



LMC *a fellowship of anabaptist churches*

Shalom NEWS

JANUARY—MARCH 2024



Roots & Wings

*Grounded in the Word, Soaring
with the Spirit*

SERVING TOMORROW'S LEADERS:

Where do you feel the Spirit leading LMC?



Today's youth will be the leaders of tomorrow's church. At LMC, we take the responsibility to provide opportunities to reach and disciple youth and their leaders seriously. We acknowledge that this is an area where we need to do more. We need to find new and creative ways to provide this necessary support.



We want to hear from you!

We'd like feedback from leaders, parents, youth, members who are interested in the future of the church. What are the youth-related needs and services you feel that LMC should be supporting and facilitating?

Please prayerfully respond to the survey below:



English Survey at:
bit.ly/47NEGEw



Spanish Survey at:
bit.ly/47NxjwP



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ON THE COVER

Main photo by Adobe Stock

Secondary photo: Group from Immanuel Community Church from Flushing, Queens

Rooted in Scripture

BY WILLIAM HIGGINS

In 2023 at their annual Labor Day weekend church retreat at Camp Deepark, I led a series of Bible studies for Immanuel Community Church, from Flushing, Queens. I taught in a style of teaching that I call 'Holistic Bible Study' that involves lots of participation and a focus on applying Scripture to our lives. Our study was on "Stories about Jesus and Women in the Gospel of Mark."

In this article, I present a brief Bible study from Mark 4:21-25, which encourages us to work hard at being grounded in Jesus's teaching and the Scriptures.

AN EXPOSITION OF MARK 4:21-25

This passage comes in the context of Jesus's kingdom parables. Jesus has just experienced a great deal of rejection from many in Israel and he begins to focus on his disciples, those who have believed in him. Outsiders don't get these

parables, but he explains them to his disciples. Jesus encourages us to listen carefully to him and work hard at understanding. Mark 4:21-25 reads:

And he said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand? For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to

you. For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

All these sayings, which are parables in themselves, and might seem like they aren't connected, actually are and, in context, refer to Jesus's teaching. They teach a simple truth, it takes work to understand Jesus. Jesus really does want his teaching to be understood. He



Above: oil lamp photo by Adobe Stock. Below: Most of the participants at Immanuel's Labor Day retreat, 2023. Photo provided by the author.



Jesus is saying that there's a relationship between the effort we put in and the understanding we receive from God.

compares it to a lamp in verse 21.

And he said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand?"

Just as a lamp is meant to shine out, so his teaching is meant to give light to all. Jesus' intention is expressed in verse 22.

"For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light."

Everything Jesus hides, for instance in parables, he wants to come to light. Everything he veils, teaching that is hard to understand, he wants to be made known. But we have to do some work. Jesus hides his teaching so that only those who really seek after it will find it. The two exhortations that come next tell us what we need to do, verses 23 and 24.

"If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear."

As disciples we need to listen, "pay attention to what you read," since Jesus's teaching is now written out in the Scriptures. Jesus teaches that you need to put



Above: Bible study photo by Adobe Stock.

Below: William with several students from the Mennonite Anabaptist Theological College (MATCO) in Migori, Kenya, 2022. Photo provided by the author.



some effort into understanding what he's saying. Then comes an important principle as verse 24 continues.

"With the measure you use, it will be measured to you . . ."

Jesus uses this principle to put focus on understanding his teaching. Jesus is saying that there's a relationship between the effort we put in and the understanding we receive from God. The amount of careful listening you put in – seeking, puzzling, discerning, studying – equals the amount of understanding you will get. Likewise, the less of these things you do, the less understanding you receive. But then, there's the generosity of God for those who put in effort, verse 24 ends with:

" . . . and still more will be added to you."

If you pay attention and receive from God in proportion to your effort, God will give even more understanding on top of this; a surplus; an added bonus, verse 25.

"For to the one who has, more will be given . . ."

The disciples are an example here. They have received the message of the kingdom and have gathered around Jesus and are asking questions. They have some understanding of his teaching and what he's up to. So more is given. Jesus tells them what the parables mean (Mark 4:34). And then we have a warning, found at the end of verse 25.

