

Fellowship Informer

Stephens City Mennonite Church

Stephens City, Virginia

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts:
and though all its parts are many, they form one body.
So it is with Christ. I Corinthians 12:1

Worshiping: August and September

August 7 – MCUSA reflections from those who attended

August 14 – Sharing Mission moments

August 21 – Parable/teachings of Jesus

Back to school ~ Hand out the worship bags to Gemma,
Nathan, and Aidan

August 28 – Parable/teachings of Jesus series continued

September 4 – Highland Retreat – The *heart* of worship
(see article)

September 11 – Christian Education Sunday

Upcoming Activities

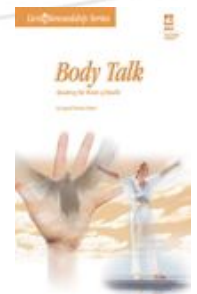
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|---------------|--|
| July 28-31 | Virginia Mennonite Conference Assembly, Harrisonburg, VA |
| July 30 | VMM Taste of Missions, Eastern Mennonite High School 8:30 PM |
| August 5 | Missions night with Cizmanskis family from Montenegro 6 PM |
| August 7 | Contemporary Worship Service 6 PM |
| September 2-4 | Church Retreat at Highland Retreat |



FRIENDS AND VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

From the Parish Nurse

I plan over the next months to bring you insight from the book *Body Talk* (the words of Health) from the Living Stewardship Series by Ingrid Friesen Moser.



Chapter 2: Motivated by Love?

“God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God. and God in him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear.” 1 John 4:16,18

Allowing God to love us as the guiding and motivating factors in our lives, we become One with Him. There is no room for fear, and it cannot control us. Therefore with the power of love we can make better decisions about health and wellness within our lives. With this love, it will enable and empower us to make radical changes through our frame of mind, attitudes, and actions.

What motivates us when it comes to our health? Do we want a closer relationship with God, others, and the created world, or are we trying to make our doctor, spouse, parent, et cetera happy? Could it be to keep up with the cultural expectation of beauty and health?

Some common fears:

Rejection—not thin enough

Disapproval from doctor, boss, spouse

Losing control—I could die anytime

Being alone with health problems

Fear there won't be enough health care resources when I need them

If fears are what are motivating us to more healthy habits, then we can become a hostage to them. For them to continue to be effective, they have to continue to make us afraid. Fear has the power to make us suspicious and have an inward focus, where love helps us trust and gives an outward focus, which draws us to the larger body we are a part of as well.

Knowing and believing that God loves our bodies, we will develop a deep desire for our Bodies to reflect God's love. We start caring for our bodies, and others, and it won't be a place for fear, guilt, shame, or a drive to earn love, but a place of joy and contentment. Being motivated by love, our health goals will change from trying to be the most fit, and perfect earthly body, to making choices which will draw us closer to God. We have complete control over these changes, unlike the complex control of our genetics, age, and sex. How might our health and lifestyle decisions be different if we believed in the promise of love and abundance?

Blessings,

Joan Rosenberger, Parish Nurse



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Reflections: Mennonite Church USA Convention, Pittsburgh, 2011

“Bridges to (the) Cross” was the theme, with the scriptural text of II Corinthians 5:16-20. Corporate worship gatherings reflected the ethnic diversity across our nation.

Each guest speaker skillfully used the scripture text to help the listener’s bridge to the cross and to be the bridge to bring others to Jesus. Shane Hipps appealed for us to have the ministry of reconciliation as our goal. Madeline Maldonado shared her personal story of crossing the bridge to new life. Several speakers shared on *We Are the Church Day* about Life on the Bridge. The President of Mennonite World Conference shared many stories of how he sees God at work in the world. Ervin Stutzman, MCUSA Executive Director, ended the week with a powerful sermon calling all of us to be ambassadors for Christ.

Delegate Assembly Reflections

This year we voted to try a Pittsburgh Experiment by working on a purposeful plan instead of listening and debating about resolutions. In many of our sessions delegates were asked to pray and discern responses to questions such as:

1. Who is God calling us to become as a people?
2. Where is God calling us to go?
3. What are the signposts to show we are on the right path?
4. Where are we now on this journey?
5. What circumstances might cause us to make adjustments along the way?
6. What are the next steps?

The following Seven Priorities were looked at:

1. Christian Formation
2. Christian Community
3. Stewardship
4. Holistic Witness
5. Leadership Development
6. Intercultural Transformation
7. Church-to-Church Relationships

I personally experienced healthy conversation around the table even though it was obvious we have different perspectives on some of the topics. People were respectful and loving.

Submitted by the Pastors

City of Hope, Tanzania: Anna Snodgrass and Karen Gonzol



Additional Tidbits From Conference

The Coffee House site overlooked the Allegheny River. Every evening there were music groups performing from various Mennonite colleges—church groups or individuals.

The Hymn Sing continues to attract a large crowd.

Melody Musser, along with many others, participated in the 5K/10K MennoNight Fun Run one evening along the Three Rivers Heritage Trail.

From the Church Treasurer

As we near the end of our fiscal year at the church here are a few thoughts from the Stewardship & Finance Commission. First, a final reminder: If you want to provide input about the 2011-2012 budget, please talk to a commission chairperson or to me as soon as possible. We will approve the budget at our August congregational meeting. Secondly, we appreciate the regular financial support many of you have given this year, but we are still over \$5000 below our goal for the year, and I would encourage everyone to consider helping to eliminate that deficit before the end of August.

I recently read a book by Randy Alcorn, *The Treasure Principle*. I found this book very thought-provoking. Here is a summary of the principles in the book:

Treasure Principle: You can't take it with you—but you can send it on ahead.

