

VMC members participate in Pittsburgh Convention

By **GLORIA L. LEHMAN**

VMM Director of Public Relations, *Connections* editor

Arriving in Pittsburgh, it was very evident why the theme for Mennonite Church USA convention in Pittsburgh was chosen as “Bridges to the Cross.” Hundreds of bridges cross the three rivers in this city and many were visible from the convention center. The total registration count was 6,427, with 3,596 youth and sponsors and 2,092 adults.

Ervin Stutzman, Harrisonburg, executive director of MC USA, welcomed the participants stating that “we are here to celebrate Jesus” and a thunderclap joined in with the roar of applause. The adult worship band, C3, led worship in each adult worship session—they are from Calvary Community Church in Hampton, Virginia.

Before the convention opened, a group called “The Reconcylers” from Harrisonburg traveled by bicycle to Pittsburgh. Organized by Lars Akerson, VMM *Partners* coordinator, the group of six riders left on Thursday and arrived on Monday, stopping for a Sabbath rest at Laurelville Church Center where they participated in the Anabaptist Missional Project.

Ted Swartz, Harrisonburg, spoke to the youth on Tuesday evening with the theme “Reconcile...What?” Using skits, Ted integrated humor into the larger theme of forgiveness. He outlined three requisites for reconciliation: be present at all times, listen and have empathy.

“We are the Church Day” emphasized the diversity in the Mennonite Church. Glen Guyton [formerly from Hampton, Va.], associate executive director for constituent resources for MC USA, said that the idea for this special day emerged in October 2009 with the Intercultural



Park View Mennonite youth group meet on top of the Convention Center in Pittsburgh to process how MC USA Convention experiences are impacting their lives. Photo by Ross Erb.

Relations Reference Committee. An intercultural dinner, a performance of Indonesian Christian Community Fellowship dancers were just a few of the highlights from this day.

Eastern Mennonite University’s associate professor of art, Cyndi Gusler, directed the Trash Fashion Show which drew lots of attention on Thursday evening. The show dazzled spectators with 48 models walking the runway, 32 wearing clothes designed by the model or a youth group, and the rest wearing outfits designed by college students in Gusler’s class.

Virginia Mennonite Missions’ display in the exhibit hall featured the theme “transformed. transforming.” with creatures that transformed from caterpillars to flitting beautiful butterflies. Many people stopped to see them and to discuss service opportunities.

Ervin Stutzman, the executive director of Mennonite Church USA, called for church members to “be reconciled to

God” during the final adult worship session on Friday evening. By reconciling with God, he said, Christians can become ambassadors for God.

“You can be an ambassador of Christ, but you need to be reconciled with God,” said Stutzman. “Open your hearts to God.” To see more of Ervin’s address go to <http://blog.goshen.edu/mpress/>

Convention attendees will sing the theme song “Be the Bridge” written by E. A. James of Calvary Community Church, Hampton and doing the motions—right arm extended to the person beside them, as they remember Pittsburgh 2011.

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A devotional reflection and farewell

This month, Owen Burkholder asked me to share some farewell thoughts as I complete my responsibilities as Conference Coordinator of VMC.



Steve Carpenter
Conference Coordinator

I recently graduated from Eastern Mennonite Seminary. One of my favorite classes was Leadership and Administration. Many would have found it boring but it energized me. In the book *Church Administration*, two Lutheran pastors describe the biblical concepts of time. The Greek New Testament has two words for time. *Chronos*, from which we get the word chronometer, speaks of the daily passing of time. The other, *kairos* refers to the deeper significance of time, or God's time. It is the biblical word translated "in the fullness of time." The authors contend church administration "is a profoundly holy calling." They note the word comes from two parts *ad* + *ministrare* meaning "one who ministers to." Thus to ad-minister is to add

ministry. My favorite sentence in the book is: "It is our bold claim that in the very daily demands of ad-ministering a church in one of its expressions—parish, judicatory, national office, agency or institution—one called to leadership discovers *kairos* in the midst of *chronos*, eternity embedded with momentary duties, the divine hidden in the mundane." During the past nine years, I have often felt that way about VMC and my work here.

