



September 2016

*Missional Crossroads
seeks to build relationships,
report missional activity,
and focus on congregational
stories expressing how
we speak and live
the reign of God.*

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WOULD YOU LIKE TO DONATE TO _____?

By Michael Danner

It is a common occurrence. I'm in the check out line of a store, gas station, and/or restaurant. I think I've finished my transaction when the clerk says, "Would you like to donate to _____?" Then I answer.

Here's what's cool. In the space between their question and my answer, I am considering their request by asking two questions. This happens so fast I'm barely aware of it. Question 1: Do I believe in what they are asking me to support? Yes, no or I don't know? Question 2: If the organization I'm being asked to support succeeds in what they are doing, will I be glad I helped out (even if my help is very small)?

Lately, I have been asked repeatedly to give a dollar or two to St. Jude. Given what I know of St. Jude, I say, "Yes, I believe in what they do," and "Yes, when St. Jude succeeds in providing medical care to kids with cancer at no cost (and advances research into childhood cancer) I'm glad to be a part of that!"

More than a dollar...

That's a small example of what happens when any organization invites you to support their work or ministry. Do you believe in what they do? If they succeed in what they are doing, will you be glad you helped out?

Illinois Mennonite Conference, in many ways, is like any other organization. We need resources to do the ministry entrusted to us. We invite individuals and congregations to support that ministry. What you have to consider – as congregational members, leaders and individuals is; (1) do you believe in what we do, and (2) if we are successful will you be glad you invested in our ministry?

What does IMC do?

At the center of IMC's ministry is supporting Anabaptist/Mennonite congregations in Illinois (along with a few congregations in Missouri and Michigan). If we are successful in our work, Anabaptist/Mennonite congregations will thrive in their towns and neighborhoods and our particular way of following Jesus will take root in the lives of more and more people.

Much of that is accomplished directly by local congregations. We support that work by ensuring congregations have healthy pastors through *credentialing*, *coaching* and ongoing *accountability*, assist congregations in *maintaining health* through *conflict mediation* and *visioning*, *equip* congregations in managing pastoral searches and transitions, equip congregational leaders in the area of *missional* engagement so that they can better *share the good news* with their neighbors, *empower mutual aid* between congregations through *vetting* and *communicating* needs throughout the conference, and sparking congregations to partner with one another in areas of *common mission*.

You can donate to IMC by sending a check to the office: IMC, P.O. Box 3, Tremont, IL 61568

You can also make online payments by visiting our website at:

<http://illinoismennonite.com>

You can click on the online giving icon on the homepage.



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Would you like to donate to Illinois Mennonite Conference?

There are multiple ways congregations and individuals can join IMC in supporting Anabaptist/Mennonite congregations. They are;

- **Congregations and Individuals:** Please pray regularly for the ongoing mission of IMC and each congregation that is engaging others with the gospel of Jesus!
- **Congregations and Individuals:** Attend IMC gatherings, such as the Annual Assembly, and equipping events, such as the upcoming Innovative Disruption seminar at Menno Haven.
- **Congregations:** If you already give to the IMC general fund, THANK YOU, please continue to give! This helps us meet our budget and keeps the ministry of IMC going.
- **Congregations:** If you are not currently giving to the IMC general fund, prayerfully consider starting. One suggestion is taking a love offering or special offering for the work of IMC on a Sunday morning. Even a small or modest offering will help
- **Congregations:** If you give to the IMC general fund, but want to do more. Please consider additional giving to one of the IMC designated funds. The two funds that receive the most requests are the Ministerial Grant Fund (this helps fund continuing education, seminary study, etc. for IMC pastors) or the Pastoral Financial Assistance fund (this helps provide matching grants for pastors facing financial difficulty who wish to access the Lilly Endowment/Everence fund).
- **Congregations:** Prayerfully consider who in your congregation might have pastoral gifts or leadership gifts and let us know in the IMC office. Leadership development is a part of what we do.
- **Individuals:** In order to meet our operating budget, IMC needs individual donors. Our target for 2016 is \$15,000 in individual donations. If you would like to support IMC, or have questions about joining IMC in our mission, please contact CEM Michael Danner.
- **Individuals:** Consider answering the call to serve in IMC leadership. Each year we need new persons to serve on the Missional Leadership Team, the Church Life Team, the Gifts Discernment Team and the Financial Advisory Team. If you have experience in organizational development, we'd love to talk.

