

Akron Mennonite Church Newsletter

1311 Diamond Street, Akron, Pennsylvania 17501

January 2010

VISION FOR AMC

Akron Mennonite Church will be fully engaged in God's mission in a broken world as we are called, equipped and sent by the Holy Spirit to follow Christ in life. Shaped by the gifts and vision of our members, we will keep Christ and church at the center of our lives as we reach out to neighbors near and far and witness to the world around us through an Anabaptist-Mennonite expression of faith.



Worship Notes

By

Jim S. Amstutz & Renny Magill

Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart.

2 Corinthians 4:1

This New Year marks the beginning of a new season in the life of Akron Mennonite Church. We bring to a close the chapter of Pastor Dawn's 12 ½ year ministry. She has served us well in the areas of youth ministry, pastoral care, preaching, and her presence. She has done so with a clear sense of call, with grace, and consistency. We will miss her.

Now it is time to look forward, to trust ourselves to not only survive this time of transition but to thrive. We know that we are a talented congregation with a deep resource pool.

Renny: Congregational Council has been deliberate and intentional in shaping our next steps. In response to what we are hearing from the congregation through the recent Financial Priorities Task Force report, and the Repurposing Committee, we are focusing on strengthening our organizational and physical structures.

The staffing priorities report will guide us as we consider both the new staffing configuration and the organizational structure to support the new arrangement. Change is likely, and we will involve the congregation in the important discernment work that is necessary.

The council has worked with Jim to create a new job description for this transition time that will shift 20% of his time from administration to additional pastoral care. Bonnie Myers has been hired to assist in pastoral

Worship Series

January 3 Jim S. Amstutz

January 10 Jim S. Amstutz - Communion

January 17 Jim S. Amstutz

January 24 Jim Smucker

January 31 Jim S. Amstutz

visiting and responding to special needs and on-going care situations.

Jim: Pat Martin and I have already been working with the volunteer Interim Worship Team of Ron Guenther, Cheryl Zook, Deb Sprunger and JW Sprunger for Sundays from Epiphany to Lent. Lectionary texts from Acts and 1 & 2 Corinthians focus on the work of the Spirit in the church.

Karen King will continue coordinating the MYF advisor team with Dwight Yoder giving oversight to lining up teachers. Pastoral Team, Janet Weber, Mary Jane Crockett and Charity Shenk will lend continuity to a smooth transition.

Paul reminds us that we are committed to this ministry because God has called us together by his mercy. We are promised that the Holy Spirit continues to inspire, empower, and equip the members of the Body of Christ for mutual ministry. We do not lose heart.

Looking Ahead: This year we look forward to a number of key decisions and events as a congregation:

- Dr. Luke Gascho, Executive Director of the Merry Lea Environmental Center at Goshen College is our Mission Festival Speaker, February 6-7. His theme is *Creation Care in Holistic Mission*.
- Council is exploring next steps on repurposing existing space to maximize storage, fellowship and gathering options.

- The MYF will travel once again to Kentucky for a week of service June 27-July 3 with the MCC SWAP (Sharing With Appalachian People) program doing home repair.
- *Healing the Wounds of War* is the theme of Adult VBS, July 25-28 with resource person Carolyn Holderread Heggen. As a psychotherapist specializing in trauma recovery, her call is for peace churches to reach out to veterans in their communities “who are paralyzed with shame and suffering terrors of the soul.”
- Still in the dream stage is a related *Children’s Peace Camp* sometime before or after the adult sessions. Curriculum materials already exist, and this may be another *Market Place* opportunity to reach out to children in the community as well as our own.

We look forward to a year of possibility, hope, and a renewed sense of the Spirit’s leading in the life of Akron Mennonite Church. Thanks in advance for your patience and understanding as together we find our way into God’s future.

AMC Newsletter Interview: Grace Brubaker

by Dawn Yoder Harms



Grace Stahl Brubaker was born to Ira and Nora Stahl on September 17, 1929, near Davidsville, Pennsylvania. She joined an older brother and sister, Lorraine and Romaine. Her family lived on a farm until Grace was in the 4th grade, at which point they moved into the town of Davidsville.

Grace remembers her mother gardening and preserving what she grew, quilting (her tiny stitches were legendary), and working at the butcher shop. A quiet woman, Nora had a wonderful smile and laugh.

Grace’s father, Ira, was a farmer and truck driver. She remembers that times were hard during the Depression,

and that her father “was out working all the time”. Sadly, he died of a stroke soon after Grace left home for college. After graduating from high school, Grace followed her sister, Romaine, to Goshen College, where she studied for two years before transferring to Hahnemann Nursing School in Philadelphia. Unfortunately, halfway into her training there, Grace contracted tuberculosis and needed to take a hiatus from her studies. In fact, she needed to stay at the hospital there for three months for a time of recuperation.

