

NEWS & VIEWS

July 7, 2019
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Doylestown Mennonite Church

PASTOR'S PEN

(Randy wrote this article for the "Intersections" publication of our conference)

Learning and Celebrating along the way

In my work both as a pastor and in the work I do for the conference, one of my greatest rewards is the opportunity to learn from and with others working in God's Kingdom. Going back to the first congregation I served as a young minister in the United Methodist Church, the board of ordained ministry was wise enough to pair me with an older minister, younger than my current age, to mentor me. Charles and I were very different both in our theological perspective and in our view of worship, however he taught me the importance of accepting affirmation and as he declared "to let it sink deeply into your entire being. Challenges and criticism will come frequently enough, and you will need to have a strong bank account of affirmation to keep your balance." Fast forward to my current work, I file notes of affirmation and appreciation with a prayer of gratitude as evidence of God's grace.

More recently, in working with the pastoral search committee at Towamencin, a person called to share concern regarding our process. As I listened, I gained a fuller understanding both of what happened at our last meeting and how we could find our way forward. Grateful for the honest feedback, I reached out to some other people for wisdom and discerned an approach for our next meeting. The next meeting was vastly improved with more vigorous engagement. On the ride home, I thanked God for the varied gifts people have to contribute to the church.

I recently met with Tim Moyer, Pastor at Bally, for breakfast at his house. Let me first say Tim knows how to fix breakfast! As we talked, his excitement and energy was contagious. The Bally congregation is working to learn about and practice a centered-set approach. Tim shared how this focus is unifying the congregation. They are also rethinking and reshaping who they are as a church. I give thanks for the fresh wind of God creating new expres-

sions. I look forward to what God is yet to do at and through Bally.

At Doylestown we recently celebrated the ordination of Sandy Landes. Sandy's ordination was a tribute to God's constant pursuit and Sandy's willingness to say yes. Many people present would have witnessed Sandy's transformation through the process of refusing, then reluctantly leading, and now leading boldly in a public setting. Former members, family, neighbors, colleagues and friends celebrated Sandy's faithful example of answering God's call. I rejoiced the day after Sandy's ordination for the many people who nurtured and participated in this work of God.



The picture is a display that was present during Sandy's ordination. It represents God's power to transform what was once a barren desert into a lush land. As in the little stories I have shared, it visually reminds us of God's life giving power. May we all give thanks for the ways we have witnessed God's transformational power. May we continually learn to wait on God.

-Pastor Randy

COMING UP.....SOME SPECIAL DATES-

BIRTHDAYS

Gary Garges	7/2
KrisAnne Swartley	7/5
James Beyer	7/6
Mia Gidley	7/8
Lorraine Landis	7/11
Cyndi Landis	7/12
Juliano Andres Garrido	7/15
Grace Snyder	7/18
Kaitlin Jimenez	7/20
Layla Garrido	7/24

ANNIVERSARIES

Cesar & Judy Garrido	7/1
William & Karen Fennel	7/24
Steven & Sandra Landes	7/26
Kendrick and Janey Garrido	7/29

YOUTH SOCCER CAMP

Soccer Camp, "Developing Moves With Christ" will be held on July 20 and July 27 from 9 - 12pm; Lunch included!

CHURCH PICNIC - August 4 at Lost Acres Ranch, Creek Road in New Britain Township. Worship at 10:00 am and Lunch at noon. Bring two potluck items and a drink to share.

KAREN'S PLACE

No events are planned for June and July. Watch for the announcement of the outdoor concerts during August.

FROM THE PRAYER CORNER

As we continue our focus at DMC on **Simply praying**, our July theme will be **practicing gratitude**. For so many of us, this is already a daily practice as we give thanks to God before our meals, as we begin or end our days with prayers of thanksgiving. What I invite us to consider is how to pray for a situation or concern with thanksgiving **first**. The writer and speaker, Graham Cooke, often says, "What if we begin our prayers with the question: 'God, what do you want to be for this person or for me in this situation?'" So this means we need to take the time to listen to God and trust that what we hear is God speaking to us. Then our posture in prayer becomes thanking God for who God is.

What if we took the time this month of July to practice gratitude for who God is and the particular characteristic God wants to display in a current situation? That will mean that we need to take the time to listen to God and hear what God is saying to us. It may be wisdom, peace, love, truth, strength, etc, all the characteristics of God that we know to be true. The Bible is filled with descriptions, stories and demonstrations of the many facets of God's character.

Taking the time to give thanks for God's presence and the particular way God wants to bless us or another person is not difficult but it is a practice that takes thoughtfulness. It is different than simply beginning with our needs. It is different than beginning with us. It is beginning our prayers with God.

It actually brings us into God's presence with thanksgiving as it says in Psalm 100:4, Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise, give thanks to him and praise his name. Let's join with others as we focus on all that God wants to be for us as we practice **Simply praying** with gratitude.

Sandy Landes

CARE TEAM UPDATE

Sandy Landes, Randy Heacock, Robin Miller and Freida Myers met as a Care Team on Monday evening, June 11. Kendrick Garrido was on vacation.

Sandy shared a few verses from Luke 4 where Jesus reads in the synagogue: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has appointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." We spent a short time in prayer for some persons in challenging circumstances.

