

gospel evangel

connecting the congregations of
indiana-michigan mennonite conference

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PRACTICING OUR
H O P E
IMMC ANNUAL SESSIONS 2019



photo by: Joe Pendleton

Delegates, pastors, exhibitors and staff of IMMC gather in the Activities Center of Amigo Centre, Sturgis, MI for Annual Sessions 2019

Practicing our Hope

Members of IMMC gather for 2019 Annual Sessions

By: Anna Board, editor

Pastors, delegates and their family members gathered at Amigo Centre in Sturgis, MI on June 13-15 for Annual Sessions 2019. The theme, "Practicing Our Hope", draws on Romans 12:1-2; 11-12 and 1 Peter 3:15 and speaks to Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference's desire to have transformative faith that is founded on hope in Christ.

Speakers this year were Paula Killough (Prairie Street, Elkhart, IN), Glen Guyton (Executive director of MCUSA), Malinda Berry (Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, IN), Dan Miller (Conference Pastor of IMMC, Goshen, IN), and Naomi Yoder (East Goshen, Goshen, IN).

Hope grows as sisters and brothers exchange stories of God's work in their lives. During delegate sessions, Michigan church leaders shared congregational stories of how they were practicing their hope. Contributors were Bess Fitzgerald (Kalamazoo Mennonite Fellowship, Kalamazoo, MI), Denny Heath (New Hope, Midland, MI, Leighton Miller (Wildwood MC, Engadine, MI), Lady J and Bishop Sam (Community Christian Fellowship, Detroit, MI) and Jane Neill and Heidi Burkhart (Maple River, Brutus MI).

This time of fellowship and equipping carried into the 15 different seminars and Amigo Centre outings offered to attendees.

¹⁵ but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the **hope** that is in you;
-1 Peter 3:15

Inside you will find a photo gallery from Annual Sessions 2019. While reviewing the pictures inside (photographer Joe Pendleton), consider this: In what way is God calling the people of IMMC to "practice our hope"?

Sermon recordings and photos
available at im.mennonite.net.

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4 Journeying with our pastors

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Practicing our hope



Clockwise from L to R: 1. Jon and Cora Brown; Rosetta Brown and Louise Millsaps of Church Without Walls. 2. Eli and Yasi Bouwman of Walnut Hill Mennonite Church. 3. Chan Cung of Mara Christian Church of America. 4. Brenda Meyer of Benton Mennonite and Brian Bither of Shalom Mennonite Church light candles during Friday morning worship. 5. Bishop Sam and Lady J of Community Christian Fellowship, Detroit, MI shared congregational stories on Friday afternoon. 6. Malinda Berry of AMBS and member of Fellowship of Hope Mennonite Church spoke on Friday morning. 7. Arnold Burkhardt, Heidi Burkhardt, and Jane Neill of Maple River Mennonite enjoy the first course of Friday night's Celebration Meal. 8. Josh Tyson of Waterford Mennonite Church served as worship director.



This issue is available online:
im.mennonite.net/gospel-evangel



Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference—a conference of **Mennonite Church USA**—is a community of congregations in Indiana, Michigan and Kentucky, gathered together for mutual encouragement in kingdom mission and inspiration to joyfully follow Jesus.

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Practicing our hope



"¹Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God-this is your true and proper worship."²Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing and perfect will. -Romans 12:1-2



Clockwise from L to R: 1. **Dan Miller** of IMMC and member of Walnut Hill Mennonite Church prays over **Glen Guyton**, the executive director of Mennonite Church USA before he speaks at Thursday night worship. 2. **Suella Gerber** of Fellowship of Hope offers Communion to **Ben Bouwman** of Walnut Hill Mennonite Church. 3. **Rose Shetler** of Waterford Mennonite Church and **DaeAnna Howard**, great-granddaughter of Paula Killough assist with registration. 4. **Katie Misz** of Waterford Mennonite and **Emily Hunsberger** of Amigo Centre. 5. **Bess Fitzgerald** of Kalamazoo Mennonite Fellowship shares what God is doing in her congregation. 6. **Sharon Yoder**, transitional pastor for leadership transitions serves as worship leader for Friday night's worship service. 7. **Jim Norton**, conference bookkeeper, **Louise Millsap** of Church Without Walls, **Larry Rohrer** of Belmont Neighborhood Fellowship, and **Cora Brown** of Church Without Walls, attend one of the 15 seminars offered during Annual Sessions.

