



SOJOURNS



Vol. XXXIV, Issue 19 The Newsletter of Sonnenberg Mennonite Church October 5, 2025

SENIOR SAINTS October, 2025 Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy celebrating to our senior saints who have birthdays/anniversaries in October, 2025!
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Trent/Alice Metcalf (33), Wednesday, October 1  
Pam Coleman (75), Sunday, October 5  
Fred/Vi Smith (67), Saturday, October 11  
Dan Gault (87), Monday, October 13  
Joan Steiner (90), Friday, October 17  
Ruth Steiner (79), Saturday, October 18  
Gordon/Lorene Amstutz (62), Sun, October 19  
Rhoda Hartman (94), Sunday, October 21  
David J. Geiser, (82), Thursday, October 23  
Joyce Taylor (71), Saturday, October 25  
Vi Smith (87), Monday, October 27  
Lloyd Miller (76), Friday, October 31



**Hebron Mennonite Church**

**On Two Years of Pastoring**

- By Anna Ressler

*(After 2 years of ministry Anna Ressler will be ordained October 19th at 2:00 pm at Hebron Mennonite Church in Hagerstown, Maryland. The following article is what she shared after being asked to reflect on her journey thus far.)*

Most of my life, I planned to be a teacher. For a while I thought of being a research psychologist. And other ideas came and went – writer, actor, music therapist... Pastoring arrived



late to my career considerations and yet, now that I am here, it seems exactly right. I have been a pastor for just over two years and can say with honesty and conviction that it has been good. Other things too, of course – hard, surprising, an adventure – but overall, good. And God has been in it.

On September 1, 2023, I began as pastor of Hebron Mennonite Church in Hagerstown, Maryland. Though, a week before that official start date, I said a prayer at the funeral of a congregation member I would never have the chance to get to know. Hebron is a small church, with an average attendance around thirty which means that I am not an associate pastor or youth pastor. I am the Pastor. It was a challenge to be the Pastor when I was brand-new, and when no one – not me, not the church, and not the rather vague job description – could tell me exactly what my job entailed and how to do it. But my congregation was very gracious and my conference minister, pastor mentor, and local clergy friends were very helpful and we figured it out together.

From day one (or day negative-five), my ministry has been shaped by the peculiar gifts and losses of walking with a grieving congregation.

There have been six more deaths in my time at Hebron and it has been a lot – for me and for the church. People sometimes apologize to me that I had to officiate so many funerals in my first years, but, though not exactly a “highlight,” these have been some of the most beautiful and holy experiences of my pastorate so far. It is this that has done the most to solidify my calling to this work and these moments where I’ve been most keenly aware of God’s Spirit.

Not surprisingly, my favorite part of pastoring is planning and leading weekly worship services. This is what comes most easily to me and it is consistently a life-giving part of my job. Things that I used to volunteer to do occasionally, I now get to do nearly every week (and get paid for!). I preach fairly often, but also sometimes worship lead or song-lead or experiment with other creative worship endeavors. I have found that I enjoy writing not just sermons but all sorts of other worship materials as well: dramatic sketches, character monologues, prayers, poems, responsive readings and other liturgy pieces. I am already amassing quite a collection of my own worship materials and was particularly excited to be part of a team to write worship resources for Leader magazine (Lent 2026 - coming this Spring).

In addition to building relationships with my congregants, I have gotten to know faith leaders all over the city through the Hagerstown Area Religious Council (HARC), which has led to a number of unique experiences. I participated in a musical put on by the Synagogue, joined a committee to plan an Eccumenical Good Friday Walk and am getting ready to host the first stop of the Interfaith Progressive Dinner (to celebrate the International Day of Peace). The local clergy group I meet with weekly have become some of my best friends and, when they learned I had no family visiting for Easter last spring, one of them invited me to lunch with their extended family!

On October 19th, I will be ordained. From me, this is an acknowledgment that I want to keep doing this. From my congregation and my area conference, it is an affirmation that they also see these gifts in me and wish to empower me to continue this work. I am excited and ready to take this step. And I am so grateful to have ended up

here – as a pastor, generally, but also here – in this city and with this particular congregation. It has been good. It has been a lot, sometimes, and less-defined-than-I-might-hope, sometimes. It has been surprising and strange and holy. And God has been in it.

## 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



### **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.

**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.



**Widow's Support:** a group will meet at Orrville Mennonite Church on Wednesday, January 8, 1-2:30 pm. Bring your favorite tea cup! This is a social group for any and all widows. Come join us!

Questions contact Judy King 330-201-2069 or Lou Erb 330-317-0726.



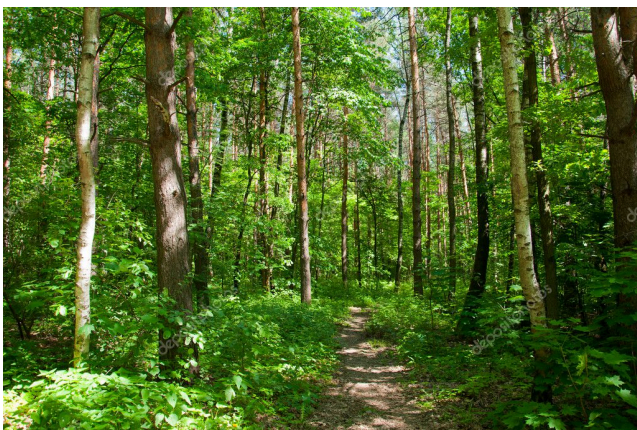
**Camp Luz: Fall Fest - October 18, 2025** from 4-8pm. Enjoy a fall evening filled with camp activities, food, friends, family and fun! This is a perfect opportunity for the entire family to make treasured memories together at camp. Invite a friend and share with them some of the reasons you like coming 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 QR code.

