



Blessings on the Way

OUR AUGUST WORSHIP SERIES

AUGUST 18 — VOICES TOGETHER: MUSIC SUNDAY

Guest Artist Benjamin Bergey, Commissioning service workers

Ben is the music editor for Voices Together, a new Mennonite hymnal that CMC will acquire in 2020. He also serves as director of music at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, conducts two local orchestras, and teaches music theory at JMU. Ben and his wife, Kate, have one daughter.

August 25 — Blessings Across Generations: Faith Formation for all

Sermon by guest preacher Sarah Bixler, Backpack Blessing

Sarah will be our resource person for CMC's fall retreat (Sep 20-22) focused on the Ecology of Faith Formation. She is completing her PhD in practical theology (Princeton Theological Seminary) and beginning a faculty position at Eastern Mennonite Seminary. Read more about Sarah and CMC's annual retreat on page 4.

A new Worship Series begins Sunday September 1st!

September 15 — Congregational Meeting

Church Council has called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, September 15th following the Sunday School hour. We will discuss our conference affiliation discernment process and potentially vote on whether or not the congregation should remain in Virginia Mennonite Conference. Lunch will be provided.



A WORD FROM PASTORAL TEAM

Lois Kauffman, Leah Wenger and I served as CMC's delegates to the #MennoCon19 in Kansas City. We were blessed during this churchwide event--worshiping and learning with Mennonites from across the country and working together as a delegate body to discern direction for our church. On pages 2-3 Lois' watercolor reflections and Leah's poetry highlight themes from Bible teacher Tom Yoder Neufeld's presentations. Major decisions by the delegates included a [Churchwide Statement on the Abuse of Child Migrants](#) and inclusion of voting youth delegates at our next assembly. Thanks to Leah Wenger, who led the Step Up! program, youth from across the denomination are engaging in delegate conversations and discernment. Whom shall CMC send as our youth delegate to the convention in 2021?

—Pastor Jennifer

PRAYER CONCERNS

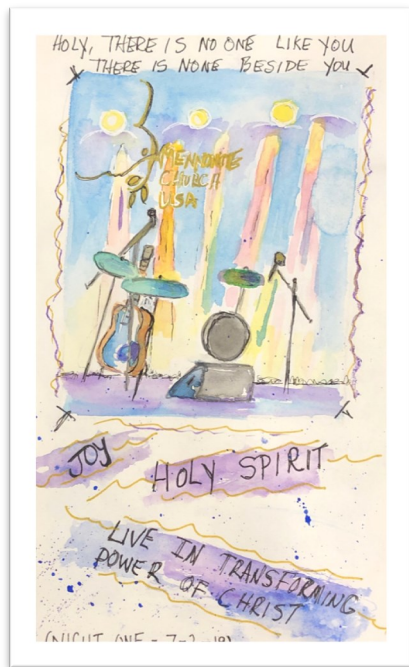
- For students, faculty, staff, administrators and parents as the school year begins.
- For the 24 congregations of Faith in Action as we identify a shared local justice concern for our next campaign.
- For spiritual discernment regarding CMC's future ministry staff and conference affiliation within Mennonite Church USA.

*Pastor Jason will lead prayer on Sunday 8/18 11:30-11:50 in the prayer alcove at the front of the church. This is an opportunity to pray for the requests shared in our service as well as any other concerns.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

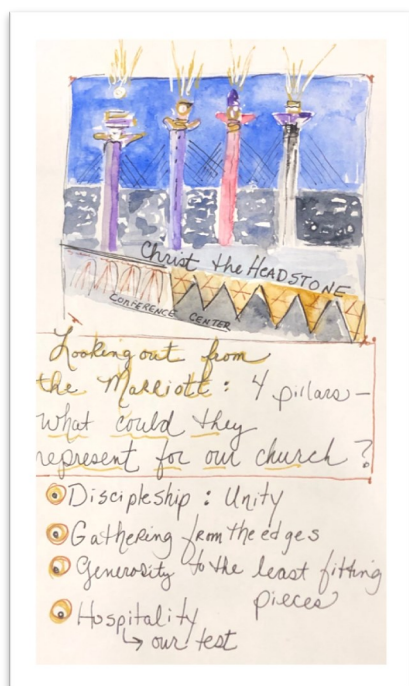
Watercolors & Poetry	2-3
Church Retreat Preview	4
Need & Plenty	5

CMCERS REFLECT ON #MENNOCON19 THROUGH ART & POETRY



These watercolors by Lois Kauffman and this poem by Leah Wenger were shared in Worship at CMC on Sunday August 11th. Lois and Leah were delegates at this year's MCUSA Convention in Kansas City, MO.

