NEWS & VIEWS

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Doylestown Mennonite Church



MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM: Discerning Our Next Steps



Over the past several months, the Ministry Leadership Team (MLT) has been taking time to reflect on how we are organized as a church and whether our current leadership structure continues to meet the needs of our congregation. As we have worked together, we have recognized that some responsibilities are clearly defined, while others have evolved over time or have fallen into gaps. This has led us to ask some important questions: What ministries and responsibilities are essential to the life of our church? Where are we doing well? Where might we need additional support, clarity, or leadership?

Our conversations have focused on identifying the work that needs to happen within the church, rather than simply maintaining the structures or committees we have had in the past. We've been considering how our various ministries connect, where responsibilities overlap, and how we might better support those who are serving. We also recognize that the gifts, interests, and availability of our congregation continue to change, and our leadership structure needs to be flexible enough to respond to those changes.

As part of this process, we've begun exploring how we might organize our ministries around several broad areas, including Gathering, Scattering, Caring, and Stewardship. These areas reflect different aspects of our calling as a church from worship and fellowship to serving our neighbors, caring for one another, and faithfully managing the resources entrusted to us. Rather than immediately creating new committees or filling positions, we are first seeking to understand the responsibilities within each area and identify where we have strengths, gaps, and opportunities for greater collaboration.

We don't have all the answers, and we recognize that discerning the best way forward will take time, prayer, and conversation. Our desire is not simply to create a more efficient organizational structure, but to develop a way of working together that encourages participation, shares leadership, and allows people to use their gifts in meaningful ways. As we continue this work, we want to remain open to where God may be leading us and how we can best support the mission and ministry of Doylestown Mennonite Church.

Romans 12:4-6 reminds us that we are one body with many members, each having different gifts. Perhaps that is the heart of the work before us: recognizing the gifts among us, understanding what is needed, and finding ways for each person to contribute to the life and ministry of our congregation. Our hope is that this process will help us build a leadership structure that is both sustainable and life-giving, supporting the church's ministry today while preparing us for the future.

As we consider the next chapter of our church's ministry, how might we organize ourselves in ways that not only accomplish the work before us, but also encourage more people to discover and share their God-given gifts?

- Susan Bartels

FROM THE PRAYER CORNER

We, the Doylestown Mennonite Church, have experienced God's presence and provision in many ways since Randy Heacock retired. We have had many different people preach, a new initiative has begun with The Sharing Table and we have a developing relationship with the EMM mission workers we support. God is blessing the gifts within the congregation and in our communities as we continue on our mission of taking risks with and for Christ.

We continue to rely on the Holy Spirit to empower us to share God's abundant and overflowing grace. There will be a prayer gathering on Sundays, November 8 and 15 during the Sunday School hour to continue to pray for God's leading and guidance in the pastoral search process and the ongoing ministry God has for us. You are invited and welcome to join. We meet in the 2nd floor prayer room.

Every year, for several years now, DMC has had a yearly theme to give focus for ministry. The process for writing that theme is birthed in listening prayer and scripture. There will be two opportunities for discernment for the 2027 theme on Sundays, November 22 and 29 during the Sunday School hour. If you are interested in participating, please let Pastor Sandy know. She welcomes anyone who has a desire to wait on God for his leading as we look ahead to the next year.

May God receive all the glory as we continue to share his abundant and overflowing grace!

- Pastor Sandy

Happy Birthday!
Denny Bartels 11/1



FROM THE CARE TEAM

The Care Team met in person on September 29. It is always valuable to meet face-to-face when possible, since as the daylight hours get shorter, we'll be returning to Zoom.

We opened with a look at Galatians 6:1-10 and shared how serving in our communities, and our family of faith, and what it entails. This coincides with our book study - "Christian Caregiving, a way of Life". Discussion centered on the difference between servanthood and servitude, and how we experienced it in our own lives and also in the congregation.

The meeting came to a close with prayers for many individuals in our congregation and events that are happening, but always with a heart of thankfulness for all the blessings and happenings taking place at DMC.

- Gary Garges, for the Care Team
(Freida Myers and Sandy Landes)



PASTORAL SEARCH TEAM UPDATE - September & October 2026

Over the past two months, the Pastoral Search Team has continued to meet regularly, prayerfully reviewing applications and discerning who God may be calling to serve as our next pastor. During September and October, we have had opportunities to interview candidates, hear their stories, learn about their gifts and experiences, and explore how their sense of calling might align with the needs and vision of our congregation.

Our process continues to be one of thoughtful conversation, prayer, and discernment. Following each interview, we take time as a team to reflect on what we have heard, share our perspectives, and consider how each candidate might help lead and shepherd our congregation in this next season of ministry. We recognize that this is not simply about filling a position, but about listening for God's direction and identifying the pastoral leadership that will best support our congregation moving forward. We are encouraged by the conversations we have had and the progress we are making in our discernment. While there are still steps ahead, we remain committed to moving thoughtfully and prayerfully, trusting God's guidance as we consider the next chapter of pastoral leadership for our congregation.

As we continue this journey, we invite the congregation to remain in prayer with us. Pray for wisdom and unity within the Search Team, for the individuals who are exploring a call to our congregation, and for our church as we consider what kind of pastoral leadership we need for the season ahead. We are grateful for your continued patience, encouragement, and trust as we seek God's guidance together.

We are reminded of the words found in Proverbs 3:5–6: *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."* (KJV)

May these words continue to guide us as we listen, discern, and trust that God is leading us into this next season of ministry together.

- Sue Bartels on behalf of the Pastoral Search Team

SAVE THE DATE!