Much of what I do is administrative and its benefits are sometimes difficult to see. However, without good management most organizations tend to go off track and lose direction or become bloated and inefficient. My role has been to streamline and professionalize VMC's operations while striving to connect its many parts: 69 congregations in five states and the District of Columbia, eight conference institutions and 10 conference-related ministries. It has been a stable time for VMC and I have felt God's presence in our midst. My wife Chris and I plan to stay in Harrisonburg and continue to be a part of VMC through our involvement at Immanuel Mennonite Church. As I move on, I wish you blessings in your work, worship and witness.

Schloneger writes piece and interviews on CNN



On June 26, the top story on CNN was an article by Mark Schloneger, pastor of Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro,

Va., "My Faith: Why I Don't Sing the 'Star Spangled Banner.'" Mark states that he wrote the article when he saw how Goshen College's decision to not play the National Anthem prior to athletic competitions was being portrayed in the national media. His intent was to explain both the Anabaptist history and the theology that went behind the decision.

To read Mark's article, go to:

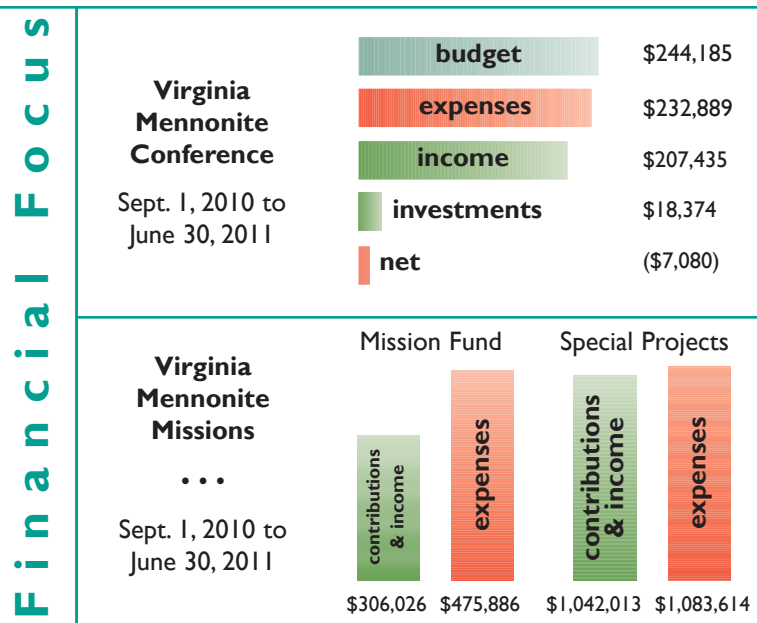
<http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2011/06/26/my-faith-why-i-dont-sing-the-star-spangled-banner/>

Quickly the national media picked up on this "third way" voice and interviewed Mark on Friday television talk shows.

To listen to the interview go to:

<http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2011/07/01/pastor-explains-why-i-dont-sing-the-national-anthem/>

This was a clear and powerful witness on the weekend of the US national holiday. Thank you, Mark, for speaking out on behalf of our beliefs.



Connections (USPS 007-205) is published monthly by Virginia Mennonite Missions and Virginia Mennonite Conference to connect congregations with each other and conference agencies.

Send subscriptions to **Connections** Circulation Manager, 901 Parkwood Dr., Harrisonburg, VA 22802

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POSTMASTER Send address changes to 901 Parkwood Dr., Harrisonburg, VA 22802. Periodical postage paid at Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

Connections is distributed free to each household of supporting congregations. Subscription rates: \$5 per year, 2 years for \$9.

Consumed by forgiveness

By **NICHOLAS DETWEILER-STODDARD**

“All too often I see victim’s families consumed by hate.” Judge Martin Gonzalez understands compassion and hope are a powerful oddity and conveyed that fact to the young sixteen-year-old receiving his sentence. “The forgiveness of [this] family has reverberated throughout this case... You have had a shield around you of forgiveness and love by the victims that is phenomenal. They have been your guardian angels.”

