Fellowship sent many more groups to Vietnam with the support of the Vietnamese Mennonite Church and Church For The Needy. Members of other local churches here asked these teams to reach out to their families, relatives, and friends in different towns and cities in Vietnam. The number of believers has grown to about 2,000 people and 11 congregations.

God's work involves repetitive cycles of planting and watering. Plant and water, plant and water plant and water.... God wants each of us to be a farmer modeled after Jesus, the Master farmer. God gives us the Seed of Christ to be planted. Each of us is given a field to tend. Even though we might think that the eternal destiny of our families, relatives, friends, and neighbors are our

responsibility, they really are not; God gives us the fields. God calls us to work the soil, plant the seed, and tend the crop, but God looks after the Word planted into people's lives. When scattering the Seed, we can't really control where it falls. We often do not know the condition of the soil, the openness a person has to God's word. Some falls on the footpath, on the rocky ground, and on thorn-infested ground. But some falls on fertile soil, which produces a great harvest! ■

Pastor Danh Ho focuses much of his ministry at Upper Darby Mennonite Fellowship on outreach to Vietnamese people in Philadelphia, North Carolina, and Vietnam. He is a STEP graduate.



LMC – VIETNAMESE CONNECTIONS

1957
First LMC Missionaries sent to Vietnam

1977–1983
Vietnamese Fellowship (Ephrata)

1986
Vietnamese Christian Fellowship Hawaii

1984
Vietnamese Mennonite Church (Philadelphia)

2007
Upper Darby Fellowship (Pa.)

2010
First LMC-related Vietnamese Mennonite Church Plants in Vietnam

2010
Church for the Needy (Philadelphia)

2009
Outreach to Vietnamese Community (North Carolina)

Đất Ẩn Giấu

NGƯỜI VIẾT DANH HO

Chúa chúng ta đã kể câu chuyện ngụ ngôn về người nông dân rải hạt giống trong Lu-ca 8:4-15 (Ma-thi-ơ 13:1-23; Mác 4:1-20). Chúa Jesus đã dùng ngụ ngôn này trong số những ngụ ngôn khác để dạy các môn đồ của Ngài về Nước Đức Chúa Trời.

Chúa Jesus đã kể ngụ ngôn cho một đám đông lớn tụ tập. Trong câu chuyện, một người nông dân rải hạt giống. Khi anh ta rải hạt giống, một số rơi xuống lối đi, một số rơi vào đất đá sỏi, một số rơi vào bụi gai và một số trên đất màu mỡ. Kết quả là chỉ có hạt giống trên đất màu mỡ tạo ra một vụ mùa.

Trong các sách phúc âm, chúng ta có cả câu chuyện ngụ ngôn và lời giải thích của Chúa Jesus về ý nghĩa của câu chuyện ngụ ngôn đó. Chúa Jesus giải thích rằng hạt giống là Lời của Chúa. Lối đi, đất đá sỏi, bụi gai và đất tốt đại diện cho những phản ứng khác nhau mà mọi người có khi nghe Lời của Chúa. Chúa Jesus đại diện cho người nông dân. Khi mọi người lắng nghe Chúa Jesus, sự sẵn sàng trong tâm lòng của họ quyết định liệu Lời Chúa có đâm rễ trong họ hay không. Chỉ những người nghe Lời của Chúa, hiểu Lời của Chúa, chấp nhận Lời của Chúa và bắt đầu hành động theo đó mới được biến đổi và tạo ra những công việc tốt.