These are various ways you can join IMC in our work of supporting Anabaptist/Mennonite congregations. If you believe in our work and would be thrilled to see IMC succeed in our mission, please consider ways that you can support IMC.

Innovative Disruption Good News for LGBT Youth

By Michael Danner

Join us at our upcoming workshop September 23-24, 2016 at Menno Haven Camp & Retreat Center - This event is for pastors, youth pastors, youth volunteers, parents, grandparents, friends and anyone else who engages LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender) youth. At Innovative Disruption you will learn about adolescent development - which is applicable to understanding all teens - and the unique pressures that LGBT youth face, as well as practical ways to accompany youth as they move closer to Jesus.

Our presenter is Chris Schaffner, founder of Conversations on the Fringe. He's been working with hurting children, teens, and adults for over 20 years. He is a sought after conference speaker and blogs at conversationsonthefringe.com

<<http://conversationsonthefringe.com>>. Chris is a regular presenter at the Youth Specialties National Youth Workers Convention, Faith Forward Conference, and Group's Simply Youth Ministry conference. He wrote a recent article for the Summer 2016 edition of Group

magazine entitled 7 Keys to Counseling LGBT Kids. Check it out to get a taste for Chris' approach."

Please make sure to send a group of congregational leaders who could benefit from considering this topic.

For registration information you can visit our website <http://illinoismennonite.com/page33/index.html>





A Year as Conference Minister

By Michael Danner

It has been a little over one year since I began as Conference Executive Minister (CEM) for Illinois Mennonite Conference. Over that year, a theme has emerged that has now become the office slogan: “Never a dull moment!”

That slogan captures the uniqueness of the day-to-day working environment of IMC. The diversity of issues and tasks cannot be overstated. From pastoral searches, to coaching, to conflict mediation, to visioning, to fundraising, to web-design, to communication, to... Well, you get the picture.

My response to such diversity and unpredictability is to search for clarity. What is the purpose of IMC? How do we accomplish that purpose? What things should we be doing? What things should we not be doing? How can we best use the resources of IMC?

Purpose

For me, I define the purpose of IMC as “...supporting the missional practices of Anabaptist/Mennonite congregations in Illinois Mennonite Conference.” There are many ways to say that – including our own vision statement – but I find that simple and clear.

The local congregation is where it’s all happening. That’s where the people of God, led by the Spirit of God, join God in the neighborhood! If congregations are not thriving as mission outposts where they are, there is no Illinois Mennonite Conference.

So our task is to support each congregation, as they become thriving missional outposts for the Kingdom. As you can imagine, the kinds of supports needed are as unique as each congregation. So how do we discern what supports a congregation may need?

Presence

Discerning what supports a congregation may need happens through presence. Over the first year, I’ve intentionally attempted to engage congregations and pastors of IMC to begin building relationships. I estimated that this would take about a year and a half (depending on other needs). Contacts happen through visits (congregational and personal), pastor peer groups, conference gatherings, email and phone calls – primarily. It is important for pastors and congregations to actively seek relationships with

IMC and the staff (Me, Kim and Holly), and to be responsive to efforts to build relationships initiated by the staff.

Predictable

While the needs of each congregation are unique, there are some predictable needs that arise in every congregation. Some of those needs are credentialing/accountability to ensure healthy pastoral leaders, conflict mediation, pastoral searches, visioning processes, pastoral evaluation/support, continuing education, effective governance, and so on.

Possible

One thing is very clear to me after my first year – there are many possibilities for sharpening and expanding the ministry of IMC. The only limits are limits imposed by finite resources.

