



SOJOURNS



Vol. XXXV, Issue 6 The Newsletter of Sonnenberg Mennonite Church March 15, 2026

SENIOR SAINTS March, 2026 Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy celebrating to our senior saints who have birthdays/anniversaries in March, 2026!

~~~~~  
Julie Beun (68), Saturday, March 21  
Conrad Neuenschwander (72), Tuesday, March 24  
Mike/Mim Lehman (32), Thursday, March 26  
Alice Metcalf (76), Friday, March 27  
Rich Horst (78), Tuesday, March 31

**SIM** Society for International Ministries

**APPP** Arsenic Poisoning Prevention

Program

*(The following comes from the February newsletter the Schumachers from Plain City have shared as an update on the work to combat arsenic poisoning in Bangladesh).*

Arsenic in wells across southern Bangladesh and neighbouring West Bengal is the largest human poisoning in world history, according to the World Health Organization. An estimated 43,000 Bangladeshi citizens die annually from arsenic poisoning.

It was not a problem until the '70s and '80s, when there was a massive switch from surface water (which often spread disease) to shallow wells for drinking water. Water testing for arsenic was not routine then. Problems with arsenic were not discovered until 1993.

Today, an estimated 20 million people in Bangladesh are still exposed to very high levels of

arsenic. Despite abundant research, few North Americans know about the crisis



The program works with households for three years, addressing four main points: Education of families in affected areas about the presence and dangers of arsenic; Testing of water; Provision of water filters where needed; and Provision of medical screening, nutrition counseling and follow-up care to those already suffering effects of arsenic poisoning.

The problem is huge. SIM is one of the few organizations still assisting the government in working on this crisis. Although APPP works in a relatively small area, it is a very important part of addressing the problem.

### Village Life

Bangladesh basically has 3 seasons:

- Kharif-1, or pre-monsoon/summer, runs mid March through June. High temperatures are typically in the low to mid 90s, with lows generally in the 70s. This season also has high humidity.
- Kharif-2, or monsoon, runs July through mid October. Slightly cooler than Kharif-1, highs are typically in the upper 80s, with lows still in the 70s. Heavy rains and correspondingly high humidity are common.
- Rabi, or winter, runs mid-October through mid March. Highs are typically in the mid 70s to low 80s, with lows in the 60s or upper 50s. Dry, with

mild daytime temperatures, nights can be quite cool and few homes are heated, which can be difficult for residents. These are the normal seasons for villagers in southern Bangladesh, not the four seasons that we experience in much of North America.

### Prayer Concerns

\* Mobile clinics for the arsenic project are planned for March 29 – April 9. Please pray for dedicated and compassionate doctors and improving health for the patients they will be serving.

\* Bangladesh had national elections on February 12. Please pray for peaceful transfer of power, along with leaders concerned about the well-being of all Bangladeshi's, not just the wealthy or well-connected.

\* Bill Schumacher is planning a trip to Bangladesh, along with a professor from one of our Mennonite colleges, who will be scouting things out for a potential student group cross-cultural experience trip for next school year. The focus will be for students in medical and environmental science related fields. The scouting trip is planned for February 27 – March 6, 2026. Please pray for safety and positive experiences for them.

Dr. Arefur Rahaman, David Waiswa and Kirsten DiMello came to share with us on February



22nd their experience in working under MCC dealing with the effects of climate change in their work in the Sahel region and Bangladesh. Dr. Arefur Rahaman works in a different region of Bangladesh than the part of the country burdened with the arsenic problem highlighted above. However, the Schumachers and others involved with the SIM project are former MCC workers in that region.

## NEWS & NOTES



### OrrVilla Retirement

**Community:** Is continuing its Speaker Series each month.

OrrVilla's Speaker Series events are a 1-hour presentation (2:00 – 3:00 PM) on a variety of topics. These talks are free to the public, with an RSVP (330-462-1038), and are intended to be informative and educational.

