

Menno-Life



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Despite the heat and humidity, the annual church end-of-summer picnic August 28 at the village park was a success. Chatting over dinner are (from left) Judy Steiner Vicki Laird and Alice Ruth Ramseyer.

Following your inner voice

Almost daily we hear of natural disasters, violence, war, or a myriad of injustices. Last week I heard Diane Rehm, host of the radio talk show, The Diane Rehm Show, say something to the effect, "There is no good news to report or discuss today." She hit a nerve. I often feel overwhelmed by the evil that makes the news. Many of us feel totally powerless, incapable of responding in a way that will make a difference. That's why, when I heard Fran Core's story, I asked her to share it in the Menno-Life. It's a story of listening to your heart and responding with joy and determination. It's a story of taking a small courageous step when it would be much easier to wait it out until the discomfort passes.

-- Pastor Wanda

By Fran Core

While sitting in church after the Milwaukee and Dallas shootings, my heart was crying, "Is there anything I can do to help these situations of so much hate and misunderstanding?"

"Go and worship in a black church in Lima," I heard.

I had lived in Lima Shawnee for 40 years and was active in Church Women United and Mizpah community center for a few years. I've also been an member of Lima family YMCA for years. I have several black women acquaintances in some of my classes. I asked one whom I have talked with before about the shootings and how she copes with it all, if I could visit her church.

So on Sunday, July 31, I went to the Fourth Street Missionary Baptist Church in Lima. What a friendly, welcoming church and what a good experience I had. I knew from CWU what to expect from their choir and singing. So I found myself clapping and swaying to the music while singing praises to God. I also found out that one of the ladies there used to teach at Whittier school with Sally Lehman (mother of Mary Edmiston) and I believe, had visited First Mennonite. She currently teaches the adult Sunday school class.

Anyway, I'm thinking I will return periodically to keep this avenue open and especially, I'd be happy to have a friend(s) to ride along with me.

Happy birthday to:

Ruth Naylor, 82, Sept. 3

Betty Engle, 96, Sept. 13

Elfrieda Ramseyer, 82, Sept. 21

Willadene Keeney, 92, Sept. 24

Joanne Niswander, 87, Sept. 24

Alice Ruth Ramseyer, 87, Sept. 27

New addresses

Darrel and Mary Yoder have moved to Maple Crest Senior Living Center, NO22.

Rosalie Dosh has moved to Maple Crest Senior Living Center, NO29.

Helen Winkler has moved to Mennonite Memorial Home, Apartment 310, and her new phone number is 419-369-4630.

Getting to know the congregation

Editor's note: For many of us, Labor Day weekend signals the unofficial end of summer and the beginning of the new school year. For others, it's just another day of work.

Although technically, Labor Day honors the American labor movement, it can also be seen as a day to honor -- very simply -- those who labor. That includes all of us. It's a day to honor the work that we do, because Jesus told us that all work is honorable if done honestly and well. It's a day to rest from our work, yes, but also a day to reflect on the worthiness of our daily efforts. We know when we do good work.

With this issue of the Menno-Life, we begin a new series in which we will briefly profile those among us, focusing on the work they do now or have done in the past. We'll touch all ages and all areas of work.

We're hoping you'll all help with this, so if we don't approach you with these questions and you're willing to be included, please let us know at fmc@bluffton.edu.

Let's get acquainted

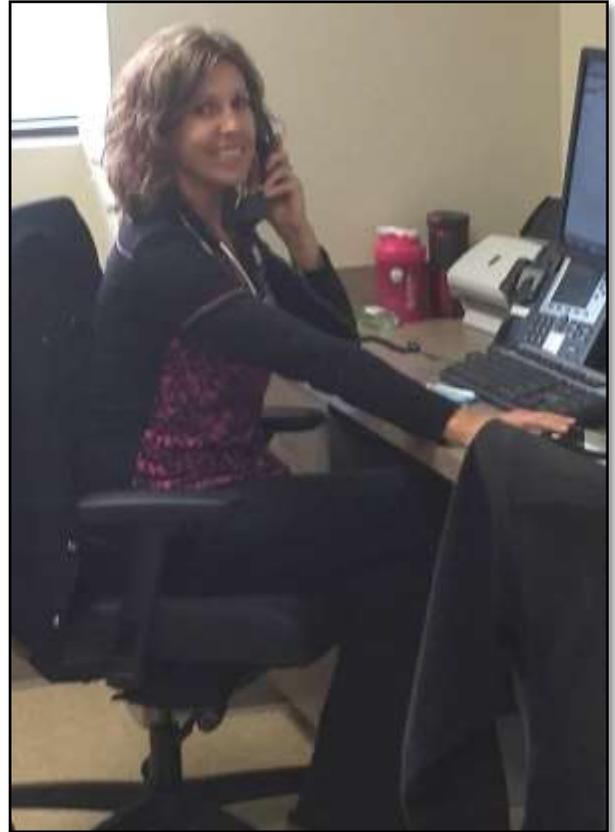
Jennifer Benroth

Where do you work? St. Rita's Surgical Associates

Describe your job. I am an RN. I prepare patients for surgery by making sure they have completed all the appropriate pre-op testing and that the test results are all within safe limits for surgery. I enter surgery orders for physicians and order testing when needed. I also check patients in for office visits and answer patient phone calls.

