



Upcoming Events

~~UNIFORMITY~~

ACC Youth Retreat—September 16-18, 2016

Resource speakers this year will be Ryan and Emily Ralph Servant from Baltimore. They have worked as a sports reporter, piano teacher, morning show DJ, basketball referee, software tech, website designer, worship leader, cook, and voice-over artist. Currently, Ryan teaches at Loyola Joint Headshot University, where he's finishing his MBA, and volunteers with Safe House of Hope, advocating for survivors of sex trafficking. Emily pastors Indonesian Light Church and is writing her PhD dissertation on mission theology.

Emily and Ryan will share on the theme of Uniformity: What happens when you throw very different people together in a room? How about in a family? Or a church? It could be chaos ... or it could be something else entirely. When we build relationships and celebrate others for who they really are, we discover why our world (and the Church) is so much better, not despite our differences, but because of them.

Weekend Features: Worship and Resource times, Zipline in the Dark!, T-shirts for everyone, Volleyball and Basketball Tournaments, Climbing Wall, Late-night Open-Gym, Coffee House/Talent Show—youth will not want to miss this!!! Talk to Rachel Mast for more information!

Fall Frolic

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1

HOSTED BY CONESTOGA'S TEDDY BEAR CLUB

Drop in anytime between 3:00 - 7:00 p.m. at Pastor Bob and Cinty Petersheim's Pond (Rain Date is Oct. 2). Fun for all ages—including pumpkin painting and chunking, apple bobbing, wagon ride, bonfire, etc. You are welcome to add a dish of your favorite fall flavors to the festivities.



The
Value
of
You

The Value of You” Ladies Class

is entering its fourth year with the next class beginning Tuesday, September 20, at 7 p.m. at Conestoga Mennonite Church. The book study this season is *Keep it Shut: What to Say, How to Say it, and When to Say Nothing at All*.

The power of the tongue will be discussed along with the negative effects of gossip. Taught by Jill Waters, this class will meet every other Tuesday night through December 13. Please contact Jill for information in ordering books. This is open to all CMC ladies and women of the community.

Got words? Oh yeah, you do! The average woman speaks over 20,000 words a day—not to mention the ones she types online. Karen Ehman—a woman whose words have often landed her in a heap of trouble—shares from experience the how's (and how-not-to's) of dealing with the tongue in her new book *Keep It Shut*. Using Biblical examples as well as Karen's own personal (and sometimes painful!) stories, *Keep It Shut* will equip you to know what to say, how best to say it, and when you'd better just keep your lips zipped! This book will teach us what the Bible teaches about making our speech laced with grace, as sweet as honey, and yet seasoned with salt.



Hebron and Bethlehem Schools Dinner—Friday, September 23

This picture of Hebron in the West Bank of Israel clearly shows the Tombs of the Patriarchs in the foreground—actually a shrine complex built mainly under Herod (1st cent. BC) with additions by the Crusaders (12th

century AD). It centers around the Cave of Machpelah, an ancient double cave revered since at least 1000 BC as the burial site of the Hebrew patriarchs **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their wives**. This is the second holiest site in Judaism after the Western Wall in Jerusalem and has been a Jewish pilgrimage destination from earliest times to today. It is also highly sacred to Muslims who revere Abraham highly as a true prophet of God. Of course, Christians believe this too.

Nearly all of what is seen today was built by Herod the Great in the 1st century BC in the same style as his Temple of Jerusalem and enclosure at Mamre, neither of which survive. It is thus of inestimable historical value as well as great sacred significance.

Today, the Tombs of the Patriarchs unfortunately is the center of ongoing conflicts between the Palestinians and Jews in Hebron, and is therefore under tight security.

Sixty plus years ago when Miss Ada and Miss Ida Stoltzfus (members here at Conestoga) started the orphanage and school in Hebron,
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CONESTOGA MENNONITE CHURCH
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Editor: Lois Ann Mast Assistant
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Three of the students at the Hebron School today. Come to the Fundraiser Dinner to learn how God is at work in this controversial region of our world.



