

January/February 2010

Fall Delegates Welcome New Congregation



A large contingent of delegates was in attendance at the November delegate session in Philippi, WV to ratify the acceptance of Grace Fellowship of Greenwood, Delaware as a new member church of Allegheny Mennonite Conference. Six members of the Fellowship were present for this special occasion. In all, eighty-nine delegates and 10 visitors from 26 of our 29 congregations answered the roll call and took part in this occasion. Since Philippi's meetinghouse was too small for all of us, they arranged for our gathering in the Philippi Methodist church. We sang familiar hymns from the Methodist hymnal and in the opening worship Lester Lind urged us to listen to our hearts: "Remember God loving me this morning. How did I express my love back to God?"

We welcomed Grace Fellowship as a new congregation, but we also learned that Hyattsville (Maryland) is contemplating the possibility of transferring to Atlantic Coast Conference, a move that would only be made after careful discussion among all parties involved. We learned that Pittsburgh Mennonite Church has obtained a much larger building and that First Mennonite Church in Johnstown has decided they can no longer support

their building. Currently, they are meeting in the YWCA and offering their meetinghouse for sale.

Jack Styer was scheduled to be ordained for Canan Station on Nov. 8. Also Rosellen Lehman was to be licensed at Kaufman Mennonite Church on Nov. 22 for a counseling ministry. Steve Olivieri is to be licensed for a similar ministry at Cornerstone in Mill Run.

In other business, we were invited to discuss a proposal for restructuring the conference on a regional plan. Delegates were impressed by the concern to bring the organization closer to the people ("Some are afraid of conference."), but one person suggested that reorganization should be from the bottom up, not from the top down.

Ken Litwiller of the Finance and Stewardship Commission reported that we are 33 percent through the budget year but that congregational giving is only at 28 percent. The conference can use a little more money. We learned, however, that our conference staff is operating on minimum time: conference minister, youth minister, and administrative assistant at 50 percent each, and missional leader at 25 percent. One question raised but not discussed was "What would we do if we had plenty of money?" I wrote, "Employ conference minister full-time."

Lawrence Brenneman, our missional leader, reported that he has visited 10 congregations and has five scheduled. His intention is to visit all Allegheny congregations. One thing Lawrence noted from his visits thus far is that churches are already pursuing many things classified as "missional activities".

The next delegate session is scheduled for March 6, 2010 at Blough Mennonite Church.

—Daniel Hertzler, Scottsdale



Above: The Philippi Mennonite Meetinghouse, Philippi, WV

Left: Donna Mast welcomes Grace Fellowship as a fledgling congregation into Allegheny Conference.



Dan Hertzler shares during the open mic time.

Conference Churches Raise Funds for MCC

“God brings about justice for the oppressed; He gives food to the hungry.

Psalms 146:7



Above: Isaac Tice, Springs, demonstrating a sand dam water collection system used in third world countries during the 2009 Relief Sale.

Below: Emily and Megan Spory help pack up school kits for MCC during October's Relief Sale Workday.



Merely persuading people to respond to the plight of poverty will not eliminate it. We must build a world community where this is not acceptable. For instance, 852 million people worldwide live with chronic hunger. When we realize this statistic is not about numbers - but about people - everything will change.

God has a great concern for those who are poor and hungry. God wants all people to have enough to eat but he has chosen to work through people to achieve this goal.

In light of these dire needs, several significant contributions have been made to MCC by Allegheny Conference churches in recent months. In October, over 400 school kits were collected and packed up at the Tri-State Relief Sale Workday for MCC at Kaufman Mennonite Church. Another 195 completed school kits and 12 comforters are ready to ship from Scottdale. Also, volunteers from many churches have quilted and knotted additional comforters.

Later, in early November, conference constituents gathered for Music Night at Kaufman, which was organized as a fund-raiser to offset start-up costs for July's Tri-State Relief Sale.

Approximately 200 people attended and contributed over \$1,300.00. Special music included performances from the Alumni Quartet (Dan Hunsberger, Pete Harshberger, Alan Yoder and Mel Blough), Scottdale's Quartet (Conrad Mast, Kim Fox, and Levi and Gloria Miller), Sounds of Grace Trio (Mary Jane Beisel, Lila Harshberger, and Lois Cable), and instrumentalists Amy Yoder and her father (piano), and Dale Miller (accordion). The evening also included chances for congregational singing. All of the musical contributions were thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed. Best of all, MCC benefitted, too.