Cindy and Herm Weaver and children Hope and Dillon—former residents of Harrisonburg, Virginia—lost their daughter and sister last October when she was hit and instantly killed by a pickup truck while out on her bicycle. Chloe Weaver was with Mennonite Voluntary Service in Alamosa, Colorado, when she was struck from behind by young driver, Kyle Stotsky. Yet, in this wrenching tragedy, an inspiring story of Christ’s transformative love has beamed through the responses of the Weaver family. The Weavers stressed their hope for restoration and reconciliation with Kyle rather than incarceration and retribution. Herm, Mennonite conference minister with Mountain States, made it clear that Chloe would have had no desire to have two lives ended and would rather have Kyle continue Chloe’s legacy.

“I want you to have the courage to take responsibility for your life and actions, honestly and humbly,” Herm told Kyle at the final sentencing. “I want you to carry on, in some small way, the work Chloe came here to do, to make it a better world.” This radical restorative love has rippled through many lives beyond just Kyle’s.

District Attorney Dave Mahonee noted the interaction between the Weavers and Stotsky as incredible. “The love they showed for Kyle almost brought me to tears,” he said. “It showed the strength of their faith.”

Julia Wilson, covering the story for the *Valley Courier*, admitted that in their shoes she probably would have wanted the perpetrator to suffer, to answer legally and emotionally in proportion to her pain. She marked the unusual witness of love, compassion, forgiveness and hope by the Weavers. “I have known a multitude of people who claim to be practicing Christians, people who claim to live their lives by ‘the Book’... when it’s obvious that only applies to Sundays during church time....[But the Weavers’] religion is not just a Sunday habit; it is as much a part of their daily lives as breathing.”

Such radical forgiveness is our calling as well. Herm claimed that this offender-love is not really something extraordinary for Christians, but what we should have deeply instilled in us. Through Christ’s strength, may we regularly nurture in our churches such healing responses of forgiveness, of restoration over retribution.

Quotations in this story come from articles in the Pueblo Chieftain and Valley Courier of Colorado.

Menonite Hispanic Initiative to celebrate second anniversary

By **MARVIN LORENZANA**
 Director of Mennonite Hispanic Initiative

The Mennonite Hispanic Initiative (MHI), a project that started in Harrisonburg, Va., on September 16, 2009 with the clear purpose of doing innovative church planting, provide theological education and leadership development within the Latino community, is about to celebrate its second anniversary.

For the last couple of years and with the financial support of Virginia Mennonite Conference, Virginia Mennonite Missions, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, a good number of local Mennonite congregations as well as generous individuals, this initiative has significantly contributed financially to provide higher theological education to five Latino seminary students.

MHI has also launched a pilot church-plant named Iglesia Discipular Anabaptista (IDA) which meets on average with 35 people every Saturday at 7 p.m. at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church. IDA’s church-plant efforts are led by Pastor Byron Pellecer, who also is a second-year seminary student working on an M.Div.

As a pilot church-plant, IDA’s main goal is to develop a non-traditional, more “organic” model of church-plant focusing on an effective disciple-making strategy by using small group dynamics, intentional mentoring and spiritual formation. About four new families have joined the original six families that began this church. One of these families is the Alvarados. Pastor Alfonso

Alvarado, his wife Milagros and one-year-old Sofia Rachel joined IDA in February 2011. Alfonso is originally from El Salvador and was the pastor of Jehovah Nissi Church in Winchester for three years as part of an independent church council. Alfonso’s first connection with IDA was



Alfonso Alvarado, his wife Milagros and daughter Sofia Rachel. Courtesy of Marvin Lorenzana

through his interest in getting a diploma in theology at the Anabaptist Biblical Institute (IBA) which has a study center (with two classes) at Eastern Mennonite Seminary since 2006.

