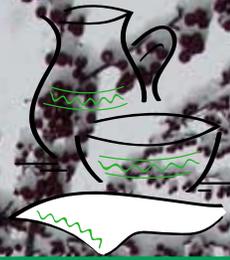


CONESTOGA  
*Connections*



March 2016  
Vol. XXVII  
No. 3

Conestoga Connections



# Keeping a Prayer Journal

**Do you want to know how God has been good to you?**

Then start a prayer journal! I just discovered an old journal that I kept about ten years ago and it was reassuring and affirmative to read my prayer concerns and struggles then, and now recognize the powerful faithfulness of God as He answered the prayers in one way or another!

Keeping that prayer journal not only served as a reminder, but also strengthens my faith today! Be sure to read Andy Leatherman's article in this issue on page 5 as to why he still keeps a Prayer Journal started in 1961!

**Tip #1. Begin with prayer for God's guidance.** *"Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long."* Psalm 25:5. Ask God to give you the perseverance to follow through what you plan to do. Through God's amazing grace, He will prompt you to write down the necessary facts that you may forget later.

**Tip #2. Find a quiet place for reflection and meditation.** *"Lord, I love the house where you live, the place where your glory dwells."* Psalm 26:8. Finding the right place may be just as difficult as finding the right time to

by  
Lois Ann  
Mast

*God used His  
beautiful paint  
brush of snow  
this winter!*



write in your journal. Be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, but the awesome revelation is that the "place" where you meet God is wherever you are!

**Tip #3. Search for a scripture(s) that correspond with your prayer request and write it out at the top of the page.** *"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."* Psalm 119:105. The Holy Spirit will direct you to the scriptures that speak most closely to your request. You will rejoice as you see your prayers answered.

**Tip #4. Think about what you can give thanks to God in your prayer request.** *"Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."* Ephesians 5:20. It is our nature to write out a laundry list of requests to God without giving the first thought to what we can thank Him for in our situation. Find those bursts of grace moments that you can give thanks to God.

**Tip #5. Write out your prayer requests with specificity.** *"Jesus stopped and called them. 'What do you want me to do for you?' he asked."* Matthew 20:32. Wouldn't it be evident that the blind men were calling out to Jesus for healing? Yet, Jesus asked them what they wanted. When we write our requests down, we can later see how our prayers were answered.

**Tip #6. Praise God for hearing and answering your request in accordance**

**with His will.** *"I will proclaim the name of the Lord. Oh, praise the greatness of our God."* Deuteronomy 32:3. Because you know that God will answer your prayer request . . . praise Him in advance. Proclaim God for who He is—awesome, wonderful, faithful, generous, mighty, and holy.

**Tip #7. Remember to go back and write in your journal how God answered in His perfect timing.** *"Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them."* Deuteronomy 4:9. This is the most important step, but the one that many of us forget. We need to go back and write how God answered our prayers. By doing so, we also give our families something to look back on and continue the legacy of faith. Our faith is renewed when we read back over our journals and reflect on God's deliverance.

Keeping a prayer journal does not take as much time as it does effort. We must continue to strive in the habit of remembering the Lord's help in our lives and share it especially with those in our families.

And, yes, God uses our *miracles* to build up the faith and courage of others. Take the time today to begin a lifetime of journaling! You will be blessed!

(Tips in this article come from Crystal McDowell.)



**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  
Contributing Editor: Anna Martin



# 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 to attend this time of fellowship!*

## Sewing Circle

Sewing Circle met on Wednesday, February 3, 2016. There were 14 ladies present. Donated were 60 kit bags and 2 comforters. Completed items included 5 comforters, 26 hygiene kits, and 1 quilt for the Relief Sale.

For devotions, we sang "Whiter Than Snow," followed by a devotional entitled "Go On a Complaining Fast" based on Phil. 2:14.

The special offering amounted to \$61.00 intended for hygiene kits. Before adjourning, we sang "Showers of Blessing."

*- Betty Cannell, Secretary*

— March 1 —

**"Queen Esther's Palace"**

*with Loice Byler*

— March 8 —

**Guess Who's Coming to Brunch?**

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

— March 15 —

**"Deborah: Prophet, Judge, and Warrior"**

*with Lisa Heft*

— March 22 —

**Creating a Spring 18" Gravevine Wreath**

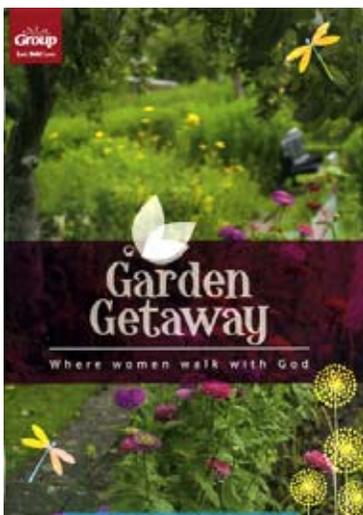
*with Mary Breidigan*

*Pre-register and supply your own flowers and bow.*

— March 29 —

**"Easy Family Friendly Healthy Meals"**

*with Barb Wimer*



*Throughout history, different plants have symbolized different qualities or meanings. Here are a few:*

- Daisies represent innocence.*
- Peonies represent healing.*
- Sweet peas represent shyness.*
- Ivy represents fidelity and friendship*

Join us from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the church fellowship hall for this ladies retreat studying *Garden Getaway; Where Women Walk With God!* We will explore Ecclesiastes 3 and discover how God is at work in our life with session leaders: Lisa Miller, Carol Moss, Karen Horning, Carmen Weber and Krista Petersheim, Jill Waters, and Cindy Petersheim. This retreat is for women of all ages and will include worship, delicious food at breaks and at lunch, and door prizes. Register with Blair Petersheim by paying \$10 for all the day's activities! Childcare provided [mothers, please bring a packed lunch for your child(ren)].

*- Tina Essick, Lois Ann Mast, Lisa Miller, Blair Petersheim, Coordinating Committee*

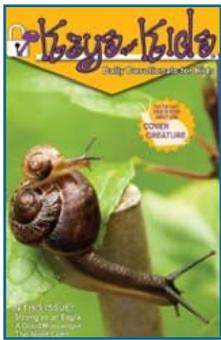


# Family & Media

Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6

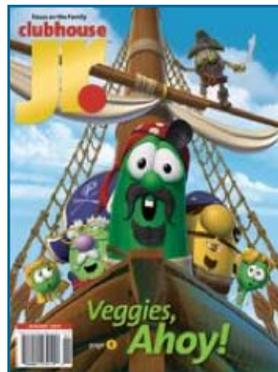
This column provides suggestions for movies, books, magazines, audio, and highlights of new materials in Conestoga's church library. I welcome your suggestions as well. - Mike Petersheim

## Children's Christian Magazines



1. **Keys for Kids** contains short daily devotionals for families with a story and verse to discuss. The issues arrive quarterly, and is free for both the email and the print versions.

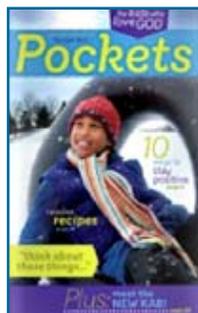
2. **Clubhouse Jr.** is for ages 3-7 and is a well-produced, high-quality monthly magazine by Focus on the Family. With stories, activities, recipes, and a story about the Bible, I highly recommend this resource for households with young children!



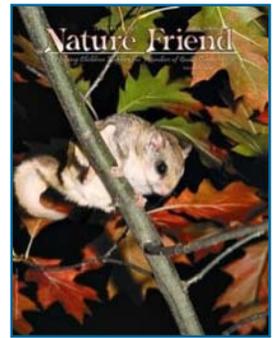
3. **Clubhouse** for ages 8-12 is a favorite monthly magazine for many! It is another well-produced, high-quality magazine by Focus on the Family. With fun stories, comics, activities, and an apologetics/worldview feature, this magazine is great for tweens.



4. **Pockets** is aimed at kids ages 6-12, with stories, games, recipes, news about Christian kids, and a little Christian history. Each of the 11 annual issues focuses on a different theme, and each has a little writing contest kids can participate in. Pocket-size!



