

#1 – Congregations adapting to stay at home orders

Reports from our pastors include creative modes of worship and connecting during this time of isolation in our homes. During video-conference pastor check-in calls on March 25 and April 14, it was clear that there is a mixture of fatigue and energy to face the new realities we are facing. Facebook Live, YouTube, and Zoom are being used for worship services to be live-streamed, pre-recorded and video-conferenced, given the makeup and tech abilities of congregational members. The challenges to offering ministry while social distancing are spurring new ways to visit, counsel, support, encourage and be “together while being apart.” Phone calls from a car just outside the front door, varieties of online Bible studies and devotionals, and new blog posts are just some of the creative approaches our pastors/congregations are utilizing. Finances are a growing concern as we face members being laid off or having hours reduced. How will we share resources within and beyond our congregations? Do we need a conference-based fund or are our congregations needing to focus internally first? Let’s remember one another and seek God’s leading as we find new ways to follow Jesus. Send ideas and suggestions to office@alleghenymennoniteconference.org

#2 – New Dates for Spring Study - 2021

I am exceedingly happy to report that Elaine James has agreed to come to Laurelville for Allegheny’s Spring Study for Pastors and Leaders ***in 2021***. “Embodiment and Holism: Reading the Poetry of the Song of Songs” will happen April 12-15, 2021 and focus on a reading of this book which leads to creation care, healthy views of body and sexuality, and an agrarian approach to life. If you registered for this year’s event, a decision has been made to refund all registration fees in order to keep our fiscal year accounting clean. You should be receiving refund checks in the next week.



#3 – Healthy Boundaries Training Scheduled



Every three years, persons actively serving as credentialed ministers of Allegheny Conference are required by Allegheny and Mennonite Church USA to receive “healthy boundaries” training. Michael Danner, Associate Executive Director of Church Vitality and Engagement, is scheduled to offer the training on Friday, July 31, prior to the conference annual assembly at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center. This training is pending the decision to hold an in-person gathering. To register, call the conference office - 814-443-2007. There is a \$25 fee which includes the training booklet. Stay tuned!

#4 – Summer Camps for Children and Youth at Laurelville

In the next few weeks Laurelville will be making a decision whether to hold summer camps. As of this writing, summer camping is still on. Numerous factors will determine a final decision – governors lifting stay at home orders, campers and their families willing to come to Laurelville, Laurelville’s internal policies and decisions. Keep in touch with Joy Cotchen and the Allegheny conference office for more information as it becomes available.

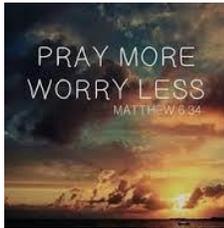
#5 – Successful conclusion for PPP Loan Application

It is yet to be determined how congregational and conference financing will be affected over the long term due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are grateful for the wonderful financial support from congregations and individuals which has continued to the conference to date. THANK YOU!!! In order to buffer what could not be fully anticipated at this juncture; Allegheny applied for and received a PPP loan to cover payroll and rent costs for the time period covered by



the loan program. A fuller financial report for our third quarter (Jan-Mar) will be coming in the next few weeks.

#6 – The tentative nature of everything!



The AMC Executive Committee met via Zoom April 16. There are many decisions facing us around which we do not have sufficient clarity to make definitive decisions. Summer camps, our annual meeting at Laurelville, long-term financial planning, even our Fall delegate session the first weekend in November – all of these and other decisions can only be made tentatively. Maybe this is the primary meaning of Matthew 6:34 –

“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” This is the last verse in a passage encouraging us not to worry. (LeAnne Zook, Moderator-elect, thinks that this may be a theme verse for our annual meeting, whenever and however we are able to gather. We are taking LeAnne’s suggestion under advisement!) Suffice it to say that we are unsure of many things. Yet, God’s steady hand is with us. May we lean into these days with humor and clarity of assurance that God is with us. Peace be with us all!