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## Seasonal News

Praying God's blessing for you in this season of Advent and Christmas.

The conference office will be closed Christmas Eve through New Year's Day.

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## So many contributed to a bountiful 2018!

This has been an eventful year in the conference office, with staffing changes, implementing Search Guides, Dan and Paula going to Tanzania, relocating conference offices to East Goshen Mennonite, covering during Dan's sabbatical.

Anna Buck began in May as administrative coordinator and is doing an impressive job in the office. Here are others who served as interim staff this year:

- Vanessa Kelleybrew
- Cindy Steiner
- Nedra Gnagey
- Tim Burkholder
- Sharon Yoder

Conference leadership teams are passionately addressing their responsibilities. Our life together is a result of our efforts together. Thank you for being conference to one another!

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## **Staff Updates**

Sharon Yoder will begin mid-January to work quarter time with credentialing and pastoral searches.

Sharon has filled in several times for staff sabbaticals in recent years.

Numerous people express appreciation for her work. She is enthusiastic and conscientious. With the introduction of Search Guides this year, Sharon found the load reasonable during Dan's recent sabbatical. Dan will cover these processes between now and mid-January.

Many thanks to Tim Burkholder and Sharon Yoder for filling in during Dan's sabbatical.

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## **Regional Meetings**

### [Dates and Locations](#)

Delegates please note dates and locations for the annual delegate days in February and March.

February 23 – southern meeting at Parkview Mennonite in Kokomo, Ind.

March 9 – central meeting at East Goshen Mennonite, Goshen, Ind.

March 16 – north meeting at Maple River Mennonite, Brutus, Mich.

**Each day begins with warm drinks at 8:45 and ends at 4pm.**

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## **We want to hear your story!**

**What has God been doing in your congregation? How has God been using your church in the community?**

We are looking for stories to add to the next editions of the *Gospel Evangel* and we want to hear your stories! Give us a call (574) 534-4006 or email the office at [imoffice@im.mennonite.net](mailto:imoffice@im.mennonite.net)

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## **Updates from Missional Leadership Team (MLT)**

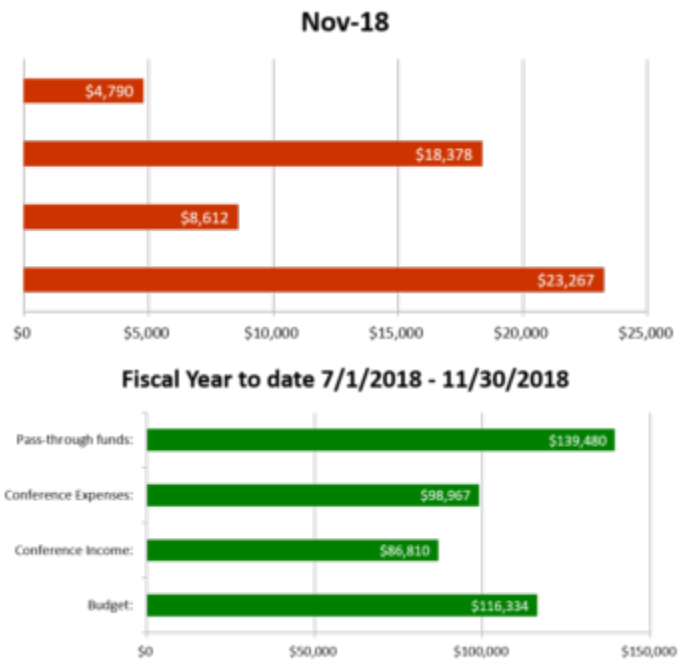
The Missional Leadership Team recently met together. We welcomed back Dan from his sabbatical and looked ahead to unfolding plans for summer Annual Sessions and beyond. At the end of our meeting we each reflected on highlights of the meeting and what we wished to communicate to the broader conference.

Themes included:

- a special spirit in the work of the various conference teams;
- excitement in the focus of “congregational equipping” for 2019 Annual Sessions;
- smooth transition during Dan’s sabbatical with the work of Tim Burkholder and Sharon Yoder;
- laughter around the table;
- and, a growing Spirit-infused hope for the future of IMMC.

*Bob Yoder, on behalf of MLT*

## Financial Graph



The income for the month of November was \$14,655 below budget and \$9,766 below expenses. For the year to date the income is \$12,156 below expenses. This tends to be the low month for donations and we trust that the next few months will show an increase. Thank you for your support.- *Jim Norton, bookkeeper*

## Congregational Updates

In keeping with conference leadership's commitment to inform delegates about congregational affiliations, there are several congregational processes that came to completion in the fall:

- True Vine Tabernacle, Elkhart Ind, withdrew effective July 24, 2018 and joined LMC, a fellowship of Anabaptist churches

- Yellow Creek Mennonite, Goshen, Ind, withdrew effective October 7, 2018 and joined LMC, a fellowship of Anabaptist churches
- First Mennonite, Middlebury, Ind withdrew effective November 6, 2018. They are still determining their affiliation.
- North Leo, Leo, IN withdrew effective the end of 2018.

