

The Menno Beacon

SEPTEMBER 2011

Volume 56 Number 4

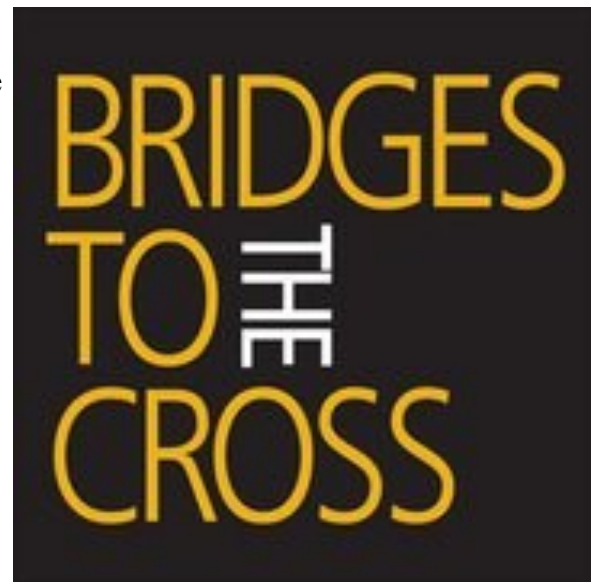
More Mennonite Church USA Convention Pittsburgh, PA

By Pastor Matthew Yoder

Editor's Note: Due to some kind of electronic glitch, in the internet system, I didn't receive Pastor Matthew's article in time for the last issue of *The Menno Beacon*.

The theme for this year's Mennonite Church USA convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was "Bridges to (the) Cross." On the first day of convention, Monday, July 4, Shane Hipps spoke in a joint evening worship service. His profound and challenging speech about justice, holiness, and reconciliation will be on the DVD recordings of convention worship available for purchase from the convention office or loan from the people at Menno who bought them.

On the second day of convention, Tuesday, July 5, delegates participated in an orientation session followed by a session in which we discussed what it means to be a "missional" church at both the conference and congregation levels. In our third session we discussed international church relations with Mennonite Church Canada and a number of global, ecumenical Christian groups including Catholic, Lutheran, and Pentecostal denominations.



At the first session of our second day we discussed and approved the adoption of the "Pittsburgh Experiment." The Pittsburgh Experiment was a motion to adopt a dialogue-oriented method of decision making in lieu of the parliamentary procedure that is normally used at MCUSA conventions. The motion passed by a strong majority although many questions were asked and addressed.

The remaining sessions for the week were conducted according to the new meeting process of table discussion and reporting on topics outlined in the "Purposeful Plan" proposed by executive leadership. I am happy to make copies of the "Pittsburgh Experiment and Purposeful Plan" available to the congregation upon request.

Our second session that day was shaped by discussion about re-framing MCUSA's commitment to antiracism as an "intercultural transformation" initiative. During this session, Charlotte Hardt addressed the delegate assembly regarding her work with Glen Guyton on the intercultural transformation task force. The proposed change in language was given overwhelming support by the delegate body. Intercultural transformation continued to be an important topic meaningfully shaping conversations about the future of MCUSA at this convention.

On the third day of convention, Wednesday, July 6, the first delegate session was shaped around conversation about the church's holistic witness in the world. The core question at my table was "How can we advance an integrated witness where evangelism, church planting, peace and justice, and service are a seamless web?"

In the second session of day three, delegates focused on the topic of leadership development. The delegate body affirmed a churchwide emphasis on training for lay leaders at all levels of the church.

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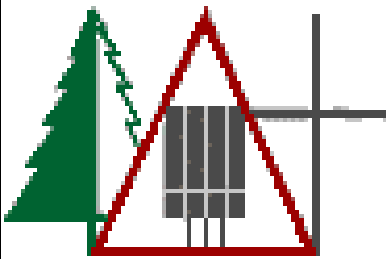
On Saturday, July 2, the first day of the AMP meeting, as I made the three and a half hour trip along the Pennsylvania turnpike to camp, I reflected on the lush, dense forests that crowded in along the edges of the highway. And the presence of water. Water everywhere; in rivers, streams and lakes. Water so abundant that the earth was spongy with it and the air heavy with it. So much water that I wore it on my body as I sat, driving along the highway with the air conditioning off and the windows down. Water that makes such dense and abundant life possible.

But water, by its ability to nourish and sustain all forms of life, also paradoxically speeds the process of decay. On my first night at camp I accidentally left a banana outside my cabin by the path. In the morning there was nothing left but a well picked shred of peel. By contrast, the wilderness with its characteristic shortage of water has a way of preserving things. Perhaps that's why God often comes near to God's people in the wilderness. When water is overabundant, it can become easy to forget that it is really God who sustains us and not water alone. In the wilderness there are constant reminders that human life is utterly dependent on the stream of mercy that issues forth out of God's providence.

