

# West Swamp News

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November '20

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## FYI

- Daylight Savings Time ends on Nov. 1. Don't forget to set your clock back one hour before you go to bed on Oct. 31!
- We will worship from our homes on Nov. 8, taking part in the All-Conference Worship Service of Mosaic Mennonite Conference. (A West Swamp ensemble will lead one of the songs!)

## Moving services back indoors

On October 25, our season of outdoor worship comes to a close. We have truly appreciated everyone's flexibility as we worked out kinks, made adjustments and learned as we went along.

In all, we've had 21 services outdoors—5 months worth. And out of 21 Sundays, we only had to deal with rain twice!



Starting out in cars in the parking lot, we moved to the grassy shade in July, then as the mornings grew a little chilly, moved our chairs back onto the parking lot to catch the morning sun.

We especially want to thank Mark Kemmerer, Tim Scheetz, Emily Rush, Glenn High and

Rod Rush for all their help in setting up sound equipment and/or videoing the services.

And now it's time to move back inside.

On Nov. 1 we will hold the first service in our sanctuary since Mar. 1! We are putting policies in place to worship inside as safely as possible, knowing that as we go along there



Sanctuary pews will be marked for appropriately spaced seating. Songs and scriptures will be on the screen. Offering plates will be stationed, not passed. Sanitizing will take place before and after each service. Hand sanitizers will be placed at several locations for our convenience.

We will also continue to video and post the service for those who can't attend, and transcribe the service for those without internet access.

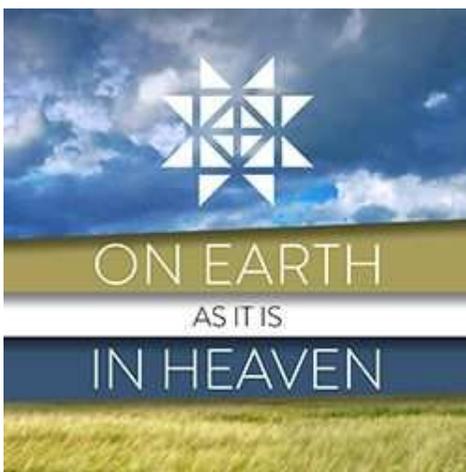
may be kinks to work out and adjustments to be made.

Masks will be required, and we will maintain physical distancing. As hard as it will be, we will refrain from shaking hands or giving hugs—though I know we all long for the time when that will be possible again.



## Pastor's Corner: Two unique Sundays

November is shaping up to be a unique month of worship for us at West Swamp Mennonite Church. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you can read about our return to worshipping in the church building, scheduled for Sunday Nov. 1.



Sunday Nov. 8 is the weekend of our Mosaic Mennonite Conference Annual Assembly, and we

will worship via a livestream at home, like we did at Pentecost. The service will start at 11am. You will be provided with a link to the service via email a little closer to the 8th. This service will be a wonderful time for us to celebrate the diversity and unity of our conference, experiencing all the different cultures that go together to make up our Mosaic Conference.

On Sunday, Nov. 15 we will be doing a pulpit exchange with our sister congregation, Swamp Mennonite Church. Pastor Tami Good from Swamp will be preaching here at West Swamp. Tami grew up in Souder-



ton and attended Line Lexington Church. She now lives in Lansdale with her husband Rob and their children Camron, Ryan and Kaitlyn. When not in lockdown, Tami likes to travel. She also enjoys baking, good coffee and a good book.

I am glad that West Swamp will get to hear her voice as she brings the sermon that day. Come ready to be encouraged and challenged from the Scriptures.

Peace,  
Pastor Michael

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## MCC: Five ways to show compassion to asylum seekers

Asylum seekers, like refugees, are migrants who flee their homes due to a fear of violence or persecution. U.S. and international laws affirm the right to apply for asylum. However, several changes in U.S. immigration policy are preventing asylum seekers from finding safety.

In recent years, asylum seekers arriving at the U.S.-Mexico border have been forced to wait for months in overcrowded tent cities and shelters in Mexico. The U.S. has sent some to other

Central American countries, such as Guatemala, which does not have adequate capacity to take in asylum seekers or process their claims. The countries agreed to take the asylum seekers because they fear U.S. economic and political sanctions.

The COVID-19 global pandemic has further exacerbated the situation, leading to a near complete closure of the U.S.-Mexico border to asylum seekers—in violation of U.S. law. One 2019 study indicates that 92% of asy-

lum seekers have family or close friends in the U.S. they can stay with, but they cannot reach them.

