

## Ministry Team Highlights

Pastor Tracy spoke about raising up leaders who multiply and create new leaders and the process to continue adding new persons. He challenged each minister to come up with at least one person to have an "ICNU" (I see in you) conversation with. He then proceeded to discuss the document "Communicating with the Congregation" by asking ministers for input in updating it. It was decided to consider digital methods and adding texting as new ways of communicating to members of the congregation. This was followed by prayer.

Pastor Nathan welcomed Will Sadler as the new Minister of Outreach. He then reviewed the organizational chart making a few adjustments and the Ministry Team committee information for the 2022 Church Directory.

Long-range planning for the 2022 calendar included the addition of several new entries including the Good Friday Service; Easter Sunrise Service; the last day of Clubs (tentatively May 18); the Pinewood Derby (tentatively June 1); Pentecost on June 5 which will include covenant renewal, baptism, communion and the possibility of

having an informal type barbecue later in the day.

Other upcoming items discussed included whether or not to keep the items currently located in foyer including VBS art and the Connecting For a Purpose window from last year; having Communion on February 27 at table(s) with ministers and spouses helping with the elements; special artwork was discussed for this year's Lenten Season for each of the six Sundays; look for individuals to be dramatic readers for Good Friday and Easter Sunrise services; communicate with Larry Geissinger about how to obtain palm leaves for the Palm Sunday service; and Rachel will speak with Head Trustee, Ken Longacre about placement of the Cubbies in the CE wing.

What are your plans for communicating needs, activities, and successes of ministry? Ideas mentioned included: Sending thank you cards and/or messages to those working behind the scenes, making sure to use the bulletin and one-call system for relaying activity information, create a google document, and add bulletin boards. Pastor Nathan then reviewed the Communication Covenant and everyone present signed it.

Pastor Tracy noted that the best way to review the Child/Youth Protection Policy will be via e-mail and proposed that the best way to update it may be to develop a committee. The policy must be conveyed to all individuals in contact with children. It was decided to plan a training session before fall.

A congregational meeting was scheduled for 1:00 pm on March 6 to discuss 2 upcoming MC USA resolutions to be voted on in May. MC USA delegates will be decided after that meeting. It was decided to staff the Nursery and have activities for the kids during this meeting time.

Will announced that the Mission Outreach subcommittee will be undergoing changes in the coming months and asked ministers to think about how best to plan for the future and rebirth of this committee and the overall vision of Mission Outreach. Lowell noted the Youth Auction was being planned for October 1<sup>st</sup>.



MOSAIC  
mennonite  
conference

Deadline for next issue is  
Tuesday, April 26th.



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## Imitate Christ by Nathan Good

We have just finished a series through the Gospel of John considering the work of the Spirit in the life and ministry of Jesus. As John finishes proclaiming the good news about Jesus, he tells a story of Jesus showing up in a room where his disciples are gathered. He speaks peace to them and says, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." After saying this he breathes on them and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit".

We are called by Jesus to continue his ministry with the woman at the well, the man at the pool of Bethesda, the disciples by washing their feet in the upper room. We are called to the water cooler at our office, the water boy on our basketball team, the watering trough on our farm. We are sent by Jesus and given the power of his Spirit to bring God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven where we live, work, and play.

Pastor Tracy and I recently went to a conference at Souderton Mennonite Church with over 35 other local pastors where we considered what it means that we are sent to minister as Jesus ministered. This means church isn't about what we do as your pastors, it isn't about our staffing structure, it isn't about Sunday School or Sunday morning worship, it isn't even about daily devotions of Bible reading and prayer. These things are all important, but they only matter if they transform us into the image of Jesus so that we live lives of self-giving unconditional love everywhere we go. As Paul says

in 1 Corinthians 13, if we have every skill and gift possible, if we have every mark of success, even in ministry, but we do not have love, we are only clanging gongs.

Jesus went into the worship services of his day to lead people out into their neighborhoods, and somehow we've turned following him into leading people out of their neighborhoods and into our worship services. As we gather together and consider how to equip one another as followers of Jesus, it can be easy to lose focus on this. We can spend so much energy connecting that we forget the purpose that we are connecting for. However, sometimes congregations go through seasons that strip everything away in such a way that they are forced to ask the difficult questions of why they exist and what it means not just to gather as the church but to actually be sent on mission as followers of Jesus.

