

West Swamp News

Volume 11, Issue 4

June/July 2022

Getting our hands messy in worship

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FYI

- You probably know that June 19 is Father's Day and Juneteenth and July 4 is Independence Day. Here's a few more obscure days you might want to observe this summer:
- June 11—National Corn on the Cob Day
- June 14—World Blood Donor Day
- July 15—National Give Something Away Day
- July 17—National Ice Cream Day

Worship Commission set a goal this year to explore alternative ways to worship on fifth Sundays.

On May 29, the second Fifth Sunday of 2022, the congregation split into two groups. One traveled to Allentown to work and pray at Ripple.

Ripple's mission statement: We are a Christ-centered community-focused church seeking to have a ripple-effect in our neighborhoods and beyond by loving ourselves, our neighbors, and one another as we live towards peace and justice in Allentown.

Since their beginnings in 2010, Ripple has met at 5 different locations. They are in the

process of purchasing the building they currently meet in and are excited to have a permanent location. With that permanency comes new responsibilities—like maintenance.

The West Swamp Ripple group pulled weeds and trimmed trees in three garden beds around the church. They also did some cleaning and organizing inside, before ending with a prayer circle.

Another group stayed at West Swamp, and after a short devotional by Louise Butcher, baked cookies and wrote notes of encouragement. These were delivered to Camp Men-O-Lan staff and to members of West Swamp who have not been able to attend in person.

There are two more fifth Sundays for the year. Thank you for supporting this Worship Commission goal.



Brenda Landt and Leon Propst clear weeds in front of Ripple's new building.

Louise Butcher and Emily Rush bake sugar cookies in the church kitchen.

Pastor's Corner: Kansas City MC USA Special Assembly Report

From May 27-30, more than five hundred delegates from throughout Mennonite Church USA traveled to Kansas City, Mo. to worship, dialogue, and discern God's future for our denomination. There were over 50 delegates from Mosaic Conference.

The assembly began Friday evening with worship, including the typical harmonious Mennonite singing in several languages and storytelling by three pastors.

Saturday morning's worship included a sermon by Dr. Samuel Sarpiya, former Moderator of the Church of the Brethren, on the need for us to live with a spirit of unity in the midst of differences. After worship, the opening business session began with the approval of minutes and opportunities for delegates to get to know their assigned tablemates.

Delegates entered into a facilitated discussion of the "Clarification on Mennonite Church USA Polity and the Role of the Membership Guidelines of Mennonite Church USA" resolution. The purpose of this resolution was to retire the 2001 Membership Guidelines as the active polity of MC USA. Specifically, Section III of the guidelines says that credentialed pastors in MC USA may not perform same-sex covenant ceremonies. The facilitated discussion encouraged delegates around their tables to process how the membership guidelines have functioned in MC USA for good and for ill.

After lunch, there was a discussion and vote as to whether or not to process "A Resolution for Repentance and Transformation." This resolution acknowledges and attempts to make right the harm suffered by LGBTQIA Mennonites due to MC USA actions and policies. The delegates voted 357-135 in favor of processing the resolution, so time to process and vote on the resolution was added to Sunday's agenda.

On Saturday afternoon, four church leaders, including Mosaic Leadership Minister, Aldo Sihaan, of Philadelphia Praise Center, shared how they have navigated the challenges of ministry during the global pandemic.

Sunday morning's sermon by Dr. Samuel Sarpiya exhorted the delegates to be peacemakers in their contexts. After a facilitated community-building exercise, floor discussion began of the resolution to retire the Membership Guidelines. Many delegates spoke and it was obvious that feelings run deep regarding the treatment of LGBTQIA persons within Mennonite Church USA. A vote was taken, and by a margin of 404-84, the resolution was approved and the Membership Guidelines were retired as polity for MC USA.

After lunch, a facilitated discussion began of "A Resolution for Repentance and Transformation." The intent of the resolution is to

acknowledge the harm done by the church to LGBTQIA persons in the church, to repent of that harm, and to take some remedial steps, including eliminating the Membership Guidelines and adding representation on the Constituency Leaders Council for LGBTQIA persons. After the facilitated discussion, floor discussion was held. Many delegates shared. Many spoke in support of it, while some said they felt like they were being asked to repent for things they had not done. An unsuccessful motion to table the resolution was made. Delegates then voted, 267-212, in favor of the resolution.

Monday morning's worship acknowledged the mix of emotions delegates were feeling. There was a facilitated discussion on the "For Justice" resolution, which had been presented as a study resolution not requiring a vote. The MC USA Accessibility Resolution was passed with a show of hands. Some delegates expressed regret that consideration of issues of justice and accessibility were crowded into the end of the agenda and not considered more fully. The assembly concluded with singing, "Blest Be the Tie that Binds."

