

# OHIO MENNONITE EVANGEL

News & Views of Ohio Conference

MAR/APR 2023



ohiomennoniteconference.org

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## Central Christian School hosts Annual Conference Assembly

# Affiliation resolution at ACA not adopted

**At the 2023 Annual Conference Assembly (ACA), a resolution for Ohio Conference to withdraw from Mennonite Church USA and become temporarily independent did not receive enough votes from delegates to be adopted. The Ohio Conference Leadership Team proposed the resolution to delegates on March 4 at ACA after several sessions of group spiritual discernment.**



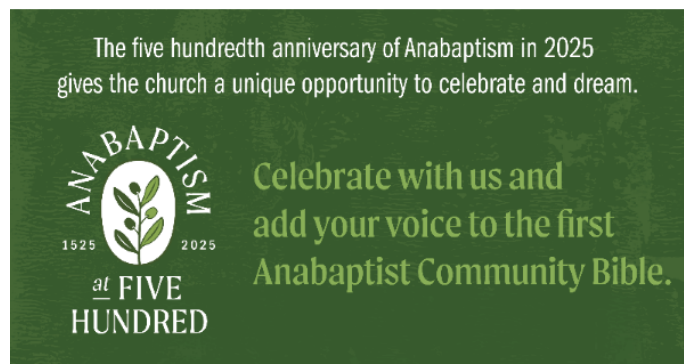
Delegates post responses from their table groups on a prayer wall at Annual Conference Assembly.

Eighty-one delegates (54.7 %) voted to affirm the resolution, while 67 delegates (45.3 %) voted against the resolution, and three delegates abstained.

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## Study groups sought for Anabaptist Community Bible

**HARRISONBURG, Virginia — The Anabaptism at 500 project is looking for 500 study groups from a broad spectrum of Anabaptist communities to participate in creating the first-ever Anabaptist Community Bible. People from all Anabaptist traditions are invited to form study groups and submit**



**their insights for this once-in-a-generation project.**

Participating is easy. Volunteers can form their study group and register at

Continued on page 2

## RESOURCE CORNER

# Check out these new Lenten resources



THE SOIL  
and  
THE SEED  
PROJECT

For more information about the Soil and The Seed Project, see [https://](https://www.thesoilandtheseedproject.org/about)

order, go to <https://www.mennomedia.org/9781513809342/fight-like-jesus/>. ■

By Ann Leaman  
Ohio Conference  
Resource Advocate

The Soil and The Seed Project has released a new collection of free resources for Lent, Easter and Pentecost. Included are a new album of music, "Little Liturgies," art, and lyrics/chord/lead sheets. To download these resources, go to <https://www.thesoilandtheseedproject.org/vol-6>.

[www.thesoilandtheseedproject.org/about](https://www.thesoilandtheseedproject.org/about).

Another resource for Lent comes from MennoMedia. The book *Fight Like Jesus: How Jesus Waged Peace Throughout Holy Week* by Jason Porterfield looks at Jesus' last week in Jerusalem and explores how Jesus' actions during that week exemplify his approach to peacemaking. To



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## Anabaptism at 500

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<https://www.mennomedia.org/register-your-bible-study-group>. Each group will be assigned three passages and asked to meet four times

to read and study together, following a simple format. The reflections and questions generated by these groups, supplemented by insights from biblical scholars, will appear as marginal

notes in the Bible. All groups are asked to register by April 1, 2023. Anabaptism at 500 is a project of MennoMedia. Learn more at <https://anabaptismat500.com>. ■

## Personnel of the Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA

Moderator: Ken Sims — [simsken6@gmail.com](mailto:simsken6@gmail.com)  
Assistant Moderator: Paula Snyder Belousek — [pastor@salemennonite.com](mailto:pastor@salemennonite.com)  
Credentialing Representative to Leadership Team: Rachele Lyndaker Schlabach — [rachele@millersburgmennonite.org](mailto:rachele@millersburgmennonite.org)  
Gifts Discernment Ministry Chair: Jared Chase — [jchase2882@gmail.com](mailto:jchase2882@gmail.com)  
Stewardship Ministry Chair: Andrew Blount — [blountandrew@hotmail.com](mailto:blountandrew@hotmail.com)  
Credentialing Ministry Chair: Doug King — [douging.tedrow@gmail.com](mailto:douging.tedrow@gmail.com)  
Conference Minister: Dick Barrett — [ohioconferenceminister@gmail.com](mailto:ohioconferenceminister@gmail.com)  
Regional Pastor: Tony Doebrmann — [ocrpwest@gmail.com](mailto:ocrpwest@gmail.com)  
Administrative Secretary: Judy King — [ohmc@zoominternet.net](mailto:ohmc@zoominternet.net)  
Finance Coordinator: Stan Helmuth — [cboh1@zoominternet.net](mailto:cboh1@zoominternet.net)  
Conference Editor: Ann Leaman — [ohioevangel@gmail.com](mailto:ohioevangel@gmail.com)  
Coordinator of Volunteers: Alys Short — [alysashort@gmail.com](mailto:alysashort@gmail.com)



