

NEWS & VIEWS

November 6, 2022

Volume 21 No.11

Doylestown Mennonite Church

PASTOR'S PEN— Finding Friendships

On Friday Night, October 14, 2022 I performed a wedding ceremony for a couple in Allentown, Pa. The very next day, I led a funeral service in Fairfax, Va. The man who died had recently celebrated 58 years of marriage with his spouse. I hope that the newly married couple will experience that many years (and more) of marriage. Although the thought of losing a spouse is hard, typically - but hopefully after decades of marriage – one of them will eventually find themselves saying goodbye to the other.

In my premarital counseling, I encourage every couple to develop and maintain strong same-gender relationships throughout their lives. I believe it is equally important for all of us to do this, but I think women are often better at it than men.

In Genesis, we read that it was not good for Adam to be alone. I believe this Biblical witness from the start names our need for connection with other humans. Our society is infatuated with romantic love and couples, yet both Jesus and Paul call us to a broader community to love and build relationships. Whether married or not, I believe all of us need to develop significant, non-romantic relationships to love and be loved.

The first time this came into focus for me was when a good friend lost his wife to cancer at the age of 45. I saw how his deep friendships nurtured, supported and gave him strength. I wondered if we place too heavy expectations on our marital relationships because we fail to develop and maintain other friendships. It is not surprising that many marriages struggle when we place such an emphasis for a person to be “the one.”

I have been blessed in my journey as I have developed male friendships. Though I am an introvert, I have discovered that I really enjoy hanging out with other men. Whether I am playing basketball, disc golf, working together, or sitting around a table, I find these friendships energizing. As my circle of friends has enlarged, my life was enriched.

It has been equally rewarding as this circle of friends has reached far beyond my church/pastoral connections. I believe having friends outside the church has helped me be more realistic regarding my expectations toward my faith community. I have learned much from my Catholic friends and from those who do not attend church at all. There are often refreshingly honest conversations on a wide variety of topics. Whether we are discussing parenting, job-related issues or sports, the variety of opinions is welcomed. While I do not often engage, many loud political debates also ensue, where I try to discern what makes it so emotionally charged for those arguing. Through it all, what I appreciate is that all leave as friends and return for more in the weeks ahead.

Nancy claims that I am a “fake introvert”. Regardless, I will keep encouraging all to develop same-gender relationships within and beyond the church. It takes time, investment, and even a willingness to be uncomfortable. For me, it has been well worth the effort. I believe it has enhanced me as a follower of Jesus, which is good for my marriage and my church .

-Pastor Randy

F•R•I•E•N•D•S

COMING UP....SOME SPECIAL DATES

Birthdays

Denny Bartels	11/11
Zachary Schwabe	11/21
Marge Swartley	11/25
Lucy DeJesus	12/4

Anniversaries

Michael & Aimee Gourley	11/11
Ray & Marge Swartley	11/27

KAREN'S PLACE COFFEEHOUSE

Doylestown's only underground Christian Café! Open the first and third Saturdays of each month, 7:00-10:00pm, October—June.

November 5 – Dana Isles and Facedown

November 19 – The Sweet Mercy Band

December 3 – The Eddy Mann Band

Karen's Place will be donating a percentage of its proceeds to Worthwhile wear, an organization that helps women caught in the sex trafficking industry. It will continue to collect canned goods for the New Britain Food Larder.

LOOKING TOWARD THANKSGIVING

November's offering project is collecting items for Mennonite Central Committee relief kits. A list of items will be provided. Bring an item or two or whatever you can, to church throughout the month. Items can be donated up until the Thanksgiving Eve Service on November 23.

Visit this link to learn more and to see a list of items:

<https://mcc.org/get-involved/kits/relief>

CARE TEAM REPORT

The Care Team met on Tuesday, October 18, 2022 via zoom.

Our devotion was based on Galatians 6:1-10; we also reflected on some past DMC sermons when we talked about boulders and backpacks. There are times in our lives when we need to walk by each other's side and carry each other's boulders. We may need to share burdens with others at times in our lives. We also need to be cognizant of what fits in our backpack and the need to carry our own load. In other words, we are here to support each other and also to encourage each other to work on our own journeys.

We reviewed the Care Team job description in part. We encourage, lead, and equip the church to address personal, pastoral, and spiritual needs within our congregation.

