

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

Leadership Team announces resignation of Regional Pastor Sherah-Leigh Gerber

It was with sadness that the Leadership Team of Ohio Conference recently accepted the resignation of Sherah-Leigh Gerber as our regional pastor in the east. Sherah-Leigh was called to this role of regional pastor because of her unique skill set and gifting, and her presence and contributions will be greatly missed. One of the primary reasons she gave for her resignation is the intense season in the life of the Conference that made the emphasis of her work different than she had anticipated. The other primary reason given was the patriarchy and sexism which she experienced while carrying out her role as regional pastor.

*From the
Leadership Team*



As the Leadership Team we are especially concerned about patriarchy and sexism present in our system. In late 2020 the Leadership Development Resource Team that was in place at the time conducted a survey of our pastors and congregational leaders regarding women in ministry. The survey revealed that over the years there has been improvement in how women pastors are viewed in Ohio Conference. However, the survey also revealed that women in ministry continue to experience more challenges and barriers than men. The report specifically stated, "Comments reflected that people tend to scrutinize women leaders more than they do men." Together as a Conference we must own the patriarchy and sexism that exists in ourselves, our congregations, and in the Ohio Conference system. These attitudes, biases, and actions, whether conscious or unconscious, are inconsistent with the Kingdom of God as revealed through our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, and we must continue the undoing of them from our system.

The Leadership Team strongly affirms the calling of women to all ministerial positions. In particular, we affirm the gifts that Sherah-Leigh possesses, and the significant contributions she has made to our Conference life. We ask for your prayers for her during this time of transition in her life.

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.

Perspective inserts

This issue of *Perspective* includes the November-December issue of *Prayer Prompter* and prayer requests for November from Mennonite Education Agency, as well as bulletin announcements for November from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Please distribute Perspective copies to:

- Pastor(s)
 - Church chairperson
 - Youth sponsor(s)
 - Delegates
 - Duplicate for other church leaders
-

Advent at Home guide now available

ELKHART, Ind. (Mennonite Education Agency) — “Restoration is Near!” is the theme of the Advent at Home 2022 worship guide, now available at the Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) website: <https://mennoniteusa.org/adventathome>. Using the theme developed for *Leader* magazine, the guide offers weekly and daily Scriptures from the lectionary texts, worship rituals, prayers, activities, and background information to help individuals and households of all ages prepare for Advent through Epiphany.

Advent at Home was originally created by Mennonite Church Canada in 2002. MC USA has developed the curriculum since 2016 as part of its Faith Formation emphasis. This year, Mennonite Education Agency (MEA) and MC USA communications staff partnered together to produce the resource. It is intended for all ages and life stages to deepen the experience of Christmas.

Video project focuses on visual art in worship

[Together in Worship](#), an online collection of free worship resources from Anabaptist sources, is pleased to announce the launch of a new resource about the use of visual art in worship.

A Creative God: The Visual Arts in Worship is a video project that explores how seven Mennonite congregations in southern Pennsylvania and eastern Virginia use visual art and other visual elements to enrich their corporate worship.

The video and an accompanying discussion guide are designed to inspire the imaginations of congregations who are ready to explore how visual dimensions of worship might expand their relationship with God and with each other.

Two webinars will be held to share about the documentary and its related resources. Both events are free and open to the public:

Teaching webinar hosted by Anabaptist Worship Network: Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2–3:30 p.m. EST

Video premiere webinar with question-and-answer session with the documentary team: Thursday, Nov. 10, 7:30 p.m. EST (75 minutes)

To learn more or to register for either webinar, see the AMBS website: <https://bit.ly/2022VisualArtsWebinars>.

Cluster meeting dates set

Mark your calendar: Ohio Conference will hold five winter cluster meetings for delegates to Annual Conference Assembly. Locations are as follows:

- Jan. 17 — Maple Grove Mennonite (Hartville)
- Jan. 19 — Toledo Mennonite
- Jan. 24 — Sharon Mennonite (Plain City)
- Jan. 26 — Orrville Mennonite
- Jan. 30 — Online via Zoom

Mission perspective

Ohio Conference is changing the date of the 2023 Missional Workshop from March 2-3 to **April 15**. As was announced previously, Mauricio Chenlo, minister for church planting at Mennonite Mission Network, will facilitate the Missional Workshop. This event will include significant time for congregational teams to work on a project and receive feedback about the project from others. The location for the Missional Workshop will be announced later.

Hymnal perspective

Does your congregation have copies of *Hymnal: A Worship Book* that you would be willing to sell or donate? Andrea Nord, a former member of University Mennonite Church now living in Greenville, Illinois, is seeking copies of this hymnal for her Free Methodist congregation in Illinois. She will be driving to Harrisonburg, Virginia, over Thanksgiving and could pick up the hymnals on her way there. If you have hymnals that you would be willing to sell or donate, please contact Andrea Nord at andrea.nord@greenville.edu.

Perspective deadlines

Nov. 15 for Nov. 17 issue
Nov. 29 for Dec. 1 issue