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In the Land of the Living

Eric Massanari, Executive Conference Minister



"Divino" by José Ramirez

O my God, how does it happen in this poor world that you are so great and yet nobody finds you, that you call so loudly and yet nobody hears you, that you are so near and yet nobody feels you, that you give yourself to everybody and yet nobody knows your name? People flee from you and say they cannot find you; they turn their backs and say they cannot see you; they stop their ears and say they cannot hear you.

Hans Denck (1495-1527),
Anabaptist reformer

I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

PSALM 27:13

In these weeks following the celebration of Easter, the church recounts scripture stories of the varied ways the risen Christ was encountered. The first disciples are invited to touch, embrace and breakfast with him. A Pharisee named Saul is confronted and transformed by him. The risen Christ breathes upon all who would follow him a Spirit of blessing, peace and vocation. The message is clear: ***Christ is risen and Christ is here, within us and among us!***

For the 16th century Anabaptists this understanding of the Christ who calls and comes alive in the heart of each disciple and within the beloved community, the Body of Christ, was central. Even in the midst of great persecution, these forbears of our faith lived not only in the hope and truth of a life eternal, but also in the hope of a life transformed here and now by the love of God revealed through Jesus Christ.

In Christ, our faith is oriented to this moment, to this circumstance we are currently facing, to this person we are presently with, to this community to whom we commit ourselves, to this path we now seek to follow together. Our primary orientation is not to ideologies, political platforms, or any human power or authority.

We are oriented to and centered upon the limitless love of Christ, here in the land of the living. From this center, we move into life!



Click [HERE](#) for the 2024 Annual Meeting Registration!

Will you join PNMC for a **3-day conference gathering** for worship, fellowship, and service opportunities and discernment together? A block of rooms have been reserved for Friday and Saturday nights at the Peppertree Hotel in Bend. The accommodations are located across the road from Seven Peaks School where our meetings will be held. The per night reduced rate is \$175 + tax. *(Block pricing has not been arranged for Thursday night.)* To make a [ROOM RESERVATION](#), please follow this [Booking Link](#). **Reserve before May 21 when the offer will expire.** [Click here for schedule details](#). Plans are in the works for

childcare during the weekend. Congregants from Bend are planning activities based on the "Path to Peace with Creation" curriculum.

PNMC CONGREGATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & MINISTRIES

MCC West Coast Bike Ride 2024

Join other bikers and MCC supporters on a 4-day fund-raising ride this summer from **August 4-9**. The riders will be based in Albany, OR at the Mennonite Village and take loop rides each day from there through the scenic Willamette Valley.

Visit <https://mcc.org/events/west-coast-bike-ride> for more information or contact Bruce Kuhns at kuhns.bruce@gmail.com.

Camp CAMREC

Bring your family and friends to CAMREC **April 19-21, 2024** for a FREE opportunity to explore the marvels of spring time as guests gather to reflect on Earth Day. Participants will be able to connect with the Washington Mennonite Fellowship through the WMF Annual Meeting as well as take time to care for camp during the Spring Work Weekend during the same weekend.

Drift Creek Camp

Friends of DCC will gather to [Spruce Up Camp](#) on **Saturday, April 20, 2024** to prepare for spring outdoor schools and summer programs! Helping hands are needed to prep cabins, clear trails, and clean the lodge. To sign up, click [here](#), contact info@driftcreek.org or call 971-600-1266.

Mennonite Church USA and Other Organizations



Mennonite Women USA

Sister Care Goes to Cuba – Again

Carolyn Heggen and Rhoda Keener traveled to Cuba in March to share the [Sister Care](#) seminar there for the third time. We found that the situation in Cuba had deteriorated significantly since our last trip in 2018. Food and medicine are now scarce for the average person, electricity is shut off frequently, and lack of fuel affects garbage pickup and transportation. Carolyn said, "As my Cuban friend with the Council of Churches has been telling me for several years now, **There are many shortages in Cuba, but the greatest shortage is of hope!**" This time I did sense the loss of optimism and hope that things in Cuba will get better."

We were asked to lead a workshop in Havana for women pastors and religious leaders from all over the island on 'Cultivating Hope When There is None'. Both Rhoda's and Carolyn's churches (Hebron Mennonite and Albany Mennonite) filled suitcases with soap and other needed items for us to carry to Cuba. At the Havana

workshop we used the sunflower as a symbol of hope: it can grow in harsh conditions and always turns toward the sun. The Albany sewing circle created beautiful sunflower fabric gifts and we gave these and a bar of soap to each woman. (Anaitza, Rhoda, Carolyn, and Elda are pictured above.) Quite a few women had tears as they received their gifts.

The Palmira workshop with 28 women was hosted by Bonnie Klassen, MCC director for Cuba, México and South America. The Havana workshop with 34 participants was hosted by Midiam Lobaina with the Cuban Council of Churches and included women from 19 denominations from all over the island. The Sister Care seminar has been shared in 21 countries and the Sister Care manual translated into 20 languages.

Upcoming e-Bulletins:

May 6 (submissions due by 4/29)

May 20 (submissions due by 5/13)

June 3 (submissions due by 5/27)

June 17 (submissions due by 6/10)

If you would like to contribute, please send a brief announcement in Spanish & English with website links to brenda@pnmc.org. Our goal is to provide a valuable resource, not an In-Box jammer. If space is tight, we may omit announcements that are not as pertinent to PNMC. Announcements will run ONE time only, unless specified otherwise. *We welcome your feedback!*

For more PNMC updates: <http://pnmc.org> e-Bulletin Archives: <http://pnmc.org/Resources/eBulletin>