

# OHIO MENNONITE EVANGEL

News & Views of Ohio Conference

JUL-AUG 2016



ohiomennoniteconference.org

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*Leadership Team creates 'The Voice' task force to speak to MC USA*

## Task force wants to hear from you

**At Annual Conference Assembly (ACA) 2016 the delegate body affirmed an Ohio Conference "Statement on Remaining with MC USA." One key element of this statement was that Ohio Conference would "remain a part of MC USA in order to articulate to the denomination our perceptions of differences in doctrine and practice."**

The Ohio Conference Leadership Team has seated a task force of three people, Erin Dye, Darrin Snyder Belousek and Bill



Erin Dye



Darrin Snyder Belousek



Bill Seymour

Seymour, to take the lead in this endeavor. Erin, Darrin and Bill will work closely with the Leadership Team in this work, but **their task is to listen to Ohio Conference congregations to discern these "differences in doctrine and practice" and find avenues in which to articulate them to MC**

**USA as well as reporting to congregations.**

The task force hopes to discern the right questions to ask of the right people and to relay edifying information from their findings to all of Ohio Conference. This team

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## Resource Teams can meet shared needs

**Do you see a need that Ohio Conference should address? One way to work at these needs is by forming a Resource Team.**

A Resource Team is a temporary group that carries out specific tasks identified by the

Ohio Conference Ministry Development Team (MDT). Resource Teams exist to respond quickly to the needs of congregations within the Ohio Conference. As individuals bring a need to the MDT's attention, the MDT can choose to form a Resource Team to carry out a response to the need.

Resource Teams have worked on a variety of programs and projects in the Ohio Conference, such as Pastor-Spouse Retreat Planning, Youth Ministry Resourcing, Church Planting, Child Protection, Young Adult Ministry, Prayer, Reducing Pov-

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**EDITORIAL**

# How are we doing so far?

Back in March, immediately before Annual Conference Assembly, Ohio Conference kicked off the Conference Year of Mission with a two-day training event titled "Becoming Missional: Relearning How to Be Sent." Eighty-nine people participated.

The Year of Mission has three stated goals:

- To develop areas in the Conference of missional focus (e.g., church planting)

- To promote greater missional engagement and identity in local Ohio Conference congregations
- To encourage each member of a local congregation to do mission in his or her own context

So how are we doing, now that we are several months into the Year of Mission? Has your congregation been focusing specifically on

mission this year? Have you used any of the Year of Mission materials which are on the Conference website?

At Annual Conference Assembly, many delegates responded positively to the idea of the Year of Mission. My question is this: Is the Year of Mission just a good idea, or are we working to make it a reality?

— ahl

# Donation to support church planting

Cornerstone Mennonite Fellowship has closed its doors, but one of the last actions of the congregation will further church planting.

Members of the congregation, which was located in Plain City, decided to close the church as of Dec. 31, 2015. A closing worship service was held Jan. 10, 2016.

Following the church's closing, the church's board decided to make a donation

to the Ohio Conference. In June, the board sent the Ohio Conference a \$2,500 donation which is to be used for church planting.

In a letter of thanks for the donation, Conference Moderator Bob Sauder reflected on the closing, saying, "Jesus, in his teachings, used the examples of seeds many times. As I read of your desire to see those funds used in church planting, I was struck by the

thought that a seed has to die in order to produce fruit. Dying is often a painful process as I am sure was the case at Cornerstone, but it can also be a time of recommitment and growth as we move forward. What I find so refreshing is your willingness to cast that seed so that others can find the joy and fellowship and growth that I am sure you all experienced at Cornerstone." ■

## Personnel of the Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA

- Moderator: Bob Sauder — sauderbob2@gmail.com
- Assistant Moderator: Thomas Dunn — thomas@crownhillmennonite.com
- Credentialing Ministry Chair: Naomi Engle — englenaomi@gmail.com
- Gifts Discernment Ministry Chair: Mel Hathaway — smcpastor@embarqmail.com
- Stewardship Ministry Chair: Melanie Miller — mgfmiller@gmail.com
- Regional Pastor: Ralph Reinford — ralphreinford@gmail.com
- Regional Pastor: Cliff Brubaker — cliffbru7@gmail.com
- Year of Covenant Facilitator: George O'Reilly — pastorgeorgeoreilly@gmail.com
- Administrative Secretary: Judy King — ohmc@zoominternet.net
- Finance Coordinator: Stan Helmuth — cbohl@zoominternet.net
- Conference Editor: Ann Leaman — ohioevangel@gmail.com
- Coordinator of Volunteers: Alys Short — alysashort@gmail.com

# 'The Voice'

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is a work in progress and will look to the next ACA for how delegates would like to proceed with commissioning this task force.

