



Shalom NEWS

LMC *a fellowship of anabaptist churches*

JULY–SEPTEMBER 2022



Who Is My Neighbor?

God's love transcends borders, cultures, and languages.



CELEBRATING *the* RETIREMENT of L. Keith Weaver, LMC Moderator for twenty-two years of faithful service

*Everyone is invited to an informal drop-in dessert reception
to celebrate with Keith and Joanne Weaver.*

**Sunday, September 25, 2022
2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
450 North Prince Street, Lancaster, Pa.**

Please RSVP by September 10th to Sherri Martin
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ON THE COVER

Main photo: Friends from Parkview Mennonite Church welcome a family of seven from Afghanistan at the Harrisburg airport on December 1, 2021.

Small photo: Youth participate in the after-school CORE tutoring program.

An Afghan refugee family enjoys the nourishment and hospitality of the host family after a long journey. Photo supplied by the authors.



Reaching My Neighbor

BY SHELDON AND ASHLEY MARTIN

Who is my neighbor? Have you found yourself asking this question? The world we live in is divided into so many categories that we easily get swept into the idea that we are confined to a certain ethnicity, political party, geographic location, or the various other categories we could add to the list. Have we become so earthly-minded and agenda-driven that we struggle to truly look at people the way God looks at people, and therefore incorrectly identify who our neighbor really is?

Perhaps we have thought that our neighbor is anyone who lives next door, but what if I told you that while that is true, your neighbor is also the orphaned child living 6,000 miles away, the widow three doors down, or the refugee family who recently moved locally? Ephesians 4:1-3 reads:

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.



Celebrating a birthday with our new neighbors and friends.

Left: Ashley Martin caring for children.

Christ has asked us to live out our calling with peace, humility, gentleness, and love. God has called each one of us to reach out to our neighbors and care for the hurting.

Recently God opened the doors for tens of thousands of Afghan refugees to be resettled across the United States. We now have many Afghan families living locally, to all of us! This gives us the perfect opportunity to live out our calling as Christians by showing these friends peace in the midst of their worlds being turned upside down, by showing them gentleness and love, and ultimately being the hands and feet of Jesus. A number of volunteers from our church, Parkview Mennonite Church, along with other Martindale District congregations, have come together to work with Church World Services to provide teams to walk alongside the refugee families as they adjust to life in the United States. Let us paint a picture of what this has looked like.

The day before Thanksgiving, we received news that a family of seven was set to fly into Harrisburg airport on December 1, 2021. The refugee family would live with a host family from our church. It was our team's responsibility to provide any needed

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furniture, toiletries, food, car seats, or other essential items. The excitement was high as we planned to get things ready. The only information we had were their ages and gender: four girls and one boy, ages one to fifteen. We did not know if they would speak any English, what would they be like, what experiences they had gone through, or what they were feeling.

On the evening of December 1, our team drove to the airport to meet and pick them up! Many prayers were sent heavenward, on their behalf, as we realized just how big and overwhelming this would be to all of them! We waited by the baggage claim, holding our homemade welcome sign, and feeling a little anxious at meeting these dear souls for the first time. Soon we saw them arrive, with only a few bags holding all of their life possessions. The first meeting was precious, anointed by God, and ordained by His hands. God brought these exact souls into our lives for a purpose. Although they were strangers to us, it felt oddly like we had known them for a long time.

That night the refugee family was so grateful to learn that we would all be there for them. We would be their friends and

walk alongside them. The oldest daughter spoke some English, which was a huge blessing! On the ride home that night the daughter said in her broken English, with deep emotion, “We thought we would be all alone. We were so scared, but then we saw all of you and now we are so happy, thank you!” Tears filled my eyes at the realization of the magnitude of heartbreak these refugees had faced. We would offer them hope and help them piece their lives back together.

Now, a few months later, this refugee family has become some of our dearest friends. Our team has had the privilege of driving them to many doctors, dentists, and other various appointments. We helped them navigate grocery stores, guided them in becoming renters of their own houses, and helped them furnish their homes. We watched the children begin school and supported their families as they adjusted to new schedules. We celebrated with the father as he started his first job in the USA. We have enjoyed countless meals of rice, biryani, and naan on the floor, Afghan style. Our children have become good friends with their children, despite not knowing the same language.

