



LMC *a fellowship of anabaptist churches*

Shalom NEWS

OCTOBER–DECEMBER 2026



Deepening Surrender

*LMC's Core Value #3 on Display at
Assembly '26*

Four Unique Ways to Consider LMC in Your Year-End Giving



This Fall, as you consider your end-of-year giving, we'd like to invite you to consider four specific ways you can give to the mission of LMC.

Mission Fund – Driving our LMC mission forward by empowering leaders, fostering connections, providing training and support, and compensating staff. Learn more on our website at “What We Do.”

STEP Study Award – Developing leaders in LMC by providing grants to students to help cover the STEP tuition costs and make training accessible to all.

Spanish Team – Nurturing our connection with our Spanish-speaking congregations by funding travel, training, and resource development costs.

Relational Collaboration – Stewarding relationships with bishops and leaders by supporting collaboration with Synergy Churches and LMC.

WAYS TO GIVE



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Set up automatic monthly giving at
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ADD LMC

as part of your congregational giving plan



October–December 2026

Issue 4 / Volume 46

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ON THE COVER

Main photo: Worship at YouthCon.
Photo by Delbert Tieszen.

Small photo: Assembly participants sharing with and praying for one another. Photo by Johnathan Charles.



Youth praying over the MCC relief kits they helped assemble during YouthCon. Photo by Delbert Tieszen.

How Did the Youth Grow and Learn at YouthCon '26?

BY NAN KANAGY

From worship and workshops to serving and celebration, we marveled at what the Lord did in the hearts of the youth at YouthCon on June 18–21. Not only did the youth respond with excitement and reverence, but also youth workers and pastors were greatly encouraged to hear testimonies of the Spirit of Jesus moving in their midst. The seeds of deepening faith, passion for mission, and study of Scripture were watered. Grateful for the theme, “Sowing Seeds of a Jesus Movement,” our planning team was excited to see what fruit came from this event, and look forward to what will continue to come.

We heard feedback from both youth and youth workers about how much they appreciated the worship band, the opportunity to meet other Anabaptist youth from all over the country, and to grow deeper in relationship with Jesus and others. Opportunities to serve with MCC, play games, hear testimonies, learn in the seminar times, live in a dorm, and learn about Jesus were all well received and appreciated.

I would highly recommend serving with a team of passionate, committed, Jesus-loving youth workers at some point in your life, and see what the Holy Spirit will do. The first bi-annual YouthCon planted seeds of a Jesus movement in ways that we could only have imagined.

Our prayer is that God continues to grow the seeds that were planted and that faith will be deepened as Jesus grows his church. ■

Nan Kanagy works part-time as Family Life and Worship Pastor at Hope Community Church of Fleetwood where her husband Kevin is the lead pastor. They have three teen/young adult girls who also attended YouthCon and had a blast!



Al Motley Jr. praying for youth during the last YouthCon session. Photo by Delbert Tieszen

“I was able to be fully surrounded by Christian youth, unlike my surroundings at school. I was also able to be myself and see what it is really like to be a part of a Christian community. It felt good to be able to share such fun and impactful days with people I hadn’t met before!”

— Isaac Eberly, Eastside Church

Youth Testimonials from YouthCon

We asked youth who attended YouthCon '26 to share their reflections and experiences with us. Here's what they had to say:

"I really enjoyed meeting new people, listening to the deep discussions, and being able to not only grow closer to the girls in my youth group, but also to God. Spending time with God everyday, whether through morning devotions or evening worship, made me feel happy! Everyone I met was so kind and encouraging. It really felt like we were one big happy family worshipping, laughing, and playing together!"

— Milla Zook, Slate Hill Mennonite Church

"I experienced God's presence when we were all singing and worshipping. When the Holy Spirit came through, I knew I was going to follow the path He has built and given me."

— Lovely Moo, Habecker Mennonite Church

"I experienced amazing worship—dancing and having joy in the Lord and getting on my knees with my hands in the air. I grew in my understanding of what it means to surrender to God and give it all to Him."

— Aubriana Keller, Journey Mennonite Church, South Hutchinson Campus

"It was so cool to worship God with so many others who believe the same things as me."

