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*If possible, please include blurbs from weLink (as applicable) in your church bulletins and/or newsletters. Thank you!*

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## Conference prayers

*Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (Colossians 1:15-17)*—Today's Sip of Scripture from Mennonite Media at [www.thirdway.com/scripture/](http://www.thirdway.com/scripture/)

Please pray for the congregation at **Maple River Mennonite**, Brutus, Mich., as they grieve the tragic loss of their pastor, **Rudy Kuyten**, who was killed July 10 in a car accident near Kalkaska, Mich. Rudy was originally from the Netherlands. From 1960 to 1994, he served as a missionary on the island of Hokkaido, Japan, for the Reformed Church in America, running coffee house ministries and helping establish a church. He also was a woodcarver. Please remember in prayer Rudy's wife—Eraina—and family. A memorial service will be held at the church in Brutus at **3 p.m. on Saturday, July 28**.

Condolences may be sent to Eraina Kuyten, Marina Bay S, #401, 2515 Harrison Ave., Cheboygan, MI 49721, and to Maple River Mennonite, c/o Pat Brubacher, 8755 Woodland Rd., Brutus, MI 49716.

Lift up **Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC)** as they mourn the loss of their conference minister and administrator **Miriam Martin**, who died July 3. She had served the conference for 16 years. Miriam was recognized for her service to the church, including her work on the Transformation Team forming Mennonite Church USA and on the Mennonite Church General Board (prior to Mennonite Church USA). She was a friend and mentor to many people.

Miriam became ill on May 15 from a lodged gall stone that created additional complications. She was part of a family decision not to continue medical treatments after diagnosis of additional medical setback. A memorial celebration of life service was held July 21 at Ridgeview Mennonite, Gordonville, Pa. Condolences may be sent to Bob Martin at [rmartin53@juno.com](mailto:rmartin53@juno.com) or 1465 Union Grove Rd., East Earl, PA 17519.

The conference staff members give thanks **for your expressions of concern and support** regarding James Waltner's illness/treatment and the plan for covering some of Nancy Kauffmann's responsibilities during her sabbatical.

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## Conference Assembly 2007—follow up

**From Sherm Kauffman, executive conference minister:** This is a huge THANK YOU for the all the kind words of affirmation and the special PIE break at annual sessions recognizing my years of service among you all. You folks have been very patient and affirming, and this has been a wonderful place to live out my call to ministry. A special thanks to those who baked the pies and were not able to enjoy the fruit of their labors. Many blessings to all.

**Recordings of both the worship and worshipful work sessions** are now available to be checked out from the office.

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## Finances

**2006–07 year-end report.** Thank you so much to all of you who contributed what you discerned was possible for you to support the ministry of IN-MI Conference! Thirty-six congregations increased their contributions by more than \$50, and 24 decreased their contributions by more than \$50. Unfortunately, the increases did not match the decreases, so we will need to make some choices about how to prioritize our work for the year ahead.

Congregational contributions for this past year—\$503,358—were down \$16,924, or 3.25 percent, from the previous year. (In 2006, we had seen a nearly 2 percent increase compared to 2005.) Congregations seem to have changed their remittance patterns to a monthly or quarterly sequence, and we appreciate the more consistent way that you are forwarding your gifts.

The year-end report shows an actual operating deficit of \$30,255. This is the third year in a row with a deficit of \$23,000 or more, which brings our operating balance to just over one month of planned ministry activity.

If giving continues at the level of this past year (or the average of the past two years), some adjustments will need to be made to the current delegate-approved ministry plan. We reported to you in a special mailing last week about our decision *not* to fund a half-time interim staff person to help cover responsibilities during Nancy Kauffmann's sabbatical, given

James Waltner's unavailability due to chemotherapy treatment. We will keep you informed about other changes that are made as they become clear.

Attached is the conference year-end financial report, including information about fund balances, designated giving to other agencies/organizations, and congregational giving to conference. See also the per-member giving report, which shows churches' giving to conference on a per-member basis. The **June 30** year-end figures are:

	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2005-06</b>		<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Estimated income*	\$644,422	\$676,611	Estimated expenses	\$644,422	\$670,555
Actual income	549,903	591,842	Actual expenses	580,158	614,918

\*calculated according to historical giving patterns

**Donate via the web.** Using your credit/debit card, you can donate to any Mennonite Church USA organization (including IN-MI Conference) online at [giving.mennoniteusa.org](http://giving.mennoniteusa.org). (Follow the links: Organizations and Projects > Area Conferences > page 2 for IN-MI.) The conference's web site ([www.im.mennonite.net](http://www.im.mennonite.net)) also contains a link to the donation site.