Scripture tells us that all people are made in the image of God and deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. That's true for all migrants, no matter where they are on their journey — away from home, returning home or anywhere in between. Some U.S. government leaders have used COVID-19 as a pre-

*(Continued on page 4)*

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## Mission: Ripple Meal & Clothing/Hygiene Drive

Donations for the Ripple Clothing Drive are piling up, but we can always use more! Hygiene products are also needed. You are welcome to drop off donations up to Nov. 5 during church office hours. (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9-1. Just ring the doorbell.)

Mission Commission is also providing a Meal-to-Go for Ripple meals on Nov. 8. You can help with that in three ways: 1) provide food items needed, listed below; 2) help fill to-go containers and hand them out; or 3)

pray—not only that this goes smoothly and safely, but for the Ripple congregation as well.

If you would like to provide food items, we still need

- 3 packages of 25-35 frozen chicken patties,
- 8 dozen hamburger rolls,
- 10 lbs. of elbow macaroni noodles,
- and about 10 dozen cookies or brownies.

These quantities are divided up in the list sent out by email in

Oct. Contact me at [dsearfass16@gmail.com](mailto:dsearfass16@gmail.com) to let me know what you will provide.

If you are interested in helping with the meal on Nov. 8, we will meet at the church in Allentown at about 3:30. There, we will fill to-go containers and hand them out to Ripple members after their worship service—at about 5 pm. A group of 6-8 people would be great. Again, email me if you are interested.

~ Dana Searfass

## Mission: Got some free time?

The MCC East Coast Material Resources Center in Ephrata needs your help to check cans of meat! MCC needs to have approximately 10,000 cartons of meat checked and banded

by January. There are 24 cans per carton. That means quality control for 240,000 cans of meat!

***These cartons are sitting in the warehouse waiting for this final part of the process***



***before being ready for shipment to Ethiopia and Ukraine.***

Please consider coming with people in your “pandemic bubble” to work at this. We also have tables spaced so that 5 individuals can safely work simultaneously.

Daytime hours for this activity are Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Evening hours can be arranged for Tuesdays or Thursdays from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Strategies are in place to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. To sign up, please contact Marilyn Peters, Ephrata MRC Volunteer Coordinator, at [MarilynPeters@mcc.org](mailto:MarilynPeters@mcc.org) or (717) 733-2847.

## Showing compassion to asylum seekers

(Continued from page 2)

tense to turn away people seeking safety in the U.S., rather than safely admitting them using internationally-recognized procedures; however, we are reminded in Mark 1:41 that when people with incurable diseases approached Jesus, he was “moved by compassion” and healed them. MCC encourages people to pray and to seek ways to show compassion.

### 1. Advocate

MCC asks people of faith to urge their members of Congress to craft policies that welcome those seeking asylum in the U.S. and to focus any federal spending related to asylum seekers on meeting humanitarian needs and addressing the root causes of migration rather than on detention, deterrence and militarized borders.

### 2. Give

MCC continues to address the root causes of poverty and violence that push Central American families to flee their home countries. By offering opportunities – from vocational and agricultural training to peacebuilding and education– MCC helps people become more secure where they are.

Sometimes people must flee for the safety and well-being of their families. MCC supports its partners’ efforts to provide food, shelter, legal assistance and psychosocial support to them as they travel. Your gift to Central American migrants helps those



who stay home and those who must leave.

Once people arrive, your gift of welcome helps MCC provide legal assistance in the U.S. and train those who work in non-profit immigration organizations. Read a story of MCC's work in New York City.

### 3. Learn

Attorneys, staff of nonprofit organizations and church members who are interested in creating a church-based immigration program or who want to learn more about the complex U.S. immigration system can take MCC's five-day intensive immigration law training.

Once travel is feasible again, consider participating in a learning tour of Central America or the U.S.-Mexico border to learn why so many parents with their children leave Central America and seek refuge in the U.S.

Reflect on the stories of migration in the Bible, including the story of Abram in Genesis 12 and the book of Ruth.

Reach out to your local MCC of-

fice and invite an MCC staff person to speak (in person or via video conference) at your church, youth group or community group about migration and border-related topics and the work of MCC in these areas.

### 4. Pray

Ask God to move the hearts of political leaders

to create more just laws and more legal pathways for immigrants, including those seeking refuge, work or family and those trapped at the border, often in dangerous circumstances.

Ask God to touch the hearts of immigration enforcement officials, staff at detention centers, military service members and judges in Central America, Mexico and the U.S. so that they treat migrants with respect and dignity.