On Sunday, the second of the AMP meeting, I rose early to go for a short jog on the camp trails. Half an hour later I had to admit to myself that I was hopelessly lost. I've gotten used to running where I can see at least 2 miles ahead and the road is self-evident. On the twisting trails of the dense Allegheny forest I had forgotten to watch carefully for the trail markers. In that moment when I stopped pretending to know where I was and what I was doing, admitting that I was completely lost, I felt the spirit of God draw near. And I realized that it is often when I am most lost that God succeeds most in finding me.

That afternoon I drove from Laurelville to Pittsburgh, making a total of three wrong turns along the way which caused me to do quite a bit of back tracking and "exploring." As I made my way slowly to the convention center, I reflected on my roundabout journey. In a land of many rivers, like Pittsburgh, no matter where you're going there will be a river to cross. And so it is vital to find bridges that will take us where we want to go.

By Pastor Mathew



Celebrating the Colors, Shapes, and Textures of Our Journey will be the theme of this years WMF 2011 Women's Retreat which be held November 4,5, & 6 at Camp Camrec. Guest speaker will be Pat Hershberger.

Pat grew up in the Willamette Valley in Oregon. She is the wife of one, mother of three, and grandmother of nine. The church has one been a strong interest of hers, teaching, helping, committees/boards and simply just being involved. Her church involvements have been both PCC & PNMC and the larger Mennonite Church, before and since MCUSA. Pat was moderator of PNMC. In her retirement time she now chairs the board of Hope Village, a retirement community in Canby, OR and also makes herself available for women's retreats. We will be blessed to have Pat help us with celebrating the colors, shapes and textures of our journey.

Menno Mennonite Church will be hosting this weekend event. For more information contact Diane Gering 509-659-1362, 509-660-1081 cell, or wdgering@centurytel.net.

The *Menno Beacon* is published at the whim of the editor (tries for at least four times per year or more). Any address corrections, additions, or deletions can be sent to: **Menno Mennonite Church – 1378 N. Damon Rd. – Ritzville, WA 99169**, phone 509-659-0926. Web site: <http://menno.wa.us.mennonite.net>. If you wish to help with mailing costs of the *Beacon*, donations can be sent to the above address. Matthew Yoder pastor, email: Matthewpsyoder@mennonite.net, menno@centurytel.net, Sharon Meyer, publisher, and Bill Dyck, editor. You can contact Bill at: 509-677-3616 or email at: billdyck70@yahoo.com or postal mail at: 379 W. Harder Rd. – Ritzville, WA 99169. If you have something for the *Beacon*, **the next Beacon news is due Nov 6, 2011.** Thanks to , Howard Reimer, Greg Reimer, and Derek Schafer for the pictures in this issue.

34th Mennonite Country Auction & Relief Sale

It seems like everything has been running about two weeks later this year. Even harvest started later this year, but October 1, 2011, will be right on time! That's when the 34th annual **Mennonite Country Auction and Relief Sale** (MCA) raises funds for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), a relief and development agency of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Churches.

MCC was organized in 1920, to help victims of war and famine in Russia and the Ukraine. Today MCC works in more than 50 countries around the world, responding to human need in the midst of poverty, war, and natural disaster. Since 1977, when the first MCA sale was held at the Menno Mennonite Church grounds, MCA has raised over \$1,850,000 for this work "in the name of Christ".

Friday, September 30, folks, from all parts of the state, travel toward Menno Church, to help with the setup of the grounds which starts usually after lunch. The tent was put up earlier in the week, the parking areas mowed and watered, the Kraut Runza's were made, some of the apple butter was made, and booths are ready to be set up. Friday evening supper starts around 6:00, with Diane Gering



putting together the first of the meals. Darkness comes, lights go on, and further preparations for Saturday are made into the night.

Breakfast begins at 7:00 to 9:00 A.M. Food and craft booths open at 10:00. There will be booths of crafts, antiques, quilter's supplies and fabric, international crafts at the "**Ten Thousand Villages**" booth, and unique collectibles at the "**Great Gatherings**" booth. Food items include smoked sausages and hams, fresh pressed apple cider, freshly made apple butter in a copper kettle, hot New Years' cookies, cold homemade ice cream, tasty homemade pies, mouth-watering homemade breads and other baked goods, stone-ground wheat flour and corn meal, pure Canadian maple syrup, and Troyer Amish cheeses. There will be Kraut Runzas this year too.