Her family was permitted to visit her there, as was a certain young man she had met at Goshen College, J. Clarence “Red” Brubaker from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In the early 1950’s, they were married, and over the years, six children were born into their family: Jerry, Jay, Jim, Sue, Jan, and Barb. Throughout their married life, they lived in Smoketown, Elstonville, and Rothsville.

For a number of years, “Red” owned and operated his own foundry business. For most of his career, however, he worked as a toy designer at Hubley Toy Company.

When their children were young, Grace worked mostly at home. When they got older, she worked at Sauder’s Eggs, the Manheim Auto Auction (registering vehicles), with Amish friends cleaning houses, in the offices of Dr. Busco and Dr. David Harnish, and as a nurse at Lancaster General Hospital. When I ask Grace how she managed it all, she smiles and says, “The house wasn’t always clean!”

Both “Red” and Grace were charter members of Akron Mennonite Church, coming to this faith community from Monterey Mennonite Chapel. “Red” served on Congregational Council, and Grace led singing in worship and helped with Hospitality. She also sang in a variety of music groups, including church choir and a trio with Anne Weaver and Helen Peifer.

A very sad time came for the Brubaker family and Akron Mennonite Church in 1987, when “Red” ended his life after ten years of significant health challenges and decline.

In the meantime, Grace has carried on. She continues to nurture her love of flower gardening and quilting, and especially music. As we visited, I learned that she sang in the Lancaster-Franconia Singers from the early 1960’s until recently – some forty years!

One of my own warm memories from time visiting with Grace is singing songs together from the little red children’s hymnbook as we reminisced. And of course,

we all enjoyed hearing her sing with Anne Weaver and Helen Peifer at AMC's 50th anniversary celebration in September, 2009.

Grace has experienced much life change in the past twelve years. In 1997, she moved from her home in Rothsville to Garden Spot Village in New Holland. Then, in 2004, Grace suffered a major stroke, which altered her life significantly. Even so, she continued to live independently in her cottage until this past year, with the help of her very supportive children, all of whom but one live in this general area. She now enjoys living in an apartment at Garden Spot Village.

Here are some things that I will always remember about Grace: her ability to laugh when her words don't come out right; her independent spirit; her loving and supportive family; and the way music touches a place deep within her. Keep on singing it for us, Grace!

Creation Care in Holistic Mission to be Mission Festival Topic



Creation Care will be the topic of the annual Mission Festival to be held on February 7-8, 2010. The Good News of Jesus Christ touches on every aspect of life. Christ's roles as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, model for us what it means to be stewards of all things. Caring for creation is an important aspect of living out Christ's message of hope. The community of believers is called to engage the issues of creation care individually, locally, regionally, and globally.

The guest speaker for Mission Festival this year is Dr. Luke Gascho who is the Executive Director of the Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College, Wolf Lake, Indiana. In addition to his role with the Center, Dr Gascho also serves as the chair of the Goshen College Strategic Planning Committee and provides leadership for the Mennonite Creation Care Network.

His Saturday evening session is entitled *Biblical and Global Realities of Creation Care* and will examine how faith expressions and caring for the Earth are often seen as being at odds with each other. This presentation will focus on the intersection of theological, ethical and ecological foundations for environmental stewardship.

The Sunday Morning Sermon will address *Creation Care is an Act of Peace*. From the beginning, God has been in relationship with all of Creation. The sermon will examine biblical texts that speak of the relational nature of God and explore two Anabaptist belief statements that construct a foundation for caring for creation as an act of peace.

- *We believe that the universe has been called into being as an expression of God's love.*
- *The peace God intends for humanity and creation was revealed most fully in Jesus Christ.*

During Discipleship Hour, Dr. Gascho's topic will be *The Church Engages Creation Care*. Creation care practices in our congregations should affirm and teach that everything belongs to God. Our response is to be keepers of the Earth. This session will encourage holistic stewardship in daily life of the congregation and its members. Practical applications will be shared and discussed.

The food festival will occur on Saturday evening, but with one change in emphasis. You will be encouraged to bring dishes made with local in-season or preserved foods. More on this and other aspects of the program later in January

CHILDREN'S CORNER

By
Mary Jane Crockett



NEWS FROM THE JR. DEPARTMENT NURSERY TO GRADE 5

CALENDAR

- | | |
|------------|--|
| January 6 | Venture Club - Beach Party at Bird-in-Hand pool; 6:30-8pm |
| January 29 | Share-A-Life - Game Night in Assembly Room; 6:30-8pm |

CHILDRENS OFFERINGS

Thank you for sharing a gift for a child.

49 Christmas Bundles were collected for 31 girls and 19 boys, to distribute in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Virginia cities for Christmas.

VENTURE CLUB UPDATE

Join us for a FUN Venture Club Night at the indoor pool party at **the Bird-In Hand Motel Wednesday, January 6** from 6:30-8PM. Children K-Grade 5 and parents are welcome. See you there!