— Ashlyn Brenneman, Mellinger Mennonite Church

YOUTHCON '26



Left: Group of youth from Habecker Mennonite Church. Photo by Jonathan Charles.

Below: YouthCon plenary speaker Ken Wettig shares during YouthCon. Photo by Delbert Tieszen.

"YouthCon was a really good growing experience. I was reminded that my relationship with God is through Him, and not the things I do."

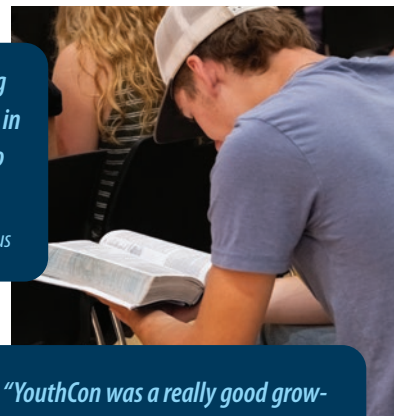
— Riley Martin, Weaverland Church

"The worship was incredible and allowed me to more fully worship and submit to God. I am so thankful we could go. I will always remember it because it was the closest to God I've ever felt."

— Youth participant at YouthCon



Worship during a YouthCon session. Photo by Jonathan Charles.



Assembly '26:

Sowing Seeds of a Jesus Movement

Our theme for Assembly '26, "Sowing Seeds of a Jesus Movement," was drawn from the parable of the sower who scattered seeds widely, trusting that, at the right time, some will take root and produce a crop to be harvested. We also drew from Isaiah 61:3, 10–11 and John 12:20–26 as key verses. We prepared for Assembly

with a sense of expectancy that God's kingdom would come and his will would be done among us.



Participants praying together during Assembly '26. Photo by Jonathan Charles.

Team that led worship during the main Assembly '26 plenary sessions. Photo by Delbert Tieszen.



For our **plenary sessions**, we focused on LMC's five core values: Delighting in God, Following Jesus, Deepening Surrender, Intercultural Embrace, and Apostolic Impulse. For each plenary session, we invited two-person teams to speak. These sessions included worship, group discussion, story sharing, and one even featured a ventriloquist!

Thursday night plenary speakers, Tom Eshleman and Ryan Bomgardner, bishops of the Groffdale District. Photo by Delbert Tieszen.



Left: Bishops Josef Berthold and Glenn Kauffman serving ice cream during an evening social. Photo by Jonathan Charles.





MCC leads an intergenerational workshop on conscientious objection. Photo by Delbert Tieszen.

Workshops were held on June 19th and 20th. There were intergenerational workshops as well as workshops designed specifically for just adults or just youth. These sessions were great opportunities for participants to learn from ministry practitioners and discuss how to apply various topics and concepts to their own lives and ministries.



Pastor and plenary speaker Ron Tinsley speaking. Photo by Jonathan Charles.



Iglesia Camino al Cielo led worship in Spanish during Assembly '26. Photo by Delbert Tieszen.



Pastor and plenary speaker Lynn Parks speaking. Photo by Jonathan Charles.

Throughout the four-day Assembly, we also welcomed **several featured presentations**. The Soil and The Seed Project opened the Thursday night session and worked with the Kingdom Kids to do a special presentation Sunday morning. Piercing Word brought the Gospel of Mark to life through a theatrical production. Additionally, Stumptown Mennonite led a hymn sing, Abide Community Church led worship in Nepali, Iglesia Camino al Cielo led worship in Spanish, and Habecker Mennonite Church led worship in Karen.



Above: Children who took part in the Kingdom Kids program singing Scripture set to song, taught to them by The Soil and The Seed Project. Photo by Jonathan Charles.



UK-based leader Aled Griffith sharing the final plenary session message. Photo by Jonathan Charles.



Left: The Executive Bishop Team sharing a final blessing during the last plenary session of Assembly '26. Photo by Jonathan Charles

The Welcoming Table

Deepening Surrender Through Extravagant Hospitality

BY SHERRI MARTIN

During LMC's Assembly '26, extravagant hospitality invited us to let go and surrender more deeply. This hospitality is not defined by worldly standards; instead, it inspires us to create safe spaces where God's unconditional love can flourish. In doing so, we set aside our personal agendas, preferences, and needs to welcome others as Christ has welcomed us. It is a truly transformative work of the Holy Spirit that prioritizes the needs of others above our own.

