

# CONESTOGA Connections



November 2013  
Vol. XXIV  
No. 11



*Julia Yoder, one of our church librarians, holding two of the new children's books that just arrived this past week.*

## Conestoga's Library Has New Books

New books were recently added to our church library. Stop in and check out the following new books:

### Fiction

*Beyond the Valley*  
*A Christmas Snow*

### Nonfiction

*Gray Matter*  
*Crazy Busy*  
*It's Not Over*

### Biography

*Fields of Grace*  
*Out of a Far Country*  
*Odyssey of a Romanian*  
*Street Child*  
*One Light Still Shines*

### Blush

*Kinship Concealed*

### Juniors

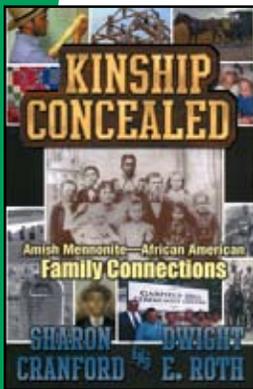
*Sarah's Long Ride*  
*The Secret Garden*  
*What Katy Did*  
*Forbidden Gates*  
*Jotham's Journey*

### Childrens

*Susanna's Surprise*  
*Winter on the Farm*  
*Sugar Snow*  
*The Adventures of Reddy Fox*

### DVD's

*Misty*  
*Heidi*



A new book in our church library is titled *Kinship Concealed, Amish Mennonite—African American Family Connections* by Sharon Cranford and Dwight E. Roth.

People who climb their family trees sometimes find some amazing facts. That is what happened to the authors of this fascinating book. While teaching at Hesston College in Kansas, Sharon and Dwight discovered that they both had Mast ancestors, and although she is African American and he is white, they are distant cousins.

It all started in 1750 when brothers Jacob and John Mast, ages 12 and 10, along with their four sisters, came

to America from Switzerland. Jacob, the ancestor of Dwight Roth, became an Amish bishop in this community.

John Mast, the ancestor of Sharon Cranford, moved to North Carolina where his descendants became slave holders. His grandson, Ruben Mast, fathered a child with a slave girl. She named her son Charley Mast. When Charley was six months old, his mother was sold south, and he was given to Ruben's brother John. At the age of four, Charley was sent to live with an older woman in the slave quarters. Being of

mixed race made his life difficult, but he was known to make the most of every opportunity he had.

When Charley was age 41, Ruben Mast bought him and his family back from his brother John and moved to east Texas.

In 1862, just shortly before Ruben died, Ruben gave Charley's whole family their freedom. Charley became a Methodist preacher and a landowner who provided well for his large family.

If nothing else, this book serves to make us more aware of the evils of slavery. - Julia Yoder



*Tombstone for Charles Mast near Nacogdoches, Texas. Lemar and Lois Ann Mast recently visited this Mast Cemetery where Charley's tombstone is located and took this photo. In fact, two couples from Hesston, Kansas, just happened to be there at the same time—also distant Mast cousins!*



# God Answers Our Prayers

*Sharon Stoltzfus*

As a life-long member of Conestoga Mennonite Church, I reflect on changes in the past 59 years. One of the largest changes was moving from a site that served the congregation since 1882. Congregation needs prompted purchase of land and construction of a new building in 2002. This left the original church building empty.

I remember my parents joining others in the church praying for God's will to be done in the seemingly complicated problem of finding a use for an old building in close proximity to our church cemetery and parsonage. Today, tears come to my eyes as I realize the current use of this building as the Morgantown Reuzit Shoppe is an abundant answer to their prayers.

My involvement in the shoppe as a manager allows me to see local and global needs being met through using this building as a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Thrift Shop.

Ways the Morgantown Reuzit Shoppe meets needs locally and globally:

**1. Customers.** Low cost, good quality, clean items are provided for purchase. Customers are surprised to find just the item they need or want in our well-organized store. We have regular customers who shop on their way to Shady Maple. We advertise very little because word of mouth advertising is powerful and the location on a busy street provides high visibility.

