

From the Pastor



“Dig a Little Deeper”

I believe that our quarterly “Faith Forums” have been a great success. There has been a good turnout of participants and lively, yet civilized discussion. And while I have heard mostly positive responses from others who have taken part, the most common comment I get is, “It wasn’t what

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I thought it would be.” We engaged two difficult topics, but attempted to do them in a different way than the typical cultural conversation. So, the typical way to address gun violence might be to debate, gun laws or safety procedures. The way we might talk about Christmas decorations is to offer evidence that our symbols are Christian or Pagan, whichever side you might be on. Those are important conversations in a certain time and place, but the problem is that we rarely are able to calmly engage in debates or conversations about hot topics. I believe the reason is that there is usually something deeper going on inside us that stirs us up and raises our anxiety. To be healthier people who engage in healthier discernment, we need to dig a little deeper.

That is precisely what we’ve been trying to do in our Faith Forums. So, instead of talking about gun violence, we named and shared about fear. In regards to Christmas, we didn’t debate whether our decorations are Christian or Pagan, but focused on what the season means to us and what the coming of Jesus means in the Bible. These conversations are more difficult to have, because it means addressing issues deep down within each of us. Anyone can offer a solution to a given issue, but few of us may be willing to explore the depths of our hopes and our fears, probably because it leaves us feeling very vulnerable. Yet, I believe that level of self reflection is more important than winning a particular debate.

The reason I’m thinking about all this right now is that I see in the story of Christmas God addressing our deepest hopes and fears. While the people of Israel were ready for a savior that would lead them to freedom and prosperity, Jesus came to offer a deeper understanding of those concepts. Israel wanted to be freed from Rome, Jesus came to free them from Sin and Death.

Jesus always found deeper meaning in the midst of the debates of the day. So, when the religious teacher asked Jesus who exactly his neighbor was, Jesus knew the man was looking for ways out of the expectation to love all. When cornered about the woman caught in adultery, Jesus didn’t take sides between the church and the state. Instead, he directed people inward, to see their own sin, instead of condemning others. When asked about the issue of taxes, Jesus again didn’t fall for the political debate he was being drawn into, but instead revealed the deeper reality that everything belongs to the creator God. When asked about the most important commandment, Jesus named the two that contain the deepest meaning of all: *love God and love your neighbor*.

Jesus came not to win a debate, but to address our deepest fears and longings. That’s what we celebrate at Christmas. It’s why we are so drawn to the Christmas season, because it is about true peace and comfort. It is about light in the midst of darkness. It is about our God coming to us in our time of need to be present to us and to give us a glimpse of the healing and wholeness that is promised. It is why we sing together *the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight*.

David A. K.



The Eden Leadership Team met November 12 at the Eden Church office.

Members present: Larry Kaufman, Cheri Kaufman, Glen Goering, Pastor Dianne Schmidt, Teresa Graber, Becky

Koller, Jerry Lankford, Ken Preheim, Marcia Goering, Austin Goering, Pastor Derek King, Kyle Neufeld and Candy Unrau

Kyle Neufeld lit a candle to symbolize the presence of the Holy Spirit, and read scripture from John 1:1-5 in Lectio Divina format. He led the group in prayer.

Kyle read Eden's Mission Statement and Vision Statement.

Minutes from the 10/8/18 ELT meeting were approved as submitted.

Budget Report—Austin Goering reported \$18,000 offering on 11/11/18; Income to date: \$332,000, which is \$10,000 more than last year at this time; Expenses to date: \$380,000; Expenses v. Budgeted amount to date--\$35,000 under budget; Last year—end of year we were \$13,500 in the red

Commission reports

Deacons—Glen Goering: Communion is scheduled for 11/18/18. Safe Hope pamphlets have now been placed in the men's and women's restrooms at church.

Trustees—Larry Kaufman: Their committee has been working with insurance for the church building. The church's policy with Brotherhood Mutual has been updated and will be a line item on the proposed budget. Goering Hardware will do Spring and Fall inspections of the HVAC systems at the church and church office for a fee of \$200 to \$250 each time for each site.

Worship Commission—Cheri Kaufman: The committee is working on Advent. Infant care kit items will be collected for MCC. The plan will be to have a church service at Pine Village on 1/13/19. They are also making plans for the upcoming Lent/Easter season.

Peace and Witness Commission—Ken Preheim: They are sponsoring baby showers for three Congolese refugee families. They assisted a community member with their Redigas utility bill.