Sewing Circle

Sewing Circle met on Wednesday, August 3, 2016. There were 15 ladies present with the following donations: 10 school kits, 1 relief kit, 120 kit bags, 4 comforter tops, and 2 comforters. Items completed included 2 comforters and 125 school kits.

For devotions, we sang "Under His Wings" followed by the reading of Ps. 34:15-22, with a devotional entitled, "Who is Watering You?"

The special offering totaled \$42.00 intended for sewing kits. We ended by singing "Blessed Assurance" before adjourning.
- Betty Cannell, Secretary

Hebron & Bethlehem Schools

(continued from page 2)

they were sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), Akron, Pa.

This year's Fundraiser Dinner speaker is **James Wheeler**, manager of MCC's Material Resource Center in Ephrata, Pennsylvania. James served for 15 years with MCC in the Middle East where he learned to know Ada and Ida Stoltzfus. James and his wife, Linda Herr, co-directed MCC's program in Egypt from 2003-2009. It will be a privilege to hear James share stories this year about their memories of "serving" with the twin sisters, Miss Ada and Miss Ida from Conestoga!

David and Lois Garrison will also share updates on what is happening at the schools in Hebron and Bethlehem. (David is President of Holy Land Ministries that oversees both schools.)

God is alive and well in spite of the conflict and challenges in this volatile region. His truth cannot and will not be hidden. The "light of Jesus" shines through the workers we pray for and support.

Tickets for this informational dinner, catered by Becky Yoder, are available from either Lemar or Lois Ann Mast, (484-798-8556).



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!

— September 20 —

"Honey for a Woman's Heart"

presented by Susan Crooks and celebrating 31 years of "Neighbors Caring and Sharing" ministry

— September 27 —

"Abuse in the Church"

presented by Pam Hopkins



LEADING THROUGH ABUSE A Conference on Abuse for Church Leadership September 24, 2016

Still Waters Ministry invites church leaders in the Berks, Chester, & Lancaster Counties to a conference on abuse being held Saturday, September 24. The conference will be held at the Conestoga Mennonite Church in Morgantown. Doors will open on Saturday morning at 8:30 a.m. with the program concluding at 3 p.m.

The conference will educate church leaders on a variety of issues surrounding domestic violence in our churches and will shed light upon what abuse looks like and how to recognize and confront it without fear.

Seating is limited, so early registration is encouraged. The cost for the conference is \$35, which will include a continental breakfast and lunch. To make reservations, call the church office at 610-286-9124 or email to stillwaters@conestogamc.com.

WE MUST

When victims of abuse are not heard,
WE MUST listen to them.

When victims of abuse are silent,
WE MUST speak for them.

When victims of abuse cannot stand,
WE MUST stand with them.

When victims of abuse feel helpless,
WE MUST help them.

When victims of abuse feel all alone,
WE MUST come alongside them.

When victims of abuse lose all hope,
WE MUST hope for them.

When victims of abuse feel unlovable,
WE MUST love them.

When victims of abuse are at risk of life and limb,
WE MUST protect them.

When victims of abuse struggle in the dark places,
WE MUST show them the Light.

WE MUST!

WE MUST!

WE MUST!

- Sam Waters, Still Waters Ministries



THAT DAY IN SEPTEMBER

with
Artie Van Why

A survivor's firsthand account of the events
of September 11, 2001



For Artie Van Why, 9/11 is not just a chapter in our history books. For him, 9/11 is when his life, as he knew it, was indelibly changed forever. Playwright, author, artist and public speaker, Artie vividly shares his story of 9/11, transporting his audiences back to the day that changed our lives and our country forever. His audiences come away with not only a more intimate understanding of the events of that day but also with a personal glimpse of how his life has been dramatically changed.

Saturday, September 10, 2016 @ 7:00 PM

Presented by Still Waters Ministries
Hosted by Conestoga Mennonite Church
2779 Main Street
Morgantown, PA 19543

Dessert Reception & Silent Auction Following Presentation
All Proceeds to Benefit Still Waters Ministries



What If?