**2. Volunteers.** An opportunity to serve locally but contribute globally is a strong drawing point for our volunteers. While working at our store volunteers meet people, make friends, shop, and fulfill community service hours for school or the judicial system.

**3. Jobs.** A limited number of positions provides leadership and ensures key stations at the store are always filled. MCC provides continuing education and support to us as part of a network of 53 thrift shops in the US.

**4. Community.** Our store is a 'feel good place' to donate items when cleaning, children outgrow things, moving or closing estates. We find opportunities to listen and provide sympathy/empathy as people unload their donations from vehicles onto our dock. Donated items that do not meet our store standards are frequently recycled to other areas, some of which also benefit MCC.

**5. Support of local Christian agencies.** Our Board of Directors has followed the suggestion of MCC to donate a percent of the gross income to local Christian agencies. I am pleased to report our board has donated funds to Tel Hai Camp and to Conestoga Christian School. Both agencies were started by Conestoga Church members.

**6. Global involvement.** Funds generated from our store are presented several times a year to MCC. Their work is done around the world in relief, development and peace in the name of Christ. Currently work with partner churches in Syria is a priority, providing refugee care along with prevention of violent conflict. Proceeds from our store up to now in 2013 have allowed us to send \$186,000 to MCC.

Thanks to each of you who have already joined in meeting the needs listed above. We are always looking for people to join us in meeting personal, local or global needs. Talk to me if you are interested!

I see my roots at Conestoga Church and my role as Manager at the shoppe as an answer to the prayers of my parents and others. Join me in continued prayer as we look to the future of Morgantown Reuzit Shoppe.  
*- Sharon Stoltzfus*



## CONESTOGA MENNONITE CHURCH

2779 Main Street, Morgantown, PA 19543  
(610) 286-9124  
[www.conestogamc.com](http://www.conestogamc.com)

Monthly newsletter for Conestoga Mennonite Church published since 1988. Deadline for articles and photos is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month of publication.

**Editor:** Lois Ann Mast  
**Assistant Editor:** Elizabeth Petersheim  
**Reporters:** Bonnie Beam and Sharon Stoltzfus



## Sewing Circle

Sewing Circle met on October 2, 2013. It was our annual “Bring a Friend” day. There were 27 ladies and one baby present. At noon we enjoyed a pot luck meal.

We finished the quilt for the CCS auction and also finished eight comforters.

For devotions, we sang “Blessed Assurance” and Exodus 3:7-15 was read followed by a devotional entitled “Who Am I?”

The special offering for hygiene kits amounted to \$47. Our closing song was “God Be With You Till We Meet Again.”

*- Julia Yoder, Acting Secretary*

# 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!*

— November 5—

### Guess Who’s Coming to Brunch

Pre-register and meet at 9:15 a.m.  
and bring your contribution for a fun morning  
enjoying food and fellowship.

— November 12 —

### “Godly Self-Esteem for Ourselves and Our Children”

*with Jill Waters and Dot Leatherman*

— November 19 —

### “Extreme Makeover”

*with Beth Bangaman*

— November 26 —

### Thanksgiving Week

No meeting.

**THE KING'S HERALDS**  
CELEBRATING OVER 85 YEARS OF MINISTRY

November 7, 2013 – 7:00 PM

**Conestoga Mennonite Church**  
2779 Main Street (Highway 23)  
Morgantown, PA 19543

Church Phone – 610-286-9124  
The King's Heralds request that no video or audio recording be allowed during the concert

## “Creative Arts Celebration” Fundraiser

Still Waters Counseling Ministries will host a “Creative Arts Celebration” fundraiser on Friday, December 6 from 7-9 p.m. and on Saturday, December 7 from 10-1 p.m.

A “meet the artists” reception will be held Friday night which will showcase the participants’ beautiful artwork and photography. All pieces of art will be for sale and proceeds will go to Still Waters no-cost Counseling.

Local watercolor artist and instructor, Loretta Englerth, has graciously donated artwork to be sold by silent auction.