stained from voting. **Because the resolution did not receive affirmation from at least two thirds of the delegates, it was not adopted.** (The Leadership Team had announced prior to voting that at least two thirds of delegates would need to affirm the resolution for it to be adopted.)

## PATH TO THE RESOLUTION

At the 2022 ACA held at Zion Mennonite Church in Archbold, delegates approved a new mission statement for the Conference. At that time the delegates also gave feedback to the Leadership Team about a plan to conduct a three-part review process, focusing on the Conference's constitution, structure and affiliation with Mennonite Church USA. The review of denominational affiliation was prompted by a [resolution passed at the 2017 ACA](#) which stated that a change in the membership guidelines of Men-



nonite Church USA (MC USA) would trigger a review of Ohio Conference's affiliation with MC USA.

At the 2022 ACA, delegates expressed affirmation for the Leadership Team's plan to hire a consultant to help with the review process. The Leadership Team subsequently hired [Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi](#) of Design Group International for a two-year period to help guide the review process.

## TWO SCENARIOS

During the past year, the review process has involved numerous meetings with pastors, Leadership Team, Ministry Development Team, staff and delegates. Many options for denominational affiliation were suggested, and a Strategic Planning Team explored these options before making recommendations to the Leadership Team.

Prior to ACA, the Leadership Team proposed two scenarios for denominational affiliation. Scenario 1 proposed that Ohio Conference would remain a part of MC USA, and Scenario 2 proposed that Ohio Conference would withdraw from MC USA and become temporarily independent while seeking new partners for affiliation, networking and/or collaboration.

During ACA, delegates spent several sessions in group spiritual discernment led by Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi, looking at both of these scenarios. Delegates spent time discussing the scenarios with partners and their table groups. They named their hopes and fears concerning each scenario, and each table group compiled responses. These responses were then posted on a prayer wall. All delegates were invited to read the variety of responses from across all table groups.

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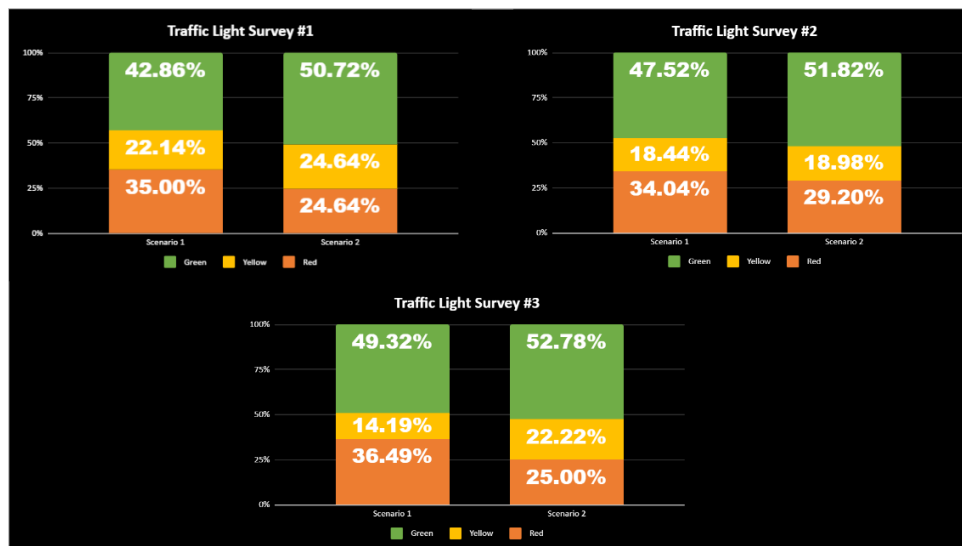
ACA photos: At left, consultant Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi leads delegates in a time of group spiritual discernment; above right, delegates spent time in spiritual practices, such as participating in a prayer walk while using a labyrinth; below right, delegates at one table group share a laugh during discussion time. All photos by Bryan Leaman. To see more photos from ACA, go to <https://bit.ly/ACAPhotos>.