Education and Discipleship Commission—Marcia Goering: They have been working on the Christmas Eve program. No one volunteered to coordinate the program, so their committee is doing it together with Pastor Derek's help.

Pastor Derek: He is planning on having a leadership retreat for returning and new church leaders on 1/26/19. Plans are to have the Year in Review celebration on 1/27/19. On 1/27/19, Sara Wenger Shenk will be the speaker and there will be a potluck meal after the service/ Sunday school.

Pastor Dianne: She is grateful for all who step up to be involved in the ministry of the church. She is looking forward to having a Mission Sunday event with the other area Mennonite churches.

Stewardship Commission—Teresa Graber: She passed out a draft of the proposed budget. The commission met with SCRT to prepare the budget for the salaries of Pastors and office staff. Kyle and the Pastors met to get a budget amount for the sabbatical coverage in the summer months considering honorariums for speakers, worship coordinator expenses, and emergency on-call support. There was discussion about the Student Grant Fund and the Student Endowment Fund. We currently have 3 students receiving grant money, but they will all graduate in May and we don't project a demand for grant money in the near future. There was also discussion about changing the budget allocation to the Capital Building Fund—increasing the amount from proposed \$3,000 to \$6,000 to help build up this fund to have money available for needs as they arise. There were questions about the Peace Witness budget and why it has a higher allocation than the other commissions. There was also concern about increasing the budget when our expenses are already exceeding our income. It was brought up that budgets normally need to increase to factor in the rate of inflation. It was suggested that we need to increase money coming in to the budget, or adjust our expectations. After much discussion, it was the consensus to increase the Capital Building fund allocation from \$3,000 to \$6,000, and to increase the insurance line item to reflect the increase in the current premium rate.

Other Business: On 12/2/18 the budget will be presented to the congregation. On 12/9/18, the budget will be voted on by the congregation. Also on 12/9/18, the congregation will be affirming the nominees for open leadership/service positions.

The Gift discernment committee reported to Kyle that they have 5 open positions left to fill.

Meeting was adjourned. Next meeting will be 12/10/18 at 7pm at the Eden Church Office.

Candace Unrau
Secretary



Remember loved ones with an angel

Beginning on December 2 the Angel Tree will be decorated in the fellowship hall to honor the memory of our loved ones who have passed away. You may purchase an angel for each of your loved ones for \$3.00 each. The ornaments will decorate the tree during the Christmas season and may be taken home on or after December 23. The forms and envelopes are available near the tree. Please place the completed form and payment in the box.



An attendant is now available at the west church doors every Sunday before church to help individuals transition from their vehicles into the church building. This person may help with vehicle/church doors and accompany individuals into the church as they wait for their drivers to join them.



Christmas Gathering for all Camp Mennoscah volunteers!

Put it on your calendar, wonderful counselors and program directors and cooks and nurses and staffers! We're gathering on December 15 at 2:30pm for conversation, cookies, games and great fun. Bring your family.



Invitation to Share

The project for the month of December is Comforters. Comforter specifications

- Use new or nearly new material
- Single/twin size preferred (approx 60 x 80 in); double/full size accepted (approx 82 x 90 in)
- Winter weight preferred (please use new quilt batting)
- Knotted with crochet cotton (not more than 4–8 in apart)

Download [detailed instructions](#).

If you would like to support this project you may write a check to Eden with “invitation to share” in the memo

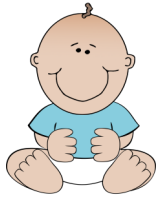


MennoMedia needs your help to make the new *Voices Together* hymnal a reality by Fall 2020. Before any copies of *Voices Together* are sold, MennoMedia will invest more than \$700,000. Everence and Mennonite Central Committee U.S. have issued a matching grant challenge of up to \$100,000 to help MennoMedia in this final fundraising effort. Help ensure that *Voices Together* will be affordably priced for congregations. Make a gift today and have it doubled! Every voice matters. Every dollar counts. Give at VoicesTogetherHymnal.org or email Steve Carpenter at SteveC@MennoMedia.org for more information. Gifts of \$500 or more entitle the giver to a tribute line in the hymnal.



Looking for a unique Christmas gift this year?

Consider buying one of the resources on our wish list in honor of your loved one! The Resource Library is excited to partner with Faith & Life Bookstore for this project. Visit our list & purchase online OR visit the wishing tree in the store. All items purchased will be delivered to the library and added to the collection in January. <http://faithandlifebookstore.net/wdc-resource-library-wish-list/>



INFANT CARE KITS (December 2 – January 6)

This Christmas as we remember Baby Jesus and his parents, who were refugees, we will be collecting infant care kits to be given by MCC to families displaced by war or disaster. These kits will help mothers and fathers give their infants a good start by providing supplies needed for a new baby.