Nhìn lại cuộc sống của tôi ở những thời điểm khác nhau, tôi có thể thấy những ví dụ về những phản ứng khác nhau này đối với Lời của Chúa trong cuộc sống của tôi. Lớn lên trong một gia đình có truyền thống tin vào việc thờ cúng thần tượng và tổ tiên, tôi không chấp nhận bất kỳ tôn giáo nào khác. Chúa đã sai nhiều mục sư Cơ đốc đến nói lời Chúa với tôi. Lúc đầu, tôi không nghe và không có gì đâm rễ. Sau đó, tôi giống như lối đi. Tôi lắng nghe nhưng ma quỷ đã đến và cướp lấy Lời Chúa ngay khi tôi nghe. Sau đó, tôi giống như đất đá sỏi. Lời Chúa mọc lên, nhưng sự nghi ngờ sẽ chiếm lấy, và cây con héo rữa. Cuối cùng, Lời Chúa đâm rễ, lớn lên, nhưng rồi những bụi gai của cuộc sống đã bóp nghẹt cây đang phát triển. Những lo lắng, giàu sang và sung sướng trong cuộc sống đã ngăn cản sinh thành trái chín.

Nhưng với Chúa, mọi sự đều có thể xảy ra. Mặt đất có thể thay đổi. Mưa có thể làm mềm đất cứng. Trên bề mặt, đất có thể trông cứng và khô, nhưng bên dưới bề mặt có đất tốt. Đất có thể bị đá và gai bao phủ, nhưng đất có thể được cày xới, biến thành đất tốt và loại bỏ cỏ dại.

Như Phao-lô đã nói với hội thánh Cô-rinh-tô: “Tôi đã trồng, A-bô-lô đã tưới, nhưng Đức Chúa Trời đã làm cho lớn lên” (1 Cô-rinh-tô 3:6). Chúa đã đặt không chỉ một, mà nhiều người khác nhau như Phao-lô và A-bô-lô vào cuộc sống của tôi. Hạt giống của Đấng Christ thường xuyên được gieo trồng và trồng lại vào tâm lòng và tâm trí của tôi cho đến khi đâm rễ. Sau đó, hạt giống cần được tưới nước và Chúa nuôi dưỡng để hạt giống lớn lên.

Trong ngụ ngôn, chúng ta đọc về những hạt giống rơi trên đất màu mỡ và tạo ra một vụ mùa bội thu. Nhưng phải mất bao lâu mới tạo ra được vụ mùa? Điều gì đã xảy ra trong khoảng thời gian từ khi trồng đến khi thu hoạch? Người nông dân đã mất rất nhiều thời gian và công sức để chăm sóc đồng ruộng.

Trong trường hợp của tôi, nhiều người khác nhau đã mất thời gian và công sức để nuôi dưỡng tôi đến khi tôi thành trái chín. Tôi đã chấp nhận Đấng Christ và được báp-têm vào năm 1992. Sau nhiều biến cố khác nhau của cuộc đời, tôi đã hoàn toàn dâng cuộc sống của tôi cho Chúa vào năm 2009. Cùng năm đó, tôi đăng ký vào STEP, một chương trình đào tạo lãnh đạo và mục vụ của LMC. Trong khi tham dự STEP, nằm trong mục vụ bên ngoài của Liên Hữu Mennonite Upper Darby và Hội Thánh Mennonite Việt Nam, tôi bắt đầu đi đến North Carolina. Việc tham gia mục vụ đó là một phần của nhiệm vụ đào tạo thực địa của tôi trong STEP.

Có một cộng đồng nhỏ những người Việt sống ở Camden Point và Columbia, North Carolina với khoảng cách lẫn lộn là 300 dặm và 350 dặm. Chúng tôi có hai nhóm chính thay phiên nhau đến ở đó để rao giảng và nuôi dưỡng các tín đồ. Một số tín đồ Đấng Christ từ khu vực Philadelphia cũng chuyển đến khu vực này để tìm kiếm

việc làm. Một số người dân địa phương cũng trở thành tín đồ mới thông qua công việc truyền giáo của chúng tôi. Kể từ năm 2009, khoảng 66 người đã chấp nhận Đấng Christ. Chúng tôi tiếp tục đi đến North Carolina để đào tạo các nhà lãnh đạo.

