

Annual Meeting, June 20-22

"Come, walk with us ... to God knows where"

Milwaukee (Wisc.) Mennonite Church and Central District Conference leaders invite everyone to the Annual Meeting ... and to listen together to where God is leading.


The gathering begins Thursday, June 20, and continues through noon on Saturday, June 22. Coordinators represent both Milwaukee and Madison Mennonite Churches. The worship planning team also includes members from Chicago Community, First Mennonite in Urbana, Ill., and St. Paul Mennonite in Minnesota.

Worship services explore the walking-listening theme:

- Thursday evening's preacher is **Anton Flores-Maisonet**, using John 4:1-10 for his sermon, "God, go where?"
- Friday's worship service is a hymn sing with communion.
- Saturday morning's preacher is **Alison Brookins**, helping us see in the story of Zacchaeus what we need for "Thriving on the way."

Agenda for delegates includes voting on welcoming three congregations into the conference: Americus (Ga.) Mennonite Fellowship, Emmanuel Mennonite Church

(Gainesville, Fla.) and Jubilee Mennonite Fellowship (Bellevue, Ohio). Other events include seminars and examples of congregations following where the Spirit is calling. Thursday is Family Day with fund-raising activities and opportunities to explore Milwaukee.

All are welcome to attend any part of the Annual Meeting and are invited to join the fellowship, worship and learning. 

Visit the CDC website

For all details of the Annual Meeting, visit mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting. You will find:

- Registration forms for the gathering, along with forms for childcare and children's activities, dinner for Mennonite Women, Pastor Appreciation dinner, and the fund-raising activities
- Delegate Report Book, including items requiring action
- Information about housing and meal options
- Speakers, seminars, storytelling stations
- Slate of nominees for the CDC board and committees



Schedule

Thursday - Family Day

Family Day events are open to everyone! You do not need to register for the Annual Meeting to attend.

1:00pm - Golf Outing at Dretzka Park

1:00pm - Bike-Run-Walk on the Hank Aaron Trail

2:00pm - Registration begins in the lobby outside the sanctuary

3:00pm - Spiritual Practices for the Journey, seminar led by Mary Etta King, sanctuary

5:00pm - Pastor Appreciation Dinner, Blues Egg

5:00pm - Backyard Picnic, fellowship hall

7:30pm - **WORSHIP** in the sanctuary.

Speaker: Anton Flores-Maisonet

9:00pm - Ice cream social, fellowship hall



*Anton Flores-Maisonet,
Thursday evening preacher*

Friday

DELEGATE SESSION 1 in the sanctuary

8:30am

- Welcome and getting acquainted around tables
- State of the conference address
- Centering, silent reflection, prayer
- Congregational story: Milwaukee Mennonite Church
- Introductions
- Summary review and ACTION on 2018 Annual Meeting minutes
- Highlight actions in 2019 agenda
- Treasurer's report and presentation of the 2019-2020 proposed Spending Plan
- Presentation of and ACTION on the 2019-2020 slate of nominees; Commissioning prayer

9:45 - 10:15am - **BREAK**/Snacks, Fellowship Hall

10:15am

- Receiving congregations requesting membership in CDC: Americus Mennonite Fellowship, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Jubilee Mennonite Fellowship
- ACTION: Vote to receive into membership
- Word from Mennonite Church USA

10:45am

- Sharing around tables
- Introduction of Jane Wood, president of Bluffton Univ.
- Introduction of guests
- Announcements

11:45am - **LUNCH** (on your own)

1:00pm - **VISITING/DISPLAYS/BOOKSIGNINGS**, Area outside sanctuary

DELEGATE SESSION 2 in fellowship hall

1:30pm

- Announcing membership vote
- Term review of Conference Minister
- Congregational Story: TBA

1:45pm - **STORYTELLING STATIONS** (see more on p. 3)
Rotate from one to another: 1:45-2:10; 2:20- 2:45; 2:55-3:15; 3:25-3:50

- Biblical Storytelling, with Deron Brill Bergstresser and Karla Minter
- How Camp Friedenswald Changes Lives, with Jenna Liechty Martin
- Congregations and Prison Ministry, with Tim Lind and Christine Nofsinger
- Stories of Call, with Janeen Bertsche Johnson

4:00pm - **BREAK**/Snacks, Atrium

4:30pm - **WORSHIP** (hymn sing, offering, Communion), sanctuary

5:45pm - Transition

6:00pm Dinner

- Mennonite Women, fellowship hall
- Dinner for others, on your own
- 7:30pm SEMINARS** (see more on p. 3)
- Looking Forward to MennoCon19, with Michael Danner
- Sanctuary for our Undocumentable Neighbors, with Joel Miller and Isaac Villegas
- Faith Formation for Children and Families, with Lora Nafziger
- Youth Ministry Resource Sharing, with Mark Rupp
- A Life in Story, with Jane Wood



Saturday

8:30am - **WORSHIP** in the sanctuary.

