

Allegheny Miscellany

ALLEGHENY
MENNONITE
CONFERENCE
#80
December 2024

Journeying Together to Undo the Doctrine of Discovery

I am a member of AMC's Repair Committee that was formed to help our conference respond to harms created by the Doctrine of Discovery and the dispossession of Indigenous peoples. Through this committee, I've learned more about becoming an advocate for repairing relations and showing up to support Indigenous efforts to create a better world for all of us. This work is important to me because, as a Mennonite, I know that my ancestors came as immigrants from Europe, settling on land in the eastern United States that was taken by violence and unequal treaties from Indigenous people.

So much has changed in the three hundred plus years since then. My ancestors flourished and thrived and mostly forgot about Indigenous people who were driven westward, often in terror and fear, forced to leave behind their historical and treasured connection to landscapes, their burial grounds, their memories, their connection to home and place – all things that we, as American Mennonites have long taken for granted as we filled those same spaces with little thought to the Doctrine of Discovery and all that that flowed from it.

A valuable resource for our committee in understanding and becoming invested in repairing these harms is the Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery (dismantlediscovery.org) founded by Sarah Augustine, Anita Amstutz and Sheri Hostetler. The Coalition helps us recognize and respond to the harms done to Indigenous people and to the earth through dispossession and conquest, much of this done, lamentably, through the name of Christ. The AMC Repair Committee is inviting you to walk on this journey with us. Our conference has churches scattered over the eastern United States on land that was once the beloved home and terrain of many Indigenous people, some of whom are presently engaged in reclaiming their heritage, land, and traditions through land-back efforts, cultural events, legal redress, and protection of our natural resources and environment.

We are inviting you to sign up for the Coalition's online sessions in January called "Moving Toward Right Relations." These sessions explore how we have benefitted from a system of injustice and how to become better allies of Indigenous people. The sessions are offered multiple times throughout the year and include opportunities to practice core skills of solidarity. You can register for these modules at bit.ly/ddod2025.

Mary Hershberger
AMC Repair Committee
Member at Hyattsville Mennonite Church

Where's your Conference Minister?



To invite your Conference Minister to preach or worship in your congregation, email her at amy@alleghenymennoniteconference.org

January 5--Community Mennonite Church of Harrisonburg

January 12--Ordination of Jonny Rashid at West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship.

January 24-25--Leadership Council Retreat

January 26--Stahl Mennonite Church

February 4--Pastor Peer Gathering

February 9-14--Interim Pastor Training

February 16--Butanese Nepali Church

February 17-20--Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Pastor's Week

February 22-March 6--Trip to Palestine

March 8--Spring Faith and Life Gathering, State College, PA

April 21-24--Spring Pastor and Leaders Bible Study

May 8-10--Constituency Leadership Council

May 11--Scottdale Mennonite Church

A REQUEST FROM THE REPAIR COMMITTEE:

ARE INDIGENOUS GROUPS IN YOUR AREA ENGAGING IN POWWOWS, EDUCATIONAL EVENTS, OR OTHER PUBLIC INDIGENOUS-LED EFFORTS? HAVE YOU HEARD OF, OR PARTICIPATED IN, INDIGENOUS EFFORTS TO PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES IN YOUR AREA? WHAT ABOUT EFFORTS TO CHANGE HARMFUL IMAGES IN SCHOOL MASCOTS OR PLACE NAMES IN YOUR STATE OR COMMUNITY? YOU CAN MESSAGE THIS INFORMATION TO AMY@ALLEGHENYMENNONTIECONFERENCE.ORG, AND WE WILL GLADLY SHARE IT WITH THE WIDER CONFERENCE.



All are welcome to the celebration of ordination for Jonny Rashid!
Sunday, January 12, 2025
3:30pm
West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship