

Annual Meeting Workshop Listing

Session One: 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Room # National Identity resolution at the San Jose 2007 Delegate Assembly: What is it and where is it going?

Presenters: Janeen Bertsche Johnson, member of the Executive Board and the national identity task force; and Ron Byler, MC USA Associate Executive Director

Delegates at San Jose asked the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board to work on a process that helps the church “explore our identity as Mennonites in what many consider to be the wealthiest and most powerful nation in the world.” Delegates wanted resources that help us live in Christ-like ways, sometimes at odds with our national culture, acknowledging that no culture is either completely redeemed or completely fallen. The Executive Board, in turn, appointed a national identity task group.

What’s happening with the resolution? What is the task force proposing? How can area conferences and congregations respond? The session will include time for input and discussion.

Room # Foods Resource Bank: A Christian response to world hunger through local agriculture.

Presenters: Rich Bucher, Pastor of North Danvers Mennonite Church; Phil Eicher, First Mennonite Berne; and a representative from Foods Resource Bank

Foods Resource Bank seeks to bring Rural and City folks together to form agricultural growing projects which in turn generate income. That income is available for member organizations such as MCC to use in agricultural projects to help hungry people feed themselves. In this workshop we will try to explain what FRB is and how two local growing projects (First Berne, and North Danvers) were organized.

Room # New Churches: Imagine it

Presenter: Dean Heisey, Mennonite Mission Network Global Ministries Networking/Partnership Coach

We are accustomed to thinking of the “congregational” model of being church. How do new models suit our times, and how might we participate in actively initiating either new congregations or new non-congregational models of church? Stories from around the conference will help imagine our involvement in developing new churches.

- Room # Working and Caring for God’s Creation**
 Presenters: Barry Schmell, Pastor of Maplewood Mennonite Church, and members of the congregation
God created humankind with the responsibility “to work and care for God’s creation.” Today that calls us to use less, reuse, and recycle. For the past six years Maplewood Mennonite Church has been recognized and honored by Allen County (Indiana) for their efforts in this area. It also means that we build and live “green.” Come learn and share how to increase our faithfulness in working and caring for God’s creation.
- Room # The Land of Esther: Pilgrimage to Iran**
 Presenters: Bertha Beachy, Assembly Mennonite Church; and Gwen Gustafson-Zook, MCC Great Lakes Regional Representative
Bertha and Gwen were part of an MCC Learning Tour to Iran in January of this year. Impressed by the hospitality, the history, the faith and the graciousness of the people, Bertha and Gwen share a perspective on Iran that is quite different from what we hear about in the news. Issues of faith, culture, women and politics will be addressed through stories, pictures and poetry.
- Room # Combining Tried and True with Cutting Edge—The Camp Setting**
 Presenter: Justin Weaver, Executive Director of Camp Friedenswald
*When most of us think about camp, we think of our childhood and making new friends, learning about God and having lots of fun with all the “camp” activities. In some ways camp hasn’t changed a bit! But, camp is also the place where young and old alike are encouraged to think outside their own “box”. In some ways camp is the same old place you and your friends experienced, but in other ways it is the cutting edge setting to discuss and live out what it means to **be an Anabaptist Christian in our American Culture.***
*Come to this workshop to hear how we are engaging our day and age in challenging ways. Let’s focus together on recent positive directions American Culture has taken – including growing ecological awareness, methods of communication that connect people in new ways, and openness to spirituality just to name a few. Bring your visions and share how you see Camp Friedenswald connecting and providing resources for our time and culture. **Keeping the old while growing the new—let’s talk!***
- Room # Stewardship in today’s culture**
 Presenters: Lori Nester and Wendy Lehman, Jeff Boehr Stewardship Committee members; and panel members
Panel discussion about what it means to give to the church from the perspective of different age groups.

Room # What is the Church Saying about Immigration: MCC US Listening Project
Presenter: Saulo Padilla, Director, MCC US Immigration Office

This seminar will address the Church's response to the MCC US Immigration Listening Project: What is the Church Saying, and will provide attendees an open environment to discuss the responses. Attendees will also be provided with information on immigration from a biblical perspective.

Participants in this seminar will learn about what our constituency is saying about immigration. In addition, attendees will learn about ways to inform and educate their congregations about immigration from a biblical perspective on peace and justice.