TriState Relief Sale invites you to keep helping to educate our constituency through efforts like these, as well as our Penny Power program that responds to the MCC program, "Food for All". The TriState Relief Sale is not all about the dollar value, but also about the value of awareness and compassion gained.

Remember: TriState Relief Sale will be held July 16-17, 2010. Please mark your calendars now.

—Harriet Berg, Springs

Right: The Scottdale Quartet performing during Music Evening: Conrad Mast, Kim Fox, Levi and Gloria Miller.



Far right: The Alumni Quartet: Mel Blough, Pete Harshberger, Alan Yoder, and Dan Hunsberger.



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Just Live It!

During the weekend of November 20-22, youth from all over the Allegheny Conference made their way to Camp Mantowagan, Saxton, PA, for the annual Youth Leadership Retreat. There was a smaller number of youth in attendance this year but that did not seem to have any effect on the amount of fun, fellowship, and meaningful worship that was experienced throughout the weekend.

The theme for this year's Leadership Retreat was *Just Live It*, inspired by Matthew 10:1-20 and Matthew 28:18-20. The main speakers for the weekend were Peter and Deb Haddad from Scottsdale Mennonite Church. Peter and Deb talked about their lives over the course of a four part series. They also described how they recently opened a coffee shop in Scottsdale, not only so the surrounding community can enjoy a really good cup of coffee, but also so the Haddads can share their faith with those who are desperately in need of experiencing God's love.

The youth also had a chance to hear from Alan and Nancy Kauffman, of Maple Grove Mennonite, who conducted an amusing and informational workshop entitled "Myths about Marriage." Sam and MaryAnn Yoder from University Mennonite, lead a very thought-provoking workshop on "Making the Bible Exciting." Over the course of the weekend, the youth also participated in several sessions of worship, as well as a variety of fun activities during free time and an exciting game of Capture the Flag on Saturday evening.



Once again, at this year's Youth Leadership Retreat, many new friendships were formed and many hearts were touched. Thanks to all the hard work and dedication of Joy Cotchen, the Allegheny Youth Cabinet, the guest speakers, the participating youth and sponsors, and most importantly Jesus Christ, who all helped to make this year's Leadership Retreat a huge success!

—Sarah Yoder, Maple Grove

Above: 18 youth, 8 adults, and 2 "youth wannabe's" attended this year's Youth Leadership retreat, encouraging one another in their faith.



Weekend speakers Deb and Peter Haddad shared stories about how they have strived to live out their faith.



Julianna Tennefoss, Tyler Shrock, and Isaac Tice compete in a game of pool during some free time Saturday afternoon.

Allegheny Conference Slate - 2010

Moderator-Elect
J. Lorne Peachey
Scottsdale, PA



Congregation: Scottsdale

Lorne currently serves as an Elder at Scottsdale Mennonite and has been a member and chair of the church Council. He worked previously as editor of Allegheny Conference News, chair of the first Faith, Life, & Procedures; and on Coordinating Council. He retired as director of marketing for Mennonite Financial FCU in Dec. 2008. Lorne also served Mennonite Church as editor of various publications for 30 years. He currently is editor of *Courier-Correo-Courrier* for Mennonite World Conference. He enjoys bicycling, reading, and traveling.

Faith, Life, & Procedures Commission
Karen Howard
Pittsburgh, PA



Congregation: Pittsburgh

At PMC, Karen serves on the Servant Board and is chair of both the Listening Committee as well as the Education and Nurture Commission. On the conference level, she is assisting with the Restructuring Committee. Karen is also on the Adult Planning Committee for the 2011 Convention. Karen has a master's degree in education and has just retired after 30 years of teaching. She has one daughter, Aimee, and one granddaughter, Narya. She loves to read, travel, and spend time with family and friends.

Finance and Stewardship Commission
Ken Litwiller
Lewistown, PA



Congregation: University

Ken is an active member of University Mennonite Church where he is an Elder and regularly teaches Adult Sunday School. Formal education includes degrees in Engineering and a Masters of Divinity from AMBS. Ken has served the wider church in Illinois, Indiana, Kenya, Egypt, Ethiopia, Zambia, and Pennsylvania. He has served as a pastor within 2 congregations for a total of 5 years and as a hospice chaplain for 3 ½ years and counting. Within AMC, Ken has served the Missions and Service Commission and currently with the Finance and Stewardship Commission. Related to the current position are 5 years experience with Aflac benefits and 2 years as Treasurer of the Juniata District of Lancaster Mennonite Conference.

