

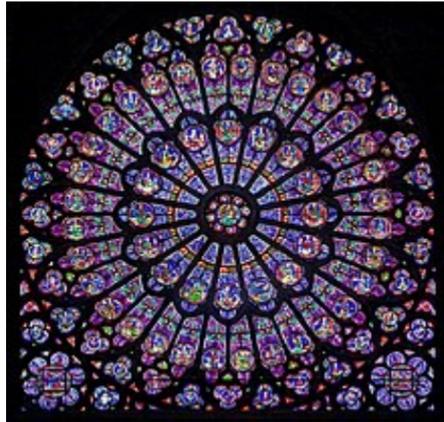
A Thumbnail History of Stained Glass by Carl Raub

The origins of stained glass are not certain, but some of the oldest examples of man-made glass are Egyptian colored glass beads from around 2700 BC. The use of stained glass windows were first used by wealthier Romans in their homes beginning during the first century A.D. At St. Paul's Monastery located in Great Britain, some of the oldest pieces of a stained glass window dating back to 686 A.D. were found. The earliest stained glass piece presenting a picture is a head of Christ from the 10th century, which was discovered at the Lorsch Abbey in Germany.



The stained glass windows that we are familiar with today did not come about until the 10th century, with the construction of Gothic cathedrals. The oldest complete stained glass windows were those of Augsburg Cathedral located in Germany that were constructed during the late 11th century. The Medieval church funded most of the stained glass windows

created of the time. Abbot Suger of Saint Denis was a famous patron of stained glass art and resided outside of Paris, France. He used the wealth of the abbey to make the windows larger and more beautiful. This was due in part to the fact that he considered light the manifestation of God himself. Subjects of stained glass windows that were being made during this time were mostly religious in nature.



These magnificent creations served to tell Biblical stories to lay people that were not able to read, as well as beautifying the churches. It has been speculated that the stained glass windows probably had a more profound impact on the people than the sermons that were given at that

time. These gothic windows were generally tall and spear-, wheel-, or rose-shaped. A good example of these types of Gothic stained glass windows are those of the Notre Dame chapel in Paris. It holds one of the largest rose shaped windows in the world, which recently survived the devastating fire in the cathedral earlier this year.

In the next issue, what puts the color in stained glass.

Covenant
& New
Member
Sunday is
June 9th



This 'n' That by Arlene Yothers

Thank You to all who came out for the Hymn Sing back in April. Thank you to the Song Leaders and pianist, you all did a great job!

The Mennonite Heritage Center will be holding the Whack and Roll event on May 31 and June 1. This is a fund raiser for the Center. You are invited to watch the competition between teams of croquet players. That would give you a chance to stop in and see the gift shop that they have there.

Thanks to all the children and parents that gave money to go towards the Worm Project, this was collected

as a Sunday school project. We had a nice day for the 5 K Walk/Run. It was a way to reach out into the community and inform others about the Worm Project. If you have questions about this organization, please contact me.

The Care and Share Thrift Shoppes is looking for volunteers to help in their various stores. There are many opportunities ranging from testing items received to being a bagger or working at the cash register. If young people need a place to volunteer to complete a project for school or want this for your college applica-

tion, come on down. If retired folks want to get out of the house, come on down. Thanks to all who do help in some way and to those who bring items to be sold or come as a buyer. All are needed to help many persons through the MCC organization.

The Souderton Home Chicken Bar -B-Que will be held on August 23 and 24. If you are able to bake, please help us out. If you want to come and be entertained, there will be activities for all ages. There is good food to eat there or take home. More information will come later.



From Pastor Nathan

Our oldest child, Eulalia Ada-Rose Good, is named after my grandmother, Ada Rosenberger. Ada was the first woman elder to serve here at Swamp Mennonite Church, not because she believed women should serve in leadership, but because she believed that strongly in the call of the church (at least that is how the story has been passed down to me).

We have a 10 volume set of Bible Stories for kids, starting in Genesis and going all the way through to Revelation. Each page has pictures on it, each story is around three pages long, and the set contains most of the stories of Scripture in a way easily understood by children. We read a story to the kids every night before bed, and recently we read the story of Hilkiah the priest and other messengers from king Josiah going to Huldah the prophetess to inquire of the Lord (2 Kings 22:14-20, 2 Chronicles 34:22-28). As I was reading, Eulalia pointed to each person in the picture, asking who they were. When she pointed to Huldah I explained that this was Huldah the prophetess, but realizing that she wouldn't know what "prophetess" meant I explained that she was a preacher, almost like a pastor. Eulalia immediately responded, "Like Pastor Tami? I LOVE Pastor Tami!"