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## Connecting congregations

**Car donation needed.** Jubilee House, a Mennonite Voluntary Service unit in Elkhart, Ind., is in need of a car for the first volunteers who will arrive this fall. The three to five VSers will work with organizations serving the neighborhood around Prairie Street Mennonite, the church sponsoring the unit. Placements include work with restorative justice, community development, education, immigration counseling, social services, business development and handicap services. Contact Art Stoltzfus: 574 293-6367 or [art@nefinc.org](mailto:art@nefinc.org)

**An opportunity for service and learning.** Parkview Mennonite, a small vibrant congregation in Kokomo, Ind., invites people with a heart for mission in the city to live in Kokomo and help us reach out to this community. We welcome young adults or couples with children to become actively involved in the congregation's expanding mission to children, youth and their families. Pastors Lillian and Jacob Elias are ready to use their expertise in mentoring people who are interested in testing their ministry gifts. Opportunities for part-time seminary studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., also would be available. Contact Lillian Elias: 765 236-0412 or [lillianelias@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lillianelias@sbcglobal.net)

**A half-time support staff position** is open at Kern Road Mennonite, South Bend, Ind. beginning mid to late August. Do you want to be part of an active, hard-working and fun-loving staff? Do you enjoy computers and other forms of technology and have good to excellent skills to share? Can you work independently as well as part of a team? Do you enjoy being creative in problem-solving and in design? Contact the church office: 574 291-0924 or [krmc1@juno.com](mailto:krmc1@juno.com)

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## IN-MI Mennonite Women's retreats

The **Northern Michigan Mennonite Women's Retreat** will be held **Sept. 7-8** at Northwoods Christian Campground, Pickford, Mich. Three women will speak about their life experiences around the theme, "Seasons of change." Contact Eleanor Buskirk: 231 347-8352 or [angel435@bignetnorth.net](mailto:angel435@bignetnorth.net), or Debbie Miller: 906 477-9433 or [wwdsm@yahoo.com](mailto:wwdsm@yahoo.com)

The **Michiana Mennonite Women's Retreat** will be held **Oct. 12-14** at Amigo Centre, Sturgis, Mich. Laurie Oswald Robinson will speak about "Mary, Martha and Miriam: Exploring Three Models for Today's Women." Lola Gingerich and her daughters will lead music. Download a brochure and flyer at [im.mennonite.net](http://im.mennonite.net) (under News update). Register by Sept. 15. Contact Mary Sue Miller: 574 831-2473 or [miller173@maplenet.net](mailto:miller173@maplenet.net)

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## Calendar

### August

- 3-4 ..... Northern Michigan Relief Sale, Oscoda County Fairgrounds, Fairview, Mich.
- 10 ..... IN-MI Executive Committee meets
- 11-12 ..... Mennonite Central Committee's Mobile Meat Canner 60th anniversary celebration, Syracuse, Ind. Contact Jennifer Rupp: 574 534-4133 or [jrupp@mcc.org](mailto:jrupp@mcc.org). Or see: [www.mcc.org/canning](http://www.mcc.org/canning)
- 13 ..... Bethany Christian Schools' first day of school
- 15 ..... IN-MI Conference Youth Ministry Spirituality Retreat Day at the Hermitage. Contact Merle: 800 288-8486 or [merle@im.mennonite.net](mailto:merle@im.mennonite.net)
- 18 ..... Daviess County Relief Sale, Simon J. Graber Community Building, Odon, Ind.
- 25 ..... IN-MI Mennonite Golf Benefit for Racial/Ethnic Leadership Education, 7:30 a.m. at McCormick Creek Golf Course in Nappanee, Ind. Entry fee: \$60 per person (includes lunch). Register by July 25. Contact Dick Martin: 1614 Winsted Dr., Goshen IN 46526, 574 534-9703, or [meldick@maplenet.net](mailto:meldick@maplenet.net)
- 31-9/2 ..... Family Canoe Trip at Amigo Centre

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*weLink* serves to connect IN-MI Conference congregations to each other, to Amigo Centre and Bethany Christian Schools, and to the wider church. It is published on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. *weLink* issues are archived on the conference web site at: [www.im.mennonite.net/News\\_Calendar/weLink](http://www.im.mennonite.net/News_Calendar/weLink)

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