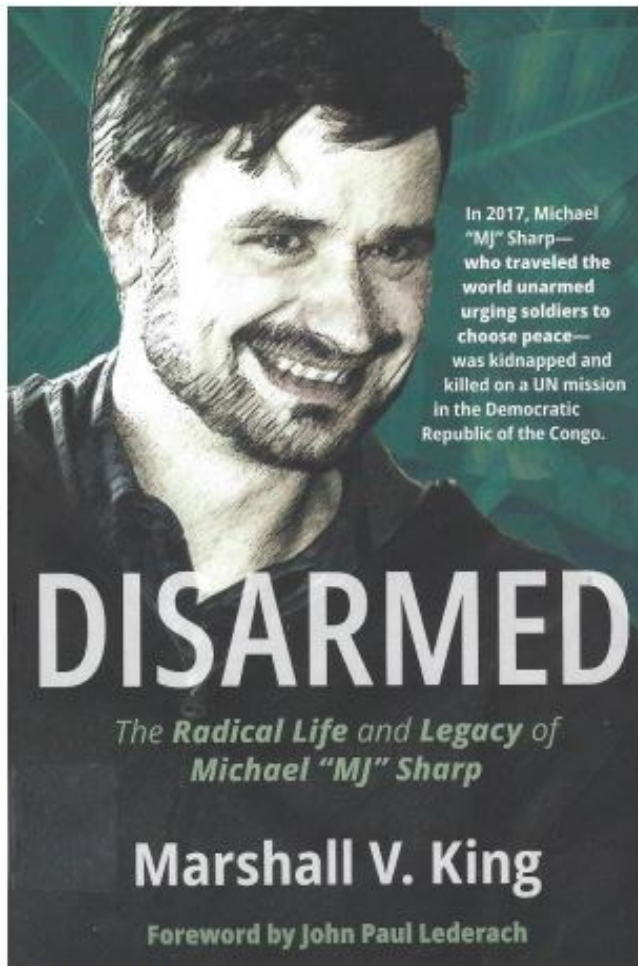
We talked about the Care Team members as we will have a vacancy beginning in 2023. The Millers are moving to Maryland and Robin will be leaving the Care team. Beginning in January 2023 we will have four members serving on the Care Team, and we believe that we will be able to support the needs of the congregation. It is not imperative at this time to have another member. We may re-evaluate this need in the upcoming months; we do encourage you to contact any of the Care Team members with questions or concerns that you may have.

We have a standing agenda item to discuss the Compassion Fund needs. We are thankful to be able to provide financial support in situations for various needs.

We are grateful for the members of DMC and how they walk by each other; we closed by praying for individuals and families in our congregation. Our next meeting is Tuesday, November 29, 2022 at 7:00PM.

-Robin Miller, for the Care Team: Sandy Landes, Randy Heacock, Aimee Gourley, Freida Myers

CHURCH LIBRARY– BOOK REVIEW



From the back cover:

"A powerful story of one man's radical commitment to peacemaking."

"Michael 'MJ' Sharp was a modern Mennonite armed with wit and intellect, but not a gun. The son of a Mennonite pastor, he demonstrated a gift for listening and persuading early in life. His efforts to approach others with acknowledgement rather than judgement gave him the ability to connect on a level that very few others manage. He also honed a deep commitment to peace, and after college he joined Mennonite Mission Network and moved to Germany, where he persuaded soldiers to choose peace and step away from the military's violent systems. At thirty-four years old, MJ was working for the United Nations Group of Experts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo – urging them to lay down their weapons – when he and colleague Zaida Catalán were murdered, likely assassinated by those with government ties. This gripping account from longtime journalist Marshall V. King explores what compelled MJ to travel the world working for peace and the impact of his life and death in the ongoing story of Christian peacemaking in a war-torn world."



Freida Myers often tells me, "Here is a new book you might enjoy." This one was especially good. It made me think about reaching far out beyond our comfortable boundaries to demonstrate our love for God and care for other people. It also reminded me of my 1st wife's brother, a classmate in my freshman year of college, who flunked out because of boredom, enlisted in Army Intelligence, and began to travel extensively around the world during the Viet Nam War era. This was shortly after the incident at Watergate. His training program was titled "Defense against surreptitious methods of entry" and his work was trying to break into various facilities and embassies. MJ and he obviously would have been bored by our jobs, eh. Anyway, my brother-in-law was in the embassy in Kuwait the day the Iraqi's took over that building and brought him and everyone else in there to Bagdad as hostages. After finally being freed and his 1st wife died of a heart attack while they were living in Greece, he remarried, moved to Luanda Angola, and subsequently spent the rest of his career testing various facilities all throughout Africa.

