

# West Swamp News

Volume 5, Issue 5

August/September '16

## Truly Sharing With Appalachian People

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### FYI

- Quilters and knotters work through the summer. Got a spare Tuesday? Come and join them.
- Pray for our students and teachers as they head back to school.
- Men's Bible Study starts up again Sept. 17. All men are welcome.

Anyone who has ever gone on a SWAP trip knows that you receive as much or more than you give. For first-timers Shawn Husvar and Jeff Searfass, it was no different.

Shawn and Jeff, along with Mark Kemmerer, Emily Rush and Lynne Rush, spent a week in July in McDowell County, West Virginia, with MCC's Sharing With Appalachian People program.

McDowell (pronounced

MACdowell) County was once one of West Virginia's most prosperous counties, boasting a population of almost 100,000 in 1950. Then began the decline of the coal industry, resulting in a rapid loss of jobs and income. Today its population is around 20,000 and has the highest poverty rate in

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**Shawn Husvar stands with homeowner Billy Joe McPeak on his new stairs and deck.**

## Worship service at Men-O-Lan

Hurrah! It's time for Men-O-Lan Sunday! Join us at Camp on Aug. 14 for our worship service, fellowship meal, and games and activities.

Worship begins at 10:30 am in the auditorium. There is parking near the auditorium for those with walking issues. Everyone else

should park in the main lot.

Lunch will be around noon. Hot dogs, BBQ, rolls, condiments, baked beans and beverages will be provided. If you are able, bring a salad or dessert. Because the auditorium kitchen is so small, please bring only already prepared items in

coolers. Kitchen use will be limited to the kitchen committee.

Afternoon activities include time at the water-slide and lake, hiking the trails, games, spectating and just hanging out together.

We hope to see you there! And bring some friends.

## Pastor's Corner: LOVE Stories

***“Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story...” Ps. 107:2***

I'm lying here on my bed, in St. Luke's Quakertown hospital, looking out my window on a lazy morning at the end of July. I suddenly realize that the long days of summer are shortening and the green of grass and trees will soon begin to fade. It's the time of year to make the most of your days. I'm wishing I could be at home or at work doing a million things that cannot get done from here.

It is not easy when life takes these quick turns and lands us in places where what little control we have in the world is taken from us. It is much easier to groan and growl and give everyone around us the worst side of ourselves. The harder thing is to make the best of a tough situation. To take a deep breath, say a little prayer and then let go of *my* agenda and listen for what God has in store for me in this place – rather than in all the ones I'd rather be.

And for me, it has been in the stories I have heard that have brought God to me here – even in this place I'd rather not be. Stories from cleaning ladies to doctors to fellow patients to nurses and respiratory therapists. I

have been ministered *to* instead of ministering *to others*. I have been given these holy stories, tiny snippets from the human collective that is life here on earth. And God's LOVE has been active in every one of them.

I listen as one of them shares of her beloved son struggling with obsessive compulsive issues and trying to raise his three young children. “He cleans and cleans. He keeps his truck so clean the other truckers get mad at him. But he's a good boy,” she says with her eyes bright with LOVE.

Or another heading for retirement and lamenting a disabled husband who finds it difficult to travel, or dance, or go to the movies with her. “He's starting to like this singer I like and is getting tickets for us to the show – maybe he's starting to try,” she says with a longing for GREATER LOVE in her heart.

And finally, near midnight, I listen as another tells me of the incredibly difficult journey of birthing a very ill child that ended with discontinuing life support and of the life-long grief and healing process she has embarked upon. “I did everything I could to make an informed decision. I did it because of LOVE,” she said.



And as the stories continue to move through my memory, I am blessed all over again. I look out the window at a fading summer and my desire to do a million things has gone. LOVE is here; in the stories and in all the many unplanned places we end up in. Listen and may God have mercy.

*~ Pastor Kathy*

## A small laugh

“God warned a man named Lot to take his wife and flee out of the city,” said the Sunday school

teacher, “but Lot's wife looked back and was turned to salt.”

A curious boy then asked, “What happened to the flea?”

## DISCO: Special class on Aug. 28

During Sunday School on Aug. 28 **Sheila Clever** will share her experiences with Mennonite Central Committee's Pipeline to Prison learning tour. Sheila is a member of First Presbyterian Church in Allentown and leads a prison justice advocacy group with the Lehigh Conference of Churches.

Sixteen participants journeyed through Pennsylvania's criminal justice system, learning about law enforcement, sentencing, incarceration and re-entry. The tour grew out of the organization's commitment to focusing education and advocacy efforts on the racial disparities in the U.S. criminal justice system.