Trong năm đầu tiên của STEP, một trong những nhiệm vụ của mỗi học viên là làm việc với gia phả của mình. Đó là khi tôi cảnh tỉnh tình trạng tâm linh của nhiều người trong đại gia đình của tôi vẫn sống ở Việt Nam. Họ vẫn sống với các tập tục thờ cúng thần tượng và tổ tiên. Nhiệm vụ đó của STEP đã đưa tôi trở lại Việt Nam vào tháng 3 năm 2010.

Tôi trở về Việt Nam để thu thập thông tin tôi cần cho nhiệm vụ của STEP và mang Tin Lành của Chúa Jesus đến gia đình tôi vẫn sống ở đó. Khi tôi trở về, cả hai người ông của tôi đã qua đời. Cả hai bà của tôi đều khá lớn tuổi, vì vậy tôi không muốn bỏ lỡ cơ hội trình bày Chúa Jesus cho họ. Bởi vì tôi chỉ mới bắt đầu học tập STEP và cảm thấy mình thiếu kinh nghiệm trong việc chia sẻ phúc âm, tôi đã xin Chúa gửi một người có kinh nghiệm dẫn dắt mọi người đến với Đấng Christ đi cùng với tôi. Tôi cầu nguyện rằng Chúa sẽ gửi Mục sư Tuyền Nguyễn đi cùng tôi. Mục sư Tuyền là thầy dạy của tôi ở STEP và là mục sư tại Hội Thánh Mennonite Việt Nam ở Philadelphia.

Khoảng một tuần sau khi tôi cầu nguyện, Mục sư Tuyền đã liên hệ với tôi và hỏi tôi có đến Việt Nam với ông ấy không. Ban lãnh đạo LMC đã yêu cầu ông đến Việt Nam và hỗ trợ cho việc phong chức 26 mục sư mới. Sau khi nghe lời mời của ông ấy, tôi muốn xác nhận rằng Chúa thực sự đáp lại lời cầu nguyện cụ thể của tôi. Tôi trả lời: “Tôi sẽ đi nếu ông đi cùng tôi đến quê nhà của tôi và cầu nguyện cho gia đình tôi nhận được Đấng Christ”. Ông ấy đã đồng ý ngay!

Rô-ma 10:9 chép rằng: “Vậy nếu miệng ngươi xưng Đức Chúa Jê-sus ra và lòng ngươi tin rằng Đức Chúa Trời đã khiến Ngài từ kẻ chết sống lại, thì ngươi sẽ được cứu”. Đó là cách gia đình tôi, bà tôi, chú, dì, bạn bè và hàng xóm chấp nhận Đấng Christ. Tổng cộng có 72 người đã cam kết theo Chúa Jesus trong chuyến đi đó. Kể từ ngày đó, các tín đồ tiếp tục tụ tập tại các ngôi nhà khác nhau để thờ phượng Chúa và cùng nhau học Kinh Thánh. Họ được dẫn dắt bởi người giảng Tin Lành Hương Nguyễn, cô của Mục sư Tuyền.

Kể từ đó, Liên Hữu Mennonite Upper Darby đã gửi thêm nhiều nhóm đến Việt Nam với sự hỗ trợ của Hội Thánh Mennonite Việt Nam và Hội Thánh Church for the Needy. Các thành viên của các hội thánh địa phương khác ở đây đã hỏi xin các nhóm này đến với gia đình, người thân và bạn bè của họ ở các thị trấn và thành phố khác nhau ở Việt Nam. Số tín đồ đã tăng lên khoảng 2.000 người và 11 hội thánh.