One of our sister congregations, Rocky Ridge, has been experiencing this in recent years. They have been through some challenging pastoral transitions along with other factors that have left them much smaller than they were several years ago. They are currently discerning what this means for their future but are also sensing a fresh wind of the Spirit encouraging them to re-envision what it might mean for them to follow Jesus here in our local community. In this season they have been encouraged by conference leadership to consider what it might look like to partner with other missionally minded churches in the Quakertown area in order to work for the kingdom of

heaven rather than thinking they need to function as an island. I have been invited into this conversation along with Kris Wint from Finland Mennonite Church.

The members at Rocky Ridge are aware that things will not continue as they are now, that their elders are actively praying and seeking council to understand what God wants for them in the coming year, and that they are in conversation with Finland and Swamp. If you hear about any of this through the grapevine, let it remind you to pray for the work of God in our community, for all of our local churches, and for ourselves. Let it also remind us of the need we have in every season to seek the Spirit's direction and will above all else, to seek the way of love, sent by Jesus into our community with the power of the Holy Spirit to bring transformation.

In what ways is God calling you to bring his kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven? What are your "watering holes" and who are you sent to there? As you ask these questions, if you realize that you are not working towards these things, it is worth asking yourself whether you have received the Holy Spirit that sends us on the mission of Jesus.



## Swamp Youth Ministry... You In? by Lowell Gehman

It's Wednesday, 7:15 PM and do you know where Swamp Teenagers are? That's what I thought. "It's not my day to watch them" or "What do I look like? Their mother?" may work for some people but don't try selling that to me. By the time one has been on this earth 66 years he has talked to enough used car salesmen to know when the truth is being trampled.

That being said I hope you are now curious as to where you could find a Swamp Teenager should you need one on Wednesday evening. Beginning at 6:30 they would be gathering

awaiting the beginning of games. 6:45 to 7:30 you could find them playing things like Never Ending Dodgeball or Basement Baseball. At 7:30 the leaders gather them and begin the process of lowering the energy level with announcements which then leads into a time of worship and a lesson.

In addition to the Wednesday gathering there is also a monthly planned activity. In January the senior youth had a hangout weekend at Hemlock Springs while the junior youth spent an evening bouncing off the walls at SkyZone. February gathered both the junior and senior youth

together for a retreat at Men-O-Lan. A trip to a Phantoms ice hockey game and a Lock-in are on the calendar for the near future. Each month is different.

Does that sound like something you would like to be part of? If so I have some really good news for you. We are looking for a few good people to be part of the leadership team. Even if you can't commit to every event we need volunteers to keep the program functioning. If you are interested please contact either Lowell Gehman, Brandon Longacre, Hilary Gehman, Ashley Geissinger or Pastor Tracy.

## Pastor's Perspective by Tracy Commons

So... you in?? As I have had the opportunity to invest intentional time and energy in supporting our youth ministry, I have been so encouraged by the level of long-term self-giving love and investment from our youth leaders in utilizing their gifts in teaching, coordinating, creating fun and enjoyable environments, and especially cultivating a culture of relational trust with the youth. The youth group is growing, and our desire is to foster a community where they are connecting for a purpose, where it is a safe place for all to be welcome, and where these young people will grow together in Christ.

We have some work to do, and we can't do it without your help. As Lowell communicated so well, we need more leaders, leaders who can come alongside to teach, help plan/host events, and build relationships to mentor and disciple our youth in the way of Jesus.

Over the last month and a half I have been doing the majority of the teaching with the junior youth, and we have had some great conversations together, watched Bible Project videos, studied scripture, had times of sharing and prayer, and focused on learning about "*Jesus as a gracious and generous king who is our peace*" (ask your junior youth to see if they remember that statement!). We also looked at the "One Anothers" of scripture as a response to learning about who Jesus is and who we can be for others in light of who he is for us.