I'm grateful to Freida for recommending this book to me. I highly recommend it to you as a very inspirational thought-provoking read. MJ and Zaida were outstanding examples of how we can serve God more if we focus on peacemaking and developing closer relationships with God.

Karl Strauch PS: Zaida was from the same island in Sweden where my maternal grandparents were born.

A SPECIAL SUNDAY

On Sunday, October 16 our special speaker was Sam Sandler, called "America's Premier Deaf Magician." He spoke with emotion about having been deaf since the age of 30, until two weeks ago, when he received a cochlear implant. For the first time, he was able to hear the background music as he performed and visit with people afterward. He spoke about God's leading from a very low point in his life to his present life of ministry and entertainment. After his inspiring talk, the Sunday School hour was taken up by a spectacular performance, assisted by his daughter. Children present were called up to participate in some parts of the show. Adults were just as delighted as the children. A sign language interpreter was present for the benefit of any deaf visitors.



FIFTH SUNDAY DAY of SERVICE

Sunday, October 30, was a day of service. People volunteered at one of two places: One group visited Harborview, a nursing care and rehab facility in Doylestown. They led a worship service based on the Good Shepherd. Residents participated very well in singing, reciting the 23rd Psalm together and responding to questions during Sandy's talk. Several of them shared about their own lives and enjoyed visiting afterward.



Aimee Gourley reports on the second group that served in Bristol:

A group of us went to Redemption Church in Bristol. We arrived ready to roll up our sleeves and accomplish some work for this church that is new to the old space in the Bristol Friends Meetinghouse. Since the building has been around since 1711, there was plenty to be done. Michael, Cesar, Tim and Dave spent the time tackling some of the electrical issues in the sanctuary. Joyce teamed up with Paul, the long-time clerk and meeting house historian, to comb through the items in the balcony-turned-storage space. They made a huge dent in the clutter there. It was really fun to see the carvings from long-ago teenagers, who would sit up in the balcony while their parents attended service on the main floor. The carvings were in the old style font and one was even dated "1891". Steve kept busy repairing the old walls with spackle.

Outside, Nancy, Sue and I worked on raking and bagging leaves. Some of these leaves had fallen from a glorious old buttonwood tree that was standing when William Penn arrived in 1682. It was great fun to rake with the children from the church; as we worked you could see the pride they were taking in the work that

was being done. Jon, Ben, Jeff and new friend King were working on sprucing up the landscape and pressure washing the exterior of the building.

I had the pleasure of taking a walk with Associate Pastor Ian. As he guided me down historical Mill Street to the river, he enthusiastically explained the story behind the beginning of Redemption Church. It was almost hard to imagine that many of these businesses were boarded and empty when the church was planted in 2009. Now I was strolling down this inviting street past a busy coffee shop and plenty of other meeting places with food and drink. It was such a nice sunny fall day, so there were lots of dog walkers and a few people with strollers on our path. I saw Ian wave into the coffee shop as we passed, and he told me of the connections the church has made since 2009. Not only have these young people brought the Spirit of God, but they have made this town anew. Once we reached the river we took some time for prayer and a moment to enjoy the serene surroundings. We then trekked back to the church, where the day was wrapped up by a beautiful song and time of communion led by Pastor Gary Alloway.





Deadline for submitting items for the December News & Views: **November 29**

PARTING THOUGHT:

Jesus' example of friendship: "I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will eat with him, and he with me." Rev 3:20

Pastor: Randy Heacock

randy.heacock@doylestownmc.org

Pastor of Prayer & Pastoral Care:
Sandy Landes

sandylandes1311@gmail.com

Doylestown Mennonite Church

590 N. Broad Street

Doylestown, PA, 18901

Phone: 215.345.6377

dmc@doylestownmc.org

Newsletter Editor: Lois Myers

Phone/Fax 215-794-8327

myersfm@juno.com

Pastor of Worship & Administration:

KrisAnne Swartley

krisanne.swartley@doylestownmc.org