

OHIO MENNONITE EVANGEL

News & Views of Ohio Conference

MAR/APR 2017



ohiomennoniteconference.org

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Central Christian School hosts Annual Conference Assembly

Delegates affirm direction statement

Delegates overwhelmingly affirmed a direction statement presented by the Ohio Conference Leadership Team at the 2017 Annual Conference Assembly (ACA) of the Ohio Conference. Those gathered at Central Christian School in Kidron on March 24-25 numbered 217, including delegates from 46 congregations.

Ninety-three percent of delegates affirmed the Leadership

Team's direction statement for Ohio Conference. Vote totals were as follows: affirm – 154, do not affirm – 11. Part of that direction statement included the following aim: **“We will put our best energy into being and becoming missional congregations**



ACA closed with a communion service. Delegates were invited to lay down the broken shards of pottery they had received earlier.

together.” To read the entire direction statement, see page 4.

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Cliff Brubaker takes on new assignment

The Ohio Conference Leadership Team has agreed to employ Regional Pastor Cliff Brubaker for a special half-time assignment beginning in April.

Since September 2016 Brubaker has been serving half time as regional pastor and half time with the Year of Covenant process and focusing on trust-building between congregations and the Con-

ference. That second half-time position concluded at the end of March.

Starting in April Brubaker is taking on a half-time assignment working with the new Gathered and Sent initiative, which will continue the work of both the Year of Covenant and the Year of Mission, two initiatives from 2016-17. See page 5 for more information about Gathered and Sent.

In this half-time position, Brubaker also will work with the



Cliff Brubaker

Leadership Team to guide the hiring process for a half-time conference minister.

Missional Conference challenges participants

Immediately prior to Annual Conference Assembly, the Ohio Conference held a Missional Conference with Alan and Debra Hirsch at Kidron Mennonite Church. One hundred forty-two people from across the Conference participated in this event.

During six different sessions, speakers Alan and Debra Hirsch challenged participants to look more closely at Jesus, discipleship, mission, and sexuality.

"How do we know we have God right? Look at Jesus," said Alan Hirsch. He discussed several ways that people tend to focus on one aspect of Jesus' character to the exclusion of the other aspects.

Participants also heard the challenge to move across barriers to meet others rather than expecting others to come to the church. Debra Hirsch noted, "We are called to disciple everyone, not just those in the church."

Each participant received a copy of the book *Untamed: Reactivating a Missional Form of Discipleship* by Alan and Debra Hirsch.



Top photo: Debra Hirsch talks to missional conference participants about discipling others. Bottom photo: Terry Shue of Mennonite Church USA (at left) talks with presenter Alan Hirsch during a break. Photos by Bryan Leaman.



To see more photos from the missional conference, go to <http://bit.ly/2017MissionalConferencePhotos>.

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Editor: Ann H. Leaman

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Moderator Bob Sauder, a member of Salem Mennonite Church in Waldron, Michigan, expressed thanks for the work of the delegates over the weekend, noting “There was a very real sense of God’s presence among us during the entire time.”

DELEGATES CHOOSE HEALTHY BUDGET

In addition to considering the direction statement for the Conference, delegates were asked to choose between two proposed budgets for 2017-18, a “Healthy” Budget and a “BareBones” Budget. The Healthy Budget calls for spending totaling \$354,050, while the BareBones Budget would have called for spending totaling \$283,050. If delegates had chosen the BareBones Budget, some staff positions would have been reduced.

Ninety-eight percent of delegates chose the Healthy Budget. The final vote total was as follows: Healthy Budget – 159, BareBones Budget – 4.

2015 SPENDING RESOLUTION RESCINDED

Delegates also voted to rescind a spending plan resolution which had been adopted at the 2015 Annual Conference Assembly. The vote was 97 percent in favor of rescinding that resolution: approved – 160, did not approve – 5. The rescinded resolution put limits on the Conference’s spending based on a formula including congregational giving, individual giving,



Ruth Kauffman and Melanie Miller of the Stewardship Ministry (pictured left-right) wear their “hard question hats” while answering delegate questions about the two proposed budgets. Also pictured are Stewardship Ministry Team members Dean Falb (at left) and Matt Hochstetler.

the operating reserve fund and the short-term accumulated surplus. To see a copy of the resolution which was rescinded, go to <http://bit.ly/ACADocuments>.