" . . . and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

This is the other side of the coin, of God's generosity. Those who don't listen to Jesus, who put in no effort, will lose even what they have. An example here is the hardened soil of the path. Satan comes and "takes away" the word from them (Mark 4:15). There is no standing still with regard to learning and putting into practice his teaching. We are either moving forward or moving backward.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

As disciples of Jesus, we have received the secret of the kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus. More broadly we have the Scriptures and all that is taught in them. But all this can still be hard to understand. Like the disciples, who had Jesus to help them, we have the Holy Spirit present with us to help us (John 14:26), as well as other

As disciples of Jesus, we have received the secret of the kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus.

believers (Colossians 3:16).

Why did Jesus hide what he means, if he wants us to get it? One answer might be that it's a good teaching approach to have students do some work to figure things out. This is a better way of learning than just being told

all the answers. Another answer might be that Jesus isn't just looking to communicate information to us, he wants to be in a relationship with us. What is in our heart? As we wrestle with the Scriptures, do we seek him and thus grow in our closeness to him?

A key challenge in this passage is to honestly ask ourselves, "What measure of effort am I putting in to understanding Jesus and the Scriptures?" "Am I reading, puzzling and studying or am I content with what I know and feel that's enough?" There is so much more than any of us will ever discover in a whole lifetime of study. Are you hungry for more? ■

William Higgins serves as an LMC resource staff in the area of theological education and specifically Anabaptist Christian identity formation. William also serves part-time as a non-resident missionary for EMM. He serves globally providing discipleship training, leadership development and mutual learning and encouragement with EMM's partners. He and his wife, Stacey, attend New Danville Mennonite Church. William studied historical and systematic theology and biblical studies at Vennard College, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and Drew University. His vision is to help our congregations and individuals be Spirit-empowered disciples of Jesus, living lives that engage and impact the world around us.



Holistic Bible Study

Holistic Bible study contains elements from oral culture (story, repetition) and print culture (text exposition).

- ▶ Group participation and teacher input.
- ▶ Teaching content to learn about the text.
- ▶ A focus on application and putting what we learn into practice.



To learn more about this way of studying the Bible and to see an example presented at Immanuel's Labor Day retreat, scan the QR code or go to LMCchurches.org.

If you would like to experience this kind of Bible study, there is still time to sign up for LMC's Winter Bible School. Contact William at whiggins@lmcchurches.org.



Arraigado en las Escrituras

POR WILLIAM HIGGINS

En el 2023, dirigí una serie de estudios bíblicos para Immanuel Community Church, de Flushing, Queens en su retiro anual del fin de semana del Día del Trabajo (Labor day Weekend). Enseñé en un estilo de enseñanza que llamo “Estudio Bíblico Holístico” que implica mucha participación y un enfoque en aplicar las Escrituras a nuestras vidas. Nuestro estudio fue sobre “Historias sobre Jesús y las mujeres en el Evangelio de Marcos”.

En este artículo, presento un breve estudio bíblico de Marcos 4:21-25, que nos anima a trabajar duro para estar cimentados en las enseñanzas de Jesús y las Escrituras.

UNA EXPOSICIÓN DE MARCOS 4:21-25

Este pasaje viene en el contexto de las parábolas del reino de Jesús. Jesús acaba de experimentar un gran rechazo por parte de muchos en Israel y comienza a centrarse en sus discípulos, aquellos que han creído en él. Los de afuera no entienden estas parábolas, pero él las explica a sus discípulos. Jesús nos anima a escucharlo atentamente y trabajar duro para comprenderlo. Marcos 4:21-25 dice:

“También les dijo: ¿Acaso se trae la luz para ponerla debajo del almud, o debajo de la cama? ¿No es para ponerla en el candelero? Porque no hay nada oculto que no haya de ser manifestado; ni escondido, que no haya de salir a luz. Si alguno tiene oídos para oír, oiga. Les dijo también: Mirad lo que oís; porque con la medida con que medís, os será medido, y aun se os añadirá a vosotros los que oís. Porque al que tiene, se le dará; y al que no tiene, aun lo que tiene se le quitará.”

Todos estos dichos, que son parábolas en sí mismos y podría parecer que no están conectados, en realidad lo están y, en contexto, se refieren a las enseñanzas de Jesús. Enseñan una verdad simple: se necesita trabajo para entender a Jesús. Jesús realmente quiere que se entiendan sus enseñanzas. Lo compara con una lámpara en el versículo 21.