To view these images in color, visit the CMC website or look for it in your email.



GATHERED INTO ONE BY: LEAH WENGER

Unity is hard work, we could blame it on god
It takes grace, it is grace
The church is a mess, thanks BE to God

Into a unity with each other, into THE one
All things gathered in Christ's body
God is gathering everything
No thing is left undone

A unity of diversity
I will let you find me
Give you a future with hope
Gather you from the nations
And let you find me

So now let's grasp this news
Unity from division
Jews and non Jews
Natives and immigrants
With nothing to lose
You are now neighbors

A counter cultural punch
Let's walk with this hunch
This peace poem gathers the far and near*

The far was us in Babylon
The near got to stay home
The far are the wandering strangers
We welcome you home
Far and near
Into one

Let's fit ourselves into this peace loving mitten
Walls come crashing down
Stories are rewritten
The fence is torn
Our souls are reborn

This is transformation
The cross once stood for state terrorism
No one had thought let's make it into earrings
Like an electric chair

This is Costly reconciliation
Images of violence
Into new creation
Bringing the strangers home
While home is still in formation

We're at home with distinctions
Defining ourselves
Proclaiming our missions
To differentiate from others
We are ANABAPTIST Christians
We should be careful

The messy womb of a church
Institutionalized Racism, threatening militarism
Increased and industrialized materialism
Hidden and protected sexism
Light isn't reaching the prism
We're concerned about criticism
Add schism to the -isms
The anabaptist disease

Torn by fear of difference
Fear and forbearance
Our world not gathered
But keeping out
Scattered

How can we aim to gather
When we can't even sustain
Those that remain
Despite the stain of shameful pain
WE remove those that threaten
Our definition of gain
Scatter, not gather
Slaughtered and slain
Our peace, thought to be
But not really engrained
How else could we explain
Turning a blind eye
To those that are detained

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
How can we as a people fear what we don't know
Instead, love all God's creatures here below
So that God's love through us bestow

Can it be that easy?
Love your enemy to let yourself fly free?
No, no this can't be
There will always be those with whom we disagree.
Without getting away from them
We'll never have unity

Even in peace loving churches
We shut out
You make my point

If only they weren't here
Or they turned to think like me
We'd have nothing in this house but
Blessed Unity

Fear and forbearance
Baring the minimum

God as one who wishes to gather
From the edge of the cosmos
Every inch of matter
Unity is not harmony
Not achieved by agreement
The restless reality of God gathering strangers
Is that harmony utilizes dissonance

The church is a mess
Thanks be to God

Be wary of assuming
That everything is good
When we have won the argument
Weather or not we should

Unity is the starting point
Not the end result
Christ is at the center
Institution is not
So what now?
Where do we go from here?

You can't be a Christian by yourself
You must enter into fellowship
Bring the tensions, disagreements, misgivings
Because that's where Christ transforms things

If you aim at humility
You're likely to miss it
But here's Humility in action
Forget about being humble
Then you'll hit it

Patience
Enduring with hope
Three strands of twine make an unbroken rope

We need each other
Patience does not come without suffering
We suffer each other
For the sake of His body
Church hurts
Grace each other as God has graced you
With patience

By grace we have been saved
How far does patience stretch
Well how strong is love
Love stretches
Love stretches to the far and the near
Love bends to those who are already here

Does hope ever end?
With the prodigal son can we hope to mend?
And to whom, our love, do we hope to send?

The shamed father of the prodigal son
Never stops Checking the far horizon
Even when patience runs out
When endurance runs too thin
There is a glimmer of hope
That keeps one checking the horizon

Mcusa
We will be ok
This with confidence I can say

Don't ever stop checking the horizon
Celebrate the great spirit moving
The unity of the spirit is bigger wider deeper
Than any of our institutions
Unity of spirit
Is not unity of denomination
It's much deeper than that

"The Church is a mess. Thanks be to God"

God can use our schisms
For God's greater mission
Unity in Christ is no longer division

Breaks have led to conversation
Our failure at walking together can be
Used For reconciliation
To make us better at walking