Refreshments and classical music will be provided. Admission fee will be by donation. The community is invited to enjoy this special two-day celebration held at Conestoga Mennonite Church. For more information, please call the church at 610-286-9124.



# Conestoga's Annual MYF Auction

Every November (the day after Thanksgiving), Conestoga's youth host a fundraiser dinner followed by an auction that is so much fun as we raise money for youth activities. Thank you to all who are creating items now that will be sold that evening. Watch for the auction sale card that will be in our church mailboxes on Sunday, Nov. 17.

*Last year's MYF Auction with Rodney Stoltzfus riding the Nordic Track Trainer that was auctioned! See you on November 29!*

## Upcoming MYF Events

Wed., Nov. 6, 7:30 p.m. - Bible Study in the Youth Room led by Rachel Mast

Wed., Nov. 13, 7:00 p.m. - Stocking Food Pantry shelves in our church fellowship hall.

Wed., Nov. 20, 7:30 p.m. - Bible Study in the Youth Room led by Rachel Mast

Fri., Nov. 29, 5:30 p.m. - Annual MYF Fundraiser Dinner and Auction in the fellowship hall. Auction begins at 6:30 p.m.

## Upcoming Jr. MYF Events

Saturday, November 9 - Fall Barn Party at Nelson and Marilyn Beam's barn. Watch either Facebook group or e-mail for more details.

Friday, November 29 - Let's join the MYF at their annual Auction. Dinner begins at 5:30 p.m. and the auction begins at 6:30 p.m.

Sunday December 22 - Make fruit baskets and enjoy playing Christmas games.



*Ryan Petersheim's first archery buck for the season—tagged on the Petersheim property on the Welsh Mountain. Congratulations, Ryan!*



*Prize-winning photos taken by Sam Waters who won prizes at the New Holland Fair. Congratulations, Sam!*

## Conestoga's Pastoral Team

On Friday, October 25, Conestoga's Pastoral Team attended the "Healthy Congregations" seminar sponsored by Atlantic Coast Mennonite Conference.

The eight-hour seminar provided a variety of issues for us to consider and discuss and pray over—we all appreciated the privilege of attending this seminar together and wanted to share briefly some of the insights we learned.

\* \* \* \*

I was familiar with the teaching shared at the "Healthy Congregations" workshop from seminary days and follow-up readings over the years. What made this day special was to participate with the Pastoral Team. I grew in my understandings as we made application to our life together. The principles reminded me anew how much God has blessed us here at Conestoga with good healthy relationships. I encourage you to commend your Team for the sacrifices they made by taking vacation days, etc., from work in order to be present. This is a great group to work with!! ~ *Pastor Bob*

A healthy congregation has relationships that are open to differing thoughts, and individuals take self responsibility for their own thoughts and behaviors. In families and in our churches, secrets create great anxiety and are destructive. When families or churches are unhealthy, they lose all ability to problem solve,



*Pastoral Team: Pastor Bob Petersheim, Karen Horning, Greg Petersheim, Jerry Petersheim, Rod Stoltzfus, Rachel Mast, Lemar Mast, and Lois Ann Mast.*

communicate, have fun together, and are reactionary and blaming of each other. One of the helpful features of this event was table times when we (Conestoga team) had discussions. As we talked about areas, such as conflict, it would have been easy to focus on the past but we identified current opportunities for differing opinions. Healthy congregations are guided by beliefs that are clear, respectful of each other, and challenge each other toward growth. We should expect resistance to change and remain mission driven. We can celebrate differences, manage conflict, and have healthy relationships as we joyfully share Christ's love story to the people around us. ~ *Karen Horning*

I love to attend seminars like this and thrive in taking notes to prod my memory at later times. Here are a few notes that I took: "Focus on myself and not others as we grow together in our faith. Vision and adventure is needed in healthy congregations. How can I be sincere if I change my mind to conform to what I think others expect of me? Be prepared for change and growth and conflict—don't run away from it. Celebrate our commonalities—emphasize the positives when negatives arrive, and they will always come!" ~ *Lois Ann Mast*



## An "Adventure" in Center City Philadelphia

While visiting Doug Beam at Jefferson Hospital one day this past month, Bob Ebert felt something flapping on his shoe as he walked the streets of center Philadelphia. It did not take him long to discover that the sole of his shoe was flapping and that it soon fell off. What do you do in the center of Philadelphia when your shoe sole falls off? Who wants to buy shoes in Philadelphia?

