



October 2017

HIVELY AVENUE MENNONITE CHURCH

Happenings

In prayer, are we ready to listen?

Jake Hess, pastor

I watched him with a kind of pained curiosity. Perched awkwardly over home plate, he stood, bat in hand, ready to swing. Crack! The dull echo of ball-on-bat rippled throughout the park. His hit bounced just left of second base and tumbled feebly into the outfield. But there was no one to return his hit, no mitt swerved to scoop up his ball. We were, as far as I can recall, the only ones in the park that day. The weather, stereotypically for the Pacific Northwest, was gray with a chance of melancholy. I continued watching from a distance, unseen. He walked resolutely, though with a noticeable hobble, toward the outfield where his ball had bedded in the tall grass. Then, ball retrieved, he shambled with equal resolution back to home plate. Bending his middle-aged body as best he could, he raised the bat and tossed the ball several feet in the air. Crack! And off he shuffled, again, to the vacant outfield. I watched this ceremony for some time, listened to its sacred rhythms. Crack!—and, then, the long silence. Crack!—Silence. When I finally left the park, the beat of this haunting rhythm still pounded behind me.

Maybe it was his Franciscan-like hair—or maybe being enrolled in a poetry class at the time made me prone to conjuring metaphors—but, either way, I couldn't help seeing him as a kind of monk at midnight vigil, praying persistently into the dark night. He seemed to possess the sort of saintly doggedness that Scripture sometimes advocates regarding prayer. "Ask ... seek ... knock," we are admonished. "Pray without ceasing." But we are also haunted by the Lord's words, echoing from the psalms—"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Sometimes our prayers feel chronically unheard, unanswered, rejected. Has prayer ever felt this way for you? Like a game of baseball played solo, like hitting a ball into an empty outfield, fetching it yourself, and carrying it back sullenly. Will you swing again? Will the ball—the prayer—just thud, once more, into the dark silence? Is it worth it? Will there be an answer?

Perhaps we've come to think too narrowly of our prayers, and what it means for them to be "answered." Often, we think of an "answered prayer" as one which turns out exactly as we requested. We forget that it may be answered in other ways. "Not yet." "Not in this way." "For now, you need this instead." Or simply, "No." These may not be the answers we're hoping for. But in the end, perhaps our biggest problem is that we think prayer requests flow only one way. We ask. God answers. Perhaps we don't acknowledge that God may be petitioning us. In prayer, God also speaks, also requests. More often than not, God may be the one pounding baseballs into an empty outfield, awaiting players to join the joyous game. In prayer, are we ready to listen? In prayer, do we have our mitts on?

Vol. 34 No. 10

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Great Day of Singing

Sample the new worship and song collection

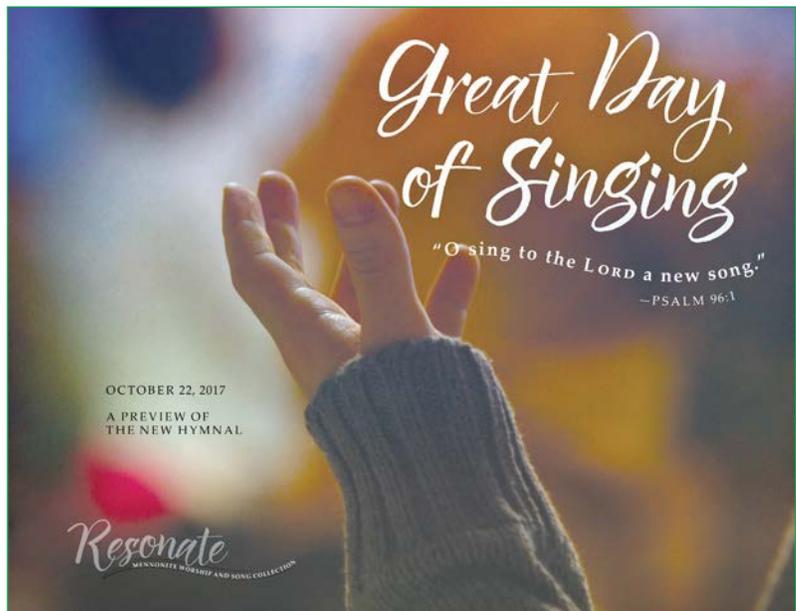
On Sunday, Oct. 22, Hively will join in a “Great Day of Singing,” along with other congregations in Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada.

The invitation comes from MennoMedia, the organization behind the creation of a new song collection for our denominations. For the special Sunday, we will sample new hymns, led by SaeJin Lee, and new worship resources with Tyler Klassen as our worship leader.

