

Connecting with Grace Tyson

It was 1965 when Grace left 1234 Main Street in Akron for Goshen College with no thoughts of ever coming back. After more than forty years away, she has returned to be with Menno in the same brick house where she grew up. She came back in 2009 when it seemed prudent to have someone living with Menno. Grace was newly retired, and with the blessing and help of her siblings, she made the move from south Florida to Akron. She continues to have the support of her family and feels deeply that this is where she is meant to be.



You *can* go home again, Grace has discovered, and what a satisfying homecoming it is. She was hesitant at first about how much she wanted to be involved in church life, but since her role included bringing Menno each Sunday morning, she tiptoed along with him. She was warmly greeted by old friends who knew her from growing up as a charter child of the church. She

eased into this new space and found herself more at home as time went on. Joining the Women’s Bible Study, Grace was welcomed into a close group where the (continued on Page 2)

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JANUARY 2012

Worship Series

January 1	Jim S. Amstutz
January 8	Jim S. Amstutz
January 15	Michelle Dula
January 22	Jim S. Amstutz
January 29	Jim S. Amstutz

WORSHIP NOTES BY JIM S. AMSTUTZ

But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God’s grace.
-Acts 20:24

Finishing Well

The *Final Arrangements* class that Don Ziegler and Jerry Shank facilitated this fall on a series of Monday mornings was an informative and

challenging experience. To put it simply, we all committed ourselves to planning our own funeral. It took me a while to get over the normal fear that if I plan my own funeral I’m somehow hastening my own demise.

With excellent input and a wealth of resources, we thought about every detail from the moment of death to the memorial service. Some of us have been around dying and death a lot, others not so much. Sharing these plans

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(continues from Page 1) women cared about her and included her and Menno in their prayers each time.

Two years later Grace finds herself happily involved in life at AMC. She has participated in the children's story time, served as worship leader, and especially enjoys singing in the choir. Singing was something she hadn't done since college choir and she finds this most rewarding. She also is on one of the worship planning teams as well as being involved with the children in Venture Club.

Grace Diener was born in Champa, India on December 2, 1947, where her parents Menno and Savilla were with MCC, assigned as relief to missionaries who had not been able to travel because of World War II. They came to Akron in 1949 when Menno was invited to work at MCC. He later owned a meat/cheese business at local markets: Upper Darby and York. Menno, a CPA, was a savvy business man. Grace helped in the family business as well as helping to take care of her younger sister and brothers: Elaine, Nevin, Arlin, and Claude. Five children born in seven years makes for a lively household!

Warm memories of childhood include playing with friends and neighbors who were classmates at Akron Elementary School. Everyone knew everyone, Grace recalls with fondness. They played together after school and all summer in those years when summer lasted forever and there was time to lie on your back and watch the floating clouds. They played in the park behind the Miller Hess Shoe Factory and up and down the streets of Akron when Main Street was brick. Grace can still hear Menno whistling to them as the call to come home for meals.

Early years in church were at Monterey, and Grace remembers leaving some of her best friends when her family moved with the new group to form AMC. She was in the first baptism class of youth in 1961. A voracious reader, Grace read every book in the church library, some of them twice.

Grace graduated from Ephrata High School and headed to college, graduating from Goshen College in 1970 with a BA in Elementary Education. She and D. Rex Tyson from Elkhart, were married in 1969 in Goshen by C. Norman Kraus. They moved to Miami, Florida for graduate school and stayed there when jobs became available. Grace's jobs included teaching in a state residential facility, two private schools, substituting in the public schools at a time of unrest in the segregation years.

Her last position was as a math teacher in Miami-Dade County schools. This position was remarkable in a unique school, organized under a grant to serve at risk students. This was the first time that these nonconforming students were shown caring and confidence in their ability to make it in life. Grace connected with these students and made a lasting impact on their lives. This

is evident in the connections she has on Facebook with these former students, now her friends.

Since Grace and Rex were both teachers, they spent their summers traveling. Two trips to Maine and most summers on Beech Mountain in NC are good memories for Grace. Their son Andrew made friends at the mountains each summer. One of them, Rachael became his wife, and they now live in North Dakota where they are in school.

When her mother Savilla died in 1999, Grace experienced two major shifts in her life. That was also the year that she and Rex were divorced. The following years, Grace came home more frequently to check on her daddy. A highlight for her was the trip to India with Menno in 2004 to visit the place where she was born. Menno was invited by Ed Miller to participate in a SALT/Bangladesh celebration. He and Grace were hosted royally by Ed and Twila on this memorable trip.

