

CONESTOGA
Connections



April 2012
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Congratulations 2012 Conestoga Quiz Team!





The PASTORS CONNECTION

Confirmed Call

I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been enriched in every way, in all your speaking and in all your knowledge, because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you.

I Corinthians 1:4-6

Cindy and I praise God for the joy of receiving your confirmation of God's call upon my life to continue leading this body into our future together. We look forward to witnessing what God accomplishes through our gospel partnership the five years before our next end of term review.

I want to publically thank our Oversight Team James and Faith Wenger, and Nelson Yoder who joined in this review; for their generous investment of time and energy. It would be appropriate for each of us to pray God's blessing on them for their service!!

Our church structure is modeled upon what we see in scripture. New Testament Apostles functioned in teams. Similarly, we benefit from the wisdom of oversight from a Team. In the New Testament church, the Apostles led the believers in calling leaders from within the body to govern their life together. Similarly, we empower out Pastoral Team into that

governing role of providing direction, correction, and protection of our life together.

After confirming elders, the New Testament Apostles no longer retained governmental authority in the local body, but rather spoke life upon a foundation of relational authority. Our Oversight Team also has no governing authority to override the decisions of the congregation or Pastoral Team. They function as "invited in" authority whose word carries weight simply because God leads us to select persons into oversight whom we love, trust, and respect.

Our Constitution also seeks to fully honor biblical principles of leaders being both authorized to lead, and accountable for that leadership. Every ministry in the church has clarity regarding who on Ministry Council empowers, oversees, and releases Gods mission through their work. Similarly "authorization" empowers our Pastor to lead Pastoral Team and Ministry Council while "accountability" empowers the outside Oversight Team to lead annual reviews and bring a report to the congregation without any member of the Pastoral Team having veto power over the content of that report.

In last weeks' review, Pastoral Team and Oversight Team briefly evaluated this model. Obviously it works well when relationships are healthy and leaders have integrity. But what about a setting where the Pastor would lack integrity, or have mediocre leadership skills? In such a setting would an outside Pope or Bishop model, or a single Overseer or Conference Minister model, or a less authorized Pastor sharing leadership power with a congregational chair model, or an independent church model work better?

I came away from that discussion more deeply grateful for the privilege of serving in a setting where we aim to honor accountability and authority of all leaders.

In my May 2010 Connection, I summarized the work of our Constitution Team by writing, "We believe church organization should reflect the skeleton of our bodies, providing structure and flexibility. When the skeleton is broken, the body can come apart; when inflexible, it can grind to a painful halt. We pray the changes approved will provide adequate structure to help us stand together; and adequate flexibility to run with the wind of God's Spirit stirring new dreams in our midst."

I believe the abundant fruit we witnessed in our 2012 review is direct outgrowth of those strong governance roots.

*Joyfully Living Christ's Story with You,
Pastor Bob Petersheim*



CONESTOGA MENNONITE CHURCH

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Editor: Lois Ann Mast
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Reporters: Bonnie Beam and Sharon Stoltzfus



Sewing Circle

Sewing Circle met on March 7, 2012. There were six ladies present. Donated items included: 1 comforter top and 9 kit bags. Finished items included: 4 comforters and 16 health kits.

For devotions, we sang "Christ Arose," followed by a reading of Matthew 26:36-46, and a meditation entitled "Calvary's Deepest Pain." The special offering was \$35.00. We sang "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today," before adjourning.

- Betty Cannell

NEIGHBORS caring & sharing

Neighbors meets on Tuesday mornings during the academic school year in our church fellowship hall from 9:15 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome for this time of fellowship!

— April 3 —

Once Upon an Apron

Bring your favorite apron(s) and share a story or history of this apron. Munchies also.

— May 1 —

Field Trip to Mt. Cuba Center

Meet at 9:00 a.m. and bring a packed lunch for this two-hour walking tour. Pre-registration required. \$5.00 admission.

— June 12 —

Bowling at Blue Ball Lanes

\$8.00 a person for two games, shoes, and ball. Come at 10:00 a.m. and pack a lunch for later.

PENNY POWER COLLECTION . . .



April 13-14 is the Pennsylvania Relief Sale at Harrisburg, Pa. This is where our pennies will go that we have been collecting every Sunday morning. In 2011, 168 congregations sent coins totaling \$63,817. With the challenge match of \$50,000 the total raised by Penny Power at the Pennsylvania Relief Sale was \$113,817.

