

Seminars for Annual Meeting 2019

Friday, 4 to 5 p.m.

1. **“Meet Your Conference Leaders”** (for youth delegates) — Amanda Bleichty

Youth and young adults ... now that you've begun to experience annual meeting — worship, delegate sessions and fellowship — you surely have questions! Join your conference ministers and moderators for a conversation about the conference and the church. Church leaders are eager to hear your thoughts and questions.

2. **“Preserving the Cheyenne Language”** — Willis Busenitz

Come hear a history of Mennonite involvement in the preservation of the Cheyenne language. We'll talk about present efforts and get a status report on current Cheyenne language usage.

3. **“Two or Three: Using Matthew 18 for Hard Conversations”** — Ted Lewis and Lois Janzen Preheim

This workshop offers an introduction to Matthew 18's framework for conflict resolution and interpersonal forgiveness that the Conflict Management Support Team wants to explore in more depth through longer workshops with congregations. Participants will learn about resolving hurts and misunderstandings either with one other person or with the aid of a third-party facilitator. The goal is for churches to strengthen their internal capacities for prevention and low-level interventions for peacemaking processes.

4. **“Cultural Literacy: Race Relations in the Past, Present, and Future”** — Abraham Funchess

Using Iowa's Cedar Valley as a case study, Rev. Abraham Funchess, Executive Director of the Waterloo Human Rights Commission, will address the history of race relations in the American Midwest. In conversation with audience members, the current state of affairs will be explored, and implementing positive change for the future will be discussed.

5. **“Formed in the Forest: Practicing Prayer in God's Creation”** — Rachelle Luitjens and Corey Miller

Are you tired of the noise and information overload? Take a moment to slow down and join us outdoors in God's creation while we practice praying together in new ways such as praying through a psalm, imaginative prayer, Lectio Divina, and Visio Divina. We'll take a break from the busyness of life around us by engaging our bodies, minds and souls in prayer while walking through the “forest” located directly south of the baseball diamond on the IMS campus.

6. **“No Pastors Allowed!*”** — Lyle Miller

*What are the biggest challenges pastors face in their own financial situations? What are the stress points and where can they turn? Most importantly, how can the congregation help? In this workshop, we'll explore research on how pastors feel about their own financial situations, including particular challenges they face. We'll also explore a \$1 million Pastoral Financial Wellness grant for pastors made possible through Lilly Endowment Inc.'s “National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders,” and we'll consider the role congregational leaders can play in supporting their pastors through this grant. (*Just kidding, pastors are indeed welcome, even encouraged, to join this presentation!)*

7. **“Journeying with the Spirit and Each Other”** — Anna Geyer

How do we learn to listen to the Spirit? How do we live together as a community committed to each other and to the world? These questions have been the foundation of Anna Geyer's thought over the years as she welcomes people to her backyard pizza venue, her you-pick flower garden, and a newly-created folk school. Hear how this journey has transformed her understanding of ministry and mission.

8. **“Curbing Physical and Spiritual Hunger through Farming”** — Chris Becker and Cal Zehr

Growing Hope Farm is a ministry in the Twin Cities with a vision for “health, learning, economic opportunity and healing that inspires people of all cultures, faiths and backgrounds to be in life-sustaining relationships with one another and the land.” Hungry World Farm, near Tiskilwa, Illinois, “inspires and educates people about healthy fields, food and bodies while caring for the earth.” Come learn about these efforts to address both physical and spiritual hunger.

Saturday, 4 to 5 p.m.

1. **“Conversation with Our Speaker”** — Cheryl Bridges Johns

Bring your questions, comments, and dreams to share space with Cheryl Bridges Johns, keynote speaker, as she hosts a question-and-answer session about living in the Holy Spirit.

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4. **“Why I Came and Why We Keep Coming to the U.S.”** — Margie Caraballo

This workshop will provide a broad overview of the causes of immigration, with time for discussion regarding detention, deportation, and action steps we can take to support our immigrant brothers and sisters.

5. **“Group Karaoke or Four-Part Formation? Singing Together as a Formational Practice”** — Amanda Bleichty, Barb Tieszen, Dylan Keller

Songs and singing have long held an important place in Mennonite tradition and formation. For many of us (though certainly not all), Mennonite hymnals and four-part harmony have shaped our understandings of God and of the church. We are blessed with diverse collections of songs, many that gather us together, open our eyes to the wider world around us, transform us into the people of God, and send us back out into the world with direction and purpose. Join us for an hour-long journey of singing from Sing the Journey and Sing the Story (the Hymnal supplements), prayer, and storytelling as we discover aspects of who we are as God’s people.

6. **“It’s OK to Talk about Disabilities”** — Bonnie Miller

Many churches really don’t talk about how to include folks with disabilities, and, interestingly, those folks quit showing up at church. Let’s share our stories and then brainstorm together how to make church doable for those touched by disabilities. Bonnie Miller, a representative from Anabaptist Disabilities Network, will share ideas utilized by other churches to meet a variety of needs.

7. **“Building Communities of Peace”** — Holly Blosser Yoder and David Boshart

What does it mean to proclaim the gospel in a country in crisis? To be present with a rainforest people whose culture is in transition? To live out one’s faith in a congregation that receives refugees from around the world? Hear stories and updates from our mission partnerships in Ecuador and Venezuela. Learn how the Colombian Mennonite Church, Mennonite Mission Network, and Central Plains Mennonite Conference partner to support sisters and brothers building communities of peace.

8. **“A Worldwide Body: Mennonites in the USA and in the Democratic Republic of Congo”** — Rod Hollinger-Janzen

Through prayer and factual comparisons, we will examine and compare our American situation with that of the DR Congo, and then ask what response we might have to the situation of our sisters and brothers in Mennonite churches in the DR Congo.