

OHIO MENNONITE EVANGEL

News & Views of Ohio Conference

JUL/AUG 2023



ohiomennoniteconference.org

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Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale gives globally while staying close to home

All over the world people are hurting. From war-torn Ukraine to providing clean water in the Congo, and even closer to home where families in Appalachian areas struggle to thrive, people are hurting.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) understands the plight many families face every day. MCC is making an impact and helping those in need with a focus on biblical teachings such as John 3:17, which reads, "If anyone sees

his brother in need and fails to help, what evidence is there of God's love?"

MCC relies heavily on the compassion and giving of others to support its many programs, and one such event that has been a staple of fundraising over the decades has been the Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale.



Quilts and wood items will be sold by auction at the Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale, as well as many other items.

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Fund your local mission with a Ministry Grant

Do you have an idea for a ministry that could impact your community? Why not apply for a Ministry Grant?

The Ohio Conference Ministry Development Team (MDT) is accepting proposals from Conference congregations and related organizations for projects and mission initiatives. The MDT

has \$7,395 available for grants in 2023. The deadline to submit a grant proposal is **Friday, Aug. 4**. The MDT will consider all grant proposals at its August meeting.

Each summer since 2012, the Ministry Development Team has awarded Ministry Grants for a wide variety of local missions. For more information or to apply for a



grant, please see the Ohio Conference website: <http://bit.ly/MinistryGrants>. ■

EDITORIAL

What is God's invitation to us?

What is God's invitation to Ohio Conference for the next three years?

That question was part of the discussion at a recent joint meeting of the Ohio Conference Leadership Team and Ministry Development Team. The two teams spent time working with our consultant, Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi, as part of the Conference's review

process. The teams took time to consider Ohio Conference's current context, including opportunities and threats we face.

As you might expect, during the Leadership Team/Ministry Development Team discussion participants gave a variety of answers to that crucial question after some time for reflection.

The discernment process is by no means complete. Pastors and congregational delegates will be adding their voices to the conversation in the coming months. Please remember this discernment process in your prayers. Pray that we may be led by the Holy Spirit as we discern our path forward.

— ahl

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Ohio Mennonite Evangel is distributed to all households of Ohio Conference congregations, other interested individuals and church agencies.

Send subscription information and email address changes to the editor at ohioevangel@gmail.com.

Golf event to benefit Adriel

Save the date: Adriel will hold its annual benefit golf scramble Sept. 11 at Eagle Rock Golf Club in Defiance, Ohio. Proceeds benefit children in Northwest Ohio and throughout the state through Adriel's foster care and adoption, clinical services, family preservation, and training programs. For more information, contact Jennifer Butler at 419-906-0228 or email

foundation@adriel.org. ■



Monday September 11, 2023
Eagle Rock Golf Club
Defiance, Ohio

Fantastic prizes for the top 3 teams; 50/50 raffle, on the course game, raffle prizes and more!

For more information, contact Jennifer Butler at 419-906-0228 or email foundation@adriel.org.

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Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale

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This year's 58th annual Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale has a new date (one month earlier) and a new location (Mount Hope, Ohio) with a bevy of activities, entertainment, an auction and plenty of chances for people who aren't called to travel globally as missionaries to contribute in other ways.

The event begins **Friday, July 7**, with an evening open house beginning at 4 p.m. A variety of foods will be available, including the traditional Laotian egg rolls, barbecued chicken dinners, homemade ice cream, brats and sausage sandwiches, fresh fruit and fresh-squeezed lemonade. Patrons can peruse the many auction items. A large bake sale also begins at 4 p.m.

The evening's events will also include a gospel concert by John Schmid at 6:30 p.m.

The auction kicks into high gear **Saturday, July 8**, when patrons can fuel up for the big day with a full breakfast beginning at 7 a.m.