We grieve the change in relationship with these congregations and pray God's blessing for them as we all seek to faithfully follow Jesus.

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## Conference Affinity Groups

### Conference Affinity Groups videoconference: Jan. 15, 7pm

In the last year conference leadership has mentioned conference "affinity groups" as a way to pursue relationship in

- our community – congregation to congregation relationships,
- our region – mutual relationships with Chin congregations, exploring Detroit or Muncie
- the world – invitation to relationship with Shirati diocese (Tanzania)

Where shall we respond?

Where is there adequate interest to sustain connections?

We will hold a videoconference on January 15 to overview opportunities, and test the support for each. NO commitment is required. Anyone is invited to participate.

**Mark your calendars now. More details in the new year.**

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## News from Bethany Christian Schools

Bethany Christian High School will hold its annual Christmas concert at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 14, in Goshen College's Sauder Concert Hall. Come hear choral and

instrumental groups as they celebrate the birth of Christ in music and join them on stage for their concluding song “The Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s Messiah. Admission is free, though a freewill offering will be taken.

**Bethany Christian Schools Alumni Night.** Bethany alumni will receive free admission and be eligible for prizes at the boys and girls evening Holiday tourney basketball games on Saturday, Dec. 15. Girls game begins at 6:00 and boys at 7:30. Note, alumni night does not include the morning games of the Holiday Tourney.

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## Updates from Amigo

### Amigo Job Openings

Amigo has an opening for **an Assistant Cook position**. We are looking for someone who is excited and able to help in a local ministry. All of our meals are buffet style. We need someone who is independent, confident and willing to go above and beyond for guests. Amigo Centre strives to be a place where people can come to experience God either through Fellowship or through his awesome creation. If you are interested email us at [info@amigocentre.org](mailto:info@amigocentre.org) or call the office at [\(269\)651-2811](tel:269651-2811).

## SAVE THE DATE: Amigo Winter Youth Retreats in February!

**Packets have been mailed!**

- **February 1-3:** Peace Camp – Speaker: Steve Wiebe-Johnson

**Scripture:** The book of “Luke”

**Description:** This additional Winter Youth Retreat comes out of a partnership with Mennonite Central Committee, with the specific focus of community building. Bring your ENTIRE (junior youth and senior youth!!) youth group to camp this February and join us in celebrating the beauty of God’s community!

- **February 8-10:** Junior High – Speaker: Kent Miller

**Title:** “Money and Me and You.” **Scripture:** Luke 16:10-13

**Description:** Kent Miller will bring us perspective on how to prepare for our monetary future. Through scripture we will learn about how to honor God with our money and about the true riches God has for us.

- **February 15-17:** Senior High – Speaker: Tig Intagliata

**Title:** “Becoming Friends with God.” **Scripture:** John 15:15

**Description:** Tig will help your students to prepare for the stage of life after high school. His campus ministry expertise will give insight for how to have a true friendship with the creator. Drawing near to God is something we all need to work on.

- Looking for a great **Christmas gift** idea? How about a **week of summer camp** at Amigo! Bring a week of joy and excitement to the life of a loved one or community member that could use the experience in great outdoors surrounded by a caring community during summer camp at Amigo. Contact us for information on purchasing a gift certificate to be used in this way. Call 269-651-2811.

## Amigo Adult Programs

- **Amigo Scrapbook, Crafting, and Sewing Retreats...** Whether you scrapbook, sew, quilt or craft, Amigo invites you to join us for a relaxing weekend filled with good food and fellowship. Come alone or bring friends/family. We provide the space, lodging, food and just the right amount of focused input to allow you time to balance your productivity with time to rest, restore and refresh your body and soul.

**2019 dates include:**

January 11-16 (weekend plus stay over Sun-Tuesday options)

March 8-13 (weekend plus stay over Sun-Tuesday options)

April 2-7 (weekend plus come early Tuesday-Thursday options)

Call or register online! 269-651-2811 or [mandy@amigocentre.org](mailto:mandy@amigocentre.org) or [www.amigocentre.org](http://www.amigocentre.org)

- **NEW DATE:** Transitional ministry offers a unique gift in a congregation's life. Whether a change in pastor comes because of conflict, retirement, shrinking numbers and weariness, or questions of congregational viability, transitional ministry walks alongside a congregation while it answers questions of mission, courage and transformation. **April 1-4, 2019, Amigo Centre hosts a Transitional Ministry Training retreat** for individuals interested in pursuing this type of ministry. Visit [tmt.amigocentre.org](http://tmt.amigocentre.org) for additional information, or contact Amigo Centre at [269.651.2811](tel:269.651.2811) or [mandy@amigocentre.org](mailto:mandy@amigocentre.org)

## Amigo Facilities

- Has it been awhile since your congregation has had a **church retreat**? Are you considering trying to get one up and running? Give us a call to find out how we can help facilitate your retreat. There is some availability in the Spring and Early Fall 2019.
- Looking for a place for a **New Year's Eve gathering**? West Shore Lodge is available. Also, the **weekend before Christmas** we have Retreat Center Rooms available if you are looking for a place to gather with family and friends. Give us a call at 269-651-2811.

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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/).

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