



SOJOURNS



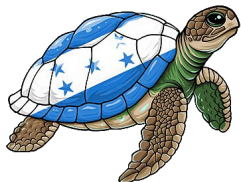
Vol. XXXIV, Issue 20 The Newsletter of Sonnenberg Mennonite Church October 19, 2025

SENIOR SAINTS October, 2025 Birthdays/Anniversaries



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

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



## Tortuga's Musings and Journeys

*(Austin is a grandson to Arlin Zuercher and nephew to Steve, Lisa and Carolyn Zuercher. O & S decided to add Austin and Griselda to our annual support in 2023. The following is an update from their last newsletter.)*

As we near the end of our first term in Honduras, it seems like we just started, but at the same time it feels like we've been here forever. Our lives have changed so much since we got on the 48 hour bus ride from Costa Rica to Peña Blanca, Honduras. We've moved between four different



houses and two vehicles. Adopted Molly. Austin has finished a BSW degree and Gris is halfway through her Psychology degree. We've eaten more fried chicken and flour tortillas than I (Austin) ever thought possible. Our base staff has grown from 4 to now 9 people from Belize, Costa Rica, Honduras, and the US. A discipleship base camp that was practically abandoned has life, ministry activity, and new building projects. I (Gris) have seen young mothers changed through God's love in El Nido. Some have decided not to commit suicide or have an abortion. Many have felt loved for the first time in years. Ordinary disciples that thought of missions as "something for the gringos" have realized that they can be part of missions as well. The list could go on and on.

As we process how our lives have changed and how we've been able to partner with what God is doing here, our hearts are filled with gratitude and our eyes with tears as we consider these past three years. Truly we are so thankful to God and each and every one of you for accompanying us on this journey. We truly could not have done even

10% of this without your faithful partnership. There have been times where we faced situations that we never imagined that were beyond our control and so difficult, but your prayers sustained us. Thank you so much!

Which brings us to this moment. Discussing with leadership at EMM and VidaNet, our MST, and through much prayer; we have decided to continue into another term directing the VidaNet base in Honduras, two and a half years to be precise. Therefore, first and foremost, we want to thank each and every one of you who has accompanied us on this journey. We are so grateful. Secondly, we would like to invite you to continue partnering with us into these next few years that God has for us here in Honduras. Please prayerfully consider investing into what God is doing in Central America to see His church mobilized, people disciplined, and God's Kingdom grow.

More details will be coming in the next few weeks on what our budget for the next term will look like and how you can be part of that specifically. But for now, thank you so much for investing in this Kingdom work in Central America and to the ends of the earth!

Thank you so much to everyone of you who has been part of this journey in Honduras these past three years. None of this would have been possible without you and our incredible staff team. Thank you!

#### **Praises:**

Refreshing time in AFA retreat in Guatemala  
El Nido- Connection with Mennonite NGO  
who will come to lead a session abuse prevention  
for the mothers.

Opportunity to train leaders in 2 different  
churches during the past few months.

Kairos Course at EMM in Pennsylvania with  
15 Hispanic leaders

Open hearts to being part of missions

#### **Prayer Requests:**

Staff finishing commitments-

When returning home, they'll be able to  
apply what they learned here.

That new people come to fill their very  
important roles.

Rest and encouragement in the midst of  
great busyness.

Financial support for next term.

Wisdom and direction as we work through  
many ministry opportunities. What to say yes and  
no to!

Gris' grandpa who was diagnosed with  
Stage 4 stomach cancer.

**Gracias!**

**- Austin and Gris**

### **NEWS & NOTES**



#### **Meat Canning:**

As of this week there is  
\$60,000 in the  
bank/pledged. 30,000  
pounds of meat have  
been ordered at a cost  
of ~ \$43,000. What

remains of the total projected costs of roughly  
\$72,000 can be paid at a later date. So, thank you  
to this answered prayer and for the many generous  
donations that have come forth.

**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**



#### **Sonnenberg Mennonite Website:**

Use this QR  
code as a quick  
link to the  
church website  
or share with  
anyone who



wants to learn more about Sonnenberg.