“También les dijo: ¿Acaso se trae la luz para ponerla debajo del almud, o debajo de la cama? ¿No es para ponerla en el candelero?”

Así como una lámpara debe brillar, así su enseñanza debe dar luz a todos. La intención de Jesús se expresa en el versículo 22.

“Porque no hay nada oculto que no haya de ser manifestado; ni escondido, que no haya de salir a luz.”

Todo lo que Jesús esconde, por ejemplo en parábolas, quiere que salga a la luz. Todo lo que oculta, las enseñanzas difíciles de comprender, quiere que se den a conocer. Pero tenemos que trabajar un poco. Jesús oculta su enseñanza para que sólo la encuentren aquellos que realmente la buscan. Las dos exhortaciones que vienen a continuación nos dicen lo que debemos hacer, versículos 23 y 24.

“Si alguno tiene oídos para oír, oiga. Les dijo también: Mirad lo que oís”

Como discípulos debemos escuchar, “prestar atención a lo que leemos”, ya que las enseñanzas de Jesús ahora están escritas en las Escrituras. Jesús enseña que debes esforzarte un poco para entender lo que está diciendo. Luego viene un principio importante a medida que continúa el versículo 24.

“porque con la medida con que medís, os será medido...”

Jesús usa este principio para centrarse en la comprensión de su enseñanza. Jesús está diciendo que existe una relación entre el esfuerzo que ponemos y la comprensión que recibimos de Dios. La cantidad de atención que le pongas (buscando, descifrando, discerniendo, estudiando) es igual a la cantidad de comprensión que obtendrás. Del mismo modo, cuanto menos de estas cosas hagas,

menos comprensión recibirás. Pero luego, está la generosidad de Dios para aquellos que se esfuerzan, el versículo 24 termina con:

“... y aun se os añadirá a vosotros los que oís.”

Si prestas atención y recibes de Dios en proporción a tu esfuerzo, Dios te dará aún más comprensión y además de esto; un excedente; un bono añadido, versículo 25.

“Porque al que tiene, se le dará...”

Los discípulos son un ejemplo aquí. Han recibido el mensaje del reino y se han reunido alrededor de Jesús y le hacen preguntas. Tienen cierta comprensión de sus enseñanzas y de lo que está haciendo. Entonces se da más. Jesús les dice lo que significan las parábolas (Marcos 4:34). Y luego tenemos una advertencia, que se encuentra al final del versículo 25.

“... y al que no tiene, aun lo que tiene se le quitará.”

Ésta es la otra cara de la moneda, de la generosidad de Dios. Quien no escucha a Jesús, quien no se esfuerza, perderá hasta lo que tiene. Un ejemplo de ello es el suelo endurecido del camino. Satanás viene y les “quita” la palabra (Marcos 4:15). No hay quietud en el aprendizaje y la puesta en práctica de su enseñanza. O avanzamos o retrocedemos.

¿QUÉ SIGNIFICA ESTO PARA NOSOTROS?

Como discípulos de Jesús, hemos recibido el secreto del reino de Dios en las enseñanzas de Jesús. En términos más generales tenemos las Escrituras y todo lo que en ellas se enseña. Pero todo esto todavía puede resultar difícil de entender. Al igual que los discípulos, que tenían a Jesús para ayudarlos, nosotros tenemos al Espíritu Santo presente con nosotros para ayudarnos (Juan 14:26), así como a otros creyentes (Colosenses 3:16).

¿Por qué Jesús ocultó lo que quiere decir, si quiere que lo entendamos? Una respuesta podría ser que es un buen enfoque de enseñanza hacer que los estudiantes trabajen un poco para resolver las cosas. Esta es una mejor manera de aprender que simplemente recibir todas las respuestas. Otra respuesta podría ser que Jesús no sólo busca comunicarnos información, sino que quiere tener una relación con nosotros. ¿Qué hay en nuestro corazón? Mientras luchamos con las Escrituras, ¿lo buscamos y así crecemos en nuestra cercanía a él?