RELEASE OF CONGREGATIONS

Regional Pastors Ralph Reinford and Cliff Brubaker led the delegates in a litany of lament and blessing for congregations which have chosen to leave the Ohio Conference. Those congregations include Beaverdam Mennonite Church; First Mennonite Church in Berne, Indiana; Hillside Chapel; North Lima Mennonite Church; Pleasant View Mennonite Church; Smithville Mennonite Church; and Victory Community Church. Prior to the litany, Todd Martin, pastor of Smithville Mennonite Church, briefly addressed the delegates.

YEAR OF MISSION

Jacob Dodson, pastor of Wooster Mennonite Church and a member of the Mission

Resource Team, spoke to delegates about the vision behind the Year of Mission. Since mission is integral to our future as a conference, the Mission Resource Team felt that Conference congregations needed practical tools and training. He talked about the paradigm shift from an attractional model to a missional model which focuses on our life outside our church building and in our local context.

CLIFF BRUBAKER REPORTS

Regional Pastor Cliff Brubaker reported to delegates about the Year of Covenant process which took place during 2016-17. The Conference held three Year of Covenant meetings for pastors which dealt with topics such as the character of the Confession of Faith and practicing discernment in times of ambiguity. At the third pastors’ meeting, which was held in Toledo, participants were asked to identify things which helped to

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build trust and those things which had been detrimental to trust.

Brubaker also reported to delegates about the Listening Process which he engaged in over the past several months. He has met with leadership groups from most Ohio Conference congregations.

Brubaker also talked about plans to merge the Year of Mission and Year of Covenant efforts into a new initiative called *Gathered and Sent*. (See page 5 for details.)

DELEGATES WORSHIP

In addition to business, delegates also participated in wor-

ship. On Friday night, Debra Hirsch, one of the presenters for the pre-ACA missional conference, spoke to delegates, focusing on the theme “Who is my Neighbor?” That worship service served as both the conclusion to the missional conference and the beginning of ACA.

Also, during the first Saturday morning business session, Jessica Schrock-Ringenberg, pastor of Zion Mennonite Church in Archbold, led delegates in a time of worship. She used shards of pottery as a visual symbol of brokenness and asked delegates to each take a pottery shard. She noted that when we hold on to these bro-

ken things so tightly, they hurt us and they hurt others.

In other business, the delegates:

— Approved the minutes of the 2016 ACA;

— Were introduced to pastors with new assignments in the Ohio Conference;

— Affirmed the personnel slate presented by the Gifts Discernment Ministry (see pages 8-11 for more information about these volunteers);

— Heard a report from Assistant Moderator Thomas Dunn about the work of the Ministry Development Team;

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Direction statement affirmed

Delegates at the 2017 Annual Conference Assembly affirmed the following direction statement proposed by the Ohio Conference Leadership Team:

Setting Direction for the Next Chapter of the Ohio Conference

As we prayerfully consider God’s leading into the future, we commit ourselves to the following:

- We will continue our affiliation with Mennonite Church USA.
- Three changes would trigger a review of that affiliation:
 - ◆ A substantive change in the Confession of Faith;
 - ◆ A substantive change in the membership guidelines of MC USA;
 - ◆ A change in policy or practice at the national level that would require Ohio Conference to recognize the credentials of pastors who have performed same-sex marriages or who are involved themselves in a same-sex relationship.
- We will continue to utilize the Voice Task Force to speak into denominational processes and to agencies affiliated with MC USA.

We will put our best energy into being and becoming missional congregations together.

- We will join the Year of Mission and Year of Covenant initiatives into a single initiative: *Gathered and Sent*.
- We will minimize the effort spent on the same-sex marriage issue.