We walked with them and listened as they poured out their hearts about life’s disappointments, as they shared how difficult it is to be missing their family and loved ones back home. We laughed with them as we encountered language interpretation mishaps and other silly cultural differences. We also learned a lot about their religion, Islam, the many different times of day that they pray, what halal meat is, and the five pillars of their faith. We listened to much of their life story, but most importantly, we shared the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them. While they are not yet at a place where they believe Christ died for their sins, it is our hope that someday they will realize this. By faith, we believe we are called to prepare the soil and plant the seed, which God will transform into a beautiful, vibrant fruit! The father of the refugee family asked us, “Why do you do all of this, for us?” We replied, “Because God has asked us to.”

We choose to live out God’s call on our lives. To care for our neighbors with peace, gentleness, love, and kindness. The neighbors in this story are an Afghan refugee family. Who is the neighbor in your story? Ephesians 4:32 reads:

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

Brothers and sisters, let us be tenderhearted and allow the gift that Christ has given us, to spur us on to reach out to our neighbors, offering the love of Christ to all! ■

Sheldon and Ashley Martin and their four children live in Denver, Pa. Sheldon serves as an associate pastor at Parkview Mennonite Church.



Boys enjoying a campfire at Sheldon and Ashley Martin’s home.

Church World Service

Church Word Service has refugee resettlement branches working around the United States.

For more than 30 years, Church World Service’s Lancaster branch has welcomed thousands of new neighbors from around the world to our country. Through partnerships with faith groups, organizations and individuals, Church World Service empowers our newest neighbors to build new lives in peace and security, providing up to 5 years of service and support.

Refugees’ Economic Impact in Lancaster County, Pa.



2,154

Number of refugees who resettled in Lancaster County from 2009–2014.



8%

Amount of growth in the overall county population for which growth in the foreign-born population accounted.



\$1.3 billion

The amount foreign-born residents contributed to the Gross Domestic Product in the county in 2014.



\$178.2 million

The estimated amount by which immigrants increased the total housing value of the county from 2000–2014.

Source: New American Economy’s “New Americans in Lancaster” report

زما ګاونډي ته رسېدګي کول

د شيلدن او اشلي مارتين له خوا

درلود. لومړۍ لينډه ډېره قيمتي وه، خدای مسيح کړې وه او د هغه په لاسونو ټاکل شوي وه. خدای دا ټاکلي روحونه زموږ په ژوند کې د يو هدف لپاره راوستل. که څه هم دوی له موږ څخه پردي وو، خو داسې احساس مو کاوه لکه موږ چې هغوی له اوږدې مودې راهيسې پېژنو.

په دې شپه دا کډواله کورنۍ هغه مهال ډېره خوشاله شوه چې پوهه شوه، موږ ټول به د هغوی لپاره هلته واوسو. موږ به د دوی ملګري يو او له دوی سره يو ځای به څو. مشري لور يو څه په انگليسي خبرې کولای شوې، کومه چې يو ستر برکت وو! هغه شپه کور ته پر لاره د دوی لور په ماته ماته انگليسي ژبه په ژورو احساساتو سره وويل، «موږ فکر کاوه چې موږ به بېخي يواځې يو. موږ ډېر وېرېدلې وو، خو کله چې مو تاسې ټول وليدلئ او اوس موږ ډېر خوشاله يو، له تاسې څخه مننه!»، کله چې ما د زړه ماتېدو هغه اندازه وليده چې دا کډوال ورسره مخ شوي وو، سترګې مې له اوښکو ډکې سوئ. موږ به دوی ته هيله ورکړو، او له هغوی سره به مرسته وکړو چې يو ځل بيا خپل ژوند له پېله شروع کړي.

اوس يو څو مياشتې وروسته، دا کډواله کورنۍ زموږ له ګرانو ملګرو څخه دي. زموږ ټيم دا افتخار درلود چې دوی يې ډېرو ډاکټرانو، د غاښونو متخصصينو او نورو ګڼو ليدنو کتنو ته بېولي دي. موږ له دوی سره د خوراكي توکو پلورنځي په تګ راتګ کې مرسته وکړه، دوی ته مو لارښوونه وکړه چې د خپلو کورونو کرايه ورکونکي شي، او د دوی د کورونو په سمبالولو کې مو مرسته وکړه. ماشومان مو وليدل چې ښوونځي يې پيل کړ او په نوي مهال وېش کې د اعياريدو لپاره يې د خپلو کورنيو ملاتړ وکړ. کله چې يې پلار په امريکا متحده ايالاتو کې لومړی دنده پيل کړه، موږ له هغه سره د خوښۍ جشن جوړ کړ. موږ د وريجو، برياني او ډوډۍ بې شمېره افغاني خوراکونو څخه خوند اخستې. زموږ ماشومان د دوی د ماشومانو ښه ملګري دي، سره له دې چې ټول په يوه ژبه سره نه پوهېږي.