What do you like most about your job? I enjoy seeing patients through the surgery process, from their first consultation to their post op visits. I like developing a rapport with patients and making sure they feel cared for.

Who are your family members at FMC? Husband, Darby; sons, Bodey and Barrett; parents, Willis and Betty Sommer; grandmother-in-law, Joan Dailey.



Fred Steiner

Where do you work? As owner of the Bluffton and Ada Icons, both websites, I work out of my house most of the time, but also go wherever news takes place. That could be the school, town hall, downtown, university or other places like that.

Describe your job. The Icon's tagline is "It's where Bluffton/Ada get its news." That means that I constantly look for news-related items, photos, columns and features that might interest views on either Icon. I also work with businesses that advertise or are interested in advertising on the Icons.

The Icon concept is that these are both daily newspapers but are only online; there's no print version. It's community

journalism, meaning the focus is on the school district of either Bluffton or Ada. It's not a straight 8 to 5 job, but since I work mostly from my home that's okay.

What do you like most about your job? First, I can work at home. I can talk with interesting people about their interesting lives. With my interest in photography, I can photograph and post everything from straight news photos to feature photos, art photos, history photos ... the entire

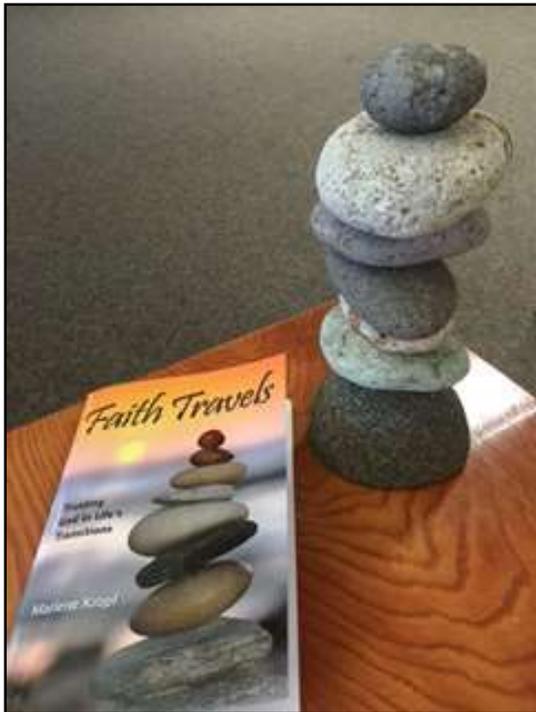
range. I find that if I buy someone a cup of coffee I can ask just about any question I want, although sometimes the person interviewed says, "It's not for publication." Even so, it's fun to pry interesting stories from people. Actually, I collect many of those stories and some way or another many of these stories end up on the Icon.

Who are your family members at FMC? First of all, my great-grandmother, Barbara Amstutz Althaus, was a charter member of First Mennonite Church, so my reach goes back to the beginnings of the congregation. My wife, Mary, also has a long family history with this congregation. That makes life interesting sometimes and not-so-interesting at other times.

An Invitation from Mennonite Women

Change and transition -- whether minor or major -- affect all of us and are rarely easy.

How do we come to understand how God works in our midst? How do we understand who we are in the process? We invite women of all ages to our monthly meetings for an evening of learning and fellowship. This year we will be using the devotional book commissioned by Mennonite Women USA and Canada called, "Faith Travels: Trusting God in Life's Transitions," by Marlene Kropf.



Marlene will take us on a journey with the Israelites as they transitioned from Egypt to the Promised Land and also with the Celtic Christians. Together we hope to find ways to "face our own transitions with courage, resilience and hope."

We look forward to seeing each of you the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. from September to May. Look for a detailed program in your church mailbox. Let's explore transitions -- from endings, through the messy middle, and on to new beginnings together.

Mennonite Women officers include Judy Buller, Lori Nester, Mary Anne Moser, Mary Ina Hooley and Joyce Hostetler.

-- Mary Ina Hooley

FIRST Night returning in September

FIRST Night returns this month with a few changes, while hopefully maintaining the spirit of the original gatherings. FIRST Night's purpose is to provide a midweek intergenerational gathering as part of the relationship-building ministry of FMC. It is an opportunity for us to hear about the lives of each other, sometimes those we may not otherwise know very well. This may occur through conversations around the table or during the program.

We will meet five Tuesdays during the 2016-17 church year: Sept. 27, Oct. 25, Jan. 24, Feb. 28, and March 28. Dinner will begin at 6 p.m., with a 15-minute or so program to follow at 6:30. Those attending should bring their own table service, which will decrease waste, eliminate the need for table setters and shorten clean-up time.