ACA photos: At left, Jessica Schrock-Ringenberg uses a pottery shard as a visual symbol as she talks to delegates. At right, Bill Seymour, a member of the Voice Task Force, listens as Darrin Snyder Belousek, another member of the task force talks to delegates. Photos by Bryan Leaman. To see more photos from ACA, go to <http://bit.ly/ACAvideophotos>.

— Heard about the Voice Task Force;

— Heard about the Ohio Conference Cast podcasts from Bill Seymour and Thomas Dunn;

— Heard a report from Interim Credentialing Ministry Chair Dan Hooley;

— Learned about the upcoming Pastor-Spouse Retreat from Jeff Hochstetler;

— Heard reports from Karla Minter of Mennonite Mission Network, and Terry Shue, director of leadership development for Mennonite Church USA;

— Celebrated communion. ■

Gathered and Sent initiative begins

Ohio Conference will merge the focus of the two initiatives of the past year (Year of Covenant and Year of Mission) into one. The combined initiative will be called **“Gathered and Sent.”** A longer version could be, “Gathered in Covenant, Sent in Mission.”

The “Sent” part of “Gathered and Sent” will provide us with resources, tools, training and support to enable us to reach out and to grow as missional congregations. Examples could include:

- Events to encourage each other and to celebrate and

hear stories about what God is doing in our settings

- Mentoring for pastors or leaders
- Training events for growing missional cultures, learning to live with a centered set approach, utilizing the APEST (Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd and Teacher) model of leadership, and practical training in engaging in “third places,” (neutral meeting places where disciple-making relationships can begin).

The “Gathered” part of “Gathered and Sent” will help

us tend to our center. Examples could include:

- Articulating a covenant that would include our core values, a procedure for working at differences in community, and spiritual practices to sustain covenant living.
- Studying together how we use the scriptures and how we use the Confession of Faith;
- Learning and practicing skills for engaging fruitfully in difficult conversations. ■

‘Invitation to Rest’ is Day of Inspiration theme

Ohio Mennonite Women’s Spring Day of Inspiration will take place Saturday, April 8, at Crown Hill Mennonite Church in Rittman. Featured speaker Janice Hershberger will focus on the theme “Invitation to Rest,” based on Matthew 11:28-30. The day’s events will begin at 9 a.m. and end 3 p.m.

During the afternoon women will be able to participate in one of two workshops:

- Card stamping led by Shari Riley and Wilma Barnhart (\$2 fee)
- Information and touring food pantry at Crown Hill led by Myrna Ramseyer

Lunch will be provided on a donation basis.

Janice Hershberger was scheduled to be the speaker at the 2016 Spring Day of Inspiration, but that meeting had to be canceled due to inclement weather.

Janice Hershberger has an M.A. in pastoral counseling from Ashland Theological Seminary. She has been a clinical counselor for more than 20 years, currently working at Spring-Haven Counseling in Mt. Eaton, Ohio. She has also received training in spiritual direction through Anabaptist Mennonite



Janice Hershberger

Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., and enjoys working with people in that capacity as well. ■

Seminar to focus on worship

Are you interested in deeper, more meaningful worship experiences in your congregation?

Sonnenberg Mennonite Church in Kidron will host a worship resourcing seminar on Saturday, May 6. This seminar, featuring speaker Rachel Miller Jacobs, will provide participants with practical training, resources and theological teaching for planning and leading worship.

Rachel Miller Jacobs is an assistant professor of congregational formation at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana. In addition to her work as a professor, she is a spiritual director. She was the resources coordinator for *Lead-*

er, a magazine of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. She has previously served as a pastor of congregational formation in a local congregation.

In addition to two presentations by Rachel Miller Jacobs, the day also will include workshops focusing on worship leading, scripture reading and drama, leading music with song and instruments, visual art in worship, and use of technology in worship.

The cost for this seminar is \$20 per person for those who register by April 28. After that date, the registration cost increases to \$30 per person. There is no registration cost for anyone



Rachel Miller Jacobs

aged 25 or under, but registration is still required.

