

Centering Prayer

As part of Zion's Year of Prayer, the Centering Prayer group has resumed meeting. Centering Prayer is a contemplative practice of resting in God's presence. Many of us typically think of prayer as talking to God, but we also need to take time to be receptive to God. This form of prayer or contemplation has been around for centuries, but has resurged in recent decades. Father Thomas Keating is the most prolific writer on the topic and was instrumental in founding Contemplative Outreach www.contemplativeoutreach.org/.

The process of Centering Prayer is very simple, yet can have profound effects. There are 4 steps:

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.
3. When engaged with your thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.
4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

There is a wealth of information on the above website. If you have any questions, please contact Barb Musselman or Pastor Beth. Or just join us! We meet every Wednesday morning at 9am and share in a 20-minute time of silent Centering Prayer.

Barb Musselman

The *Joyful Noiz* is published monthly by Zion Mennonite Church. The editor is Jennifer Moyer. Contributors this month included: Yvonne Detweiler, Mike Ford, Suzanne Gunden, Donna Halteman, Mary Keller, Sonya Stauffer Kurtz, Jennifer Landis, Ted Landis, Jennifer Moyer, Barb Musselman, Grace Price. Stories and information for the newsletter can be submitted to Jennifer via email <jenn@zionmennonite.org> or left in the mailbox marked "Joyful Noiz" in the church office.

Next Deadline for the January issue: December 11



December
Joyful Noiz 2022

"Seeking the Spirit, Discerning a Pathway"

An Update on Mosaic Mennonite Conference Delegate Assembly from *Mosaic News*, by Jeff Wright

Mosaic delegates met on November 5, 2022 at Souderton Mennonite Church for a day of discernment and decision-making. Delegates and friends gathered to seek the Spirit and explore the Assembly theme of *Chesed*—God's constant, steadfast, and faithful love—from Psalm 116 and 117.

During three worship times, and three business sessions, Mosaic Conference worked hard at the continuing task of transformation from a system concerned mostly with organizational detail into a formational, missional, and intercultural community. The gathering was animated by life together in the Holy Spirit and fed through the encouragement of the scriptures, acts of praise and worship, and remembering Jesus in the celebration of Communion. Although there was contentiousness related to the denominational decision-making process, and outcome from the Mennonite Church USA Special Delegate Assembly in Kansas City in May 2022, by the end of the day, for many, the uncertainty had given way to a cautious, even hopeful, optimism.

During the morning delegate session, Angela Moyer Walter, Allentown, PA and Roy Williams, Tampa, FL, were affirmed as Mosaic's next Moderator and Assistant Moderator, effective January 1, 2023.

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The delegates heard from and affirmed a new congregation, Iglesia Evangélica Menonita de Oración y Adoración, located in Philadelphia and a new Conference Related Ministry Amahoro International, based in Los Angeles.

The major building block for this delegate Assembly was a listening process initiated by the Mosaic Board. During the month of September, approximately 80% of the Conference's communities and ministries had opportunity to dialogue with one of a ten-person Listening Task Force. This Task Force collated and discussed the data and submitted nine findings to the Board for their further consideration.

The Board distilled those findings into a single, four-point "Pathway" document, presented to the delegates. The Pathway document called for an increase in prayer and fasting, along with a call to walk together and begin a two-year strategic planning process, allowing for clarifying priorities and relationships. The document also offered congregations the opportunity to suspend membership in Mennonite Church USA while remaining within Mosaic Conference. This last point would result in a change of the current Mosaic bylaws, if affirmed.

Table group conversation and reporting to the wider delegate body filled the afternoon sessions. At the end, delegates had to offer one of three possible choices to move forward: affirm the Pathway document, affirm the Pathway document with reservations, or withhold affirmation of the Pathway document. Of the delegates who voted, 81.5% expressed a preference with or without reservations for the Pathway document.

No one is claiming the process that was followed, nor the Pathway document itself, proposed a perfect solution to the challenges of a community amid theological dissent and social change. But a pathway is necessary. It is the next effort to maintain and grow a strong Mosaic identity. We gathered yearning for consensus; we finished the day with a pathway forward.