In 2012, we again have a generous challenge match of up to \$50,000 of funds that are contributed will be matched. Contributions this year will go to support MCC's Global Family Program which provides community-based education sponsorships in more than 40 countries to allow more children to have the privilege to learn. Education is one of the most powerful ways to combat poverty and very much in keeping with Christ's words and actions in Mark 10. "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these . . . And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them."



In March, Lois Boyer, Lois Ann Mast, Jo Ebert, and Pegge Tennant, worked in the kitchen preparing about 100 dinners to again add to the "Meals From the Heart" freezer. Due to a schedule conflict, the kitchen is not available in April, and not surprisingly, God took care of us once again as 55 dinners were prepared from the leftovers at the Food Pantry Banquet for volunteers! Thank you God!!!

Come to Conestoga's Easter Sunrise Service

Sunday, April 8, at 6:15 a.m.

Conestoga's annual Easter morning sunrise service will be held on April 8 at Pine Grove Cemetery near Elverson. Austin Unruh will share an inspirational message with Kristy Petersheim and Rachel Mast leading in some worship singing. After this Easter sunrise service, we will return to the church fellowship hall for a delicious breakfast hosted by the Kitchen Committee.

Everyone is welcome!



New set-up at the Food Pantry in March was a big improvement as the Food Pantry recipients were served more efficiently and the noise level was noticeably less in the Fellowship Hall! Note the new freezer and fridge on the left. Good job, Food Pantry Team!



Upcoming MYF Events

Bible Studies each Wednesday night in the Youth Room led by Rachel Mast. Come and be inspired by God's word—mercy, justice, and passion—as we consider how we can help the poor and less fortunate more!

Wednesday, April 4 - 7:30 p.m. - Revealing of Secret Quiz Sponsors and Bible Study in the Youth Room.

Sunday, April 8 - 6:15 a.m. - Easter Sunrise Service at Pine Grove Cemetery with meditation by Austin Unruh and singing led by Kristy Petersheim and Rachel Mast. Breakfast at church.

Wednesday, April 11 - MYF Bible Study

Wednesday, April 18 - MYF Bible Study

Monday, April 23 - Monday - Meet at the church at 3:45 p.m. to travel to Mason's baseball game.

Wednesday, April 25 - No Bible Study

Sunday, April 29 - Kayaking Adventure

June 10-15 - Tentative Mission Trip

June 17-21 - Summer Bible School at Conestoga

Upcoming Jr. MYF Events

Friday, April 13 — Annual trip to the MCC Relief Sale at Harrisburg with the Penny Power jug! Meet at the church at 5:30 p.m. to travel to the Farm Show complex where the Relief Sale is held. Our evening includes helping to count coins at the Penny Power stand and browsing the other many vending stands. Plan to bring spending money as there are lots of edible temptations to fill your hungry stomach! We plan to return to the church at 9:30 p.m.

Any questions, call Marilyn Beam at 610-406-7628.



Left: Wes beside a magnificently flowered bush. Right: Lois in front of their cruise liner.

The Majestic Handiwork of God

by Lois A. Boyer

What a wonderful trip! Our vacation last month was a cruise with Holland America on the *Westerdam* cruise ship. We set sail from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, bound for Nassau, Bahamas, and then went on to Grand Turk where we unexpectedly stopped briefly for a medical emergency. Then instead of going to St. Maarten, we stopped at San Juan, Puerto Rico, and spent a day there. Then we were on to St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, and back to the Bahamas to Half Moon Cay where we spent a day on the beach before returning to Fort Lauderdale eight days later.

The handiwork of God was so majestic. The ocean was bright blue, crystal clear. I had to wonder if our northern oceans would be that blue if man had not polluted them. Father, forgive us. Every part of this planet has its own beauty. The islands, the sky, the sea, the plants, the fish, and the

birds. So much of the beauty is seldom seen by man. There is so much color and beauty down in the ocean. God, I guess you just enjoyed making it.

The people on the ship were so interesting. We made friends with a group from England, and a couple from Ohio who were traveling together. They knew we were alone so they added us to their group. Everyone has issues that they struggle with: health issues, family issues, financial issues, and spiritual issues. It helps to share with other Christians. We also enjoyed the people who were assigned to our table.

The concerts were a source of delight, humor, praise and worship. Mark Lawry and Ken Davis kept us laughing. The Isaac's, the Martin's and the Hopper's were two family groups. Lady Love and Reggie Smith, Charlotte Ritchie, Gene Mac-

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Left: The Gaither Vocal Band who performed on our cruise ship. Right: Cruise ship staff made our towel in the form of a dog!