**Need a place to hike, have a picnic or a**



**campfire ? Welcome to my woodland.**

**Just call me at...**

**330 / 857-8893. - Virgene Steffen**

**SAVE THE DATE !**



## Ohio MCC Comforter Bash

**March 12-14, 2026**

*Times to be determined*

*Snacks and coffee/tea will be provided. Please pack your own food for meals.*

**MCC Material Resources Center**

**4080 Kidron Road, Kidron, OH 44636**



This year we are gathering at the new MCC Material Resources Center! With the new location, the format will be a bit different with the event spread over three days. We still need volunteers for knotting and trimming comforters, along with sewists to bind and finish them. **Specific times and more information will be coming soon.**

Comforter tops (60" x 80") and backs (65" x 85") are accepted throughout the year at the MCC Material Resources Center in Kidron.



[mcc.org/ohio-comforter-bash](https://mcc.org/ohio-comforter-bash)

Sarah Doerksen, MCC Great Lakes Material Resources Coordinator  
234-415-1036 or [GLOhio@mcc.org](mailto:GLOhio@mcc.org)

1 / 1



**THE SOIL  
and  
THE SEED  
PROJECT**



*Creating music, art, and Little Liturgies  
to nurture faith in Jesus  
in the ordinary moments of life*

**FREE CONCERT – OCT. 9, 6:30 PM**

**Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron, OH**

*This Week in Anabaptist History ...* On October 5, 1533, a congregation of pre Hutterites convened and excommunicated Simon (Sigmund) Schützing, their former leader. Eight days later Jakob Hutter was made bishop of the entire group; but the conflict with the 3 different camps of Anabaptists living in Moravia at the time eventually led to a complete break in fellowship.

Simon (Sigmund) Schützing (Schitzinger), an early Anabaptist, born in Rattenberg in Tyrol (according to Widmoser), was a co-worker of Jakob Hutter and his assistant in Tyrol in the late 1520s. We know of him only through the *Chronicle* and one letter by Peter Riedemann; no writings by Schützing are known. Twice Hutter and Schützing made the trip from Tyrol to Moravia together to help the beginning communities there to become established on sound Christian principles.

At that time there was one Bruderhof in Austerlitz, entrusted to another Tirolean brother, Jörg Zaunring, populated mainly by Tirolean newcomers; in 1531 it was moved to Auspitz. At that time three groups of Anabaptists lived communally in Moravia: the Gabrielites in Rossitz, and the Philippites and the Tiroleans in two groups in Auspitz. For a while they lived in friendly co-operation and unity. Then, in 1531, after an unpleasant affair involving Zaunring's wife it was decided that not Zaunring but Schützing should become the shepherd or "bishop" of the group, in fact the leader of all three groups.

Then, in 1533, Jakob Hutter came to Moravia for the third time, this time to stay. Now a lamentable conflict arose which seriously injured brotherly unity and peace. Hutter felt called by God to become the very shepherd of all brethren who lived in the community of goods, but Schützing showed no intentions to yield the office. Philipp Plener suggested that both should become co-leaders as he and Blasy Kühn were among the Philippites; Gabriel Ascherham opposed this solution; Schützing felt badly about even the suggestion of sharing in the leadership.

The congregations were confused and not able to decide (according to the description of Kaspar Braitmichel, the writer of the *Chronicle*, and most likely an eyewitness). Then a situation arose reminiscent of the story of Sapphira in Acts 5, involving the wife of Jörg Fasser. Hutter now proposed spontaneously to see whether or not such a breach of trust might not also have happened among the elders of the community, and

a search was undertaken in Schützing's house. Here they found money hidden under the roof, and Schützing readily admitted that he had known of this reservation of private money without mentioning it to the brotherhood. Unfortunately, Braitmichel does not say anything about the later fate of Schützing, who simply disappears from the pages of the *Chronicle*. It is likely that he returned to his native Tyrol.

[https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Bender,\\_Harold Stauffer\\_\(1897-1962\)&oldid=148865](https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Bender,_Harold_Stauffer_(1897-1962)&oldid=148865)

The next issue of Sojourns will be printed for Sunday October 19, 2025. Submit items to the church office by Thursday October 16, 2025 @ 9:00 a.m.



**Love INC of Wayne County** extends hope to the citizens of our community **In the Name of Christ.**

It begins with a call to the Connection Center. Trained volunteers encourage our callers through listening to their story. Information is exchanged and an invitation to prayer is offered. On many occasions, a prayer of hope becomes the foundation for transforming lives, families and communities.

One of our volunteers recently shared how each individual encounter has impacted her life story. She states: "I have been blessed by listening to people about their lives' journeys and being able to pray for their needs. Sometimes God stretches us when we would rather stay in our comfort zone."

**Connecting with hope is the beginning of transformation.** Transformation takes you out of your comfort zone! Love INC of Wayne County is here to walk alongside our neighbors in their individual journey of transformational hope. **We will use your donation to directly impact the lives of our neighbors in Wayne County!**

**Will you join us in making an impact?**

Scan the QR code or mail a check to:  
Love INC of Wayne County  
PO Box 71, Kidron, OH 44636



330.391.4802 ✉ [requests@loveincwayne.org](mailto:requests@loveincwayne.org) 🌐 [loveincwayne.org](http://loveincwayne.org)