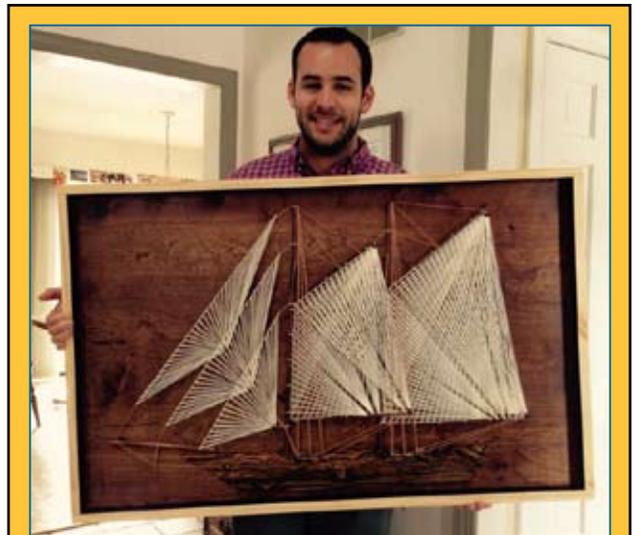
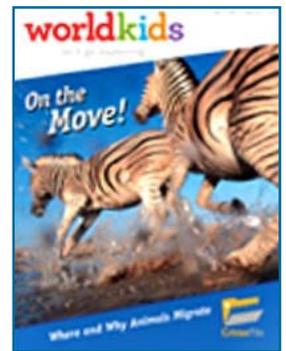
5. **Nature Friend Magazine** is a fun way for your animal-loving children to learn about God's Creation each month. The magazine has strict guidelines for its Creation-based articles and stunning photography.



6. **God's Big WORLD** is for kids under age seven, *God's Big WORLD* is a fun look at current events and news from a Christian worldview. This kids' edition of *WORLD Magazine* gives our children a way to study the world as well!



7. **WORLDkids** is for 7-10 year olds to learn more about current events and world-wide issues from a Christian worldview. This was previously *God's World News*. This is another edition of the *WORLD Magazine* for adults.



This is a project that **Jody Essick** worked on while interning at Brandywine Hospital as part of his Physical Therapy Degree. He designed and built it himself with dove tailed corners in his frame.

# The Beginning of my Prayer Journal

by Andy Leatherman

Early 1961, as I approached the end of my junior year in college, I picked up my sister's prayer journal while visiting her and her friend Jane in Philadelphia. I was so impressed I began my own. This utterly profound habit shaped me for the rest of my life.

This prayer journal became the means whereby God spoke to me in later years, and was the mechanism by which I expressed the essence of my own developing spiritual life. I have done minimal editing of my prayers to make them clearer, but the essence of each prayer is intact.

My first prayer in this lifelong journal (undated, but likely written in March or April of 1961) is as follows:

*Father, this little notebook is dedicated to You. Throughout my future, I will have vitalizing experiences with You. Sometimes I will take these emotional highlights and put them in this notebook. Why? Because I will not be able to contain them within me.*

*Occasionally, my language will not be nice, but this will not discourage me. You will understand what I am trying to say. May my praise and confessions be completely pure and true. May I always be wholly honest with myself.*

As with many young college men, I was fascinated by the opposite sex! The following prayer reflected my continual struggle with depression, but also my growing interest in specific young women.

*April 10, 1961 Junior Year: Dear God, times like today I feel so despondent. Why is it? Is it because I am not living close enough to You, or is it because I am too interested in myself?*

*God, I do not care what happens to me. No matter if everything seems to be going wrong, I am just giving myself completely to You. It is the only way I can be happy. I am so sorry for letting my feelings for other people play such an important part in my life. Like today when Mary seemed to ignore me, the props were knocked out from me for a while. Is my life all wrapped up in how others treat me? No! It cannot and will not be.*

*You have helped me these days enjoy my Bible reading. Thank You, God. It gives me such a warm feeling when I am reading the Bible and it is touching my heart. I am thinking of the verse You gave me this morning "He hath changed my mourning into dancing." You have done that sometimes. Please do it more.*



## Destination: Drift Creek Camp

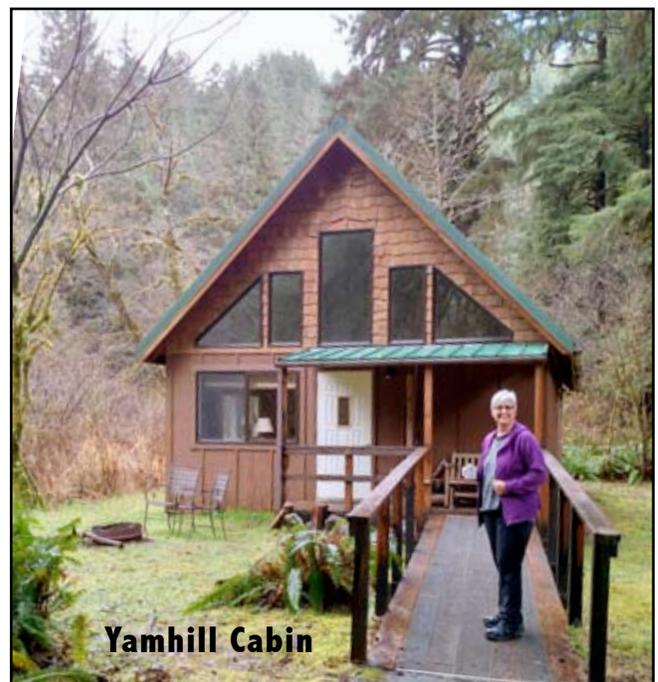
(continued from page 8)

