

#1 – Leadership Council significant decisions - The Allegheny Leadership Council met for its annual planning retreat at Stahl Mennonite Church from Jan. 26-28. This meeting brought new excitement as we shift to new leadership, updated vision, and a new (or no) office location. The work of the nominating committee was affirmed. A proposed budget was approved for recommendation to the delegates. These and other agenda will be taken up at a virtual delegate meeting on March 2. The work of the Conference Minister Search Committee, the Youth Ministry Task Force, and the Ministry Resources Task Force was also reviewed.

A significant decision was made concerning our newest congregational member – *the exchange*. *The exchange* (Winchester, VA) made a decision to join Allegheny in June of 2022, but were not able to transfer affiliation because of commitments with their former conference until they were formally released on February 4, 2023. Due to this technicality, *the exchange* did not receive a portion of the IGH sale proceeds because July 1, 2022 was the membership deadline established by a motion passed by our delegates.

As an act of solidarity with *the exchange*, the AMC Leadership Council approved a motion to send a request to all other sixteen congregations to consider a voluntary gift to *the exchange* out of their IGH proceeds receipts. A gift in the range of \$1,500-\$2,000 is suggested, to be sent to the conference office by May 31, 2024. (Leadership Council will add \$2,000 to the amount received from some of the interest earned on AMC's portion of the proceeds.) All gifts received will be given to *the exchange* at this year's Celebration event. Every congregation will receive a formal letter of invitation to participate in this gifting. Checks should be made to AMC with a note in the memo for *the exchange*. We hope this action will continue to grow the community of collaboration we are building in Allegheny!

#2 – AMC's Spring "Faith & Life Gathering" to be held virtually on March 2, 2024

FAITH LIFE

Congregations and delegates will soon be receiving formal invitation to join the upcoming delegate meeting via Zoom on the first Saturday of March. Significant agenda items include the 2024-25 proposed spending plan, reports from the Conference Minister Search Committee (Lee Good, Chair), the Youth Ministry Task Force (Dave Swanson, Chair) and the Ministry Resources Task Force (Randy Kolb, Chair).

With a new conference minister, there are plans afoot to relocate the conference office to space in one of our congregations or to have no physical location at all. A new task force will soon be formed to look into the logistics and rationale for such a transition, timing it with the hiring of a new conference minister and the eventual (not this year!) retirement of our current administrative secretary.

Be looking for your virtual "packet" of information and a Zoom link for this important meeting.

#3 – Bhutanese-Nepali Church of Pittsburgh (BNCP) – February 2024 AMC Featured Congregation



Suraj Bhandari, pastor for BNCP (back row left), says that "we are still meeting in the same church building (renting space from a Lutheran congregation), but we are also having discussions whether to move our meeting to my house."

Suraj is also experiencing "new medical conditions - it's becoming very challenging for me." Suraj's request for all of us in Allegheny – "I just want to tell you that there is no significant improvement in BNCP's membership, but we are praying from our hearts for God's wisdom about the future model of

ministry. There are many plans on the table and we are prayerfully seeking HIS guidance. Please continue to lift us in your prayers."

#4 – From MC USA – 1) Congregations are invited to apply for "Renewable Energy Grants."



Recent recipients in Allegheny include Laurelville Retreat Center/Scottdale Mennonite Church and University Mennonite Church (State College, PA) - <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/news/mc-usa-congregations-invited-to-apply-for-renewable-energy-grants/>

2) Also check out - <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/news/mc-usa-signs-letter-to-congress-asking-for-strengthened-funding-for-victims-of-crime-act-grants/> and

3) - <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/news/mc-usa-women-in-leadership-launches-new-podcast-season/>