

SOJOURNS



Vol. XXXIV, Issue 18 The Newsletter of Sonnenberg Mennonite Church September 21, 2025

SENIOR SAINTS September, 2025 Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy celebrating to our senior saints who have birthdays/anniversaries in September, 2025!

Mim Lehman (71), Sunday, September 7 Carolyn Jackson (82), Sunday, September 7 Robert Masters (70), Monday, September 8 Bob Kapper (83), Wednesday, September 17 Ken Neuenschwander (79), Sunday, Sept 21 Marvin Sommers (74), Sunday, September 21 Bill/Edna Ressler (69), Monday, September 29



Mennonite
Mission
Network

Mennonite Mission
Network announced
the appointment of
Juan Sebastian

Pacheco Lozano as the new Regional Director for Latin America. Juan succeeds Linda Shelly, who has served in this role since 2002, pioneering and fostering relationships with Mennonite churches and partners across twelve Latin American countries. In this edition of Sojourns we'll give an intro to Juan, share portions of a longer piece from MMN about Linda's legacy and some updates from the Oyangurens.)

As many of you know, our dear sister Linda Shelly will be retiring after working for Mennonite Mission Network for the past 23 years, and in Latin America more broadly for over 40 years! We are indebted to Linda's tireless work with our Latin American siblings.



In knowing about this transition, MMN has been in a process of discernment to fill this role. Juan

Sebastian Pacheco Lozano has accepted this role and will be the new Regional Director for Latin America.

Originally from Colombia, Juan brings over a decade of experience in peacebuilding, leadership, and community engagement across Latin America and the United States. He has served with organizations such as Justapaz (in Colombia), Mennonite Central Committee, and Goshen College, and has been deeply involved in intercultural ministry, advocacy, and partnership development. Juan is bilingual in Spanish and English and brings a strong Anabaptist foundation to his work.

Please welcome Juan into this new role and the steep learning curve and the journey that he will be embarking upon. You can contact Juan at juanpl@mennonitemission.net.

(The following are excerpts from a MMN article highlighting Linda's legacy. It was written by Jane Morrow, the Content Marketing Team Lead for Mission Network.)

Linda Shelly, Mennonite Mission Network director for Latin America, has retired after 23 years of serving in this capacity. All told, Linda experienced a 44-year journey of mission in Latin



America. As a young mission worker in the 1980s Linda recognized 3 things that would serve her well...

embrace
 vulnerability
 sing with joy even
 when off-key and
 trust in God's love
 through every
 challenge.
 Two years into her

Bolivian service, MCC called with a new challenge. Salvadoran refugees were fleeing violence, swimming across the Lempa River to Honduras to escape bombs dropped by their government. MCC needed a country representative to establish a long-term program, and they asked Linda to lead.

After four and a half years in Honduras, Linda enrolled at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary to process her experiences, earning an M.A. in Peace Studies. Linda then returned to Honduras and eventually became MCC's regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean from 1992 – 2001.

In 2001, as Linda prepared to leave her MCC role and move from Pennsylvania to Kansas, she received a call asking if she would consider serving as Latin America director with the newly forming Mennonite Mission Network. Initially hesitant, she committed to two years, seeing it as a way be involved in Latin America while staying in Kansas to support her mother after her father's death. But on her first trip to Latin America, mission workers and Latin American leaders urged her to stay long-term, weary of rapid leadership transitions. Linda listened and stayed.

Linda's work over her 44 year career covered many different areas of need. She advocated for women in leadership, particularly through her engagement with the Movement of Anabaptist Women doing Theology in Latin America (MTAL). She taught Sunday School, and conducted health, education and nutrition workshops

Linda worked with refugee camps and helped to create a network that unites institutions to increase opportunities for students worldwide to study Spanish language courses on the Bible, theology and leadership development from an Anabaptist perspective through the organization Community of Anabaptist Theological Institutions (CITA).

Other projects included church development and construction, applying for grants that churches used for outreach during Covid, advocating for peace and planting trees. We know Linda most intimately through her work with the Oyangurens in the Chaco where the emphasis is to work with Indigenous Evangelical churches with language preservation and education through the Qom Sayaten center.

(Below is a brief update from the Oyangurens on life in the Chaco and for a picture update see the back page of the newsletter)

In the summer we were able to visit the Mennonite Church in Bragado. We stayed at the property that the national church has for spiritual retreats. It is a beautiful place, with lots of greenery and bird sounds all the time. We recalled great moments of our lives spent there, since we attended the spiritual camps as children. It's also where Alfonsina and I met.