موږ له دوی سره قدم وهل او کله چې دوی د ژوند د ناهيليو په اړه د خپلو زړونو غږ راوويست موږ دوی ته غوږ ونيو، دوی له موږ سره شريکه کړه چې د خپلو کورنيو او زړه ته نژدې خلکو تر شا پرېښودل او د هغوی يادول څومره ستونزمن وي. کله چې د ژبې د ژباړې د تېروتنې او نورو بې معنا کلتوري توپيرونو سره مخ شوو، نو موږ له دوی سره وځنډل. موږ همدا راز د دوی د دين اسلام، د ډېرو بېلا بېلو وختونو چې دوی پکې هره ورځ لمونځ کوي، دا چې حلال څه معنا، او د دوی د عقېدې د پنځو بناوو په اړه ډېر څه زده کړل. موږ د دوی د ژوند ډېره برخه کيسه واورېده، خو تر ټولو مهمه دا وه چې موږ له دوی سره د عيسی مسيح انجيل شريک کړ. په داسې حال کې چې دوی هغه حالت ته لا نه دي رسيدلي چې په دې باور ولري چې عيسی مسيح د دوی د ګناهونو له امله مړ شوی و، موږ هيله لرو چې يوه ورځ به دوی په دې حقيقت پوه شي. د عقېدې له رويه، موږ باور لرو چې له موږ غوښتنه شوې چې ځمکې ته بوټي او تخم برابر کړو، کوم به چې خدای په يو ښکلي او خوځنده مېوه بدل کړي. د دې کډوالي کورنۍ پلار له موږ پوښتنه وکړه، «تاسې زموږ لپاره دا هر څه ولې کوئ؟» موږ «ځواب ورکړ، «ځکه چې خدای موږ څخه همدا غوښتي».

موږ پرېکړه کړې چې د خدای دعوت به په خپل ژوند کې تر سره کوو. خپلو ګاونډيانو ته په سوله، نرمۍ، مينه او مهربانۍ پاملرنه وکړو. په دې کيسه کې ګاونډيان يوه افغانه کډواله کورنۍ ده. ستاسې په کيسه کې ګاونډی څوک دی؟ په اپريل ۲۰۲۲ کې راغلي

پر يو بل مهربانه، نرم زړې واوسئ، او يو بل ته پېښه کوئ، ځکه چې د عيسی «مسيح له رويه خدای به تاسې وپېښي».

خوښو ورونو، راځئ نرم زړې واوسو او هغې ډالۍ ته اجازه ورکړو چې عيسی مسيح موږ ته راکړي ده، تر څو خپلو ګاونډيانو ته د رسېدګي لپاره موږ وهڅوي، او هغه ټولو ته. د عيسی مسيح د مينې وړاندې کول دي

زما ګاونډی څوک دی؟ ايا کله دي له خانه دا پوښتنه کړې؟ هغه نړۍ په ډېرو طبقو وېشل شوې چې موږ پکې ژوند کوو، او موږ په اسانۍ سره په دې فکر کې غورځوی چې موږ تر ټاکلي توکم، سياسي ګوند، جغرافيايي موقعيت، يا ګڼو نورو هغو طبقو پورې محدود يو چې موږ يې دې فهرست ته اضافه کولای شو. ايا موږ تر دې حده د ځمکو چارو پورې نرلي او پروګرام محوره ګرځېدلي يو چې موږ په ريښتيني معنا خلکو ته په هغه نظر نسو کتلاي په کوم نظر چې خدای خلکو ته ګوري او په همدې ډول خپل ګاونډي په حقيقي شکل نسو درکولای

شايد موږ او تاسې دا فکر کړی وي چې زموږ ګاونډی هغه څوک دی چې په څنګ کور کې ژوند کوي، په داسې حال کې چې دا خبره هم رښتيا ده، خو که چيرې زه دا درته ووايم چې ستا ګاونډی هغه يتيم ماشوم هم دی چې ستا څخه ۶۰۰۰ ميله لرې ژوند کوي، درې کوره کشته ميشته يوه ګورنده، يا هغه کډواله کورنۍ ده، څوک چې تازه په تازه دې ځای ته راغلي ده، نو؟ اپريل ۲۰۲۱ وايي