What if every Jesus follower here in the Tri-County area, in Pennsylvania, and even in the U.S., found his or her place in God's assignment *to go and make disciples of all nations?* (Matthew 28:19-20)

What if we lifted our heads and looked beyond our school classrooms, where we work, where we eat—the complacency, the chaos, and the confusion of our lives long enough to truly see the potential in the weary world around us?

Some of us might go across the street to invite a lonely or troubled neighbor to dinner. Some might go across town to build relationships with Muslims or people from other faith traditions. Some might go into Reading to start a business with a quadruple bottom line, working for positive economic, environmental, social, and spiritual transformation in the marketplace.

On **Sunday morning, September 18**, Nelson Okanya, president of Eastern Mennonite Missions, will be here at Conestoga to lead a discussion in Sunday School as well as share in our morning worship. Nelson enjoys teaching, preaching, and engaging in cross-cultural and theological discussions focused on faithfulness to Christian discipleship and missions.

When Nelson Okanya grew up in Kenya, he played with the children of the first Mennonite mission workers from Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) to plant a church among his people.

Today, Okanya, the first-born son of John and Mary Okanya who received from EMM's ministry, and his wife, Jessica, are raising their two small sons, Barak and Izak, in North America. It's where, since October 2011, he has served in his new role as EMM President in Salunga, Pa., to help a new generation of Anabaptists join in sharing God's good news in Christ.

It's also ministry that Okanya—former pastor of the multiracial Capital Christian Fellowship in Lanham, Maryland—hopes will take root among believers who faithfully live as citizens of God's kingdom, which has no national boundaries. It's



Isak, Jessica, Nelson, and Barak Okanya.

Photo by Jonathan Charles.

a kingdom Okanya believes today ***begins in one's backyard before spreading into other fields.***

"It's a new day in missions, because the world is coming here to the doorstep of North America," Okanya says. "It's a day when North American-based mission agencies need to share the gospel with the influx of people from other cultures and religions who are being drawn to this country.

"North American mission agencies have spent the last 100 years learning how to do cross-cultural ministry. It's now time for these same mission agencies to share those tools with local congregations who are seeking to do the same kind of ministry at home."

Nelson Okanya, originally from Kenya, East Africa, came to the U.S. in 1996 as a participant in the YES (Youth Evangelism Service) program of EMM.

After graduating from Daystar University in Nairobi, Kenya, Nelson served and led international teams to various locations in Kenya with EMM and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions.

Okanya says, "I am looking forward to participating in the re-envisioning mission for the next generation. The 21st century mission context brings unique opportunities and challenges; we are 'going where the church is not . . . yet' and equipping local churches for serious discipleship. The Anabaptist witness and mission, which comes from a marginalized position rather than from the center, continues to be a model for world mission."

"The way to engage youth in missions, and in church itself, is sharing and teaching with authenticity," Okanya says, "just as the prophets, disciples, and Jesus Himself did. "Are we 'almost Christian'?" he asks, using a term coined by author Kendra Dean Creasy. "Are we not serious enough about our faith and not taking seriously what He said and what He meant? We lack the strength to tell the story, and if we do not have it, then we cannot pass it on.

Conestoga Happenings

Mildred Yoder demonstrating how she milked cows at age nine as the oldest child in her family (Ruth Beam is one of her younger sisters). At age 15, Mildred accepted Jesus as her Savior, attended pre-baptism instruction classes and was baptized here at Conestoga. She is now 93 years old and is enjoying her senior years at Tel Hai.



Thank you, **Rachel Mast**, for the testimony that our church sign has here in our community! Keep up the good work!



The **Brandon and Kristin Stoltzfus** family the day that they entered Florida—what fun to enjoy this family vacation together! So glad you could do this!

Congratulations to **Bryce Petersheim** as he continues studies as Physician Assistant—here he is with sister **Sonya!**



Pastor Bob “blessing” Penny Kolb, daughter of Justin and Sarah Kolb, at the Baby Dedication service in August.



Jr. Youth Sunday School class learning more about Jesus with their teacher Sharon Stoltzfus on her last Sunday of teaching before a well-deserved “break.” Thank you, Sharon!



