

## Annual Meeting, June 23-25

### Join the in-person event or watch online

The 2022 Central District Conference event will be in person, with the option for people at a distance to participate online in some sessions. The gathering at College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., begins Thursday afternoon, June 23, and continues through noon on Saturday, June 25,

Worship services will explore the theme, "Tending Transformation."

- Thursday evening's preacher is **David Cramer**, member of the pastoral team of Keller Park Church, South Bend, Ind., one of CDC's newest member congregations.
- Friday's worship service is "Swords to Plowshares: Sharing Story and Song."
- Saturday morning's preacher is **Susannah Larry**, credentialed CDC leader, Bible professor at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary and member of Keller Park.

Agenda in the delegate sessions includes

approving the spending plan and nominees for conference leadership positions and hearing a report on the review of Doug Luginbill's work as conference minister.

The worship services will be live-streamed and the delegate sessions will be available by Zoom. More information about participating is available on the registration page:

[mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting-registration/](https://mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting-registration/)

James Rissler, CDC president asks several questions in his invitation to this meeting: How is the church being transformed as we emerge from the pandemic? How is the body of Christ different today than it was a generation ago? How is CDC being called to change as we know Christ's love and answer God's call?

Everyone is invited to join the Annual Meeting as we pay attention to these questions and tend the transformations we see God's Spirit leading. ☞

### Visit the CDC website

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

- Registration form for the gathering, childcare and children's activities, Pastor Appreciation dinner, pre-conference golf outing and more
- 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
- Link to the auction of CDC theme art



## Annual Meeting details

# Schedule

### Thursday

Golf Outing at Black Squirrel Country Club  
First tee at 11 am

2:00pm - Registration begins in the hallway beside the fellowship hall at College Mennonite Church

3:00pm - Pre-conference Seminar in the sanctuary  
Storytelling as a tool for spiritual transformation with Kay Bontrager-Singer and Brenda Sawatzky Paetkau

5:00pm - Pastor Appreciation Dinner at Assembly Mennonite Church, 727 New York Street, Goshen

7:30pm - **WORSHIP** in the sanctuary.  
Speaker: David Cramer  
Offering: Natural Helpers program

9:00pm - Ice cream and popcorn in the fellowship hall



David Cramer,  
Thursday  
evening  
preacher

### Friday

#### 8:30am DELEGATE SESSION 1

- Welcome
- State of the conference address
- Congregational story: Hively Avenue Mennonite Church
- Review of minutes of 2021 Annual Meeting
- Treasurer's report and presentation of the 2022-23 proposed Spending Plan
- Presentation of and ACTION on the 2022-23 slate of nominees

9:45 - 10:15am - **BREAK**

10:15am

- Missional Church Committee report
- Word from Mennonite Church USA
- Dwelling in the Word
- Blessings: Trenton Mennonite and Keller Park
- Introduction of guests
- Announcements

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

#### 1:30pm DELEGATE SESSION 2

- Term review of Conference Minister
- Congregational Story: Southside Fellowship

2:00pm - **STORYTELLING STATIONS** (see more on p. 4)  
Rotate from one to another: 2:00-2:20; 2:25-2:45; 2:50-3:10; 3:15-3:35

- Pilgrimage as Spiritual Practice with Jane Roeschley
- The Great Adventure with Bluffton University

- Journey/Amahoro Ministries with Charles Baraka and Lavon Welty
- 65 Years with CDC with Perry Bush and Janeen Bertsche Johnson

3:35pm - **BREAK**

4:00pm - **WORSHIP** in the sanctuary: Swords to Plowshares: Sharing Story and Song  
Offering: Assistance for Ukraine

5:15pm - **DINNER** (on your own)

#### 7:00pm SEMINARS (see more on p. 3)

- Faith in Place: Ecological Crisis is a Spiritual Crisis with Brian Sauder
- The War in Ukraine: History, Memory and Peace Church Responses with Perry Bush
- Let the Children Come to Me with Lisa Weaver
- Called to be Bad with Mariah Martin
- Natural Helpers with Julia Schmidt

### Saturday

8:30am - **WORSHIP** in the sanctuary.  
Speaker: Susannah Larry  
Communion will be served.

9:30am - **BREAK**

#### 10:15am DELEGATE SESSION 3

- Congregational Story: Shalom Mennonite Congregation
- Ministerial Committee Report
- ACTION: 2022-23 Spending Plan
- Everence resources
- Open mic
- Constituency Leaders Council report
- Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes report



Susannah Larry,  
Saturday  
morning  
preacher

Closing

- Listening Committee Report
- Evaluations and Committee nominations
- Closing words from CDC Board president
- Closing meditation and songs

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



## Seminars

Thursday, June 23, 3 pm

### Storytelling as a tool for spiritual transformation

Presenters: Kay Bontrager-Singer, pastor at Faith Mennonite Church in Goshen, and Brenda Sawatzky Paetkau, pastor at Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen.

