

Community Mennonite Church Newsletter

Wednesday, May 20, 2020

A Note From Church Council

Despite Virginia’s Stage 1 reopening, Community Mennonite Church will not meet in our sanctuary for worship for now, and probably not through the summer. This was the most important decision from the Church Council meeting on May 14.

There just doesn’t seem to be a way yet for us all to meet safely, given the size of the congregation, the size of the sanctuary, the means by which the virus spreads, and other considerations. The CMC COVID-19 team (Kristina Yoder, Alden Hostetter, Sue Klaasen, Jeremy Nafziger, Jennifer Davis Sensenig) has listened to meetings from the governor’s office and read the evolving CDC and state guidelines for groups and congregations.

“Members are safer at home,” the guidelines say. “Continue to provide and encourage use of online streaming and drive-in options.... No place of worship should feel obligated to return to in-person worship before they are ready to do so.”

Since March, council meetings have had one topic in many convolutions. It feels a little bit like walking through a tunnel that’s not high enough to stand in: with every step you take, you have to hunch unnaturally and remember not to bump your head.

We have tried to remember that despite hazard, we still walk and still walk together in faith. We have talked, in Zoomed meetings and emails, about our church during the onset of the pandemic, during our extended quarantine state, and how our exit from it might come about.

We do not have a date for when meetings can resume, and in fact, we aren’t sure there will be one date. More likely, things that stopped abruptly will restart in stages and eventually there will be a time when we look around the congregation and think, “This is mostly like it was in February 2020.”

But even now, congregational life goes on. All the commissions are talking about what we do now, what we’ll do later, and what might be different in the future. More on that next week’s newsletter.

-Jeremy Nafziger, Church Council Chair

Our Current Worship Series

Alleluia Anyway

Sunday, May 24 - Ascension Sunday
Acts 1:1-11

Sunday, May 31 - Pentecost Sunday
Acts 2:1-12



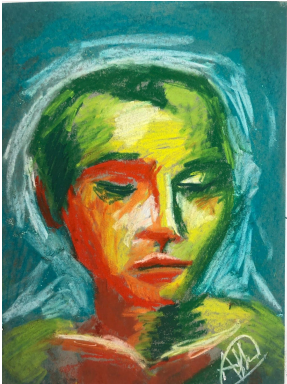
Celebrating CMC's High School Seniors

We've moved the annual Senior Tea to our Newsletter as we're practicing social distancing during this time. Please remember each of our high school graduates this week (and over the coming weeks). Enjoy their senior pictures, descriptions about their plans for the next academic year, and a few photos that they would've displayed on their tables in the Fellowship Hall.

Afton Rhodes Lehman

Graduating from Eastern Mennonite High School

Next year, I will be attending EMU undeclared. I hope to minor in art and vocal performance and participate in the honors program. My goal for next year is to find something that I am passionate about to study. I will be participating in a student lead a cappella group and in theater and set design. I hope to be a part of the chamber singers as well.



Alex Graber Neufeld

Graduating from Harrisonburg High School

Next year I plan on attending Goshen College and intend to double major in Biology Spanish. Over my high school career some of the things that have been important to me are backpacking with my family, learning about plants, and fly fishing. I also enjoy playing Ultimate with friends.



Alia Brislen

Graduating from Harrisonburg High School

I'm going to JMU next year to study music education on flute and minor in jazz studies.



Iris Cessna

Graduating from Harrisonburg High School

I am committed to Wellesley College, a historically women's college outside of Boston, Massachusetts. I plan on majoring in Environmental Studies and Geosciences or Biological Sciences.



Isaac Sawin

Graduating from Harrisonburg High School

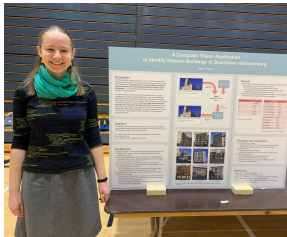
I am thrilled to say that I will be attending Eastern Mennonite University this fall. I have chosen to study nursing after Three years in the Healthcare STEM program at HHS. During my time in high school I participated in choir and marching band, and plan to audition for the chamber choir at EMU. I have had many hobbies over the years, but currently I enjoy listening to music, singing, and running at the gym.



Lane Burkholder

Graduating from Eastern Mennonite School

I'll be going to EMU next year to study math.