Over six days, participants traveled to Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Lancaster and Reading, visiting sites such as a minimum- to medium-security prison, an immi-

gration detention center and a coalition of organizations supporting people with criminal records. The participants also studied a book by legal scholar Michelle Alexander and held Bible studies exploring how their faith communities' teachings on justice, reconciliation and forgiveness inform their understanding of mass incarceration in the U.S.

The tour was organized by Chantelle Todman Moore, Philadelphia program coordinator for MCC East Coast; Ron Muse, MCC East Coast staff member and prison chaplain; and Lorraine Stutzman-Amstutz, restorative justice coordinator for MCC US. The hope is for tour participants, along with their faith communities, to continue to seek opportunities to share God's love and compassion with people

and communities that have experienced the US criminal justice system.

We hope you will join us at 9:30 am on Aug. 28 for this special presentation.

Fall will bring back the start of two adult Sunday School classes. The class that is normally held upstairs will meet in Room 204 and use the MennoMedia Quarterly study guide. The resource is titled *Sovereignty of God*.

The resource for the Discussion class that meets downstairs in Room 104 will be determined later this summer.

Youth and children's classes will resume Sept. 4. Junior Youth will begin again in October, meeting on the first and third Tuesday at 6:30 pm.

~ Jan Wieand

## Worship: Musical happenings

As the summer winds down and September rolls around, it's time to start thinking about singing and ringing.

Choir begins on Sept. 7. Practices are Wednesdays at 7 pm (almost but not quite every week). The choir usually sings on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. There is always room for new voices!

Joyful NoiseChoir begins Sept. 13. Practices are Tuesdays at 6 pm. JNC sings the third Sunday of the month October through May. Children age 4 to grade 5

are invited to praise God with their voices and a variety of instruments.

Chimin' In begins Sept. 14. This tone chime ensemble practices Wednesdays at 6 pm, usually twice a month, and performs on the first Sunday of the month, October to June. So far this has been an all-female group, but men are welcome too! Previous experience is not necessary.

Those are the set musical groups we have, but we want to make sure other musicians have opportunity to use their talents for

God. Do you play an instrument? Do you like to sing, but can't make choir practice? Let Lynne or Louise know and they will make sure you get a chance to use your gifts.



## Mission: School kit time!



Does missions take a vacation? No, not really. There is always some sort of mission going on that you can get involved with.

The last few years West Swamp has done a great job putting together MCC school kits. With back to school sales starting (sorry, kids, but your summer is winding down), it is time once again to put those school kits together.

Mission Commission will collect school supplies the four Sundays of August. Look for the MCC school kit box in the fellowship room—and in the back of the auditorium when we are at Men-O-Lan.

Grab a bag and make a complete kit (see list below) or just donate individual items and we'll put together as many complete kits as we can with them and take the rest to MCC.

School kits are MCC's most requested item. In 2015 almost 90,000 kits were sent to Jordan, Syria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, Haiti, U.S., Serbia,

Honduras and more. They are given to students displaced by natural disaster or war or struggling to afford schooling. Many children all over the world will get a big smile on their face when they receive their school kit. Let's all get involved and make a child's day.

~ *Rod Rush*

### School kit items

- 4 spiral or perforated notebooks (8 1/2 x 10 1/2 in and 70 sheets)
- 8 unsharpened pencils
- 1 ruler (flat, flexible plastic; indicating both 30 cm and 12 in)
- 12 colored pencils (in packaging)
- 1 large pencil eraser



**In December 2012, children from Syrian refugee families in Sidon Lebanon, receive MCC school kits and health kits and were told how volunteers in Canada and the U.S., including children, put together these kits.**

## Stewardship: Six month financial check up

We have reached the 2016 six month milestone; it's a good time to see how we are doing with our Unified Budget. Our balance is tracking OK as we stand with a year-to-date budget surplus of \$5,366.40 at June 30. That is in spite of above normal costs for repairs and maintenance from early in the year.

As far as the offering receipts go we are at 48% of the annual

budget so I am optimistic that, by the end of the year, we can fully fund our Unified Budget. Of note is the recent receipt of a bequest from the estate of Peg Heimbach for \$10,000. The money is restricted for use in church building or improvement needs so that will be held for a future capital project.

Also of note: the old elevator has been dismantled and removed

from the shaft; the shaft is now closed off with the doors screwed shut. The plan is to repurpose the shaft space as closets possibly next year.

The Stewardship Commission would like to thank you all for your continuing financial and prayer support in our efforts to keep our church building safe and conducive for worship.