Continued from page 3

As part of the discernment process, three times during ACA delegates completed a “traffic light survey” regarding two options for denominational affiliation. Results are shown here. Note that in each grouping, Scenario 1 on the left and Scenario 2 is on the right.



### TRAFFIC LIGHT SURVEYS

At three separate times during the discernment process, delegates were asked to participate in a “traffic light survey” regarding the two scenarios. The possible responses were as follows:

Green = I fully support this option.

Yellow = This is not the option I would choose, but I would stay with Ohio Conference if this option were chosen.

Red = I cannot accept this option.

Based on delegate responses (see the graphic on this page), the Leadership Team determined that a resolution to withdraw from Mennonite Church USA had a better chance of receiving the affirmation of two thirds of the delegates. Subsequently, the Leadership Team proposed [the resolution to withdraw from Mennonite Church USA](#), but the resolution was not adopted because it did not receive affirmation from at least two thirds of the delegates.

### AKRON SWAHILI CONGREGATION JOINS CONFERENCE

In other business, delegates voted to accept a new congregation into membership in the Ohio Conference. The Akron Swahili Mennonite Church is the newest congregation to join

the Conference. The congregation’s pastors, Benaya Mlondani Wahina and Malanga Lusaende, had been licensed for ministry by the Ohio Conference during a World Communion Sunday worship service at Central Christian School in October

Continued on page 5

## ACA delegates adopt resolutions of thanks

Delegates at Annual Conference Assembly adopted two resolutions of thanks during Saturday’s last business session. The resolutions are below:

- We thank Ohio Conference Staff, leadership, and Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi for their work and support of Ohio Conference churches and pastors this past year. We appreciate their energy, clarity, and determination to help us live into our new Conference vision and mission statement.
- We would like to acknowledge and express our immense gratitude for Sherah-Leigh Gerber’s faithful service as Regional Pastor within Ohio Conference. Her leadership, wisdom, and support were invaluable to our conference, our congregations, and our pastors. We are better because of her service.

# ACA

Continued from page 4

2022. Jacob Dodson, pastor of Wooster Mennonite Church, and Thomas Dunn, co-pastor of Crown Hill Mennonite Church in Rittman, have been serving as mentors to these two pastors.

When the congregation was accepted as a new member of the Ohio Conference, Pastor Benaya Mlondani Wahina shared some words of appreciation with the delegates, with translation provided by Jacqueline Nashon of Tanzania. She is currently serving in Wayne County through Mennonite Central Committee's International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP). Thanks were also given to Rollin Mukanza of the International Institute of Akron, recognizing his help in connecting the Akron group with the Ohio Conference.



In other business, the delegates:

- Worshipped together Friday evening and Saturday morning with worship services focusing on the theme "Rooted and Grounded in Love," based on Ephesians 3:16-21;
- Approved the proposed 2023-24 spending plan for Ohio Conference;
- Affirmed the personnel slate presented by the Gifts

Discernment Ministry (see pages 8-10 for information about these individuals);

- Welcomed pastors new to the Ohio Conference;
- Heard reports from Rachel Ringenberg Miller of Mennonite Church USA and Eric Frey Martin of Mennonite Mission Network;
- Heard from Bill and Carole Schumacher of Sharon Mennonite Church about the Arsenic Mitigation Project, which focuses on removing arsenic from the water supply in Bangladesh;
- Heard about Grace & Groundings, the Ohio Conference racial reconciliation resource team, from Greg Battle, a member of the resource team;
- Heard about the upcoming missional workshop from Alex Dye, a member of the Missional Resource Team;
- Heard about the Pastor-Spouse Retreat, planned for Nov. 10-12, from Doug King of Tedrow Mennonite Church and Valerie Jones of South Union Mennonite;
- Observed communion. ■

Benaya Mlondani Wahina, lead pastor of Akron Swahili Mennonite Church, shared words of appreciation with Ohio Conference delegates as the congregation was accepted as a new member of the Ohio Conference. Also pictured (left to right) are Jacob Dodson, pastor of Wooster Mennonite Church; Jacqueline Nashon, translator and IVEP participant; and Malanga Lusaende, vice pastor of Akron Swahili Mennonite Church.