Through the Fall and into 2017, I will continue to invest in relationships with congregations and pastors. I will continue to work with congregations that are looking for congregational leaders. I am taking Mediation Skills Training through Lombard Mennonite Peace center to assist congregations in conflict (and to coach pastors in conflict situations). I will gather regularly with pastors from across IMC for support, equipping and prayer. We will launch a new IMC website and strengthen our communication through social media and email. We are hoping to expand our ability to record teaching/training events and make them available online. We will continue to work together to be a conference whose diversity is present in the activities of the conference.

That which we do well we will keep doing well. We will grow in the areas where growth is needed. We will innovate, in the spirit of openness and flexibility and experimentation, to see just what may happen when we do things differently. We will do all of this towards the ends of ensuring that wherever there is an IMC congregation, there will be a vital and distinctively Anabaptist/Mennonite witness to the way of Jesus.

Grace and peace,

Michael Danner
Conference Executive Minister



From Kim Litwiller, Associate Conference Minister

Menno Haven
NOV
11-13

This is an Illinois Mennonite Conference organized and sponsored event.

YOUTH LEADER RETREAT!

*Come and recharge!
 Come and relax! Come and connect
 with others who share your same passion
 and calling.*

Youth Retreat without YOUTH!!!

No youth to chaperone! No release forms to collect! No vans full of teenagers to drive! This retreat is for YOU—those of you who give yourselves to youth ministry week after week, year after year. Youth leaders, youth pastors, youth sponsors—anyone with a passion for youth ministry—plan to join us at *Menno Haven Camp & Retreat Center November 11-13.*



Registration now Open!

Cost: \$100/person

Registration Forms Online:
www.illinoismennonite.com

Retreat begins @ 7pm on 11/11 & concludes @ 10am on 11/13. Feel free to arrive early and stay late.

This year **Kim Litwiller, IMC Associate Conference Minister**, will serve as the weekend pastor!!



SOUL REST will serve as our theme throughout the retreat. Our soul crave rest! Our hope is for youth leaders to find their souls able to rest in the living Lord as they unplug from ministering to others and embrace the gift of being ministered to.

"I absolutely love teenagers! And I completely adore those who share my love for walking alongside teenagers as they encounter Jesus. I'm looking forward to spending an entire weekend loving, caring and ministering to the precious youth pastors & youth leaders of IMC at the 'No Youth; Youth Retreat' and inviting them to some much needed Soul Rest." ~ Kim Litwiller

A life of generosity: Former student and life-time supporter leaves final large gift to the college

By Brian Yoder Schlabach, Goshen College

Milo Albrecht, a former Goshen College student, farmer and generous donor to the college, died Tuesday, April 19, 2016, at the age of 94.

Though he only attended Goshen College for three semesters in 1939-40, his charitable giving continues to provide opportunities for many Goshen College students to attain their degrees.

A regular donor, Albrecht gave \$1.98 million worth of stocks to Goshen College in November 2014. It is one of the largest one-time donations by an individual in the college's history. Following Albrecht's recent death, another \$3 million worth of Illinois farmland is being given to the college through an estate gift. The money from the estate will be put toward scholarships primarily for nursing students.

While he never studied medicine himself, it is a subject that had always intrigued Albrecht and he valued the nursing care he received while residing at Apostolic Christian Restmor in Morton, Illinois.

"Milo lived a simple life," said Herb Roth, Albrecht's cousin, financial representative and caregiver. "He didn't buy new cars and didn't buy a lot of clothes. He'd come up to the grain

elevator twice a day, that was his social life. He enjoyed making money, but it gave him greater pleasure to give it away. He was a very generous person, a very quiet person and a very committed Christian."

Born Sept. 16, 1921 in Morton, he was the third son of Levi and Lydia (Roth) Albrecht.

In 1939, Albrecht followed his dream of attending college and excelled in algebra and geometry at Goshen College. After only three semesters, he was called home to work on the family farm when his brother Marion went into Civilian Public Service.

Albrecht continued to work on the farm until 1947 when, at the age of 26, he traveled to Poland for six months with Mennonite Central Committee. Working as a farm machinery instructor, Albrecht said he "saw lots of destruction" during that time, which would stay with him for the rest of his life.

When his time of service was finished, he returned to Morton. This time, however, it was to work on his own farm. He and Marion farmed together; Albrecht raised feeder cattle and his brother had dairy cows.