د رب د يو بنده په توګه، زه له تاسې غوښتنه کوم چې تاسې داسې ژوند وکړئ، کوم ژوند چې له هغې بلنې سره مناسب وي چې تاسې تر لاسه کړي. په بشپړ ډول متواضع او نرم واوسئ؛ صبر ولرئ، يو بل په مينه وزغمئ. د سولې د تړون په مرسته د روح د يووالي د ساتلو هره ممکنه هڅه وکړئ

عيسی مسيح موږ ته ويلي چې موږ خپل دعوت د سولې، عاجزۍ، نرمۍ او مينې سره تېر کړو. خدای له موږ هر يو غوښتي چې خپلو ګاونډيو ته رسېدګي وکړو او زيانمنو ته پاملرنه وکړو

په وروستيو کې خدای د لسګونه زرو افغان کډوالو په وړاندې په ټولو متحده ايالاتو کې د بيا مېشتېدو لپاره دروازي پرانيستې. زموږ ټولو لپاره اوس موږ ډېرې افغاني کورنۍ لرو چې په سيمه کې ژوند کوي. دا موږ ته يو ښه فرصت راکوي چې د مسيحيانو په توګه د خپل دعوت د تر سره کولو لپاره، دې ملګرو ته چې ژوند او نړۍ يې په بله اوښتې ده، د امن په ښودلو سره هغوی ته خپله نرمۍ او مينه وښايو او بالاخره عيسی مسيح ورته وګرځو. زموږ له کليسا، د پارک ويو مينونايټ له کليسا، د مارټنډيل ډسټرکټ د نورو ټولنو سره په شريکه يو شمېر رضاکاران يو ځای شوي دي، تر څو له ورلډ سروسيز کليسا سره يو ځای کار وکړي او د کډوالو له کورنيو سره د مرستې لپاره ډلګۍ برابرې کړي ترڅو هغوی وکولای شي د متحده ايالاتو د ژوند سره ځان برابر کړي. راځئ داسې يو انځور وکړو چې دا چاره څه ډول ښکاري

د مننې له ورځې يوه ورځ مخکې، موږ خبر تر لاسه کړ چې د اوه کسانو يوه کورنۍ د ۲۰۲۱ کال د ډيسمبر په لومړۍ نېټه د هيرسبرګ هوايي ډګر ته راتلونکې ده. زموږ د کليسا يوه کورنۍ به د دې کډوالي کورنۍ د ژوند تېرولو کوربه وي. دا زموږ د ټيم مسئوليت و چې هر ډول د کور اړين وسايل، د تشناب وسايل، خوراک، د موټر چوکۍ يا نور اړين توکي چمتو کړي. د شيانو په چمتو کولو کې مو ليوالتيا ډېره وه. يواځينې معلومات چې موږ ددوی په هکله درلودل د دوی عمرونه او د دوی جنسيت و؛ چې څلور انجونې او يو هلک وو، او عمرونه يې له يو څخه تر پنځلسو کلونو پورې وو. موږ نه پوهېدو چې دوی به په انګريزي يو څخه خبرې وکړای شي او که نه، دوی به څه ډول وي، دوی له کومو تجربو تېر شوي دي، او دا چې دوی کوم احساس درلود

د ډيسمبر د لومړۍ نېټې په ماښام، زموږ ټيم هوايي ډګر ته ولاړ، تر څو له هغوی سره وګوري او تر لاسه ئې کړي. د هغوی په استازيتوب اسمان ته ډېر لاسونه د دعا له پاره پورته سو، لکه چې موږ محسوس کړه چې دا کار به د هغوی لپاره څومره ستر او دروند وي. موږ د بېګونو د تر لاسه کولو لپاره انتظار وويست، زموږ سره په کور کې جوړې سوي د ښه راغلاست ليکنې وې، او په لومړي ځل د دې زړه ته رانژدې روځونو سره د ملاقات له امله يو څه اندېښمن وو. يو څه موده وروسته دوی مو وليدل چې راورسېدل، دوی د خپل ژوند ټول سامان يواځې په څو بکسونو کې له خانه سره

Who Is My Neighbor?