## ACA by the numbers

- **190** participants
- **153** delegates
- **35** congregations represented
- **1** new congregation welcomed into membership (Akron Swahili Mennonite Church)
- **9** spiritual practices for delegates to choose from
- **18** displays from local ministries and church-wide agencies
- **3** worship services, including closing time of communion
- **\$2,317** — Offering given by delegates during the Friday evening worship service. The money given will be shared between two projects: assisting in the purchase of Bible curriculum for Central Christian School students and the Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Project.

## CONFERENCE MINISTER MUSINGS

# Church is not a democracy

By Dick Barrett  
Conference Minister

I find myself writing this just a few days after our 2023 Annual Conference Assembly where the theme was “Rooted and Grounded in Love,” based on Ephesians 3:16-21. The Assembly was a time of good fellowship, worship and learning about different spiritual practices. It was also a time of hard work, as the delegates continued to discern God’s will for Ohio Conference regarding future denominational affiliation.

While there is no clear direction at this time, the Holy Spirit’s presence was felt in many ways. The Holy Spirit was present in how the delegates interacted with one another, showing love in the midst of differences, listening well and speaking with respect. The Holy Spirit was present in what appeared to be a desire of many to maintain “Holy Indifference” to anything and everything but the will of God in the discernment. The Holy Spirit was present as delegates discussed in table groups and then shared with all through writing on large sheets of paper and posting suggestions for moving forward together.

Leading up to the Assembly, the Leadership Team came to the conclusion that a decision or vote regarding affiliation (to remain with Mennonite Church USA or to withdraw, become temporarily independent, and seek a new affiliation) of less than 2/3 majority affirmation would be an indication that we have not yet clearly discerned God’s will for us as a conference regarding future affiliation.

We live in a country which prides itself on the democratic process, and as Anabaptists and Mennonites the process of communal decision making is very important, but church is not a democracy. Church is a theocracy with the triune God of Father, Son and Holy Spirit as the head. Voting can be a tool that helps us discern God’s will and to make decisions together, but in making large and important decisions that affect the future of the church, God’s will should be clearer than just a majority. And as much as many among us would like to be done with the question of affiliation and be moving on, we need to remember that we live in God’s timing which is often different than our own.



How might God be speaking to us in this time we are in? Is there a better way, or as Anabaptists and Mennonites like to say, “Is there a third way?” Is God calling us to something different that we have not yet fully explored?

These are questions that we are going to need to try to answer as we continue to discern together in the second year of our review process facilitated by our consultant, Jeanne Zimmermanly Jantzi. I am confident that if we remain faithful to the process, and we continue to love one another in the same way we have throughout this first year, God will reveal his will for us as a conference for the years ahead. “Because of our partnership in the gospel he who began a good work in us will carry it on to completion.”

With the Love of Christ,

Dick

*“Voting can be a tool that helps us discern God’s will and to make decisions together, but in making large and important decisions that affect the future of the church, God’s will should be clearer than just a majority.”*

# Ohio MCC Comforter Bash set for April 21-22

Mennonite Central Committee will hold the second annual Ohio MCC Comforter Bash on Friday and Saturday, April 21-22, in the recreation building at the Kidron Community Park, 4434 Kidron Road, Kidron.

Everyone is invited to knot comforters for Mennonite Central Committee at this event. A handmade comforter provides not only warmth but also a tangible message to people that their needs are not forgotten. MCC will distribute the comforters to people in need around the world.

The Comforter Bash will be held from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on

Friday, April 21, and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 22. This is a drop-in event; volunteers are invited to come and go as their schedules allow.

Comforter tops and backs are needed for this event. MCC invites you to make comforter tops (60" x 80") and backs (65" x 85") for use at the Comforter Bash. Comforter tops and backs should be dropped off by March 10 at the MCC Material Resources Center in Kidron, 4080 Kidron Road, Kidron.

During the 2022 Ohio MCC Comforter Bash, volunteers knotted 129 comforters over a two-day period. To see photos from last year's event, go to



Lisa Zuercher knots a comforter at the 2022 Ohio MCC Comforter Bash. This year the Ohio MCC Comforter Bash will take place April 21-22 in Kidron. Photo by Jennifer Steiner of MCC Great Lakes.

<https://bit.ly/2022ComforterBash>. All photos are by Jennifer Steiner of MCC Great Lakes. ■

## Gilead Mennonite Church holds final service

On Jan. 29th Conference Minister Dick Barrett worshiped with Gilead Mennonite Church as the congregation worshiped together as a church for the last time.