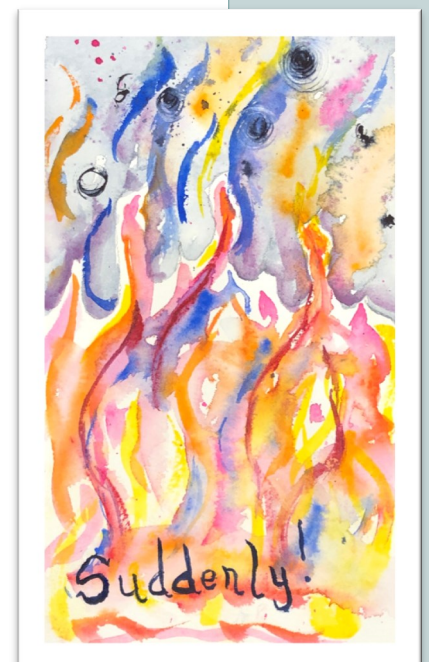
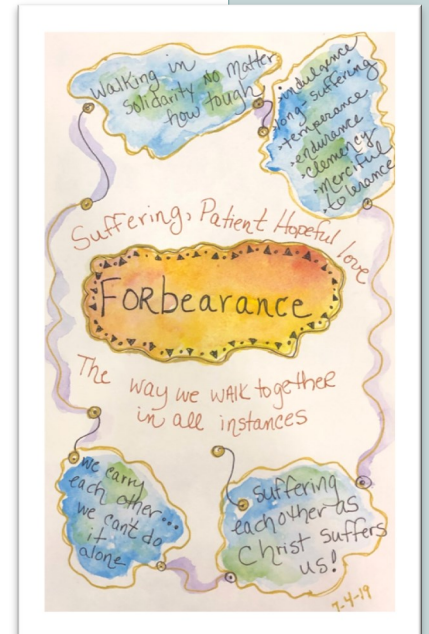
Unity is hard
We could blame it on God

But the mess of the church
Provides opportunity
To transform ourselves
Into a spirit of unity
A spirit of grace
A spirit of hope
That never stops checking the horizon
That works to gather the far and the near
That works to bless those who are already here

The spirit runs
So deep

The church is a mess
Thanks be to God

*(eph 2:11-22)



My Coins Count

In addition to our regular offering, which funds the ministries of CMC (worship, outreach, community life, pastoral care & leadership, children & youth) during August and September we will also have a “noisy offering”.

CMCers are encouraged to bring coins for Mennonite Central Committee and Virginia Mennonite Missions. These will fund a clean water project in Jordan, the work Jail Chaplain-Jason Wagner, and E³ Collective holistic short term mission experiences.

We'll pool our change with that of other Mennonite congregations in our region. Last year about \$23,5000 was raised, so bring your coins!



MEET OUR RETREAT SPEAKER, SARAH BIXLER

Sarah Ann Bixler is an instructor of formation and practical theology at Eastern Mennonite Seminary. She is currently completing her PhD in practical theology, focusing on Christian education and formation, at Princeton Theological Seminary where she also earned her Master of Divinity. Sarah is a graduate of EMU and previously taught at Eastern Mennonite Middle School, was the youth minister at Zion Mennonite Church, and was conference coordinator for Virginia Mennonite Conference. Sarah is married to Benjamin Bixler, a PhD student in Bible and cultures at Drew University. They live in Princeton, New Jersey with their children Calvin (13), Eve (9) and Juliet (6) and enjoy hiking, camping, and gardening.

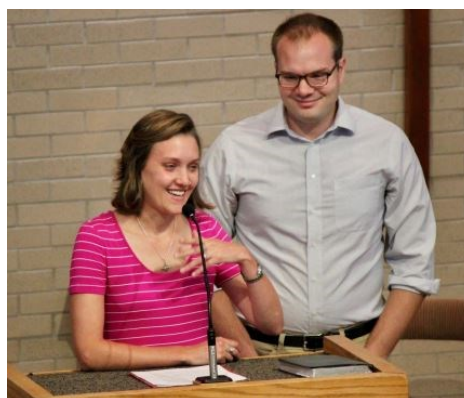


At this year's CMC Retreat, Sarah will lead us in a series of intergenerational learning exercises titled “Exploring the Ecology of Faith Formation”. We will consider the question What is faith, and how is it shaped? We will explore these questions that lie at the heart of faith formation, working from an “ecological” perspective. Faith takes shape for each of us within a complex environment where interdependent factors like personality, family, church, school, community, and culture play important roles. Through interactive sessions that incorporate scripture, science, and theology, we will consider together how aspects from this rich ecology shape our faith. All ages will find an accessible way to reflect on how their own faith has been shaped, and imagine how they can open themselves and nurture others toward its growth in the future.