BY DEB MUENSTERMANN, HUB 450 MANAGER

Who is my neighbor? If you are part of an LMC congregation in Lancaster County, the answer to this question is different than you might expect. Most people think of the Amish or persons of Pennsylvania Dutch descent when thinking of Lancaster County. It may come as a surprise that the nations are our neighbors in Lancaster!

Lancaster has been nicknamed the “Refugee Capital of America” as there are more refugees settled here per capita than in any other US city. It is not uncommon to see women in hijabs at the supermarket, Swahili speakers at the bank, and Nepali neighbors walking down the street. The nations are at our



Artisans from the Women's Global Village displaying hand-made crafts. Photos provided by the author.

doorstep, and it is a great time of opportunity for the church to be a blessing and be blessed by the nations! Traditionally, missions looked like going overseas with a passport and visa, to reach different cultures with the love of Jesus. The true definition of a missionary is one who crosses cultures to share the Gospel. Now an airplane journey is no longer needed to reach the nations; the nations have come to us. We only need to cross the street to find unreached people groups among us.

At Hub 450, a community center owned by Eastern Mennonite Missions, we are devoted to welcoming the nations in the heart of Lancaster city, a place for the Church to connect and share the love of Jesus with the nations among us. Many members of LMC congregations have caught the vision and have launched creative initiatives to welcome the foreigners among us. These missionaries give of their hearts, time, and resources to provide afterschool tutoring, driver's education, citizenship tutoring, English classes, and prayer nights for the nations.

Chad Forry, a member of Willow Street Mennonite Church and a high school driver's education teacher by trade, felt God prompt him to offer driver's education classes to new immigrants at Hub 450. His first class of 15 had 10 newly arrived Afghans. What began as a formal class soon ended with friendship as Chad and his family hosted students for meals in their home. Chad said he realized that his students were longing for more

than a class but desired fellowship and connection. Chad plans to continue to offer these classes on an ongoing basis.

Beth Manyara, from Stumptown Mennonite and a reading specialist by trade, had a long-time dream to provide extra literacy assistance to refugee youth. Through her job with refugees over the years in Lancaster city, she saw many students struggle with homework and basic reading skills. Beth approached Hub 450 with a dream to assist Swahili-speaking youth with academic tutoring. This is how the CORE tutoring program was birthed. Now twice a week, students, many of whom grew up in refugee camps in Tanzania, are matched with tutors who can mentor them and provide academic support with the love of Christ.

Chad and Beth represent many others who have also used the gifts that God has placed in their hands to be a blessing to the nations. What is in your hands? How can your heart, gifts, and passions be used to share the love of Christ with our new neighbors from the nations? You too have an opportunity to be mobi-

lized for missions at Hub 450. **We would love to explore with you how you might get involved in crossing cultures locally to share the Gospel. Contact deb@hub450.org or visit our website: hub450.org to get involved.** ■



Deb (Horst) Muenstermann serves as a local missionary under EMM in the role of Hub 450 manager. Deb previously served with her family overseas in South Africa where they pioneered the ministry "Justice Creates" (www.justcreate.space) Deb, her husband Ralph, and two children attend Witmer Heights Mennonite and are planting a "fresh expression" of church in their home.



Chad Forry (standing) teaches a driver's education class to refugees at Hub 450.

COME TO THE TABLE – Luke 13:29

LMC Resources

Anabaptist Teacher for LMC

William Higgins serves as a teacher for LMC. He provides resources for leaders and church members for training and enrichment in following Jesus in the mission of God. He leads reading groups, teaches classes focused on Anabaptist faith and practice, and also provides Bible studies on various Scripture passages. He visits district meetings and churches to give input, teach, and preach.



Two Anabaptist spirituality reading groups finished up in May. Upcoming classes include *Five Stories from the Gospel of Mark* (in Spanish) this summer; *Interpreting Scripture with Jesus at the Center* in September; and Winter Bible School 2023 on Mark 8:27–9:50.

William was born in Alabama and was raised in the South, but has lived in various parts of the country including the Northwest and Northeast. He is married to Stacey and has three grown daughters. Although not raised as an Anabaptist, he has served as a pastor of several Mennonite churches over the course of twenty-six years. Along with his work at LMC, he serves as an overseas teacher for EMM. He also teaches in LMC's STEP program.

William graduated from Vennard College, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and Drew University Graduate School.

To learn more about upcoming offerings, visit lmcchurches.org and scroll down to the Training tab.

Interpreting Scripture with Jesus at the Center

An Anabaptist Faith and Practice Class – Coming this Fall!