In preparing my vacation around Winslow's birth, we did not know whether I would be able to participate in the Good Friday service, so we planned the service with Tami preaching and with me functioning as the worship leader, where it would be easier for someone else to step in as necessary. As the elementary children came up to sing after the meditation, I couldn't help but notice that at least three quarters of our elementary children are girls. This

wasn't planned by anyone (except, perhaps, by God) but I couldn't help feeling extreme gratefulness that these young women will grow up with the example of a female role model in leadership at church.

Carolyn Custis James has written several books on gender, leadership, and the church. She has reframed the conversation in evangelical churches over the past century from "can women lead in the church?" to "can men build the kingdom of God alone?" When God created Adam in the Garden of Eden he said, "It is not good for man to be alone". He looked for a suitable *ezer* for the man. This Hebrew word *ezer* is found 21 times in the Old Testament. Twice, in Genesis 2, it refers to a woman. Three times it refers to stronger nations Israel called on for military support in battle. And the other sixteen times it is used to refer to God himself, again, most of these references in relation to God's strength and support in times of war.

While most of our Bible's translate *ezer* in Genesis 2 as "helper", Carolyn suggests that a better translation would be "warrior". And this makes sense because, as we soon find, the Garden of Eden was a war zone! The enemy was preparing to attack, and God looked and saw that the man was vulnerable. God did not create Eve to be Adam's helper, some sort of servant or care-taker. God created Adam and Eve to be a blessed alliance to stand against the evil one. God created Eve because Adam could not win the battle for the kingdom of God alone. God never intended men to put themselves above women, to exclude women from certain decisions or areas of leadership in business, the church, or the home; he created women and men to hold fast to one another, to stand in unity together, to function as one heart, one mind, and one flesh together. This is how the battle for the kingdom is won.

Women in leading and teaching roles in the church is not a response to cultural feminism. Women have always been at the forefront of the Christian story. The women who met Jesus at the tomb were the first evangelists, the first to proclaim Jesus' resurrection. The stories in our Anabaptist history book, *Martyrs' Mirror*, show that the majority of early evangelists and preachers in the Anabaptist reformation were women. The women's liberation movement in the United States was actually the *result* of the Pentecostal movement in the 1900-1910's which recognized the gifts of men and women equally. Brinton Rutherford of Lancaster Mennonite Conference did a historical survey of the church throughout its 2000 year history and found that every time the Spirit of God moved in mighty ways and revival broke forth in the church, at the forefront of this was women and men working together in teaching and leadership. This should not be surprising to us, as the verse of Pentecost was Joel 2:28-29, "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days." But Brinton Rutherford also discovered that in each of these cases, within 2-4 generations, the church institutionalized the revival movement, slowly pushing women back to the margins as men resolidified their positions of power and control.

I pray that my sons and daughter can grow up in a Church that no longer caters to one gender or another. I pray that women do not replace men in leadership and that men do not push women back out of leadership. *(continued on page 3)*

Living Prayers by Pastor Tami Good

"I lift my eyes up, unto the mountains...where does my help come from? My help comes from You, Maker of heaven, Creator of the earth." (Psalm 121)

During this past Lenten season, we, as a congregation, focused on the power of prayer, challenging ourselves to seek after God in new ways in order to grow closer to Him and to each other. When Pastor Nathan and I decided to look more closely at the topic of prayer, I would have never guessed that our family would also be flung into a medical crisis with our daughter at the same time. I can't tell you how often I found myself running to God asking, "Why, Lord!?" as we faced the uncertainty of her diagnosis. However, each time I did, Psalm 121 would come rushing into my mind and show me the help I needed and longed for comes from the Lord.

As you read down this Psalm of only 8 verses you are reminded twice that your help comes from the Lord and six times that the Lord is your keeper. God keeps you when you sleep and when you rise. God keeps you in the darkness and in the light. God keeps you from all evil and in everyday life. God keeps you when you leave and when you return... From this time on and forevermore. God is your keeper and in this you will find rest, even in the midst of life's most chaotic situations.

I must admit, living into this promise was not an easy task. The last evening of our daughter's IV treatment proved to be the worst. For four hours I watched as my precious little girl suffer every side effect of a treatment that was supposed to help her. Nothing about that experience made sense and I found myself walking the hospital halls asking God how THIS situation could bring Him any glory. As I sat at a nurse's desk weeping tears of exhaustion, God's still small voice rang in my ears, "The Lord is your keeper; the Lord will keep you from all; The Lord will keep your life...from this time and

forevermore." In this moment I was reminded when I am weak, MY God is strong. When I am unable, MY God is infinitely more able. These were not mere words to be read, but words to be lived, breathed, claimed and carried out. They became my strength and my hope, which in turn helped me to give Kaitlyn all the love and compassion she needed to finish her "race". Through God's words, both of us remained strong.

