

# NEWS & VIEWS

January 10, 2021

Volume 20 No.1

Doylestown Mennonite Church

## PASTOR'S PEN

I want to begin this first note of encouragement with the ending of my January pastor's pen. As we begin 2021 seeking to look instead for what God can do, may each of us take time this month to focus on whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, pleasing and worthy of praise!

For the remainder of this month I invite us to practice focusing on those things that are worthy of praise. Perhaps the first place to start is to stop listening to and giving our attention to things that are not worthy of praise. Last I checked radios, televisions, computers, cell phones as well as all electronic devices have things called off buttons. I suggest we begin the discipline of either turning such things off or at least changing the channel/source when they report things that are not worthy of praise.

We will do well to turn off any source such as news feeds, radio personalities, political pundits, or even Christian media, which do not encourage trust in God and love for others. What if we assessed the sources we daily tune in to by Paul's test of being pure, honorable, commendable, and worthy of praise? Are we willing to turn such things off? Are we even aware how much of what we take in on a daily basis is not commendable, not pure, and not worthy of praise.

In order to prepare our hearts and minds to look instead for what God can do, let us take the first step by making room for those things that are worthy of praise. It is not a matter of letting the two compete or discerning which side has more to offer but rather what it is that we give our energy and time.

May we be surprised what God can do in us when we turn off those sources that are not worthy?

-Pastor Randy



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## COMING UP...SOME SPECIAL DATES

### Birthdays

Mary Ellen Schade	1/1
Dave Chittick	1/10
Janey Garrido	1/13
Karry Bull	1/14
Judy Garrido	1/14
Heather Zeo	1/18
Peg Freed	1/25
Donald Derstine	1/31
Dorothy Wartko	1/31
Isaac Garrido	2/1
Jeff Buckwalter, Jr.	2/3
Jon Swartley	2/4

### Anniversaries

Dave & MaryLee Chittick 1/25

## KAREN'S PLACE

Karen's Place is not open to the public right now but will be live streaming its events. Tune in on January 16 at 8:00 pm to watch the live stream, or watch the concert later at your convenience, on our Facebook page or website. We hope to open our doors to the public soon!

## From HILLTOWN PIKE to SPRUCE STREET

Steve and Sandy Landes sold their Hilltown Pike house at the end of October and shortly afterward found a house at 316 Spruce Street in Hellertown, which they bought and spent their free time in the next six weeks or so "sprucing" it up. They painted, refinished floors and got ready to move in on December 16. They are now enjoying a lovely home they can share together while working at job locations far apart.



## FIFTH SUNDAY DAY of SERVICE

The plan was for those of us who volunteered, to go to the Ripple Community in Allentown for a day of service in their facility, including the packing of lunches that they usually hand out after their 4 pm service, to which we were invited. Because of the pandemic, we were unable to visit their location, but some of us stayed after church to pack the lunches here. They were then delivered by Steve and Sandy to Ripple for distribution as planned. The next chance for re-scheduling comes January 31. We'll see what happens!



## REMEMBERING 2020

>**January** - The Leadership Team announced that each of the 5th Sundays would be a day of service and fellowship. Rather than gathering for worship we would join together to work alongside each other as a way to worship.

>**February** - The fellowship meal and congregational meeting did not take place until March 1. In that meeting the pastoral staffing plan and plan to sponsor a cabin at Spruce Lake were affirmed, and the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday plan was discussed with some expressing reservations.

>**March** - Lockdown! We had no service on March 17 and March 22, but 12 of us met at the pavilion for a walk around the walking path and grounds and short time of fellowship and prayer.

>**April** - Easter Sunday was April 12 and we had a service on line that our pastors live-streamed. This was the beginning of the same for many more weeks.

>**May** - We continued with the on-line services. Karen's Place announced that they were live streaming events for May 16 and June 7 and planned no other events until fall.

>**June** - After the on-line service on June 7 we met at 11:45 at the pavilion for fellowship, continuing through the month. Sara Heacock was with us for the last time; she passed away two days later. Finally on June 28 we met inside with masks, sitting separately, followed by time in the pavilion. The service was also live-streamed and a significant number of persons watched on line.

>**July** - On July 11 a joint memorial service was held for Lester and Sara Heacock, who died on May 4 and June 10 respectively. Many of their family were in attendance—the first gathering of that size in many months.