This workshop will use a model for storytelling to access deeper levels of a story. Participants will tell their own stories, listen to two other stories and participate in making a simple journal to take with them.

Friday, June 24, 7:00 pm (choose one)

### Faith in Place: Ecological crisis is a spiritual crisis

Presenter: Brian Sauder, president and executive director of **Faith in Place** in Chicago; he attends Chicago (Ill.) Community Mennonite Church

Hear stories of healing and action. Explore ways to inspire your congregation and take practical steps to implement programs in energy and climate change, sustainable food and land use, water preservation and justice, youth empowerment, and climate and environmental justice advocacy.

### The war in Ukraine: History, memory and Peace Church responses

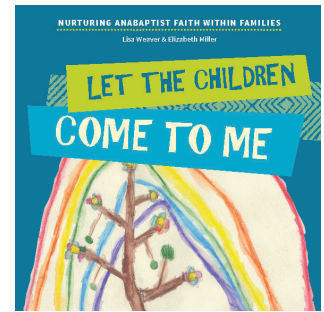
Presenter: Dr. Perry Bush, professor of history at Bluffton University, member of First Mennonite Church in Bluffton.

This workshop will have two tracks: First we will have opportunities to share family stories from Ukraine and reflect on suffering experienced by Ukrainian ancestors. Then we will shift to the current suffering in Ukraine, explore ethical arguments for war, and wrestle with what a Peace Church response can be.

### Let the children come to me

Presenter: Lisa Weaver, teacher and author; she attends Madison (Wisc.) Mennonite Church

This workshop will introduce the book, **Let the Children Come to me: Nurturing Anabaptist faith within families**, with 12 units on Anabaptist faith practices, which can be used in home or congregational settings. Participants will have opportunities to sample projects and activities and consider implementing these in a variety of settings.



### Called to be bad?

Presenter: Mariah Martin, pastor of Bonneyville Mennonite Church, Bristol, Ind.

Sometimes God's call on our lives is unexpected, strange, and may go against the status quo of what it means to be faithful. The podcast that Mariah Martin hosts—**Called to be bad**—features people who are brave enough to be “bad,” and the workshop explores what we can learn from them.



### Natural Helpers

Presenter: Julia Schmidt, immigrant resource coordinator for the Center for Healing & Hope in Goshen; she attends Southside Mennonite Fellowship.

The **Natural Helpers program** at the Center for Healing & Hope extends services to immigrant patients by connecting them with a volunteer who speaks their language and can refer them to services for food, language classes, legal help and more. This seminar will describe the program's impact and the ways that congregations can be involved in welcoming immigrants.

## Annual meeting details

### Storytelling stations

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

#### Pilgrimage as spiritual practice

Presenter: Jane Roeschley, spiritual director. She served on the pastoral team of Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.) for 19 years.

#### The Great Adventure with Bluffton University

The Great Adventure is a fall retreat for first-year students, which includes experiences of outdoor exploring, solitude and building deeper connections with peers.

#### Journey/Amahoro Ministries

Presenters: Charles Baraka and Lavon Welty. Charles Baraka is a student in the Journey program, combining experiences in his congregation (Madison (Wisc.) Mennonite) with ministries in Africa. Lavon Welty is Charles's mentor in Journey.

#### 65 years with CDC

Presenters: Perry Bush, CDC historian, and Janeen Bertsche Johnson, director of campus ministries at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

### Children's activities

Activities and care for children are planned during the Annual Meeting sessions. This includes child care for infants and children up to age 4 during worship and delegate sessions. Special activities are planned for children in grades K-12. Please check the Annual Meeting registration form for details:

[mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting-registration](https://mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting-registration).

*Serving and receiving Communion at the CDC Annual Meeting in Milwaukee, Wisc., in 2019, the last time the Annual Meeting occurred in person. Here Russ Miller serves Melissa Florer-Bixler. Behind them are Joel Miller and James Hubbard.*

Reporter

Central District Conference

### Giving project

**Natural Helpers** is the Giving Back to the Community project this year. This new program of the Center for Healing & Hope in Goshen pairs immigrant patients with advocates who can speak their language and help them find community resources. See more: at [chhclinics.org/natural-helpers-program](https://chhclinics.org/natural-helpers-program). You can donate online when you register and an offering will be taken Thursday evening.

An offering also will be taken on Friday afternoon to provide support for Ukraine.

### Thursday special events

#### Thursday, June 23, afternoon and evening

**11 am - Golf outing** at Black Squirrel Golf Club, 1017 Larimer Drive, Goshen. See details: [mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting-2022/](https://mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting-2022/)

**Bike-Run-Walk.** Information is available for many trails in the Goshen area. See details: [mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting-2022/](https://mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting-2022/)

**Pastor Appreciation Dinner**, Thursday, June 23, 5 pm, Assembly Mennonite Church, 727 New York Street, Goshen.

For credentialed leaders, retired and current, along with a spouse/guest. There is no charge for the meal. Children of those attending will be provided childcare and a meal at no charge.

