

Perspective



Ohio Conference
of Mennonite
Church USA

www.ohiomennoniteconference.org

Editor: Ann H. Leaman 5854 Sunland St. N.E., Louisville OH 44641 Phone: 330-453-0150 Email: ohioevangel@gmail.com

Giving to Conference slows during March

For the second month in a row, giving to Ohio Conference was down. Receipts for the month were just \$13,952, including \$13,517 in giving from congregations. Expenses for the month totaled \$34,991, resulting in a significant shortfall for the month. The operating balance for March was -\$21,039.

The Ohio Conference ended its fiscal year on March 31 with an operating balance of -\$7,484. Thank you to all who contributed to the Conference during the 2019-20 fiscal year. We appreciate your contributions toward our work together as a conference, especially in times which are financially challenging for many among us.

Missional conference has been canceled

Please note: Because there is uncertainty about when restrictions will be lifted for public gatherings, the Ohio Conference Leadership Team has decided to cancel Engaging Mission 2020. This intergenerational missional festival was scheduled to take place June 24-26 at Bluffton University.

Plans are already underway for a missional conference next March. The 2021 missional conference is scheduled for March 4-5 at Central Christian School in Kidron. The featured speaker will be Brad Roth, pastor and author of *God's Country: Faith, Hope, and the Future of the Rural Church*.

MDS, Everence and MCC launch COVID-19 Congregational Relief Fund

GOSHEN, Indiana — Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), Everence® and Mennonite Central Committee U.S. (MCC U.S.) have joined together to launch a COVID-19 Congregational Relief Fund to aid churches facing financial crisis due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

The new fund was seeded with a combined \$550,000 commitment from MDS, Everence and MCC U.S. The fund will be administered by Everence Foundation. A special committee with representation from MDS, Everence and MCC has been formed to review requests and allocate grants based on need.

Perspective: 1) The inter-relation in which a subject or its parts are mentally viewed. 2) Point of view; capacity to view things in their relative importance.

Leader's perspective

Conference Minister Dick Barrett shares thoughts about living in an uncertain time in a blog post titled "Easter — now what?" A copy is included with this issue of *Perspective*.

Please distribute Perspective copies to:

- Pastor(s)
 - Church chairperson
 - Youth sponsor(s)
 - Delegates
 - Duplicate for other church leaders
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The fund will accept grant requests of **up to \$5,000** each from churches that might not have means to recover from this unprecedented global situation. Recipient churches may use the grants to meet their congregational financial needs (such as rent, mortgage, utilities, staff salaries, etc.) or to assist families and individuals in their midst recover from COVID-19 hardships. Churches with historic roots or relationships with the Anabaptist faith community are eligible to apply for a grant. Priority will be given to racially and ethnically diverse churches serving in historically under-resourced communities, i.e. communities and households that are underbanked, underinsured and/or uninsured.

While primarily focused on domestic relief needs, a portion of the fund will support global partners through the Mennonite World Conference Global Sharing Fund. Established in 1997, the Global Church Sharing Fund supports the ministries and mission of Mennonite World Conference member and associate member churches in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

“The coronavirus disease and its accompanying impacts will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable populations, particularly those who are part of racial or ethnic communities,” said J Ron Byler, MCC U.S. executive director. “It’s imperative that we re-commit ourselves to caring for our neighbors, acting generously, and sharing God’s love and compassion with all in the name of Christ.”

To learn more and/or apply for a COVID-19 Congregational Relief Fund grant, visit everence.com/covid-19-congregational-relief-fund. Individuals, churches, businesses and organizations may also support the fund through charitable donations.

Lighthouse Ministries plans A Day of Giving

A note from Darin Nissley, executive director of Lighthouse Ministries in Canton:

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Lighthouse’s Annual fundraising banquet has been moved to an online event on Saturday, April 25. We’d love it if you joined us on Facebook or Instagram for the party! We will go live every half-hour, starting at 10 a.m., with all sorts of fun things — a children’s art showcase, live music, a live guided tour of the Lighthouse, testimonies and more. Visit www.cantonlighthouse.org/day-of-giving for the complete schedule and to have your gift tripled. That’s right, the first \$10,000 given towards the Day of Giving gets tripled by our sponsors. If you’re sending a check, please put the word “celebrate” in the memo.

Summer Peacebuilding Institute goes online

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Center for Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University will hold its Summer Peacebuilding Institute (SPI) online this May and June. To find information about SPI courses and instructors, go to <https://emu.edu/spi/>.

Youth perspective

Mennonite Mission Network has released a new resource for youth groups, “Making faith sense amidst the pandemic.” This resource is designed to guide conversation with youth as part of an online group meeting. You can learn more and download the resource at <https://bit.ly/MMNYYouthResources>.

Resource perspective

CommonWord has compiled a curated list of worship, family, and other resources for use during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to downloadable documents, the list includes links to articles on topics such as “An Examen for Life During COVID-19” and “How to Livestream Your Church Service: A Practical Guide.” To view these resources, go to www.commonword.ca/go/2005.

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The AMBS community is offering resources to foster a spirit of hope, trust, resilience and ongoing faith during the global COVID-19 pandemic. AMBS hopes these prayers, music playlists, audio files, articles and pastoral care resources can help people to be grounded in and sustained by God’s unfailing presence. See amsb.edu/publishing/hope-and-resilience.

Perspective deadlines

May 4 for May 7 issue

May 18 for May 21 issue