Leadership Commission
Thinnagar Sither
Monroeville, PA



Congregation: Asian Indian Christian Church of Pittsburgh

Thinnagar and his wife Perpetua (Petty) and have two children. Their daughter lives in Los Angeles with her husband Arul Rajan Joseph and son, Kiran. They are also expecting a second child in the coming months. Their son lives in Washington DC with his wife Sharmila. He works with the MCC Washington Office. Petty works with UPMC as a Behavioral Specialist Consultant in the "Early Intervention Program." They moved to Pittsburgh 11 years ago and have grown to like the city.

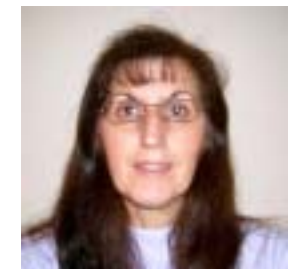
Nurture and Education Commission
Marsha Carr
Davidsville, Pa.



Congregation: Carpenter Park

Marsha is a church leadership committee member, the Primary Sunday School Superintendent, and a member of the Nurture and Education Commission (one year). She has been married to Jim Carr for 31 years, has a Masters in Elementary Education, and has been a 4th grade teacher at Johnstown Christian School for seven years.

Nurture and Education Commission
Anna Sauder
Oakland, MD



Congregation: Gortner

Anna has served as a Sunday School and Bible school teacher, and children's Sunday school superintendent. She has also served as a member and chair of Nominating Committee for Conference. She is a mother of three grown children and grandmother of one and works as a substitute teacher in Garrett County public schools.



Missions and Service Commission
Carrie Eikler
 Morgantown, WV

Congregation: Morgantown Church of the Brethren

Carrie is co-pastor of Morgantown Church of the Brethren, together with her husband, Torin and has two sons, Sebastian and Alistair. She is a graduate of Manchester College (IN) and Bethany Theological Seminary in Richmond Indiana. Prior to seminary Carrie spent two years in Brethren Volunteer Service, working in Catholic Worker Communities in Olympia Washington, and for School of the Americas Watch in Washington D.C. She is a novice gardener and cook, enjoys the beauty of West Virginia hills, is active in the local and organic foods movement in Morgantown, and dreams about traveling.



Missions and Service Commission
Liz Hunsberger
 Milroy, PA

Congregation: University

At University, Liz serves as Co-Coordinator of the Ghana Coordinating Team, a member of the Pastoral Search Committee, a Bridge of Hope Mentor, a member of the Memorial Garden committee, and worship leader. She is an AMC representative to MCC East Coast Board. has been a teacher and coach at Messiah College, Christopher Dock High School and Hesston College, a Women's Development Worker (MCC Zambia), Assistant Director in Personal Services with MCC (Akron), and Director of Visitor Exchange Programs (Akron).

Present Jobs: Organic small fruit/vegetable grower and van driver for East End Transportation in Milroy.

Hobbies: Woodworking, reading, bird watching, hiking, and traveling.

Family: Single with 4 siblings (second oldest).



Nominating Committee
Harley Brenneman
 Grantsville, MD

Congregation: Glade

Harley serves on the Glade Church Board, is a song leader, and chair of the Cemetery Committee

He is a retired sewing machine mechanic (still does some repairs for home machines) and a gun smith. He is married to Joyce and they are parents to 9 adult children.



Nominating Committee
Jolene Tennefoss
 Greenwood, DE

Congregation: Grace Fellowship

Jolene serves the church as a Sunday School teacher, women's group president, Girls' Club sponsor, and MYF sponsor. She is also a member of the Gift Discernment Committee.

Jolene works as a bookkeeper for Greenwood Pallet Co. and as a home healthcare provider to the elderly. She is married to TJ and the mother of 5 children. She enjoys painting pictures, pottery, glass ornaments.



Nominating Committee
Roveen Yoder
 Ridgeley, WV

Congregation: Pinto

Roveen is presently serving on the Church Council at Pinto; previously served on the Nominating Committee for conference. She has been married to Wayne for 42 years, is the mother of two children, grandmother of four girls, an elementary school teacher, enjoys reading, gardening, and geocaching.

Canan Station Ordains Pastor Jack Styer



Conference Minister Donna Mast shares with Pastor Jack Styer and his wife, Sandy, about the significance of ordination during his ordination service at Canan Station.

It was indeed a blessed occasion when a packed church witnessed the ordination of Jack Styer at Canan Station Mennonite Church on Sunday, November 6, during the morning worship service.

Overseer Tim Peachy shared a stirring sermon,

taken from I Timothy 1:12-18. He pointed out that even though Paul started out with a lot of “me” in the scripture, he later made it clear it was all the work of Christ. Tim also said that in

order to serve God we must love the people more than the work we are doing. And it is important to see things through God’s eyes, not our own.