SaeJin serves with 13 others from Canada and the U.S. on the “Resonate” Team, working to develop the new Mennonite worship and song collection. This collection will replace *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, *Sing the Journey* and *Sing the Story*. By the time its successor arrives, *Hymnal: A Worship Book* will be at least 28 years old, Bradley Kauffman, project director, pointed out at a seminar this summer at the Central District Conference Annual Meeting. He added, “Our committee engages this work with deep gratitude for this collection (in the three current hymnals).... So much of this has shaped us as a committee, but we also believe God has something new for the twenty-first century church.”

SaeJin said, “All on the committee come to this work with a sense of awe or wonder, with a deep respect for how well-loved these hymns are. It’s humbling to be entrusted to do this work.”

Among the committee’s challenges is deciding which 900 hymns in the three current books will be carried forward and which hymns might be brought back from earlier versions. SaeJin reported that after a year of work, the committee has reviewed all three current books and then reviewed the top scoring hymns in more depth. The committee also has begun assessing new submissions that arrive through the MennoMedia website



at a rate of about 100 per month.

SaeJin noted, “A part of the challenge is how we as a committee represent the breadth of the church. We come wanting to do the most faithful work, but we know that not all voices in the church are part of the committee.” For example, according to Bradley, Mennonites across North America sing in 20 different languages.

At the summer seminar, Bradley asked a few of the foundational questions in this work:

“What is Mennonite singing? Unison melody sung with conviction? A chorus sung in Spanish? Four-part harmony? A chorale accompanied by organ? Contemporary worship music—praise and worship songs? Singing in first-person singular or with corporate language? Multicultural? A cappella? Does it come with electric guitars amplified? It is singing about something, like discipleship or faith in action? What’s essential to Mennonite singing?”

As part of serving on the Resonate Team, SaeJin also works on two subcommittees. One of these, the Worship Resources committee,

(continued on next page)

New worship and song collection (continued)

has just extended a call for submissions of visual art. “Our hope is for 12 works of art, which will be paired with Scripture passages that reflect the core of our faith,” SaeJin said. The plan is to make these available for congregations to use. Although there will be only 12 art pieces, “it’s still a step into art as a way we worship,” SaeJin said.

In addition to the arduous work on the collection itself, the committee also is addressing the forms in which the resources will be produced. One form will be a hard-bound book, like *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, because of the durability of that form for the next 25 years. The project also will be released in a projection edition and possibly in an app that will allow worship planners to search by word, theme and topic.

With at least two more years of work ahead for the committee, here are ways we can support this project:

- Join in the Great Day of Singing on October 22 in anticipation of the new hymns and worship resources that are coming.

- Pray for the committee and for wisdom in their discernment. (SaeJin said she has been doing Resonate work nearly every evening for several months!)
- Submit original content: <http://www.heraldpress.com/MennoniteWorshipAndSongCollection/SongSubmissions/>
- Complete the “heart songs” survey on the Resonate website: <http://www.heraldpress.com/MennoniteWorshipAndSongCollection/>
- Contribute financially.



A regional “Great Day of Singing” event is set for Sunday, Oct. 22, 2 pm, at College Mennonite Church in Goshen. Adam Tice, member of the Resonate Team, will lead singing of favorite hymns and introduce new hymns being considered for the collection. For information, contact Steve Carpenter, 540-908-3933, or SteveC@MennoMedia.org. 



Photo by Tyler Klassen

Deb Byler (with red stole near center) was ordained for ministry at Hively on Sunday, Oct. 8. Family and friends from Hively, Mennonite Mission Network, Support Circle, and her home congregation of Bethel Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio, surrounded her in prayer. Doug Luginbill, conference minister for Central District Conference, is behind Deb to the left; Nina Lancot, preacher in the ordination service, is behind to the right.

Hively's got talent

At the talent show during our annual congregational retreat at Camp Friedenswald on Sept. 10, performers shared music, art, stories ... and helped all of us to share laughter and appreciation.



Ollie and Lena (Leroy and Winifred Saner) had us laughing at vignettes from their lives.



Rich Preheim was the emcee for the talent show, deftly introducing each act.

Photos by Tyler Klassen



Maya and Lucille did a skit about money and magic.



John (left) and Fabian (right) unwittingly became the object of a joke in a skit led by Tim and Jan Stair.