Erin, Darrin and Bill have already started their work, and they would like to hear from you and work with you. These members hope the existence of the task force will affirm congregations that their concerns or questions are being heard and that these conversations can bring positivity to our forward journey with MC USA. If you and/or your congregation have a specific discussion you would like to see started with MC USA or a member organization, please get in touch with this task force to begin the process of giving and receiving counsel from MC USA.

## About the task force members:

Erin Dye, a member of Oak Grove Mennonite Church in West Liberty, is a chaplain at Adriel in West Liberty.

Darrin Snyder Belousek, a member of Salem Mennonite Church in Elida, teaches philosophy and religion at Ohio Northern University and Bluffton University. He is active in ecumenical relations, currently serving as executive director of Bridgefolk.

Bill Seymour is pastor of Orrville Mennonite Church. He is a past member of the Ohio Conference Ministry Development Team.



## Contact Information:

Erin Dye —  
Erin.Dye@adriel.org

Darrin Snyder Belousek —  
darrin.w.snyderbelousek@gmail.com

Bill Seymour —  
omcbill@gmail.com ■

# Resource Teams

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erty, and Immigration, among others.

If you see a need that could be addressed by a Resource Team, you are encouraged to submit your idea to the Ministry Development Team. More information about Resource Teams is on the Conference website: <http://ohiomennoniteconference.org/ministries/resource-teams>. Contact Coordinator of Volunteers Alys Short at [alysashort@gmail.com](mailto:alysashort@gmail.com) or 419-572-1348 with any questions you have about Resource Teams. ■

COVENANTING TOGETHER

# Constancy and change

By George O'Reilly  
Year of Covenant  
Facilitator

**As people of faith we have the great privilege of relying on the Constancy of God. In Hebrews 13, the writer quotes a promise found in Deuteronomy — “I will never leave you or forsake you” —as a way to remind readers about how our God is so faithful. And I too can join in and declare this is true. Oh, there have been times when I did not know what was going to happen next, certainly. But time and again when things got to the point where something had to happen, God has shown up.**

In Ohio Conference I have at times not been certain what direction things were going to take, but again, by the Spirit's work, good things have arisen at times when I least expected it or through means I would not have personally chosen. Frankly, I see this as a time of hopefulness in Ohio Conference. I sense a new desire to do good things together, a searching for a path forward together, a discovery again that in the Ohio Conference we are meeting the people of God. I think this is a good time here.

Amid my growing confidence there has also been change. And the most dramatic change

for me has come on me rather suddenly in just the most recent weeks. From the very beginning with Ohio Conference, I knew my time was intended to be temporary. I was here as a “transitional person” to help the Conference through some struggles and difficulties. And since this is the type of work I have been doing for the past eight years or so, I was all right with that.

Along with the expected pattern of temporary work, at the Conference level we of course encountered significant budgetary constraints. And so my time was moved to half-time. This would not be unusual in such a case, and the right decisions were made in that regard. But as the weeks went by, I began to search for the next thing which would “fill the gaps” and help make ends meet. Nothing really materialized.

Not long ago I became aware of a temporary position as a pastoral associate which seemed quite well suited for my situation. And so I applied, thinking a couple of months would likely transpire before this was finalized, and knowing I likely was not the only one considering the possibility. I have been in this position before.

To my surprise, this process has moved at a very rapid pace. Within just a few weeks I had interviewed with a team and been offered a place in their ministry. And so I have just



started June 15 as pastoral associate at First Mennonite Church of Bluffton, Ohio. It is just the kind of thing I was looking for next, and I have been very warmly welcomed into the ministry endeavors they are hoping I can help them address.

My connections with Ohio Conference will of course decrease. I do intend to help with the Year of Covenant on a contract basis with some days here and there to help convey what I have learned and to help others who will be working at some parts of next steps.

I admit that I have grown very fond of the folks I have met in Ohio Conference. I do that actually, every time I work with a group of people, and this time has been no exception. I have much appreciation and affection for you all. But you will no doubt see much less of me in the days ahead.

I pray for our Lord's rich, full blessings on your continuing

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*“In Ohio Conference I have at times not been certain what direction things were going to take, but again, by the Spirit's work, good things have arisen at times when I least expected it or through means I would not have personally chosen.”*

# Constancy and change

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endeavors. I pray especially for the Spirit to have freedom to convey to you the sustaining power of God and the discernment to know where God is

calling Ohio Conference next. You may see me helping some here and there. But be at peace. It is not about me. God has given many faithful spiritually

mature persons and leaders to Ohio Conference. So despite the change, lay hold again of the constancy of God. God will show up often and in surprising ways and times. ■

## ABOUT PEOPLE

### Pastoral notes

On June 5 Ryan Nafziger was ordained for Christian ministry at Tedrow Mennonite Church in Wauseon. He was supported by the attendance of many family members and friends.