A powerful biblical example appears in the story of Mary of Bethany, who anointed Jesus in John 12:1–8. She used an entire year's worth of expensive perfume to honor him, demonstrating profound devotion despite societal expectations. By letting down her hair—a symbol of humility—Mary revealed her vulnerability and submission. Although some criticized her actions as a “waste,” Jesus defended her, emphasizing the importance of her gesture in preparation for his burial and promising that it would be remembered forever.

The relational interactions at Assembly '26 were truly beautiful to witness. The community came together with sincere



Communion table at Assembly. Photo by Jonathan Charles.

devotion, embracing both God and one another with open hearts. It was uplifting to witness people from diverse cultures and generations coming together around the tables, exchanging laughter and vibrant conversations. We worshiped together and prayed for one another. This beautifully highlighted the richness of our community and the profound strength that arises from our shared faith. I left feeling inspired and

hopeful that the bonds of unity can continue to be nurtured and strengthened.

Practicing extravagant hospitality and deepening surrender may not come naturally. However, with intention and care, this spiritual discipline can continue to foster rich relationships among all of us. ■

Sherri Martin serves as LMC Ministry Support Specialist, a role in which she actively engages with LMC's mission as a Spirit-led movement. Her vision is to see thriving, vibrant congregations fully engaged in God's mission, impacting communities and the world for Jesus. Sherri and her husband, Mel, live in Ephrata and are members of Weaverland Church.



Participants hold hands and sing 'We Will Stand' by Russ Taff together as a response to the Intercultural Embrace plenary session. Photo by Jonathan Charles.



Evangelical Garifuna Church shares traditional music with participants.
Photo by Delbert Tieszen.



Khanthaly Bounma of Lao Mennonite Fellowship dances at Celebration of Cultures.
Photo by Delbert Tieszen.



Members of Habecker Mennonite Church sharing some cultural traditions during Celebration of Cultures. Photo by Jonathan Charles.

Celebration of Cultures at Assembly '26

BY MERCEDES THOMAS

"After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands" (Rev. 7:9).

To be a part of LMC is to be a part of an intercultural movement of churches with many cultures and worship languages. As part of Assembly '26, we hosted a Celebration of Cultures to highlight and learn more about the many groups of people that make up our LMC family.

Held on Saturday, June 20 from 2–5 p.m., congregations were invited to share a cultural song, dance, or performance. They were also allowed to set up a table display, showcasing information about their history, language, traditions, and culture. Anyone attending Assembly was able to walk through the displays and watch the performances.

The celebration was a deeply impactful, worshipful event. Brothers and sisters from across LMC had the opportunity to reflect on the beautiful diversity of the Lord's creation, while celebrating the one who unites us, Jesus Christ.

We praise God for the chance to come together as a family to worship the Lord! ■

Member of Lao Mennonite Fellowship plays a traditional instrument.
Photo by Jonathan Charles



Pastor Jean Molovero of Stumptown Swahili sings and dances at the Celebration of Cultures. Photo by Jonathan Charles.



Youth from Abide Community Church (Bhutanese-Nepali congregation) shares a traditional dance. Photo by Delbert Tieszen

Members of Habecker Mennonite Church sharing some cultural traditions during Celebration of Cultures. Photo by Jonathan Charles.





Dawn Landes thanking members of the Assembly '26 Steering Committee. Photo by Jonathan Charles.



Participants pose for a group photo. Photo by Jonathan Charles.



Some of the LMC staff at Assembly '26. Photo by Delbert Tieszen.



YouthCon plenary speakers, Joshua and Raquel Rivera. Photo by Delbert Tieszen.

Thank You!

We'd like to express our deep gratitude for all those who made Assembly and YouthCon '26 possible.

Thank you to the Assembly '26 Steering Committee for your hard work in planning this first, biennial event: Dawn Landes (Chair), Khanthaly Bounma, Celia Cardoza-Hill, Sherelle Charles, Reggie Hill, Ashley Litwiller, Rosita N'Dikwe, Mercedes Thomas, and Felix V. de Kunkle.