The main auction will begin at 9 a.m. Stunning hand-made quilts, Amish handcrafted furniture, power tools, outdoor furniture, and specialty items like a muse-

um-quality doll house, furniture, appliances and much more will be up for auction. Patrons will be able to bid in person or take advantage of online remote bidding.

Quilts and general auction items can be previewed Friday night at the event. In addition, there are select quilts and gift cards available as a "Buy It Now" option online, with these items available for purchase through July 6.

A Silent Auction will take place on both Friday and Saturday, featuring thousands of dollars in gift cards from local businesses and tourist locations.

While the adults support the auction, the kids can have fun with the exciting opportunities awaiting them. Children's games and activities, inflatables and even a children's auction are available for the youngsters.

Staffed solely by volunteers, the Relief Sale's proceeds go to Mennonite Central Committee, a relief, service and development agency of North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. MCC seeks to demonstrate God's love through committed women and



men who work among suffering people.

Admission and parking are free, and the entire event is wheelchair accessible in the air-conditioned 80,000-square-foot Mount Hope Event Center. The event is held rain or shine.

The Mount Hope Event Center is located at 8076 State Route 241, Millersburg, Ohio. **Please note:** Although the official address is listed as Millersburg, the event center is in Mount Hope.

A poster with the 2023 relief sale schedule is available at <https://bit.ly/2023OhioReliefSalePoster>.



A photo gallery of items which will be auctioned is available online at <https://www.auctionzip.com/Listings/3818778.html>. To register to bid online, see the Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale website: ohiomccreliefsale.org.

Run 4 Relief set for July 8

The Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale 5K/1K Run will take place Saturday, July 8. Both races will

start at the Mt. Hope Event Center. The 1K Fun Run will begin at 7:30 a.m., and the 5K Run will begin at 8 a.m.

Every participant will receive a T-shirt, and the top six overall runners will receive

an award. Age awards will also be given. All proceeds benefit a special project through Mennonite Central Committee. For more information or to register, go to <https://bit.ly/2023Run4Relief>.



RESOURCE CORNER

New resources are available for leadership training and faith formation

By Ann Leaman
Ohio Conference
Resource Advocate

In this column I would like to highlight two new sets of resources, one for leadership training and one for faith formation.

PRACTICAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING

In August Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) is beginning a new program called Practical Leadership Training. This program is designed to equip not only pastors, but also lay leaders, community leaders, and leaders of nonprofit organizations.

Practical Leadership Training will include modules focusing on four areas: **administration, leadership, contextual engagement** and **well-being**.

The program's training modules will be offered in a variety of formats: in-person seminars or full-day leadership clinics; one-session webinars; four-session online workshops; or six-week synchronous online short courses.

The following is a list of course modules which will be offered this summer and fall:

- **Embracing Your Leadership Identity** | In-person seminar: Aug. 5
- **Liderazgo que edifica** | Four-session online workshop

(Spanish): Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26

- **Leadership Practices for Spiritual Vitality** | Four-session online workshop: Sept. 7, 14, 21, 28
- **Guide Your Congregation through Polarization** | Webinar: Sept. 20
- **Practicing Resilience in Response to Trauma** | In-person seminar: Sept. 29

- **Leading Congregations in Transition** | Online synchronous short course: Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24; Nov. 7
- **Intercultural Inclusion: From Symbolic to**

Shared Power | Four-session online workshop: Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25

- **Peacemaking through Curious Dialogue** | Webinar: Oct. 26
- **Practices and Principles for Effective Boards** | Four-session online workshop: Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22
- **Creating a Healthy Congregational Culture** | Webinar: Nov. 29

AMBS developed this leadership training program after a listening process with church leaders in 2021, in which seminary leaders asked, "What is the most meaningful thing that AMBS can do to support current and future leaders for the church?" Many leaders shared that while seminary had prepared them

well for Bible study, preaching and pastoral care, they needed practical leadership skills to meet challenges resulting from the pandemic, polarization, shifting church commitments and an unpredictable future.