How we approach Scripture has a large impact on what we get out of it. In this class we will look at several key components of biblical interpretation including the spirituality of interpretation, the literal sense of Scripture, the canon and a Christocentric hermeneutic.

We will meet at 6:30 on Tuesday evenings for six sessions starting September 27th. For more information or to sign up contact William Higgins at whiggins@lmcchurches.org or call 717 293-5246 ext. 121.



"In his Anabaptist Spirituality course, William Higgins took a very invitational approach, inviting all of us to share our insights and understandings. At the same time, he was knowledgeable in his responses to our questions and inquiries. I was particularly moved by the deep commitment to Bible study and prayer by the martyrs in our past."

— Paul W. Nisly, retired Bishop

"I joined William Higgins' Anabaptist Spirituality reading group to deepen my understanding of being an Anabaptist. Coming from an evangelical background, I had no prior understanding. Not only did this class deepen my understanding, but it also gave me a profound love for the Anabaptist way. I highly recommend these reading classes for those desiring to grow."

— Josh McCullough, Associate Pastor at Mount Joy Mennonite Church

"I stumbled upon the Anabaptist Spirituality Reading Group 'by accident,' and I'm so glad I did! It was encouraging to me in my own faith in two ways. First, by examining the witness of the early Anabaptists who followed Jesus and the Scriptures – even to death. Second, we discussed what it means for us to follow Jesus faithfully and how Anabaptist theology can shape our lives and faith today."

— Erica Heisey, Leader of Team 6:8 for Racial Justice, Cross Roads BIC Church

Youth Ministry

Welcome One Another

BY LAM NGUYEN

Great things are happening in LMC congregations as we are finding our way, Spirit-led, learning how to “welcome one another” and serve our “Neighbors.” The Youth from the Bridges Youth Group (BYG) are modeling what it means to follow Jesus.

BYG consists of four congregations – Crossroads, Habecker, Laurel Street, and RiversEdge Mennonite Church. In 2019, a Youth-led Vacation Bible School was established focused to (1) create relationships between congregations, (2) provide a safe space for children of Lancaster City to come to learn more about God and His Love for all, and (3) offer the next generation the opportunity to live out the Great Commission.

The following is a story between a refugee Youth Leader from Habecker and another Youth Leader. For nomenclature’s sake, a Youth Leader is any Youth who leads. Youth are reminded that they are capable of leading right now, just as they are!

A few months after our VBS 2019 ended, a Habecker Youth Leader shared a story of how working together, within intercultural congregations, with other Youth Leaders helped him feel included in his high school. The Habecker Youth Leader shared how, prior to VBS 2019, he was bullied at his school because he was a refugee and did not look like “everyone” else. One of the bullies would be reintroduced to the Habecker Youth Leader, during the VBS 2019 orientation, as a Youth Leader helper assigned to lead VBS 2019! The adult church leaders planned the orientation as a first gathering, to welcome and introduce the Youths from the various congregations. What transpired was the awakening of the church that the first gathering with “strangers” was not so!

As God would have it, these two Youth Leaders ended up on the same team/station during VBS 2019. The adult VBS Youth Leader Coaches, unaware of the previous history between the two Youth Leaders, provided words of encouragement and wisdom, with the emphasis that God can do ALL things. The Youth Leader Coaches prayed over the Youth Leaders and asked God

“After working together to teach others, we realized we are more alike than not! Thank you, God.”



Youth Leaders prepare to receive children at VBS. Photo by Jonathan Charles.

to bless and protect their time with one another. The Lord answered! VBS 2019 provided the safe space for transformation to occur. The Youth Leaders became good friends, through the act of service, leading, and being missional. The Youth Leaders were able to reconcile their relationship without any intervention from the adults. How amazing is that?

When asked to speak of their story of forgiveness, the two Youth Leaders kept it short and sweet. “We didn’t know each other, and we just thought nasty things about each other. After working together to teach others, we realized we are more alike than not! Thank you, God.”