Ask God to bring comfort, courage and wisdom to adults and children in transit, in tent cities, and in detention, and to the church leaders, staff and volunteers of nonprofit organizations and immigration attorneys who work tirelessly on their behalf.

Ask God to show you how you can help respond with compassion to this ongoing crisis.

### 5. Connect with MCC

Email MCC, at [immigration@mcc.org](mailto:immigration@mcc.org), to learn more about opportunities to help asylum seekers stranded in this complex asylum process.

~ *Linda Espenshade, MCC*

## Care & Share service evening

Fifteen West Swampers donated a few hours to help out at the Souderton Care & Share on Oct. 22. Pictured: Ann Stauffer and Sue Howes worked with linens; Joan Hallman, Deb Stevenback, Rod Rush, Emily Rush and Leon Propst unpacked donations; Linda Rice and Lori Farrell stocked shelves; and Pastor Michael and Jan Wieand priced items. (Not pictured: Becky Mosser, Don Rosenberger, Edna Rosenberger and Lynne Rush) Care & Share is always looking for help. If you would like to volunteer sometime, talk to Don Rosenberger!



## Staying connected

From **Katie Mood:** (*right*) One of many beautiful October sunsets at the Farm Stand. (*below, left to right*) Matt getting ready to start the soybean harvest. A lot of hard work from Jeff Rice and Matt to finish our new hearth area—Case was on clean up duty. And I enjoyed my tractor buddy just about as much as nephew Jaxson enjoyed his tractor ride!



From **Lori Farrell:**  
Here are a couple pictures of our last camping trip to Otter Lake, East Stroudsburg on Oct. 2-4. This is one of my favorite trips because of the beautiful scenery. The one picture is Chris and our dog Lucy on the dock. We like to do the paddle boats on the lake, and there is a walking trail that I love that goes around the lake.

**\*Kid's Page\***



**Glad gatherings**

The first Christians met together over a meal. Today church families still gather to break bread and thank God.

Follow the instructions below. Then write the remaining words in order from left to right and top to bottom to complete the verses.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	They	found	broke	bread	acts	in
2	houses	their	homes	beautiful	and	round
3	ate	world	beginning	together	follow	thought
4	with	numbers	glad	happiness	lesson	and
5	thanks	sincere	disciples	gathering	hearts	tradition
6	celebrate	good	praising	Christian	God	river

- Cross out all words in column E with double letters.*
- Cross out all words that are books of the Bible.*
- Cross out all words in column B that end in d.*
- Cross out all words in column A that have more than 4 letters.*
- Cross out all words in row 5 with 3 syllables.*
- Cross out all words in the table with 9 letters.*
- Cross out all words in column F with 2 or more vowels.*

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ACTS 2:46-47, NIV

**A taste of history**

Add a yummy, authentic touch to your Thanksgiving meal with this recipe.



**What you need:**

- 2/3 cup heavy cream
- pint jar with lid
- strainer
- bowl
- container
- salt



**What you do:**

1. Pour cream into the jar and close the lid tightly.
2. Shake vigorously about 8 minutes, until a solid lump of butter forms. (Take turns with a friend!)
3. Strain the contents, catching the buttermilk in a bowl to save for another recipe.
4. Put the butter in a container. Add salt to taste.
5. After chilling the butter, enjoy on fresh bread.



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Reflecting God in our  
living, loving and serving

## Care & Share strives to make up for lost time



The Care & Share service evening on Oct. 22 started with an introduction to their mission by Volunteer Coordinator Suzanne Kratz (pictured above, right).

MCC Thrift Shoppes support the local and global relief, development and peace projects of Mennonite Central Committee. Due to the global pandemic, most MCC Thrift Shoppes in

the U.S. and Canada had to close for several months. With the loss of that significant amount of funding, MCC had to make hard and painful decisions and close 25% of their projects. Most of their current projects center on relief: food aid and kit distribution—school kits, hygiene kits, and new COVID health kits.

Since their beginning in 1975, the Souderton Thrift Shoppes have donated over 19 million dollars to MCC. Though this year's revenue is down, they are working hard to build those numbers up. You can help by donating good used items, shopping at their stores, and volunteering your time.



- 11/3 Nancy Jacobs
- John Riley
- 11/05 Olivia Mood
- 11/06 Jordan Husvar
- 11/08 Alex Parzych
- 11/18 Andrew Spiess

- 11/19 Pam Grube
- 11/20 Don Butcher
- 11/21 Bernice Keller
- 11/26 Les Rice
- 11/28 Kitty Stauffer
- 11/30 Mary Bittenbender