MCC has provided flannel blankets to wrap each kit. We are invited to add the following items to complete the kits.

- **3 gowns/sleepers**
(flannel or similar warm, soft material - preferably colors, rather than white)
**Patterns, directions, and an example are available by the tree in Fellowship Hall, if you would like to sew a gown instead of purchasing one.*
- **3 undershirts/onesies**
(short or long sleeves - preferably colors, rather than white)
- **1 pair of socks**
(preferably colors, rather than white)
- **1 cap**
- **4 large, heavy duty safety pins**
- **1 large bar Dove soap**
(leave in wrapper)

The items may be Size 3-12 months. There may be mixed sizes within a kit.

Remove packing material (except soap). Fold items into a flannel blanket located by the tree. Fasten together with safety pins.

Place under the large tree in the Fellowship Hall.

There is a basket by the tree to hold individual items, if you would prefer not to put together a complete kit but would like to share individual items from the above list.

There is a container by the tree, if you would prefer to share a monetary gift that will be used by MCC to purchase items to complete Infant Care Kits. Make check out to "MCC" with "CS Infant Care Kits" in the memo line.



Many comforters needed

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) needs 55,000 Comforters. Comforters are sent all over the world for use in refugee camps.

Yassir, a mission worker in Sudan, recently asked some women in a refugee camp how churches in North America could be of greatest help to them. They responded with, "Please send us more 'Mennonites'."

Not sure how more 'Mennonites' would benefit them, he asked what they meant by that. They explained that they cover themselves with them at night and then hang them up as walls or dividers during the day. He eventually figured out that she was referring to MCC comforters and quilts.

Since these were tagged as coming from Mennonite Central Committee, people in the camp referred to them as 'Mennonites'.

What better ways to be known than through providing some warmth and some sense of private space for refugees and others in need?



Let's join together in anticipation and worship of the coming of Jesus on Christmas Eve! We will gather to hear the story of Jesus's birth as the children and youth guide us through the Christmas story. We will worship together with singing and await the Light of the World by lighting candles in the midst of the darkness. Join us for worship at Eden at 7 p.m.

**Congratulations
on Your
New Baby!**



Congratulations to Tyler and Kristen Stucky on the birth of a daughter, Kinslee Mae. Kinslee was born on Thursday, November 22. Maternal grandparents are Wayne and Laurie Schrag and paternal grandparents are Bob and Cheryl Stucky. Welcome Kinslee Mae!



Thank you for the many ways you supported our family during the time of our mother's passing. The prayers, cards, food, hugs, comforting words, and memorial contributions were very much appreciated.
The Family of Hilda Schrag

Thank you to all that help support Angels' Attic!
Without your generous support, it would be difficult to continue our service to our community and surrounding communities. When we have 100+ shoppers a day, it means we are providing help.
Thanks again,
Angels' Attic

I came to AMBS because I love the Bible and wanted to teach it in some capacity. During my first year, I heard God calling me more specifically to pastoral ministry through experiences in ministry classes, pastors week, and leading in chapel. I am thankful for this learning community in which I have been formed as a minister and practiced the deep integration I came here longing for—integration of my head and my heart, faith and intellect, ideas and practice. Thank you so much for your contributions and prayers that make this learning community possible!
Thank you!
Michelle Curtis, a Master of Divinity graduate from Lansdale, PA

Bethel College exists to educate students to be critical thinkers and courageous doers, motivated by a love that extends compassion and goodwill to all humankind. The support of generous alumni and friends makes it possible for us to succeed in our mission. Your gift helps Bethel students pursue their learning both inside and outside the classroom, preparing them to bring skills and insight to their chosen fields.

We are grateful for your part in this educational endeavor. Because of your support, Bethel faculty, staff, and volunteers are able to dedicate themselves to student success.

Thank you for your generosity and your confidence in Bethel College. Many thanks for this gift and your continued support through prayer and deeds.
Brad Kohlman
Director of Alumni Development

Thank you for your contribution to Mennonite Disaster Service.

I am humbled by your generosity and that of many others. I recently visited the areas in Florida impacted by Hurricane Michael, accompanying an Amish chainsaw crew as they cleared trees. Homeowners were skeptical of the service we could provide because tree removal businesses were quoting anywhere from \$12,000-\$40,000. Timidly, the homeowner would show us the scope of work and ask—can you really do that? Our response: “we can do that.”