The Mosaic Board will host post-Assembly listening sessions on June 6, 8, and 9 for further discussion.

Peace,

~ *Pastor Michael*

Community: It's time for a picnic!

It's time to celebrate summer with a good old-fashioned picnic. Join us in the pavilion on **June 15 at 6:30 pm** for the **Hot Dog Social!**

You are invited to bring games to play. Ladderball, corn hole, Kanjam, croquet—what fun options will we have? Board games are good too.

The Social Committee will provide hot dogs with all the fixings and ice cream for dessert. The Moods' will provide their awesome fries. If you are able, please bring a salad or side dish.

This is a perfect opportunity to invite your friends and neighbors! Mark your calendars

~ *Lori Farrell*



Mission: Care & Share volunteer evenings are a regular thing

Mission Commission encourages you to take part in the Care & Share Shoppes' monthly volunteer evening on the last Wednesday of the month, from 5-8 pm. Participants stay as long as they like and choose which department to work in.

Contact Glenn High or Karen Parzych to learn more.



Above: Don Butcher, Rod Rush and Lynne Rush test electronics. The lamps were easy; other appliances, a little more complicated.

Above right: Glenn High and Deb Stevenback empty a gaylord of donated items to sort.

Left: Karen Parzych, Edna Rosenberger and Jan Wieand sort and price clothing.

Right: Lee and Joan Hallman sort donations for the Variety Shoppe.



Stewardship: A few Thank You's

In the last newsletter I highlighted the work of Care & Share and the Thrift Shoppes as an example of extreme stewardship. This newsletter I would like to call attention to three recent examples of West Swamper's extreme stewardship.

I am sure you have noticed the fresh layer of mulch in the beds around the church building. Thank you to Matt Mood's family and friends for taking on the annual beautification task this spring.

Don Jacobs has also been hard at work of late in the prayer garden. In conjunction with the replacement of the park bench, Don has taken on the task of leveling out the pavers that have become a tripping hazard after many years.

And speaking of the prayer garden, many thanks to Mark Kemmerer for adopting the fountain as his labor of love. Mark has been opening the fountain in the spring, maintaining the wa-

ter quality throughout the summer and winterizing in the fall for many years.

These are just three examples of extreme stewardship being modeled in the West Swamp family. The Stewardship Commission

thanks all in the Church family for their acts of extreme stewardship throughout the year.

*~ Randy Rush
Moderator Deacon
Stewardship Commission*



Rod Rush tries out the new prayer garden bench during his lunch break.

Second Sunday—April



Second Sunday snapshots—May



Second Sunday activities may not always actually be on the second Sunday of the month (due to a variety of reasons), but we're still sticking with the name! Pictured on page 4: Painting and sock stuffing bring out the creative side of Rick Hinkle, Marian Wolf, Sue Howes and Matt Mood.

Pictured here on page 5 are too many people to name, but show the fun and food of the Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction.



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Reflecting God in our
living, loving and serving

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Gifts of the Holy Spirit are not presents that we can see or touch, but special power to do God's work. Find the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

L B O U Z L Z O S I A U R G E I L Q W A
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APOSTLES	HEALING	SERVE
DISCERNMENT	KNOWLEDGE	SHARE
ENCOURAGE	LEADERSHIP	TEACH
EVANGELIZE	MIRACLES	WISDOM
FAITH	PASTORS	



June

- 6/3 Joel Bauman
- 6/3 Mike Opdyke
- 6/4 Linda Rice
- 6/6 Allison Bevan
- 6/6 April Huff
- 6/6 Michael Opdyke
- 6/6 Jeff Searfass
- 6/9 Leon Propst
- 6/12 Kaitlin Kennedy
- 6/14 Michael Howes
- 6/17 George Mellan
- 6/17 Eileen Riley
- 6/22 Brook Stauffer
- 6/23 Marian Wolf
- 6/25 Adam Wieand

- 6/27 Shawn Husvar
- 6/27 Eli Mood
- 6/29 Cindy Raub

July

- 7/1 Jonathan Opdyke
- 7/2 Haley Stauffer
- 7/3 Richard Rosenberger
- 7/5 Pov Sar Loch
- 7/9 Mike Olimpo
- 7/14 Lindsay Baver
- 7/22 Kevin Riley
- 7/27 Evelyn High
- 7/27 Mark Kemmerer
- 7/30 Sue Conrad Howes