Roth believes that Albrecht, a life-long farmer, became interested in the stock market by watching his grandfather, who had land investments in Louisiana. Albrecht began investing in his 20s and became serious about the stock market after he returned from Poland.

"Every morning he had his devotionals, ate his breakfast and then he

would read the Wall Street Journal with his calculator next to him, to see how his stocks were doing," Roth said.

It was around this time that Albrecht, who never married or had children, first began giving to Goshen College. He believed that giving was important, but that "not everyone could do it."

As Albrecht grew older and had more health issues, he asked Roth to assist him with financial matters.

"I was stunned when he told me how many assets he had," Roth said.

Few people in his home community knew about Albrecht's financial situation, and his generosity extended beyond just giving to the Mennonite church and Goshen College. According to Roth, Albrecht made anonymous donations to individual people he saw struggling financially.

"I went with him once to an attorney in Peoria, [and] he wouldn't tell me why," Roth said. "He told the attorney, 'I need you to send out [anonymous] checks to different people.' They were people who had medical problems or unfortunate circumstances. That's just the kind of things he did. He admired people who worked hard and lived a Christian lifestyle."

Roth emphasized that Albrecht didn't seek any acknowledgement for his giving and didn't want his name on any buildings. He just wanted to help students get an education.

"It's going to be a nice gift for the college," Roth said. "That's what he wanted to do, is to help people. It's his living gift."



Gordon Yoder, associate director emeritus of college relations for Goshen College (left), visits with Milo Albrecht (center) and Herb Roth (right) at the Apostolic Christian Restmor in Morton, Illinois, in November 2014.

Cazenovia

By Susie Jauch

The Mission Task Force distributed funds as follows: \$500.00 to Open Doors, \$1,000.00 to Africa Inter Mennonite Missions, and \$1,000.00 to Jeannie Fries for her work in Mexico.

Vacation Bible School was held June 6-10. The theme this year was "Backyard Roundup" focusing on Psalm 23. Jesus is our Good Shepherd who cares, provides, leads, forgives and saves us forever. We had an attendance from 80-87 children. Phyllis Ulrich and Julie Kennell picked up children from Washburn and low Point in vans provided by Christian farmers. The offering of \$684.00 was sent to Gospel for Asia to buy farm animals for needy families. There was a program on Friday evening with a time of fellowship afterwards that was well attended.

We, as a congregation, extended our congratulations to the graduates of grade school, high school, and college for the hard work they did to achieving this accomplishment. Blessings to you as you enter a new phase of your life.

Women's Fellowship was held on a Monday evening at the Fellowship Hall. Eight ladies attended as we closed the meeting until fall.

Tim Kennell preached the sermon on June 12. His text was: Corinthians 1:17-25, "Ordinary People Living Extraordinary Lives."

We held our annual Father's Day picnic at the Washburn Park on June 19. All enjoyed a time of fun and fellowship.

Jeannie Fries from Mexico was here on July 2 to talk about her work in that country.

East Peoria

By Mary Lou Howard

Joy Kohl started a sewing class on June 2 and they are make bags for school supplies for MCC. We hope to have 100 bags.

Greg Underwood, John Franks, Leonard Franks and Kathi Adams went to Maple Lawn Home on June 5 to help people get to church services. This is a real need on Sunday mornings.

Greg Underwood, one of our shepherds, gave the morning message on June 19 "The Virgin Joseph". Greg had answered God's calling to stand in front of our congregation with the morning message.

Olivia Litwiller, Caillie Smith, Austin Smith, Callin Sayers, and Sadie Schindler attended summer camp at Menno Haven and enjoyed it very much. They made a lot of new friends.

Our vacation bible school was held on July 24-28. The theme was Cave Quest and the church was decorated to look like caves. It was very wonderfully done. We had an average of twenty kids each night and on Thursday night a supper was served.

July 31 was Our Praise and Worship service, which is held every 5th Sunday. It was led by Doc Johnson and his wife, Sheena. It was so inspiring with all the piano and guitar music, singing, and praying. We all left church with a warm heart and good blessing for each one.