Submitted by Pastor Sonya

Gospel Growers Newsletter

May the God of peace be with you all as we look forward to celebrating the Lord Jesus Christ's birth!

Haiti desperately needs your prayers. Who would have thought that this country would come full circle and be faced with a possible invasion of US/UN forces in order to reestablish law and order. Multiple gangs have taken over parts of the country, primarily surrounding the fuel storage area near Port au Prince, resulting in the country being paralyzed due to lack of fuel. Everything is at a virtual standstill.

However, praise the Lord — there is positive news! The locales in which Gospel Growers is ministering are active with ongoing support. Although transportation is hampered, the Clinic in Dariol has been able to get the meds they need to keep the doors open. In October, the seven schools we support were able to start after a prolonged summer vacation. The children are once again being educated and learning God's Word! The seven churches we assist are thriving and shining the Light into the communities where they are located. People are being saved!

We had a difficult moment in August when an unruly mob burned the Agape Flights plane that carries our mail to and from Haiti. This event created a problem with sending checks in, and we had to resort to alternative means. Fortunately, another plane was providentially obtained and the mail service was re-established. We thank our Glorious God for this!

We are exceedingly thankful to all our faithful contributors whose support has allowed us to continue these vital ministries in Haiti. Glory to God! We thank you one and all! May your Christmas be blessed and the New Year filled with infinite opportunities to share the Good News.

In His name,
Sam Rice

A Cookie Exchange

Banana Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients:

1/3 c. Unsalted butter (room temp.)
 1/2 c. Sugar
 1 Lg. egg, (room temp)
 1/2 c. ripe banana mashed (1 banana)
 1/2 tsp. vanilla or banana extract **
 1 1/4 c. flour
 1 tsp. baking powder
 1/4 tsp salt
 1/8 tsp baking soda
 1 c. semi-sweet chocolate chips or nuts

Cream butter & sugar until well combined and light & fluffy. (about 2 minutes)

Add egg, banana & extract. Mix until well combined.

** I use banana extract for more banana flavor.

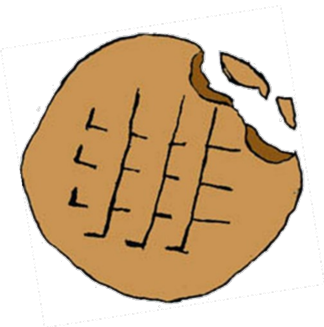
In another bowl whisk together flour, baking powder, salt & baking soda.

Add dry ingredients to butter mixture. Blend until almost no streaks of flour show.

Fold in chocolate chips or nuts. If you have time chill the dough for 30 minutes.

Scoop dough onto prepared cookie sheets. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-14 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool on baking sheet for 5 minutes.

Yield: 20-24 cookies.



From the kitchen of Grace Price

REESE'S Peanut Butter Chip Brownies

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Ingredients

1 cup butter or margarine (2 sticks), softened
 1 package cream cheese (3 oz.), softened
 2 cups sugar
 3 eggs
 1 tsp vanilla extract
 1 cup all-purpose flour
 3/4 cup HERSHEY'S Cocoa
 1/2 tsp salt
 1/4 tsp baking powder
 1 2/3 cups REESE'S Peanut Butter Chips (10 oz pkg.)

Directions

1 Heat oven to 325°F. Grease bottom of 13x9x2-inch baking pan.

2 Beat butter, cream cheese and sugar until fluffy. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Combine flour, cocoa, salt and baking powder; gradually add to butter mixture, beating well. Stir in chips. Spread batter in pan.

3 Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until brownies begin to pull away from sides of pan. Cool completely. Frost with Brownie Frosting, if desired. Cut into bars.

Tip

Brownie Frosting: Beat 3 tablespoons softened butter or margarine and 3 tablespoons HERSHEY'S Cocoa until blended. Gradually add 1-1/3 cups powdered sugar and 3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract alternately with 1 to 2 tablespoons milk, beating to spreading consistency. About 1 cup.

