

# CONESTOGA Connections



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## Garden Getaway at Conestoga

Twenty-five ladies enjoyed Saturday, April 2, studying God's Word, meditating together and alone while walking outside, creating a flower to give to a friend, playing games, and eating snacks and lunch together. Thank you, Vida, for leading our worship throughout the day; and Lisa, Tina, Blair, and Lois Ann, for organizing this inter-generational activity for Conestoga ladies and friends!





## It Really is Not So Bad at All Turning Age 65!

I know that some of my friends dread turning age 65, but I am different. I am excited to “gray”—although not so happy that I cannot walk as fast anymore (let alone run) or have less energy, but otherwise, there is a lot of good in graying/aging! Yes, I am excited to turn age 65 next month! Well, to be honest, one reason I am excited is because Lemar and I will be in Nome, Alaska, on my birthday!!!!

Above, you can see a recent photo taken at Conestoga’s monthly “Senior Connections” where we eat lunch and enjoy a program together. This fellowship is fulfilling, exciting, and needed!

Why is it needed?

Because the truth is that the population of seniors is growing and it

is now an opportunity for us to bless not only Conestoga’s seniors, but others here in our community.

**Did you know that over one-fourth of all Americans today are over the age of 50?** In fact, the fastest growing population in developed nations is the elderly, those age 65 and older. This “graying of society”<sup>1</sup> results in the increasing frequency of chronic diseases, which itself poses challenges, but yet it also provides golden opportunities to demonstrate the true meaning of love.

Conestoga Mennonite is a wonderful example of seniors generating excitement and life and enthusiasm in our midst. Initiatives and energy for inter-generational harmony here at Conestoga has come from our seniors.

- In 1860, half the population of the United States was under age 20, and the vast majority of the population was not expected to live to age 65.<sup>3</sup>
- From 1990 to 1996, the number of Americans age 65 or older increased elevenfold (from 3.1 million to 33.9 million).<sup>4</sup>
- In 1940, just 7% of those age 65 would survive to age 90; by 2050, the number will climb to an astonishing 42%!<sup>5</sup>
- In just 30 years, the number of people in the U.S. over age 65 will more than double to reach 70 million people!<sup>6</sup> Such growth

means that nearly one in five Americans will fit this category, up from 1 in 100 in 1900.<sup>7</sup>

So, thank you, Conestoga, for encouraging seniors to participate and be involved in different areas of our congregation: Visitation Team, Senior Connections, Sewing Circle, etc.

We want to relate to each other, but we especially want to keep connected with the younger generations from the small children to youth to young adults to middle-age. Start getting excited . . . your special time of reaching age 65 is just around the corner!!!

~ Lois Ann Mast



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<sup>1</sup> Most figures and statistics address the United States’ population, but this ‘graying of society’ applies equally to the populations of most developed nations.

<sup>2</sup> *Resources in Social Gerontology, “Social Gerontology and the Aging Revolution,”* p. 1. Find at: [www.trinity.edu/~mkearl/geron.html](http://www.trinity.edu/~mkearl/geron.html).

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census. Current Population Reports. Special Studies, pp. 23-190, 65+ in the United States (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), 2:1.

<sup>4</sup> Profile of Older Americans: 1997, p. 2. Found at <http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov/aoa/stats/profile>.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, 65+ in the United States, pp. 3-4.

<sup>6</sup> Profile of Older Americans, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Special Studies, pp. 23-190, 65+ in the U.S., Government Printing Office, 1996, p. 1. Find at [www.Trinity.edu/~mkearl/over65.jpg](http://www.Trinity.edu/~mkearl/over65.jpg).



## Sewing Circle

Sewing Circle met on Wednesday, April 6, 2016. There were 12 ladies present. Two comforter tops were donated. Four comforters were completed and 25 hygiene kits were filled.