serving meals, cleaning floors, camp shop organizing, and rodent patrol. The small amount of work we did was balanced with laughter, good food, sharing of stories, playing games, and hopefully encouragement of all we came in contact with. Staying in a comfortable cabin by the Drift Creek was another benefit!

Yes, it rains every day several times a day in Oregon. We learned to wear a raincoat, putting the hood up and down as needed and moving on with our day.

Gary and I encourage you to check the Mennonite Central Committee website to look for short term service opportunities for families and adults of all ages to volunteer with the SOOP program in locations all over the U.S.

~ Sharon Stoltzfus



# Youth Ministry Council: The Gathering 2016

by Rachel Mast

It is not often that I get to go on “Business trips” in the Youth Ministry line of work, so when I saw that MC USA’s Youth Ministry Council was in Orlando, Florida . . . in January . . . I thought I would jump on that opportunity! So on January 29, I boarded a plane headed directly for Orlando.

This is not my first Youth Ministry Council. I attended last year when it was at Spruce Lake Camp to check it out and see if this was something I could continue to invest time with year after year. I found last year to be rewarding, and this year was equally, if not more, rewarding.

I arrived in Florida on Friday mid-morning, and went to check into my hotel. I found out that there was no room ready for me yet so I needed to wait until 3:00 p.m. Well, it was 10:30 a.m., so what in the world was I going to do until 3:00 p.m. in a city I have never been in?! So I sat in the lobby reading my book, dressed in my comfortable travel clothes, and all around me were businessmen and women coming and going. Clearly, at that moment, I did not fit in with my attire.

Praise God for smart phones! I perused my phone to find the local attractions within walking distance. I found out there was a Ripley’s Believe It or Not Museum a mile

*Worshipping together . . . in this picture you can see Rachel plus Jon Stoltzfus, son of Harvey and Lillian Stoltzfus.*



up the road. So for a good chunk of the afternoon, I was walking, enjoying the sunshine, scoping out attractions to take the youth to when we come back for Convention, and learning all about crazy oddities from around the world at the Ripley’s Museum. It was a relaxing first day, but I was glad to be taking it easy in my hotel room that evening.

Saturday and Sunday were packed full with meetings, small group times, times of worship, and fellowship with other Youth Leaders and MC USA leaders. Our time on Saturday began with Michele Hershberger, author of *God’s Story, Our Story*, and Bible Professor at Hesston College, sharing about what she sees are seven Anabaptist Distinctives:

- 1) Biblical Identity (a different kind of Bible)
- 2) Jesus Fixation (a different kind of Jesus)
- 3) Loyalty to the Church (a different kind of church)
- 4) Mutuality and Authority (different kind of power)
- 5) Enemy Love (a different kind of love)
- 6) Concrete Service (a different kind of service)



*Never met Lindsay Diener of Mississippi before—also a youth minister—but these are the benefits of attending meetings like this where you learn to know new friends!*



*(continued on next page)*

7) Authentic Witness (a different kind of witness)

If you want details on these distinctives, I would gladly give you a copy of my notes!

I found this information to be very fascinating! Through the rest of our time we looked at different Youth Ministry case studies and gathered in small groups to discuss them. We looked at the case studies in the light of who was involved, what each party stood to gain or lose, what were the Anabaptist distinctives at play in this situation, and even offered some potential recommendations of how to solve or handle that particular case study. It was a wonderful time of hearing from other leaders of their successes and learning from mistakes.

While our group times were wonderful, informative, and anointed, another reason I wanted to attend this year was because Orlando, Florida, is where the next MC USA Convention will be held on July 4-8, 2017!

On Sunday evening, we took a tour of where the youth and delegates will meet in the convention center. We also got all the inside knowledge of things to come from one of the convention planners! I won't give away details, but I believe this next convention will be "hot" (Florida in summer), a lot of fun, and delicious... So, youth and delegates and friends, you will just have to come and see what I mean!