At about 9:30, Sherri Farmer, from Evergreen, CO, will sing on the main auction stage. Sherri has sung at Menno Church, in concert in the past, and brings a fresh variety of old and new Gospel songs and hymns. You can learn more about her and her singing ministry on her website at:

www.sherrifarmer.com.



Sherri Farmer

The children's auction, for kids six grade down to five years old, will start at 11:00, with special auction items for them. The main auction of quilts and other "items of interest", will begin at 12:00 noon, starting with the traditional loaf of bread, used for the celebration and communion service on Sunday's worship service at Menno Church in the tent at 10:00 a.m.

You can donate your pennies, (nickels, dimes, quarters, dollars), to the **Penny Power** project jug located on the grounds. Come meet your neighbors and friends for a full day of fun, eating, and visiting. There is no admission or parking charge. Come early to experience all the food and activities planned. There are planned activities for the kids too.

For more information contact Pastor Matthew Yoder at 509-659-0926, or MCA website: **www.mennonitecountryauction.mennonite.net** for a downloadable flyer, with driving directions, and pictures of some of the quilts and auction items. If you are using your mobile GPS, please remember that not all mapping systems, for the Menno Church location, are accurate. Follow the posted signs.



Walt Reimer & his bowl for the auction

Menno Remembers...

EDNA MARIE (FRIESEN) REIMER

passed away on August 18, 2011, in Goessel, Kansas. She was born

March 21, 1927 in Hillsboro, Kansas, to Abraham D. and Susanna (Penner) Friesen.

She is survived by her husband of almost 65 years, Irvin, Goessel, Kansas; and her son Howard (Linda) Reimer and grandson Aaron (Amy) Reimer, all of Ritzville, WA; brother Alvin (Ann) Friesen of Hesston, KS; sisters Linda Bartel of Aberdeen, ID and Evelyn (Irvin) Harms of Moundridge, KS.

Edna is preceded in death by her parents, daughter Susann Reimer, and brothers Carl and Theodore Friesen.

Edna farmed with her husband from 1949 until 1960 at which time they moved to Hesston, KS. During the following years she was a foster parent, day care mom, and caregiver and mentor to numerous college students. Edna felt a true calling from the Lord to be one of his "Special Servants" volunteering at Camp Mennoscah and with Mennonite Disaster Service, Habitat for Humanity, and the Etc. Shop; teaching Sunday School; and, working at the MCC Sale. She will be remembered by many as an avid and accomplished hand quilter. Edna also loved to travel; she and Irvin traveled the US from coast to coast, Europe, the middle east, and the Caribbean.

Memorial Service was held August 22, at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS. JOST FUNERAL HOME, Hillsboro, KS, was in charge of arrangements. Memorial gifts may be made to Bethesda Home, 408 East Main, Goessel, KS 67053.



Will Warden Mennonite Church, Warden, WA, close its doors? That's the question the members of the Warden Mennonite Church discussed during their meetings in late August with Duncan Smith. The congregational members, by consensus, have decided to continue with planned worship services through September and a joint service with Menno Mennonite Church on October 1, after that there will be limited services for the next three months. These limited services will be an informal gathering of those who wish to worship together, a sabbatical of sorts, for the church. During the three months, there will be monthly meetings to discuss Warden's future, the possibilities of continuing, or exploring other options. Please keep Warden Mennonite Church, its leaders, and its members in your prayers as they go through this hard process.

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On day four of the convention, Thursday, July 7, the central topic of table conversation was Christian formation. Commitment to promoting a "year of the Bible" project in local congregations met with strong affirmation from delegates.

The fifth day of delegate sessions, Friday, July 8, was devoted largely to reporting on topics and conversation from the Conversation Room, and open microphone time for delegates to share and process their views, opinions, and perspectives. Conversation covered a range of topics from how to deal with

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News & Notes:

Cleon & Elizabeth Claassen spent most of August visiting family. First they went to Indiana to see Elizabeth's parents, who now live in an assisted living facility in Goshen, IN. After a few days at home they flew to Kansas to spend time with their daughter Rebecca and her husband Beau. Time was spent helping to prepare for a future grandchild. They also helped Cleon's sister Patrice Claassen prepare for her upcoming hip surgery. They had a good visit with Walt & Clara Reimer in their lovely duplex in North Newton. Clara still has a boot on her broken ankle, but gets around well.