Room # Youth Formation Through Rites of Passage

Presenter: Joel Miller, Pastor of Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship

What are some of the ways that a congregation can use its strength of being an intergenerational, relational community when it comes to the spiritual formation of its youth? In response to that questions, Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship decided to begin a coming of age ritual as a rite of passage for youth when they are 12 years old. This workshop will facilitate conversation about youth formation and rites of passage and introduce one model developed by Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship.

Session Two: 4:15-5:15 p.m.

Room # Vision, call and ministry of Mennonite Church USA

Presenter: Jim Schrag, Executive Director of MC USA Jim was a pastor for more than 20 years in congregations in Ohio and Kansas. He has also served as general secretary of the former General Conference Mennonite Church and director of the transformation team.

More than six years ago, we formed Mennonite Church USA in response to how we heard God calling us as Mennonites. What difference has it made within our churches and communities? Hear the Executive Director of Mennonite Church USA share what progress we are making and his vision for the future.

Room # The Spiritual Lives of Children

Presenters: Lois Kaufmann, Assembly Mennonite Church and Gwen Gustafson-Zook, Faith Mennonite Church

Through storytelling and conversation this seminar will open a window into the spiritual lives of children. We will hear a Bible story told in a worshipful manner, share stories of practices that encourage children to love God and others, and offer resources that inspire adults to listen to God with children.

Room # God's Shalom Endeavor

Presenter: Jane Roeschley, Associate Pastor of Mennonite Church of Normal

This workshop will survey the biblical sweep of God's "shalom endeavor" from the perfect Garden in the beginning, to the New Creation yet to come. Emphasizing aspects of God's restorative justice and unfailing love, participants will explore God's intention to bless all (Genesis 12:3P, God's purpose of reconciliation of the whole creation (Eph 1:10), and our call to be partners with God in dismantling injustice and building peace (shalom). Special emphasis will be given to who the God is that we know and encounter in worship, since "we become like the God we adore." This is formational in Anabaptist congregations seeking to grow peace-makers for our world.

Room # Clear the Clutter to Create A Sacred Space

Presenter: Rebecca Sommers, President of Mennonite Women USA Board of Directors

Taking a look at why we hang on to certain 'stuff' and letting go, moving on, to become our very best for God – making room for sacred space.

Room # Caring for the Environment: Church Building Site and Land Usage

Presenter: Wally Shellenberger, Paoli Mennonite Fellowship

Using Paoli Mennonite Fellowship as a model, this workshop will explore ways we can use the land on which our church buildings are located to care for the environment and aid in spiritual formation. We will also look at building or updating our meetinghouses so they are environmentally friendly.

- Room #** **What Is God Calling Chicago Mennonite Learning Center to Be and Do?**
Presenter: Sueann VonGunten, CMLC Board Chair
CMLC will be closed for the coming school year 2008-2009. Sueann VonGunten will share the process that the CMLC Board is using to discern God's call. Come, hear and discern with us.
- Room #** **Treasurers Handbook**
Presenters: Chris Habegger, CDC Treasurer; and Marty Lehman, MC USA Financial Development Director
Marty Lehman, Mennonite Church USA Financial Development Director has been working with conference treasurers to develop a training manual for congregational treasurers. This is in a draft stage and we want/value your input. Help us create a resource that will help first time treasurers get a good start and provide training for future treasurers.
- Room #** **Church Leadership Center**
Presenter: Nina Lanctot, Assistant Director of Engaging Pastors at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary
This workshop will share resources available to pastors and congregations through the Church Leadership Center at AMBS.
- Room #** **Global Connections**
Presenter: Ron Byler
Come explore an opportunity to become a Global Church Congregation. Ron Byler will share a program sponsored by Mennonite World Conference that encourages congregations to share their gifts with each other. Congregations will be paired and asked collaborate together to establish a congregational communication and prayer link with each other and with MWC.
- Room #** **Investing Can Glorify God!**
Presenters: Jeff Swartzenturber, Mennonite Foundation Representative and Vice President of MMA Trust Company, and Steve Bustos, Church Relations Manager
What's your money doing at night? Or during the day, for that matter? How and where you invest your money can make a difference not only in your bottom line, but also in furthering God's kingdom. This workshop will not only encourage you to align your investments with your values, but to also understand that your investments serve as a witness of your faith values to others.