It was a trip to New England in 2008 that included Menno where Grace noted that he needed more care. Plans began to form around next steps for Menno. Grace was close to retirement, and it seemed to be the right time to make this move. She is now his primary care giver, and her siblings come to fill in when she takes a break to refuel. She takes Menno to Landis Homes week days where he spends time with friends in the day care program. They come to church together and sit on Menno's bench. They sing together, sharing the hymn book, after all of these years.

Grace has made new friends here in Akron in addition to renewing former connections. She meets regularly with her childhood friends for breakfast; these same friends who went through elementary and high school with her, who played all summer in the park. All of her friends will miss her when she is no longer needed at 1234 Main St. and moves back to Florida.

Grace reflects on her sojourn here with Menno: "It is an honor for me to represent my family in caring for our father and a joy to have this time with him."

~Priscilla Ziegler, January 2012





HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- 1 Dave Frey
Mary Martens
Ethel Shenk
Ruth Weaver
- 2 Mindy Cameron
- 3 Phil Zimmerman
- 5 Ken Langeman
Ezra Smee
- 6 Lorene Horst
Jean Miller
Emily Walker
- 7 Jim Amstutz
Susan Broadus
Rena Weaver
Kristin Yoder
- 9 Karen King
Rebecca Longenecker
David Nancarvis
- 10 Herman Bontrager
Steve Hershberger
John Horst
- 11 Sharon Bowman
Jolene Weaver
- 13 Linda Horst
Jenna Stoltzfus
- 14 Esther Hostetter
Annika Neufeld-Kreider
- 15 Sanela Gligorevic
Flo Harnish
- 16 Corin Dundore
Barbara Erb
- 17 Nebojsa Gligorevic
- 18 Joyce Haller
Mark Weaver
- 19 Robert Hess
- 20 Lisa Weaver
- 21 Caden Beyer
Bernice Valverde
- 22 Andrea King
Robert Martin
Esther Weaver
- 23 Brigham Martin
Barbara Mitchell
- 24 Cathy Boshart
Meghan Nolt
Betty Summers
- 25 John Shearer
- 26 Aaron Cameron
Megan Erb
Steve Hartzler
Jared Horst
Joy Millen
- 27 Lloyd Chapman
Dorothy Martin
Kenton Martin
Sven Sundberg
- 28 Chris Hostetter
- 29 Verna Schrock
Milo Smee
- 31 Randy Garber
Virginia Lapp
Leif Sundberg

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with loved ones was also a challenge. This can be a difficult conversation to have.

Not long after the class ended, Myron Ebersole died. Myron was a long time hospital chaplain, first at Lancaster General Hospital, then at Hershey Medical Center. He also trained and supervised students in Clinical Pastoral Education. He was comfortable talking about dying and death, and he planned ahead.

Myron had an Advanced Directive, a living will that helps family members and Drs. decide what level of intervention they want done when death is near. *No heroic measures* was Myron’s wish, and it was honored.

He wanted to donate his body to science. The paperwork was in order, and that too was honored. All the arrangements with the local funeral home were not only planned, but paid for. When his cremains are returned, he requested that they be placed in one of AMC’s handmade wooden boxes and buried in the AMC cemetery.

His obituary had been carefully written and needed only minor editing and updating by the family.

Finally, the order of worship for his memorial service was written out with the provision to “adapt as necessary.” Scriptures, hymns and names to call for tributes—it was all there.

What a gift for all concerned. Family members could focus on being together and comforting one another through the initial stages of the grieving process. Pastor Michelle and I had what we needed to finalize a memorial service in the midst of a busy Advent season. Those gathered for the service knew that this is what Myron wanted us to hear from him, a final testimony of God’s grace.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you’ll find the AMC funeral planning form. I encourage you to fill it out, keep a copy with your important papers and return a copy to the AMC office. You will also find an invitation to a second offering of the *Final Arrangements* class. Take advantage of this if you are able. You, and your loved ones, won’t be disappointed. It’s an invitation to finish well.



Connecting with Youth and Young Adults

by Michelle Dula and Melody Rupley

AMC is very blessed to have a committed group of advisors for the MYF who give their time and energy to our wonderful group of youth. We want AMC to be a place where the youth feel connected in a deep way to AMC in spite of this busy time in their lives. One way that we would like to help build on this connection is to assign each youth a “contact advisor.” While this is not the same thing as a Deacon, it is similar in that these relationships help to keep the youth connected to the congregation in a deeper way. This “contact advisor” will check in with their youth in a more intentional way. This may be through contact during the week, checking in with them on Sunday mornings, and perhaps attendance to a sporting event, concert, or play. This will look different for each advisor and each youth but the goal is to provide a deeper, more intentional connection between the youth and another adult outside of the family.