Servings: 24

Yvonne Detweiler

**Birthdays**

1 - David Koehler
 1 - Laura Martin
 2 - Betty Bergstresser
 4 - Sherri Heckler
 9 - Clyde Moyer
 10 - Ella Bohrer
 10 - Amy
 Cummings- Leight
 11- Michelle Gerjovich Price
 13- Dan Bencsik

13 - Chris Francis
 13 - Teena Kriebble
 13 - Jennifer Landis
 14 - Carole Scholl
 14 - Esther Stoudt
 15 - Ron Price
 16 - Willis Delp
 16 - Polly Moore
 21 - Pauline Landis
 22 - Judy Francis
 24 - Liz Nyce
 26 - Barry Halteman
 27 - Pat Oelschlager
 28 - Jim Delp

Anniversaries

1- Brooke & Kerrie Ziegler
 11 - Rod & Pat Kratz
 20 - George & Rhoda Gaugler

20 - John & Michelle Gerjovich
 21 - Art & Judy McVaugh
 23 - Victor & Esther Rampogu

If your birthday or anniversary is incorrect or missing, please notify the office.



*Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends of **Geraldine Keller** who passed away October 29, **Jean Moyer** who passed away on November 3 and **Jim Derstine** who passed away on November 17.*

Church Directory Update

Pauline Price
 221 W. Walnut Street
 Souderton, Pa. 18964
 215-300-3607

Reminder: The church directory will soon be updated. If you have any changes to your contact information. Be sure to let the church office now.

SUNDAY MORNING CHILD CARE

	Worship Service	Sunday School
December 4	Dawn & Kate Repsher Polly Moore	Kelsey & Dylan Landis
December 11	No Nursery Today	Laura & Isaac Martin
December 18	Amy Cummings - Leight Bonnie Moyer	Joyce & Ron Price
December 25	No Nursery Today	No Sunday School Today

December Fellowship Time

December 4	Bob & Terri Musselman
December 11	Scott & Sherri Heckler
December 18	Matt & Laura Musselman
December 25	No Fellowship Time

Upcoming Holiday Services & Events

Mark your calendars for these special services & events:



December 17 @ 12:30 p.m. Crossroads Party
 December 24 @ 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service
 December 25 @ 7:00 p.m. Christmas Worship Service
 ** Please note service time change.
 January 1 @ 4:00 p.m. Vespers Worship Service
 ** Please note service time change

Sharing Time with Our Zion Youth

In November, Pastor Mike invited members of the Creation Care Committee to join the Youth Group Sunday School class, to share why followers of Christ should care for creation with some examples of how we as a committee and as individuals are striving to do this.

We referenced Genesis and the many times that God declared creation “good.” Also, that he has charged human kind to take care of the good creation, not to simply exploit it and be wasteful of creation’s resources.

Barb Musselman led the discussion, describing some of the changes that we have implemented at Zion over the years; such as recycling, use of Corelle dishes instead of Styrofoam dishes, creating a meditation garden, and planting native trees on our grounds, etc.

Amy Cummings- Leight talked about a current project we are working on, researching green burial options for Zion, and we talked about why that is good for the environment.

Dylan Landis noted that it is not always the big changes that are most important, but as we all do small things they add up and make a big impact.

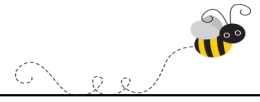
We discussed how our country’s lifestyle and decisions make a worldwide impact, especially with climate change and the natural disasters it causes, which are affecting poorer countries. Suzanne Gunden says God stresses in the Bible to “Love one another” and her decision to drive an electric vehicle is a way she seeks to help the survival of future generations and others worldwide.

The group ventured out in the brisk, autumn weather to the Meditation Garden, where Barb led us in an exercise in Forest Meditation, where we focused on each of our individual senses to internalize our outdoor surroundings.

Thanks to Mike and the youth for inviting us and allowing us to share and hopefully instill the importance that caring for our creation has in their faith walk.