Well, Bob and Jo just kept on walking which Bob did with a smile and Jo did too! But then, would you believe that the same thing happened to the other shoe? How often does someone lose both soles at the same time? Well, when you think of it, one does use both feet all the time . . . at the same time!

So what did Bob do? He walked the rest of the way to the train station carrying two soles in his hands! Yes, a police officer glanced at him twice and then smiled at him **after** first contemplating whether Bob was ready to hit someone with one or both of those shoe soles! Who has advice for Bob so that this never happens again?

## . . . . AN APOLOGY . . . .

Several years ago, I found this little piece entitled:

"Three Parts of an APOLOGY"

It spoke to me and I cut it out and it has been on my refrigerator ever since.

1. I made a mistake. Please forgive me.
2. I feel terrible about the impact it had on you.
3. It will never happen again. (At least, that is my heart's desire!).

This serves as a daily reminder to me that a sincere apology is important. Cheap apologies are empty words and saying "sorry" without meaning, is, well, without meaning.

It is important to mean what we say. Otherwise our repetitive apologies to others only remind them that the last one did not stick!

We need to think about an apology before we utter the words and remember to pay attention to the conviction of the Holy Spirit that nudges us when we have wronged another person. Lord, please take away any pride that would allow us to make excuses for our wrongs. Examine our hearts and motives and keep us sensitive and aware of our words and actions for which we need to ask forgiveness. Amen.

*- submitted by Jill Waters*



**Senior Connections  
on Thursday, November 14**

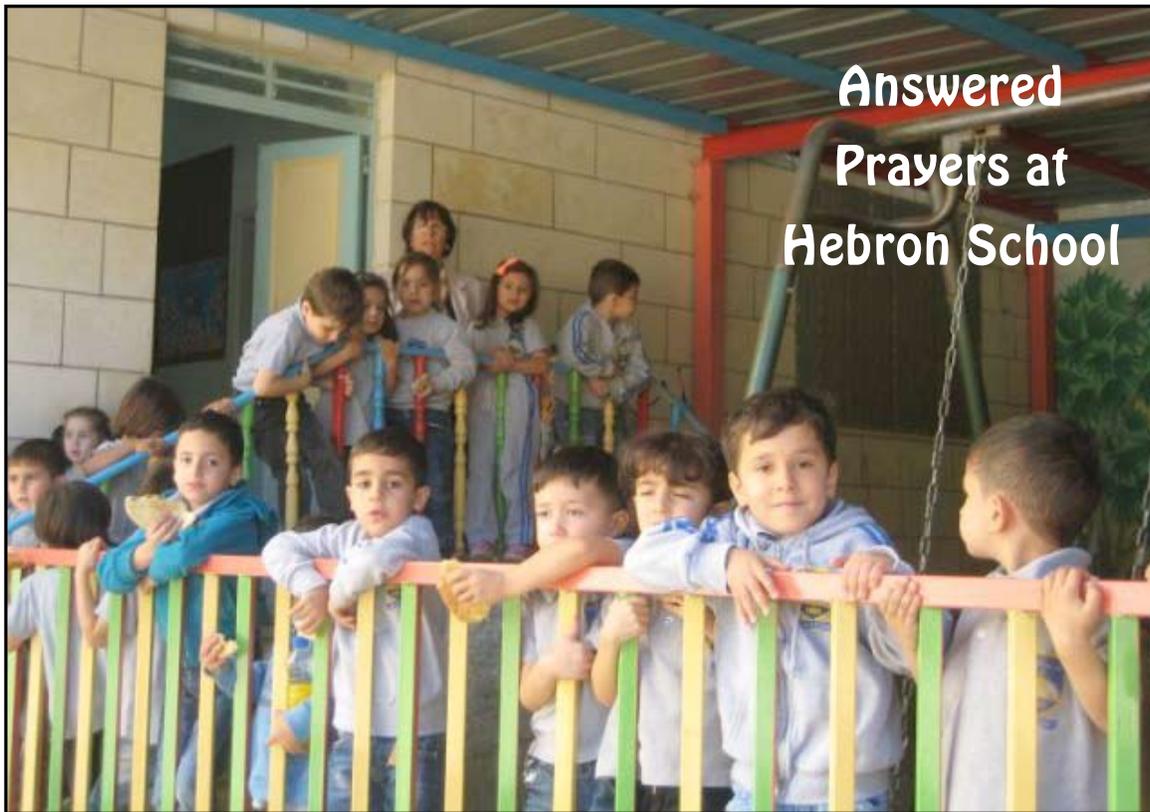
*A Thanksgiving dinner with program will be featured on Thursday, November 14, at noon. Bring a friend and attend this monthly Senior Connections dinner, and take home a surprise!*

**Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
his love endures forever.  
1 Chronicles 16:34**

**Seniors Working at  
MCC's Material Resource  
Center in October.**

Photo Credits: Bob Ebert.





## Answered Prayers at Hebron School

*Hebron School kindergarten enjoying their new shaded area. The Hebron School is the only Christian influence today in this Muslim city in Israel. There are so many opportunities for God's light to shine through God's people as we pray for the workers there!*

Friday, October 18, 2013

Dear Friends,

Our school here in Hebron is a rented facility, so if we want to make any changes or repairs to the building we have to deal with the landlords (i.e. a family). And the landlords, of course, are Muslims (from the party that opposes us) who don't particularly like what we are doing. At the same time, they are businessmen who would like to see us leave so that they can get a better return on their investment. Consequently, they deliberately make life difficult for us in the hope that they can force us out.

So when we realized that that we needed to create a sheltered area for our kindergarten students to play in, we knew that we could expect stiff opposition from the landlords. However when we came to school this fall we found that the landlords themselves had built a shelter for their building materials on the border of our property using a wall that we share. And they did this without our consent at a time when they knew we would be gone. So we thought that this would be good opportunity to claim the same privilege for ourselves using the same wall. So we prayed about it and went ahead with the project.

However, when they landlords saw that we were going ahead, tensions rapidly escalated. Before we realized it, the landlords had gathered at the work site and were threatening to throw large rocks at the contractor and his men if they continued with the work. Shortly thereafter, the police arrived in an attempt to prevent violence. At that point, we were alerted to the problem and we went down to defuse

the situation. We found that the landlords were shouting and threatening and that our guard and the contractor were standing up to them. So we asked the police and the guard to step aside and allow us to speak with the landlords alone.

The fact that we were calm and ready to listen seemed to help, and over the next 15 minutes we listened to their demands and calmly made our case. We stood by our rights, but at the same time we appealed to their sense of honor, their compassion for the students, even their business sense by explaining how they would benefit in the long-term if they were cooperative. At first these arguments didn't seem to have any affect on them and as they left the school, they continued to shout and threaten. But after a little while they returned and, to our surprise, they backed down and agreed to let us complete the project in peace.

Meanwhile all of the staff had been listening and watching events unfold from their classrooms. And the kindergarten teachers in particular were afraid to come out until the coast was clear. But when it was all over they came and expressed their surprise that the confrontation had ended so peacefully. We explained that we had been praying throughout the confrontation and that the change in the landlords' attitudes should be seen as an answer to prayer.

This is evidence that prayer works. As I said, when the landlords left they were angry, but when they returned they had a completely different attitude. So clearly God was working. We urge you to continue to pray for us as individuals and for the ministry of the school.

*~ Gregg and Rawda Doolittle, Administrators*