Mira Yoder

Graduating from Harrisonburg High School

I am graduating from Harrisonburg High School. Next year I plan on attending Goshen College to major in Computer Science and minor in Environmental Studies (at least for now).



Prayer requests

Please pray for healing for Aliese Gingerich. She was in a bicycle accident last Wednesday, May 13, and has been at UVA hospital the past week. A Caring Bridge page has been set up at <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/aliesegingerich>

Please remember Brian & Linda Martin Burkholder in the death of Brian’s brother, Michael, who died this past Friday, May 15, in West Salem, OH. His obituary can be found [here](#).

CMC News & Announcements

Ask Church Council Anything

This remote version of our “Speakeasy” format will be held on Sunday afternoon. May 31. You can ask anything you want to ask about church plans, congregational life, finances--anything. Watch for details and a Zoom link.

-Jeremy Nafziger, Church Council Chair

Upcoming Zoom Conversation Circles For CMCers

Members of CMC’s pastoral team will be hosting several zoom gatherings for conversation and connection with specific groups from the congregation. Here are the dates for upcoming conversation circles.

CMCers who live alone: Tuesday, May 26 at 12 pm - Bring your lunch!

CMCers who are engaged with university education: Thursday, June 4 at 4:00pm

CMCers who are engaged in K-12 education: Monday, June 8 at 4:00pm

If you have questions, please contact me. Ben will distribute Zoom links to access the meetings to the congregation via email.

-Pastor Byron, on behalf of Pastoral Team

CMC Women Facebook Group

Do you need to find yeast so you can continue baking? Do you have excess kale that you’d like to give away? Do you need the name of a good Home Health Care agency for when you are released from the hospital? Do you want a walking buddy (socially distanced, of course)? Do you simply want a way to connect with other CMC Women? If so, join 145 CMC women who are already members of the Facebook Group "CMC Women" and become a part of this energetic group that supports one another in all sorts of ways, big and small. All CMC-connected women are welcome!

-Jan Jenner

Participate In CMC’s Pentecost Video Project

Still time to participate in the CMC Pentecost video project. There are parts for singers, instruments, and speakers (especially if you speak a language that’s not English). The instructions, with links to music, parts, and backing tracks, are here.

One easy way to participate is to play a percussion instrument of any kind, even something that’s not normally considered a percussion instrument. Lots of kids should do this. There’s a video here that will explain the whole thing; watch it, play along, and have someone take a video. Videos are due by Monday, May 25. Questions? Feel free to get intouch!

-Jeremy Nafziger, JFNafziger@gmail.com or 540-209-3767



Fifth-Sunday Offering for CMC Playground

The playground area around the south east corner of CMC’s property is well-loved by the children of our congregation and those that attend Community Preschool. But over the past several decades their boisterous play, mother nature, and a few unfortunate circumstances, have taken their toll: the wooden play structure is beginning to rot; a portion of sidewalk the preschool had used for riding toys was removed during exterior improvements to the church; and recently both trees on the playground had to be removed.

A small group of people convened earlier this year to draft a plan for refurbishing and improving CMC’s playground. The group consists of myself (preschool board & parent), Eliot Swartz (preschool board president), Larry Miller (facilities chair), Ben Bailey, and the three preschool teachers (Jennifer Runion, Betsey Branner, and Lisa Moomaw).

Currently our plan includes the following high priority items.

- Replace the decking and railing of the wooden play structure.
- Improve the lid over the sandbox so that it’s easier to open and close.
- Reinstate a way for riding toys to be used (e.g. replace missing sidewalk)
- Plant new trees that can begin providing shade as they mature

The committee has also spent time thinking creatively of additional improvements, including the following.

- Improve seating areas for adults to socialize and monitor children.
- Expand the playground to include the area outside its north east fence.
- Create a paved loop for riding toys.
- Create a picnic/gathering area for preschool snack time, sunday school classes, small groups, meetings, etc.
- Enhance the beauty of the playground with additional landscaping.

While our planning has been disrupted a bit by COVID-19, we are moving forward with an initial fundraising goal of \$10,000, which should cover the plan’s high priority items. Thank you for giving generously toward these needed improvements during May’s fifth-Sunday offering, and please contact me or others on the committee for more information or to offer your own playground improvement ideas.