Mark your calendar for our much-anticipated ***DMC Spring Getaway at Spruce Lake Retreat***, scheduled for April 23-25, 2027. Come expecting a good time of fellowship with old friends and making new ones. Featuring indoor and outdoor activities for everyone, from jigsaw puzzles and table games to hiking, volleyball, etc.

Spruce Lake
Pointing People Toward Christ

The Sunday morning worship service, followed by a bountiful meal, is a perfect way to end our time together!

Lodging Cost: *Homestead*: $298 per room for two nights | *Spruce Lodge*: $338 per room for two nights. Check-in is Friday at 4 pm.

Meal Cost: $110 per person for 5 meals/half price for ages 6-11 (Sat. breakfast to Sun. lunch); the dining room is in Spruce Lodge.

Sign up on the sheet in the sanctuary and pay a $100 deposit per room by December 13 to reserve your place for this refreshing getaway at Spruce Lake.

Make checks payable to Doylestown Mennonite Church and place them in the box in the church office. Contact Pastor Sandy if financial assistance is needed.

OCTOBER WORSHIP



October 4 - Our preacher was Stephanie Gehman of Spruce Lake Ministries. She spoke of her personal journey from childhood in our congregation to her job of overseeing the ministry of Spruce Lake and Pinebrook. In her message she spoke of how an athlete needs a coach to prepare for success. God is the best coach and we need to listen to him. We think we can accomplish everything by working hard, but for success we need to surrender to God's grace. A load-bearing wall supports everything above it; it needs to be built by a master craftsman; Christ is the master craftsman.



October 11 - Rob Arner took us back to Isaiah Chapter 53, describing the "cruciform life". This chapter is not about Israel, but contains the most explicit description of Jesus. He walked us step by step through the crucifixion story, asking us to use our imagination to place ourselves in the middle of the events. "It is finished" changed everything; it's different now. The Holy Spirit keeps us grounded as we live with uncertainty.



October 18 - We enjoyed the visit of Toshi and Beth Imchen and their family. Four of their five daughters were present and led us in singing. In his sermon Toshi talked about stepping into the unknown. The deep things of God are beyond our understanding without the Holy Spirit. He keeps us grounded in the things that are already there and absolutely real even when we don't see the way ahead.



October 25 - Back to Isaiah with Rob Arner in a message titled, "Married to the Lord" - a metaphor for God's relationship to us. Chapter 54 is part of the message written to desolate people in exile who were experiencing the shame of captivity and had no prospect of change. Our relationship with God is like a marriage. Jesus is the model bridegroom, choosing the church to be his bride for the honeymoon of all time.

KAREN'S PLACE

Doylestown's only underground Christian Café recently celebrated its 26th anniversary. The next attractions are:

November 21 – Dana Isles and Facedown - for a powerful night of Blues/Gospel/Rock and Spirit-filled praise. Coming from Southern New Jersey, they are dedicated to worshiping Jesus and sharing the message of hope. One of the most popular bands!

December 5 – Wendy Schettig - Wendy loves writing whimsical songs but often writes about overcoming the tough things in life like faith in God. Much of what she writes comes from her own experience."

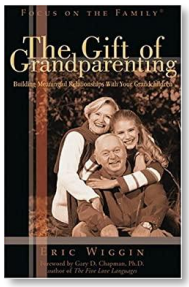
THE SHARING TABLE



On October 6 we again opened our doors to our neighbors. It was well attended and the main course was stretched to the limit, but there was plenty of dessert. For some it has become a monthly time of connections and good fellowship.

FROM THE LIBRARY: Book Review – The Gift of Grandparenting

Our church library has some truly valuable gems in it. This book is one of them, published in 2001 and, according to the sign-out sheet in the back, I was only the 5th person to read it in the 19 years since it was first read in 2007. In hindsight, I wish I had read it when I moved here and began attending DMC 7 years ago in 2019.



Ten notable people wrote endorsements to it and three statements on the back describe it well. "The Gift of Grandparenting [by Eric E. Wiggin] acknowledges the one-of-a-kind place in a child's life that only a grandparent can fill. From passing on family history and imparting spiritual wisdom to sharing special times and traditions, the book guides grandparents in taking an active role in creating a family that's strong spiritually and emotionally. Whether the grandchildren live round the corner or around the country, this book gives every grandparent new ways to enjoy the marvelous gift if grandparenting". Two other statements that are profoundly true are the last two sentences at the end of the book on page 25: "The Lord has given us a few more years to love our grandchildren.

Whether we're raising our grandkids or are grandparenting across the miles, let's do so for the blessing of our grandkids—to God's glory. The book is a very easy, very interesting read written somewhat similar to Proverbs, with an amazing amount of wisdom through it. The author is only about 3 years older than I am, so his descriptions of changes in technologies and relationships occurring during our lifetimes brought back many memories and were quite thought-provoking. I've been praying for some time now that everyone in my family and those in yours would have a deeper relationship with God, His Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. As the 85-year old "patriarch" of a family of 8 "kids", their spouses, 20 grandkids, several "grandspouses-in-law" (so far), I'm eternally grateful; also to Freida for asking me to read this book and write a report on it. It was exactly what I needed at this point in my life.

I'll keep this short. Don't wait until you are 85 to read this book! Read it NOW … and keep reading your Bible, praying, and praising God at every opportunity you can. An entire generation has come and gone since this book was written 25 years ago. The knowledge and advice in it is even more important now in view of the many new challenges and distractions that our newest generation is facing. May God richly bless you and everything you do with your children and grandchildren.

- Karl Strauch

PARTING THOUGHT

There are many gifts, but the same spirit,
There are many works, but the same God.
And the Spirit gives each as it chooses,
Praise the Lord, praise God.
- Patricia Shelly (1 Corinthians 12)

Deadline for submitting items for the December issue of News & Views:
December 1, 2026

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