~ *Randy Rush*

## Community: Your 300th Anniversary Committee needs YOU!

As you know 2017 is going to be a very active year for West Swamp as we celebrate our 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

We hope you are excited to help us celebrate this milestone together.

We will be looking for volunteers to help on these events in 2017...

1. January 8 – 300<sup>th</sup> Kick Off Sunday
2. March 6-11 – Why Knot! Week: 300 Comforters for 300 Years

3. June 23-25 – 300<sup>th</sup> Commemorative Weekend

4. September 9 – Community Picnic

To find out more details see one of the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee members to see how you can help.

We hope you will consider helping to make our 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary a memorable year!

~ *Barb Moyer*



A YEAR OF  
**CELEBRATION**

## Comforter project update

A total of 310 comforters have been made so far this year. They have been distributed as follows:

MCC—153 twin  
MAMA Project—91 twin, 66 child

186 were made during Why Knot! Week; 124 were made on Tuesday mornings.

The project can always use fabric, especially 3-4 yard lengths, and knit crosheen thread.

Thanks to everyone for helping with this mission.

We're aiming to knot 300 during a special Why Knot! Week session in 2017. What a way to add to West Swamp's 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration! It's time to make more history for this congregation.

~ *Joyce Rosenberger*

## Hard work and good times

*(Continued from page 1)*

the state.

The Elkhorn SWAP location was started after two major and devastating floods swept through the county in 2001 and 2002. Since then volunteers and staff have worked steadily to make homes SAFE, WARM and DRY.

The West Swamp crew joined a youth group of 30 from Wisconsin for the largest workforce of the summer. They worked at six different sites, West Swampers working on two.

Shawn and Jeff worked with Billy Joe "Tooter" McPeak, who needed concrete steps repaired. Shawn shares, "I was picked to be a group leader, so right away

I was out of my comfort zone, yet I couldn't wait to get started. While waiting for material to arrive on our first day, I had a chance to sit with Tooter and hear about his life. He had dealt with epilepsy and was never able to get a license all his life."

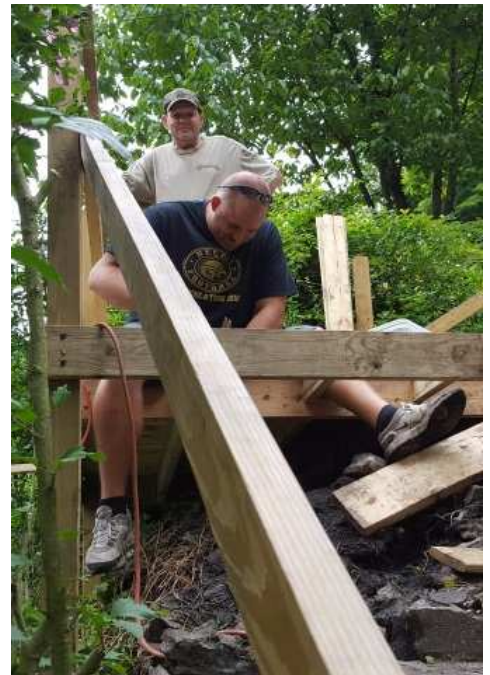
Shawn's crew mixed about 90 bags of concrete and built a wooden deck with a flight of stairs in 2-1/2 days, accomplishing the job despite heavy rains and downtime waiting for materials.

"Throughout the week the kids liked my Mennonite hat I wore for the sun and rain," Shawn says. "Tooter would also say, 'I really like your hat, Shawn,' especially after I was asked to give a brief history lesson one morning about the Mennonite faith. I gave Tooter that hat and he said he's going to tell everyone a Mennonite group from PA came and built him a deck and the boss gave him his hat."

Tooter came to the Friday

dinner and closing program at the SWAP house. During the evening the question was asked, "What is your greatest gift?"

"When the answer was put up on the screen, the one person who probably had the least in that room really had the most because he got it right," Shawn recalls. "Tooter was the first person to answer, and his greatest gift in life is knowing GOD!"



(Left): Lynne, Emily and Mark work at putting on a metal roof for Mr. Tyrone. (Above) Jeff hammers in a board at the top of Tooter's new steps.

## College students: Turn in your info!

Heading back to college? Please make sure the church office has the following info before you go:

College/University name

Year of study

Major(s)

Address

Phone number

Email

We want to know where to send those care packages!



★ Kid's Page ★



# NEVER FEAR!

The Psalms are full of inspiring prayers to God,  
who always looks after you.