Roger Springer from Hopedale Church gave the morning message on Aug. 7 entitled "Press On". It was so good to hear him and to meet him and his wife.

First, Champaign-Urbana

By Rebecca Bare

The summer sermon theme was the Beatitudes: Action and Contemplation. In June, we celebrated the graduations of two high school students and seven students of higher education.

We held a Menno Mugging for Gina Reynolds on June 12, she moved to Germany.

We held a retirement celebration for Pastor Janet Guthrie on June 18. Over 100 people attended to share stories and food with Pastor Janet and her husband, Mark Jaeger. Pastor Janet's last Sunday

was June 26, when she preached her last sermon.

Regina Shands Stoltzfus, faculty member at Goshen College, was the guest speaker on June 19.

Randy Nelson, Marcia Nelson, Jill Schreiber, and Gordon Oyer were the delegates to the Central District Conference meeting held at the end of June.

Four youth: Emily Gibson, Anna Lubienski, Berit Rasmusson, and Anja Schrag, along with their sponsors, Mary Biddle and Sam Cox, travelled to Harlan, KY for a service trip during the first week of July. They worked with SWAP (Sharing with Appalachian People). They led the worship service on July 17 to tell us about their experiences.

An installation service for Pastors Michael Crosby and Deb Sutter was held on July 10.

Several people attended the 5th Sunday community breakfast and Sunday School on July 31. An Interfaith picnic was held in the afternoon, with friends from the local mosque, Sinai Temple, and two other churches.

A Menno Mugging was held on July 31 for Hannah Lake Rayburn, who has moved to Georgia to take classes in midwifery.

A Menno Mugging was held on Aug. 14 for Liz Mallott, who will be doing post-doctoral work at Northwestern University.

Matt Yoder and David Horst Lehman were guest speakers on Aug.7 and 14.

First, Morton

By Lavonne McGuire

The summer months brought a hiatus to our usual activities. A men's church softball league began with 12 teams locally, of which, ours has been having a winning season, and they are really having a 'ball.'

June 3 was ordination Sunday for our pastor, Aaron Yoder, by Michael Danner, Illinois Conference leader. All in attendance enjoyed a meal after the service. Our summer Bible School was led by

Linda Teater. About 35 children ages pre-school through 4th grade enjoyed learning more about God's word. Thanks to the 15 volunteers who helped make this a success. Wes Crandall and Leah Roth served with the staff at Camp Menno Haven this summer.

The Mennonite Women's ladies provided the June 16 birthday/anniversary party at Maple Lawn Homes, with angel food cakes and beverages along with a program by several children and volunteers. We had a worship service on June 26 on the lawn with a picnic after. It was the day we packed the church van with food items, paper goods, and personal health items to help the South Side Mission in Peoria.

Jason Yordy brought the message for our worship on July 10. Seven of our MYF kids left for Louisville, Kentucky on July 24 for a week-long mission trip to serve in the inner city. A special thanks to Ryan and Anna Leander, and Wes Crandall, for taking the students to serve. Pastor Aaron Yoder's series on "Communion of the Saints," continues as we delve into Corinthians, looking into topics of sexuality, marriage, singleness, family life, and loving relationships with all.

First, Norwood

By Sue Lane & Dot Dalbey

We had Gideon speaker Don Fortner share with about their ministry on Feb. 21. In March and April Brian Feeder from Everence held a four-week financial class for church members.

Easter Sunrise Service was held here at Norwood with East Peoria Mennonite in charge of the service and Norwood providing in Breakfast (around 45 attended). Our Easter Service began at 10:30 with the Sunday school children doing a skit. We had our first puppet show by our new puppet ministry' *Hands Up Puppets* and a special song by Dan Lane.

Brian Butler, a co-worker of Alan Doubet, who also works with the Peoria Mis-

sion gave the morning message on April 24.

We again had a special puppet show for Mother's day honoring the mother's in our church followed by gifts for the ladies in attendance. We held a workday on May 14 to get a few maintenance issues taken care of. *Hands Up Puppets* became a regular part of the service on May 15. Messages about Bravery, Letting your light shine, and Obedience.