The LMC mission is a Spirit-led movement to: make disciples of Jesus, mobilize every member as a missionary, and multiply faith communities locally and beyond. At the LMC Spring Leadership Assembly words of encouragement and wisdom were shared with congregations to go and do because God has prepared ALL to share, listen, and love. Let this short story empower you to work boldly, listen, and meet others. May you become a welcoming congregation and more importantly, a loving and compassionate human being and follower of Jesus. May the Lord bless your time and the works of your hands for His Glory. Let’s get to know and welcome our neighbors. ■

Lam and his wife, Anita Nguyen, reside in Harrisburg, PA and attend Habecker Mennonite Church in Lancaster, PA. They have been blessed with four children and find that their hands are full with parenting duties. When they are not in Lancaster, they are volunteering their time at local congregations in Harrisburg, PA. They have a heart for inter-congregational growth and development and hope to empower youth, the future generation of God’s Body.



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.

WOMEN'S GLOBAL VILLAGE

On Wednesday, April 27, 2022, LMC staff participated in a reception to honor women of color and different immigrant backgrounds who completed a 12-week Women's Global Village project. This project was founded by Elizabeth Soto and aims to identify and support local immigrant and refugee women in Lancaster, in overcoming poverty by creating and selling together.



SPRING LEADERSHIP ASSEMBLY

On Friday, April 29, 2022, LMC leaders gathered for a day of resourcing and fellowship. The event was hosted by Pastor Joe Sherer at Willow Street Mennonite Church. Bishops Glenn Kauffman, Daryl Weaver, and Keith Weaver along with Marvin Lorenzana, EMM President, facilitated resourcing and table group discussion centered around missional DNA.

CIES – SHALOM YOUTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

On Saturday, April 16, 2022, a special activity was held for the youth of Shalom Youth at the Zion Gate Evangelical Church in Trenton, New Jersey. Adalberto Santiago, LMC Conference Minister, preached a life-giving message to the youth.



CELEBRATION OF CHURCH LIFE – COME TO THE TABLE

LMC's annual celebration was held at Camp Hebron on June 10–12 2022. Approximately 380 people, including youth and children, participated in the event. Adults, teens, and children engaged in worship, plenary sessions, and workshops. The weekend of fellowship, recreation, and relaxation was enjoyed by everyone.

TIM TRAINING – GOD'S MISSION AND CHURCH

August 18–20, 2022, a leadership retreat exploring God's purpose, heart, and intent for the church. Understand the fundamental purposes of the church, the validity of the local church, and the necessity of the collective church. If you have any questions, please reach out to Jeff McLain, Director of Training in Ministry – jmclain@rosedale.edu. For more information visit <https://lmcchurches.org/training-in-ministry-opportunities/>. Training in Ministry, or TiM, was developed through a collaboration of Rosedale Bible College, CMC, and LMC.

CIES – MEN OF FIRE MINISTRY

On Saturday, April 23, 2022, Concilio Iglesias Evangelicas Shalom (CIES) held a special service for men at the Alpha Evangelical Church in Alpha, New Jersey.

God manifested himself in a very powerful way during the service.



CIES – HOUSE OF HOPE

In the month of May the Children's Center "House of Hope" in Payares, Cuba, gave special thanks to the Lord for the life of each one of the little ones. Children's Ministry leaders taught the Scripture and prayed for God to continue impacting the children's hearts. A special thank you to each one who supports this Center to bring hope and salvation to this place.



SEED GRADUATION

On Saturday, May 21, 2022 a graduation ceremony was hosted by SEED Co-Directors, Chris and Dawn Landis at the 450 Hub in Lancaster. SEED is a three-year church leadership development program designed to equip cross-cultural leaders to serve the church in the United States. Eight leaders from the 2019–2022 cohort graduated as follows: Benuka Tamang, July Paw, Khamsense Saengdy, Kyaw Kyaw, Mu Kaw Htoo, Mya Ray, Sah Klu, and Tha Su.

NEWS NOTES

CREDENTIALING REPORT

In recent months, the following men and women were licensed, ordained, or installed:

Sarah Garber (*Jared*) was licensed toward ordination as associate pastor at Bossler Mennonite Church in Elizabethtown, Pa.

Scott Breneman (*Lorena*) was ordained as associate pastor at Mechanic Grove Mennonite Church in Quarryville, Pa.

David Torres-Oyala (*Sally*) was ordained as lead pastor at Rohrerstown Mennonite Church and RMC Spanish in Lancaster, Pa.

Daniel & Samantha White were licensed toward ordination as co-lead pastors at Stroudsburg Community Fellowship in Stroudsburg, Pa.

William Higgins (*Stacey*) was installed as an ordained LMC/ EMM Teacher-Mission Worker from the New Danville District.

John Druoillard (*Cheryl*) was ordained as leader of marketplace ministry in Strasburg in the Willow Street-Strasburg District.