Thank you to the YouthCon '26 Planning Committee, for your amazing work at planning the first ever YouthCon: Jesse Blasdel (Chair), Paul Daigle, Nan Kanagy, Ashley Litwiller, Sam Miller, Rosita N'Dikwe, Ken Wettig, and Dale Zimmerman.

Thank you to all those who volunteered on one or many of these teams, who were all crucial in pulling off this event:

- ▶ ASL Interpretation
- ▶ Celebration of Cultures Team
- ▶ Child Care
- ▶ Communications
- ▶ Financial Oversight
- ▶ Food Coordination
- ▶ Graphic Design
- ▶ Housing Coordination
- ▶ Isaiah 61 Tree Artists
- ▶ Kingdom Kids Program
- ▶ Loaners of Hymnals and Flags
- ▶ Logistics Coordination
- ▶ Millersville University Staff
- ▶ On-Call Medical Support
- ▶ Parking Team
- ▶ Plenary Speakers
- ▶ Prayer Groups
- ▶ Registration
- ▶ Spanish Interpretation
- ▶ Speakers Coordination
- ▶ Special Music
- ▶ Tech Support
- ▶ Welcome Table
- ▶ Workshop Speakers
- ▶ Worship Team
- ▶ YouthCon Activities
- ▶ YouthCon Leaders/Chaperones

And we'd like to extend a special thank you to Dawn Landes, for the hundreds of volunteer hours she gave to help make this all possible. We are so grateful for her leadership, vision, and coordination to plan our first ever Assembly! ■



Celebrations

Here are some of the things we're celebrating in LMC over the last several months!

LMC CREDENTIALING REPORT

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

Andy Hostetter (*Jodie*) was issued an ordination credential as pastor at Hayat, a church plant of the West End Network, in Lancaster, Pa.

A leader from Central Asia was issued a license toward ordination as associate pastor at Hayat, a church plant of the West End Network, in Lancaster, Pa.

David Norris (*Alice*) was issued an ordination credential as lead pastor at Spring Valley Mennonite Church in Canton, Ks.

Jon Byler (*Nyambura*) was installed as bishop of the Conestoga River District with congregations in Bird-in-Hand, Lancaster, Leola, Lititz, and Mountville, Pa.

Sherri Zenger (*Darrin*) was issued a license for specific ministry as children's ministry and outreach pastor at Journey Mennonite Church in South Hutchinson, Ks.

Joseph Alexander (*Kimberly*) was issued an ordination credential as associate pastor at Capital Christian Fellowship in Lanham, Md.

Joshua Jefferson was issued an ordination credential as co-pastor at Perkiomenville Mennonite Church in Perkiomenville, Pa.

Monica Jefferson was issued a license toward ordination as co-pastor at Perkiomenville Mennonite Church in Perkiomenville, Pa.

Greg Pettersheim (*Tina*) was issued a license toward ordination as worship ministries director at Willow Street Mennonite Church in Willow Street, Pa.

Romauldo Velázquez (*Guadalupe*) was issued a license toward ordination as lead pastor at Pentecostes de Woodburn in Woodburn, Or.

Ken Becker (*Anne*) was issued an ordination credential as associate pastor at Bowmansville Mennonite Church in East Earl, Pa.

Phoebe Quaynor was issued an ordination credential as lead pastor at Maple Grove Mennonite Church in Belleville, Pa.

Mersete Amare was issued a license toward ordination as a church-planting pastor at Victorious Church of Christ in Silver Spring, Md.

Zelalem Eshete (*Elsa*) was issued an ordination credential as a worker of Ethiopian Missionary Fellowship in Springfield, Va.