This seminar is for people of all ages, but especially for young

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OC leadership pays tribute to Naomi Engle

By Bob Sauder
On behalf of the Ohio
Conference Leadership Team

Naomi Engle, Credentialing Ministry Chairperson and a member of the Leadership Team of the Ohio Conference, went to her heavenly home on Jan. 1. At the beginning of their meeting on Jan. 21, the Ohio Conference Leadership Team spent some time remembering who she was, what she brought to the Ohio Conference, and the void that her passing has left.

Naomi's love for the Ohio Conference was apparent in all of her activities on our behalf. We remembered the impact made by her administrative skills and her compassionate personality in her role as the Credentialing Chairperson. Many people are blessed with those skills, but to see both of those demonstrated so successfully by one person was truly amazing and a gift from God. Relationship seemed to be at the center of her core being represented by her readiness to offer compliments to those she met, her ability to see the gifts

that others possessed and affirming them in those gifts, and the feeling of support she gave to her fellow ministry team members, the Leadership Team and the pastors of the Conference.

While Naomi would be totally focused and serious when the situation called for that, we also recalled her ready smile, her sense of humor and her enjoyment of the fun-filled relationships that arose.

Naomi's passion for women in leadership was evident in her own pastoral ministry, pastor-spouse get-aways, and the leadership she gave to pastors' spouse support groups. Her rallying cry was, "Don't let the fact that you are a woman limit you in the use of the gifts that God has given you." While women were her passion, we are sure that she would say that to any person she met whether they were youth, old-timers, poor, rich, married, single or a sinner saved by grace.

We were appreciative of the three admonitions she left for us at her memorial service: Don't give up on prayer, be kind, and don't limit what God can do through you because you are a woman.



We were deeply saddened by the fact that a life so full of potential had to be so short, but we were blessed by the way she skillfully and faithfully used the gifts that she was given. We, individually and as a Conference, are better people for having known Naomi. She certainly left her world, her sphere of influence, a better place than what she found it. May she rest in peace in the loving arms of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Our prayers and support go out to her family and the West Clinton congregation as they mourn her loss, and we want to thank them for allowing Naomi the time to share her gifts with us all. ■

"Naomi's passion for women in leadership was evident in her own pastoral ministry, pastor-spouse get-aways, and the leadership she gave to pastors' spouse support groups."

Worship

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adults (high school and post-high ages).

The worship resourcing seminar is sponsored by Sonnenberg

Mennonite Church and Oak Grove Mennonite Church in Smithville with additional financial support provided by the Ohio Conference.

To register online, go to <http://bit.ly/2017WorshipSeminar>. ■

Volunteers accept Conference positions

Members of Ohio Conference congregations who volunteer their time play a vital role in Conference life. Without the help of numerous volunteers, many of the programs and functions of the Ohio Conference could not take place.

Much of the work of Ohio Conference is done by the Leadership Team, the Ministry Development Team, the Credentialing Ministry, the Stewardship Ministry and the Gifts Discernment Ministry. Delegates at Annual Conference Assembly affirmed the following individuals for service:

Assistant Moderator

Name: Thomas Dunn

Home congregation:

Crown Hill
(Rittman)

Occupation:

Pastor

Previous service:

Assistant moderator, youth pastor at Kidron Mennonite

Family information: Single

Goals: Continue to see Ohio Conference grow closer and stronger as we learn to develop our missional muscles

Hobbies/special interests:

Biking, board games, listening to audiobooks, traveling, hiking, exploring, experiencing and learning new things



Credentialing Ministry — Chair

Name: J. Andrew Stoner

Home congregation:

Huber (New Carlisle)

Occupation:

Pastor

Previous service:

Member of Credentialing Ministry, retired Ohio Conference regional pastor



Stewardship Ministry — Co-Chair

Name: Ruth A. Kauffman

Home congregation:

Tedrow
(Wauseon)

Occupation:

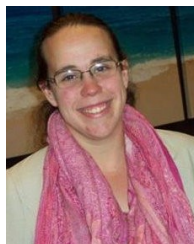
Credit analyst/banker

Previous

service: Various Stewardship committees; finance chairman/board member, Defiance Area Youth For Christ; bookkeeper, Care & Share Gift & Thrift Store; treasurer/board member, Fairlawn Haven

Family information: Husband — Dennis Kauffman; parents — Wayne and Anna Dinius

Goals: Continue to be a good fiduciary representative, continue to think of new and creative ways to meet the current challenges, try to shift the focus back to educational stewardship — in order to enable Conference/member churches to answer the call of being missional, and not just respond to the current financial position (and have a little fun while I'm at it).



Hobbies/special interests:

Asking (and occasionally answering) questions, cooking/baking

Stewardship Ministry — Co-Chair

Name: Melanie Miller

Home congregation:

Maple Grove
(Hartville)

Occupation:

Accountant,
CTP

Previous

service: Ohio Conference Stewardship Ministry member, treasurer with Ohio Mennonite Women and treasurer with Indiana/Michigan Mennonite Women

Family information: Married to my husband for nearly 10 years, Rod Miller (pastor at Maple Grove Mennonite Church), and we have two young daughters, Cadence (7) and Keilana (4) as well as two cats and a goldfish.

Goals: Continuing to serve diligently as the chair of Stewardship Ministry, helping to guide the Conference's finances in a responsible manner and continue to think of methods with which we can meet these financial responsibilities and support a healthy conference in the process.

Hobbies/special interests:

Good conversation and laughter shared with someone over a cup of coffee rate very high on my hobbies. I also love geocaching and experiencing new places.



Volunteers

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Ministry Development Team

Name: Dan King

Home congregation: Presently visiting a number of Ohio Conference congregations



Occupation: Retired pastor
Previous service: Former pastor of Dover Christian Fellowship and Beech Mennonite Church, member of Resolutions Committee Ohio Conference (two-year term)

Family information: Married to Jeanette; two grown sons

Goals: As part of Ministry Development Team, to help individual congregations become stronger and healthier, and to develop stronger connections between congregations

Hobbies/special interests: Gardening, beekeeping, music, reading, travel

Ministry Development Team

Name: Karla Kauffman

Home congregation: Jubilee (Bellefontaine)
Occupation: Program developer, Kirkmont Center



Previous service: Central District

Family information: Single

Ministry Development Team

Name: Shawn Hilliard

Home congregation: Martins (Orrville)
Occupation: Pastor



Previous service: Member of Mission Resource Team

Ministry Development Team — Witness Focus

Name: Jason Rissler

Home congregation: Cross Connections (Strasburg)
Occupation: Church planter



Previous service: Member of Ministry Development Team, member of Mission Resource Team

Ministry Development Team

Name: Alan Kauffman

Home congregation: Oak Grove (West Liberty)
Occupation: Farm consultant



Previous service: Member of Ministry Development Team and Gifts Discernment Ministry

Ministry Development Team — Prayer Coordinator

Name: Dan Hooley

Home congregation: Friendship (Bedford Heights)
Occupation: Interim pastor



Previous service: Member of Credentialing Ministry, interim chair of Credentialing Ministry

Credentialing Ministry

Name: Jacob Dodson

Home congregation: Wooster
Occupation: Pastor
Previous service:



Ministry Development Team, Mission Resource Team

Family information: Spouse, Katie; one son, Micah - 12 years old; two daughters, Aubrie - 10 years old, and Hannah - 2 years old

Goals: Provide good support and discernment processing for those considering credentialed ministry in Ohio Conference.

Hobbies/special interests: Music, reading, nature, cinema, gaming, and collecting comics

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Volunteers

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Ministry Development Team — Faith Focus Leader

Name: Steve Schmid

Home congregation: Wooster

Occupation: Business leader

Previous service:

Treasurer at Wooster Mennonite Church, Sunday School teacher

Family information: Married to Cathy Schmid

Goals: I am anxious to learn about the challenges encountered by the Ministry Development Team. I want to be a valuable contributor to the team as we take steps forward.