Un desafío clave en este pasaje es preguntarnos honestamente: «¿Qué medida de esfuerzo estoy poniendo para comprender a Jesús y las Escrituras?» “¿Estoy leyendo, descifrando y estudiando o estoy contento con lo que sé y siento que es suficiente?” Hay mucho más de lo que cualquiera de nosotros descubrirá en toda una vida de estudio. ¿Tienes hambre de más? ■

William Higgins se desempeña como personal de recursos de LMC en el área de educación teológica y específicamente en la formación de la identidad Cristiana Anabautista. William también sirve a tiempo parcial como misionero no residente para EMM. Sirve a nivel mundial brindando capacitación en discipulado, desarrollo de liderazgo y aprendizaje mutuo y aliento con los socios de EMM. Él y su esposa, Stacey, asisten a la Iglesia Menonita de New Danville. William estudió teología histórica y sistemática y estudios bíblicos en Vennard College, el Seminario Teológico Gordon-Conwell y la Universidad Drew. Su visión es ayudar a nuestras congregaciones e individuos a ser discípulos de Jesús empoderados por el Espíritu, viviendo vidas que interactúen e impacten el mundo que nos rodea.



Soar On Wings Like Eagles: *Insight and Eagerness Found in the Scriptures*

BY ANNABELLE PERRI

The Spirit was powerfully present at the Immanuel Community Church's annual Labor Day weekend retreat.

The months prior to the retreat, the Lord was already at work preparing the hearts and attentions of the attendees. Our Young Adult Bible study was going strong and increasing in fervor and size. Several of them decided to be baptized at the retreat, after recommitting their lives to the Lord and to serving Him through the mission and ministry of the church. This is truly a work of the Holy Spirit in reviving God's people!

We fed on God's word through the teaching of William Higgins. It was one of the best retreats we have had. Through a format that allowed for much congregational participation, new insights and personal application of the Word were gained. We searched and discovered the richness found in the Scriptures – in this setting, three Bible passages from the Gospel of Mark. After each service, there was a great anticipation for what the next study would open our eyes to see. Truly, God's word never returns to Him empty but accomplishes that which He purposes and succeeds in the thing for which He sent it (Isaiah 55:11).

Our final gathering on Monday morning was a great summation of the weekend. The Holy Spirit moved amongst the congregation as we worshiped and had time to reflect on what we learned from the Scriptures. The sharing prompted confession, repentance, and determination to persevere in faith. Several youth and young adults struggling with life issues came forward for prayer. They desired to break from the pull of the world and follow Jesus.

Truly, God's word never returns to Him empty but accomplishes that which He purposes and succeeds in the thing for which He sent it (Isaiah 55:11)

The Scriptures we had studied during the retreat, focused on three women. The hemorrhaging woman (Mark 5), the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7), and the Woman who anoints Jesus (Mark 14). Each of these women had to press in against insurmountable cultural,

religious, and social obstacles.

With eagerness,

they pressed in for what they knew to be true, that Jesus was their answer to wholeness and healing. That conviction was emblazoned in their soul by the Holy Spirit. During Monday's service, the Holy Spirit was impressing that same truth in the hearts of our multigenerational congregation.

Since the retreat, I am thankful for the perseverance of all the saints. I am also thankful for the continued commitment of our young adults in gathering for Bible study and prayer, in reaching out to friends and strangers, serving on the worship team and other ministries, receiving training in leading intergenerational small groups, and in understanding Anabaptist teaching on war and peace. There are those who still struggle to press in. Jesus said that the gate is narrow and the way that leads to life is difficult (Mark 7:13-14). Yet those who hope in the Lord will soar on wings like eagles (Isaiah 40:31).

We have committed to praying and fasting, especially for the next generation of leaders, aware that the enemy seeks to

devour but knowing with certainty that He who began the good work will bring it to completion until the day of Christ. ■

Annabelle Perri lives in Queens, NYC with her husband Mark Perri, Pastor of Immanuel Community Church in Flushing. She works as a Registered Nurse. Mark and Annabelle have four adult children.



Baptism at the retreat. Photos provided by the author. Below: A group from Immanuel Community Church at the Labor Day weekend retreat.





Left: Blessing of a new baby.

Bottom: A worship service in the Easter season.



CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE: Defiance Church

DISTRICT: TBD

LOCATION: Glenwood Springs, Co.

DATE OF FOUNDING: 1955

AVERAGE SUNDAY WORSHIP

ATTENDANCE: 40 adults and
20 children

WORSHIP SERVICE:

10:00 a.m.

PASTOR:

Matthew Shedden
serves as pastor.
He and his wife
have three young
kids that love to
be outside and
enjoy the Colorado life.