“We loved IDA’s people from day one! Our brothers and sisters surrounded us with God’s love from the beginning,” said Pastor Alfonso.

MHI will celebrate its second anniversary by offering two concerts with recording artist Hector David who has been in Harrisonburg twice before. This time, Hector David will play the violin accompanied with a live band of accomplished musicians. These events will take place on September 9-10 at Eastern Mennonite High School at 7 p.m. A suggested love offering will be taken. Also, music clinics will be offered on Saturday, Sept. 10 at EMHS from 9-noon.

Blessings to MHI as it reaches an important benchmark!

Weekend retreat for women of all ages will be Oct 28-30

By PEARL L. LANTZ

Retreat Planning Committee Chair, MWV

Since the 1960s, thousands of Virginia Mennonite Conference (VMC) women have enjoyed annual, conference-wide weekend retreats. Again this year, women of all ages are invited to participate in a weekend retreat, beginning Friday evening, Oct. 28, and ending Sunday at noon, Oct. 30, at Best Western Waynesboro Inn & Suites.

Pastor April Gunderson, Associate Pastor of Care & Counsel at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, will speak on the theme “More Than Water,” as she invites us to experience the thirst-quenching water that Jesus offers. A gifted and

vibrant speaker, April cares deeply about people and welcomes opportunities to minister “living waters” in desert places. Her caring spirit, gentle humor, biblical knowledge, and intimate relationship with Jesus enrich both speaking and counseling skills.

Some special worship features will include: four primary worship sessions, “meeting” the Samaritan Woman by the Well, special music by Finely Tuned and violinist Tara Davis, liturgical dance, and a prayer room with four stations relating to the four worship sessions. Other special features include: Saturday afternoon seminars and spa options, hiking, and free time; a Saturday evening banquet; optional early morning and late evening

activities; Book Savers; and more.

Registration brochures and posters will be distributed to VMC churches early August. Retreat registrations and hotel registrations, as outlined in the brochure, should be completed by Oct 10 for best rates; after Oct 10, registration fees and hotel rates will increase. Registration deadline is Oct 17th.

To download additional registration brochures, go to <http://vmconf.org/related/mwv.htm>. Registration questions may be directed to Kathy Zehr Rhodes at 540/843-0763.

Please join us for a delightful weekend of inspiration, relaxation, fun, and fellowship as we experience “More Than Water” during this retreat!

In praise of international partnership in missions

By EVA EBERLY

VMM Mediterranean Regional Assistant

During the anarchy that ensued in Albania after the civil uprising in 1997, Norma Teles fled the country along with her YWAM colleagues and returned home to Brazil. In spite of this traumatic experience, Norma couldn't forget Albania and the deep needs of its people. Her inexplicable desire to return was evidence of God's call. When she shared this with her pastor at Lagoa Encantada Mennonite Church in Recife, Brazil, he encouraged her, “Why not make Mennonite connections and return to Albania as a missionary sent by Brazilian Mennonites?”

Thus began a process of correspondence between Willard Eberly (VMM) and Janet Plenert, (JMMI—*Junta Menonita de Missões Internacionais*, the then newly-formed Brazilian mission agency) to constitute an agreement of cooperation and partnership. This agreement covered JMMI's secondment of Norma Teles to serve with VMM on the missionary team in Lezhe, beginning in 1999.

Since then Norma has made significant contributions to the formation of the Lezhe congregation. Her vibrant, friendly approach endears her to children, families, and youth. God is using Norma's passion



Paulo Campos, Executive Secretary of JMMI, and Willard Eberly, Mediterranean Regional Director of VMM, visit Norma Teles in Albania. Courtesy of Eva Eberly

for the underprivileged and her frugal lifestyle to connect with the gypsy population in Lezhe. She exemplifies untiring, sacrificial self-giving as she faithfully shares Jesus with the Albanians.