Working with the Wednesday night kids as well as helping create their own puppets which they will use at a later date to put on their own puppet shows.

We participated in the Village Garage Sale on May 21 with a food tent. For Father's day we had a special puppet show to honor Father's and those in attendance received a gift.

We held a carry-in breakfast on July 3 in place of Sunday School a *Hands Up Puppets* gave the morning message.

A party was held on Aug. 3 at the church to celebrate Joe Lane's 80th birthday.

Membership Renewal Sunday was held on Aug. 14.

Upcoming events, Wed Nite Kids kick-off with a wiener roast in the Inspiration Garden across the street from the church. *Hands Up Puppets* will again bring the morning message on Sept. 4.

Metamora

By Beulah Fierce

Vacation Bible School was held June 6-12 with Roanoke Mennonite children joining us. The theme was "Surprise-stories of Discovering Jesus." Sunday, June 12 the service was presented by VBS children and staff. Roanoke Mennonite Church and VBS families joined us for the service.

Mission workers Gamaliel and Amanda Falla shared with us on June 26 during worship and the Sunday School hour. This was followed by a potluck meal.

During the summer snack pack lunches were given to Open Arms and Washburn Food pantries and to Noah's Ark at Maple Lawn Homes. Snack pack continues to spread to other counties.

Guest speaker Sunday July 24 was Joe Sawatzky.

In July Randall and Morgan Koehler went with four high school boys to Milwaukee, WI on a service trip.

In August three high school boys, along with Pastor Randy Miller and Mark Thannum, spent a week at Living Water Community Church to help with their VBS program. Both groups had some very interesting experiences.

Transition Pastor Randy Miller's ministry has been extended two months through mid November.

Graduates: Kristen Rauh, Bachelor of Psychology, Wheaton College; Charlene Mast, AMBS; Alicia Thomas, Bethany Christian High School

Season of Life

Births

First, Champaign-Urbana
Silas Bradford to Pastor Michael and Abby Crosby on Aug. 4

Deaths

First, Champaign-Urbana
Lee Petrie-Springer, 69, June 5
First, Morton
Henry Hudson, 84, May 20

New membership

First, Champaign-Urbana
Sara Sutter, by baptism; Angela Williams
First, Morton
Erica Stauffer and Nick Huseman by baptism

Chad Gundy interns for one of the largest IT teams in the nation at State Farm



Chad Gundy interns at State Farm

By Tricia Bell

When Chad Gundy '17, a math and information technology double major from Flanagan, Ill., tells people he's interning at State Farm Insurance this summer, people automatically assume he's giving them a sales pitch.

"A lot of times they think I'm selling insurance," said Gundy. "That's not what I'm doing at all!" Instead, Gundy is working in the IT and systems department, and is writing computer code and shadowing data scientists. State Farm has one of the nation's largest IT teams, and he's getting real-world experience at the Bloomington, Ill., site. "I'm working on languages I'd never even heard of."

His favorite part of the internship was a 24-hour event where "computer nerds" were given free rein to innovate. "We worked on things that would improve State Farm's business from mobile apps to virtual reality programming."

Gundy's project was a web application for social media to connect

internal employees with coworkers who share similar interests.

The 11-week, paid internship program at State Farm also features business acumen and career workshops, mentorship programs and organized social events.

"I was surprised by how invested State Farm was in teaching us new skills and how to put them to use. I thought they would find out what I already knew how to do and give me projects based on that," said Gundy.

For example, Gundy described a speech program all of the interns participated in. Each week the interns prepared a different speech to present in front of a group. "The first one was an introduction and the last one we had to present on a way to prepare State Farm for the future," said Gundy.

The interns were divided into teams after the final individual speeches to work on one cohesive speech. Gundy's group is in the top five, so they will present their con-

cept to the vice president and CEO of systems.

Even though Gundy calls himself a computer nerd, his interests on campus are incredibly diverse. Gundy is a resident assistant, sings in Camerata, plays intramural basketball, is involved in Ultimate Frisbee and will be leading Sunday night worship this year.