Alfonsina traveled to Córdoba to look for a place where Juan could live. She got an apartment in the same building where Emilia and Kiki live. That was our intention, but we didn't know if it would be possible. We thank God that even though the apartment was not for rent, the owner changed his mind and rented it to us. God is so good. Otherwise, it would have been difficult for Juan and for us. So, the siblings are neighbors, they visit each other often, they eat together, and they don't have to go out on the street to meet. Juan began his studies in physical education at the university in Córdoba. He is trying to adapt to the church where Emilia and Kiki attend.

Qom Audio Bible

Thank God we have finished the audio recording of the entire Qom Bible. We were working together with Sociedad Bíblica Argentina and Davar. Some details of editing the audios are



missing and then
they will be ready
for the creation of
an application in
which people can
read the text and at
the same time
listen to the audio.
This work took
every morning and
part of the

afternoon each day to finish in less than a year. It was hard work, but with the contribution of each one it was possible. We thank God for all those who participated in different ways.

Social support

Alfonsina has always liked to sew. At home there are many of her projects. She has started making quilts for the coming winter. Our neighbor gave Alfonsina many scraps of fabric, and she had others too, so these were enough to start this project. The intention is to give a blanket to each family of a small Toba-Qom community in the Mountains. Here winter is not so cold, but you always need one more blanket during that time.

Juan for the Oyangurens



CHURCH LIBRARY

We have 4 new books along with 2 new DVDs that were donated to the church library.

Samuel's Choice by Anne Hilty, Very Beary Stories by Stan, Jan & Mike Berenstain, Joni Eareckson Tada by Kristyn Getty and A Paintbrush for Joni by John A. Greco.

Rocky Railway - Sing and Play Express Music and Mullett Family - My Lighthouse.



Catfish Fry:

Thanks to all those who helped make the Catfish Fry a success.

\$21,775.00 has come in so far

towards the meal and all proceeds go to missions as costs were covered. We served over 750!

NEWS & NOTES



Your help is needed to fund MCC meat canning in Kidron:

We are grateful for the volunteers who will help can 30,000 pounds of turkey in the Gerber

Building behind Central Christian School from October 20-23. However, we are struggling to raise the necessary funds to pay for the canning. While we were able to secure a loan from MCC that enables the canning to move forward without delay, we need to raise \$40,000 to repay the cost of the meat and canner operations. Please consider supporting this important project helping people in need around the world, providing important nutrients through canned meat.

Checks payable to: Relief Canning, Inc, Kidron EIN #34-1325825

Mail to: Ben Froese, Treasurer
PO Box 157, Kidron, OH 44636 -or- 12828
Church Rd., Orrville, OH 44667



CAMO Collection: CAMO collects more than just medical equipment. Each month they'll focus on new or gently used items. For August & September they'll accept the items for

Women's Health. Items can be mailed or dropped off

at....
322 Westwood Ave,
Orrville, OH
44667

Bras; Sanitary Napkins (disposable only); Preemie, Infant & Pediatric Diapers;



Manual breast pumps; Post-partum supplies; Baby Bundle Kits (cloth diapers & diaper pins, baby blanket (not knitted) Infant t-shirts, baby lotion, brush or comb).



OrrVilla Retirement Community:

Is continuing its Speaker Series each lla 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.

Tuesday, October 7th PM they'll offer "Understanding Alzheimer's & Dementia". The speaker will be Jay Regalis, volunteer educator with the Greater East Ohio chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. Join us to learn more about the differences between Alzheimer's and Dementia

Jay will also share the most recent research on maintaining a healthy brain and treatments available for symptoms. If possible, please post the attached flyers or include details in your newsletter or church bulletin.



Ohio Mennonite

Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale:

We are pleased to announce that the 2025 sale raised over \$500,000 for its 60th anniversary!

We praise the Lord first and foremost. And we are grateful to YOU! The success of the Relief Sale Auction sale is a credit to the hundreds of volunteers and

countless hours invested in preparation throughout the year and implementation of the actual event.

We are also grateful for the generous sponsors, the plethora of individuals and businesses who donated items and services, and the hundreds of supporters who attended and generously supported the sale, both in person and remotely.

On behalf of the thousands of people impacted by MCC's programs around the world, we say a heartfelt, "Thank you!" You are an important part of sharing God's love and compassion for all through relief, development and peace in the name of Christ.