Speaker: Alison Brookins

9:45am - **BREAK**/Snacks, fellowship hall

DELEGATE SESSION 3 in the sanctuary

10:15am

- Missional Committee report
- Congregational Story: TBA
- Ministerial Committee Report: Recognition of new pastors/credentialed leaders, presentation of Journey certificate and remembering pastors who have died
- ACTION: 2019-2020 Spending Plan
- Everence: Sharing available resources
- Open mic

11:00am

- Constituency Leaders Council report
- Camp Friedenswald highlights
- MCC Great Lakes report
- Listening Committee Report

11:40am

- Evaluations
- Close of Delegate Sessions; Songs/Benediction

12:00pm - **CLOSE** of Annual Meeting



*Alison Brookins,
Saturday morning preacher*

Seminars

Thursday, June 20, 3 pm

Spiritual Practices for the Journey

Presenter: Mary Etta King, co-pastor at Covenant Mennonite Fellowship, Sarasota, Fla.

Explore spiritual disciplines, with Anita Amstutz's book, *Soul Tending: A Journey into the Heart of Sabbath*, as a resource. Also practice silence, contemplation on a scriptural passage and music to motivate and inspire.



Friday, June 21, 7:30 pm (choose one)

A Life in Story

Presenter: Jane Wood, president, Bluffton (Ohio) University

Explore theories of identity development. Drawing from examples in her own life, Wood will invite participants to think of their own "life story" through key experiences and narratives that shape and ground the individual in community.



Youth Ministry Resource Sharing

Presenter: Mark Rupp, Pastor of Christian Formation, Columbus (Ohio) Mennonite Church

Share resources, stories and ideas for doing ministry with youth. A few people who work directly with youth in CDC congregations will begin, and all participants can share what has worked well in their context.



Faith Formation for Children and Families

Presenter: Lora Nafziger, Pastor of Christian Formation and Congregational Life, Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Hear about one congregation's experience with creating and shaping faith formation programming within worship, Sunday school and during the week for children and



families in an inter-generational and multi-sensory way.

Sanctuary for our Undocumentable Neighbors

Presenters: Joel Miller, Columbus (Ohio) Mennonite Church, and Isaac Villegas, Chapel Hill (N.C.) Mennonite Fellowship

Throughout church history, communities have used their worship space to shield people from punishment from the government. Hear how two CDC congregations have participated in what's being called "The New Sanctuary Movement."



Looking Forward to #MennoCon19

Presenter: Michael Danner, Associate Executive Director for Church Vitality and Engagement, MC USA

Preview some of what's in store at the Mennonite Church USA biennial convention in July in Kansas City. Get answers to your questions about #MennoCon19.



J. Tyler Klassen

Communion (pictured here from the 2018 Annual Meeting) will be part of the worship service on Friday, June 21, beginning at 4:30 pm. At that service, an offering will be taken for the work of CDC and the giving project, The Cathedral Center.

Storytelling stations

Participants will have opportunities to hear four stories during the first Friday afternoon session, rotating from one to another.

Congregations and Prison Ministry. Presenters: Tim Lind and Christine Nofsinger, Florence Church of the Brethren-Mennonite.

Learn how a small, rural congregation has become involved in a variety of activities relating to prisons, jails and prisoners.

How Camp Friedenswald Changes Lives.

Presenter: Jenna Liechty Martin, executive director.

Gather in a makeshift Mosquito Hollow to hear stories that have enlivened the camp over the years.

Biblical Storytelling. Presenters: Deron Brill Bergstresser and Karla Minter.

Hear stories of Miriam, Deborah and Jael, sharing a vision for right relationships as women engage in leadership, act with authority, bring a prophetic word, fully participate in and respond to God's call.

