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ALLEGHENY MISCELLANY

The official newsletter of Allegheny Mennonite Conference

WHAT'S INSIDE OUR LATEST ISSUE:

WHERE IS YOUR CONFERENCE MINISTER?

CHURCH SPOTLIGHT: OPEN DOOR CHURCH

WE DON'T ALWAYS SEE THE PLAN

CONGRATULATIONS TO CINDY!

SAVE THE DATES:

NOVEMBER 7, 2026: AMC FALL ASSEMBLY, 8AM-10AM ON ZOOM

JANUARY 15-17, 2027: WINTERVILLE AT LAURELVILLE

MARCH 6, 2027: AMC SPRING ASSEMBLY, 9AM-3PM, WEST PHILADELPHIA

JUY 30-AUGUST 1, 2027: AMC CELEBRATION WEEKEND AT LAURELVILLE



CONSIDER GIVING TO "100 FOR $10" STRENGTHENING OUR FAITH COMMUNITY TOGETHER

Start a recurring gift of $10/month (or any amount you choose) to sustain and strengthen the work of Allegheny Mennnonite Conference!

WHERE IS YOUR CONFERENCE MINISTER?

October 11--Pittsburgh Mennonite
October 17--Constituency Leadership Council Online
October 18--Morgantown COB
November 1--Philippi Mennonite
November 8--Friendship Mennonite
January 22-23--AMC Leadership Retreat
January 24--Scottdale Mennonite
March 6--AMC Spring Delegate Session, West Philadelphia
April 15-17--Constituency Leadership Council, Dallas, TX
April 19-22 AMC Pastor' Study Week at Laurelville



Church Spotlight: Open Door Church

Article by: Mable Bakali

In Matthew 18:20 Jesus tells his disciples,"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." Open Door Church is a community rooted in the teachings, life, divinity and saving grace of Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, our small but resilient congregation emerged from Circle of Hope, a larger church network that disbanded after 30 years. After the dissolution of Circle, a small group of us continued to gather for worship and fellowship at a restaurant owned by members of our church. Inspired by the transformational love of Christ and His call to serve others, we established Open Door Church in 2023.





Our simple and intentional weekly meetings serve to create a safe space to explore and express God's love. On Sundays at 5 PM, we gather online and in-person at the Dandelion Project in South Philadelphia to be together, share the word of God, and lift our voices in song. Each week, different members of our congregation lead a talk, meditation, or spiritual practice. A bible centered small group also meets weekly to reflect on God's word and share a dinner time meal.

Through service, we desire to profoundly impact and be impacted by our surrounding local communities. We seek to bridge rifts created by class and cultural factors such as race, sexual orientation, and gender identity among other divides. We are grateful for the welcome we received at the annual celebration and look forward to building relationships with faith partners in the Allegheny Conference.





We Don't Always See the Plan

Article by: Beth Dalansky
AMC Conference Administrator

One year ago, I went in for a routine mammogram. It was October, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and I was simply checking another item off my to-do list. I had no idea that what seemed like an ordinary appointment would become the moment that separated my life into "before" and "after."

At the time, I couldn't see God's plan. All I could think about was my family. I have two boys I want to watch grow up and a husband I want to grow old with. I was terrified that the future I had always imagined might be taken from me, and that my family would have to go through the unimaginable loss of a wife and mother.

The weeks following my diagnosis were a blur of appointments, scans, and tests. Every phone call and every doctor's visit brought a new wave of anxiety. Each time, I braced myself for the worst. Yet through God's grace, I received the best possible outcome in what could have been a worst-case situation.

Just as it felt like we were finally beginning to move forward, we faced yet another major challenge. Six weeks after my mastectomy, my husband lost his job due to budget cuts. Along with his job went our health insurance. I still had another surgery ahead of me, ongoing medical appointments, and medications I needed. Once again, we found ourselves wondering how we were going to get through this.

But again, God provided.

At the time, facing cancer and unemployment all at the same time felt so overwhelming. We struggled to understand why so many terrible things were happening at once. Looking back now, however, I can clearly see God's hand in it. During the four months my husband was unemployed, he was able to be home and take care of me through treatments, appointments, and recovery when I needed him the most. What initially seemed like terrible timing was actually God providing. Just as I was recovering from my final surgery, my husband was offered a new job that proved to be an even better fit than his previous position. Through it all, God provided exactly what we needed, exactly when we needed it.

There were many moments over the past year when I couldn't understand what God was doing. I had so much fear, uncertainty, and unanswered questions. I couldn't see his plan and was honestly just angry. But looking back now, I can see that He was guiding us every step of the way. He didn't remove every struggle, and He didn't spare us from every hardship, but He never left us to face them alone.

Sometimes God's plan only becomes clear when we look back. While I would never have chosen this journey, it has strengthened my trust in a God who sees the whole picture, even when I cannot.

Congratulations to Cindy Lapp on EMU Distinguished Service Award

Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) has named Cynthia "Cindy" Lapp, pastor of Hyattsville Mennonite Church, as a recipient of its 2026 Distinguished Service Award. Since 2003, Cindy has served her congregation and community through ministries supporting immigrants, community chaplaincy, and advocacy for individuals experiencing homelessness and financial hardship.



Cindy will return to EMU during Homecoming and Inauguration Weekend to share her story at EMU TenTalks on Saturday, October 10, at 2:00 p.m. in Martin Chapel.

For more information, visit: emu.edu/homecoming

Source: Eastern Mennonite University Facebook post, accessed October 2026. Original post available at: https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1523948016432033&set=a.612373897589454
Photo by Rachel Schrock Photography

AMC Fall Assembly - November 7, 2026, 8am-10am on Zoom

Zoom link - https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84621746574

Agenda:

Welcome and Prayer
Financial Update
Welcome New Congregations:
- Open Door Church, Philadelphia, PA
- First Mennonite Church, Canton, OH

Introduce New Congregations for Consideration
Palestine Resolution
Sharing credentialing document
Announcements
Benediction

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