SHARE-A-LIFE

Winter is a welcome time for our next event - a **Board Game Night - on January 29th** from 6:00 -8:00PM in the AMC assembly room. It will be a comfy, cozy sharing of time together with board games and popcorn for mentors and partners.

“Helping Churches Help People.” It serves as a bridge between people in need and the Church. We at Akron are most familiar with one of their affiliated ministries -- Homes of Hope, a transitional housing program. Linda Helmus has just completed a term on their Board of Directors.



On Wednesday, December 16, House Church N hosted a Christmas Tea for the Landis Homes' residents who are AMC participants. It was a 5 STAR celebration of loving and care! The children and teenagers of the hosts entertained us with music and served wonderful Christmas cookies and punch. We played games and one in particular was so enjoyable for the elderly. Each was told to bring an early photograph of themselves which were passed around and others tried to match it to a participant, who got to elaborate on the occasion of the photo. A Big Hearty Thanks to House Church N for 10 years of party giving!

~Joy Millen

Welcome to Woven...

What is it?

A group of believers, seekers...or even questioners

Doing what?

Being community, discussing, sharing

Who is it?

It could be you or someone you know or someone you invite

When is it?

Beginning January 10, every Sunday morning from 8-9AM, meeting in the Sabbath Room

...come and find out if *Woven* is you.

Inspired by the lessons of Jesus and with input from the writings and thoughts of authors such as Donald Miller (*Blue Like Jazz*) and Jim Palmer (*Divine Nobodies*).

55 PLUS Sunday, January 19 5:00-7:00 pm

A light meal with finger foods will be enjoyed at 5PM followed by a program at 6PM with guest speaker Kim Wittel, executive director of Love INC (In the Name of Christ).

Love INC of Lancaster County involves over 100 area churches in meeting local community needs. Theme –

Update from Atlantic Coast Conference

You may be wondering why you are hearing from the ACC office when there is not an imminent assembly. First of all, there is a lot happening in the life of our conference, and we want to make sure you are part of our communication cycle. Secondly, you provided very valuable feedback at October's Fall Assembly this year regarding the role of delegates and our communication practices...or prior lack thereof. In short, we heard you and you were right! Your role as delegates representing your congregation to the conference, and in reporting back to your congregation about what is going on is a vital one. We realize that you need more information, more often, more interactively than can be summed up twice a year in a weighty Assembly docket. Below, you'll find several news items which are occurring or about which the Executive Committee is currently discerning. Please take a look and prayerfully consider the work that we are all engaged in as a community through ACC. You'll also find these items posted on the delegate tab at atlanticcoastconference.net as well. Please feel free to email us with any questions or concerns. Thank you!

ACC Connections to Puerto Rico - Bob Martin (now working at Camp Deerpark in New York) recently traveled to Puerto Rico to meet with the moderator of

Puerto Rico Mennonite Convention (PRMC) as well as the chairman of their Missions Committee to revisit a conversation which began in 2006. The conversation is moving toward some level of membership, either full or associate, with Mennonite Church USA through Atlantic Coast Conference, due to our historical connections and existing relationships.

End of Year Budget Shortfall – The following is an excerpt from a letter that was sent to the pastors at each of our congregations. *ACC operates on a calendar year budget. As of November 30, the ACC budget is \$47, 282 behind income compared to expenses. This is about \$17,000 greater difference compared to a year ago. As your congregation considers end-of-year giving, we invite you share this report with the congregation and consider a special end-of-year gift to Atlantic Coast Conference.*

Hyattsville Mennonite Church Membership Request. You may recall that at our Fall Assembly, it was noted that we had received a letter from Hyattsville MC requesting a transfer of membership to ACC from Allegheny Mennonite Conference. Following is an update on that, taken from a letter from Executive Conference Minister Warren Tyson to ACC pastors. *On November 10, 2009, with counsel and after prayer seeking God's direction, the Executive Committee took action to respond to the Hyattsville Mennonite Church request to transfer its conference membership from Allegheny Mennonite Conference to Atlantic Coast Conference. The Executive Committee decided that it would not be wise to go further at this time considering the membership transfer request. Rather, we provided counsel back to Allegheny Conference and Hyattsville Church leaders encouraging they have dialog determining what is required to lift the disciplinary measures which AMC delegates placed on the Hyattsville Church some years ago. This decision was made in communication with Allegheny Conference leaders as well as counsel received from Mennonite Church USA leaders. ACC leaders pledged our prayers for Allegheny Conference and Hyattsville Church leaders as they continue the conversation in respect and mutual love and care.*

Simply in Season Discipleship Hour Class Returns...

