



New York Mennonite Conference

An area conference of Mennonite Church USA

LIFE

In New York Mennonite Conference

Love Family Community Church

Terry Zehr

Just over six months ago, Miguel and Nereida Monsanto moved to Utica NY from Lancaster PA for the purpose of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ and planting a church in a very needy city. They are being co-sponsored by the Hispanic Council of Lancaster Mennonite Conference and New York Mennonite Conference. Lowville Mennonite Church is their supporting congregation.

Once a month a group of us from Lowville meet with Miguel and Ney for support. Periodically, Samuel Lopez joins us from the Hispanic Council. Our meetings are marked by practical planning, hopeful reflection and prayer. Miguel and Ney are extending the love of Jesus to their new community, and we are all learning together.

A group currently meets on Wednesday evening for a Bible Study Café. Miguel teaches the adults, while Ney teaches the children. They are seeing God at work as people begin to take ownership of their spiritual lives. The name of this new emerging congregation is Love Family Community Church.

Love Family, continued on p.2

Prayer Gathering in Amsterdam

Gene Miller

On Saturday, May 16th, about a dozen people from the Iglesia Christiano Bethel congregation in Amsterdam, NY and from across the conference gathered to pray for breakthroughs for the city of Amsterdam and for blessings on the congregation. Participants prayed together in the church building and also fanned out in small groups to pray across the city: left to right, below, are Julio Rodriguez, Terry Zehr and Milton Zehr. Julio Rodriguez serves as pastor of this New York Mennonite Conference congregation located about 30 miles west of Albany.

Prayer Across Amsterdam

Photo courtesy Gene Miller



Global Mennonites to Gather in Harrisburg

Mennonite World Conference, an every 6-year event, is coming to Harrisburg, PA, this summer!

More than three times as many of our sisters and brothers from Africa as went to Paraguay in 2009 are already registered for "PA 2015". A great response. Likewise with our sisters and brothers from Asia. More than three times as many as went to Paraguay!

It's going to be a great international celebration and time of renewal. Make sure your friends from your Sunday School class, from your small group, from your leadership team, as well as friends and family, are all registered.

Register at: www.mwc-cmm.org/pa2015

Don't let them delay. It's the event of a lifetime. It is unlikely that the Mennonite World Conference Assembly will return to the United States again for at least 30 more years, perhaps even 50 years. So the time is now.



Photo courtesy Mennonite World Conference

Sister Care: Level 2

Sister Care: Level 2 "Going Deeper," a retreat for women, will be held October 2-4, at Camp Hebron in Halifax, PA. The retreat will be led by Carolyn Heggen and Rhoda Keener. For brochure with registration form, go to:

<https://www.mennonitewomenusa.org/resources/sister-care-seminars/>

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Congregational News

Lowville FWSC

Thirteen women met at church on May 5th for Faithful Workers Sewing Circle. The women got busy tying quilts and sewing. After a delicious lunch the meeting was opened with a song led by Lois Zehr. Catherine Barnes had devotions. The quilt for Beaver Camp Auction was on display. A twin quilt was given to a local family who suffered a fire.

In response to the day's challenge forty-seven hygiene kits were brought in and \$390 was donated for the purchase of twenty relief kits. Items brought to the meeting included fifty pairs of used blue jeans, two yards fabric and ten pounds used clothing. Items finished during the day were three 60x80 quilts, one twin quilt and eleven newborn kits.

Love Family, continued from p. 1

Miguel continues to make connections in the community. He volunteers at the Rescue Mission of Utica, and at the Mohawk Valley Action Center with immigrants. At our last support team meeting, two local pastors attended who are excited at the possibilities of Miguel and Ney's ministry. One pastor remarked that the fastest growing population in the school is Hispanic and sees Miguel's ministry as being 'for such a time as this'.

This ministry is made possible by the Outreach and Church Planting Fund along with the prayers of God's people both in New York and Lancaster. I invite us all to partner with the Monsantos in cooperating with God's desire that Utica come to fullness of life in Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Pastors, Church Planter with Leadership Commission



Photo courtesy Gene Miller

Women's Retreat

Kathy Shelly

Those of us who gathered for the women's retreat on May 16th experienced a wonderful day together. We met at Sojourners Mennonite Fellowship in Belfast on a beautiful spring day. Connie Finney had prepared several activities for us to spend time together with an emphasis on being with friends, worship and prayer, and two very special times of entertainment—over lunch we were entertained by Laurie Smalley playing hymn arrangements on a Celtic harp, and in the afternoon Connie presented her own story of "Tales of the Welsh Aunts".

We were a small group that day but, as always, we had a good time together and look forward to having time together again in the future.

SHELTER44 Survey Results

During the month of April, Ken Landis conducted an online survey with the goal of better understanding NY Mennonites' thoughts and experience about engaging peace and justice in a real world. A total of 157 responses were received from the SHELTER44 survey. Survey results, along with comments from Ken, can be found at:

<http://shelter44.com/blog.html>

Planning for Ministry

On May 2nd NYMC Leadership Commission met at Rochester Mennonite to interview (photo front-row, left to right) Julio Rodriguez (Pastor, Bethel Christian Church in Amsterdam), Miguel Monsanto (Church Planter, Love Family Community Church in Utica), and Timothy Lian (Pastor, Syracuse Emmanuel Church) as part of the process for licensing for pastoral ministry. Commission members (back row, left to right,) were Terry Zehr, Tim Wright, Gene Miller, and Luann Martin (front row, right).

Dreams and Visions...

Seeking Shalom

Gene Miller, Conference Minister

Our "Dreams and Visions" document states that this is the time for our message of radical discipleship and peacemaking.

Radical discipleship—we take up our crosses and carry them regardless of the cost. Luke 9:23.

We offer ourselves to God as living sacrifices; no longer conformed to the pattern of the world but transformed by God. Romans 12:1-2. Jesus is the only way to God. John 14:6

Peacemaking—we have been given the ministry of reconciliation; to God and others. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20. We devote ourselves to making peace in relationships, because we live in a broken world. Matthew 5:9. We choose to love our enemies. Matthew 5:44.

I believe this is shalom, (when everything is set right according to God's dream). We follow Jesus fully and choose to live in his Kingdom ways, but as broken people we often fall short. As Mennonites, I believe that scripture and our '95 Confession of Faith provide the guidance we need.

Radical disciples recognize that judgment and condemnation of others is not the way of shalom.

Peacemakers realize we are called to live in grace and truth. We are all called to the cross, to live in that broken place where we fully love while fully recognizing sin's presence.

My prayer is that in these challenging times, we will seek and find God's shalom.

Save the Dates:

2015 MC-USA Biennial Convention, June 30-July 5, Kansas City
Mennonite World Conference, July 21-26, Harrisburg
Minister's Retreat, August 3-5, Beaver Camp