Suzanne Gunden

The Youth Buzz



The Youth Group has been active in study, service, and fun fellowship. We meet every Tuesday night in the youth room from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. for fellowship, and guests are most welcome. Our activities recently included a Corn Maze/Hayride/fire pit fellowship time (during which your kind, caring Interim Youth Pastor tried to scare the youth while hiding in the corn maze. Sorry, parents!) we helped with the Creation Care group's clean up of West End Park, Souderton, and volunteered at Care & Share to learn more about MCC's work and how Care & Share contributes to it.

In Sunday School, we've been looking at scripture and putting together the qualities and characteristics of Jesus we see in the text. We have also had the Creation Care folks come teach us about



earth stewardship based on the Bible, and have hosted several adults to tell their 'how I decided to follow Jesus and what it means to me' testimonies.

Pastor Mike

“Happy Birthday, Jesus”

Children’s Christmas Program

Sunday, December 11 9:00 a.m.

It’s easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the holiday season and forget that the real reason we celebrate Christmas is Jesus’ birth. Join the children as they prepare for a very special birthday party with decorations, familiar carols, and presents.



Library News

Check Out What's New in the Zion Library

Series Updates!

- *A Midwife's Song: Oh, Freedom!* (Hope River #4)
by Patricia Harman
- *The Yada Yada Prayer Group Gets Tough* (Yada Yada Prayer Group #4) by Neta Jackson
- *To the Land of Long Lost Friends* (No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency Series #20) by Alexander McCall Smith
- *How to Raise an Elephant* (No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency Series #21) by Alexander McCall Smith

Biography/Memoir

- *Finding Chika: A Little Girl, an Earthquake, and the Making of a Family* by Mitch Albom - Albom's intimate and heartwarming memoir about what it means to be a family and the young Haitian orphan whose short life would forever change his heart
- *7 Men & 7 Women: And the Secret of Their Greatness* by Eric Metaxas (two books in one) – short portraits of widely known, but not well understood, Christians

Season's Readings!

- *Love Finds You in the City at Christmas* by Ruth Logan Herne and Anna Schmidt – two heartwarming stories of past and present
- *An Amish Christmas: December in Lancaster County* by Beth Wiseman and more – four Amish romances
- *An Amish Second Christmas* by Beth Wiseman and more – details a treasured, lighthearted time of community through four Amish romances
- *A Log Cabin Christmas Collection: 9 Romances of American Pioneer Christmases* by Wanda Brunstetter and more
- *A Prairie Christmas Collection: 9 Historical Christmas Romances from America's Great Plains* by Tracie Peterson and more



CODE BLUE season is almost here.

This is not the code blue that you hear called in a hospital. This is what the Code Blue shelter organizers at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale declare when the outside air temperature falls below 30°. When this happens, homeless men in the Lansdale area may go to the shelter to receive dinner, a warm blanket, a cot to sleep on, and breakfast.

If you are interested in volunteering your time or donating a meal email Mark Lanan at codeblue@trinitylansdale.com.

Donations of the following items may be left outside Fellowship Hall:

Socks:

Merino wool is the best; socks saying "Wool blend" should be checked to make sure they are more than 50% wool, and have no cotton. Bombas is a great brand, and they have "Buy one, give one". Make sure they are the wool socks, as Bombas makes a lot of kinds of socks. Alvada 80% merino wool hiking socks 3 pack are a good value on Amazon.

Hats:

Polartec fleece, or microfleece. Not like a knit jersey hat. Turtle Fur and "Project Warmth". Carhartt, LL Bean, Outdoor Research all have fleece hats.

Long Johns:

Polypropylene is the fabric. Thermajohn on Amazon has a set for about \$20. Avoid the old school "waffle print" cotton ones.

Gloves/Scarves:

Polartec windproof
Columbia Thermarator
OZERO winter gloves -30 cold proof on Amazon for about \$20
Handwarmers
Wool blend scarves
Fleece neck gaiter

Coats: (Built in Hood is key)

Carhartt Active jacket or Duck active jacket with hood about \$99
Camel Crown on Amazon ski jacket with a hood about \$79

Ponchos/umbrellas:

Terra hiker poncho on Amazon for about \$17
Totes automatic open compact travel umbrella on Amazon for about \$20