Doug Zehr shared affirmations as Ryan's mentor, and Dan Sauder spoke on behalf of the congregation. Ron Kauffman brought the message. Regional Pastor Ralph Reinford led the ordination ceremony, including an anointing and prayer. A carry-in meal followed the worship service. ■



Celebrating Ryan Nafziger's ordination on June 5 are, left to right, Melissa (holding Tobin), Eliana and Ryan Nafziger, and Regional Pastor Ralph Reinford.

Emily Hedrick was installed as pastor of Lima Mennonite Church on June 5 during the morning worship service. Merlin Hedrick, Emily's father, shared a sermon titled "Keeping up with Jesus," based on Luke 7:11-17. Regional Pastor Cliff Brubaker and Lois Johns Kaufmann, conference minister of the Central District Conference, conducted the installation ceremony.

"There was a strong sense of celebration that morning as they welcomed Emily," noted Regional Pastor Cliff Brubaker. A fellowship meal followed the worship service.



A native of Telford, Pa., Hedrick is a 2016 graduate of Wake Forest University School of Divinity and a graduate of

Goshen College, and also served as chaplain at Wake Forest Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem, N.C. ■

Pictured from left to right are Joyce Daniels, chair of the Lima Mennonite Pastoral Search Committee; Regional Pastor Cliff Brubaker; Emily Hedrick; and Lois Kaufmann, conference minister of the Central District Conference.

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## Birthday blessing crosses cultures at Salem

Hispanic members of Salem Mennonite Church in Wooster serenaded LuLu Miller (seated in front) in celebration of her 95th birthday.



**By Raul Tadeo**

The Hispanic members of the Salem Mennonite Church of Wooster love LuLu Miller, the oldest member of the bilingual congregation.

LuLu has learned to accept the “besos”(kisses on the forehead and cheeks) and “abrazos” (hugs) that the Hispanics use to greet her with every Sunday morning when

she arrives at church. On Sunday, May 22, she reached the age of 95, having been born May 22, 1921.

The Hispanics appreciate LuLu so much that they decided to celebrate her birthday by singing a “serenata” (birthday song), “Las mananitas,” for her during the worship hour. A few of the Hispanics were expected to go forward to sing, but when others realized LuLu was going to be serenaded, many more came forward to sing. Someone said, “Only in the Salem church would one expect that event to happen.” ■

**ABOUT PEOPLE** Continued from page 5

### Hesston College

Five students from Ohio Conference congregations were among the 166 individuals who were awarded degrees during the 2016 graduation exercises at Hesston College on May 8. The graduates are listed here, along with their parents’ names, degrees, and home congregations:

Molly Bruner of Wauseon, daughter of Keith and Peg

Bruner, associate of applied arts and sciences in early childhood education, Central Mennonite; Emily Kauffman\* of Pettisville, daughter of Jeff and Janine Kauffman, associate of arts, Zion Mennonite;

Shelby Miller of Archbold, daughter of Eric and Marla Miller, associate of arts, West Clinton Mennonite; Micah Raber of Millersburg, son of

Eric and Beverly Raber, associate of general studies, Millersburg Mennonite; and Rose Yoder of Bellefontaine, daughter of Steve and Christine Yoder, associate of arts, Oak Grove Mennonite (West Liberty).

\*Emily Kauffman was one of two students chosen by their classmates to deliver student addresses. ■

### Goshen College

Eight students from Ohio Conference congregations were among the 205 individuals who graduated from Goshen College on Sunday, April 24. Their names, hometowns, majors, parents and home congregations are listed here:

Caleb L. Beachy of Shaker Heights, molecular biology/ biochemistry, child of Nathan and Rochele Beachy, Lee Heights Community Church; Natalie R. Graber of Stryker, elementary education, child of Joe and Karen Graber, Lockport Mennonite;

Jacob Amadeo Maldonado Nofziger of Pettisville, biology, child of Robin Nofziger and Ruth Maldonado-Nofziger, Zion Mennonite; Justin Mahadev Plank of Orrville, biology and accounting, child of Curtis and Sandra Plank, Martins Mennon-

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**ABOUT PEOPLE** Continued from page 6

ite; Irene Tracy Schmid of East Glacier Park, Mont., nursing, child of John and Katherine Schmid, Kidron Mennonite;

Adrienne Schmucker of Wauseon, theater, child of

Douglas and Mara Belle Schmucker, West Clinton Mennonite; Kiernan Josiah Yoder Wright of Orrville, social work, child of the late Paul Wright and the late RoseAnn Yoder-

Wright, Martins Mennonite; and Carley R. Wyse of Archbold, communication, child of Michael and Julia Wyse, Central Mennonite. ■

## Bluffton University

Ten students from Ohio Conference congregations received degrees from Bluffton University during the university's 116th annual commencement ceremony May 8.