It’s no secret that AMC wants to nurture ongoing connections with young adults who grew up among us. Many now attend college or work away from the AMC community and may or may not maintain strong relationships. As we planned Deacon Care, we gave special consideration to the best way to nurture ongoing intentional links with these children of the church. Knowing that Karyn Nancarvis has walked with our young adults for the last three years and that Pastor Jim has relationships with older young adults, we are grateful that Jim and Karyn have agreed to serve as connectors who intentionally nurture individualized AMC links. Adapting our Deacon Care approach, we sent each young adult a personal letter naming either Pastor Jim or Karyn Nancarvis as an AMC connector for them.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



JANUARY EVENTS

Jan. 3: Lunch Bunch@ Ephrata Diner @ 11:30 AM
 Jan. 4: Library Committee @ 6:00 PM
 Jan. 5: Men's Breakfast @ Udder Choice @ 7:00 AM
 Jan. 6-8: Junior MYF @ Camp Hebron
 Jan. 8: Sunday Soup @ 11:45 AM
 Jan. 14: Mid-Winter Ladies Lunch @ 12 noon -2:00PM
 Jan. 15: Men's Choir Rehearsal @ 8:00AM

Jan. 15: 55PLUS@ 5:00 PM
 Jan. 21: MYF Spaghetti Supper @ 5:00 PM
 Jan. 29: Discernment Sunday; 2010 budget and AMC By-laws

Living Scripture

Throughout the season of Epiphany (the months of January and February), the sermons will be based on the Gospel of Mark, chapter one. We want to help the children hear these stories and remember them. The Worship Planning Team has invited the MYF and Junior MYF to use a Reader's Theater approach to dramatize the scripture passage each week during the Children's time. It is the committee's intent to have this be the building block for not only the sermon, but also a time of conversation between children and parents, children and other adults, and among the children themselves.



DIAMOND STREET EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

JUNE HERSHBERGER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Waiting, Expecting....

I was observing the after-school program one day in December. The children arrive at DSECC on 11th around 3:30, have a snack and unwind after a day at school. At 4:00 Ms. Sandi does the count-down from 10 to 1 and then everyone begins singing the "clean up" song as they quickly put toys and games back on shelves and gather in the library area for group time.

Each day in December the children opened a window on the Advent calendar and read the message Ms. Sandi had printed. The day I visited the message was "remember those children who won't have a happy Christmas". After a few moments of talking about what that meant, one child got to "light" the candle and someone else chose a Christmas carol to sing. Then Sandi read a to-be-continued Christmas story. At the end of circle time, one child was assigned the privilege of turning out the room lights while everyone sang "Silent Night". The group of 24 students

quietly and eagerly participated in the Advent ritual each day. Two brothers told Ms. Sandi that after they told their mom about the Advent calendar she bought one for the family to open at home too.

The season included a Christmas program performed by the children for their parents and families. Refreshments and lively conversation followed. One mother told me, "my daughter loves it here. She talks about this school a lot more than her elementary school." I am grateful for the positive influence we have on so many children at DSECC. I am expecting God to continue loving and shaping children's hearts and minds through us in 2012!



AMC During January

Invitation to Participate Final Arrangements Workshop 2012

Where Oregon Dairy Restaurant Meadows room

When Monday evenings, 6:30 – 8:30, soup & salad sessions

Registration

We open this Monday evening workshop, *Final Arrangements*, to AMCers on a first come - first registered basis. Our meeting room limits seating to 24.

To register your seat, promptly call Janet Weber or Lloyd Chapman at the church office.

Overview and Purpose

This workshop provides guidance, information, and a process for you to understand, choose, and document clearly how you wish to make final arrangements for your body. Each topic considers 1) pros and cons, 2) costs, 3) services, 4) how to, 5) resources, 6) decision-making, and 7) personal documentation for survivors. We consider issues in light of our personal, Anabaptist, and traditional practices and values.

Session	Monday	Topic
I	March 5	Introduction & process. Why think about death now?
II	March 12	What to do with the body? Overview of options
III	March 19	Burial: traditional, green, natural, home, sea
IV	March 26	Casket, urn, shroud, vault, cremation, embalmment
V	April 2	Services: traditional, memorial, committal, other
VI	April 9	Eulogy, visitation, viewing, wake, reception, obit, markers
VII	April 16	Documents: organization, location, legal, financial, other
VIII	April 23	Wrap-up, finalize and distribute personal documentation

Primary text

Death for Beginners by Karen Jones, available from Janet Weber @ \$8.00.

Costs

Advance: Please purchase your text as soon as possible.

Weekly sessions: Order from the soup & salad buffet; pay your own tab.

Workshop: No fee for the workshop.

This is our second offering of *Final Arrangements*. We ask you to work with us as we go through the material to help improve the workshop for the benefit of others who participate in future offerings. We anticipate running the workshop again periodically.

