

NEWS & VIEWS

April 6, 2025
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Doylestown Mennonite Church

PASTOR'S PEN

Though it hardly seems possible, in less than one month I will conclude my time as pastor of DMC. It is hard to comprehend that nearly 24 years have passed since I first sat in the office to begin serving as Pastor of such a fine congregation. My mind is flooded with faces and memories. As I think on this being my final Pastor's Pen, I am unsure how to begin, what to say, and most of all how to end. The overriding feeling is that of gratitude for having served with and learned so much from all of you.

The words of Apostle Paul as recorded in Philippians 1:3-5 seem appropriate: "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now." While I share this as an expression of gratitude, it is also a commitment to continue to pray for the work of DMC. Though I am leaving, my desire and concern for all of you to keep following God's leading remains.

I have hope for your future. I say with Paul that "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion." (Philippians 1:6) I remain convinced God desires for

DMC to have a unique witness in the community. The foundation of DMC is Jesus and Jesus promises to continue to work through this church.



In this time of transition I encourage each one to focus on Jesus to guide and direct. I also invite you to consider what Jesus may want to complete in you individually and as a faith community. As you reflect and listen to God's leading, be ready to act with courage. Stay true to the vision of taking risks with and for Christ. Remember your task is simply to do as God leads and allow Jesus to complete His work through you. Trust God to provide the outcome in God's timing.

As I reflect on my two-plus decades, I can truly say God has done, God is doing, and God will do great things through DMC. I thank God and each of you for the joy of sharing in shaping the ministry of Doylestown Mennonite Church.

- Pastor Randy

COMING UP: SOME SPECIAL DATES

Birthdays

Sue Croll 4/6
Mark Reiff 4/9
Amber Youssef 4/14
Sandra Maldonado 4/25
Cesar Garrido 4/29
Cindy Strauch 5/3



KAREN'S PLACE

Doylestown's only Underground
Christian Cafe

April 5 was the annual Comedy Night, for the benefit of Battle4Children Charities.

* April 19 – closed for Easter

* May 4 – Bethany Hatchett has a heart to share the love of Jesus through songs focused on God's character and the complex intersection of faith, life and mothering. Bethany brings her heart for the Lord and her love of singing beautiful melodies and true words to the community around her and beyond.



FROM THE LIBRARY:

DOG-GONE, It Hurts: Grieving Your Dog is Nothing to Bark At - by Hal Kichings

Two months ago my friend, companion and furry child Champ died. A good friend gifted me this book, thinking this might help me deal with my grief. She was right, it helped. DOG-GONE, It Hurts deals with how you might be feeling day-to-day about the loss of a pet. Through a well-written forward, thirty short, two-to-three page chapters and a conclusion, the author recalls his life with his animals and how he dealt with the grief of their death.

Using scripture excerpts and grief psychology, he helps you understand the meaning of what you are feeling. He touches on the reality of your grief and how to deal with “well meaning” but sometimes hurtful condolences from your friends and family (sometimes one word is better than two). He encourages you to not be ashamed of your grief “because it’s just a dog”. He reminded me that even when I was having my worst day of loss and loneliness, God was there to help and comfort me. There were days when the words in this book brought tears to my eyes or a smile to my face; all are helping in the healing process.



I think this book will help with any grief. I've re-gifted this book (might be a couple tear stained pages) to our congregation's library, in the hope that it may help someone as it helped me.

- Dave Santopietro

FROM THE LIBRARY:

SCARY TIMES, HOLY TIMES - by Sarah and Herb Myers



Local authors ... you may know them and other people whom they mention in the book ...

Local places ... Souderton Mennonite Home, Doylestown Mennonite Church ...

Sarah was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins's lymphoma and Herb with atrial fibrillation in 2001. Both of them kept detailed daily journals during their four-year journey with these illnesses. Sarah had degrees from three different colleges: Home Economics, Education, and Occupational Therapy. Herb had a Biology degree from Eastern Mennonite and an MD degree from Temple. He practiced medicine in Puerto Rico, Pennsylvania, and Mississippi before transitioning to psychiatry and practicing that in Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

Their journal notes from that 2001-2004 period are extremely thorough in describing all of the many procedures and emotions that they went through during that journey. Anyone who has gone through similar experiences or is about to begin that journey (never call it an undertaking) will find this book extremely interesting and informative.

Writing this review in the middle of a similar journey that began with a near-death experience in mid-October 2024 and includes a challenging mix of several other intriguing, previously undiscovered maladies added in for kicks, it was quite helpful to read their detailed descriptions of the experiences that they went through 20 years ago.

May God richly bless you as you read this book and fully trust in Him each day of your life.

"The joy is in the journey." - Karl Strauch

*Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil, for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
- Psalm 23:4*

FIFTH SUNDAY DAY OF SERVICE

Harborview worship service

Eight of us went with Sandy Landes to Harborview. There was a good turnout of residents who were happy to see us. They like to visit with us and tell their stories. Those able to do so joined in the singing and were very responsive to Sandy's message.