For more information about Practical Leadership Training or to register, see the AMBS website: <https://www.ambs.edu/practical-leadership-training>.

FAITH FORMATION RESOURCES

I have written about The Soil and the Seed Project in previous columns. This month I would like to highlight a new set of resources that these creators are offering free of charge.

The Soil and the Seed Project creates music, art, and "little liturgies" that follow the liturgical year. These resources can be used for at-home faith formation. The goal of the Soil and the Seed Project is "to help us welcome the seed of the Good News together as it takes root in our lives." The resources are



This program is designed to equip not only pastors, but also lay leaders, community leaders, and leaders of nonprofit organizations.



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GRACE & GROUNDINGS

God's kingdom is bigger

By Kevin Himes

In Acts 10, Peter had a dream — a weird dream. Foods that any God-fearing Jew knew to be unclean were no longer off limits. It's like a vegetarian dreaming of bacon high fiving a cheeseburger while God says, "It's okay to eat meat now!" Although it seemed ridiculous at the time, Peter's dream ultimately paved the way for him, a Jew, to see a Roman centurion named Cornelius as a fellow brother in the Lord instead of an unclean Gentile.

God, the mastermind behind the dream, the one who overcame cultural barriers for Peter, is doing the same work today. Just because people don't look like us, share our last names, eat the same foods, or dress like us, doesn't give us license to look down our nose at them. Friends, the kingdom of God is a rich tapestry of people of all colors and cultures. We are, in a sense, the coat of many colors



that Jacob gifted to his son Joseph. Each color, each people, is sewn into the robe of God's kingdom.

God's kingdom is bigger than a cappella singing or contemporary Christian hits. It includes Black gospel taught by ear, and soulful African American spirituals. God's kingdom is bigger than the white faces and voices behind many of the pulpits in Ohio Conference. It includes dedicated preachers like Vikki Pruitte-Sorrells faithfully preaching the Word at Lee Heights Community Church in Cleveland. God's kingdom is bigger than a white middle-class perspective. It includes the

stories of minorities who experience the world very differently than others do, stories of pain, fear, and oppression. Don't let those stories go unnoticed. Reach out and companion those who hurt; show the world what righteousness — justice in Jesus — looks like.

Kevin Himes, pastor of Salem Mennonite Church in Kidron, is a member of Grace & Groundings, the racial reconciliation resource team of the Ohio Conference. To learn more about Grace & Groundings, see the Ohio Conference website: <https://bit.ly/RacialReconciliationResources>. ■

"Friends, the kingdom of God is a rich tapestry of people of all colors and cultures. We are, in a sense, the coat of many colors that Jacob gifted to his son Joseph."

Resources

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a gift to the church, given freely to any individual or community who wants them.

Now available is a new set of resources, *Volume 7/Ordinary Time*, designed to be used from June through November. Volume 7 includes 24 songs, read-

ings, "little liturgies," and artwork. Many of the songs are based directly on scripture passages, such as "Love Must Be Sincere," based on Romans 12:9-21, and "Teach Me, O LORD," based on Psalm 119:33-37.

To download these resources or to request a physical copy, go to <https://www.thesoilandtheseedproject.org/vol-7>. You also can listen to samples of the songs at this web address. ■

Mennonite Men to hold half-day retreat

Mennonite Men will hold a Men's Retreat Saturday, Aug. 19, at Pathways Retreat, 309 Hackett Road, Goshen, Indiana.

The theme of this half-day retreat will be "Living that Matters for Men." Steve Thomas, US coordinator for Mennonite Men, will be the retreat leader.

This retreat draws from the book *Living That Matters: Honest*

Conversations for Men of Faith. Each participant will receive a copy of the book.

For more information, please see the event flier at <https://bit.ly/2023LivingThatMatters>.

Registration is due by **Aug. 5**. To register, go to bit.ly/pathways_Living_That_Matters.



Living that Matters for Men: A half-day retreat

Men, what kind of man do you want to be and how can you live a life that matters? In this half-day retreat, we will...