Hobbies/special interests:

Yard work at home, making candles, bike riding, and enjoying the outdoors - hiking is a frequent activity. Cathy and I have taken many hikes in mountains when we can. We also enjoy catching up with our three kids and their families. We have enjoyed being grandparents for most of last year (almost 11 months).



Credentialing Ministry

Name: Miriam Zehr

Home congregation: Oak Grove (Smithville)

Occupation: Associate pastor of worship and education

Previous service: Member of Credentialing Ministry, led



Mother/Daughter retreat, served in various capacities in the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference

Family Information: Married to Doug, the lead pastor at Oak Grove Mennonite; three adult daughters — Sherah-Leigh and BJ Gerber, Charissa and Henry Zehrnandez, and Maria Zehr; two grandchildren, Anna Gerber (5) and Titus Gerber (3)

Goals: Support/resource pastoral leadership in the Conference, assist in providing credentialing (licensing and ordination) to Conference pastors

Hobbies/special interests: Reading, baking with yeast, walking, travel

Stewardship Ministry — Stewardship Focus

Name: Roger Crossgrove

Home congregation: Zion (Archbold)

Occupation: Retired dairy farmer (38 years),

still farming and raise cattle

Previous service: Presently serving as adult Sunday school superintendent, attended several Ohio Conference annual meetings

Family information: Married to Mabelann; we have five adult children and 10 grandchildren.

Goals: To assist in determining the wisest use of funds available to continue the work of the Ohio Conference as it ministers to the needs of churches as we further the Kingdom of God



Hobbies/special interests:

I enjoy cutting strips of cloth so my wife can weave rugs and other items. I also shred a lot of paper that I use in the barn for bedding. We love visiting our children and grandchildren.

Stewardship Ministry — Finance Focus

Name: Christine Yoder

Home congregation: Oak Grove (West Liberty)

Occupation: Staff accountant, farmer, wife, mother

Previous service: Church treasurer for 17 years

Family information: Husband — Steve; mother of four grown daughters

Goals: To share my gifts in making decisions regarding the finances of the Conference

Hobbies/special interests: Walking the dog, traveling to visit family, reading, mowing grass



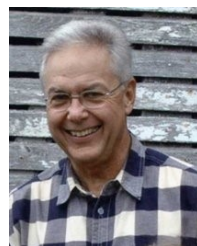
Stewardship Ministry — Endowment Focus

Name: Dean Falb

Home congregation: Martins (Orrville)

Occupation: Retired bank loan officer

Previous service: Member of Stewardship Ministry and Ministry Development Team for Ohio Conference, elder, treasurer and



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ABOUT PEOPLE

MC USA Convention

Three high school students from Ohio Conference congregations will be participating in Step Up, a new program at the Mennonite Church USA convention in Orlando, Florida, this summer.

Step Up is designed to get youth engaged in the discussions and work of the larger

Mennonite Church. Each conference has been encouraged to nominate three regular church attenders to be involved in the program.

The Ohio Conference Leadership Team has nominated **Luke Wheeler** of Lockport Mennonite Church in Stryker, **Tessa Waidelich** of West Clinton

Mennonite Church in Wauseon and **Madeline Kauffman** of Berlin Mennonite Church.

All participants in Step Up will receive preparation for being part of the delegate assembly and will sit at assigned tables during the delegate assembly. They also will debrief with other Step Up participants afterward. ■

Volunteers

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church council chair at Martins

Family information: Married to Jan, a retired teacher; one son; one grandson

Goals: To efficiently utilize financial resources entrusted to Ohio Conference for effective ministry.

Stewardship Ministry — Stewardship Focus

Name: Marion Beyeler

Home congregation: Orrville

Occupation: Retired/volunteer

Previous service: Conference moderator



Gifts Discernment Ministry

Name: Marilyn Rossiter

Home congregation: Summit (Barberton)

Occupation: Pastor



Previous service: My role previous to my present involvement has been in the area of music, having served in several Wayne County area churches as minister of music. Hank and I also served as volunteers for two years through Mennonite Mission Network in San Francisco and Phoenix in the '80s and then again in Liberia from 2004-2006.

