

Vital Signs

Of Lombard Mennonite Church



Palm processional on March 24. Photo by Kristin C.

Flowers in the Desert

—Katharine Richert

We've begun each of our Lenten worship services the past few weeks by meditating on an image of the desert. The barest hint of a path passes by an arid tree. The bulletin asked us to consider where we found ourselves on this path, and who was with us.

We are currently engaging in a discernment process on LGBTQ+ inclusion within our faith community at LMC. One could say that such an undertaking shares more similarities with a trek through the desert than a walk in the park. This journey requires effort and dedication, planning, provision of maps and other survival supplies, and responsiveness to the voices of others.

We've seen evidence of every one of these things so far and they are flowers along our way. Thank you to all who are earnestly participating in this discernment process. Thank you to all who are taking advantage of extra fellowship opportunities over meals and fun events.

God is with us on this path. May we listen well to each other and—as Barb said last month—focus on building connection, community, and care as we journey together.



Easter Egg Hunt.



Gaza pilgrimage walk.

From Menno to Marpeck to Hyde?

—Nathan Perrin

“You can’t take it with you...and by it I mean half these books, so help yourself,” a writer friend moving back to Europe said to me at his farewell party last year. His collection featured Isaac Asimov and Ian Fleming books galore; the man loved his science fiction and

espionage thrillers. But in a bin, I also found one of the most gorgeous sets of classic literature I’d ever seen.

I’ve been reading through those classics lately and am amazed at how well they hold up. My favorite so far is *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson. Some scholars think this novella—i.e., a short novel you can read in one sitting—is a metaphor for drug addiction.

The book is one of many options to choose from in our church library. We have biographies, Anabaptist theology, peace perspectives, fiction, and more. The library is a great resource for students, as well as those wanting to explore the Christian faith. I’ve used it often for sermon prep, personal enjoyment, and for seminary assignments. Check it out in the office wing this next Sunday; you may just find your next favorite book.

Get Your Game On, the Sequel!

—Mona Richards

LMC’s game night in February was such a hit that we’re holding an encore performance on Saturday, April 13, at 5:30 PM. A twist this time: during “intermission,” we’ll compete in a 20-question trivia game, featuring questions for both adults and children. Winners will walk away with eternal glory/white elephant prizes.



Plan to bring your trivia expertise and favorite board games to play with your church family. LMC will supply the pizza (including gluten-free and dairy-free varieties), salad, and lemonade. Feel free to bring a snack to share. We’ll eat at 5:30 PM, with games starting around 6 and going until 8:30ish. Questions? Contact Mona or Evan.

Fact or fiction: Peacemakers make the most competitive gamers. Help us find out on April 13!

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Save the Date for VBS This Summer!

—Nathan Perrin

We are ramping up our summer Vacation Bible School program again; mark your calendars for June 3-7, 9 AM-11 AM. VBS is a special week when kids gather together to learn about the Gospel, soak in some good Mennonite teachings, play games, fellowship, and enjoy snacks. (Emphasis on the snacks; one of our 2022 participants dubbed the week Vacation Snack School.) All are welcome!



Easter Egg Hunt.



MYF & Venture Club skating outing.

Adults and youth should save the date too. We need volunteers to make this week a great experience for the kids. If you are interested in helping in any way (snacks, teaching, games, leading music, etc.), please let me know. I'll find you a role that fits your gifts well and is fun to boot. Please contact me at nathanp@lombardmennonite.org.

Feel free to invite friends to participate! Already some Church of the Brethren kids from Elgin plan to join us. VBS is a great opportunity to build up community and connect with other children. I'm looking forward to this fun program and am excited to see what God has in store for us.

Menno Minds Meet at Menno Haven

—Richard Gehring

On March 9, representatives from Mennonite congregations across the state gathered at Menno Haven for the Illinois Mennonite Conference (IMC) Annual Assembly. Pastor Barb and I attended as LMC's delegates. Lyle Bohnert also attended as a member of the Missional Leadership Team (MLT), the governing board for IMC.

We spent time worshipping and hearing reports from area congregations and representatives of Mennonite agencies and institutions. Andrew Suderman of Mennonite Mission Network and Eastern Mennonite University was our keynote speaker. He offered a thought-provoking reflection on the Parable of the Growing Seed from Mark 4.





Comforter knotting bash on March 9.

During the business session, we approved the annual spending plan. For several years, the conference has been accumulating surplus funds since there has been no conference minister. We also approved new members for conference leadership positions. The MLT noted that they hope to find a moderator-elect sometime this year as current moderator Darrel Miller's term is ending.

Conference leaders also shared two options aimed at resolving disagreements regarding pastors officiating at same-sex weddings and credentialing of pastors in same-sex relationships. They plan to share these proposals with IMC congregations and invite feedback.

For more information on IMC and the annual assembly, visit the conference website at illinoismennonite.com.

Thank You, Mary!

—Ruth Quiroa

As Mary H. retires from the LMC nursery on March 31, it's only fitting that we give her warm tribute for the love and care she has expressed to our littlest ones and their parents for the past nine years as our nursery coordinator. During this time, she seamlessly scheduled four volunteers each Sunday—two for worship service and two for Christian Formation classes! This involved numerous emails to helpers and regular communication with Katharine to meet weekly bulletin and monthly *Vital Signs* deadlines.



Mary tirelessly recruited volunteers, kept a substitute list, and weeded out old and broken toys to provide toddlers with a clean, safe play area. She often made decisions on donations that “magically appeared,” determining their quality, age-appropriateness, and child appeal. Finally, she kept a constant supply of snacks, wipes, and cleaning supplies available, while also ensuring the bulletin board was always attractive and up-to-date. Thank you, Mary!