Thanks for My Coins Count contributions

Thank you to all the amazing children and adults at Hively Mennonite for your energy and enthusiasm in collecting \$650.05 for My Coins Count this year. Your collection, along with the special 50th Anniversary push for



matches from local businesses helped raise over \$210,000 to support water and other projects through My Coins Count. Your funds help build handwashing stations to allow girls to attend

school in Uganda, irrigate crops for farmers in India, provide water catchment systems to water vegetable gardens in Honduras and Guatemala, and pipe water into poor people's homes in Egypt. Your support offers more than just life-giving water, it offers hope to families struggling with challenging circumstances. Thank you for your generosity and creativity in sharing the love of Christ around the world through Mennonite Central Committee and My Coins Count.

— Les Gustafson-Zook, MyCC
Coordinator, Michiana Mennonite
Relief Sale. 

Requests from Mennonite Central Committee

From MCC USA

Urge your members of Congress to support the Protecting Sensitive Locations Act.

A mother and father in Texas face deportation after U.S. Border Patrol officers initiated removal proceedings at a Texas hospital where the couple sought emergency care for their infant. The actions of the Border Patrol officers clearly violate the federal government's own policy, which prohibits immigration enforcement actions at "sensitive locations," including hospitals, schools, and places of worship. The Protecting Sensitive Locations Act, H.R. 1815, would strengthen this currently nonbinding policy and codify it into law. Hospitals, schools and churches must continue to be safe spaces for children and families.

From MCC Great Lakes

Eight major relief projects

From earthquakes in Mexico, to hurricanes in the Caribbean, to violence in Congo, MCC is responding to urgent disasters around the world. We humbly ask you to learn about the eight major relief projects we are responding to (<http://tinyurl.com/y7pdxgyh>) and give today to help provide assistance and to support communities as they rebuild.

Comforter Bash

We are gathering for the third annual Comforter Bash in northern Indiana/southern Michigan. Come to join in tying comforters to be distributed by MCC around the world.

Friday, October 20—9 am to 5 pm
Saturday, October 21,—9 am to 3 pm
Pleasant View Mennonite Church
58529 County Road 23, Goshen, IN 46528
Carol Honderich (574.536.9062)
Nadine Zook Miller (NadineZookMiller@mcc.org or 574.534.4071) 

Buzzing at the Hive



Hively calendar

**October 22
November 5, 19**

5:30-7:30 pm
Spaghetti and Scripture
for senior and junior high
youth

October 14

Preschool chicken
barbecue and bake sale
fund-raiser

Oct. 11 is our annual field trip to Kerchers Sunrise Orchard in Goshen. "Mrs. Apple" will teach us all about apples. We will pick apples and gourds, go on a hayride and walk through a corn maze. We will end our field trip with a snack and some yummy apple cider.

Oct. 14 is our annual Nelson Chicken BBQ & Bake Sale. Although tickets are no longer available, you can come to the church to purchase chicken halves,

pork chops, chicken bites and Pit-tatoes as long as they last. We invite the wonderful cooks of Hively Avenue Mennonite Church to help us out by donating homemade items for our Bake Sale. Donated items should be delivered to the preschool/church on Friday, Oct. 13.

Thank you!
Julee Hay

Area events

October 20-21
MCC Great Lakes
Comforter Bash

Seminary offerings

One-course options with AMBS.

Try out a seminary course through Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary without being admitted to a degree or certificate program. You can take up to two courses, and your first class—campus, online or hybrid—is 50 percent off. Check out our spring options! www.ambs.edu/academics/one-course-options

AMBS online short course:

Understanding Anabaptist approaches to Scripture: Oct. 25–Dec. 12. The early Anabaptists' approaches to Scripture were both similar to and different from those of Catholics and other Protestants. Loren Johns, Ph.D., will lead this interactive online AMBS short course on understanding these approaches in light of today. Cost: \$200 before Oct. 4; \$250 after. CEUs available. Sign up by Oct. 18. www.ambs.edu/lifelong-learning/short-courses

Neal and Janie Blough update

Neal and Janie Blough, members of Hively and mission workers in France, sent a report on their recent activities. Here are excerpts:

"This summer we spent five weeks in the U.S.... We enjoyed seeing many of you and are energized by the support we feel from congregations with whom we have had long-standing relationships.

"Janie's English teaching with neighborhood people has resumed. She also has begun teaching the course of 'theological English,' offered at the seminary where Neal continues to teach.

Neal continues to be involved in events commemorating the 500th anniversary of the beginning of Martin Luther's Reformation.

"We are excited to be part of a movement of Christians that are seeking to join hands to work together to build unity. We want to do all we can to promote and further the church's mission and presence in France."

Hively Happenings
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