#### **IVEP 75-year Celebrations:**

Join us on Saturday,  
November 1, from 2:00-4:00  
p.m. at Christian Central  
School. Together, we'll enjoy  
snacks, hear stories, share  
reflections and celebrate the

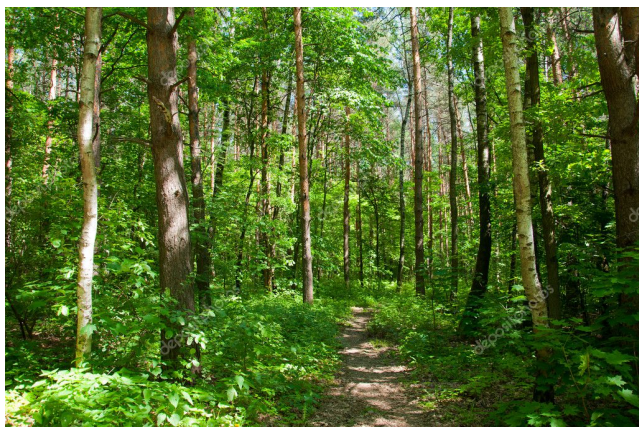
impact of IVEP across generations. [RSVP Link](#)



**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**



**Northern Indiana MCC Comforter Bash:** If you can't wait for the Ohio Comforter Bash join in on November 7-8 in Goshen, IN for their 11th annual Bash. People of all ages are invited to knot comforters at Pleasant View

Church (58529 County Road 23).

Volunteers are especially needed on Saturday! Door prizes will be awarded throughout the day on Saturday. Must be present to win. Lunch available for a donation on both days. All necessary tools will be provided. Donations will be accepted to help cover the costs of materials and supplies. Contacts - LaVera Schlabach (574.538.9629) and Donna Stoltzfus (tdstoltz48@gmail.com).

# 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

1 / 1



## 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, November 4th they'll offer "Fall Prevention for Older Adults".** The speaker will be Northeast Professional Home Care's physical therapist Mari Otterstetter and her team leading a hands-on workshop covering common causes of falls and effective prevention strategies for older adults. All are welcome to attend and gain valuable insights and practices to help prevent falls.

*This Week in Anabaptist History ...* on October 19, 1868 Johannes Molenaar, a German Mennonite pastor in Monsheim, a village near Worms, Rhenish Hesse, Germany died.

Johannes was born at Zaandam in Holland, October 27, 1810, but spent his youth in Krefeld, Germany, where his father Isaak Molenaar I served the Mennonite congregation as pastor. Johannes attended the Gymnasium in Kreuznach, studied theology at the University of Bonn, married Alwine Beindorff, a highly educated woman, poet and composer and in 1836 became preacher of the Mennonite congregation at Monsheim and made his influence felt far beyond the confines of his parish.

With his fellow ministers Jakob Ellenberger of Friedelsheim and Johann Risser of Sembach he was in close fraternal sympathy. Together they compiled a ministers' manual in 1852 and a hymnal in 1854, which latter was principally his work. He drew Albert Knapp of Stuttgart into collaboration. He also worked out a catechism in 1841, which he published in a new edition in 1854 and which in shortened form was still in use in the 1950s in the congregations of the Palatinate and Hesse.

In addition Johannes Molenaar published a collection of sermons, for every Sunday and church holiday, with the title *Evangelische Stimmen* (1884), and also *Andenken an die beiden heiligen Tage der Taufe und der ersten Abendmahlsfeier*. He also translated some of the popular writings of his brother-in-law J. de Liefde from the Dutch: *Des Christen Einnahme und Ausgabe*, for the benefit of the rescue home at Hassloch in the Palatinate, *Der Sträfling*, and other stories.

Molenaar was active in the founding of the rescue home at Rockenhausen in the Palatinate. He was well acquainted with a number of Protestant ministers, such as Ohly, Helferich, and Mallet. W. H. Riehl, author and professor of cultural history, was a frequent guest in his home, and gave him this tribute: "Among the educated preachers of the Mennonites there are, by the way, men before whose scholarship and education the light of many a Catholic and Protestant divine may be as dim as a street light in Westrich." He was also a personal friend of Hermann von Beckerath and Heinrich von Gagern, minister of state.

Johannes Molenaar was an enthusiastic sponsor of the Evangelical Alliance, and took part in their meetings in Berlin (1857) and Geneva (1861). He was also a loyal coworker on the *Mennonitische Blätter*. His description of a trip in Switzerland is particularly interesting (*Menn. Bl.*, 1861 and 1862).

Molenaar's work at Monsheim was not without its difficulties. In 1838 a part of the congregation, dissatisfied with his preaching, left Monsheim and joined the Ibersheim congregation. In his family life he endured great sorrow. His wife was afflicted with a long nervous illness until her death in 1865. His strength was broken. He had to have an assistant.

Upon his death Christian Böhmer, a Protestant minister, wrote a warm poem, and a member of his congregation also wrote a poem, *Denkmal der Liebe* (Monument of Love) which appeared in the *Mennonitisches Blätter* of 1870.

[https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Molenaar,\\_Johannes\\_\(1810-1868\)&oldid=145895](https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Molenaar,_Johannes_(1810-1868)&oldid=145895)

The next issue of *Sojourns* will be printed for Sunday November 2, 2025. Submit items to the church office by Thursday October 27, 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)