



## Contents

- [Wishing you a Merry Christmas!](#)
- [Celebrating](#)
- [Connecting](#)
- [Credentialing and Leadership Report](#)
- [Financial Report](#)
- [Amigo Centre](#)
- [The Mennonite Seeking Executive Director](#)

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## Wishing you a Merry Christmas!

### Staff Transitions

“For everything there is a season, . . .” May you have a meaningful Advent season of expectation and a joyful celebration of Christ’s birth. This is our prayer for you.

Along with that expectation is a time of farewell. At the end of this month we say goodbye to Doug Kaufman, after eight years as conference pastor for leadership transitions. I have appreciated working with him over this time. Over the past months, Doug has helped me get oriented to the transitions work, for which I’m grateful.

As 2018 begins, the office will be even emptier. IMMC’s organizational capacity will diminish. This is both a description of reality, and a statement of disappointment. Fewer things will get done and those that get done may take longer. Be patient with us as we make this adjustment, and also be persistent if something gets dropped.

It is our intent to facilitate connections across conference and to prayerfully support the work done by our community of congregations. Missional Leadership Team and the other conference leadership teams continue their work. We still

expect to live into the vision adopted last summer.

Dan Miller

Dan will be on vacation December 23 through January 1. The office will also be closed for those dates. He will not be responding to email during that time.

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## Celebrating

We live in anticipation of the birth of Jesus in this time of Advent.

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## Connecting

Plans for two people to visit Tanzania Mennonite Church were delayed from December, to possibly the end of April. With the death of Dan's mother-in-law, and the staff transition underway, he felt it was most important to stay close to home and family.

Dan met with mid-states conference ministers – minus Ohio Conference – for a retreat day at Pathways on November 15. It was a good day of worship, reflection, and fellowship.

Bob Yoder and Dan continue meeting with Matt Ropp (Amigo Centre executive director) and Tim Lehman (Bethany Christian Schools head of school) about how we best support each other's mission, and implications of that for our formal relationship. We've learned that "ownership" is not really a good word to describe the relationship because both are separate organizations. Delegates will receive a survey in January as one way of sharing their wisdom with this group.

Dan attended a meeting of local pastors where County Commissioner Mike Yoder revealed there will be a proposal for a 1200-bed ICE detention facility in Elkhart County. There is general agreement among local Mennonite congregations that this would be detrimental for the community and numerous pastors are developing stronger relationships with Latino pastors.

Doug and Dan attended the annual meeting of area church/conference ministers, this year in Nashville. Agenda included misconduct policy and healthy boundary training expectations, credential processes, and one evening of cancelled meetings.

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## Credentialing and Leadership Report

- The Journey board met November 20 in the IMMC conference room. The change to online Missional Leadership Development curriculum and opening the program to others across the US and Canada is increasing availability. IMMC and Central District Conference are still sponsoring congregations.
- Ministry Credentialing Team (MCT) meets Dec 16. This is Doug Kaufman's last meeting with the group, and Dan's first meeting.
- Doug Kaufman concludes as Conference Pastor for Leadership Transitions on December 28. Search, credentialing and transitions work will now be handled by Dan Miller.

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## Financial Report

Thanks to your generous support this month our income was again above budget by \$873. While our expenses were \$173 above budget for this month, for the year to date they are \$4,876 below budget. Still given this situation our year to date income is above expenses by \$1266. Thank you for your continued prayers as we make the necessary changes to meet your needs and yet stay within our means.

-Jim Norton, bookkeeper

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## Amigo Centre

- **Register Now!** Reservations are on a first-come basis.
  - February 2-4 Jr High Week 1 – Speaker: Seth Crissman
  - February 9-11 Jr High Week – Speaker: T Mounsithiraj
  - February 16-18 Sr High Week 2 – Speaker: Kevin Wilder

- **Attention Pastors!** Do you need some time away from your busy life? Come walk our trails, go canoeing or sit by a fire. Our rates are \$30 for the first night and \$25 each additional night. Meals can be added if we have guest groups. We only need a couple of days notice. Give us a call at (269) 651-2811 or email at [info@amigocentre.org](mailto:info@amigocentre.org) to make your reservation.
- **Save the Date! July 27-29, 2018, Know Jesus!** Every two years, "Know Jesus" is held on the campus of Goshen College. **Junior High youth (just completed grades 6-8) and their sponsors** gather for an opportunity to grow in their relationship with Jesus while having a fun and exciting weekend of fellowship with their peers. Mark your calendar and send your youth and sponsors! The **speaker for 2018 is Dustin Galyon**, from Hesston College. Watch for details coming soon!
- Still looking for a **Christmas gift with a special blessing?** Why not consider a gift of a week of summer camp for your child(ren)/grandchildren...or even make a Sunday school project of supporting a child for a free week of camp at Amigo this summer. \$260-\$300 will send one child to camp for a week, from a local family that otherwise would not be able to participate. Contact us for gift certificates or to register a child for camp (269) 651-2811.
- **Save the Date! April 13-15, 2018** is Amigo Centre's **Work Weekend**. Come and volunteer your time and skills to help keep Amigo running and beautiful this Spring! Projects may include, but are not limited to painting, clearing trails, preparing buildings for summer, and other housekeeping items. Stay tuned for more registration information to come!
- **Need a cozy getaway** to celebrate the coming of the New Year? Or maybe your family has outgrown your home and you need a new Christmas location. Amigo Centre's West Shore Lodge AND Retreat Centre have openings for large and small groups. Call the office at (269) 651-2811 or email [info@amigocentre.org](mailto:info@amigocentre.org) to make your reservation today!

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## The Mennonite Seeking Executive Director

The board of The Mennonite, Inc. is accepting applications for the position of Executive Director. The Executive Director functions as chief executive officer for The Mennonite, Inc. The Executive Director brings broad vision to The Mennonite as a content delivery system for MC USA constituents and beyond, helping the organization to develop programs and services appropriate for the digital age. The Executive Director is responsible for publishing and administration, management of staff, and maintaining denominational

relationships. The Mennonite is a multimedia and print publication and organization connected to Mennonite Church USA. To read the full description and to apply, visit: <https://themennonite.org/mennonite-inc-seeks-next-executive-director/>

**Hannah Heinzekehr**

Executive Director

The Mennonite, Inc.

(574) 343-1332

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*weLink* connects IN-MI Conference congregations to each other, to the conference organizations Amigo Centre, Bethany Christian Schools and to the wider church. It is published on the second Wednesday of each month. *weLink* issues are archived on the conference website at [im.mennonite.net/welink-archive/](http://im.mennonite.net/welink-archive/).

**Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference**

109 E. Clinton St., Suite 100 | Goshen, IN 46528

Phone: 574-534-4006 or 800-288-8486

Email: [imoffice@im.mennonite.net](mailto:imoffice@im.mennonite.net) | Website: [im.mennonite.net](http://im.mennonite.net)



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