In 2009 a young Brazilian couple, Rafael & Solange Tartari, who have a strong sense of call to Albania, applied to JMMI. VMM enthusiastically affirmed their appointment. The Mennonite missionary team warmly welcomed them to Lezhe in early 2010. Interestingly, half of this team is now Brazilian!

Mission workers from Brazil are greatly appreciated for their clear biblical perspectives and mission vision. Their broad

exposure and experience in evangelism, discipleship, youth work, and social ministries serve them well in missions. In their home setting they've learned to live simply and sacrificially, therefore adapt readily in the Albanian context. Hard work in demanding, difficult situations does not daunt them. Most of all, they are known for their love and

commitment to Jesus Christ!

Willard Eberly reflects, “This partnership has been a blessing to Albanians and missionaries alike. The witness is strengthened as persons from different nations, languages and cultures work together. Finances and talents are shared. Sometimes extra effort is required to assure accurate communication and understanding of cultural differences. But the result is a testimony of God's love for all people and races, a visible demonstration that Christ enables collaboration across cultural boundaries, a model of true unity—possible only in Christ.”

Grace Mennonite youth serve in eastern Kentucky

By **MEGAN BORROR**

Grace Mennonite youth group member

On Sunday, June 12, sixteen youth and adults from Grace Mennonite Fellowship, in Lacey Spring, Va.—Dwayne & Denise Martin, Gavin Martin, Caelin Martin, Sabrina Westfall, Timmy King, Jenell and Daisy Sipos, Eric and Justus Payne, Melinda Armentrout, Jacob Callahan, Chris Grim, Marlene Melhorn, Pastor Richard Early, and myself—departed for Kentucky. Pastor Richard prayed for us as we started on this amazing life-turning mission trip.

After a long drive, we arrived at McVeigh Missionary Baptist Church in Pike County, Kentucky. We met a new friend, Bobby Preston (who has been in a wheelchair since birth), and also the pastor of McVeigh Missionary Baptist Church, Pastor Justice. We went to the church service and met some youth and youth leader. We sang songs and talked about John 3:16. After the service we had a campfire and enjoyed hot dogs and marshmallows along with games.

The next day some of us did yard work for a 99-year-old lady. That crew did mowing, weeding, and cutting and collecting of bushes and branches. There was another lady who needed a new porch and a crew worked on that. We all ate supper together. Then the youth went over to the church and played corn hole, and the men went to Bobby's house and did some work.

On day three most of the adults went back to the 99-year-old lady's house to finish up. The youth went to pick up trash around the community. Once we got back to the church all of us rested and played games and more corn hole. Later, the youth from their church came and we all had a pizza party, played games and went swimming. Sadly, later that evening we had to say good-bye to our new friends. On the last night we had a devotion time, along with Bobby, and talked about our experiences, shared our thoughts, and had a long prayer.



(Back row:) Eric Payne, Timothy King, Justus Payne, Sabrina Westfall, Megan Borrer; (middle row:) Denise Martin, Gavin Martin, Jacob Callahan, Chris Grim, Melinda Armentrout, Jenell Sipos, Daisy Sipos, Marlene Melhorn; (front row:) Pastor Richard Early, Caelin Martin, Bobby Preston (from Ky.) Not Pictured: Dwayne Martin. Photo by Dwayne Martin

The last day we packed and loaded the van, took group pictures, had a prayer, and said good-bye to Bobby and McVeigh Missionary Baptist Church. We all had something that I think changed our lives for the better. We all tried something new and had wonderful experiences. We definitely learned to be grateful for the lives we have.

Common faith builds a bridge

By **ALDINE MUSSER**

Stephens City Mennonite Church co-pastor

Stephens City (Va.) Mennonite Church (SCMC) has hosted the Stephens City Ministers Fellowship for a number of years. This experiment emerged out of these relationship building times with Pastor Palmer from the Deliverance Ministries Pentecostal Community Church. On May 15, our two groups met for worship at Deliverance Ministries Pentecostal Community Church and sat around the table for a fellowship meal at SCMC. The purpose was to foster unity among the Christian community. We both have small faith communities and limited resources in our facilities.