*Directions: Use the clues to fill in each missing letter. Then use those letters  
to complete Psalm 13:5, NIV.*

What plants grow in ..... D I R    <sub>1</sub>

The opposite of play ..... W O    <sub>2</sub> K

One-of-a-kind .....    <sub>3</sub> N I Q U E

A hug and a ..... K I    <sub>4</sub> S

Sour ..... T A R    <sub>5</sub>

To speak very loudly ..... Y E    <sub>6</sub> L

Immediately ..... N    <sub>7</sub> W

Bees live in a ..... H I    <sub>8</sub> E

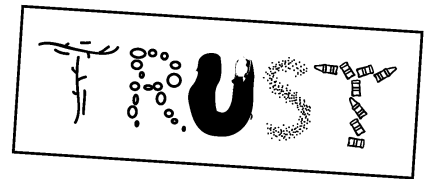
A dandelion is this ..... W    <sub>9</sub> E D

I \_\_\_\_\_ in your unfailing \_\_\_\_\_ ;  
1      2      3      4      5                      6      7      8      9  
my heart rejoices in your salvation. Psalm 13:5, NIV

Answers: dirt, work, unique, kiss, tart, yell, now, hive, weed;  
I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. Psalm 13:5, NIV

# TRUST POSTER

No matter what you face, God is with you. Make this poster as a reminder to always trust God.



**What you need:**

- Cardstock
- Glue
- Twigs (a 3" piece and a 2" piece)
- Pebbles
- Black paint
- Paintbrush
- Sand or glitter
- Broken crayons (2 or 3)

**What you do:**

1. On the left side of the cardstock, trace a 3"-high letter T with glue. Place twigs on the glue lines.
2. Trace an R of the same size. Place pebbles on that glue.
3. Use black paint to make a U.
4. Trace an S in glue. Pour sand (or glitter) on top.
5. Make another T with glue. Place the crayons on top.
6. After the poster dries, shake off the excess sand (or glitter) into a trash can.



west swamp  
mennonite church

2501 Allentown Road  
Quakertown, PA 18951

Phone: 215-536-7468  
FAX: 215-536-7709

E-mail: westswamp@comcast.net

Reflecting God in our  
living, loving and serving

## Calendar of Events

### August

9, 7 pm—Mission Com.  
11, 7 pm—Stewardship Com.  
14—Men-O-Lan Sunday  
16, 7 pm—Ministry Team  
21—Sunday Lunch Bunch  
23, 7 pm—DISCO  
23, 7 pm—Anniversary Com.  
28—Pavilion Service

### September

1, 1 pm—Senior Luncheon  
4—Children's S.S. begins again  
6, 7 pm—Community Com.  
7, 7 pm—Adult Choir begins  
8, 7 pm—Stewardship Com.  
9-18—Pastor on vacation  
9-11—YPU Shore Trip  
11—Mission Partners here  
13, 6 pm—Joyful Noise begins  
13, 7 pm—Mission Com.  
14, 6 pm—Chimin' In  
17, 8 am—Men's Bible Study  
18—Christian Education Sunday  
20, 7 pm—Ministry Team  
25, 12 pm—Sunday Lunch Bunch  
27, 7 pm—DISCO  
27, 7 pm—Anniversary Com.

### Regular Activities

Tuesdays, 8 am—Quilting & Knotting  
Tuesdays, 6 pm—Joyful Noise (starting in September)  
Wednesdays, 7 pm—Adult Choir (starting in September)



## Birthdays

### August

8/2 Bonnie Kiesel  
Gary Parzych  
8/4 David W. Green  
8/6 Priscilla Rosenberger  
Ben Rush  
8/7 Jeff Rice  
Madison Wojs

8/9 Marsha High  
Carl Raub  
8/13 Scott Moyer  
8/15 Anita Husvar  
8/16 Christine Allem  
8/20 Karen Parzych  
8/22 Katie Auckland  
8/23 Darlene Deecher  
8/29 Lynne Rush  
8/31 Elizabeth Deecher

### September

9/1 Ashlynn Rice  
9/2 Loretta Keiser  
9/5 Ethan Farrell

Gladys Hamilton  
9/9 Margaret Marth  
9/10 Joslyn Kirkpatrick  
9/15 Marlene Stauffer  
9/18 Ann Stauffer  
9/19 Doug Propst  
Alyana Riley  
9/20 Jason Kirkpatrick  
Carolyn Rush  
9/23 Donnie Aldinger  
9/24 Elsie Wolownik  
9/26 Emily Rush  
9/27 Joan Hallman  
Blake Mininger  
9/28 John Gwilliam