Công việc của Chúa bao gồm các chu kỳ trồng và tưới nước lặp đi lặp lại. Trồng và tưới nước, trồng và tưới nước, trồng và tưới nước... Chúa muốn mỗi chúng ta trở thành một người nông dân làm giống như Chúa Jesus, là Thầy gieo giống. Chúa cho chúng ta Hạt giống của Đấng Christ để gieo trồng. Mỗi chúng ta được giao cho một cánh đồng để chăm sóc. Mặc dù chúng ta có thể nghĩ rằng vận mệnh đời đời của gia đình, người thân, bạn bè và hàng xóm là trách nhiệm của chúng ta, nhưng thực sự không phải vậy; Chúa cho chúng ta những cánh đồng. Chúa kêu gọi chúng ta làm đất, gieo hạt giống và chăm sóc mùa màng, nhưng Chúa chăm sóc Lời Chúa được gieo vào đời sống con người. Khi rải Hạt giống, chúng ta không thể thực sự kiểm soát nơi Hạt giống rơi xuống. Chúng ta thường không biết tình trạng của đất, sự cỗi mồi của một người đối với Lời của Chúa. Một số rơi trên lối đi, trên đất đá sỏi, và trên mặt đất đầy bụi gai. Nhưng một số rơi trên đất màu mỡ, tạo ra một vụ mùa thu hoạch lớn! ■

Mục sư Danh Ho tập trung phần lớn mục vụ của mình tại Liên Hữu Mennonite Upper Darby về các mục vụ bên ngoài đến người Việt Nam ở Philadelphia, North Carolina và Việt Nam. Ông đã tốt nghiệp chương trình huấn luyện mục vụ STEP.



Day by Day with God

BY CRYSTAL NGUYEN

In the 1980's, the Vietnamese Mennonite Church in Philadelphia had about ten people. They met in a second floor room rented from the Second Mile Center every Sunday. The leader was pastor Quang Tran. Pastor Quang served as a missionary for Vietnamese people in Philadelphia and gradually more people joined the Sunday service.

The Vietnamese congregation moved to a bigger space in the basement of a Church on 48th and Baltimore Pike in Philadelphia. In 1990, after much time in prayer, Pastor Quang and the congregation finally purchased a building for our church to meet. God built His people, the Vietnamese Mennonite Church, on 63rd and Woodland Avenue in Philadelphia.

Pastor Tuyen Nguyen, who later became bishop, followed after pastor Quang Tran. Today, Peter Nguyen serves as associate pastor, and Pastor Daniel Tran helps with the church in its activities.

The Vietnamese Mennonite Church worships on the third floor in Vietnamese, and the Church for the Needy meets on the third floor and worships in English. The Sunday worship attendance for both the Vietnamese Mennonite Church and Church for the Needy averages about 35. Sunday school precedes the worship service, which begins at 11:00 am for both congregations.

God gave our pastors a vision to send many members from our congregation to the LMC STEP program for leadership and ministry training. Some leaders from the Vietnamese church in California enrolled in STEP.

The Philadelphia district includes another Vietnamese congregation that meets at 69th and Upper Darby. Luc Pham also attended STEP and was called from the Vietnamese Men-

nonite Church to serve as pastor of the Upper Darby Mennonite Fellowship. This congregation of about 25 people holds services every Sunday. Upper Darby Mennonite Fellowship reaches out to the local community, sends teams to North Carolina, and supports a missionary ministry to rural Vietnam.

Pastor Danh Ho focuses much of his ministry on outreach to Vietnamese people in all three regions. Since 2009, pastor Danh Ho has traveled from Philadelphia to North Carolina every other weekend to teach Bible and lead worship with the Vietnamese group there. In 2010, Pastor Danh began traveling to Vietnam once or twice a year and serves as a missionary. Bishop Tuyen travels to Vietnam three or four times a year. God has given him a vision to develop and train leaders in the new congregations there.

Although we are a small group of Vietnamese people, who, more and more frequently, do not speak our mother language and live in a foreign land, we are glad that God brought us to this place. Day by day, we grow closer to Christ. God speaks through our lips, works through our hands, and fulfills in us the great purpose of God's will. God holds our hands, and we hold the hands of our brothers and sisters as we walk on the way to be more like Jesus. ■

Crystal Nguyen is a daughter of pastor Peter Nguyen from the Vietnamese Mennonite Church in Philadelphia. She is a STEP graduate and serves at Upper Darby Mennonite Fellowship and travels with the teams to North Carolina.



