



November 2018

HIVELY AVENUE MENNONITE CHURCH

Happenings

A top 10 from Guatemala

Tim Stair, pastor

My trip to Guatemala for 12 days with Jan, Leroy, Winifred, Charlie and others beyond Hively was a significant part of my life and spiritual journey this past month. Jan and I have both been in Central America individually earlier in our lives (Jan in Nicaragua and Honduras, me in El Salvador and Honduras), but this gave us an opportunity to go together. We are grateful.

I asked Jan, Leroy and Winifred to each give me their top 10 experiences. I also did a list. It is interesting to note that only Winifred managed to keep her list to 10. That means that even I didn't follow my own rules. But I sorted through them and we shared the following 10 in common in one form or another:

1 It was a privilege to learn the history of Guatemala and its people; to learn of the struggle and suffering of the people with such a strong desire to survive and thrive. We were especially touched by the plight of so many children and how hard the people work to survive and find meaning.

2 Learning about the programs, outreach and influence of SEMILLA (the Anabaptist Seminary) throughout Central America (and into North America) and across a broad constituency (not just Mennonites). 700 people study or train through the seminary in some way in just one year.

3 Listening to the stories of pastors who have received training through SEMILLA, and the influence it has had on their ministry and theology. Mennonite understanding of a holistic Gospel of peacebuilding takes on a whole new meaning in this context and adds urgency to seeing its importance in our context.

4 Seeing first-hand the ministry of Anabaptist churches in impoverished and sometimes violent areas. Often with few resources, these churches are providing education, empowerment (especially to women and children), life enrichment (like music and art opportunities), job training, and life skills training in their communities and neighborhoods.

5 Seeing the Kekchi Mennonite Church and hearing from women who are being empowered in leadership and ministry, as traditionally in this culture women are not highly valued.

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A top 10 from Guatemala (continued)

6 Seeing Deb Byler's ministry in the context of the Kekchi church, and seeing what a wonderful match it is with her calling and ministry gifts. (Leroy, Winifred, Charlie, Jan and I got to have a wonderful meal together at her home.)

7 Visiting the Cloud Community Forest Conservation Center, started by two former MCC workers, which combines creative ecological practices with development and education among indigenous people, especially children and girls.

8 The hospitality of the people we met, especially from some families and

individuals who took us in overnight for one night in their homes in El Salvador.

9 The beauty of the land, mountains, villages and people. As Winifred wrote, "It made this trip one I will cherish for many years."

10 The group of people with whom we travelled. We had a very thoughtful and supportive group, and wonderful leaders (including Charlie).

We hope to find a couple of other settings in which to share from our experience over the next weeks. It was a great experience! 🍃



Gilberto Flores leads a session at SEMILLA on Mennonite Church history in Guatemala for the learning tour participants.

MCC Engagement Day

MCC Great Lakes is hosting an Engagement Day on Saturday, Dec. 8, at Belmont Mennonite Church, located at 925 Oxford Street, Elkhart, IN 46516.

Throughout the day MCC will showcase interactive learning tools around mass incarceration, Doctrine of Discovery and viewpoints of guns in America. The day will culminate with a keynote address by Juan

Sebastian Pacheco Lozano on immigration.

You are welcome to participate in one workshop or the whole day. This would be a great opportunity for small groups, youth groups or Sunday School classes to participate together. You can find more information at mcc.org/gl-engagement-day. Please direct any questions to Brooke Strayer at brookestrayer@mcc.org or 574-534-4133. 🍃

Hively Avenue Preschool staff: Loving learning, reading, science ... and kids

Add up all the education experience of the director and teachers of Hively Avenue Preschool and you get a total of more than 100 years ... when the preschool itself is only 48 years old. Ask any of the teachers what keeps them in this vocation and they will say they love kids and love the excitement of seeing kids learn.

Along with those common threads are the individual stories:

Julee Hay, preschool director

Julee came to the preschool as a teacher in 2005 and two years later was asked to serve as assistant director. By January 2008 she was asked to be the director. Her background includes home-schooling her children for 18 years and working in children's ministry in her church.

Two years ago, when a teacher left mid-year, Julee stepped in to teach that class. "I always liked science," Julee said, and she especially enjoyed the small afternoon class when she could do experiments with them. She also enjoys the creative task of finding or developing resources for the preschool. For

example, Julee developed the chapel curriculum focusing on virtues because of behavior issues among the children.

Other interests of Julee's include cooking, playing flute and camping. Julee and Dan, her husband, are parents of three children, each of whom



Julee Hay, preschool director chose the theme, "Trust in God and do the next thing," as the theme for this school year.

is married. Their family also includes four grandchildren, two in Texas and two in Ohio.

"Being a preschool director has made me a better grandma," Julee says; "It makes me think fast on my feet." She is stepping out of the director position at the end of this school year and is uncertain yet whether she'll continue as a teacher. But she's looking forward to having more time in the grandmother role.



Photos by Mary Klassen

Sheryl Rambadt said "I feel like this is my ministry."

Sheryl Rambadt, 4-5s teacher

Sheryl is in her 19th year of teaching at Hively's preschool. After teaching at Elkhart Baptist Christian and taking time off while her children were small, she has been here ever since. Through these years, one change she sees is the children now have more issues to deal with, and more children are diagnosed with problems. But, she said, "Kids are still kids and they are still wanting love."

What keeps her going is the love of the kids and how much she loves them. "I feel like this is a ministry," she said.

Sheryl and Mitch, her husband—who is a driver for UPS—have two daughters. One lives in Florida with her husband and two-

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Preschool staff (continued)

year-old daughter; the other daughter and her husband live in Indianapolis. Aside from teaching, Sheryl says she likes to read and to spend time with her family and friends.