- examine the scripts we've been given,
- explore the nature of healthy masculinity,
- reconsider our purpose and roles in life.

This retreat draws from *Living that Matters: Honest Conversations for Men of Faith* (Herald Press, 2023), which each participant will receive.

Why

- Following this experience, participants will...
- Recognize toxic and healthy ways of being men.
 - Know their purpose and important roles they play in life.
 - Have a safe-friendly resource for use in a men's group.

When:

8:30–12:00 Saturday, August 19

(begins with light breakfast)

Where:

Pathways Retreat, 309 Hackett Road,

Goshen, IN 46528

Cost:

Suggested donation of \$30 to \$50

(price includes book *Living That Matters*)

Registration:

Register by August 5 at:

bit.ly/pathways_Living_That_Matters

Limited to first 12 registrations.



Leader

Steve Thomas, US coordinator for Mennonite Men, has worked with men for over 30 years as a pastor and retreat leader. He completed the Male Rites of Passage with Richard Rohr in 2003, co-founded Indiana Michigan Males of Human, and has formed numerous men's groups. He is co-editor of *Peaceful at Heart: Adolescent Reflections on Healthy Masculinity* (Institute of Mennonite Studies and Resource Publications, 2019) and co-author of *Living That Matters: Honest Conversations for Men of Faith* (Herald Press, 2023).



MCC sets goal for School Kit Challenge

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is holding a School Kit Challenge this August.

The challenge: Help 10,000 kids attend school by donating 10,000 school kits during the month of August.

To assist in this challenge, MCC is offering a free school kit activity resource for Sunday school and vacation Bible

school students. To learn more about the challenge or to order the school kit activity resource, go to <https://mcc.org/school-kit-challenge>.



MMN adds three short-term service locations

Interested in short-term service? Mennonite Mission Network's Service Opportunities with Our Partners (SOOP) offers flexible service terms for individuals ages 25+ and families of all ages.

Mennonite Mission Network has added three locations to the existing 45 locations across the United States. New service locations include Amigo Centre, Sturgis, Michigan; Open Door

Mennonite Church, Jackson, Mississippi; and Menno Haven Camp and Retreat Center, Tiskilwa, Illinois. Learn more at <https://www.mennonitemission.net/Serve/SOOP>.

ABOUT PEOPLE

Pastoral notes

On June 4, 2023, Conference Minister Dick Barrett officiated at Alvis Pettker's ordination at Friendship Mennonite Church in Bedford Heights, Ohio. Dick brought the message, titled "Come, Follow Me!" from John 21:1-19.

Alvis presented the children's moment, focusing on the work of the Holy Spirit and highlighting three of his personal art pieces that have been important to him in sensing the Spirit's presence in his life. Alvis also officiated communion.



Alvis Pettker was ordained for Christian ministry on June 4 at Friendship Mennonite Church in Bedford Heights. Pictured left to right are Conference Minister Dick Barrett, Alvis Pettker and Ruth Pettker.

The worship service was followed by a potluck meal where Alvis was given two gifts

from the congregation, a beautiful piece of pottery and a commentary set of the Hebrew Bible. ■

James Robert 'Bob' Lemon

James Robert "Bob" Lemon, who served as pastor of Owl Creek Mennonite Church in Lucasville for almost 30 years, died May 19 at his home in Heritage Green in Kidron. He was 89 years old.

Bob was born Sept. 2, 1933, in Paint Valley, just outside of Millersburg in Holmes County, to the late Harvey "Jim" and Mabel Rosalie (Coleman) Lemon. He married Dorcas Laverne Kandel on June 26, 1954, at Martins Mennonite Church in Orrville; she preceded him in death on Feb. 1, 2021.

In late December of 1967, Bob resigned from the Will-Burt Company after 12 years of employment, and the Lemon family of six moved to Beaver, Ohio. Bob served as pastor of the Owl Creek Mennonite

Church, now the Lighthouse. He preached his final sermon almost three decades later on Nov. 24, 1996.