>**August** - Heidi Swartley reported on her summer at Spruce Lake. Jenni Garrido left us on August 7 after a courageous battle with breast cancer. A celebration of her life was held on August 22. The 5th Sunday Day of Service found many of us at Pinebrook helping with various kinds of cleanup work for the camp, ending with a prayer walk around the property near the end of the day.

>**September** - On September 19 we met for another funeral. Ruth Hart died on August 22 and we celebrated her life of service to family and church, a positive influence on those she served.

>**October** - We continued to meet for our service, live-streamed for those at home. We heard plans for our next 5th Sunday, November 29 at Ripple Community in Allentown.

>**November** - During the month, offerings of food were collected for Bucks County Opportunity Council culminating in our Thanksgiving service. The donations were picked up for distribution throughout the county. The 5th Sunday Day of Service at Ripple in Allentown did not go as planned. The visit was cancelled, so instead we met after our worship service, to pack lunches which were delivered to Ripple for distribution.

>**December** - Shut down again! From December 13 for the rest of the month we watched again from home while Randy, KrisAnne and the people assisting with production, faced an empty space.

## A BIG THANK YOU

On behalf of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Lehigh Valley, I wanted to say thank you for your generous Christmas Eve offering. During the pandemic it is more critical than ever for Big Brothers Big Sisters to provide mentors to children who are facing challenging circumstances. Because of you, Big Brothers Big Sisters is here to make sure that young people have someone in their corner, someone they can turn to, especially in a time like this where they are dealing with virtual school and being away from their friends. Your donation helped children like Gage achieve personal success this past year.



Over the years, the match has engaged in many active events, such as participating in the Mikayla's Voice Tri for Inclusion, a triathlon for children of all abilities, and thrilling events, such as attending a Giants/Cowboys game (Gage is a Giants fan and Jason is a Cowboys fan!). But truly the real magic in the match have been the times when Jason was there to listen and support Gage as he navigated childhood or simply showed up on the sidelines of the countless football games or track meets. Gage has told BBBSLV staff that Jason is such a good role model because he always listens to him and listens without reacting right away. He talks through situations with Gage and always gives good advice. The future is bright for Gage, as he heads off to college to begin to pursue his dream of a degree in sports management.

I feel blessed to worship with a generous, encouraging and supportive congregation!

-Sue Bartels

June 2020 was an exciting month for Little Brother Gage and his Big Brother Jason, as June marked Gage's graduation from high school and even the impact of COVID-19, couldn't take away from the excitement and celebration of this achievement for Gage, who is blind. Gage and Jason met in 2013, after Jason, a former Little Brother, had indelible impressions of the program and knew he wanted to volunteer. Jason has always told BBBSLV staff, "I knew I was in this for the long haul. So Gage was 11 when we met, and I knew I would be his Big Brother for at least 7 years. Even now, I'm not going anywhere, and he will always be my Little Brother. I plan to continue checking in on him when he is at college."

## FROM THE LIBRARY

Our Doylestown Mennonite Church library is an excellent source of inspirational books to read whenever you might have an opportunity to do so. Cindy and I are grateful to Freida Myers for her capable talents as DMC librarian and her frequent “here, you might like this one” suggestions. What an understatement. Here are three that I’ve just read and highly recommend that you do, too.

Joy in a Foreign Land written by Joan and Ron Denlinger of Lancaster, PA is a fascinating 255-page book about their life as a couple in a pastoral ministry while raising and caring for two special needs children. The sub-title on the cover states “A family that overcame when their world was coming apart.”

Faith in the Heartland “A family that grew through a life-changing road trip”, a 181-page book by Joan Denlinger in 2019, documents their recent 5-year journey on the road after writing their book about Joy. These two books together cover a 25-year period that Joan and Ron worked as church planters with the Rural Home Missionary Association (RHMA).

Together We Can “Our Seven-Month Journey with the MCC Mobile Meat Canner 2008-2009” is a 109-page journal written by Wanda L. Yoder in 2010. That 7-month journey included 37 stops in 12 states (OH, KS, NE, SD, OK, MO, IA, IN, IL, PA, VA, NY) and 2 Canadian provinces (Manitoba, Ontario), producing 566,984 cans of turkey, pork, beef, and broth in 115 days of operation.