As I reflect on the "One Anothers" I want to encourage you that considering serving with our youth is one of the best ways to live out these commands for the betterment of the next generation. Our youth need multiple adults in their lives who will exemplify these principles: *Love* one another (John 13:34 - This command occurs at least 16 times)... *Be devoted* to one

another (Romans 12:10)... *Honor* one another above yourselves (Romans 12:10)... *Build up* one another (Romans 14:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:11)... *Accept* one another (Romans 15:7)... *Admonish* one another (Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16)... *Care for* one another (1 Corinthians 12:25)... *Serve* one another (Galatians 5:13)... *Bear* one another's *burdens* (Galatians 6:2)... *Forgive* one another (Ephesians 4:2, 32; Colossians 3:13)... *Be patient* with one another (Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13)... *Speak the truth* in love (Ephesians 4:15, 25)... *Be kind and compassionate* to one another (Ephesians 4:32)... *Look to the interests* of one another (Philippians 2:4)... *Bear with* one another (Colossians 3:13)... *Teach* one another (Colossians 3:16)... *Comfort* one another (1 Thessalonians 4:18)... *Encourage* one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11)... *Exhort* one another (Hebrews 3:13)... *Stir up* [provoke, stimulate] one another to

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## Church Board Highlights

Church Board Chair, Robert Geissinger brought the meeting to order and welcomed Laura Rush to the Church Board. Laura then offered the devotional from Colossians 3:1-18 about staying in God's peace followed with an opening prayer.

The following actions were reviewed and approved: The minutes from the Church Board meeting of November 18 and Member Meeting of December 1. Laura Rush was chosen for the position of Corporate Secretary. Barry Gehman, Linda Jandl, and Brandon Longacre agreed to serve on the MEP Committee.

Quincy highlighted portions of the 2021 Financial Reports. Pastor Nathan reviewed the Church Board Policy Manual and Communication Covenant which everyone signed. Robert spoke of Mosaic Conference delegate openings for the new year, noting that Quincy is one by virtue of his Vice Chair position on the board. Laura Rush agreed to serve in the other position. It was decided to wait on filling the delegate position for MCUSA until

after a discernment process with the congregation. A meal and discussion will be held before the next board meeting.

In other business, discussion continued about the placement of an insert in the new hymnal. A vote was taken with 2 in favor of placement and 5 against. It was decided to place a letter in mailboxes detailing the process. Pastor Nathan offered to draft a letter and forward to board members for their review. The board reviewed the Trustees Responsibilities & Authorizations document. It was noted that the document already reflects what is being done. The Board approved

of the clarification with one small edit. Meeting dates were established for the remainder of 2022 and the annual Member Meeting will be held December 6.

Finally, Pastor Nathan proposed the planning of a trip to Israel to celebrate the Denlinger's 40 years of missionary work. The Board approved this and Nathan will take to Ministry Team for planning.



## This 'n' That by Arlene Yothers

Events are slowly returning to the Souderton Mennonite Homes campus of Living Branches. There will not be a Rocker-thon at the end of February. The Auxiliary hasn't had a meeting for many months. Volunteers are again welcome to the various areas. Call Lynne Allebach at 215-368-4438 at ext. 42289 if you have any questions.

The Mennonite Heritage Center in Harleysville is having various programs and workshops in March and April. See the News and Events papers posted on board by the nursery. There are some new programs starting at the Heritage Center--stay tuned.

The Worm Project Board is working to get deworming pills to children around the world. Your pennies count!!! Please contribute to the cause. There are envelopes on the table in the foyer. Would you like to receive their email or newsletter by mail? Please send them a note in one of the envelopes.

The Care and Share Shoppes is in need of volunteers. Mennonite Central Committee is a world missionary program that benefits from the proceeds from these stores. They are located in Souderton. There are ways to help in many areas. Come see me for more information.

## Pastor's Perspective

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*love and good works* (Hebrews 10:24)... *Show hospitality* to one another (1 Peter 4:9)... *Employ the gifts that God has given us for the benefit of one another* (1 Peter 4:10)... *Pray* for one another (James 5:16).

We do all this because we are in a real sense "*members of one another*" (Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:25).

So... you in??