journeying with our pastors



Dan Miller, IMMC pastor, reflects on Annual Sessions 2019.

Three words give a glimpse of my hopes for Annual Sessions: transformation, relationship, equipping. We hope you see evidence of these three characteristics as you look over photos from this year’s Annual Sessions. Thanks to Joe Pendleton (Bethel) for being our capable photographer again.

Transformation. At Annual Sessions, we present ourselves to God. Missional Leadership Team combined Romans 12:1-2, 11-12 with 1 Peter 3:15, and offered the theme, “Practicing our Hope.” Josh Tyson (Waterford) and the worship team skillfully led us into worship. Five worship services presented multi-faceted perspective on the scriptures, and applications of the hope we find in Jesus. What a joy to have diversity of age and culture bringing the sermons! (Sermons are available on the website.)

Relationship. Annual Sessions is a time to renew relationships across conference. Meals, table times, and scheduled breaks are chances for fellowship. Love is nurtured, challenged and

strengthened in relationship. I often found people engaged in caring conversation. This year we were especially mindful of how much volunteers contribute to our life together. We planned a Friday evening celebration meal to say “thank you” to everyone present for the ways they and their congregations make possible our life together. Everence came along side and helped it happen. Talented food service people in Amigo’s dining hall created a sit-down meal with linen tablecloths and wait staff. Cheese and crackers, bread with dipping oil and spices, a fresh salad, appetizer, choice of entree, roasted asparagus, new potatoes, and a brownie desert. It was a highlight for me.

Equipping. Fifteen seminars, led by people from church agencies and associated organizations, offered helpful resources related to various aspects of our vision. Whether talking about the joy of leadership, thinking about church safety, learning about spiritual styles, participants seemed engaged in the discussion.

ministry transitions

Beginnings



Mark Stahl above, was installed at Parkview Mennonite on March 31, 2019.

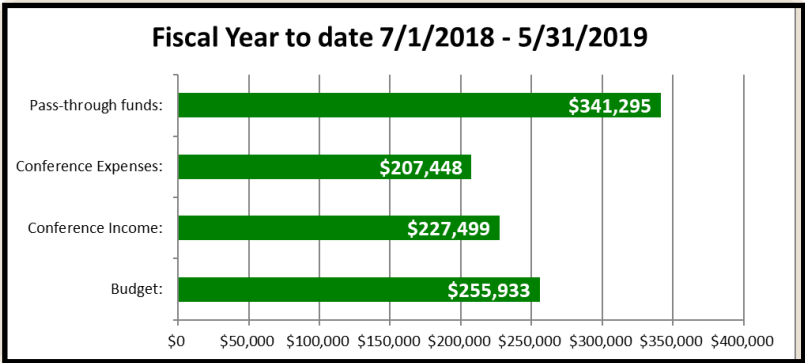


Katie Misz above, was ordained at Waterford Mennonite Church on June 2, 2019.



Brian Bither above, was ordained at Shalom Mennonite Church on April 7, 2019.

financial report



& Endings



Jane Stolzhus Buller above, retired from Walnut Hill, Goshen, IN on June 30, 2019.



Robert Brown above, concluded his time as pastor at First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis on April 2, 2019.



Velma Swartz above, retired as pastor of senior ministries from Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN on May 31, 2019.



Larry Rohrer above, retired from Belmont Mennonite, Elkhart, IN on June 30, 2019.