For devotions, we sang “Low in the Grave He Lay” followed by a devotional about Jesus’ resurrection taken from selected verses in Luke 9, 18, 24, and John 20. The special offering amounted to \$38.00  
*- Betty Cannell, Secretary*



*Five years ago in May 2011, the first meals for “Meals From the Heart” were prepared and distributed to persons in our congregation and in the community. Pictured above (left to right) are Wes Boyer, Jo Ebert, Pegge Tennant, and Lois Boyer, who on April 21, 2016, made 128 microwavable dinners (four different kinds) plus 27 desserts (two kinds) to share and bless others! Credit: Lois Ann Mast.*



**“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”** *Matthew 25:40*

This Bible verse has been accepted as a key verse by Conestoga’s “Refugee Welcoming Committee” that has recently formed and decided to begin the process of sponsoring a refugee family.

Did you know that there are an estimated 20 million refugees and 60 million displaced individuals around the world today? **The need is overwhelming.**

Christine Baer, a Congregational Resource Developer with Church World Service (CWS), Lancaster, Pa., met with 13 persons here at Conestoga on April 5 to help us pursue whether God was calling us to help our *brothers and sisters*.

It was definitely shocking and sobering to hear the facts and needs. Over 4 million Syrians are now refugees, seeking safety in countries across the Middle East, Europe, and the United States. Another 6.5+ million are displaced within Syria, forced from their homes due to violence and persecution.

With the help of local churches and volunteers, the CWS Lancaster office is welcoming around 400 individuals each year to central Pennsylvania and aims to help the new arrivals adjust, and become successful members of their local neighborhoods. Through hard work and a long-term commitment of support, people who once had no hope are now discovering the means of transforming their lives.

**Did you know that the average time that refugees remain in refugee camps is 17 years?** Can you imagine your first child born in a refugee camp and about 17 years later, you finally receive the needed paperwork to immigrate when your child is 17 years old? By then, you likely have many more children. Note that the approved families to come through CWS have been thoroughly vetted.

Sometimes I wonder why I was born into the family I was born into? Do I take it for granted? As a result, am I more responsible to reach out and assist Christian agencies like CWS to help make a difference in someone’s life?

It is true that within the United States, the welcome of Syrian refugees is being challenged. We certainly need to be cautious, but if I was born in Syria, I would be praying for *hope*—praying for a church like Conestoga to reach out in love!

At our second Refugee Welcoming Committee meeting, we agreed to be available to answer someone’s prayer searching for safety and assistance in their darkest hour!

We don’t know when we will be appointed a refugee family, but we are already praying for this family wherever they are that God will open the necessary doors soon so that they can begin a new life here in the U.S.

More information will be coming . . . in the meantime let’s join Dot and Andy Leatherman as leaders in praying for our *brothers and sisters* somewhere on this earth!



# 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



## 1. Kids Corner

kidscorner.reframedia.com  
Kids Corner is produced by ReFrame Media, the English language ministry of Back to

God Ministries International. It is geared for children ages 6 to 12. The weekly half-hour radio program and website teach, in a contemporary way, the wisdom and the truth of God to the issues and challenges that affect a child's life. Through audio drama and web resources, children are not only entertained, but are helped to develop an interest in the Bible and in becoming followers of Jesus.

2. *Thriving family* is a Christian marriage and parenting magazine from Focus on the Family. In this bimonthly publication, you will find: age-specific parenting advice, marriage tips, faith-based family activities, insights on cultural and media trends, support for blended families, adoptive families, and much more!



## Upcoming Youth Events

Wednesday, May 4, 7:30 p.m.

- Bible Study in the Youth Room

Sunday, May 15, 5:30-8:00 p.m.

- Roller Skating with local Mennonite churches at Overlook Roller Rink

Wednesday, May 18, 7:00 p.m.

- Food Pantry Stocking

Sunday, May 22, after church

- Picnic & Frisbee Golf (rain date = May 29)



## Conestoga Softball season is here!

**Mission:** First and most important is the understanding that this league is organized to give Christians an opportunity to fellowship and play together in a way that is pleasing to the Lord. It is open to both men and women who enjoy fun, fellowship, and softball.

**Season:** After practices on every Tuesday evening in April at West Nantmeal Park from 6:00 p.m. to dusk, the regular season is 15 games with one a week from May until August.

**Schedule:** Watch for copies of the schedule available in the church lobby.

**Season Playoffs:** Week of August 8-13.

**Team Fee:** \$30.00 per person.

Mike Petersheim, Team Coordinator

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# A New “Joy” on Easter Sunday



*Jeremiah and Shaelagh Martin with their daughters, Annie and Miriam.*

**Annie** came home from school one day and announced that she had found a new very good friend named Clemence. She was Annie’s age and lived in Annie’s neighborhood. Clemence had two sister who are twins named Camille and Juliette. The twins also become good friends with Annie’s sister, **Miriam**.

