



VMC News

March

The **Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center** (VBMHC) invites Brethren, Mennonites, and all people of faith to join their voices for **How Can We Keep from Singing?**, a unity hymn-sing featuring songs of hope and peace on Sunday, March 19 at 7:00 PM. In a time that is full of fear, division, and despair for many, VBMHC invites you to join with people from different faith traditions in celebrating that which we hold in common: commitments to seeking Jesus and working to bring God's love and justice for all God's children. Where forces of fear want us to see only differences, let us reflect the Body of Christ and join together to sing and celebrate the things we share. Mennonite and Brethren song-leaders and pastors will lead us together in an evening of singing hope and peace in response to God's faithful love. Join us at Harrisonburg First Church of the Brethren, 315 S. Dogwood Dr., Harrisonburg, Va. A free-will offering will be received to support the unifying mission and vision of the Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center.

The Joshua Center in Albania has had a budget short fall this year and Norma Teles' MST has been thinking of ways to make that up. **Bible school offerings** sound like a perfect match to meet this need. Children supporting other children who have few chances to have a good education or to learn about Jesus. The Joshua Center does both. Please consider this for your Bible school offering project. (A flier will be coming shortly. Thank you from Norma's MST.)

April

Holy and Beloved is a gathering for women who minister in many ways. This year's gathering will focus on the theme "Compassionate Sanctuary," hearing from a wide variety of women who are making spaces in their lives to be compassionate to themselves and to those around them. The event is April 1 from 8:30-3, with lunch and childcare provided, at a cost of \$25. Registration required! <http://emu.edu/seminary/women-in-ministry/>

Join the exciting, new *a cappella* competition "The Shenandoah Valley Sing Off!" on Saturday, April 8, 2017, 7 pm, Harrisonburg High School. This will be a fun, family friendly event attracting *a cappella* groups from all across the state. 1st place-\$750 cash prize, 2nd place-\$500 cash prize, Audience Favorite-\$250 cash prize. Application deadline: February 19. For more information, visit singoff.org

Bike Shenandoah, a family friendly and healthy way to support six local agencies, is for the first time adding a **spring ride of 62 miles** (metric century) on Saturday, April 22. The ride will be centered in Dayton, Va., with Mole Hill Bikes providing two rest stops. Registration costs \$50. If you have further questions, call Steve Carpenter, president of Bike Shenandoah, at 540 908-3933. See bikeshenandoah.org

Celebrating Congregational Life, a one-day seminar sponsored by Virginia Mennonite Conference and Virginia Mennonite Missions, is for lay leaders and pastors to be equipped for the missional impulses that nurture congregational life and the mission of the church. Join us on April 22, 8 am — 2:30 pm at Eastern Mennonite School, 801 Parkwood Dr., Harrisonburg, Va. The keynote Speaker is Dr. Art McPhee, pastor, teacher and church planter, speaking on “The Missional Church.” Twelve workshops on a variety of topics will be offered (choose 3). Cost is \$30 per registrant (includes lunch). Register at virginiaconference.org/news/ccl-seminar *See the attached flyer.*

May and beyond

Save the date for the Spring 2017 Credentialed Leaders Consultation addressing racism on Friday, May 5, 2017, most likely 8 or 8:30 to 3:30 p.m. at Shady Oak at Weavers’ Mennonite Church, Rawley Pike (Rt 33) in Harrisonburg. Shady Oak is the building off to the side of the church. More details about the topic and presenters, and registration, will be coming soon.

Mennonite Women of Virginia invite you to their **Annual Missions Day** on Saturday, May 6, in Richmond, Va. A bus will be leaving Harrisonburg at 7:00 a.m. and stopping along the way for persons in the Staunton, Waynesboro, and Charlottesville areas. Learn more and register at virginiaconference.org/partners/mennonite-women-of-virginia/annual-missions-day-event-2017/.

Virginia Mennonite Missions will again host a **fundraising dinner and auction** to raise funds for workers on Saturday, May 20, through the efforts of their Ministry Support Teams. A new feature this year is a silent auction in addition to the live one. This is a great way for MSTs to raise support for their workers by collecting items for the auction. These should be in new or very good used condition. Live auction items will be valued at \$25 or more; lesser valued items will be put in silent auction. We also welcome items that benefit our general Mission Fund. Join us at Eastern Mennonite School, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, Va. The meal begins at 5:00; live auction begins at 6:00 p.m. **Please contact Steve Leaman at VMissions for more information or if you have items to donate:** steve.leaman@vmmissions.org or (540) 434-9727. Items may be stored by VMissions in advance if desired.

Interested in creating positive social change in your community? Whether you are a pastor, lay leader, congregational member, or church elder, the **Summer Peacebuilding Institute** can help you gain the skills to help your church help its community. Over 20 courses in leadership, trauma awareness, restorative justice, dignity, and peace education are offered each year in May and June at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, VA. For more information about courses and costs, visit www.emu.edu/spi. Partial scholarships are available to help congregations with tight budgets.

Register now for Kaleidoscope Summer Camp at Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center. Camps are available for ages 7 to 18 and run from June 25 through August 3, featuring fun activities, great counselors, Christ-centered worship, amazing food and new friends. Information is at www.wcrc.info or call us at 866-566-9272.

Orlando 2017: the attached article by author Ervin Stutzman, which appeared in the March issue of *The Mennonite*, highlights plans for the **Future Church Summit** to be held at the Mennonite Church USA convention in Orlando this July. Note that MC USA is offering a 50 percent rebate on registration for representatives of congregations who’ve not sent a delegate to an assembly for the last three conventions. *See document at Informational Station*