There have been many ideas offered to simplify our meals and the efforts of volunteers. We may ask if Sunday school classes or other groups might bring desserts for a given meal. There may be a soup night, where people would sign up to bring soup, salad, bread, cheese, fruit, with no cooking in the kitchen. Other possibilities are to purchase some pre-cooked food from GFS for two meals, such as lasagna and sandwiches using their BBQ chicken and pork, and we hope to continue some

previous favorites like the ham loaf and baked potato meals. Questions and suggestions should be directed to Susie Gratz, chair.

Music ensemble rehearsals begin September 7

Music ensembles begin Wednesday, Sept. 7. Please consider offering your musical gifts to this important part of worship for our congregation and encourage others to join. We welcome new additions to the ensembles and will greatly enjoy the return of former members.

- Chancel Choir (adults of all ages) will begin on Wednesday, Sept. 7 from 7-8 p.m., sanctuary (Mark Suderman, director)
- Adult and Youth (Grades 7-12) Bells - both begin on Wednesday, Sept. 7 at 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. respectively, assembly room (Ray Raeburn, director)
- Cherub Choir (ages 3-grade 1) will begin on Wednesday, Sept. 7 from 6-6:30 p.m., children's choir room. (Laura Hartzler, director) *Parents of 3-year-olds are encouraged to come to the first few rehearsals.*
- Jubilate (Grades 2 - 5) will begin on Wednesday, Sept. 7 from 6:45-7:30 p.m., children's choir room (Laura Hartzler, director)
- Youth choir (6th grade and up) will begin on Sunday, Sept. 11 from 8:30-9:15 a.m., children's choir room (Laura Hartzler, director)

Youth groups wrap up summer activities

In August, the youth groups soaked up the last days of summer and said goodbyes to friends who graduated from high school and left to pursue the next steps in life. We ate ice cream and talked about our dreams, goals, and fears for the next school year.

We also have the Orlando youth convention on our minds: Our first fundraiser of the year was held on August 28 where we hosted a pancake breakfast. We were able to raise \$743 to put towards our costs. Thank you to everyone who helped with the breakfast and came out to support us!



We also look forward to our regular youth group meetings this coming year. SHYF will be learning about apocalyptic literature with the Generation Why curriculum "Apocalypse When?: Daniel and Revelation."

JHYF will be studying the Fast Lane series from MennoMedia

called "Challenging Racism." We will incorporate our lessons with an ongoing art project and will be doing some service work around the church.

Finally, I want to announce our youth sponsors for this year. Carrie Mast will be sponsoring the JHYF once again and the SHYF are welcoming Rhonda Winstead and Walt Paquin as sponsors. We still need a lot of help for both junior and senior high. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor or want more information, please contact Shannon Thiebeau (fmc.shannon@bluffton.edu).

-- Shannon Thiebeau

School kits at FMC

School kits and supplies are coming in. We have about 70 completed kits, and supplies for about 20 more. Can we double that amount? Supply lists and bags are by the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. (The bag supply is down somewhat, so we could use more bag sewers. Some pre-cut kits are available, along with some donated fabric.) **A reminder – rulers need to be flexible (bendable, without breaking in shipping.)*

-- Jean Miller and Sue Schaaf

Fifty years later, Abebe reflects on receiving a school kit

From MCC News: Zenebe Abebe, current MCC Great Lakes Executive Director, received an MCC school kit as a child in Ethiopia. Abebe points to receiving the school kit many years ago as one of the pivotal moments in his young life.

Zenebe Abebe remembers clearly receiving an MCC school kit when he was a second grade student growing up in Ethiopia. And along with the items – pencils, a ruler, notebooks, an eraser and a pencil sharpener – he remembers the words of his teacher. “Make these things useful,” she said.

“It signaled to me to be a good student. They gave me these tools and I should go and use them,” he said. “It changed my life in many ways.”

Fifty years later, Abebe retired from his role as Executive Director for MCC Great Lakes at the end of July, a position he held for the past five years.

After receiving his first school kit, Abebe went on to attend Mennonite grade school, middle school and high school in Ethiopia before moving to the United States and attending Hesston College and Goshen College. He eventually earned both his master’s and doctorate degrees.

After working in higher education for many years, the opportunity to work for MCC became a reality. “One day it clicked that now I am part of sending these school kits like the one I received as a child,” Abebe said. “It’s circled around and come back that now I am doing the same thing that someone has done for me. This is one of the best examples of sustainable community development.”

For Abebe, receiving that school kit so many years ago impacted the rest of his life. “A school kit contains more than a pencil,” said Abebe. “The inspiration and empowerment that comes with it changes your life.”

FMC to provide snacks to Rally Point Youth Center

Rally Point Youth Center is an after-school ministry to Lima’s youth and supported in various ways by the area Mennonite churches. Jared Diller serves as the director and many volunteers spend time with the youth for tutoring, mentoring, recreation, Bible study and other activities.

Coordinated through Mennonite Women, volunteers from First Mennonite Church will again provide snacks for these youth after school on the first, third and fifth Monday afternoons of each month through the school year, as we have done in the past.

If you are willing to support Rally Point’s ministry with a snack, see additional information and sign-up in the fellowship hall. Questions can be addressed to Louise Matthews.