Del Franz and his daughter Melina visited Minnie Franz in Spokane August 21-24. During that time, Jay Franz, Carma Franz and JC and Roberta Hodgson were also able to visit with them. During that time, Ron and Mary Lou Garbin joined all of us for a dinner at Riverview Terrace. Del had planned to return home by way of Seattle where they would spend about two days sightseeing and visiting with Laura and Bryan Munro and Alyssa and Douglas Branca, but their return flight to Philadelphia was cancelled due to Hurricane Irene. They arrived back in New Jersey one day late, but had to fly into Washington DC because the airports in Philadelphia and the New York area were still closed Sunday, the 28th. They arrived home to a house without electricity and a flooding Delaware River. The river was not expected to rise high enough to flood their home, but it may be days before power is restored, because Del reports that many trees have fallen and some seem to be suspended on the power lines. Melina begins first grade September 7 at Bear Creek Tavern Elementary School in Titusville, NJ.

The annual Alvie/J.M. Schrag family picnic was held at Potholes State Park in July. All four of Alvie and Blanche's children were in attendance (Loren Schrag, Beth Stucky, Kay Schrag, Tim Schrag), as well as their spouses, and most of their children and grandchildren. Cousin Gary Jantz was also in attendance, representing the greater J.M. Schrag family.

Dick and Beth (Schrag) Stucky hosted the tri-annual P.P. Stucky family reunion in Leavenworth and Shoreline, Washington, during the first week of August. All 16 descendants, including Donna and Cody Hostick (with Dean and Paula) spent the week together. Highlights of the reunion included a portrait session (taken by Lisa Dorsing, Warden Mennonite Church), family dinners and play time, and hand-cranked homemade ice cream. Over Labor Day weekend, Cody, Donna, Dean and Paula Hostick attended the first ever Hostick family reunion and potluck at Champoege State Park in Oregon, organized by Donna. There were approximately 30 people in attendance, some coming from as far as Colorado and Montana. Highlights included musical entertainment provided by Cody's cousins, badminton tournaments, a group photo, and the exchange of genealogy data.

The BBQ after church, Aug 21, had a great turnout, plenty of food and hot weather. The noon sun was mighty warm but enough shade was found under the porch and in the garage for everyone to sit and enjoy lunch. I think everyone had a good time and several families extended the day and even stayed for dinner! Thanks to all who came and provided food, we look forward to doing it again next year. The Schafer's



Family time it was for us this summer. June 20-30, Jon, Deborah, Benjamin, Emma Jane and Emerson came to visit. This was Emerson's first visit to the Pacific Northwest. The cool June weather did not keep us from swimming twice a day in the pool. Butch and Jon had some time to go fishing and golfing. August 6-20, Eric, Gretchen, Julianna, Timothy and Jacob came for a visit. Since harvest was late, Eric drove combine for a few days and of course the grandkids lived in the swimming pool. Butch and Eric took time to golf and we managed 3 days at Priest Lake and 1 day at the Grant County Fair. One of the highlights for the grandkids was playing with Spencer and Ellie. We will remember the summer of 2011--God is Good, All the Time.

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divisive issues in the church as local congregations and a denomination, to having a more visible and intentional witness at conventions.

The sixth and final day of delegate sessions began with a communion service and involved a survey to be used for updating Mennonite worship materials, particularly hymn books.

My time in Pittsburgh was challenging, exciting, and edifying. It was a privilege to represent Menno Mennonite Church in various contexts throughout the week, as it has been a privilege to serve Menno in ministry this year. If you would like more information about the Anabaptist Missional Project or the Pittsburgh convention, numerous articles about AMP and Pittsburgh 2011 are available on the AMP blog as well as in *The Mennonite* and *TMail*, the online version of *The Mennonite*.

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Mennonite Country Auction & Relief Sale OCTOBER 1, 2011

7:00-9:00 am	Breakfast
9:30	Sherri Famer in concert, auction stage
10:00	Craft & Food Booths open for sale
10:30	History of the Mennonites explained
11:00	Children's Auction
12:00 noon	Main Auction of Quilts & other items



Calender of Events

September	18	11:00 a.m.	Pastor Matthew speaks at Warden Mennonite Church
	21	6:30-8:00 p.m.	Women's Bible Study
	28	6:30-8:00 p.m.	Women's Bible Study
	30	5-8 p.m.	WA Pastors meet at Menno
October	1		34th Mennonite Country Auction & Relief Sale
	2		MCA Sunday at Menno Church
	4	noon	Moses Lake Ministerial Assoc. meets
	8		Fall Fest at Bethel College, N. Newton, KS
	11		Moses Lake Ministerial Assoc. meets
	13	9a.m. to 2 p.m.	Menno Women in Mission meets
November	4		Women's Retreat at Camp Camrec - Menno hosting
	8	noon	Moses Lake Ministerial Assoc. meets
	19	9a.m. to 2 p.m.	Menno Women in Mission meets
	20		Harvest Festival at Menno Church, Kevin Dorsing, speaker