Coming to Bluffton was an obvious choice, his mom and dad met at Bluffton, his brother Darin graduated from Bluffton in 2012 and his uncle is Jeff Gundy, professor of English. However, his first visit sealed the selection. "Everyone said hi to me on the sidewalk," said Gundy. "The people brought me to Bluffton."

At Bluffton, Gundy has learned new technology and concepts, but really "Bluffton has taught me how to think in different ways to solve a problem."

It's a skill he's using during his internship and will continue to use wherever life takes him after graduation.

Partners in Ministry

Living Water Community Church welcomes youth from Metamora Mennonite Church By Mark Thannum

During the week of August 1, three high school students, Ozzy Suratt, Peter Lock, and Trey Brown, from Metamora Mennonite Church travelled to Chicago to assist Living Water Community Church with their Vacation Bible School program. It was a week of growth and new experiences for the three young men from Central Illinois as they invested their time in the children who attended VBS, learned about life and God's impact on local neighborhoods, and developed new relationships with fellow students from Living Water. It was also a testament to God's planning and provision.

The idea of this trip actually was hatched during last year's high school winter retreat at Mennohaven. During that time, as they had the year before as junior high students, the students from Metamora Mennonite and Living Water interacted with each other very well. From the world's point of view, this would seem strange since the Metamora students were primarily from small farming communities and their Living Water counterparts were from the inner-city. However, God just brought these young people together in a very positive and natural way. Before the



youth groups scattered back to their respective towns, Ozzy approached Mark Thannum, one of the Metamora adult leaders and asked if they could partner with Living Water on some sort of mission project in the near future. Mark talked with Steve Lamb, the Living Water youth leader and they agreed to keep in touch about the possibilities of working together.

Through later email correspondence, Steve informed Mark of the VBS program conducted at Living Water each summer and how their youth were heavily involved. Steve invited the Metamora students to come to Chicago for a week to help with VBS. There were some logistical roadblocks including finances,

conflicts with summer activities, and one student whose family was planning to move. However, Metamora Mennonite held a fund raising spaghetti supper that provided the money, and God worked out all the schedules, including the family move, to allow the three students to participate. A conflict even arose for Mark as he changed positions at his job and was not able to attend for the entire week. Randy Miller, interim pastor at Metamora Mennonite, graciously stepped in and accompanied the guys to Chicago for the first part of the week.

Once all the logistical details were out



Partners in Ministry *Continued from page 9*



of the way, Randy and the guys headed to Chicago on Sunday, July 31. Each morning, Tim Williams, a local urban minister would discuss social justice issues with the team. This also included walks through various nearby neighborhoods where Tim would describe the socio-economic conditions, gang issues and other challenges that were definitely different than these students usually encountered in Central Illinois. Rogers Park itself is extremely diverse, and not just racially. There are immigrants living there from all over the world and you can often hear several different languages being spoken if you sit in a local coffee shop or Chicago Transit Authority station for any period of time. This was an incredibly positive experience for the guys and opened their eyes to a world beyond their normal experiences. From the discussions that we conducted during “down” times throughout the week, these sessions had a big impact on them and their view of the world. Tim did an incredible job of relating these situations in an honest, straightforward, but not overly-sensationalized manner.

The local children arrived for VBS at noon each day. These children were very representative of the neighborhood, including multiple races and ethnic backgrounds. There was even a Muslim boy who attended, which said a lot for Living Water Church in

that his parents trusted the church enough to send him to a Christian event. Although there are a handful of adults there to guide the process, most of the focused work with the children was performed by the junior high and high school students. The children were divided up in “crews” with each crew containing children from fifth grade down to kindergarten. Two to three youth were assigned to each crew as crew leaders. As leaders, their responsibilities included helping the children with lunch, bible memory verses, crafts, games and other

activities. This enabled the students to build relationships with the children, which had an obvious positive impact on both parties. The students from Living Water and Metamora Mennonite jumped right in and were fully engaged with the children, which provided opportunities for the students to build relationships both spiritually and socially with the children. The children responded in kind and were excited with the attention paid to them by the “big kids”. There were also times for the students to get to know and bond with each other, including some free time before the children arrived as well as a couple of after-VBS trips to local basketball courts and to the beach. On the way home, there was a lot of talk from the Metamora Mennonite guys about the new friends they had made and how they were looking forward to seeing their Living Water peers at camp next winter.