Gathering at the March Senior Connections as the food awaits in the foreground.



In April, Senior Connections is sponsoring JONAH as we travel to Sight & Sound to see this Bible story enacted! Plan to attend a *special* Senior Connections on Thursday, May 10—three days before Mother’s Day on May 10!

The Majestic Handiwork of God

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Donald, Russ Taff, Buddy Greene, Jeff Taylor, Gordon Mote and, of course, the Gaither Vocal Band were the singers. Bill’s leadership was evident in all of it. He is a great worship leader. Gloria has a way with words that can inspire, even if they move us to tears.

The food was excellent and the service was superb. Our room was comfortable with a king-sized bed, a couch, full bath, closets, and counter space. Our room servers made cute animals out of towels, made our beds, straightened our room several times a day and left chocolates each evening. These workers, most of them from Asian countries, sacrifice time

with their families to work and provide for the needs of them. Bless them, Lord.

Air travel always amazes me. We sit in seats like we are on a bus, yet we ride above the clouds at a high rate of speed. We get used to miracles like flying, cell phones, lap top computers, ipads and much more. Modern technology is too much for me to keep up with. Thank you Lord for giving mankind brains to develop all these things that we become used to and almost take for granted. Forgive those who misuse these things and show them the dangers of sin. I praise you, my Lord and Savior, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last. Thank you for your great unending love. Amen and amen.



Left: James and Faith Wenger and Nelson Yoder served as our Oversight Team during our recent Evaluation. Right: Joe Miller and Elam Smucker washing dishes following our Fellowship Dinner. Thank you to all our volunteers who step up so willingly!!!

Conestoga Summer Bible School

Sunday-Thursday, June 17-21, 2012

Ages 4 through Grade 6

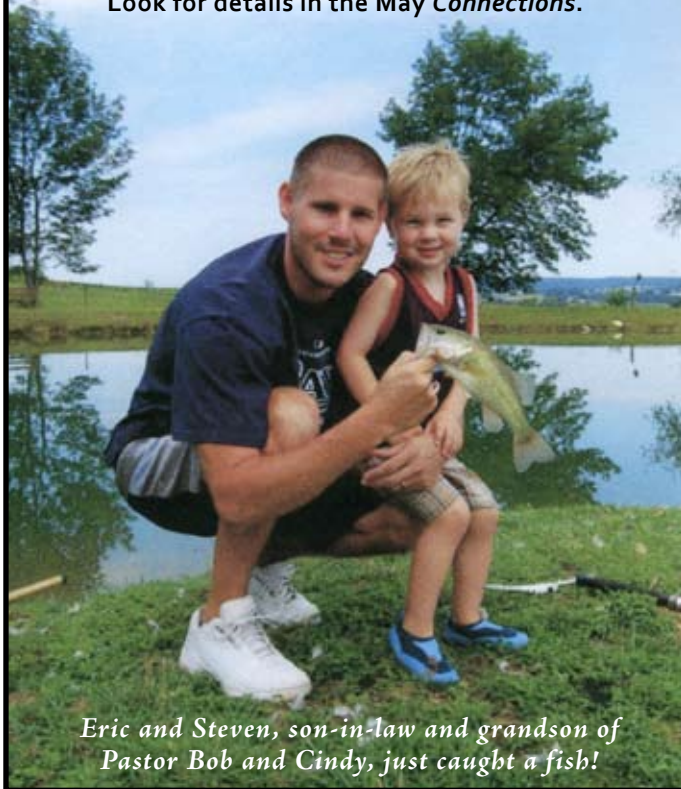
6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Take Me
to the
Water
God's Love Flows

Watch for more
information
coming soon.

It is not
too early
to start praying
for our
upcoming
Summer Bible
School
as
Kathleen Weaver
and
Sharon Stoltzfus
and
Marcia Parsons
serve
as leaders.

COMING . . . Mid June . . . Fishing Derby
for fathers/daughters/sons to celebrate Father's Day.
Look for details in the May *Connections*.



*Eric and Steven, son-in-law and grandson of
Pastor Bob and Cindy, just caught a fish!*



Last year's Conestoga Softball Team.

It is soon Softball Season again!
A sign-up sheet is in the lobby
to sign up to play on
Conestoga's Softball Team!

The one-pitch opening tournament
is Saturday, April 28.

Questions can be directed to
Mike Petersheim, coordinator, at 484-364-6193.