Vietnamese Mennonite Church worship service. Photos by Obed Arango (top) and Crystal Nguyen.



Left: Church retreat at Camp Swatara



CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE:

Krall's Mennonite Church

DISTRICT: Lebanon

LOCATION: Lebanon, PA

DATE OF FOUNDING: 1811

AVERAGE SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE: 41

WORSHIP SERVICE:

Sunday School – 9:00 am

Worship Service – 10:00 am



PASTOR: David R. Martin
pictured with wife Karen

A year ago, one of the grandmothers from Krall's Mennonite Church was on her way to visit her siblings in Lancaster County. She was carrying six loaves of freshly baked bread, and she was singing as she drove. When she looked in her rear-view mirror, she was surprised to see the blue and red flashing lights of a police cruiser. She pulled over and waited for the officer. When he stepped up to her door, he saw the loaves of bread on the passenger seat and said, "What are those?"

Our grandmother said, "They're loaves of bread I baked. Would you like one?"

He politely declined, while stating that her speed had been slightly over the limit. After receiving a warning, she drove on without a citation. (Read on for the rest of the story.) That incident exemplifies the demeanor of our church – not the speeding part – but the fact that we are a friendly group of people with a lot of warmth!

Each September, we hold Friendship Weekend when we turn over our parking lot at no charge to community folks who set up tables for a yard sale. Once a month after worship, we hold potluck fellowship meals featuring the best home-cooked food in all of Lebanon County! Every July we schedule a church retreat at Camp Swatara in Bethel, Pa. And we know how to have camp fun. At the 2017 retreat, marauding Krall's members hoisted high up between two trees Pastor David Martin's favorite Pittsburgh Steelers chair! Every spring we head to Ephrata for a bowling night, concluded by snacks and fellowship at the home of one of our couples. In short, we're a church that enjoys the warmth of fellowship.

Souls are warmed Sunday mornings with heartfelt devotions during our fellowship time, lively Sunday school discussions, and worship in Spirit and truth. Renewal services are held every spring, featuring a different guest speaker each year. Three years in a row, three separate speakers told one young couple from our church that they should minister overseas. After the third such remark, they became full-time servants for Christ in Russia. During recent renewal services, the congregation was called to engage our Muslim neighbors with the gospel.

Much of Krall's is devoted to warming others outside our walls. Our monthly Sewing Circle meets to knot quilts for overseas distribution by Mennonite Central Committee. One church member, recently called to heaven, assembled over a lifetime more than 30,000 cloth bags for health and education kits that were sent all over the world.

Krall's is part of the Heidelberg Area Churches Ministerium, which serves weekly free lunches and hosts advent services, summer concerts in a nearby park, and a Christmas concert each year.

As for our sister pulled over for speeding: when the officer told her she was not getting a fine, she smiled, grabbed a loaf of bread, and insisted, "Here, have a loaf of bread!" This time he received the bread – and some of Krall's warmth! ■

Right: Children's Sunday School Class

Far Right: Monthly Breakfast includes home-made pasteries



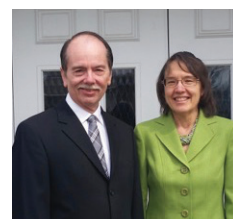
DISTRICT: Eastern Ohio

LOCATION: North Lima, OH

DATE OF FOUNDING: 1948

AVERAGE SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE: 86

WORSHIP SERVICE: 9:30 am



PASTOR: Robert Wengerd
pictured with wife Dianne



CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE:

North Lima Mennonite Church

North Lima Mennonite Church envisions itself as a community of believers offering healing and hope to the world. The early months of 2019 presented a very difficult time in the life of our church as sickness, death, surgeries, and people otherwise going through hard times besieged us. One situation involved the sudden decline and death of an older man. Another situation involved a lady going into a diabetic coma, being in ICU, needing surgery, and having an extensive time of rehabilitation. A third situation involved the sudden, tragic death of a 20-year-old. In each case, people from the church served as the hands and feet of Jesus in their prayers, visitation, meal ministry, and other practical needs. As situations required, financial resources became available and were supplied to others in unexpected ways.