Conference Minister Donna Mast shared that ordination is not making one better than others, but rather, it is the setting aside for a specific task. She then asked Jack the ordination questions before the listening congregation, followed by an anointing of Jack as the pastor.

We were already well-acquainted with Pastor Jack, since he had served as associate to Pastor Darryl (Doc) Dawson. After our devastating loss, we were fortunate to have Jack and Sandy to carry on. He has done an outstanding job and is much respected and loved,

We feel so blessed that the Lord has sent to us another caring, humble, very capable and faithful servant.

—Carol Mickel, Canan Station

New Counseling Ministry to Begin



Rosellen Lehman (left) stands with Conference Minister Donna Mast and her mother, Liz Saylor following her licensing service at Kaufman.



Friends from several Allegheny Mennonite congregations gathered on Sunday, November 22 at Kaufman to celebrate the licensing of Rosellen Lehman by Allegheny Conference for the task of counseling. With this celebration, the Paraklesis

Counseling Ministry of Kaufman Mennonite Church was established.

The idea to include a counselor in Kaufman’s ministry was considered as the pastors desired to add a staff member with specific training and expertise. By providing the space in the church for a counselor, the church hopes to offer a warm, comfortable, safe, and approachable place to begin allowing God’s plan for wholeness and health to be revealed to each one.

After thinking and praying about the decision, the dream was shared with Rosellen Lehman who holds an M.A. in counseling from IUP. While the initial plan was to serve the Kaufman congregation, it soon became apparent that Rosellen could serve the wider community as well.

During the service, Pastors Don and Keith shared that God has given gifts to build up the body of Christ. They recognize healing as a gift some are given. Since God has provided healers, certainly there is a place within the Body of Christ for Christian counseling.

The example Pastor Don used to help us think about how counseling can be used in the con-

gregation was that of a paraklete, or one who is called to someone’s side as a helper. There are times in our lives that we are seeking, hurting, or need help in discerning a life path. The image of the “paraklete” or advocate becomes symbolic of the person who can walk beside us during these times. Providing this kind of service within the congregation through counseling is a demonstration of how we can work together as God’s people.

It is Rosellen’s desire to pattern this ministry after the life of Christ who lived to serve others. Rosellen shared that as she assumes this role she does not want to be considered one who has the answers to the situations that cause a person to seek counsel. Rather, she sees herself as someone who will listen, pray, and allow God to reveal His purpose in the other’s life. She will meet regularly with others in the counseling profession for advice and feedback, maintaining confidentiality for those she counsels. She desires to be held accountable through this professional group and also Kaufman’s Paraklesis Counseling Ministry.

Pastors Don and Keith will continue to be available for pastoral counseling as they have been in the past. They are excited to offer more specific services through Rosellen’s availability and she will be using office space at Kaufman. Specific information about the Paraklesis Counseling Ministry can be obtained by calling the Kaufman Mennonite Church office at 814-479-7813.

—Jeanette Hunsberger, Kaufman

◆ Service Adventure in Johnstown ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆



*Johnstown 2009-10
Service Adventure Unit
l to r: Kirsten Schlabach,
daughters Emma (1) and
Anya (6), Rose Lind,
Julie Janzen, Joey Miller,
and Randall Schlabach.*

Unlike any other Mennonite regional conference, Allegheny Conference is enriched by having *two* Service Adventure Units within its borders: one in Johnstown and the other in Philippi, WV. They continue to bless the church circles to which they relate as well as the larger communities they serve.

Randall and Kirsten Schlabach, originally from Holmes County, Ohio, direct the Johnstown house. Randall and Kirsten, now in their second year as directors, came to the area directly after Randall completed the pastoral ministries program at Hesston. In the midst of their many tasks, they are also parents of two small girls: Anya, 6, and Emma, 1. This year there are 3 SA participants: Rosetta Lind, Juliane Janzen, and Joey Miller.

Rosetta (Rose) Lind's life has taken her in fascinating directions so far. Born in Michigan, she was adopted by parents who served as MCC missionaries in Africa. As an 8 year-old, she moved with her new family to South Africa for 5 years and later her family returned to the Congo for 2 more years. During her stay in South Africa, Rose found herself living near many needy kids who also had differing ethnic backgrounds and beliefs. These experiences with poverty and diversity and made it easier for her to relate to the variety of children she teaches both at Head Start and New Day's after school program. Next year, Rose says that she is considering studying either veterinary science or child health.