Sarah will introduce this topic in her sermon at CMC on Sunday, August 25th,



“The Unity Tree” - This mural, temporarily located near the coat racks in the annex to the Fellowship Hall, is titled “The Unity Tree”. It was created at the Many Voices of Harrisonburg Annual Event. Local organizations and community groups attached unique leaves to the tree to symbolize the event’s theme, “Unity Through Diversity”. For more info about Many Voices of Harrisonburg, contact Nelly and Harold Shenk Moreno



David and Sophie Lapp Jost's "Final Israel Prayer Letter" is posted on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall. They will be transitioning to Bammental, Germany this fall. If you'd like to receive their prayer letters and updates, they will be happy to send them to you. Their email address is lappjost@gmail.com.

MOVING PICTURES - Just when you thought you had discovered the right location for the weekly photo displays in the fellowship hall, it changed! Both the "CMC: Today" and "CMC: Yesterday" bulletin boards are now hanging with care on the EAST wall of the fellowship hall. Use your GPS if necessary, but take a few minutes to check 'em both out - "CMC Today" featuring a bevy of activities from the "Blessings on the Way" worship series - including farewells to the Olson-Getty and Carlson families - and "CMC: Yesterday" returning you to those thrilling days of August, 2016. Let the photographs and memories move you! -Jim Bishop

NOTES FROM THE HARRISONBURG AREA & BEYOND

On Thursday, August 22nd, come help make potato salad for the Friday dinner at Sing Me High Festival. We need to wash and cut potatoes and cook them as well as cook onions and put the salad together. We'll get started about 5 pm at the CMC kitchen. Hopefully we'll get done around 8ish. Thanks for considering! - Jennifer Ulrich

The Brethren & Mennonite Heritage Center and the Walking Roots Band invite you to the 4th annual Sing Me High Music Festival, celebrating music and faith in the Shenandoah Valley, August 23-24, 2019. This fourth annual gathering features a variety of music, including a cappella, folk, bluegrass gospel, and rock, as well as many activities for children and families, with pie auction, slip 'n slide, homestead activities, food trucks, Harmonia Sacra sing, variety show, ventriloquist comedian, and others. Discounts available with the use of promo code "MCUSA20."

Calling all bicycle enthusiasts, small and tall! You are invited to participate in the 22nd annual Bike Shenandoah ride on Saturday, September 14 at Eastern Mennonite School in Harrisonburg, VA. This family-friendly event includes rides of 5, 15, 30, or 62 miles in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. All proceeds benefit Virginia Mennonite Missions, MennoMedia, Mennonite Central Committee, NewBridges Immigrant Resource Center, Our Community Place, and Roberta Webb Childcare Center. Individuals and congregations can also participate by sponsoring riders. Participants and others in attendance will also have the opportunity to assemble MCC Relief Kits. Register online at <<http://bikeshenandoah.org>> bikeshenandoah.org or the day of the ride!

The SOS (Sharing Our Surplus) campaign at the Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale will again raise money for worldwide refugee relief by encouraging attendees to match their generous spending at the Sale with a cash, check or credit card gift. Over \$75,000 in additional money has been raised at the past two relief sales through this effort. Checks are to be made out to Virginia Relief Sale, with SOS in the memo line, and SOS giving can also be done online at <https://varelief.com/donate/>.

Virginia Mennonite Conference is seeking a quarter-time bookkeeper, open immediately. It is an hourly position with flexible work schedule. Experience with QuickBooks essential. Key tasks include accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll. Immediate hire is possible. Contact Executive Conference Minister Clyde Kratz to indicate your interest and secure a job description at clyde.kratz@virginiacommunity.org or 540-434-9727.

Find out how **churches across MC USA are offering solidarity with immigrant communities** in their contexts: mennoniteusa.org/news/mennonite-church-usa-follow-up-to-churchwide-statement-on-the-abuse-of-child-migrants.

NEED & PLENTY

CMCers are seeking...