Several of them were happy to receive one of the Bibles we had offered.



Yard work at the Bartels'

We are grateful for the 12 people who showed up on Sunday to help chainsaw, split and stack firewood, prune trees and rake up stickers. We even had some extra trees come down, thanks to Steve's tree removal expertise. Sam and Isaac enjoyed getting rides in wheelbarrows, too. Afterwards, we enjoyed lunch and a delicious cake to celebrate Randy's birthday.

- Sue and Denny Bartels



Food for the needy



During our March 2025 Fifth Sunday, seven top chefs cooked up large casseroles to donate to St. John's Hospice in Center City Philadelphia. For over 60 years, St. John's has been providing a wide array of service to homeless individuals and families, including warm meals, showers, clean clothing and shoes, emergency and longer-term shelter and counseling/case management assistance.

Our DMC group made casserole meals to feed 60 people, and had lots of fun doing it! The trays of food will be transported to a central freezer at a nearby church, where St. John's van picks them up once a month.



The 60 meals don't hold a candle to Jesus' 5000, but it's a start! - Joyce Zuzack

If You're Not a Skier, You Can't Be a Christian

As I look around the world today, I wonder when it will return to normal, or what the “new” normal will look like. What I see today is a lot of people living in fear. That brings me back to an article I read about 7 years ago. A few people that know me have heard me say a number of times, “I should write a book, comparing Christianity to skiing”. While it is highly unlikely that I would ever write a book, I actually have picked out a title. Since I relish controversy, the title would be, **“If You're Not a Skier, You Can't Be a Christian”**.

What started my thinking was a story written by Heather Hanson, titled “Sally and Me”. Sally fell while skiing in the Jackson Hole back country and was badly injured. She shattered her helmet, fractured her skull, back and ankle and sustained a traumatic brain injury, involving a long recovery. After that fall, Heather lost her ability to ski without thinking about consequences. After a year and a half, she still couldn't ski without worrying about whether the snow would hold. She didn't like her body's reaction to the adrenaline rush she previously loved. She got knock-kneed and bailed out on lines she would



have joyously attacked before, shaking hard. She says, “I have fortunately never been seriously injured while skiing. I have, however, sustained a number of injuries. I know all too well the feeling of pain and fear that goes through your mind when returning to “the trail that got you”. At times, it can be hard to get those thoughts out of your mind. But that is not the way that life works., and that is not the way that Christianity works. Christianity is not a religion for people who live in fear. You have to expect the best, not brace for the worst. If fear rules your life , you will never fulfill the plans that God has for you. It will stop you in your tracks when God asks you to “step out in faith”. Fear will keep you from realizing the potential God has given you.

In Hebrews 11 we are given numerous examples of people who cast aside fear to follow God in faith. As in skiing, the Glory doesn't come by taking the “safe” path down the center of the trail. The Glory comes by riding right on the edge. 1 John 4:18 says, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. And in Isaiah 41:10-14 it says, “Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” It all has to do with trust. God's word is true. He IS trustworthy. When God opens an opportunity for you, embrace it! Don't entertain thoughts of fear or doubt. He will provide all that you need and in the end, your relationship with Him will grow.”

- Don Heckler

FROM THE CARE TEAM

The Care Team met on March 25 via Zoom. Freida Myers, Gary Garges and Sandy Landes were present. Our scripture text for the evening was Colossians 3:12-25, a passage that highlights the need for humility in the life of the body of Christ. Love binds us all together. As we continue to read the book by Dennis Edwards, Humility Illuminated, Dennis challenges us to notice who we listen to, who gets our attention. Dennis writes, "While listening might be an act of humility, to whom we listen is an indicator of our authenticity." How do we open our hearts to listen to each other as an act of humility, not just those who think like us? Dennis also invites us as white Christians to be open to learn from people of color, as their perspectives have often been overlooked. How does this invitation speak to you today?

The Care Team also continues to reflect and discern ways we as a church can respond to requests for financial aid from people in our community. Currently we are not giving out gift cards from the office, but we wonder how God would want us to respond. Please speak to anyone of us if you have thoughts about this. The Compassion Fund continues to be one way we can offer support to those in our congregation and community with whom we have a relationship. We are grateful for the matching funds we receive through Everence when we respond to a need.

We closed with prayer for several people who have specific needs.

- Sandy Landes, for the Care Team

Deadline for submitting items for the May issue of News & Views:
APRIL 29, 2025



SUSIE CHURCHMOUSE

Those people working in the kitchen were making a lot of food; it smelled so good but there wasn't much left for me after they packed it all up in the freezer. Guess I have to wait for Easter breakfast - that's always good!

PARTING THOUGHT

If you but trust in God to guide you and place your confidence in him,
You'll find him always there beside you, to give you hope and strength within.
For those who trust God's changeless love build on the rock that will not move.

- Georg Neumark, 1657



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