Simply in Season class will resume on January 17 in Room 11. Topics in January and February include: money – is low cost the best choice, the history behind “slow” foods, fair trade – what is it and how does it benefit me and my neighbor, what are the “hot topics” in agriculture and food? An outline will be available by

January 10. Come and share your questions, ideas, thoughts, and suggestions. Remember to bring your copy of the cookbook *Simply in Season*. ~Patricia Martin

Lancaster Interchurch Peace Witness

Lancaster Interchurch Peace Witness's Middle East Interest Group will host AMB. Warren Clark, Executive Director of Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP), reporting on our churches' advocacy work for Middle East peace and justice. *All are welcome.*

Saturday, January 9, 2010, 9-11AM, Lancaster Church of the Brethren, 1601 Sunset Ave.

Clark is a former senior U.S. Foreign Service officer having served in the Middle East, Africa, and elsewhere. He holds degrees from Williams, Harvard, Georgetown, Johns Hopkins and Virginia Theological Seminary. CMEP is the Washington advocacy arm on Middle East affairs for 23 U.S. denominations and church bodies.

Volunteer Opportunity



Booksavers Volunteers needed: Like books? Like to support MCC? Care about our creation? Did you know you could volunteer at Booksavers and do all of these at the same time? Booksavers, located behind the ReUzit furniture store at 1054 South State Street, Ephrata has thousands of books that need to be sorted, checked, priced, entered on the internet, or recycled to save from going into landfills. Their will be a briefing to explain Booksavers and volunteer options on January 6 at 9:00 AM at the Booksavers warehouse. Coffee and doughnuts provided. Contact Lowell Detweiler if you have questions.

Mennonite Health Services Alliance

MHS invites you to join hundreds of Anabaptist board and staff leaders, nurses, physicians, pastors, chaplains, social workers and other professionals at Mennonite Health Assembly in Norfolk, VA March 4-7.

Visit the Assembly website to view conference details, download a registration booklet and register online. For a discount register by January 22, 2010.

Celebrate Epiphany with Mennonite Historical Society Field Trip to Renaissance Pageant

Join us on Saturday, January 9, for the 29th annual performance of the Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church near Philadelphia. Tour also visits the Mennonite Heritage Center in Harleysville and includes a 90-item breakfast buffet at Franconia Heritage Family Restaurant. More information at www.lmhs.org or (717) 393-9745.

Sweetheart Banquet



A sweetheart banquet will be held at Woodcrest Retreat on Saturday evening, February 6, 2010 at 6PM. Come enjoy delicious food, special music and encouragement for your marriage! "Three Pillars of Love" will be the theme of speaker John Landis. John is Associate Pastor of Krall Mennonite Church. Cost: \$30 per couple. Call 738-2233 for reservations by January 28, 2010.

Change of Email, Phone number or Address

Jan & Lynne Brubaker email change:

brubaker.jl@gmail.com (Lynne);

janalanbrubkaer@gmail.com (Jan)

Andrea King email change: andreaking78@aol.com

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cymartin518@gmail.com

Andres & Amy Zorrilla: mailing address is:

NETPACK #9511, 7801 NW 37th Street, Doral, FL 33166-6503, USA.

JOIN THE MENNONITE CHILDREN'S CHOIR OF LANCASTER



Can't keep from singing? Love praising God? Consider joining the Carol Choir (grades 2 – 5), the Concert Choir (grades 6 – 8) or the Chamber Choir (grades 9 -12) of the Mennonite Children's Choir of Lancaster (MCCL) this spring. Singers are being accepted for all three choirs. We are committed to training children and youth to glorify Jesus Christ through excellent choral singing. For more information, contact Darlene Hein (dtmhein@aol.com) at 898-0398 for singers in grades 2-8 or Rosemary Blessing (siegrirs@hotmail.com) at 392-6205 for singers in grades 9-12.

LOOKING AHEAD

January 4 – Women's Bible study @ Irma Bowman's @ 7PM

January 6 – Venture Club pool party @ Bird-in-Hand motel, 6:30-8PM

January 7 – Men's breakfast @ Udder Choice, 7AM; presenter Glenn Weber

January 8-10 – Jr. MYF Retreat @ Camp Hebron

January 10 – Communion Sunday

January 10 – Sunday Soup @ 11:45 AM

January 12 – Congregational Council meeting @ 7PM

January 17 – Men's choir rehearsal, 8AM

January 17 – 55 PLUS meeting with Kim Wittel @ 5PM

January 18 – Women's Bible Study @ Irma Bowman's, 7PM

January 26 – Congregational Council meeting @ 7PM

January 29 – Share-A-Life game night; 6-8PM, Assembly Room

January 30 – MYF Spaghetti Supper @ 5:30PM

January 31 – New Members Sunday

AMC Newsletter is printed monthly & distribution the last Sunday of the month. Give submissions to church office by the previous Monday.

Editor: Janet Weber

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Jim S. Amstutz, Pastor

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