-Eric Saner, on behalf of the Administrative Commission and the Community Preschool board

Federal Relief Funds

Many of us have received or are anticipating a CARES Act check from our federal government. We are receiving this check regardless of our employment status. Some of us need the check to pay for food and rent because our income has been negatively affected by the stay at home orders. Others of us continue to work and receive our scheduled paychecks, tucking those funds aside for a later, unidentified need. This message is for those who find themselves in that later category.

There is a significant group in our population who have been excluded from this windfall. Many of these families have been negatively impacted by the spread of COVID-19, both in loss of income and being a disproportionately large group affected by the illness.

New Bridges Immigrant Resource Center and VANITA have established a relief fund to help meet unmet needs. The requests go beyond New Bridges and VANITA’s current capacity to respond. One relief check (\$1,200.00) can help between two and four families. The Outreach Commission is encouraging families, who are not as financially impacted by the economic downturn, to consider giving all (or part) of their CARES Act check to the Relief Fund.

If you would like to donate to this fund, [click here](#). Select “other” and type the amount that you would like to give, and be sure to check the box that this is for the Relief Fund. This will designate your gift to the Relief Fund.

-Jeff Mumaw, Worship Commission Chair



This Week In Our Life Together

The following events take place on Zoom each week. Feel free to contact the person listed to get involved or learn more!

Date	Time	Event	Contact
Wed. May 20	7 pm	Mennonite Youth Fellowship	Pastor Jason
Thurs. May 21	4 pm	Worship Commission	Shirley Showalter
Fri. May 22		Jim Bishop's birthday	
Sun. May 24		Mike & Cindy Brislen's anniversary	
	8 am	Worship video distributed via email	Ben Bailey
	11 am	Adult Education	Reta Finger
	7 pm	Contemplative Service	Adam Yoder
Mon. May 25	3 pm	Meet for High School Seniors	Pastor Jason
Tues. May 26		Glenda Leonard's birthday	
Wed. May 27	8:30 am	Women's Bible Study	Pastor Jennifer
	7 pm	Next Newsletter Published	Ben Bailey

Notes From the Harrisonburg Area & Beyond

Ten Thousand Villages Could Use Your Help

Although they are currently closed, you can still make purchases that not only help the local store, but also help the (ten) thousands of artisans in developing countries who are in great need. The store is offering curbside pickup, front door delivery and shopping by appointment. Now is a great time to order fair trade coffee, tea, and chocolate! You can call the store at 540-442-1010 and can pay over the phone.



If you don't know what to order you could consider purchasing a Blind Box. This is a wonderful opportunity to send some love and appreciation to someone or choose one for yourself. Based on price point and theme we will create boxes filled with fair trade products sent right to your door or to someone you designate. Simply [fill out the google form](#).

Ten Thousand Villages tentative plan is to open on June 1 with a limited amount of customers in the store. They will continue to keep offering curbside pickup, home deliveries, and Blind Boxes throughout the year. Any support you can give is appreciated and helpful during this tough time.

-Kara Miller

CMC, Virtually Yours

Can the church maintain its place in cyberspace during COVID-19? Community Mennonite Church is making every effort to survive and thrive, despite obstacles and limitations. [Check out](#) my column in the Daily News Record.



-Jim Bishop

Everence Webinars

Everence is offering the following opportunities for you to access trusted information through webinars and Zoom meetings this May and June. Below is a list of upcoming webinars—all relating to finances and our life journey. Each of these opportunities will be offered at 7 pm on the dates listed below. Detailed descriptions and registration links can be found [here](#).

- May 21–June 25: [Walking life's journey: A six-part end of life series about your legacy, memories and faith values](#)
- May 26: [Financial wellness: Put your dreams into motion](#)
- June 2: [Basics of investing](#)
- June 9: [Creating a plan for Long-Term Care](#)
- June 16: [Women and money: Smart money decisions for your dreams and future](#)
- June 23: [Creative ways to save and pay for education](#)



Need & Plenty

CMCers are seeking...

...**a car to buy, borrow, or rent. Or a carpool pal.** Or any other way to get to Washington State in the coming weeks. Contact Izzie Howard

CMCers are offering...

...**nothing right now.** Check back next week! Or send items to office@cmcva.org

