



Indiana-Michigan
Mennonite Conference

weLink

connecting the congregations of IN-MI Mennonite Conference

May 11, 2016



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Preparing for Annual Sessions

Preparing to gather Opening to the Spirit: Will you join me in doing this between Pentecost (May 15) and June 16, as a way of preparing ourselves for Annual Sessions, June 16-18? The draft conference vision document says: “We will practice prayer, fasting and generous giving to separate ourselves from the influence of the principalities and powers of this age and to make us available to fully participate in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.”

Delegate materials: The draft report book is available on the website. New information is added as it comes in. Worshipful Work sessions are being kept shorter this year. Several conference calls are being scheduled to interact and ask questions about delegate agenda.

Credentialing and Leadership

John Powell is holding a Michigan pastors day on May 12, hosted by New Hope Community Church of Midland.

Office Closings

The Conference office will be closed on the following dates this month:

- Monday, May 16 for a staff retreat
 - Monday, May 30 for Memorial Day
-

Sabbatical Experience for Conference Pastor for Leadership Transitions

A month ago I returned from my sabbatical, a semester at the Toronto School of Theology (TST) pursuing a Master of Theology in ecology. This grows out of my ministry as a baptizer in the Elkhart River, a story that was told in the Jan./Feb. *Gospel Evangel*. For some 12 years a group of us at Benton Mennonite Church have monitored the quality of the water in the river, making sure there is not too much fecal matter in the river when we baptize.

Throughout this time I have learned from looking at the Bible with new eyes how much God is in love with and concerned for the whole of creation. TST is a vibrant and diverse place to study with schools in the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, and United Church of Canada traditions.

I studied the book of Genesis, focusing on the river of Eden found in Genesis 2. I studied ecological ethics, focusing on water ethics and management. And finally, one of my more challenging classes was on faith and culture, looking at how the worldwide church needs to work at meeting the challenge of the many cultures in Africa, Asia, and Latin America that are embracing the Christian faith, so that European and North American culture no longer define Christianity. And Toronto was an amazing place to live this reality. The majority of my classmates were Asian, with a number of Caucasians and Africans mixed in. It was a place to experience God's inclusive and all-encompassing love. I also worshipped at my sister's church in Stouffville, outside Toronto. I am deeply grateful for this time and for the way the conference made this time of study, worship, and fellowship possible.

Missional Leadership Team Report

The Missional Leadership Team met for the day on April 30 at the Conference Office. The majority of the time was spent in conversation concerning the “Pieces of a Vision” and “Breadth of Variance” documents introduced at the Regional Meetings in March. Mark Schloneger (chair of the Unity and Variance Team) was also present for some of the conversation. While working with the great variation of feedback received from the delegates has been challenging, we continue to find the documents provide energy and raise our anticipation of moving forward.

Some time was also spent in conversation planning the “Worshipful Work” times for Annual Sessions coming in June.

Please continue to keep the MLT in your prayers,
Gene Hartman – Moderator

Connecting

Tim Lichti, John Powell, and Dan Miller had two energizing days of networking visits in Detroit and then headed to Manistique for James Troyer’s memorial service.

Celebrating

We celebrate the completion of the new conference history book, *In Pursuit of Faithfulness*, and its availability at Annual Sessions next month.

We celebrate the Mara congregations have a pastor who will be installed in June. We look forward to welcoming them as a member congregation in June.

We celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the birthday of the church.

Amigo Centre

Lake Country Club. Put together a team of four to enjoy a morning of golf and lunch at the Country Club, or sponsor a child (\$300 Camper Sponsorship). See material sent to your congregation or register online at www.amigocentre.org (Forms are also available to download online <http://www.amigocentre.org/amigo-golf-scramble.html>)

Summer Camp Summer camp registration is now available online or you may mail in your forms. This summer our theme is “**One Body: Many Members**” based on I Corinthians 12:12-13. See your church bulletin board for our poster and brochures or visit our Web site for dates and registration information. Help create some wonderful memories for those special children in your life. Call or register online! 269-651-2811 or program@amigocentre.org or www.amigocentre.org

Attention all Jr High groups! Know Jesus is July 29-31, 2016, on the campus of Goshen College. This Junior High event happens every other year – so plan now to attend. This year our speaker is T Mounsinhiraj and music will be led by Nathan Grieser and friends. **Early registration** though June 1 – pay \$139.50 per person. **Full cost of \$150** will be effective June 2. **Registration deadline** is July 15. Information is in the mail and available online. You may also contact Amigo at program@amigocentre.org.