One of my childhood friends from Reading, Pa. came as our guest speaker. He grew up in the Mennonite Church and married a woman from the Pentecostal

denomination. He brought with him an understanding of both styles of worship and helped blend the two traditions to fellowship in Jesus Christ.

Pastor Palmer, Deliverance Ministries, extended a warm welcome to all of us and said, "Reverend Sloane will break the spiritual bread of life and SCMC will serve the physical bread of nourishment today." It is believed that that this is the first time in history that both congregations have met in that building for worship. The church buildings are



Pastor Palmer from Deliverance Pentecostal, Aldine Musser from SCMC, Doug and Shirley Sloane from Reading, Pa. Courtesy of Aldine Musser

within walking distance from each other. This experience was uplifting and encouraging to both faith communities.

Mark your calendars for Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale

By **LISA LEHMAN**
Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale Publicity Chair



VIRGINIA Mennonite Relief Sale

Mark your calendars now for the 45th Annual Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale on Sept. 30-Oct. 1 at the Rockingham County Fair Grounds! You won't want to miss the delicious food, 5k Race for Relief, Sporting Clay Shoot, auction, farmer's market,



children's activities, silent auction, craft items, and of course catching up with friends and family!

This year the sale will benefit the following organizations and projects: Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) Sudan Coming Home project and the Virginia Unit of Mennonite Disaster Service. Penny Power funds will be donated to clean water projects - sand dams built through MCC and wells dug in Haiti through Virginia Mennonite Missions.

Now is the time for you to get involved! Start collecting coins for Penny Power, submit your auction donation forms, start plans to bake pies, breads, cookies, cakes, etc. to donate, volunteer with apple butter boiling, or help with set-up



and tear down. There are numerous volunteer opportunities for all! For more information or to sign up to receive a monthly e-newsletter update, go to www.vareliefsale.com and follow us on Facebook!

Photos courtesy of Mary Jo Veurink



Congregational Resource Center

New Resources at the CRC

Preaching/Worship Planning Resources:

1. The last two volumes in the "Feasting on the Word" commentary series are now in the catalog process. For each Sunday during the three-year cycle of the Revised Common Lectionary four in-depth articles for each scripture are offered.

They are written from theological, pastoral, exegetical and homiletical perspectives. These volumes must be used in the CRC or photocopied for personal use.

Prayer/Group Study Resources:

1. A new Covenant Series Bible Study on Isaiah is now available. Groups may use it for one quarter of Sunday School or in other ways.
2. Three unique books on prayer approach this practice creatively using color, body, and art in fascinating ways to deepen spiritual understanding.

Beth Moore study series:

1. Two more Beth Moore DVD/workbook sets are enroute to the CRC. We now have eight of her kits to offer. They are especially appropriate for women's groups.

A number of music CDs and other resources are also in the catalog process and will soon be available for checkout. Visit the CRC as you plan for fall! Linda Alley, Director, is happy to help you during the day Mon-Fri from 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and at other times by appointment.

Contact info: crc@emu.edu or 540.432.4219

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1181 Smith Avenue
Harrisonburg, VA (Room 110)

Phone: 540.432.4698

Email: crc@emu.edu

AUGUST 2011

Connections

Prayer Calendar

Sunday

If you would like to sponsor the prayer calendar, please contact Gloria Lehman at (540) 434-9727 or (800) 505-7735

7 This morning the Mennonite Church of Trinidad & Tobago gathers at Diego Martin for worship and inspiration around God's Word. The theme is "From Dreams to Visions" based on Joel 2:28-29. May the Holy Spirit energize them.

Monday

1 We give thanks for a blessed VMC Assembly last week! Delegates discussed, international guests fellowshiped, speakers inspired, and all were challenged! Let's move forward, "practicing for the future" as God leads.

8 When Hosanna meets with women in South Asia, they come with big questions about God and the Bible. Pray for her to have wisdom and language to answer so that they can understand more fully.