Eligio & Jaunita Nuñez were installed as bishops of the Southeast Mennonite Conference District.

Doug Gerber (*Dawn*) was ordained as associate pastor at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church in Goshen, In.

Sungbin Bart Kim (*Shirae*) was ordained as a church planter/pastor from Yellow Creek Mennonite Church in Goshen, In.

James Hostetter (*Keily*) was licensed toward ordination as youth and young adult pastor at Community Mennonite Fellowship in Milton, Pa.

Moises Angustia (*Cumanda*) was installed as bishop of the New York City District.

Hyacinth Stevens (*Benjamin*) was installed as bishop of the New York City District.

STEP GRADUATION

On Saturday, May 14, ten students graduated from the STEP program (Study and Training for Effective Pastoral Ministry) with an undergrad certificate in pastoral studies. Graduation was held at Gingrichs Mennonite Church in Lebanon, Pa. Congratulations to all!



LMC CONFERENCE MINISTER – TRIP TO FLORIDA

Adalberto Santiago traveled to Florida from May 14 to 15 to

participate in the assembly of the Southeast Mennonite Conference, a district of LMC. The gathering was hosted by Assemblée de la Grace in Immokalee, Fl. Leaders from eight churches participated in an incredible time of hospitality. The support and harmony between the churches were palatable. Adalberto brought greetings from LMC to the fellowship of churches and leaders. He was blessed by the opportunity to preach at Iglesia Menonita Arca de Salvacion in Fort Myers on Sunday.

CHESTNUT HILL MENNONITE CHURCH (CHMC)

The church near Columbia, Pa. recently celebrated the completion of its public ministry and sold its church building to another Christian fellowship. EMM and LMC were the recipients of the remaining assets per the CHMC dissolution clause. The CHMC Transition Team, EMM, LMC, and Shalom Council representatives gathered on April 25 to celebrate. At the encouragement of CHMC, a \$120,000 gift from the proceeds of this sale was presented by EMM and LMC to Shalom Council.

PASTOR'S TEA – CESAR GARCIA

A pastor's tea with César García, General Secretary of the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) was held at Hub 450 in Lancaster on Friday, May 20. Approximately thirty pastors, bishops, and staff gathered for a time of fellowship and shared vision. J. Ron Byler, MWC Chief Development Officer (interim) facilitated an interactive conversation between César and the group. MWC is a communion of Anabaptist-related churches linked to one another in a worldwide community of faith for fellowship, worship, service, and witness. The afternoon concluded with a time of intercession.



BISHOP ELDERS TEAM

Bishop Board and Conference Executive Council recently affirmed the placement of a Bishop Elders Team to lead LMC for the next three to five years and continue the prayerful discernment regarding governance and structure. The team consists of Marcia Mylin (LMC staff), Bishop Keith Blank (Landisville-Manor District), Bishop Rodney Martin (Conestoga River District), and Bishop Tuyen Nguyen (Philadelphia District).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Complete calendar and more details available at LMCchurches.org.

Virtual Monday Night Prayer Gathering

Every first Monday of each month
7:00 p.m. via Zoom
717-293-5246

Women's Prayer Gathering

Every first Friday of each month
8:00 a.m.
LMC at 450 N. Prince St. Lancaster, Pa.
717-293-5246

Multiplication Prayer Team

July 21, 7:00 p.m.
West Community Room,
Landis Homes, Lititz, Pa.
717-293-5246

Mennonite Life – Annual Storytelling Night

August 8, 7:00 p.m.
Landisville Mennonite Church
Lancaster, Pa.

STEP Orientation

August 20, 9:00–11:30 a.m.
LMC at 450 North Prince Street
Lancaster, Pa.

Landis Homes Fellowship Day

September 10, 10:30 a.m.
Landis Homes, Lititz, Pa.
Landishomes.org

Retirement Celebration for L. Keith Weaver

September 15, drop-in 2:00–5:00 p.m.
LMC at 450 N. Prince Street, Lancaster, Pa.

Mennonite Life – Bookworm Frolic

September 15–17
Lancaster, Pa.
mennonitelife.org

LMC Fall Leadership Assembly

September 24, 8:30 a.m.
Stumptown Mennonite Church
Bird-in-Hand, Pa.

Friendship Community 50th Anniversary Dinner

October 20, 6:30 p.m.
Shady Maple, East Earl, Pa.
friendshipcommunity.net

