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Conference Updates

Connecting

ATTENTION PASTORS: There are a number of announcement specifically for pastors. See below for:

1. A group for retiring pastors
2. boundaries training updates
3. A renewal of the pastor financial grants
4. Looking forward to 2019

The new year is off to a fast start.

As we engaged in everyday ministry, we want to make the mundane holy. What matters in the long run is made up of numerous everyday activities: prayer, humility, forgiveness, meeting needs. Looking forward to Annual Sessions we want to celebrate the big picture of God's salvation and to equip congregations for the everyday activities of the Christian life. Glen Guyton, executive director for Mennonite Church USA will be the opening night speaker and will interact with delegates the next day. Missional Leadership Team has begun planning, along with staff and Bill Miller, for our gathering at Amigo in June. Watch for information about worship, seminars and registration. Regional delegate meetings will prepare our way.

Conference Affinity Groups video conference: January 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 to come.

2019 Regional Meetings

Delegates and other interested people are invited to attend one of the three delegate meetings: Feb 23, Mar 9 and 16. These regional meetings will offer worship and encouragement, sharing and prayer with other congregations, and introduction to business items for the summer.

Celebrating

Many thanks to the Gifts Development Team – Bruce Nofziger, Addie Lehman and Janice Wagner – for their diligent work.

Anna has been working diligently on a revamp of the conference website, and it’s almost ready to go live! (Also before the end of the month, Anna will be married. If you call into the office, don’t forget to congratulate her!)

Credentialing and Leadership Development

A support group for retiring pastors

Retirement is a big step. Adjusting one’s role is challenging work, giving the retiring pastor a chance to “clean out their closets” and release a past identity in order to embrace what is emerging. If you have retired in the last three years or are retiring in the next year, consider walking with a group of peers in a confidential facilitated conversation. The group is limited to 8 members and will meet biweekly beginning January 28. Regular attendance and confidentiality are expected. IMMC is helping with the cost. For more details or to express interest, contact Dan Miller at dan@immennonite.net or 574-534-4006.

Two Options for Healthy Boundaries Training

A Leadership Clinic on February 25 at AMBS Pastors and Leaders. David Miller will lead the seminar. David is a teaching associate at AMBS; he was a pastor at East Goshen. He spoke at Annual Sessions in 2018. Register online. Mennonite Church USA convention in Kansas City at the beginning of July. A

Healthy Boundaries seminar is being scheduled for some time that week. Exact details will be available on the convention website.

In recent years the conferences across Mennonite Church USA are asking all pastors to attend Healthy Boundary seminars. As a conference in Mennonite Church USA we are committed to helping pastors in Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference maintain healthy and life-giving relationships in their families and churches. Because pastors have access to people in vulnerable times, it is important that we consciously learn and maintain healthy boundaries.

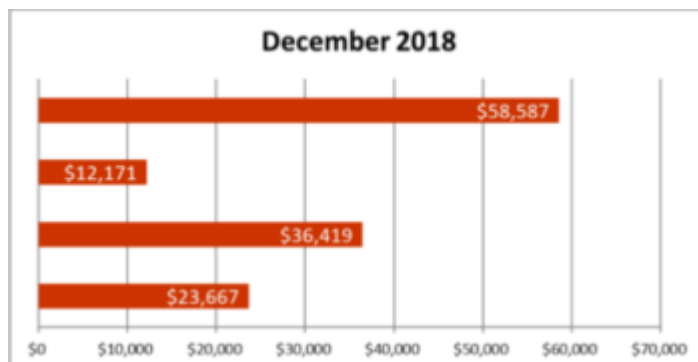
Ministry Credentialing Team (MCT) asks that every pastor attend a Healthy Boundaries seminar every three years. MCT sponsored Healthy Boundaries seminars as part of the Pastor Gathering for the last two years, and have asked every pastor to have this training by the end of 2019.

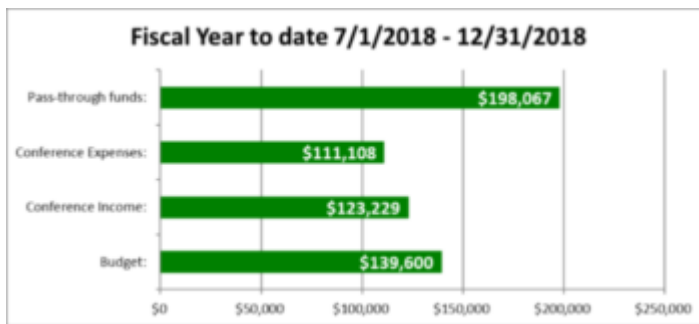
Pastor Financial Wellness

Everence has received a second \$1 million grant in support of pastor financial wellness. Half of it will be for educational events and half for financial assistance grants. Watch for future educational events.

Application forms, if you did not receive a matching financial grant last time, are available [here](#). Contact the office at 574-534-4006 if you have questions, or you can contact Patty Skelton, Everence Administrative Assistant at patty.skelton@everence.com.

Financial Report





- Edit

Thanks to your generous giving December was a remarkable month. Giving was \$12,752 above budget and \$24,248 above expenses. Our expenses were significantly below normal due to a change in bookkeeping items that were reclassified to a different fund even though expenses were actually still under budget. Our spending continues to be below budget to agree with our income being below budget. Our expenses were \$11,496 below budget for the month and \$28,492 below budget for the year.- James Norton, *Bookkeeper*

Bethany Christian Schools

Bethany Visit Opportunities are a great way for prospective students and families to see Bethany Christian Schools in action!

- **Grades 4-5 on Jan. 16:** Parents may bring children grade 4 and younger to visit the grade 4-5 classrooms from 9:30 to 11 a.m.
- **Grades 6-10 on Jan. 28:** Students in grades 5-10 interested in exploring Bethany can shadow a Bethany student on Monday, Jan. 28, 8:40 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Parents are invited to an 8:45-9:15 a.m. coffee and conversation followed by an optional tour at 9:15 a.m.

For more information, to register, or to schedule a visit on another date see bethanycs.net/visit.

Amigo Centre

SAVE THE DATE: Please join us for **Friends of Amigo** on March 14, 2019, at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church. More details to come – or call for information.

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 or call the office at [\(269\) 651-2811](tel:(269)651-2811).

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 spring dates include:

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 or 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 amigocentre.org for additional information, or contact Amigo Centre at ([269](tel:2696512811)) [651-2811](tel:651-2811) or 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.

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/.

Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference

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