

Perspective



Loving God, Loving Others,
Making Disciples of Jesus Christ

www.ohiomennoniteconference.org

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Cluster meetings begin Jan. 9

Winter cluster meetings for Ohio Conference delegates will take place during January. Each meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. and last about two hours.

Locations are as follows:

- Jan. 9 — Tedrow Mennonite Church, Wauseon
- Jan. 11 — Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville
- Jan. 16 — Crown Hill Mennonite Church, Rittman
- Jan. 18 — Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty
- Jan. 22 — Online meeting via Zoom

Please register for the cluster meeting that you plan to attend. Register online at <https://bit.ly/2024WinterClusterMeetings>.

Please join us for the Winter Read

In less than a month, the Ohio Conference Winter Read will begin. We would love to have you join us for conversation about the book *Not Quite Fine: Mental Health, Faith and Showing Up for One Another* by Carlene Hill Byron. Discussion leaders will be Emiley Shenk and Darin Nissley.

Winter Read discussions will take place on Zoom on five Thursday evenings: Jan. 11, Jan. 18, Feb. 1, Feb. 8 and Feb. 15. Sessions will begin at 6:30 p.m. and end at 8 p.m. If you are unable to participate in all five sessions, don't worry. Registrants will be able to view recordings of sessions.

Registration is free, but participants need to purchase their own copy of the book. It is available from the MennoMedia website: <https://bit.ly/NotQuiteFine>. To register, go to <https://bit.ly/OhioConferenceEventRegistration>.

Register now for Women in Leadership Retreat

The biennial Ohio Conference **Women in Leadership Retreat** is quickly approaching on Feb. 2-3, 2024. This year's retreat will be held at the Lial Renewal Center in Whitehouse, Ohio, and will feature Jewel Gingerich Longenecker, dean of Lifelong Learning at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. She will lead partici-

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.

Safety perspective

Safe Church, Mennonite Church USA's newly formed abuse prevention ministry, now has a webpage available on the MC USA website: <https://bit.ly/MCUSASafeChurch>. The webpage offers resources to help faith communities keep children, youth and vulnerable adults safe from all abuse. Among other materials, the webpage contains a major update to the Circle of Grace curriculum: <https://bit.ly/MCUSACircleofGrace>.

Please distribute Perspective copies to:

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

pants in exploring what it means to claim the fullness of their identity as leaders created in God's image.

This retreat is for **ALL** women – those serving in pastoral or congregational roles, as well as for women who want to explore possibilities for using their gifts in the church. The registration deadline will be here soon (Jan. 12) and spaces are limited. Visit ohiomennoniteconference.org for more information.

Podcast episodes to focus on shalom

Grace & Groundings, Ohio Conference's racial reconciliation resource team, is planning a podcast series focusing on social righteousness and shalom. The series will begin in January, with plans to publish one episode each month through May.

Each episode will focus on a different topic designed to draw listeners into deeper conversations about issues of social righteousness and shalom. In addition to an introductory episode, topics will include Ukrainian refugees, food deserts, how to deal with race, and homelessness. All episodes will be shared as part of the Ohio Conference Cast podcast: <https://bit.ly/OhioConferenceCast>.

Prepare for ACA by reading *Divine Gravity*

The ACA Planning Committee is encouraging all Annual Conference Assembly (ACA) participants to read Meghan Larissa Good's book *Divine Gravity* **prior to ACA in March**. Delegates will receive a copy of the book at winter cluster meetings. Everyone who has read the book prior to ACA will be entered into a prize drawing at ACA. Please see the enclosed poster for details.

Spiritual renewal program offered for clergy

The Center for Clergy Renewal (<https://bit.ly/CCRProgram>) offers spiritual renewal to Christian pastors through ecumenical immersion experiences into the life of Holy Wisdom Monastery, near Madison, Wisconsin, and an ongoing community of monastic resources and support that extends beyond the walls of Holy Wisdom. The program offers early and mid-career clergy the opportunity to nourish their spiritual center by developing life-long, covenantal relationships between clergy peers. [Applications](#) for the 2024 cohort are due by Jan. 31 (including references), and pastors are asked to contribute \$600 from their continuing education budgets over the course of the two-year program, if they are able.

Deficit increases during November

During November giving to the Ohio Conference was lower than expenses for the third month in a row.

Receipts during November totaled \$20,839, including \$20,515 in giving from congregations. Expenses for the month were \$23,334, resulting in a deficit of \$2,495 for the month. After the first eight months of the 2023-24 fiscal year, the year-to-date operating balance stands at -\$44,242.

ACA perspective

Registration materials for Annual Conference Assembly (ACA) will be sent to all congregations next week. ACA will take place March 1-2 at Sharon Mennonite Church in Plain City.

Delegate perspective

A note for all congregations: Please make sure that your congregation has an alternate delegate in place in case one of your regular delegates is unable to attend Annual Conference Assembly (ACA). These alternate delegates also should attend a winter cluster meeting.

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Delegates are welcome to submit resolutions for consideration by the delegate body at ACA. Please note that all proposed resolutions should be submitted to the Ohio Conference office by **Feb. 9**.

Seminary perspective

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary is offering training modules for pastors and lay leaders through its Practical Leadership Training program. Please see the enclosed Practical Leadership Training flyer to learn more about upcoming training modules.

Perspective deadlines

Jan. 9 for Jan. 11 issue
Jan. 23 for Jan. 25 issue