-Mike Palmer and Kami Sommers, for the Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale



Camp Luz: Fall Fest - October 18, 2025 from 4-8pm. Enjoy a fall evening filled with camp activities, food, friends, family and fun! This is a perfect opportunity for the entire

family to make treasured memories together at camp. Invite a friend and share with them some of the reasons you like coming to Camp Luz.

Men's Retreat - Oct 31 - Nov 2. It will be a time of digging deeper in God's word individually and with



others. There will be input times to study God's word, group discussion, games/activities, and maybe even time to take a nap! Those 18 yrs old and up in the congregation are encouraged to attend. The retreat is an excellent outreach opportunity to invite a friend.

More details can be found on their website or click on the OR code.

MCC School Kit Challenge:

Thanks to crews like this one above, MCC was able to exceed its goal of 25,000 kits to the tune



of 29,639! Thanks for your support!



Camp Luz Disc Golf: The tournament consists of 2 rounds of a modified layout of the Course. The layout will be posted to UDisc a few days ahead of the tournament. The cost for Saturday's tournament is \$30. As this is a fundraiser, payouts for both the glow round and main tournament will be in the form of merchandise provided by our event sponsors. All proceeds support the ministry of Camp Luz, including upkeep and improvements to the Disc Golf Course.

This Week in Anabaptist History ... On September 21, 1962 Harold S. Bender died. He was one of the dominant Mennonite personalities between the years of 1930 and 1962. He remains best known for his essay, "The Anabaptist Vision" (1944), in which he set forth his vision of faithful disciples gathered in the name and spirit of the Christ of peace. This vision permeated Bender's life and thought.

Bender was born on July 19,1897 in Elkhart, Indiana to George Lewis and Elsie (Kolb) Bender. At the time, Elkhart was at the hub of the Mennonite Church (MC)

Bender graduated from Elkhart High School (1914), Goshen College (Bachelor of Arts, 1918), Garrett Biblical Institute (Bachelor of Divinity, 1922), Princeton Theological Seminary (Master of Theology, 1923), Princeton University (Master of Arts, 1923), and the University of Heidelberg (Doctorate of Theology, 1935). He attended the University of Tübingen, 1923-1924. In 1923 he married Elizabeth Barbara Horsch; their children were Mary Eleanor and Nancy Elizabeth.

From 1924 to 1962 he was professor at Goshen College in church history, Bible, and sociology. He was dean of Goshen College, 1931-1944, and dean of Goshen College Biblical Seminary, 1944-1962.

Bender's birth coincided with the Mennonite renaissance or awakening of the 1880s and 1890s, which was, in part, the result of a shift in language from German to English. Mennonites during this era began accepting much within their new English-speaking, North American culture, including higher education and a renewed interest in missions, at home and abroad. Bender's own interest in education should be understood in this light.

Bender's formative years, on the other hand, came during the time of a new era of Mennonite Church (MC) leaders who attempted to establish a new Mennonite orthodoxy, in doctrine and dress, with a certain codification of both, and imbued to some degree by Fundamentalism. Daniel Kauffman was the major leader at the time (ca. 1898-1930). His *Manual of Bible Doctrines* (1898, 1914, 1929) became the definitive word for many within the church at that time.

The significance of Bender's work may, in part, be seen in terms of how he dealt with these new trends, both Fundamentalist and Liberal, within the church. Bender chose a route and approach to vision that differed from both. It stood in contrast to the Kauffman view of doctrine and dress, not so much in criticizing it directly, but rather by

circumventing it. Bender chose to express the Christian faith through the historical process and attempted to rediscover the Anabaptist vision of biblical faith and life. Bender believed he was not creating a new theology but was returning to and recovering an old faith, the faith of his own forebears.

In 1927 he created a journal, *Mennonite Quarterly Review (MQR)*, and in 1929 he founded a scholarly series, Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History, writing the first volume himself (Two Centuries of American Mennonite Literature). Bender's writings clearly indicate the scope of his efforts to bring about a return to the Anabaptist faith as he understood it.

https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Bender, Harold Stauffer (1897-1962)&oldid=148865

Need a place to hike, have a picnic or a



campfire ? Welcome to my woodland. Just call me at... 330 / 857-8893. - Virgene Steffen

The next issue of Sojourns will be printed for Sunday October 5, 2025. Submit items to the church office by Thursday October 2, 2025 @ 9:00 a.m.



Hello. How are you? We would like to share a bit about our lives with you. This time we are sending you some photos of the activities with the children from the communities near our Sayaten Center. Alfonsina has been working with some of the mothers to help organize the tasks. We ask for your prayers for the indigenous boys and girls. May God keep them under his hand of protection.