Donning their hard hats and gear, the volunteers confronted the wrath of Michael. I stood and watched their craftsmanship while tears and smiles spread across the homeowner's faces. Overwhelmed with relief and emotion I saw many dart back in the house embarrassed by their tears of joy. One couple told me yesterday afternoon that they had just prayed that someone would come to their aid—five minutes later an MDS rep called and said they were “on the list to call—did they need help?”

It is because of your gifts, like this one, that volunteers are able to provide hope for disaster survivors who have nowhere else to turn. Your support is enabling volunteers to respond in 18 different locations throughout Canada and the U.S. this winter.
With gratitude,
Kevin King, Executive Director

Thank you so much for your gift! Thank you for helping us share great camp experiences with others!
With peace and prayers,
Olivia Bartel, Camp Director

Thank you for your gift to the annual fund at AMBS. As the new managing editor at the Institute of Mennonite Studies, my position is made possible by gifts like yours. I was excited to join such a vibrant, warm, and diverse community as AMBS. These are exciting times at the seminary, as we train present and future church leaders. I've enjoyed working on projects like our journal *Vision* and teaching bright young students. Thank you again for supporting AMBS!
Gratefully,
David Cramer



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|--|---|
| 1- Karey French
Nick Graber
Roberta Ollenburger | 19- Seth Goering
Ernest Krehbiel
Judy Krehbiel
Jacey Krehbiel
Kyle Schrag |
| 2- Tony Schrag | 20- Christina Graber
Kollen Shirack (Ross & Christy) |
| 3- Leland Goering
Polly Schrag
Angela Tipton | 21- Victoria Stucky
Danny Zerger |
| 4- Alexis Westfall (Jacob & Tonya) | 22- Emmi Schrag (David & Hillery Schrag)
Jason Neufeld |
| 6- Bill Toews | 23- Chelsey Knight |
| 7- Annie Toews | 24- Marla Gillmore
Ruth White |
| 8- Calvin Preheim
Katelynn Stucky (Kevin & Gayle)
Teresa Stucky | 26- Charlene Epp
Ronald Stucky |
| 9- Alison Schrag (Matt & Rashelle) | 27- Annah Schrag (Matt & Rashelle)
Lauren Bode |
| 10- Galen Waltner | 28- Blair Goering
Annie Schrag
Judy Sebo |
| 11- Deborah Koehn
Bryan Zerger | 29- Kim Cutting |
| 12- Ethan Knight
Miriam Krehbiel
Norman Wedel | 30- Dick Zerger |
| 13- Reese Gehring
Christine Goering
Tonya Westfall
Haley Schrag | 31- Ronnie Schrag |
| 16- Makenna Hayes (Mike & Kelly)
Sarah Erb | |
| 18- Becky Setser
Kurt Graber
Leda Kaufman
Jerry Stucky | |

If there has been an omission or mistaken date please notify the church office.



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| 3- Fred & Polly Schrag | 22- Mark B. & Sheila Goering
Robert D. & Katy Schrag |
| 11- David & Margaret Goering | 28- Matt & Lindsey Begnoche |
| 16- Kirby & Christine Goering | 29- Don & Bonnie Kaufman
Darrell & Bobbi Schrag |
| 17- Josh & Emily Regier | 30- Stephen & Sandra Koontz
DaWayne and Britney Stos
Emory & Naomi Wedel |
| 18- Steve & Barbara Goering
Michael & Margaret Krehbiel | |
| 19- Daniel & Janet Schrag
Kelly & Donna Stucky | |
| 20- Homer & Dorothy Goering | |

Up-Coming Events

December 2: 2019 Budget Presented
December 3: 7:00 p.m. Worship Commission mtg.
December 5: 6:30 p.m. Education/Discipleship Commission mtg.
 7:30 p.m. Ladies Chorus
 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
December 9: Vote on 2019 Budget
December 10: 7:00 p.m. ELT
December 12: 6:30 Christmas Eve Service practice
 7:30 p.m. Ladies Chorus
 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
December 19: 6:30 Christmas Eve Service practice
 7:30 p.m. Ladies Chorus
 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
December 23: Christmas Eve Service practice during Sunday school
December 24: Christmas Eve (church office closed)
 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service
December 25: Christmas Day (church office closed)

December 2018						
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30	31					



January 2019						
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Address Services Requested