Tuesday

2 Richard & Margaret Keeler return to Trinidad today after two months in the US. Give thanks for their consistent witness and their dedication to God and His Church.

9 Pray for the 4 ^{train}Send participants who are now in Lezhe, Albania, being oriented to teach at the Albanian Christian School. Pray for the director, Klementina Shahini, as she gives direction to this new endeavor.

Wednesday

3 The Riddle family arrives in Bari, Italy, today after months in the US, visiting with family and sharing in churches. Pray for them as they prepare for school and relate to Centro Koinonia. May God bless each aspect of their lives.

10 Mark & Sarah Schoenhals are thinking about a preschool for Heidi a few mornings a week. In Thailand, children go to school at a young age. Pray that they make the right decisions about this.

Thursday

4 Last week, Peter Lehman returned to Va. from Costa Rica where he served with *Pura Vida* for 1 ½ years. Thank God for his service, and ask for clear direction as Peter follows God's call in the months ahead.

11 Jamaica Mennonite Church is holding their youth camp this week. Campers and counselors have a grand time together. Acting, singing, playing, and learning Biblical truths all aid spiritual formation. Praise God!

Friday

5 Rodney, Lindsey Nice and children returned to Va. last month after serving at the Maranatha School for the Deaf for 2 years. Ask for God's provision for them in every way, especially as they adjust to US culture and the boys go to school.

12 Thank God for Steve Carpenter's consistent work as VMC Conference Coordinator. Today he concludes nearly nine years in this role. May God bless his future endeavors.

Saturday

6 Today delegates of the five congregations of Mennonite Church of Trinidad & Tobago meet to do the church business and discuss vision. Pray for them and Joseph Sookram, president, as they process reports.

13 Michael & Ruth and family are visiting churches while in the US to share about their ministry in South Asia. Ask God to give them physical and spiritual strength for the demands of traveling and interacting with people.

14 Pray for Maurita Eberly, who is serving in Italy for two months as a teacher of worship and music leading. Her cultural understanding and language is a great asset. May she experience God's direction and strength for each day.

21 Steve & Betsy Dintaman are making the transition from the US to Lithuania where they will serve at LCC International University. Pray for them as they relate to many people and prepare for the school year.

15 Philip & Betsy Fisher Rhodes returned to Va. last month after a year in Israel/Palestine. Thank God for their service there. May God direct their new directions in the months ahead.

22 Parents and children are preparing for the new school year. Sometimes the adjustments are difficult. Pray for them as they make new schedules; may they find time to have prayer at the beginning of each day.

16 Giovanni & Fiorella Greco worked at Highland Retreat this summer and return to Vasto, Italy, continuing evangelistic work and seeking the Lord's direction on a Christian camp. Blessings were mutually received!

23 Pray for Keith & Tami Nice, Graham, N.C. as Outlet 10:27 continues to meet. Ask for God's insight and wisdom to make the direction of the church clear.

17 Pray for Grace Schrock-Hurst as she works with the Community Health Education classes on Wednesdays. The health of the children is a deep concern. Grace is a witness of love and care in this setting.

24 Thank God for the *Partners in Missions* teams that served this summer. Watch for their reports in the October issue of *Connections*.

18 Pray for Harry & Kris Kraus and son Sam as they make the transition from Va. to Kenya where they will be doing medical service. They are serving with African Inland Mission and VMMSissions.

25 Pray for Early Church, Harrisonburg, as they form a vibrant congregation. May each person experience the risen Christ in their lives and show that transformation to all around them.

19 Please agree in prayer with the Mennonite Hispanic Initiative, that God will provide for their financial needs and give wisdom as they plan for future progress.

26 In Quito, Ecuador, David Shenk assisted three refugees get started with setting up a shoe factory. They hope to expand this enterprise and teach others the trade. Pray for these workers who experienced oppression in Colombia.

20 In South Asia, Jacob is helping a local house church where the women are attending the meetings along with the men. This is a significant change. Pray for God to touch their hearts and lives.