Juliane (Julie) Janzen, 19, of Germany decided to volunteer with Service Adventure, she says, to give her the opportunity to trust God, grow in faith, and serve others. Julie does that well by working at Head Start Preschool in the mornings and tutoring kids at New Day in the afternoons. She states that teaching children has been a great experience for her, and

challenging at the same time. Yet God has sustained her when faced with difficult moments with the children, as all teachers have. She sees this year as a time to help her decide on a vocational track: either continue teaching children or perhaps choose a career in math or business.

Joey Miller is from Goshen, Indiana and says that computers and video games hold a strong interest for him. But serving others is a passion for Joey, as well. This year, he is holds three different volunteer positions: helping with maintenance at Johnstown Christian School, New Day's after school program, and coordinating activities for seniors at the Atrium Retirement Home. These experiences are leading him to consider serving with Mennonite Disaster Service next year. In any case, Joey has made many friends already and is enjoying this chance to serve.

—Jane Eanes, *Scottdale*

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Conference Calendar ▼

January 8-10

Music and Worship Retreat with Brian McLaren at Laurelville

January 29

Deadline March/April issue of *ACNews*

January 29-31

SnoKamp at Laurelville, grades 9-12

February 12-14

Creation Care Weekend at Laurelville

February 26, 7:30pm

Goshen College Men's Choir
Scottdale Mennonite Church

March 6

Spring Delegate meeting
Blough Mennonite Church

March 12-14

Junior High Retreat
grades 6-8 at Laurelville

April 9-11

Women in Conversation
Weekend, at Laurelville

May 24-27

Minister's Spring Seminar
Laura Brenneman on
New Testament Study
at Laurelville

Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to *Allegheny Conference News*, 1001 Arthur Ave., Scottdale, PA 15693

New Pittsburgh Church Building Dedicated



Keith Hershberger (left) and Brad Yoder share unique and inspiring musical arrangements during the church dedication of Pittsburgh Mennonite.

On November 1, the former Swissvale United Methodist Church was officially dedicated as the new facility of the Pittsburgh Mennonite Church. It was a long journey getting here and we have so far to go but we are home, where God has lead us.

The Dedication Ceremony opened with a prayer which recognized that this is just a meeting place but we

are the church. Kathleen and Bernie Good told the story of Pittsburgh Mennonite and how we evolved to where we are today. The facility has a long and rich history which was chronologically told by Pastor Dai Morgan, the current pastor of Swissvale United Methodist Church. Tracy Baton, an instrumental part of us obtaining this building, shared the obstacles and joys of finding our new building and how God walked with us in each step. The mayor of Swissvale, Deneen Swartzwelder welcomed us to the area and encouraged us to become a spiritual and vital member of the community. Pastor John Bender expressed the vision of Pittsburgh Mennonite as well as being our leader throughout the ceremony. Reverend Dennis Handley welcomed us to the Swissvale Ministerium and related how the ministerium works together to bring God's words and actions to the community. David Garber, Moderator of Allegheny Conference, offered a prayer of dedication. Music was led by Brad Yoder and Keith Hershberger, and assistance with special music by Erin Clymer. A dessert reception followed.

People at Pittsburgh Mennonite recognize that we are the church body and have been blessed with a facility that more than meets our needs. Currently our Mission and Service commission has been meeting with leaders, agencies, social service ministries and community members in Swissvale to discover how we can effectively do ministry. Our Education and Nurture commission and Mission and Service commission recently held our first community event which featured several activities around a fall theme. We desire to be a welcoming community to our Swissvale neighbors.

Pastor Bender has already become involved in the Swissvale Ministerium. He sees this as an opportunity to become more involved with other ministries and programs already initiated.

As a member of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, Pittsburgh Mennonite sees our facility as an ideal location to hold meetings and social activities. Our sanctuary is acoustically sound for hymn sings. In fact, after our dedication, several of our guests commented on the beauty of our singing. Two asked how many hours our choir practices each week. They were amazed to learn we did not have a choir! As the Mennonite Convention draws near, we see Pittsburgh Mennonite as a place where planning meetings can take place. We are also open to hear requests from Convention planners about how they can best use our facility.

The Spirit is moving at Pittsburgh Mennonite. We are in a new era in our history. We are looking at ways to enhance our ministry to the congregation, community, conference and the world. From carving a pumpkin with a neighborhood youth to visiting such far flung places of need as Honduras. Pittsburgh Mennonite is on the move. We invite you to visit us and share in our joy.

—Ken Zelaney, Pittsburgh