Located in the rural area of Mt. Gilead, Ohio, the church began in 1952 when several Mennonite families moved to the community with a desire to plant a church that was committed both to the Anabaptist/Mennonite faith and to seeking and saving the lost in its community. Sadly, like many other churches located in rural areas, the number of members and regular attenders dwindled over the past 20 years, and they made the difficult decision to close.



After the worship service, the congregation had a business meeting where they discussed disposing of the church building and property with a strong desire to pass it on to a newer church plant which has been

worshipping in the building recently. They then gathered for a fellowship meal and presented Howard Horton, who had been preaching there for the past several years, with a gift of appreciation. ■

The Gilead Mennonite Church property has been passed on to a group planting a new church.



# 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:** Paula Snyder Belousek

**Home congregation:** Salem Mennonite (Elida)

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Previous service:** This

will be my third term as assistant moderator and chair of Ministry Development Team. I have also served on the Missional Resource Team and have been a mentor to several outstanding female pastors/chaplains.

**Family information:** Married to Darrin. Mom to a middle schooler and an exchange student from Thailand.

**Goals:** To journey with Ohio Conference as the Spirit leads. To plan exciting, spiritual-

ly enriching and educationally stimulating programing that supports the Conference's mission. Continue investing in female leaders and supporting the Conference's anti-racism work.

**Hobbies/special interests:**

Traveling, sampling cuisines from other cultures, walking, reading

## **Ministry Development Team — Witness Focus**

**Name:** Joel Shenk

**Home congregation:** Toledo Mennonite

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Previous service:** Min-

istry Development Team (MDT), Missional Conference Planning Team, Strategic Planning Task Force

**Family information:** Wife — Emiley; two daughters, Roslyn (12) and Lizette (9)

**Goal:** To be more prayerful in how I approach the work of MDT

**Hobbies/special interests:** Fly fishing and fly rod building

## **Ministry Development Team**

**Name:** Alan Kauffman

**Home congregation:** Oak Grove Mennonite (West Liberty)

**Occupation:** Farm consultant

**Previous service:** Member of Ministry Development Team

## **Ministry Development Team**

**Name:** Marilyn Rossiter

**Home congregation:** Orrville Mennonite

**Occupation:** Music teacher, retired pastor

**Previous service:** Pastor of Summit Mennonite in Barberton, member of Gifts Discernment Ministry

**Family information:** I have been married to my husband, Hank, for 49 years! We have two daughters and sons-in-laws and five grandchildren.

**Goals:** My hope is that we can attract more enthusiastic workers of all ages in the work of peace and agape love for all peoples.

**Hobbies/special interests:** Ping pong, teaching music, watching birds

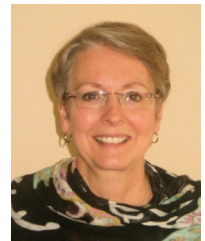
**Credentialing Ministry — Chair**

**Name:** Doug King

**Home Congregation:** Tedrow Mennonite (Wauseon)

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Previous service:** I have served three congregations in three different MC USA Conferences over the last 25 years in the roles of youth and young adult pastor and lead pastor. I have



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# Volunteers

Continued from page 8

served on the Ohio Conference Credentialing Ministry Team for two terms, served as mentor for three young Ohio Conference pastors, and am on the planning team for the upcoming Pastor-Spouse Retreat to be held in November 2023.

**Family information:** Paula is my wife of 26 years. Our children are Danielle, Megan and Trevor.

**Goals:** My goal is to continue getting to know and encourage our credentialed pastors and leaders in Ohio Conference. I long for women and men called by God to serve as healthy, long-term pastors in healthy congregations.

## Hobbies/special interests:

Hanging out with the family, hiking, biking, gardening and being a weather spotter for the National Weather Service

## Credentialing Ministry — Credentialing Representative to Leadership Team

**Name:** Rachelle Lyndaker Schlabach

**Home congregation:** Millersburg Mennonite

**Occupation:** Co-pastor

**Previous service:**

Worked 18 years for Mennonite Central Committee in their Washington, DC office.