...help upgrading the operating system (IOS) on a very old ipad (version 7.1.2). The directions say I need to connect to iTunes on a computer to make this update but I do not have an apple computer. Could someone who has an apple computer please help me with this? Thanks! -Esther Stenson

...a twin mattress + box spring & frame. Willing to purchase, rent, or borrow for one year. If you have something, contact Aliese Gingerich (319) 530-3161 or Anna Showalter (717) 377-9031.

CMCers are offering...

...a house close to EMU that will be available to rent starting late August and early September. If you or someone you know are interested, contact Rachel Roth Swatasky at 540-383-1398

Submit listings at office@cmcva.org. To contact a CMcer about a Need & Plenty listing, look them up in the Breeze Directory on the Church Website. Or look for them in the Fellowship Hall after Worship!



Don't forget about our Lending List for large, weird, or banal items that you don't know you need or are afraid to ask for. You can find it on our website under the CMcers

UPCOMING CMC EVENTS

Every Sunday	Congregational Worship Service, 10am (summer), Sanctuary
Every Sunday	Contemplative Worship Service, 8pm, Fellowship Hall
Every Wednesday	Kids' Club, 6pm, Basement
Fri, Aug 16	Seniors Ice Cream Social, 6:30pm, Fellowship Hall
Tue, Aug 20	Monthly Gathering, 6pm, Morrison Park
Thu, Aug 22	Sing Me High Potato Prep, 5-8pm, Kitchen
Sun, Sep 1	Resume Regular Sunday Morning Worship Time, 9am, Sanctuary
	Resume Sunday School & Adult Ed., 10:45, Various Locations
Sun, Sep 15	Congregational Meeting, 11:45, Sanctuary
Fri-Sun, Sep 20-22	CMC's Annual Retreat, Camp Brethren Woods

PASTORAL TEAM, CHURCH COUNCIL & STAFF

PASTORAL TEAM

Lead Pastor

Jennifer Davis Sensenig
Mon-Thu 9-4 (Fri Sabbath)
jennifer.davis.sensenig@cmcva.org
540-560-5126

Associate Pastor

Jason Gerlach
Mon, Wed-Fri, 8:30-3 (off Tue)
jason.gerlach@cmcva.org
540-421-8155

Pastoral Elders

Veva Mumaw
Matthew Hunsberger

Mike Brislen
Hannah Bailey

CHURCH COUNCIL

Council Chair, Aili Huber
councilchair@cmcva.org

Vice Chair, Jeremy Nafziger
councilvicechair@cmcva.org

Administrative Chair, Larry Miller
admincommission@cmcva.org

Community Life Chair, Lonnie Yoder
communitylifecommission@cmcva.org

Outreach Chair, Dennis Showalter
outreachcommission@cmcva.org

Worship Chair, Greg Yoder
worshipcommission@cmcva.org

Youth Chair, Traci Yoder Stoltzfus
youthcommission@cmcva.org

Member-at-Large, Kathleen Leigh
councilmemberatl@cmcva.org

CHURCH OFFICE

Church Administrator, Ben Bailey
Finance Administrator, Delbert Wenger

Custodians, Kent Davis Sensenig
Craig Serrels

Community Mennonite Church

70 South High St., Harrisonburg, VA 22801 (540) 433-2148
Church Office hours: Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9am-4:30pm; Wed closed
office@cmcva.org

www.cmcva.org

Giving Update

Annual donation budget: \$510,640

YTD budget: \$314,240

YTD giving: \$285,967

YTD +/- budget: -\$28,273

Ways to Give

By cash or check — Either place your contribution in the offering basket or mail checks to the church. Use the memo line to indicate a particular fund ("Compassion Fund," "General Fund," etc.).

By text message — Text the amount you wish to donate (e.g. "\$25") to 540-779-1276. The first time, you'll receive a link to register your information. Undesignated funds will go to CMC's general fund.

On our website — Click "donate" on the top right corner of our website at cmcva.org.

On your smartphone — Search for "GivePlus Church" in the Android or iPhone app store. Once you've installed it, search for "Community Mennonite Church."

*CMC follows
Safe Church practices.*



This newsletter will be distributed via email and CMC mailboxes every two weeks. **To opt out of receiving a hardcopy in your mailbox, please email office@cmcva.org** or write "opt-out" and your name on a copy of the Newsletter and leave it on my desk in the Church Office. **Please feel free to contribute content for our congregational newsletter.** Just shoot me an email with your idea or talk to me after church.

Thanks!

-Ben Bailey, Church Administrator