RECOGNIZING NEW CONGREGATIONS AND LEADERS AT ASSEMBLY '26

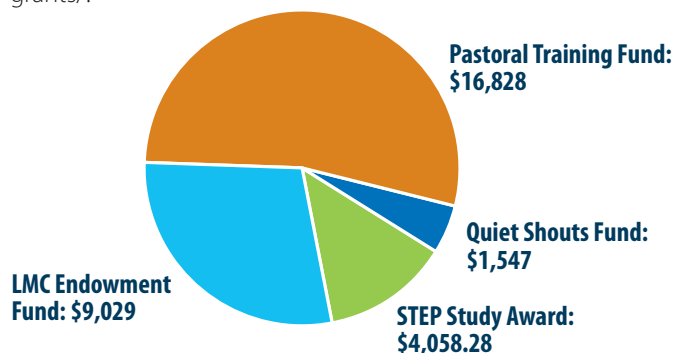
During one of the worship sessions at Assembly '26, Executive Bishop Rodney Martin and Network Innovator Adalberto Santiago formally recognized all the new congregations and credentialed leaders received by LMC in the last year and a half. Since the beginning of 2025, LMC has confirmed twenty new congregations and credentialed ninety-seven new leaders.

LMC GRANTS AWARDED IN 2026

The LMC Grants Committee supported and awarded \$30,933.28 to 28 individuals in 2026 to further their educational journeys and ministry opportunities.

- ▶ Thirteen of these individuals are STEP students.
- ▶ Six are urban elementary students in Christian schools receiving tuition assistance.
- ▶ Two women received Quiet Shouts funds for ministry education or STEP.
- ▶ Six requests were from persons pursuing higher education in seminaries and Bible schools.
- ▶ There were 3 Pastoral Health and Ministry grants for a congregation's sound system and training, as well as funds for 2 Pastor/Bishop Sabbaticals.

To learn more about LMC grants, visit lmcchurches.org/lmc-grants/.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Complete calendar and more details available at LMCchurches.org.

LMC Women's Prayer Gathering

Every first Friday of the month

8:00 a.m.

LMC at 450 N. Prince St. Lancaster, PA
717-293-5246 ext. 114 for more information

EMM/LMC Virtual Prayer Gathering

Every first Monday of the month,

Zoom only; 8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Contact Felixa at
fvdekunkle@lmchurches.org
for more information

Tiempo de oración de Líderes

Hispanos de LMC en español

Todos los primeros lunes de cada mes,

Solo por Zoom; De 12:00 a 12:30 p.m.

Envíe un correo a Felixa al
fvdekunkle@lmchurches.org para
más información

Called: Dare to listen – Dare to follow

October 2–3

7 p.m. on Oct. 2 until 8:30 p.m. on Oct. 3

The Welcoming Place, 21 S. 12th St., Akron,
PA. More at emm.org/events/called-dare-to-listen-dare-to-follow/

Maize & Snitz Fest

October 3

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

1849 Hans Herr Dr., Willow St., PA
More information at mennonitelife.org/events/

Author Talk: Amish Weddings with Beth Oberholtzer

October 29

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

2215 Millstream Rd., Lancaster, PA
More information at mennonitelife.org/events/



COME AND SEE WEST AFRICA

Join EMM this **January 6–18, 2022**, as we visit the growing Christian communities of Gambia, Senegal, and Guinea-Bissau. Participants will learn about the growth of the Anabaptist church, experience the mission context of the region, and witness how the gospel has taken root among previously unreached peoples.

The trip cost is \$2,500 person, and includes airfare from/to Dulles airport, local transportation, and lodging, but excluding vaccinations, medicine, and souvenirs.

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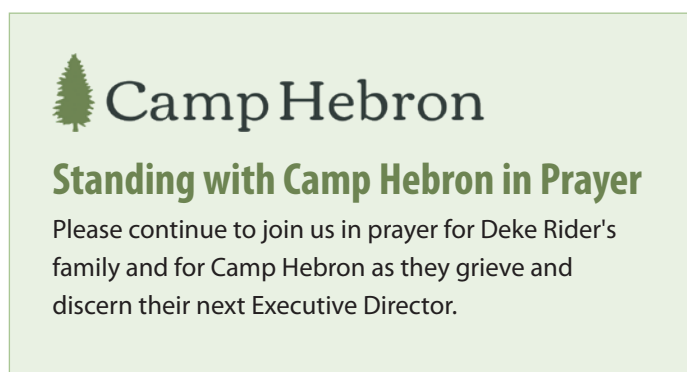
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During Mall Hours



 **Camp Hebron**

Standing with Camp Hebron in Prayer

Please continue to join us in prayer for Deke Rider's family and for Camp Hebron as they grieve and discern their next Executive Director.