Bob was a member of Martins Mennonite Church and later attended Kidron Mennonite Church after moving back to Wayne County. Bob helped with the Heritage Green Condominium Association and volunteered at MCC.

Surviving are two sons, Robert (Anita) Lemon of Worden, Illinois, and Michael (Sherri) Lemon of Apple Creek; two daughters, Julia (Darrel) Shoup of Orrville, and Joann (Rodney) Bapst of Lucasville, Ohio; nine grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; and two brothers, John and Don. He was preceded in death by two brothers, Earl and Tom.



A memorial service was held at Martins Mennonite Church on May 25 following a private burial at Martins Mennonite Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to Aultman Hospice (Aultman Foundation, Hospice Support, 2600 Sixth St. SW, Canton OH 44710) or the Kidron Fire Department (PO Box 155, Kidron OH 44636). His full obituary is available at <https://bit.ly/BobLemon>. ■

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary

ELKHART, Indiana (Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary) — **Anna Ressler** of Kidron, Ohio, was honored during the Commencement Service of Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), Elkhart, Indiana, on April 29, 2023. She also was selected to receive this year's Award for Excellence in Biblical Interpretation from the seminary's Bible Department.

Ressler anticipates completing her Master of Divinity with a major in Pastoral Ministry in August 2023. She is pursuing a pastoral ministry assignment.

She previously earned a Bachelor of Science with a major in Psychology from Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Her home congregation is Sonnenberg Mennonite Church in Kidron, a congregation of the Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church

USA. While studying in Elkhart, she has attended Sunnyside Mennonite Church in Elkhart, a congregation of Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference of Mennonite Church USA. Her parents are **Barb** and **Winfred Ressler** of Kidron.

Twenty graduates were honored during AMBS's Commencement Service, which was held April 29 in the seminary's Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount and livestreamed. Elizabeth Soto Albrecht, DMin, an author, former seminary professor and chaplain-interpreter, gave the commencement address.

The graduating class comprised 12 men and eight women from five countries — Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and the United States. Ten of the graduates completed part or all of their seminary studies



Anna Ressler

at a distance. Seven of the graduates who received the MA: Theology and Global Anabaptism made up the first cohort of Ethiopian students to complete the program entirely from Ethiopia through a partnership between AMBS and Meserete Kristos Seminary in Bishoftu/Debre Zeit that began in 2019. ■

Bluffton University

Two students from Ohio Conference congregations earned degrees from Bluffton University this spring. The university's commencement ceremony took place Saturday, May 6.

More than 200 students took part in Bluffton's 123rd ceremony including traditional undergraduate students, degree-

completion graduates, and business and education graduate students. Kathy (Gaines '78) Carr, retired principal and recipient of Bluffton's Lifetime Service Award, shared the Commencement address.

Eli Grieser of Wauseon, Ohio, earned bachelor's degrees in business administration and

marketing from Bluffton University. Eli is a member of Zion Mennonite Church.

Maggie Hartzler of Orrville, Ohio, earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Bluffton University. She was also named a Pi Delta Society member. Maggie is a member of Orrville Mennonite Church. ■

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Hesston College

A student from an Ohio Conference congregation was a part of the 2023 graduating class at Hesston College. The graduates received their diplomas during the college's 113th commence-

ment service on Saturday, May 13. The featured speaker was Riccardo Harris, executive director of Wichita GEAR UP at Wichita State University.

Jack Logan Shingler of Creston, Ohio, earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Management from Hesston. His home congregation is Crown Hill Mennonite Church in Rittman. ■

Eastern Mennonite University

Eight students from Ohio Conference congregations earned degrees from Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) this spring.

EMU awarded 348 total degrees at its 105th Annual Commencement on Sunday, May 7, 2023.