We feel blessed that God has identified and called a number of pastors from within our church fellowship, and then asked us to give them away. Several years ago, we had two young men and their families accept the call to pastor in other churches. One of the men had gone through the STEP program and now serves another LMC church. We are also blessed to have an individual who is serving full-time with a Wycliffe Associates group, working with Bible translation efforts. And we are blessed to have three men in our congregation who are involved with the area Gideons.

The broader community knows our congregation as the church with the concerts. Over the past 20 years we have hosted many gospel groups and artists. A number of these musicians were nationally-known, Southern gospel groups such as the Toney Brothers, the Blackwood Quartet, The Inspirations, Squire Parsons, Down East Boys, Soul'd Out Quartet, The Anchormen, and Dixie Melody Boys.

The community also knows us as the church with the breakfasts. We serve a monthly breakfast buffet in our fellowship hall, which is available to anyone on a donation basis. This attracts many people from outside our church. In turn, the donations for the breakfast help us to support a number of missionaries and ministries.

Our church building is located close to motels by the Ohio Turnpike exit/entrance. Some of these motels provide lodging to people who are in transition, who have experienced loss or broken relationships, or are otherwise struggling for survival. We receive requests for assistance, which has provided opportunities to not only meet practical needs, but to provide a gospel witness. Some of these individuals then attended our worship service for a time. Several joined our fellowship of believers.

As pastor, I periodically ask the Lord to both surprise and amaze us. We continue to be fascinated by the ways God acts in response to this kind of prayer. Since we are located just two miles off the turnpike, it's a convenient place to stop for worship for those that are traveling east or west. You are welcome! ■

FROM AROUND LMC

Congregations who would like to report briefly on events in their congregation should send a descriptive paragraph and a high resolution picture to smartin@LMCchurches.org.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CURRICULUM MEETING

On April 27, Children's Ministry leaders from around LMC met at the LMC offices for a morning of resourcing and fellowship. The topic for the event was "This Sacred Commission: Why do we do what we do?" The seminar emphasized the worth of investing our time and energy into children's ministry. Significant time was spent on understanding and promoting the spiritual life and spiritual growth of children. Marcia Mylin organized this repeating event.

PREPARE THE SOIL, MISSION MANHEIM

The Manheim district of LMC has pursued a process to work together at ways to better engage the neighborhoods around the congregations in the district and specifically in the town of Manheim. Bishop David Musser has encouraged this process in the churches in the district. A team from leaders in the district has come together to organize a change process. As part of their process, Church on the Other Side was asked to resource leaders over three Sunday evenings. Brinton Rutherford (who filled in for Omar Guzman) and Josef Berthold addressed the group. Musser also invited the Lebanon district to attend. Held at Manheim Mennonite Church, the three-evening event, was extremely well attended.

PALMER BECKER VISITS LANCASTER

Becker, author of the booklet, *What is an Anabaptist Christian*, made stops at EMM, Landis Homes, MCC, Lancaster Mennonite School, the LMC office, and other groups in the area. The mid-May visit was designed to build relationships and

promote his newest book, *Anabaptist Essentials*.