Nine Ohio Conference students earned bachelor's degrees. They are listed here, along with their majors and home congregations:

Adriane Bruner of Pettisville, mathematics with a business administration minor, West Clinton Mennonite; Brier

Chappuis of West Unity, intervention specialist and early childhood education, Zion Mennonite; Savannah Hofstetter of Dalton, psychology with a sociology minor, Kidron Mennonite;

Marisa Krier of Massillion, accounting and business administration, Berlin Mennonite; Samuel Miller-Eshleman of Dover, psychology, LifeBridge Community Church; Kaihle Sauder of Archbold, marketing and business administration, Central Mennonite;

Lonnie Short of Archbold, organizational management, Lockport Mennonite; Margaret Short of Archbold, public relations with a minor in marketing, Zion Mennonite; and Wesley Short of Stryker, chemistry and physics, Lockport Mennonite.

One Ohio Conference student earned a master's degree from Bluffton. Mark Leinbach of Trail earned a master's degree in business administration. His home congregation is Berlin Mennonite Church. ■

## RESOURCE CORNER

# Overplayed looks at youth sports

By Lois Bontrager  
Ohio Conference  
Resource Advocate

Now available from Mennonite Media: *Overplayed: A Parent's Guide to Sanity in the World of Youth Sports* by David King And Margot Starbuck.

This book equips parents with concrete tips such as the following:

- Encouraging kids to play a different sport for a season

- Grabbing coffee with a friend during soccer practice (instead of staying to watch practice)
- Encouraging children to care for other players
- Befriending another parent on the sidelines

Key Features:

- Challenges common myths about youth sports
- Offers wisdom for families on decisions such as choosing leagues and how many

seasons to play during the year

- Bonus tips and relevant resources for parents, coaches and pastors
- Free downloadable discussion guide

To order, go to [www.mennomedia.org](http://www.mennomedia.org).

If you have questions about what resources are available from Mennonite agencies, contact Ohio Conference Resource Advocate Lois Bontrager at [loisbon1950@gmail.com](mailto:loisbon1950@gmail.com). ■



## Conference Calendar

### MONTH

#### AUG

- I Ministry Development Team Meeting, Upper Sandusky Library
- 5-6 Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale, Wayne County Fairgrounds, Wooster
- 12-14 Girls' Jamboree, Camp Luz, Kidron

#### SEPT

- 16-18 Women's Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron
- 24-25 175th Anniversary Celebration, Salem Mennonite Church, Elida
- 28 Year of Covenant Meeting for Pastors, Maple Grove Mennonite, Hartville
- 30 Youth Worker Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron

#### OCT

- I Youth Worker Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron

#### NOV

- 11-13 Retreat for Pastors' Wives, St. Francis Spirituality Center, Tiffin

grow closer to God. Jamboree dates are Aug. 12-14, 2016. In support of this event, Ohio Mennonite Women will contribute \$10 toward each girl's registration fee, reducing the cost to \$80 per girl. (Ohio Mennonite Women will give its contribution directly to Camp Luz.) A registration form for this retreat and a printable handout are available on the Camp Luz website: [campmuz.com](http://campmuz.com).

**For creative and practical ideas on how to show your concern for refugees,** visit the Mennonite Central Committee website: <http://bit.ly/RefugeeCrisis-MCC>. Look for a video, worship resources, a bulletin insert titled "7 ways to support refugees in your community and around the world," and more.

**The Gathering Place** is an interactive website for Anabaptist youth leaders to find connection, resourcing, networking, mentoring, and spiritual formation.

Check out the website at [www.thegatheringplace.us](http://www.thegatheringplace.us). You can subscribe to receive the latest information from the Gathering Place. ■

## Back page briefings...

**Ohio Mennonite Women has scholarships available** for women who want to attend Women's Retreat at Camp Luz Sept. 16-18, 2016, and need financial assistance. Roxanne Kauffman is the contact person for obtaining applications for this scholarship. Please contact her at [roxykauff@gmail.com](mailto:roxykauff@gmail.com) or

(937) 465-1204, or write to her at Roxanne Kauffman, 5315 Township Rd 187, West Liberty OH 43357.

**Do you know a girl who would enjoy attending the Girls' Jamboree at Camp Luz this summer?** This is a great opportunity for girls in grades 3 through 8 to have fun and

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