November Church Board Highlights

- Jenn Landis, the Ministry of Worship Representative, gave the Board an update on the activities of the various committees she represents. Thank you to Jenn and all the committees. We all appreciate how God is at work in this Ministry.
- Pat Kratz, the Finance Committee Chairperson, presented the preliminary budget to the Board. As a reminder, the budget process started back in August with the Ministry Reps gathering input from all committees they represent. The original budget, which includes the input from all the committees, then goes to the Finance Committee for review. Once reviewed by the Finance Committee, any proposed changes are reviewed with the Ministry Reps, who then pass this info along to the committees for their input. So, the preliminary budget Pat presented to the Board has already passed through many hands in an attempt to have those affected feel some ownership of the budget as having been part of the process. The Board will continue to review the proposed budget and will monitor the balance of the year's receipts as some final determinations will need to be made. Thanks to all that have been involved with this process.
- Bob Musselman let the Board know that the gas company is in the process of running a new gas line from Front Street to the church. He also let us know the security camera and lock replacement project orders have been placed and we're still waiting on the installer.
- Craig Tourtellott gave an update on the new sanctuary projector. As most noticed, the new projector was up and running for the Sunday, November 6, worship service. All agreed it worked great even with the temporary stand and electric supply. Bob & Chad Musselman will be working on building and installing a more permanent shelf and Rudy Rauschenberger will be running a power line. Thanks to the whole congregation for their support of this project.

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- We received an update on the joint Board and MEF subcommittee's meetings. They have been meeting and expect to have a proposal for the Board's review within the next couple of months.
- Sonya reviewed the recent Mosaic conference and let us know the proposals to not immediately leave MCUSA but rather have a two-year discernment process related to MCUSA membership, and to allow congregations that decide to leave MCUSA continue their membership in Mosaic Conference, all passed. Please continue to pray for wisdom and patience as the conference and member churches work through this process.
- Sonya advised the Board that Melissa Moore has submitted her resignation with Sunday November 13 being her last day. We certainly appreciate all that she has brought to us over her years of service and wish her well. Thankfully a number of people (including Jenn Landis, Nancy Constanzer and Roger Kurtz) have volunteered to help with the choir directing, bell choir and congregational hymn leading. We're very thankful for their willingness to step in to help.
- The Board approved \$2,000 of Memorial Endowment Committee Grant Requests.
- Please continue to pray for the church including the pastors, staff, Board, committees, and all our members. We have a lot going on right now, so prayer for wisdom, patience and God's guidance is very important.

Ted Landis, Board Chair





Tis the season!

Christmas sweaters, moose slippers, Santa toothbrushes, cookie scented candles, socks with bells, and even reindeer that poop candy. It's everywhere, all this . . . stuff. So much stuff. It adorns our lives for a few weeks then gets shoved into a box, sometimes never to be seen again.

Free yourself (and your loved ones!) of all this stuff and simplify Christmas this year. Stay home, watch a Hallmark movie, sip some hot chocolate, and while relaxing in your chair, click on www.BeanBagFoodProgram.org. With a few more clicks all your Christmas shopping can be done!

Make a donation to the Bean Bag Food Program in honor of your loved ones and leave the stuff behind.

With each donation, you will receive a nice card that can be wrapped or inserted in a greeting card. Make it even more special and join us while packing the weekly Bean Bags and we'll take your picture putting that gift into action!



Share the love of Christ, make a donation and fill a child's belly.

The Bean Bag Food Program is now a charity on [smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com)!

Okay, so there is some stuff that we have to buy like toothpaste and winter coats. Amazon Smile offers the same products and same price as Amazon but donates a portion of your purchase to the charity of your choice – The Bean Bag Food Program!

Creation Care News

West Street Park Cleanup

Saturday October 29 was a beautiful autumn morning for our West Street Park Cleanup. Twelve people made quick work of the task and had all litter picked up in just under 1 hour. It was great to have help from so many groups this year- Bean Bag Project, Zion Youth Group, Zion congregation and Creation Care Committee. Some of this year's collection of unusual trash included a rusted barrel, a xylophone, and a fire exit sign! Thank you to all who came out to show your care for God's creation and to give back to the Souderton community.

-Creation Care Committee