1. God owns everything. I'm His money manager.

We are the managers of the assets God has entrusted—not given—to us.

2. My heart always goes where I put God's money.

Watch what happens when you reallocate your money from temporal things to eternal things.

3. Heaven, not earth, is my home.

We are citizens of "a better country—a heavenly one." (Hebrews 11:16)

4. I should not live for the dot but for the line.

From the dot—our present life on earth—extends a line that goes on forever, which is eternity in heaven.

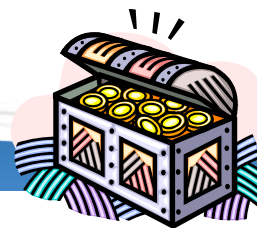
5. Giving is the only antidote to materialism.

Giving is a joyful surrender to a greater person and a greater agenda. It dethrones me and exalts Him.

6. God prospers me not to raise my standard of living, but to raise my standard of giving.

God gives us more money than we need so we can give—generously.

Denny Myers, Treasurer



Highland Retreat September 2 - 4

Highland Retreat—Sunday Morning—September 4, 2011

Theme: The *heart* of Mennonite Worship: Five vital rhythms:

1. Worship is our response to a loving God, known to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit).
2. Our worship is rooted in, and shaped by scripture.
3. Worship creates a new community, uniting believers as the body of Christ.
4. Worship forms us as followers of Jesus.
5. Worship and life are intimately connected.

What Christians have in common is our practice of gathering regularly for worship. Even though the exact ways we worship differ from one region or one cultural group to another, we share common understandings as followers of Jesus that shape our worship. The Mennonite Church Binational Worship Council is encouraging each church to think more deeply about worship and how it shapes our faith in profound ways. They provided a study guide for congregational use.

The questions they ask are:

1. Why do we gather to worship?
2. What makes worship Mennonite?
3. How does worship shape us for life?
4. Why do we gather songs for worship?

This will be our focus at Highland Retreat worship time. We will gather for the opening and introductory comments, break out into four discussion groups, and come back together to collect the feedback comments. There will be time to sing at least some of our “heart” songs. If you have a strong preference for which discussion group you would like to be in, please let Aldine Musser know.

<u>Schedule of Activities</u>	<u>Lodging and Costs</u>
<p style="text-align: center;">Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 PM, Arrive, settle in, and relax • 9 PM, Campfire with s’mores or snacks and storytelling. All are welcome! <p style="text-align: center;">Saturday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast on your own • 9 AM, Morning Devotions with our pastors • 10-12 AM, Morning Walk/Hike • Lunch on your own • Afternoon free for activities, swimming hours will be posted at the retreat center • 5 PM, Dinner • 6:30 PM, Saturday Evening Program <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 AM Breakfast • 10 AM Worship Gathering • 11:30 am Lunch • Clean-up and goodbyes by 1 PM 	<p>Lodging Costs—Retreat Center Rooms—\$29/person/night (minimum charge of 2 people/room). *Children 17 and under are free</p> <p>Note: We must use all the rooms we reserve, or we will have to pay for them; any rooms we do not reserve will be forfeited to another group, and we might not be able to get them back. SO, we will need to fill the Retreat Center first before using the other options, as much as possible.</p> <p>Meal Costs Saturday Supper and Sunday Lunch per meal: Ages 12 years to adult—\$5.00/meal Ages 6 years to 11—\$3.00/meal Under 6 years—free</p> <p>Complete brochures were placed in mailboxes. Contact Darcy at darcyzv@gmail.com for additional information</p>



What is Everence? Everence is a ministry of the Mennonite Church USA and other churches that helps individuals, organizations and congregations integrate finances with faith through a national team of advisors and representatives. Everence offers banking, insurance, and financial services with community benefits and stewardship education.

Benefits for your Community:

- **Budget and Debt Counseling**—Free, confidential counseling from a certified credit counselor through LSS Financial Counseling for you and others.
- **Everence Sharing Fund**—In partnership with your congregation, the Sharing Fund provides matching grants to help meet financial need in your church and community.
- **Church Mortgage Loans**—Loans made to churches and other church-related agencies are funded, in part by a portion of annuity deposits.
- **Stewardship Investing**—Financial decision-making motivated and informed by faith. Key parts of the Everence philosophy are: company screening, shareholder advocacy and community development investing.

Services that are offered through Everence:

- **Insurance**—Life, health, long-term care, Medicare supplement
- **Investments**—Mutual funds, annuities, retirement plans
- **Stewardship Education Events and Education Resources**
- **Charitable Giving Options**
- **Gift and Tuition Annuities**
- **Live Income Plans**
- **Estate Planning**

If you would like more information about Everence, please contact our Everence Advocate Eunice Myers.

On the web at www.everence.com

Summer Salad

Ingredients

- 1 large garlic clove
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 (2-inch-long) serrano or jalapeno chile, minced, including seeds
- ¼ to ½ teaspoon Asian fish sauce
- ½ seedless cucumber, halved lengthwise, then thinly sliced crosswise
- ½ pineapple, peeled, quartered lengthwise, cored, then sliced crosswise ¼ inch thick (2 cups)
- ½ cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped fresh mint
- 2 medium tomatoes cut into ½-inch-thick-wedges

Preparation

Mince garlic, then mash to a paste with salt using side of a large heavy knife.

Whisk together lime juice and sugar in a large bowl until sugar is dissolved, then whisk in oil, chile, and fish sauce (to taste). Add remaining ingredients, tossing to coat, and add salt to taste.