Josh Beam spent the summer helping harvest wheat from Texas to Montana! Here he rescued a small fawn! He writes, “The Lord is good, and His power was evident over the summer in His timing and beautiful creation! I came home to spend some great time with family, and now here I am at Penn State University, for the start of fall semester!”



Trail Day Hike Group (above) at Bob and Karen Horning’s cabin—and yes, some of the group even saw a bear with its cubs come right outside their cabin! Ahhh, how amazing!



Next Sr. Connections:

Thursday, September 15

12:00 noon

Speaker from the Lancaster Office of Aging on “What is Latest news on Aging, and Services Available. Handouts will be distributed.

Learning From Students: A Principal's Perspective

This is a summary of what was shared at Conestoga on “Back to School Sunday” on August 14—excerpted here since some of us were on vacation that weekend.

What was Jesus really getting at with His calling the children to his side?

We learn not only from the educated and persons of accomplishment, the traditional approach, but we also learn from the weak among us—those who are on the margins of life, those with physical and mental limitations.

1. Lessons that I have learned from primary grade students. They are inclusive, show empathy, and embrace one another. At the school where I was principal, we had a down syndrome student, those with autism, and other challenges. Primary students, especially kindergarten, were very quick to show empathy and compassion to help those who were different—it just comes naturally. Question: *Where did those students learn caring?* Most likely it was modeled by an adult, parent, teacher. The opposite can also be true, and they can learn rejection.

I have learned that students also imitate. I recall of a primary child at home lining up chairs with her stuffed toys as she pretended to be a teacher and teach a lesson on conflict resolution as taught that day by the teacher in the classroom.

I have also learned that students need structure and thrive on routines which provide security and a sense of order in their lives. At times, students can be inflexible and have difficulty adjusting to a new routine.

2. Lessons I have learned from intermediate grade students in grades 3-5. This is the stage of early independence. Students in this age group tend to think in either/or, black and white, right and wrong, in or out categories. Dualistic thinking tends to dominate their outlook in life since there are no shades of gray, no mixture of good and bad. They learn quickly to manipulate their relationships, and in behavior matters can triangulate between the teacher and student. Intermediate grade students are not as inclusive as primary students. *What has changed and what does this tell us about reflecting more of the model from adults?*

3. Lessons I have learned from middle school students in grades 6-8. Middle school students tend to be quite peer-

focused and exclusive. Peers become dominant in their life which determines their dress, language, social order, etc. Students tend to be narcissistic and think mostly of themselves. Many middle schoolers tend to have difficulty communicating with adults. Adults may need to take the initiative to communicate, reaching out to establish relationships beyond one's immediate age group. Adolescents need adults to show trust and acceptance of youth and model socialization. The problems with the present social structure makes it difficult for intergenerational relationships.

4. Lessons I have learned about parents from students. Students are transparent and bring to school the emotions and patterns from home. What takes place at home, becomes quite evident in school. Some parents have difficulty finding a healthy balance between trusting children and providing needed guidance. Students will reflect whether or not their parent is overly invested, overly protective, obsessed with grades and performance, desiring their child to be the best, the first, the smartest. These parents are projecting their fears and anxieties to their children who in return also become insecure, fearful, and anxious. Students also reflect whether their parents show little interest in their development and are detached and preoccupied with their own life.

5. I believe the lesson that Jesus wants us to learn from students/children may be to reflect the innate characteristics found in primary children, such as forgiving, trusting, compassionate, inclusive, and accepting of others who are different.

As students mature, there is a tendency to take on some of the negative characteristics of adults such as exclusiveness, preferring relationships of one's own kind. Students are open to learn, and, unlike adults, can appreciate what they do not know. Students accept knowledge with humility, unlike adults who take pride in what they know, not realizing what they do not know.

In closing I quote from Robert Fulghum's “All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten”: Share everything; Play fair; Don't hit people; Put things back where you found them; Clean up your own mess; Don't take things that aren't yours; Say you're sorry when you hurt someone; Wash your hands before you eat; Flush; Take a nap; Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you; When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands and stick together; Be aware of wonder; Remember the little seed in the Star of foam cup, the roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that; Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even little seeds in Styrofoam cups—they all die—so do we!”

- John S. Weber