Stories of Call. Presenter: Janeen Bertsche Johnson.

Hear stories of how God has invited ordinary people to prepare for and/or provide leadership in the church, and explore ways we can encourage others to use their gifts for God's reign.

Children's activities

Activities and care for children are planned during the Annual Meeting sessions. Please check the online schedule for details and registration forms:

Care for infants and preschoolers:

www.mcusacdc.org/infants-preschool/

Activities for children in grades K through 12, including a visit to the Milwaukee Zoo:

www.mcusacdc.org/children-k-grade12/

Giving project

This year's **Giving Back to the Community** project, selected by the host congregations, is the Cathedral Center in Milwaukee. It was founded to address the need for shelter and support services for women and families. It provides "a safe environment for women and families, while working to end homelessness one life at a time" by offering comprehensive, targeted programs that include emergency shelter, case management services, and workforce development. For more information, visit cathedral-center.org/



Additional events

Family Day, Thursday, June 20, afternoon

1 pm - Disk Golf Scramble at Dretzka Park, a scenic world-class course. Fees support the CDC Leadership Development Fund. www.mcusacdc.org/golf-outing/

1 pm - Bike-Run-Walk on the Hank Aaron Trail, a 12-mile trail. Donations support the CDC Leadership Development Fund. www.mcusacdc.org/bike-run-walk/

5 pm - Backyard picnic: Enjoy an informal meal with friends old and new.

9 pm - Friday evening ice cream social: Time to get acquainted with others who are participating in the Annual Meeting.

Special dinners

Pastor Appreciation Dinner, Thursday, June 20, 5 pm, at Blues Egg. RSVP by June 10. Sponsored by Everence.

Mennonite Women's Dinner: Friday, June 21, 6 pm. RSVP by June 10.

Doug's Mug: A yeasty beverage

by Doug Luginbill, Conference Minister

Are you ready to get yeasty?

From June 20-22, delegates and guests from Central District congregations will be gathering in Milwaukee, Wisc., home of the Milwaukee Brewers baseball team. (About a dozen CDC folks are attending a Brewers



game after the Annual Meeting!) Given Milwaukee's history as a world-leading producer of beer, there's likely to be a bit of yeast floating in the air! Don't be surprised if we get a little yeasty in Milwaukee.

In the scriptures, yeast is spoken of in

both positive and negative ways. In the Old Testament, unleavened bread (made without leaven/yeast) is required for the celebration of Passover and all leaven must be cleaned out of a home for the home to be ritually "clean." (Ex. 12:15) At other times leavened bread is part of celebrations and is appropriate for sacrifices.

Jesus uses yeast as a metaphor of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 13:33), slowly affecting (infecting) others in its presence. Jesus also cautions the disciples to be alert to the yeast of the Pharisees (Matt. 16:6), seemingly referring to the teachings of both the Pharisees and the Sadducees (Matt. 16:12). Clearly Jesus recognized the power of yeast to grow, expand and affect the stuff with which it comes in contact.

Yeast, or leaven, in the scriptures was usually understood as a hunk of preserved dough that would be added to a new batch of dough. (It wasn't tiny, dry pellets that came in little yellow and red pouches.) Yeast exists naturally as tiny fungus blowing about in the wind. Under the right conditions, if this wind-carried yeast settles on a warm, moist, sugary/starchy substance (flour dough, fruit juice, moistened grain), yeast begins to transform the sugar/starch into carbon dioxide and alcohol.

So are we "yeast" or are we the stuff that the

yeast transforms?

In my March "Doug's Mug," I quoted Rev. David Hooker who states, "You never need critical mass to change the world. You just need critical yeast."

My prayer as we prepare to gather in Milwaukee—and as MC USA delegates and guests prepare to gather in Kansas City in July—is that we can be recipients of the "critical yeast" that will be floating abundantly in the air. How will God's Spirit leaven us as communities of grace, joy and peace? How might our sweet/starchy lives be converted into a kind of energy that frees us for the creative work of Christ? We are invited to come together with our wide-rimmed mugs, ready to receive the yeast of Christ's Spirit! ☪

Financial report

April 30, 2019

Year-to-date giving

contributed support \$174,328

Year-to-date plan \$178,333

Difference between giving and plan -\$4,005

Year-to-date expenses \$183,066

Year-to-date spending plan \$195,422

Difference between expenses
and plan -\$12,355

With two months remaining in the 2018-19 financial year, Central District Conference is in a strong position to again complete the year with income covering expenses.