27 The large change that small change can make is astounding! *Penny Power* is in full swing as congregations gather coins and bills to benefit clean water projects in Tanzania and Haiti. If the contents of your jug are matched, the funds double in size!

28 In Belize, Nancy Marshall is now full-time with Jesus' Deaf Church. She is mentoring young potential leaders, visiting Deaf persons who can't get to church services and leading Bible studies. Pray for her.

30 EMU classes begin today. Pray for the faculty, staff and students as they live and study together this semester. May new understandings of God's interaction in the world be absorbed.

31 Tomorrow the *Perspectives* (H'burg) class begins. Pray that God will do a mighty work in the instructors and students. You are invited to the first class free of charge. Contact Gloria Lehman for information.

This month's prayer calendar is sponsored by

Rosalie & Robert Eshleman

in loving memory of their son Lee Edward,
whose birth day was August 28, 1963.



Connections (USPS 007-205)
 Virginia Mennonite Missions
 Virginia Mennonite Conference
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 Harrisonburg, VA 22802-2498

Announcements

You are invited to visit the historic Breneman-Turner Mill just three miles north of Harrisonburg during the first and third Saturdays in August and September, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. You will be able to tour the mill, see corn being ground into meal on the Pony Stone, and hear stories about the mill, including how the mill was saved during Gen. Phillip Sheridan's burning of the valley in the fall of 1864. To visit the mill, follow Route 42 north of Harrisonburg two miles, turn left on Breneman Church Road and go one mile to the mill on the right.

Myron and Esther Augsburger invite you to join them for **Footsteps of Paul's Journey**, May 26-June 8, 2012. The trip will include 8 days in Greece visiting, Athens, Corinth, Thessalonica, Philippi, Berea and Delphi. The final 4 days will be a cruise on the Aegean stopping at Ephesus, Patmos, Rhodes, Crete and Santorini. Dave & Joyce Eshleman are tour coordinators. For a color brochure, call (540) 434-1796.

Join a Spiritual Pilgrimage to Israel, Palestine, Jordan, November 9-18 (+ optional three-day extension to Jordan). In Jordan: visit Petra, Jerash, Mt. Nebo, Jerash, Amman. In Israel: experience Nazareth Village, Caesarea, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Masada, Jericho, and much more. Excellent price. Departure from D.C. Contact Ed Bontrager at (540) 438-8304 or eebontrager@comcast.net. See itinerary on www.travelventuretours.com

Vespers at the CrossRoads Amphitheater 2011:

Each event begins at 7:00 p.m.

- Aug. 7 Mary Cline Detrick, meditation
- Aug. 14 Jim Lehman, meditation
- Aug. 21 Brian Gumm, meditation
- Aug. 28 George Cornelius, meditation

Shaping Your Family's Future, a curriculum helping individuals take stock of the influence of their families of origin on their parenting styles, is testing whether to create a DVD format. The curriculum targets newly expectant parents.

"This demographic seems to be more at home with DVD rather than print curriculum," says Burton Buller, producer of a new pilot that explores how the content of the curriculum may be represented in DVD form.

Philhaven, a Mt. Gretna, Pa. based non-profit behavioral health services agency that created the original curriculum, has contracted with Buller to create the pilot. Philhaven is affiliated with the Mennonite Church. MennoMedia will serve as an eventual distributor for *Shaping Your Family's Future* curriculum. People can view the 18-minute pilot at www.shapingyourfamily.org/SYFF_video and take a survey that will help decide the viability of the project. "This survey is essential to this project moving forward," says Buller.

PENNY POWER

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2011




The **Board of Directors of CrossRoads**, the Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center, has called **Joan L. Daggett**, Associate District Executive of the Shenandoah District of the Church of the Brethren, as their new Executive Director. She will begin her new role on September 19.

CrossRoads President Robert Alley said, "She will bring valuable skills and experiences to implement our mission and vision and to interact with our constituencies. We look forward to working with her."