Annie invited Clemence and her family to visit their church. Clemence talked to her parents and then told Annie that they would like that. Annie’s daddy, Jeremiah, who is the pastor, said that it would be great to have them, but honestly, for a family of five, hmm . . . not sure where they will sit.

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As their parents and grandparents, we were sad to hear that our granddaughters’ friends would encounter such a crowded meetingplace. So, as a family, we prayed and pleaded for God to intervene! And, we continued to wait and wait and wait for God to open doors. Then, the week before Easter, there was a message from our son Jeremiah saying that a place had been secured that could hold up to 160 people!

On Easter morning, along with celebrating all the joys of our risen Lord, God had provided a new place to worship Him! The excitement was catching and we were bursting with joy on that Easter morning! The new meetingplace had a cross made by the pastor with notes to Jesus on it from the hearts of the worshippers. And, lo and behold, there was Clemence and her family in the middle of the congregation! The five little girl worshippers sat together. The **new place** rocked with **new joy** on that Easter morning in Bussy, France—located in the suburbs of Paris, France!

The old place will be kept for now since the new room will only be rented for Sunday morning services. They still need a place for office work and mid-week prayer meetings and Bible studies. The arrangement is temporary, but it will give time to raise additional funds to buy a new church building or at least something more permanent that can be used as a church with space for Sunday morning services, offices, Sunday Schools, etc.

So, here at Conestoga, we will have the opportunity to contribute on **Sunday, July 24, at a fundraiser meal** for the Martins! There is also a matching grant for whatever we can raise at CMC. Since the Martins will be here for six weeks this summer, this is a perfect time for us to get reacquainted. All are invited to join in this great project that God is so clearly blessing.

We thank you with much love and can never tell you all how deeply we are grateful for each one of you here at CMC.

*- Anna Martin*



*THANKS to the great volunteers who cleaned our church on Saturday, April 23!!*



*And also a special THANKS to the volunteers who recently installed the new digital projectors in our sanctuary. We are grateful to Brendon Petersheim and Daniel Mast who researched, ordered, and saved us a lot of money using their gifts!*





Jr. Youth at MCC's Relief Sale



Helping Dottie Martin move.



Freda Petersheim enjoyed a special time with Kristy and Austin visiting Belgium.



***Next Senior Connections ...  
Thursday, May 12, 12:00 noon***

After lunch on May 12, we will hear Dr. Donaldson speak on "Bale/Doneen and Beyond" sharing how we can truly make a better dent in the prevention of cardiovascular disease in the future. The statistics do not look good right now.

# Conestoga Fishing Derby = Friday, June 3, 2016

Picnic available anytime after 6:00 p.m. -

Derby competition begins at 6:30 p.m. for fathers and family at the Petersheim Pond.



## WOMEN'S CONFERENCE ON ABUSE

Still Waters Counseling, a no-cost, non-profit ministry, invites the women of the community to a "Conference on Abuse" held Friday, June 3, through Saturday, June 4, at Conestoga Mennonite Church. Doors will open on Friday night at 6:30 p.m. with the program concluding at 9 p.m. The event continues on Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Attendees will learn about the value that God places on women. It will be a time to look into the face of abuse . . . physical, verbal and emotional. The conference will shed light upon what abuse looks like . . . in the home, in the church and in the workplace . . . and how to recognize and confront it without fear.

Featured speakers will tell their stories of surviving and healing from domestic violence. Come to listen and learn from the experiences shared of those who have had first-hand knowledge of this intolerable issue.

Seating is limited, so early registration is encouraged. There is no charge for the conference, but registration is required to attend. Lunch will be provided, at no cost, on Saturday. A love offering will be received for Still Waters' continuing services in helping abused women.

Featured speakers will include Pastor Bob Petersheim, Jill Waters, and Sam Waters.

To make reservations, call the church office at 610-286-9124 or email [stillwaters@conestogamc.com](mailto:stillwaters@conestogamc.com).