Overall it was an excellent trip and a great opportunity for two different churches in different communities to work together. Hopefully, the relationships built and lessons learned over that week will continue to impact these students as they head back to their respective schools this fall. For all the division and strife we hear about on a daily basis, it was exciting to see these young people and Living Water Community Church provide a beacon of light in the darkness.

Menno Haven Camp & Retreat Center Update

By Jacob Landis

Who is your Shepherd? This was the question we asked this summer at Menno Haven, guided by John 10:1-18. Campers were challenged to be aware of the different voices calling out to them, wanting them to follow. For some, the voices may be success in sports, academics, and money. Others may hear the call of popularity, influence, and fame. Among these voices is the voice of Jesus calling out for us to follow.

During Junior High week we were joined by Tyler and Kendra Yoder, missionaries through Virginia Mennonite Missions and Eastside Church at James Madison University. And for High School week we had input from Hillary Watson, a pastor with Lombard Mennonite Church. These speakers helped us to go a bit deeper into the passage of John 10:1-18 which was the focus passage for the summer. Their presence and input had a great positive impact on campers and staff alike!

“We would also like to give a big THANKS for prayer this summer support! We had no major injuries, campers learned a lot, and we had enough staff volunteer to fill in the gaps. With over 280 campers this year there was no way we could have done this summer without God’s help!”

While the summer camp season is over, there are still things you can do to help for next summer! You can start by praying about and for next year’s staff and campers. Even now God is preparing them for next summer! We are also looking forward to the second round of bunkroom renovations beginning in October. Donations and volunteers are welcome for that as well!

Upcoming events:

IMC Practical Ministry Series, September 23-24

Silence and Solitude Retreat, September 26-28

Fall Work Day, November 5

IMC Youth Leader’s Retreat, November 11-13



Conference Students Bluffton's dean's list

By Tricia Bell

Bluffton University has announced its dean's list for the spring term. Students with a GPA of 3.6 or higher are eligible for the dean's list.

Undergraduates from Illinois area are:
Constance Moushon, First Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill.

Students with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.75 based on 20 semester hours received dean's list with distinction for continued high achievement.

Undergraduates from Illinois area are:
Chad Gundy, Prairieview Mennonite Church, Flanagan, Ill.
Rachel Schoener, Prairieview Mennonite Church, Flanagan, Ill.



Top left: Constance Moushon
Middle right: Rachel Schoener
Middle left: Chad Gundy



Bluffton University graduate from Illinois District

By Tricia Bell

Lauren Satchwell of Normal, Ill., earned a master's degree in business administration during Bluffton University's 116th annual commencement ceremony on May 8. Satchwell attends Mennonite Church of Normal.

IMC CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

- 1 **Chicago Area Pastor Peer** Lombard Mennonite Church
- 7 **Church Life Team meeting** Living Water Community Church
- 8 **Pastor Peer Meeting** MC of Normal
- 18 **Ordination of Amy Aschliman**, Christ Community MC
- 23-24 **Innovative Disruption** Menno Haven Camp & Retreat
- 29 **Illinois MDS meeting** at Prairieview Mennonite Church 6:30

OCTOBER

- 6 **Chicago Area Pastor Peer Meeting**, TBA
- 13 **Pastor Peer Meeting** MC of Normal
- 17-19 **Constituency Leadership Council**, Hesston, KS
- 23 **Ordination Service** Stephen Lamb, Living Water Community Church

NOVEMBER

- 11-13 **Youth Leader Retreat**, Menno Haven
- 15 **Missional Crossroads articles are due**
- 20-21 **Everence Generosity Event**, MC of Normal
- 30-Dec. 3 **Conference Ministers Meeting** - Vancouver, British Columbia

MISSIONAL CROSSROADS

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IS NOW ON FACEBOOK.