**April 7th | 2:00–3:00 pm. “Creating a Better Visit” Learn helpful and practical tips to make visits with loved ones even better!** Carole Klingler, founder and CEO of “LIFE, a Dementia Friendly Foundation” a not-for-profit grassroots program that has been supporting people living with dementia and their care partners since 2016.

LIFE operates 7 weekly Memory Cafés, offering 4 hours of engaging, supportive programming—all at no cost to families or participants.

Currently both the Wooster and Orrville areas provide these Memory Cafés, weekly. Come to learn more.



## CAMP LUZ

**Camp Luz:** is hiring for staff for summer camp. High school students who are 16 years old or older are eligible and this is a wonderful way to serve in a local ministry.

### Summer Staff Team

Most summer staff have a primary role for the summer but are occasionally asked to fill other roles based on staffing needs.

Requirements For ALL Summer Staff

**Cabin Leader-** Directly responsible for the safety, supervision, and spiritual nurture of 8-12 campers assigned to him/her. (with a co-counselor)

**Cook-** Responsible to assist in preparation, serving, and clean up of the meals and snacks.

**Housekeeping-** Responsibilities include cleaning the camp facilities, refilling supplies and assisting the cooks during meal times and clean up.

**Maintenance Staff -** Assist with camp upkeep including yard work and general maintenance.

**Program Coordinator-** Works alongside the Program

Director to plan and lead various tasks. Expected to provide leadership to the staff through encouragement, example and direction. Also expected to do any tasks the Program Director asks them to do. This could be a weekly or summer commitment.

**Photographer/Social Media Specialist-** Take and upload high quality photos. Prepare flash drives of weekly highlights that can be bought by camper families.

**Lifeguard-** Responsible for keeping guests safe at the Camp Luz pool. (certification required) \*fill out lifeguard application if you plan on only being a lifeguard, otherwise complete the summer staff application\*

**Nurse-** Responsible for the health forms and medications of campers and staff and on-call for treatment of injuries and illness. (licensed RN or LPN)

**Internship-** because of the nature of camp work, there are a variety of internship possibilities we can help you meet. If you are looking to fill internship requirements in Guest Services, Food Service, Ministry, or Programming, talk to us about how we can help.

All summer staff are expected to attend Staff Training (June 1-5, 2026) and are expected to be able to agree with the Camp Luz Statement of Faith and be willing to sign the Summer Staff Covenant.



### MCC Appalachia

**Build:** (formerly SWAP) home repair program is seeking summer staff in

Kimball, West Virginia or Elkhorn City, Kentucky. These three-month positions for Job Site Coordinators and Meals Coordinators will allow you to explore new cultures, develop skills, build friendships and live out your faith. Applicants should be at least 19 years old, but the roles are not limited to young adults. An hourly wage plus room and board are provided. For more information and to apply, visit [mcc.org/careers](http://mcc.org/careers). Or contact [RoxyReyes@mcc.org](mailto:RoxyReyes@mcc.org)

---

**MDS:** listed below are some service opportunities over the next few months:

### Location: Middlefield, Ohio to Georgia

Disaster: Hurricane Helene

Type of Work: Drivers for Amish Volunteers

Contact: Red Byler at 440-487-6371 or [redbyler@outlook.com](mailto:redbyler@outlook.com)



### Location: Berlin, Ohio to Georgia

Disaster: Hurricane Helene

Type of Work: Drivers for Amish Volunteers

Contact: Merle Stutzman at 330-893-3010 or [merles57@gmail.com](mailto:merles57@gmail.com)

**Location: TBD-**Looking for persons interested in the work of MDS

Type of Work: Future leadership roles within the unit

Contact: Bruce Kindy at 330-464-2380 or [bdkindy51@zoominternet.net](mailto:bdkindy51@zoominternet.net)

### Weekly Volunteer scheduling for April-August

projects (including the Summer Youth Program) begins in February. Weekly Volunteers can see Opportunities on the website if interested in serving in the spring or summer or join the Waitlist for the fall projects! Contact Kaelan Swartley ([kswartley@mds.org](mailto:kswartley@mds.org) or 800-241-8111) with any questions or to schedule a week of service!