Rebekah A. Amstutz of Kidron earned a bachelor's degree in environmental sustainability with a concentration in environmental science. Her home congregation is Sonnenberg Mennonite Church in Kidron.

Ethan David Ball of Columbiana earned a bachelor's degree

in engineering. His home congregation is Midway Mennonite Church in Columbiana.

Anna Grace Hoover of New Carlisle earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry. Her home congregation is Huber Mennonite Church in New Carlisle.

Caleb D. Hostetler of Rittman earned a bachelor's degree in engineering. His home congregation is Crown Hill Mennonite Church in Rittman.

Anya Jae Kauffman of Archbold earned a bachelor's degree in history and social science. Her home congregation is Zion

Mennonite Church in Archbold.

Christiana E. Murray of Smithville earned a bachelor's degree in art. Her home congregation is Oak Grove Mennonite Church in Smithville.

Luke G. Wheeler of Stryker earned a bachelor's degree in engineering. His home congregation is Lockport Mennonite Church in Stryker.

Andrew Jonte Zook of Canton earned a bachelor's degree in organizational leadership. His home congregation is First Mennonite Church in Canton. ■

MC USA Executive Board peace and justice ministries to include Mennonite Creation Care Network

ELKHART, Indiana (Mennonite Church USA) — Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) Executive Board is strengthening its ongoing commitment to creation care and climate justice by expanding its Peace & Justice ministries to include Mennonite Creation Care Network (MCCN).

The transition is the result of a mutual agreement with Everence®, an agency of MC USA

that has previously provided administrative services for MCCN and continues to provide financial support, and Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College, which has managed the daily operations since its formation in 2005. The transition process will begin Aug. 1, 2023.

Mennonite Church USA Executive Board is creating a perma-

nent, part-time staff position for a climate justice coordinator to oversee the work of MCCN and help to shape its future. Jennifer Halteman Schrock, director of MCCN since 2016, will step down from her part-time role on Sept. 30, 2023.

To learn more, see the Mennonite Church USA website: <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/news/mccn>. ■

Conference Calendar

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
- 15-16 Ohio MCC Bike Ride, London, Ohio

AUG

- 16 Credentialed Leaders Meeting with Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi, Upper Sandusky

SEPT

- 19 Fall Delegate Cluster Meeting, Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty
- 21 Fall Delegate Cluster Meeting, Lee Heights Community Church, Cleveland
- 26 Fall Delegate Cluster Meeting, Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold
- 28 Fall Delegate Cluster Meeting, Wooster Mennonite Church

OCT

- 2 Fall Delegate Cluster Meeting, online
- 12 Leadership Team and Ministry Development Team Meeting, Upper Sandusky

NOV

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

is updated each week. Check <https://bit.ly/MEAJobBoard> to see job openings at MEA-affiliated schools, colleges and seminaries.

Ohio Conference will hold the 2023 Pastor-Spouse Retreat Nov.

10-12 at Deer Creek State Park Lodge and Conference Center in Mt. Sterling, Ohio. Registration is due by Sept. 1, 2023. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/2023Pastor-SpouseBrochure>. To register, go to <https://bit.ly/2023Pastor-SpouseRetreat>.

The 2023-2024 Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) pastor salary guidelines

are now posted on the MC USA website at <https://bit.ly/PastorSalaryGuidelines>. Each April, the MC USA Church Vitality office and [Everence](#) collaborate to update the guidelines, which aid pastors, congregations, pastoral search committees and conferences in negotiating fair compensation for pastors and conference ministers. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/2023-24SalaryGuidelinesUpdate>.

Back page briefings...

Haroldo Nunes, executive director of Open Arms Hispanic Ministries, has announced his resignation, effective at the end of July 2023. He plans to move to Florida to be closer to family.

Open Arms is seeking a new executive director. Please see <https://open-arms.us/ed/> for details. A PDF with the complete job description is available at <https://bit.ly/OpenArmsExecDir>.

The Mennonite Education Agency Job Board

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