NATIONAL SERVICE DISCUSSION

The recent creation and activity of the National Commission on Military, National and Public Service, created by the US congress, has captured the attention and prompted discussion among various peace church groups. MCC hosted a day-long discussion at the Welcoming Place on June 4 in an effort to better understand what the National Commission on Military, National and Public Service is attempting to do and to prepare a unified response with feedback to the Commission. Participants included The Brethren Church, Church of the Brethren, Old Order Amish Church, Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Central Committee, Evana Network, CMC, Bruderhof Communities, Beachy Amish Mennonites, LMC, Groffdale Mennonite Church. LMC sent Keith Weaver and Brinton Rutherford to the gathering.

CMC EMERGE



CMC (Conservative Mennonite Conference) has offered LMC congregations access to its Emerge program. Emerge is a one year, church and community internship program. With weekend retreats, practical ministry, home study, and face-face meetings with a mentor, students build ministry skills. The program cost is \$100. Everence generously covers all retreat costs except travel. Learn more: cmcrosedale.org/ministries/emerge

MULTIPLICATION RESOURCES IN SPANISH

Leaders who are more comfortable read-

ing in Spanish should check out the following free, downloadable books and booklets from Exponential. Church on the Other Side recommends connection to Exponential as opportunity allows for resourcing on church multiplication. exponential.org/recursos-espanol

RECURSOS DE MULTIPLICACIÓN EN ESPAÑOL

Los líderes que se sienten más cómodos leyendo en español deben dar una mirada a los siguientes libros y folletos gratuitos y descargables de Exponential. Church on the Other Side (La Iglesia al Otro Lado) recomienda la conexión a Exponencial según la oportunidad lo permita para recursos en la multiplicación de la iglesia. exponential.org/recursos-espanol

HUMAN SEXUALITY SERIES



Weaverland Anabaptist Faith Community held a six-session sermon series on human sexuality in May and June. The link to listen to the sermon series is weaverland.org/watch/. On June 2 and 16, as an extension of the six-week sermon series on human sexuality, Ken Nafziger, MD, presented two Sunday school sessions entitled "Making Sense of the Current Gender Debate." Dr. Nafziger addressed the current cultural trends that are shaping the debate around gender and gender dysphoria. Nafziger has 17 years experience as a medical doctor who practiced in York County, teaches as a Lecturer in Bioethics at Evangelical Seminary in Myerstown, and serves as executive pastor at Timberline, an Anabaptist congregation.

NEWS NOTES

MINISTERIAL ACTIVITIES

The following men and women were licensed, ordained or installed in recent months:

Bernardo Rodriguez (*Linda*), was ordained as co-pastor at Iglesia Cristiana Valle de Jesús.

Brandon Dasilva was licensed for specific ministry as pastor of student ministries at Weaverland Anabaptist Faith Community.

Carlos Saravia (*Emelva*), was licensed toward ordination as lead pastor at Evangelical Garifuna Church de Houston.

Edward Sharpe was ordained as lead pastor at Rock Hill Mennonite Church.

Jane E. Good (*Travis*), was licensed for specific ministry in Christian counseling at Alive Church Ephrata.

Lew Wagner (*Jean*), was ordained as lead pastor at Erb Mennonite Church.

Linda Rodriguez (*Bernardo*), was ordained as co-pastor at Iglesia Cristiana Valle de Jesús.

Matthew Cordella-Bontrager (*Rachel*), was ordained for a pastoral role as a missionary to Kosovo.

Michael Deckman (*Lori*), was installed as Pastor at WayLife Community.

Richard Rutter (*Jean*), was ordained as Pastor at Crossroads Mennonite Church.

Scot Wilson (*Sharon*), was ordained as Lead Pastor at Michigan Avenue Mennonite Church.

MCUSA AND LMC LEADERS MEET



On March 29, leaders from Mennonite Church USA met with LMC leaders. This annual meeting was arranged several years ago as a way to maintain relationship with one another. Glen Guyton, Joy Sutter, and Michael Danner met with LMC officers and some staff who then gathered for a meal and sharing.