John Drescher Lehman, a therapist, joined our meeting to talk about some opportunities he could use to talk about relationships. We are scheduling sessions during the Sunday school hour on Sundays, September 15, 22, 29 and October 6. Possible topics include: attention/awareness, acceptance, forgiveness and love. We want to invite people from the community including those who use our building.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 23.

Freida Myers for the care team, including Sandy Landes, Randy Heacock, Kendrick Garrido, and Robin Miller

FROM THE CHURCH LIBRARY

A Brief Summary of "Joey" by Jennifer Marshall Bleakley- from Heidi Swartley

According to Kim, "Our mission at Hope Reins is to pair a horse with a hurting child, to help open that child's heart... Hope Reins is based upon 2 Corinthians 1:3-5, which explains that God comforts us in our time of need, so that we can comfort others in their time of need".

The novel, *Joey*, follows the true story of a horse named Joey and his time at Hope Reins. Hope

Reins is an equine rescue ranch. They host equine therapy sessions for free, and use those sessions to point hurting children and their families to Christ. I've really come to love the premise of this ministry. We often put ministry in a box, to say that it looks and sounds like *a, b, and c*, as if we're telling God how and where he should move. I don't have a lot of experience with horses, but I fully believe that, as unconventional as it may be, God truly moves at Hope Reins. In this novel, the volunteers and staff, as well as everyone who visits Hope Reins, will come to know God through His creation, and learn to trust God in learning to trust their equestrian friends.

Joey, this novel's namesake, is one the horses rescued by Hope Reins. Joey is blind. Kim and the rest of the staff at Hope Reins had no idea what they were doing in taking on a blind horse. But somehow Kim believed that God was pointing her towards Joey. God could use Joey; God could use Hope Reins. **Spoiler Alert:** God DOES use Joey and his ministry at Hope Reins. The staff at Hope Reins will come to find that they need Joey as much as he needs them.

Kim struggles with a great deal of anxiety. She is the owner and founder of Hope Reins. It's her job to keep the place up and running. It's her job to lead. But she feels just as blind as Joey. God is calling her to trust, but she doesn't know if she can. Joey will help her learn to trust, and just keep trusting. Lauren is the head trainer of two horses, Joey and his pasture mate Speckles. Lauren struggles with debilitating joint pain. Hope Reins will provide Lauren refuge and distraction from pain, and Lauren's pain will become a powerful source of empathy, as she attempts to connect with an arthritic horse. Sarah was abandoned and rejected by her father, and lost her faith. Hope Reins leads Sarah back to God. Sarah reignited her relationship with God only to pray that no one at Hope Reins would discover her past of turning her back on God (*yes, she recognized the irony in this*). Through Joey and the ranch, Sarah's relationship with God evolves into much, much more.

Read *Joey* in the church library to learn more!! I highly recommend it :)

The Missional Experiment takes shape

In March of 2011 we as a congregation began an adventure. We called it the Missional Experiment. What makes a journey an adventure is a measure of danger! We explored our tolerance for risk and we were stretched and challenged. We started out by looking to plant this seed “out there” but soon we saw that we needed to move from the safety of “in here” and plant ourselves “out there”. Our theme of incarnational living exemplifies our growth, and yet we continue to face challenges living as Christ in our worlds. The Ministry Leadership team was seeking ways to put our learning into action. We formed two groups to explore how to use our indoor and outdoor spaces to reflect what we learned from our Missional Journey.

The outdoor group looked at ways to use our outdoor space to connect with and bless our community. We started by looking at how our property was being used at the time. We acknowledged that the existing walking path was used regularly, that the community garden was flourishing and our soccer camp could use more space. Over time we narrowed our focus to relocating the garden to maximize our field space, extending the walking path and play area and expanding the grass area for soccer camp.

We divided the project into phases. Phase I included the extended walking path and relocating the garden. We overcame some obstacles in the design and permitting processes as well as budget overrun. Phase I is completed and appreciated by many walkers, both two and four legged.

Just recently we completed Phase II. The pavilion and playground have been built. Picnic tables will soon be in place and ready for use. The playground has been used with great pleasure. We know this because a young neighbor sent a picture of her favorite part, the slides and

both she and her mom expressed their gratitude. We are looking forward to The Womens Place Peace Camp and soccer camp taking advantage of these new spaces.

Thank you to all who so generously gave financially and with your time to do the work. The outdoor group was comprised of Gary Garges, Randy Heacock and Steve Landes, with Kirk Garrido serving for the first year or so.

ANOTHER WEDDING

What a celebration - three weddings in a year's time! It was Mark and Lisa, Phil and Hannah and now Karl and Cindy.

A few months ago, Karl Strauch began worshiping with us and we enjoyed getting acquainted. He shared that he and Cindy had been high school sweethearts at Central Bucks a number of years ago. They parted ways, each married someone else and raised a family. After working in various places around the country, Karl returned to this area. Both he and Cindy had lost their spouses; they connected again and made plans to marry. He was delighted to bring her to church and introduce her. They made it official on June 15, in the presence of almost all their children, and some friends. He reports that their family members got along very well together and it was a wonderful occasion. Now they make their home at 1018 New Galena Road. We look forward to more time with both of them.

SIMPLY PRAYING— THE MONTH OF JULY

Practicing Gratitude: How can we begin our prayers with thanksgiving for who God is for each of these persons and situations?

DEADLINE for submitting items to the August 6 News & Views: July 30, 2019

PARTING THOUGHT:

....It is God who works in you both to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Philippians 2:13



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