Report provided by Timothy Lind, conference treasurer

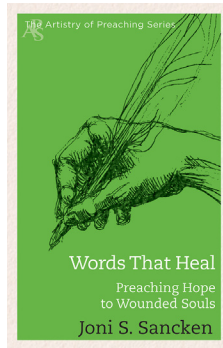
New books by CDC leaders

Words that heal: Preaching hope to wounded souls.

By Joni Sancken, CDC credentialed leader and associate professor of homiletics at United Seminary of Dayton, Ohio.

Publisher: Abingdon Press, 2019

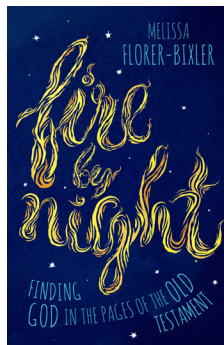
The book showcases worship practices, sermons and ministries that are actively engaged in supporting healing.



Fire by night: Finding God in the pages of the Old Testament

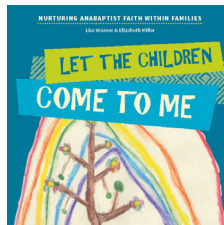
By Melissa Florer-Bixler, pastor of Raleigh (N.C.) Mennonite Church
Publisher: Herald Press, 2019

Using stories from Scripture and her ministry, Melissa Florer-Bixler braids together the text with the sometimes ordinary, sometimes radical grace of God.



Let the children come to me: Nurturing Anabaptist faith within families

By Lisa Weaver, former president of CDC, member of Madison Mennonite Church, and Elizabeth Miller; illustrations by Judith Rempel Smucker
Publisher: Cascadia 2019




A resource for families nurturing faith development of elementary-aged children structured around twelve Anabaptist faith practices, including Scripture reading, prayer, community, bearing witness, service to one another, worship, non-violence, steadfast faith, the centrality of Christ, communion, believer's baptism, and stewardship.

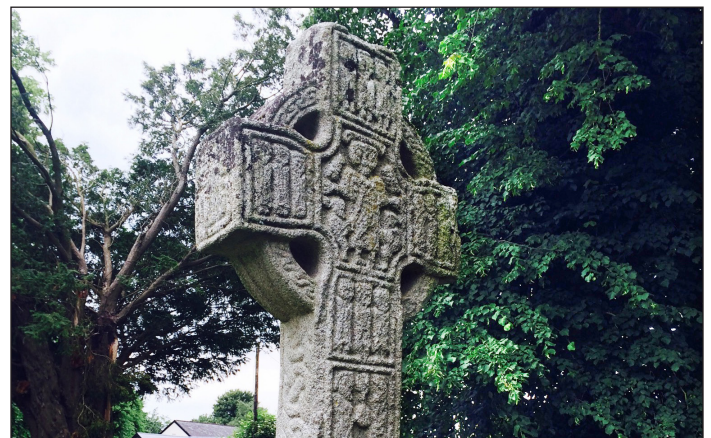
Iona, Glendalough & Kildare Celtic Pilgrimage 2021

Early planning is underway for a Celtic Pilgrimage in May-June or September 2021 to the Celtic holy sites of Iona (Scotland) and Glendalough and Kildare (Ireland). Leaders will be Karla Minter from Open Table Mennonite Fellowship in Goshen and Jane Thorley Roeschley from Mennonite Church of Normal.

A pilgrimage offers participants opportunity to travel slowly and mindfully with the intention of connecting spiritually with God, with fellow pilgrims and with sacred places. This pilgrimage will include times for solitude and reflection, group sharing, walks, morning/evening prayers, Sunday worship services, speakers and occasional museum visits. Pilgrims will want to be fit enough to walk a couple of miles a day and possibly in the rain. Solo pilgrims will sometimes be assigned to share a room.

Space is available for 16. The aim is to hold costs for the pilgrimage (roughly 16 days) to approximately \$5000 per person not including air fare going or coming. More exact fees will be known later and will depend on exchange rates at the time of travel.

If interested, please request an application from Jane (jane@normalmennonite.org) or Karla (karlam@mennonitemission.net). 



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