Family information: I am married to Hank Rossiter, and we are parents to two daughters, Sarah (Matt) Nussbaum and their three young children of Dalton, and Becca J. R. (Michael) Lachman, of Athens. My mother is Ruth Amstutz of Kidron, and my brother is Ron (Joanne) Amstutz, of Wooster. **Goals:** My goal is to join in the work of the Holy Spirit in the formation of a joyfully relevant and effective church, faithful to our calling as peacemakers and followers of the Lamb.

Hobbies/special interests: Hank and I sing with the Cantate Singers, and we also love

to bike and hike. Flower gardening and hammer dulcimer are often neglected, but well-loved interests.

Gifts Discernment Ministry

Name: Cara Speros

Home congregation: Friendship (Bedford Heights)

Occupation: Church secretary at Friendship Mennonite Church

Family information: Married to Ben (18 years in July); three children, Callie, Ian and Elliot

Goals: Get to know how the committee works. This is my first time serving the Conference, and I'm looking forward to learning.

Hobbies/special interests: I enjoy crocheting. I am currently working on an afghan where I crochet one row a day, and the color is determined by the high temperature for that day. ■



Conference Calendar

APR

- 8 Spring Day of Inspiration, Ohio Mennonite Women, Crown Hill Mennonite, Rittman
- 28-29 Father Son Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron

MAY

- 6 Worship Resourcing Seminar, Sonnenberg Mennonite, Kidron

JUN

- 16-18 Hispanic Families Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron

JUL

- 4-8 Mennonite Church USA Convention, Orlando, Florida

NOV

- 10-12 Pastor-Spouse Retreat, Mohican State Park Lodge, Perrysville

Thirty-nine people representing 29 congregations participated in the Year of Covenant Meeting for Pastors on Feb. 2 at Toledo Mennonite. See the Ohio Conference website for photos from that meeting: <http://bit.ly/YofCPhotos>.

Columbus Mennonite Church, formerly Neil Avenue Mennonite Church, will be celebrating 55+ years of worship, service and fellowship on Aug. 19-20, 2017. Over the years many people from the Ohio Conference have attended Columbus Mennonite or Neil Avenue Mennonite, and all are invited to attend this special celebration to share stories and memories and renew friendships.

The celebration will begin at 4 p.m. Saturday with a time for participants to meet, greet and eat. At 7 p.m. there will be a program, "Memories, Music and Magic." On Sunday at 9:30 a.m. the worship service will have an emphasis on the church's missions through the years. For more information, please contact Columbus Mennonite at cmc55@columbusmennonite.org and include your email address. ■

Back page briefings...

Ohio Conference will hold a pastor-spouse retreat Nov. 10-12 at the Mohican State Park Lodge in Perrysville. Presenters for the weekend will be James Lapp and Miriam Book. Tim Shue will serve as worship leader.

Twenty-five couples will receive a reduced registration rate for this retreat thanks to sponsorship from Mennonite Mutual, Hummel Group, and the Mennonite Women's Group of Kidron Mennonite Church. See <http://bit.ly/2017Pastor-Spouse> for more information about this retreat.

Christine Nafziger, former co-pastor of Millersburg Mennonite Church, has recorded a new CD of piano music titled *In Between*. The album, which includes seven original piano songs, is similar in style to her previous CD, *Music as Prayer: Gateway to the Soul*. The cost is \$11.99 plus shipping (and tax for those who live in Ohio). To purchase, contact Christine at nafzigerpnc@hotmail.com. To listen to samples or to download a copy, go to <https://www.cdbaby.com/cd/christinenafziger>.

OHIO MENNONITE
EVANGEL
News & Views of Ohio Conference

For more Ohio Conference news, visit the Ohio Conference website: ohiomennoniteconference.org