Listening to all your stories on the power of prayer and the things you learned during this past Lent, challenged me to not simply continue this journey for a season, but to instead carry this blessing of prayer into each day. Prayer is not something we do simply at certain times of the day. Instead, prayer is a continuous conversation with God that happens when we mindfully recognize His presence in every aspect of our daily lives. Nothing is too small to share... nothing is too overwhelming for God to handle. As you walk this path of life, may you too carry the blessing of prayer with you. May your life become the very scriptures we love to proclaim, and may your every breath breathe out blessings of prayers, even when life's circumstances warrant the opposite. May you be constantly reminded that your help comes from the Lord. He is your keeper, from this time on and forevermore.



Trustee Report

The curbing project for the side parking lot has started. We will be installing curbing around the two flower beds in the middle of the lot, and curbing around the outside edges of the lot. This is the first of two stages of repaving the side lot, which will probably not happen until next year, as finances allow.

We are in the process of getting quotes to replace the boiler in the old section of the church. This should be completed this summer sometime.

We were very happy with the response to the First Aid/AED/CPR training that we offered. We now have many members trained to respond to accidents that could occur at church activities.

The new signs for in front of the church, and the two directional signs at Bethlehem Pike and Allentown Rd have been ordered, and should be installed in the near future. The new signs will have the 'leaf' logo that is on our website and church letterhead incorporated in the design.

The microwave in the kitchen broke, and was replaced with a new one. (Thanks Terry Landis)

As always, if you see something that needs trustee attention, please either fill out a blue slip that is located on Carl's desk and put it in one of the Trustees mailboxes, or let one of the Trustees know. (Ken Longacre, Terry Landis, Will Sadler, Linda Martin) Trustee Committee



Nathan (from page 1)

I pray that we would be the blessed alliance that God created us to be, women and men working together to spread God's kingdom to a broken and needy world. I pray that men would find their voices, speaking about faith and teaching young men and women to love God with their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love their neighbor as themselves. I pray that women would find their courage, taking on the responsibility to lead in all areas of life. I pray that we would not back down, that we would not allow Satan to divide us, and that we continue to listen to everyone who has the Spirit of God within them.

I am thankful for Pastor Tami. I am thankful for her partnership in ministry and that we can do more together than either of us could do alone. I dream of a day when a woman pastor is not an oddity, but is instead the norm. I dream of a day when as many churches in our conference are led by women as those led by men. I dream of a day when we would be one, as Jesus and his Father are one; when we will march forward to conquer for the kingdom of heaven, rather than trying to conquer one another within the kingdom of heaven; when we will care less about our own power and control, and more about the gifts and wisdom that each person brings.

May God lead us and guide us and give us peace. Amen.

Church Board Summary

The Board held an extra meeting on March 3 to review a proposal from the Columbarium Committee. The proposal was approved for presentation to the congregation.

Joe Hackman and Verne Geissinger have agreed to serve as FMC delegates for 2019. There will be FMC delegate meetings in May and November this year. At the fall meeting a vote will be taken to merge Franconia Conference with Eastern District Conference.

Leadership Minister Mike Clemmer joined us at our Board Meeting. He announced that he will be concluding his service at Towamencin at the end of June. He is planning to relocate to the Lancaster area in the future, and is hoping to pastor a church in that area. Franconia Conference has invited Mike to continue in his role as a FMC Leadership Minister. He is willing to continue in this role for the time being and advised that he could do so after he has relocated, if the Board wishes. He intends to take a sabbatical from July to September, and he will provide a 3 month lead time when the date for the move is set. He will not move until he knows what church he will be pastoring. The Board agreed

to continue with Mike Clemmer as our Leadership Minister after he transitions to Lancaster.

The board began discussing the timing for the Lead Pastor Congregational Review. Nathan's current term is over at the end of 2020. There was discussion about condensing the process for the Congregational Review of the Lead Pastor to a 3 or 4 day procedure. This process is lead by the Leadership Minister. It was decided that we will begin working on setting dates for the review in January and engage in the process next summer/fall.

Pastor Nathan talked about considering the topic of 'membership' for the annual Church Board/Ministry Team training in the fall, possibly using 'Church Together' or 'Being the Church' as a focus statement for 2020. He also presented an idea for addressing the homelessness issue in the community that would require a greater working relationship between Swamp and West Swamp. Church Board affirmed Pastor Nathan approaching West Swamp with the idea.

Nathan spoke of a possible intergenerational Sunday school class on prayer this summer using round

Congrats!



To all of our 2019 graduates!

tables. He will meet with Laura and Bob to further discuss this proposed option.

The church sign needs to be replaced. Ken Longacre presented a preliminary drawing of the proposed sign replacement in front of the church. Ken also addressed a non-profit group that is requesting frequent use of the church facilities. It was decided to ask if they would be willing to make a contribution to offset expenses.