Defiance Church is a community growing and rooted in God's love for the people in and around Glenwood Springs and the Roaring Fork Valley. Our congregation is a unique combination of historic Anabaptism, with Eucharistic-centered worship, and a call to be a witness to God's Kingdom.

A high point of last year was our baptism service which included two men with different pathways to our congregation. One man was from the Denver area and found our congregation soon after he became a Christian. After falling in love with the scriptures, he was in search of a church and found a spiritual home at Defiance. The second man was going through a challenging time, and he was led to our congregation via his relationship with our church pastor. This relationship provided an opportunity for him to start attending church, and he never stopped coming. Both men received the same gift of salvation. Both men developed a relationship with the Pastor, as he taught them the gospels and to pray the Psalms before they were both baptized. It was a lovely baptism service by the river that turned into a great celebration with food and community.

Many people learn from our congregation that the historic name of our town was actually Defiance, which is where the name of our church comes from. We talk about the name as a sign for where we live and love, our hope that violence is not the last word and that through his son, God defied Death. In a world bent on death, defiance is to be our stance as a people of life.

Lately, the Spirit has been calling our congregation to renew our worship together by bringing more of a fullness to our Sunday time together. Additionally, we are meeting the local community's needs by praying and worshiping the Triune God together. Two things that only the church can offer to our broken world. ■



Right: Blaze Senior High Youth Group on a retreat at Three Springs Ministries in Morris, Pa.

Bottom/right: Weaverland Mennonite Church in 1961.



DISTRICT: Valley-Mountain PA-East

LOCATION: East Earl, Pa.

DATE OF FOUNDING: 1723

AVERAGE SUNDAY WORSHIP

ATTENDANCE: 490

WORSHIP SERVICE:

Sunday school for all ages – 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Worship – 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

LEADERSHIP TEAM: Brian Martin, Lead Pastor; Al Stoltzfus, Pastor of Discipleship & Outreach; Dale Zimmerman, Pastor of Life and Student Ministries; Abigail Huber, Director of Children's Ministries; Josh Lapp, Director of Keegan Ministries (middle school); Steve Martin, Pastor of Worship Arts; Rodney Horst, Pastor of Care Ministries

Brian Martin has served Weaverland full-time as Lead Pastor since 2005. Brian's heart and passion are connecting persons and the local community with Jesus Christ in daily life. He earned a Master of Arts in Church Leadership from Eastern Mennonite Seminary. Brian and his wife, Shirley, are parents of four grown children and thoroughly enjoy their grandchildren.



CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE:

Weaverland Anabaptist Faith Community

Celebrating 300 Years of God's Faithfulness

Throughout 2023, Weaverland had the wonderful opportunity to celebrate 300 years since our founding in 1723. The focus was *Celebrating 300 Years of God's Faithfulness—Remembering our Story...Pressing Forward in Christ*. Each month, stories were told from our 300-year history. The first story dates back to the Revolutionary War and the arrest of Weaverland and Groffdale members who provided food and lodging to escaping British soldiers. Such stories testified to God's faithfulness despite trial, hardship, and suffering. The celebration culminated with a significant weekend event on October 7-8, which included bus tours of the Weaverland Valley, a panel of six retired Weaverland leaders sharing memories and exhortation, and a fellowship meal provided by our Blaze youth group. Keynote speakers included Kenneth Sensenig, John L. Ruth, L. Keith Weaver, and Rodney Martin.

Although Weaverland celebrates its 300th year, the average age of participants is thirty-two. On Sundays, over 110 children from Pre-K through Grade 6 attend the church's activities, while around 200 students participate in Wednesday evening events. The church also has many senior members, with 152 people over 60. The diversity of ages is considered a gift and a strength. The church also offers a vibrant Sunday school program with eighteen classes for youth and adults. Notably, eighty-seven percent of those who attend Weaverland are actively involved in the Sunday school program.

Weaverland's mission of *Restoring Lives by Encountering Christ* continues. Outreach occurs at The Hearth, which reaches 70-100 women bi-weekly; Grief Share and Cancer Support groups; professional on-site counseling; posted podcasts and blogs; Vacation Bible School; a Day Camp reaching 160 campers from the community; and a Community Fall Celebration on October 31st, where 1,000 persons were offered a safe family space on a spiritually dark night. Visit us at www.weaverland.org ■



Why Give to LMC?