**Family information:** Married to Keith; two young adult children

**Goals:** Make connections with others in the conference; bring my perspective as a newly-credentialed pastor to the Cre-



dentialed Ministry process

## Hobbies/special interests:

Walking my dog, cooking, cheering for my favorite sports teams

## Credentialing Ministry

**Name:** Dee Custar

**Occupation:** Retired pastor

**Previous service:**

Served as pastor of Salem Mennonite (Waldron, Michigan), member of Credentialing Ministry



## Stewardship Ministry — Chair

**Name:** Andrew Blount

**Home congregation:** Bethel Mennonite (West Liberty)

**Occupation:** Non-profit administrator

**Previous service:** Chair of Stewardship Ministry



## Stewardship Ministry

**Name:** Carolyn Kopec

**Home congregation:** Sharon Mennonite (Plain City)

**Occupation:** Banking associate

## Gifts Discernment Ministry — Chair

**Name:** Jared Chase

**Home congregation:** Sharon Mennonite (Plain City)

**Occupation:** Lead pastor



**Previous service:** I served as youth pastor at Sharon for almost 10 years before being called into the lead pastor role. I have served a number of different teams that planned events for Conference life.

**Family information:** Sarah and I have been married for 17 years, and we have three wonderful children. Emma is our oldest. She is 14 and will be starting high school in the fall. Noah is 11, and Julia just turned 5 and will be in school all day every day in the fall.

**Goals:** Continuing to cast a broad net to increase the amount of people faithfully serving God at a Conference level. I would love to see new people in leadership roles bringing their fresh ideas as we continue this period of discernment.

**Hobbies/special interests:** I have a lot of hobbies. I like to play golf and coach my son's baseball team. I also really enjoy getting excited about what my kids are excited about: watching Emma perform in the arts, Noah on the athletic field and Julia bossing her older siblings around. Currently the hobby that is at the top of my list is being a personal chauffeur for all three of my children.

## Gifts Discernment Ministry

**Name:** Marion Beyeler

**Home congregation:** Orrville Mennonite

**Occupation:** Retired from Everence



Continued on page 10

# Volunteers

Continued from page 9

**Previous service:** Served as elder at Orrville Mennonite. For Ohio Conference, served as moderator and as a member of the Stewardship Ministry.

**Family information:** Married to Jane (an MCC volunteer). Our children are Nan, who lives in Fleetwood, Pennsylvania; Ben and Rachel, who live in Goshen, Indiana; and Brian, who lives in Akron, Ohio. We also have nine grandchildren.

**Goal:** To be a part of the Ohio Conference community, helping others serve as they are called

**Hobbies/special interests:** Being with family, eating, MMN SOOP service, golfing, gardening

## Gifts Discernment Ministry

**Name:** Erin Dye

**Home congregation:** Oak Grove Mennonite (West Liberty)

**Occupation:** Social worker/therapist

**Previous service:** Member of Gifts Discernment Ministry



## Gifts Discernment Ministry

**Name:** Erin Unruh

**Home congregation:** Salem Mennonite (Kidron)

**Occupation:** Pharmacy technician

## Gifts Discernment Ministry

**Name:** Hardaye Ramjit

**Home congregation:** Lee Heights Community Church (Cleveland)

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Previous service:** Member of Gifts Discernment Ministry ■



## Pastor-Spouse Retreat to offer time and space for couples to rest, refresh and reconnect

Ohio Conference will hold a 2023 Pastor-Spouse Retreat Nov. 10-12 at Deer Creek State Park Lodge and Conference Center in Mt. Sterling, Ohio, about 32 miles south of Columbus. The theme of this weekend event will be "Fill My Cup."

This retreat has been designed to provide an affordable time away for pastors and their spouses. The retreat will offer a combination of organized activities and unstructured time. During the weekend, participants will be encouraged to rest in the Lord, refresh through downtime, self-care and couple-care, and reconnect with their spouse and with other pastoral couples.

Cost for this retreat is \$250 per couple. The price includes a

room for two nights, snacks, breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturday, and breakfast on Sunday. Ohio Conference would like to thank the generous sponsors who have helped to underwrite this retreat. They include Hummel Group, Oak Grove Mennonite Church, and

Zion Mennonite Church.

Registration is due by **Sept. 1, 2023**. For more information or to register, go to <https://bit.ly/2023Pastor-SpouseRetreat>. A retreat brochure with a schedule is available at <https://bit.ly/2023Pastor-SpouseRetreatBrochure>. ■



## ABOUT PEOPLE

## Pastoral notes

Wendell Slagell recently concluded his time as pastor of Huber Mennonite Church in New Carlisle. While he officially finished as pastor on Dec. 31, 2022, his last Sunday with the congregation was Jan. 15, due to the holidays and inclement weather.