Looking for a place to hold a **retreat or family gathering** this year? Amigo Centre has the following openings:

- **September 2-5 – Labor Day weekend**– All of West Shore Lodge is available
- **October 21-23** – all facilities are available
- **November 24-27 – Thanksgiving weekend** – Retreat Center 13 rooms are available as well as all of West Shore Lodge.
- **Dec. 9-11** – all facilities are available
- **Dec. 16-18** – all of West Shore Lodge is available
- **Dec. 19-25** – all of West Shore Lodge and the Retreat Center lower level are available

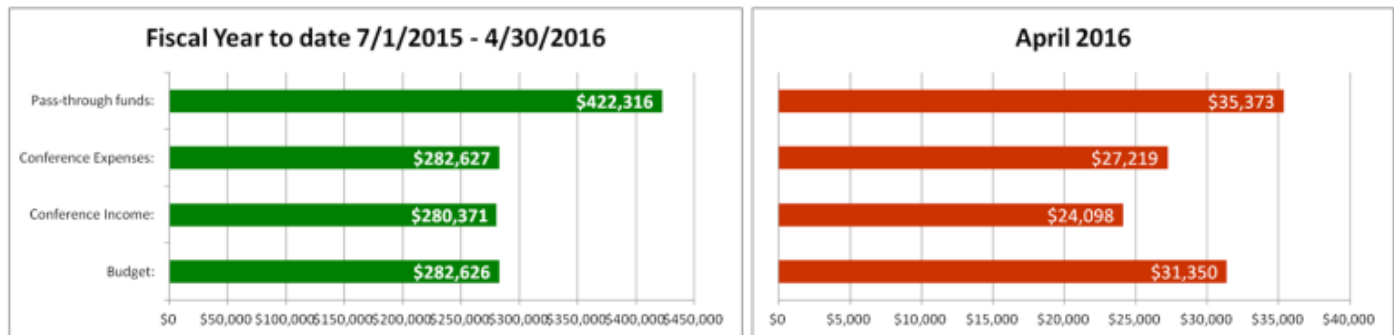
Contact: info@amigocentre.org or call 269-651-2811 for information.

Offices for Rent

The conference office has two furnished offices available for sub-lease. In addition to bathroom and staff lounge areas, the sub-lease can include wireless internet, phone/voicemail, and copier. If interested, contact the office at 574-534-4006.

Financial Report

While our income was up about \$4,000 this month it was still about \$6,000 below budget. Our expenses were also below budget. While our budget shortfall for the month was \$3,121 it was only \$2,256 for the year to date. Usually February, March and April are our low income months. Hopefully this month and next month will help us to balance the budget. Thank you for your continued support.



Bethany Christian Schools

Custodial Opening: Bethany Christian Schools invites applications for the position of evening custodian beginning June 2016. The successful applicant will have the aptitude to work independently, perform minor repairs on equipment, and supervise student cleaning crews during the summer. The position is approximately three-quarters time and eligible for partial benefits. Applications are being accepted until the position has been filled. For information about the position and an application form, visit www.bethanycs.net/jobs or contact Head of School Tim Lehman at tclehman@bethanycs.net.

Bethany Seeks Varsity Boys Basketball Coach: Bethany Christian High School is seeking to hire a varsity head coach for boys basketball next season, effective immediately. Interested applicants should send resumes and contact information to Athletic Director Gary Chupp at glchupp@bethanycs.net.

Host Families Needed: Bethany Christian Schools is in need of host families for serving international students who would like to attend Bethany. This opportunity to gain cross cultural experience in your own home often becomes a rewarding experience for the host family, as well as a blessing to the student. Families receive monetary compensation. One school year commitment. For more information, contact admissions director Sarah Kraybill Lind (admissions@bethanycs.net or 534-2567).

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