Thank you,

Don Ziegler & Jerry Shank

**ADDRESS, PHONE AND
EMAIL CHANGES**

No Updates this month.

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.

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

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Michelle Dula, *Associate Pastor*
of Congregational Life
Akron Mennonite Church

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IN OUR COMMUNITY

The 4th annual Sing for Hope – Winter Opera Gala will be held at the Fulton Theatre in Lancaster on January 21 at 8pm. Featuring Lancaster native, Madeline Bender, and benefiting Mennonite Central Committee's Global Family Program; the proceeds will be used to enrich the lives of children and families around the globe through educational and community projects. Tickets are available by calling the Fulton Theatre box office 717-397-7425 or <http://tickets.fultontheatre.org>.

Red Cross Blood Drive: Please consider donating blood during the Red Cross Community Blood Drive on Sat., January 7, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Akron Lions Club is a sponsor of this blood drive, which will be held at Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Dining Hall, 21 South 12th St., Akron,. Please call 299-5566 Ext. 220 or visit RedCrossBlood.org to schedule an appointment to be a donor. Thank you!

Stewardship University – Let's Grow Together

Save the date: March 3, 2012 at Lancaster Mennonite School

You can count on:

- Classes that offer practical, relevant, usable information
- A wide variety of classes to choose from
- A Biblical, Christ-centered, Anabaptist focus for the event

30 workshops focusing on holistic stewardship, including:

- Freed Up Financially
- Health Benefits
- Short-term Missions
- Estate Planning
- Listening to God
- Generous Worship
- Preparing Your Congregation for Disaster

Instructors include:

- Kevin King (MDS)
- David Shenk (EMM)
- Brian Roche (WGAL)
- Mary Etta King (Kairos)
- Brian Black (Gibbel, Kraybill and Hess)

For more information, contact:
Kevin Nofziger, Church Relations Representative
Kevin.nofziger@everence.com
(717) 653-6662

You can also register online at www.stewardshipuniversity.com starting **December 16**.

HELP THOSE IN NEED

Peggy and Renee's Fired Art Studio is having a fundraiser for Peter's Porch.

Peter's Porch is a non profit organization the helps feed and clothe the needy. Zion Lutheran Church, Akron feeds breakfast, give groceries and has a clothing bank every 3rd Saturday of the month.

We at Peggy and Renee's want to help. We will donate 25% of sales January 13th –17th. We would ask anyone who want to participate to bring a personal hygiene item to donate (soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant , shampoo etc).

PEGGY AND RENEE'S FIRED ART STUDIO

Friday, January 13, 6pm-12am

Saturday, January 14, 10am to 5pm

Sunday, January 15, 1pm to 5pm

Monday, January 16, Noon to 8pm

Tuesday, January 17, Noon to 8pm

Phone 717-859-5566

www.peggyandreenees.com

renee@peggyandreenees.com

29 Main Street

Akron, PA 17501

PEGGY AND RENEE'S FIRED ART STUDIO

You can help by coming and painting or shopping in the gift shop.

VIENNA BOYS CHOIR COMING TO LANCASTER!

The Parish Resource Center is hosting the Vienna Boys Choir in a benefit concert.

The concert will be held at Hempfield High School, on Saturday, March 10, 2012 at 7:30PM.

Group rates are available in two price tiers: \$25.50 or \$38.00. A minimum of 10 persons are needed in the price tier to have the discount. Contact Patricia Martin ASAP, if interested.



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Funeral Planning Instructions

One of the most helpful gifts you can give your family and church is your thoughts about your own funeral. This is not something we tend to think about often and that is precisely why it is important to take a moment to do so. Pastoral Team has provided you with this form to assist the process. It will be kept confidential and can be changed at any time by simply contacting the church office. Thanks for thinking ahead and making your wishes known. In addition to the church office copy you may want to share it with family members or keep a copy with your important documents at home.

Funeral home to be contacted _____

Cemetery: Akron Mennonite _____ **Other:** _____

I wish my remains to be Cremated ____ **Organ donor** ____ **Body to science** ____

I request an AMC hand-built wooden casket ____ **OR wooden cremains box** ____

I would like services to be held in:

Church _____ Funeral Home _____ Other _____

I request the following person(s) to participate in the service assuming they are willing and available:

Pastor _____

Relatives _____

Friends _____

Scriptures, hymns and poems especially meaningful to me:

Scriptures _____

Hymns _____

Special music _____

Poems or Readings: _____

Suggestions for Pallbearers (usually up to six):

My clothing preference: _____

Memorial Contributions may be made to: _____

Other Special Instructions (use space on back)

Your Name _____ **Date** _____