Amy Redar has a chameleon theme in her classroom, including Cam, the large stuffed animal who helps to welcome the children.

Amy Redar, 3-4s teacher

Amy is in her third year of teaching 3- and 4-year-olds here, but she has worked in education for 21 years. She has previous experience starting a school which included preschool through grade 8 students, and she served as both teacher and principal.

"I love the variety and excitement of teaching," Amy said. "In preschool, it's making a foundation for the learning the students continue to do. It takes a lot of energy and creativity, but it's great to see the kids having that 'Aha' moment when they catch on to something."

Amy and Brian, her husband, live in South Bend. She enjoys reading and spending time with extended family, who live in the Elkhart and Valparaiso areas.

In this transition year at the preschool, Amy is beginning to take over some responsibilities of the director role in anticipation of becoming the director next year.

Val Schumacher, 4-5s teacher

Val is in her second year at Hively's preschool. She has taught every level



Val said when she started teaching here, "I felt like I had come home."

from preschool through grade 12 in her teaching career of 30+ years. She's been an administrator, principal and teacher during that time and all but one year was in a Christian school setting.

"I love learning, so I love reading. It's sort of a natural to try to help kids

develop the same interest—the same desire for knowledge," Val said.

Val enjoys reading as well as walking and biking. She and Kent, her husband, have done ball-room dancing for 20 years. Their daughter and son-in-law in Elkhart have three children; the older two are students in the preschool. Their son and his wife and two children (with a third one to arrive soon) live in Ohio.

Melody Claassen, in addition to being co-chair of the preschool board, is also a staff member, supervising lunch time for the children who attend both the morning and afternoon classes three days a week.

Other preschool board members are Leanne Farmwald, co-chair; John Alter; Crystal Underwood; Kim Chris and Rachel Perkey. 🍀

Educating ourselves about child safety and protection

In Hively's Child Safety and Protection Covenant, we are asked to stay aware of and informed about safety and protection issues surrounding the young participants in our congregation.

Dove's Nest, an organization that began among Mennonites, shares a variety of helpful resources. Their November electronic newsletter included a feature on appropriate and inappropriate physical touch.

This feature emphasizes, "Love and affection are part of church life and ministry. There are many ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with children." The following examples are included:

- Brief hugs or side hugs
- Pats on the shoulder, back or head
- Handshakes
- High-fives, hand slapping and fist taps
- Verbal praise
- Arms around shoulders
- Holding hands while walking with small children
- Sitting beside small children
- Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of children or youth
- Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children
- Holding hands during group prayer



For more information, please follow this link to the full post:

dovesnest.net/Inappropriate-and-Appropriate-Physical-Boundaries

Hively's covenant is available to download at

www.hivelymennonite.org/info/child-safety-and-protection-covenant

Or request a copy in the church office.

Honors concert this week

Lucile Odhiambo and Rachelle Claassen play in the Youth Honors Orchestra, which will have a fall concert on Wednesday, Nov. 14, at 7:30 pm. The concert will be in Sauder Concert Hall in the Music Center at Goshen College. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$6 for seniors and students.

You can get tickets in advance by phone, 574-535-7566 or online: <https://bit.ly/2AR4ans>

Perdian Tumanan article published

Perdian Tumanan, a Master of Arts: Theology and Peace Studies student at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, recently had an article published in *The Jakarta Post*, the most prominent English language newspaper in his native country. Perdian is from Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia.



The article, "Fears, hoax and the politics of identity" is available at this link:

<https://bit.ly/2qwvDEW>



Buzzing at the Hive

We are once again teaming up with Varner's Greenhouse and Nursery to give you the opportunity to purchase poinsettias for the holidays. This is a great way to decorate for the holidays or purchase a gift to share. . . AND SUPPORT THE PRESCHOOL all at the same time! Money and orders are due Nov. 26 and plants will be available for pick up Dec. 7. Please

check out the information on the bulletin board or contact a board member if you would like to order poinsettias. You may also order directly from Samantha Crosser since Billi Jo is a student.

Hively calendar

**November 25
December 9, 23**
5:30 pm
Spaghetti and Scripture

**November 28
December 12**
6 pm
Prayer choir

December 2
11 am
Decorating the church for the holidays

December 24
6:30 pm
Christmas eve service

December 31
6:30 pm
New Year's Eve service



Support the new hymnal

MennoMedia needs your help to make the new *Voices Together* hymnal a reality by Fall 2020. Before any copies of *Voices Together* are sold, MennoMedia will invest more than \$700,000. Everence and Mennonite Central Committee U.S. have issued a matching grant

VOICES
Together

challenge of up to \$100,000 to help MennoMedia in this final fundraising effort. Help ensure that *Voices Together* will be affordably priced for congregations. Make a gift today and have it doubled! Give at [VoicesTogetherHymnal.org](https://www.voicestogetherhymnal.org). Every voice matters. Every dollar counts.

Open Letter on behalf of MC USA

Glenn Guyton, executive director of Mennonite Church USA, wrote this open letter to Rabbi Myers and the Tree of Life Congregation in Pittsburgh, Pa., following the shooting there on October 28. Here is an excerpt:

During times like this, it is the responsibility of all of us in the faith community to come together and stand against hatred and evil in its many forms. We denounce those that attack our houses of worship in the name of political ideology, anti-Semitism or racism. I read on your website that your congregation remains true to traditional teachings yet is also progressive and relevant to the way we live today. I pray that this tragedy will not stop you. I pray for your healing and continued strength.

Read the full letter:
<https://bit.ly/2JTQJpL>

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