***"The generous man [is a source of blessing and] shall be prosperous and enriched, And he who waters will himself be watered [reaping the generosity he has sown]."* — Proverbs 11:25 (AMP)**

When the LMC Financial Stewardship Team (Louis Kabamba, Tuyen Nguyen, Paola Sanchez, Mindi Hoover, and Paul Pearce) spend time together, we meditate on the Word of God, listen to the Holy Spirit, share what we hear, and then pray together. It has become apparent to us that the Holy Spirit has been actively working with LMC leaders. When we solicited advice from LMC bishops regarding financial giving, they provided clear guidance and informed us of their group's decisions. One bishop stated, "We have resolved to give one-tenth of our income to the Lord through LMC." Another remarked, "My church has not yet given, but we will." Yet another shared, "We used to give but stopped for a while. However, we are now ready to give again." These stories demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is working within all of us. We witnessed a beautiful scene at the Fall Leadership Assembly where leaders joyfully danced and walked up to the offering box. As we approach the season of joy and gratitude, let us reflect on the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

As a movement led by the Holy Spirit that mobilizes every member to be a missionary, LMC is passionate about providing missional resources to equip and train local and global churches. LMC's role is to nurture, develop, and multiply new and revitalized congregations for God's present and coming Kingdom. LMC is committed to supporting and enhancing leadership to increase effectiveness in ministry, providing quality training and enrichment opportunities for members and congregations, and fostering positive relational connections between congregations, districts, and geographies.

We invite you and your congregation to be active partners with us in this ongoing work through the financial support of LMC in 2024. We ask that you prayerfully consider a gift. ***Your generous support and prayers will help us positively impact the Church's future for Kingdom purposes!***



The LMC Financial Stewardship Team

\$1,045,000
2024 Spending Plan

275
Congregations

451
Active Credentialed Leaders

Multiple
Events and programs resourcing
LMC Leaders

WAYS TO GIVE



MAIL

Write checks to LMC at
P.O. Box 1635, Lancaster, PA 17608



ONLINE

lmcchurches.org/donate



BECOME A MONTHLY PARTNER

Set up automatic monthly giving
at lmcchurches.org/donate



ADD LMC as part of your
congregational giving plan

*If you have questions about other ways to support
LMC, contact Mindi at mhoover@lmcchurches.org.*

NEWS NOTES

LMC CREDENTIALING REPORT

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

Eric Lehman (*April*) was ordained as lead pastor at Pleasant View Mennonite Church in Chambersburg, Pa. and installed as bishop of the Franklin District with congregations in Maryland and Pa.

Randolf Smith (*Marianna*) was installed as bishop of the Franklin District with congregations in Maryland and Pa.

Israel Vega Sr. (*Mery*) was ordained as lead pastor at Iglesia Pentecostal Peniel in Lancaster, Pa.

Lorri Bentch (*Timothy*) was ordained as EMM Mission Director in Lancaster, Pa.

Kenneth Becker (*Anne*) was licensed toward ordination as associate pastor at Bowmansville Mennonite Church in East Earl, Pa.

Ricky Ringler (*Anita*) was licensed for specific ministry as pastor of community outreach at Bowmansville Mennonite Church in East Earl, Pa.

Frank Arzillo was licensed toward ordination as associate pastor at Village Chapel in New Holland, Pa.

Sarah Demster (*Tim*) was licensed toward ordination as co-lead pastor at Yorks Corners Mennonite Church in Wellsville, New York.

David Schrock (*Lindsay*) was licensed toward ordination as associate pastor at Erb Mennonite Church in Lititz, Pa.

Jon Barrett (*Sarah*) was licensed toward ordination as lead pastor at Grace Community Fellowship in Manheim, Pa.

Thomas Philpot (*Joanna*) was affirmed to move from associate pastor to lead pastor at Village Chapel Mennonite Church in New Holland, Pa.

Austen Kewin (*Ellenore*) was licensed toward ordination as associate pastor at Stumptown Mennonite Church in Bird-In-Hand, Pa.