STEP CELEBRATION

On May 11, the 13th STEP class celebrated completion of their three years of work. Austin Horning, Heidi Kanagy and Timothy Martin brought the number of STEP graduates to 120. All three students provided a short summary of their STEP experience, and Tom Eshleman, pastor at Groffdale MC and Year



1 preaching instructor, provided a charge to the students. Each student earned a Certificate in Pastoral Ministry from LMC and earned 30 transferrable credits through EMU. Both Austin and Timothy are second-generation students of STEP. Both of their fathers completed the program in some of the earliest cohorts.

LMC LEGACY FOUNDATION

The Legacy Foundation awarded grants to the following projects:



► **Eastern Mennonite University** was awarded \$69,000 for "Christian Faith Communities Improving Outcomes in Mental Illnesses and Addictions." The focus of the grant is to build the capacity of Christian faith communities to support individuals and families living with mental illnesses or addictions.

► **Joseph Wesley Furlong, Sr.** was awarded \$59,400 for "City Flourish." The focus of the grant is to develop a research, development and training center dedicated to equipping the church for effective community development.

NEW STAFF

Sherri Martin began work as an administrative assistant on March 25. As full-time staff, she will focus on support for the Credentialing Commission, *Shalom News*, and the Moderator. Sherri and her husband Mel are members of Weaverland Anabaptist Faith Community. She serves on the Elder Team there.



Felixa Valladares-de Kunkle began work in a part-time administrative support role on March 25. Felixa, although native to Honduras, met her husband, Dean, in Germany. She speaks Spanish, German and English and has extensive cross-cultural experience. She will serve as receptionist, web and social media support, and event support. They have a son, Ben.



FAN THE FLAME

Youth Workers are invited to a retreat to support and encourage their ministry to junior high and senior high youth. Participants will be asked to take a courageous look beneath the waterline of ministry. The retreat will occur at the MCC Welcoming Place in Akron (21 S. 12th St.) on October 11-12, 2019. Registration required at: eventbrite.com/e/youth-leader-resource-event-tickets-55369292043

UPCOMING EVENTS

Complete calendar and more details available at LMCchurches.org.

Monday Night Prayer Gathering

Every first Monday of each month

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

LMC office, Lancaster, Pa.

717-293-5246

Thursday Night Quarterly Prayer Meeting

July 18, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Harvest Room, Landis Homes, Lititz, Pa.

717-293-5246

LMC Youth Worker Monthly Breakfast

Every fourth Tuesday of each month

8:00 – 9:30 a.m.

Lyndon City Diner, Lancaster, Pa.

facebook.com/groups/LMCYouthWorkers

Global Fair

July 13, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

1719 Hans Herr House, Willow Street, Pa.

emm.org/globalfair

Outdoor Historical and Inspirational Service

July 21, 6:30 p.m.

1855 Allegheny Mennonite Meetinghouse

39 Horning Road, Mohnton, Pa.

717-278-8459

STEP Orientation

August 24, 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

LMC office, Lancaster, Pa.

Landis Homes Fellowship Day

September 14, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

1001 East Oregon Road Lititz, Pa 17543

landishomes.org

Fall Leadership Assembly

September 28, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Discerning God's Mission and Calling for LMC

Elizabethtown Mennonite Church

300 S. Spruce St., Elizabethtown, Pa

Free, lunch included.

Registration required: 717-293-5246

Fan the Flame – Youth Workers Retreat

October 11 – 12

The MCC Welcoming Place

Registration required. See link on News Notes page.

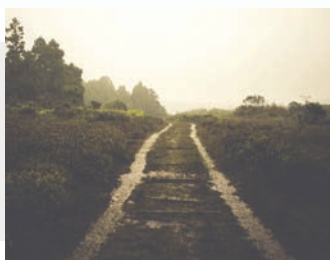
Join us!

Commissioning service

Sunday, July 7, 6:30 p.m.

Black Rock Retreat, Quarryville, PA 17566

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Hans Herr House

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