**Leadership Volunteers** - MDS will soon be scheduling our spring and summer projects once locations are finalized. We need leadership to support these projects as cooks and crew leaders specifically for the summer. We will have youth groups serving and would welcome skilled volunteers investing in the future of possible MDS volunteers! Please reach out to your volunteer coordinator if you can go for 2-4 weeks in the summer! Learn specific dates at each location by visiting [mds.org/leadership-rv/](http://mds.org/leadership-rv/). Contact: Karla Friesen (717-735-3536 or [karla.friesen@mds.org](mailto:karla.friesen@mds.org)).



Please join us on Thursday, April 23 at 6:30pm at the Hartville Kitchen for our Annual Fundraising

Banquet, an evening centered on the students of

Southeast Canton and the inspiring work unfolding through Lighthouse Ministries! Thanks to generous sponsors, there is no cost to attend, but there will be an opportunity to give at the conclusion of the program as we work toward our \$75,000 goal before our fiscal year ends on May 31. Consider arriving a little early or staying a bit afterward, as our student-run businesses will be open both before and after the program!

---

*This Week in Anabaptist History ...* On March 15, 2023 Anabaptist World reported that the Conservative Mennonite Conference made a more permanent name change to Rosedale Network of Churches--a global family of Anabaptists.

In July of 2018 the ministers of the Conservative Mennonite Conference voted to change the legal name of the denomination to: Conservative Mennonite Conference doing business as CMC.

In a 2017 interview, CMC executive director Brian Hershberger expressed concern with the name "conservative," due to its connotations of political conservatism or plain dress. At the July 2017 meeting, other ministers said "Mennonite" associated them with Mennonite Church USA.

The Conservative Amish Mennonite Conference was brought into being in 1910 at the invitation of the ministers of the Pigeon River congregation, near Pigeon, Michigan, who invited ministers of other similar churches to gather with them in a ministers meeting. The meeting was held 24-25 November 1910.

At this preliminary meeting, five ordained men were present: Bishop S. J. Swartzendruber and M. S. Zehr of the host congregation; Bishop Joshua King, Hartville, Ohio; Bishop John L. Mast. and Jonas D. Yoder of the Locust Grove congregation, near Belleville, Pennsylvania.

The purpose of the meeting was set forth in the first resolution: "That we stand more closely together in the work of the Lord, to maintain peace and unity in the so-called Conservative Amish Mennonite churches."

The name Conservative Amish Mennonite had been brought into use at the turn of the century by M. S. Steiner, compiler of Mennonite statistics, to distinguish these churches from the more progressive Amish Mennonite conferences on the one hand, and the more conservative Old Order Amish churches on the other.

The second meeting was held with the Maple Glen congregation, near Grantsville, Maryland, 27-28 May 1912. With this session the meeting became established as an annual conference, which it continued to be at this writing. Attending were 16 ordained men from Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Iowa, and Missouri. For the most part, those participating in this conference session represented congregations which, as the name of the conference indicates, felt that the established conferences of that day came short of certain Scriptural requirements, and that a more conservative emphasis was needed in the application of the Word of God than these afforded. On the other hand, it was felt that the Old Order Amish churches left certain things to be desired in the way of an aggressive church program. Most of the congregations interested in this new conference movement stemmed from this latter group and had never been affiliated with any conference, while in several cases their background included contacts with the district Amish Mennonite conferences.

As the conference met year after year and its policies became more clearly outlined, other congregations applied for membership, while a few which had been represented at the first meetings withdrew. In this early stage of development, the conference functioned in a very informal way. It had no written constitution and bylaws to guide it in its work. In fact it did not adopt one until 1945.

As of 2010 the conference had 104 congregations with 11,141 members.

[https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Rosedale\\_Network\\_of\\_Churches&oldid=179199](https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Rosedale_Network_of_Churches&oldid=179199)

The next issue of Sojourns will be printed for Sunday April 5, 2026. Submit items to the church office by Thursday April 2, 2026 @ 9:00 a.m.