PAUSING CELEBRATION OF CHURCH LIFE 2024

The Conference Executive Council and the Board of Bishops recently decided that LMC will not hold a conference-wide CCL event in 2024. A team has been commissioned to review the purpose and goals of the event and decide how we can better meet those goals for all who are a part of LMC. The pause in the event for 2024 is to give the review team adequate time to do its work. We covet your prayers as the review team seeks the heart of God for the future of this annual event. As the LMC footprint expands, finding ways to celebrate the Holy Spirit's movement among us is vital.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNER DELEGATE – IMA GATHERING INDONESIA



Tom Eshleman, LMC International Partner Delegate, traveled to Indonesia for the October 16-20 International Missions Association (IMA) gathering at the GKMI Sempakata Medan. IMA is an international, Anabaptist, cross-cultural missions association with members from Ethiopia, Kenya, Honduras, Nepal, Mission Red, USA, Philipppians, and Tanzania. On opening day, the newly appointed president, Bishop Glenn Kauffman, led the group in discussing and processing the identity document created by an IMA task force.

LMC FALL LEADERSHIP ASSEMBLY

LMC's Fall Leadership Assembly took place at East Petersburg Mennonite Church on September 30, 2023. Approximately 175 leaders gathered for worship, fellowship, and resourcing. The group heard from inspiring speakers, such as Ben Simcox, Joshua & Raquel Rivera, Eric Lehman, and Dan & Sammi White. The afternoon session included time for envisioning LMC's future together, listening to the Spirit, and table group discussions.

LMC RESOURCE PARTNER ORGANIZATION RECEPTION

On Thursday, November 9, 2023, LMC held its annual luncheon to appreciate its resource partner organizations. A representative from the leadership team and Board Chairs from these organizations joined the LMC staff for a time of fellowship, food, and conversation. Each organization received a certificate of appreciation for its unique influence and impact on their communities and briefly shared about their organization's vision and how they are living that out in the larger community.



CHILD PROTECTION REMINDER

Local Child Protection Teams are encouraged to keep their policies current and in force. Keep your Child Protection Team fully active and all personnel background checks within the five-year window. Execute any training regimen your policy requires. If your congregation does not have a Child Protection policy, contact the LMC office for more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Complete calendar and more details available at LMCchurches.org.

Landis Homes Crossings Art Gallery: Brenda Blank Art Exhibit, "Seasons"

Through January 2024

1001 East Oregon Rd. Lititz, Pa.
Open daily 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

EMM – Kairos Course

March 16– April 16, 2024

450 N. Prince St. Lancaster, Pa.

Register: emm.org/events/kairos-course/

LMC 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 ext. 114 for more information

LMC/EMM Quarterly Prayer Meeting

February 8, 2024

3:00 p.m.

West Community Room, Landis Homes,
Lititz, Pa.

717-293-5246 ext 102

Everence – Stewardship University

Friday, March 1, 2024

6:30–9:30 p.m.

Register: everence.com/centralpenn

717-394-0769

LMC Newly Credentialed Leader's Orientation

Thursday, April 25, 2024

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

LMC 450 N. Prince Street Lancaster, Pa.

Spring Leadership Assembly

Friday, May 3, 2024

Mellinger Mennonite Church

STEP Graduation

Saturday, May 18, 2024

Byerland Mennonite Church

YOUTH LEADERS, YOUR YOUTH GROUP CAN SERVE LOCALLY OR GLOBALLY THIS SUMMER.

EMM's Kingdom Teams expose youth to cross-cultural missions through discipleship and service. This summer we're offering multiple weeks in Lancaster, Pa. and one trip in the Czech Republic!

We're also looking for some awesome young adults to serve with us as paid summer staff. Do you know someone we should talk with? Let us know!



EMM.ORG/KTEAMS

Learn your own & others' stories. Become a Mennonite Life member!



In 2024, members enjoy complimentary admission to the Mennonite Life Museum, the 1719 Museum, and the Biblical Tabernacle Experience

717.393.9745
mennonitelife.org

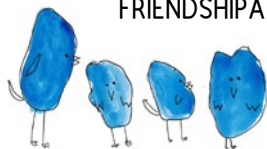
 Mennonite Life

FRIENDSHIP HEART GALLERY & STUDIO'S

21st Annual Art Benefit Auction

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2024

FRIENDSHIPART.NET/ARTAUCTION



Arts. Community. Culture.

Your Keys to Age 55+
Lancaster City Living.

Landis
Place  on King

Steeple
View Lofts 
a Landis affiliate

No Entry Fees! Monthly Rent Starting at \$1,300
LandisPlace.org | SteepleViewLofts.com

So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Isaiah 55:11 NIV