On that day, the congregation hosted an appreciation breakfast for Wendell. He preached a final sermon, and afterward the prayer team and others gathered around him for a time of prayer. Also attending the worship service were Regional Pastor Tony Doehrmann and Conference Minister Dick Barrett. ■



Wendell Slagell preached a final sermon at Huber Mennonite Church in New Carlisle on Jan. 15.

## Missional workshop to focus on local projects

Do you have ideas for ministering to your community, but need motivation to begin making those ideas come to life? Plan now to attend Ohio Conference's 2023 Missional Workshop at the St. Francis Spirituality Center in Tiffin on Saturday, April 15.

The theme of this interactive workshop is "Outward Church: Mobilizing the church wherever you are." During this one-day workshop, teams from Ohio Conference congregations will work on plans for projects designed to reach out to their individual communities.

Mauricio Chenlo, minister for church planting at Mennonite Mission Network, will facilitate

the workshop. This event will include significant time for congregational teams to work on a project and receive feedback about the project from others.

To learn more about this workshop, you can watch the brief (two-minute) YouTube video featuring Alex Dye, pastor of Oak Grove Mennonite Church in West Liberty: <https://bit.ly/2023MissionalWorkshopP> review.

A brochure with more information is available at <https://bit.ly/2023MissionalWorkshopB> rochure. Register online at <https://bit.ly/2023MissionalWorkshop>.

The registration deadline is **March 31**. ■

A vertical poster with a teal and white color scheme. At the top, the words "Outward Church" are written in a large, white, cursive font. Below this, in a smaller white sans-serif font, is the text "Mobilizing the church wherever you are". Further down, it says "with Mauricio Chenlo" in white sans-serif font. At the bottom, a dark teal circle contains the date "April 15, 2023" in white sans-serif font. Below the circle, the text "St. Francis Spirituality Center Tiffin, Ohio" is written in a smaller white sans-serif font. The background of the poster features abstract white and teal shapes, including a large white arrow pointing upwards and to the right.



## Conference Calendar

### APR

- 14-16 Men's Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron
- 15 Missional Workshop, St. Francis Spirituality Center, Tiffin
- 21-22 Ohio MCC Comforter Bash, Kidron Community Park, Kidron

### JUN

- 18 Social Justice Sunday

### JUL

- 3-6 MennoCon23, Mennonite Church USA convention, Kansas City, Missouri
- 7-8 Mennonite Church USA delegate assembly, Kansas City, Missouri
- 7-8 Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale, Mount Hope Event Center, Millersburg

### NOV

- 10-12 Pastor-Spouse Retreat, Deer Creek State Park Lodge, Mt. Sterling, Ohio

Sunday, June 18, as Social Justice Sunday, in recognition of Juneteenth the following day. (If June 18 does not work well for your congregation, please consider setting aside a different Sunday as Social Justice Sunday.) The team is preparing worship planning resources, available later this spring, to guide you in your planning.

**Youth Venture sends teens and young adults (ages 15-22) on short-term service and learning experiences** to engage with the work of God that is already taking place in communities around the globe. Hosted by churches and Mennonite Mission Network partners, Youth Venture teams will explore how Christians across the street and around the world are engaged in the work of reconciliation in their local contexts. Participants will learn about people making a difference in their local settings by confronting injustice and offering healing and hope.

Application deadline is April 15, 2023, for international locations and May 15, 2023, for domestic locations. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/MMNYouthVenture>. ■

## Back page briefings...

**Zion Mennonite Church in Archbold** is seeking a full-time collaborative ministry team pastor. A job description is available on the Ohio Conference website: <https://ohiomennoniteconference.org/news-media/pastor-openings>.

If you are interested in applying or learning more about this opportunity, please contact Regional Pastor Tony Doehrmann at

419-551-1107 or [ocrpwest@gmail.com](mailto:ocrpwest@gmail.com).

**Grace & Groundings, Ohio Conference's racial reconciliation resource team**, has compiled a list of resources for working at racial reconciliation. This resource list is available at <https://bit.ly/RacialReconciliationResources>.

Grace & Groundings also is inviting all Ohio Conference churches to set aside

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For more Ohio Conference news, visit the Ohio Conference website: [ohiomennoniteconference.org](http://ohiomennoniteconference.org)