All in all, it was a great trip! I had a good time doing something out of my routine, worshipping and networking with a wonderful group of people, and overall feeling quite excited about Anabaptist belief and the privilege to teach and show young people what Anabaptism is all about!



# Junior Youth

**Reserve Saturday, March 12  
(probably afternoon)  
for Tubing!**

**More information to  
follow coming via email and  
our Facebook page.**

## Upcoming Youth Events

**March 6: 6:30 p.m. - ACC Bible Quizzing  
at Weaverland Mennonite Church**

**March 13: 1:00 p.m. - ACC Quiz Tournament  
at Lancaster Mennonite High School**

**March 16: 7:00 p.m. - Food Pantry Stocking**

**March 18-20: Bible Quizzing Invitational  
Tournament in Kidron, Ohio**

**March 25: 6:00 p.m. - Dinner and Bible  
Study at Dan & Rachel's**



*February's Sr. Connection was a slim turnout due to the snowy weather, but we still enjoyed a Valentine dinner. Lois Ann Mast talking with Julia Yoder (left); delicious desserts (middle); and Linda Linderman making the fried chicken (right).*

### **Next Senior Connections ... Thursday, March 10, 12:00 noon**

After lunch, we will hear from the Visiting Nurse Association of Berks County, on the topic "Exercising your Brain." Bring your friends.



# Destination: Drift Creek Camp, Lincoln City, Oregon

by Sharon Stoltzfus

*Drift Creek Lodge sleeps 110 campers.*

‘Winter is the best time for us to travel.’ This is what Gary, a semi-retired farmer says! So we find places to travel that hold an interest for us, but might not involve severe weather. We look for a location that we can drive through farming areas, national parks, great food, and a chance to connect with fellow believers. A trip to Oregon fit all criteria!

We saw farming—cranberries, oysters, Dungeness crabs, apple orchards, vineyards, wheat, alfalfa, grass seed, hazelnuts and Marion berries. A family connection led us to visit the owners of ‘Steffen Hay,’ a manufacturer of specialized hay equipment. This family compresses hay and ships three containers daily to the docks for export to Japan and other places.

Tillamook Cheese Company provided a tour of their cheese-making plant. This stop included ice cream, cheese samples, and sandwiches using their cheeses. Logging and lumber are also local industries.

We included visits to National Parks and natural sites. Several days were spent near the Columbia River Gorge. This gorge is the dividing line between Oregon and Washington States.

A highlight was climbing to the top of Multnomah Falls. This hike included switchbacks and uphill climbing! When we reached the top and a viewing platform looking down, we were not sure we wanted to be there. Additional hikes allowed us to breath in the fragrance of a rainforest type environment. Many types of mosses, trees, and green vegetation were a treat to see.

The town of Astoria sits at the junction of the Columbia River and the Pacific Ocean. There we watched ships, climbed a tower for a view of rivers and ocean.

A day trip took us to Long Beach, Washington, where oysters and crabs are brought in the marina, walked to the restaurant, prepared in full sight, and brought to our table. They were the BEST crabs and oysters.

The Pacific Ocean coastline varies from crashing waves into lava rocks to wide beaches with stones and logs that have come down the streams from the mountains.

Drift Creek Camp was founded by and operated through the stewardship of the Mennonite Camp Association of Oregon, Inc. It hosts thousands of guests each year for various retreats, reunions and group gatherings.

Our connection with fellow believers took place several days at Drift Creek Camp. This camp was started in 1960 when Mennonite groups felt a need for a camp for children. They chose to build a beautiful lodge that sleeps 110 people in the Cascade Range Mountains 12 miles from Lincoln City.

The drive to camp is over a mountain (mostly gravel roads) to this remote location. Nestled in this setting with a creek, giant Sitka Spruce trees, mosses, hiking trails, and activity areas, the camp hosts many people each year.

Summer brings weeks of camp sponsored by Mennonite groups. Other weeks and weekends, groups rent the facilities and offer programs.

The camp is on public land operating under a special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service. This cooperation allows no discrimination in groups using the camp facilities.

I see this connection as a blessing and a challenge to “...let your light shine before men...” (Matthew 5:16). They are off the grid, so electricity is by generator.

Time at camp included working with the caretakers and the weekend cooks. Work included cleaning mold, inventory of camp store, chopping and dicing foods,

*(continued on page 5)*



*Gary baking in the Drift Creek Camp kitchen!*