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



J. Tyler Klassen

May 2022

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# Doug's Mug: Patience and Hope

by Doug Luginbill, Conference Minister

I'm sipping a lot of hope and patience these days. In Romans 8:24-25, Paul says, "For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience."



Our scriptures are filled with beautiful images of what God's beloved community looks like in its fullness; justice cascading like waterfalls, lions and lambs napping together, peoples from every tribe and nation worshipping God

together, wounds of flesh and spirit healed by the leaves of the tree of life, weapons of war beaten into garden tools, walls coming down, Jesus lifted up, and much more. This is our hope.

At times, my hope is a flickering lamp, threatened by every wind of bad news. My patience runs thin as I hear another story of racial injustice in my home community. My hope is tested as I hear of divisions within congregations that result in threats, name-calling and fear. My patience feels like impotence when another gifted and faithful follower of Christ is not allowed to use their gifts because of their gender, sexual orientation, racial/ethnic background or other characteristic. The vision of God's beloved community sometimes seems so obscured by the fog of hate and the narrowness of tribal rhetoric that I wonder if God has forgotten God's vision.

I pray that hope and patience will accompany us as we gather in Kansas City on May 27-30 for the MC USA Special Delegate Session. I hope that we can share our stories and experiences together around tables, both stories of pain and stories of healing. I hope we can be allies for those whose voices are diminished, ignored or rejected. I hope we can be patient with one another, recognizing the face of Christ

in each person. I hope we can speak hard truths with one another, trusting that the prophetic witness of God's Spirit is present. As we tend to the ongoing transformation of Mennonite Church USA, I pray that healing and hope will abound.

I pray that hope and patience will accompany us as we gather in Goshen on June 23-25 for our 65th Central District Annual Meeting. I hope that the pandemic, which caused us to meet via Zoom the last two years, will not mess with our plans this year. I can't wait (yet with sufficient patience) to see people fully embodied, to engage in meaningful discussion, to laugh out loud and often, to hear exciting stories of how God is at work across our conference, and more.

Patience and hope together create a delicious beverage in my mug. Hope without patience can lead to words and actions that harm and destroy. Patience without hope leaves us in a perpetual state of sameness where only the privileged and powerful rest comfortably. Patience is contemplative centering that helps us see the God-ness in all of creation. Hope is prophetic energy that drives us toward God's intended shalom. Together, patience and Hope, mixed in the right proportions, provide a balanced pH that is both refreshing and calming to our thirsting souls. ☯

## Installation



**Clayton Gladish** was installed as one of the pastors at Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on April 24. He began his ministry with the congregation on March 28. ☯

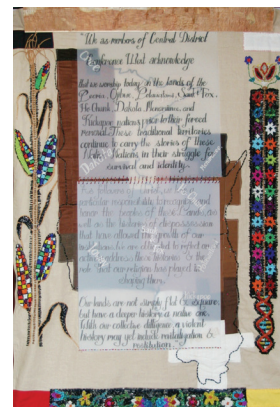
## Art auction to benefit CDC: Bid online

Four conference artists were commissioned two years ago to create pieces that represented the theme for the previous biennium: “Spirit, bless our souls with yearning.”


These four pieces were the visuals for our online worship at the 2020 and 2021 Annual Meetings. Now they will be auctioned during this year’s event as a fundraiser for the conference.

The auction is online, so everyone can easily participate. It opens for bids on Thursday, June 23, at 10 am EDT, and closes at 10 am EDT on Saturday, June 25. The winning bidders will be announced at the end of the Annual Meeting. All proceeds go to the conference’s Emerging Communities of Faith Fund.

For information about the auction, the artists and their creations, visit [mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting-2022/art-auction/](https://mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting-2022/art-auction/)



The four art pieces (left to right):

- A painting by Anita Lehman, drawing on the hymn, “Healer of our every ill.”
- A stole with quilted and digital printed elements by Eugene Stutzman. It is based on the Jan Luyken etching, “Dirk Willems 1685.”
- A watercolor by Kay Bontrager-Singer, inspired by the prayer, “Creator God, in your time you created all things and wove into their fabric a yearning for you.”
- A multi-media textile piece by Rachel Horst Lehman on the theme of yearning for justice. It includes visual representations of Native Peoples who tended the land where CDC West congregations worship today. 

## Financial report, April 30, 2022

### Year-to-date giving

total income . . . . .	\$217,263
Year-to-date plan . . . . .	\$198,750
Difference between giving and plan . . .	\$11,350

Year-to-date expenses . . . . .	\$179,016
Year-to-date spending plan . . . . .	\$205,874
Difference between expenses and plan . . . . .	-\$26,858

With two months remaining in the fiscal

year, giving to Central District Conference is well above anticipated amounts, while expenses are significantly lower than planned. Congregational contributions, the core source of our support, are running above budget. Thus far this year income has exceeded expenditures by nearly \$40,000. The conference appears to be on track for another successful financial year.

Report provided by Timothy Lind, conference treasurer

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