Having worked with a number of canning lines during my 47½ year career in the food business, I’d be tempted to participate in a journey with the Mennonite Central Committee Mobile Meat Canner, but I keep discovering new treasures to read in our DMC library.

All three of these books were truly inspirational. Cindy and I both thoroughly enjoyed the Joy and Faith books. Both of us were in awe and left speechless by their relationships with God and their responses as His servants. We agree with Freida. “You might like these.”

Karl Strauch

### The Irresistible Revolution

Did Jesus literally mean to give what we have to the poor? Or did God invent highlighters so we can highlight the parts we like and ignore the rest? Shane Claiborne expresses the belief that He does literally mean that in his book The Irresistible Revolution. He relates feeling increasingly disturbed by God for his suburban comfort. He came to a point where he “did not want to settle for a life detached from the groaning of the slums or the beauty of playing in open fire hydrants and having block parties in the inner city”. This discomfort led him to pursue something more than the American dream. Shane, along with some friends, began an experiment called the Simple Way in Jan, 1997. Six friends moved into a small row house in Kensington, one of the poorest districts in Pa, without any big vision, but rather the desire to be passionate lovers of God and to take the Gospel way of life seriously.

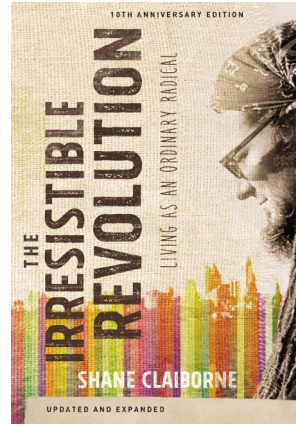
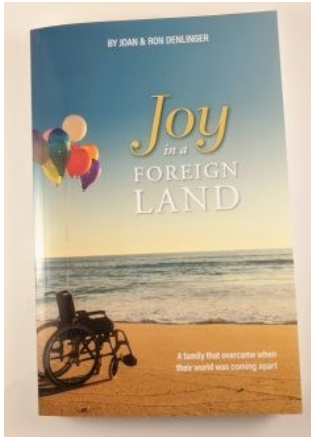
Some of the things that happen at the Simple Way are helping kids with homework, sharing food with folks who need it, eating beans and rice a neighbor makes, providing a safe place to cry or get some water or a blanket, fixing up abandoned houses, and theater camp where suburban and urban kids come together. Can you imagine meeting in an abandoned house in Kensington with homeless folks, business executives, Bible scholars, and young radicals to study Scripture dealing with economics. That has taken place there too.

Obviously Shane is passionate about social justice, but he cringes when asked which issue is most important. He answers “Don’t choose issues, choose people. Come play in the fire hydrants in North Philly. Fall in love with a group of people who are marginalized and suffering, and then you won’t have to worry about which cause you need to protest. Then the issues will choose you.” He feels strongly that we need to know the faces behind the issue about which we are concerned, and not just talk at a distance far removed from them.

This is a great read, but be prepared to become uncomfortable, and maybe even to have a desire to connect with some of the faces of nearby Kensington! -Judy Garrido

**(See pictures on the following page)**





## ADVENT and CHRISTMAS EVE

A different kind of service was held on Christmas eve, with no congregation in attendance, however there were video contributions of music and readings from congregants, to go along with the singing led by KrisAnne and Randy's meditation. We were encouraged to have our own candle at home to light as we sang along with "Silent Night." Our Christmas offering was divided four ways to benefit non-profits with local connections - see the article by Susan Bartels earlier in the newsletter for a report from of them.

### From Susie Churchmouse:

*It's been far too quiet around here this year- no fellowship meals and no classes. Oh, maybe some of the staff come down to fix lunch or something but that doesn't give me much entertainment or many crumbs of food. I don't mind the isolation; as you know I'm used to hiding in corners and keeping out of sight, but this poor churchmouse is looking forward to better times.*

**DEADLINE** for submitting items to the February News & Views: **February 2**

### PARTING THOUGHT:

"O how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day." Psalm 119:97

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**Pastor: Randy Heacock**

randy.heacock@doylestownmc.org

**Prayer Minister: 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

**Minister of Worship & Administration:**

**KrisAnne Swartley**

krisanne.swartley@doylestownmc.org