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BMC November NewsNet

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1. Wabash Church of the Brethren Joins SCN



BMC is delighted to welcome the [Wabash Church of the Brethren](#) in Wabash, Indiana, as the latest member of the Supportive Communities Network (SCN) as a publicly affirming congregation. A small, but very vital congregation, Wabash COB understands itself as a “Christian congregation that values the learning and spiritual growth that comes from prayer, study, dialogue and questions about scripture.” One way that the congregation expresses its call to continue the work of Jesus is by being open and accepting. Welcome, Wabash COB!

2. Progressive Brethren Gathering

You missed the early registration, but can still register for the Progressive Brethren Gathering that begins this Friday evening, November 15th at the Beacon Heights Church of the Brethren in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Sharon Groves, Director of the Religion and Faith Program for the Human Rights Campaign, is the featured presenter. The weekend will include worship, a screening of the film, *Love Free or Die*, breakout sessions, a dance performance, good food and excellent conversation around the theme *Holy Longing: This is My Body*. [Click here](#) to register for the Gathering.

Significant portions of the Gathering will be streamed live. To connect, go to: <http://new.livestream.com/livestreamcob/ProgressiveGathering2013>. Recordings of all sessions will also be posted as each session concludes. Views are welcome to add respectful comments and questions to an online chat that can be accessed through a login via Facebook or Livestream.

3. Kay Returns from WCC with Deepened Perspective

Kay returns from the World Council of Churches General Assembly with a deepened

awareness of the justice work before Christian denominations. A highlight for her was seeing this justice work in action while attending an [LGBTQ Christians Gathering](#) in Celebration of the WCC 10th Assembly. Here, an international community of LGBTQ Christian leaders stood in solidarity with Korean LGBTQ Christians in their call for the Korean government, churches and citizens to end social abuses. She was also struck by individuals connected to [Brethren](#) and [Mennonite](#) traditions who clearly called peace churches to fulfill their call for justice by stepping up for LGBTQ equality. You can read these stories and more at Kay's blog, [BMCinBusan](#).

4. Welcoming Dialogue/BMC Event in Lancaster

Fashioned in Love: Biblical and Theological Foundations for Inclusion is the title of Megan Ramer's presentation at a dinner event scheduled for November 17 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The event, for which nearly 200 are registered, is being sponsored by the Welcoming Dialogue Group of Lancaster (a member of the Supportive Communities Network) and BMC. Megan is pastor of the Community Mennonite Church in Chicago, Illinois. Her presentation will reflect some of the writing that she did when her credentials were reviewed after she officiated at several civil unions. BMC extends a special thanks to Bob Wyble and the Welcoming Dialogue Group for all of their work in preparing for this event. Good luck, Megan!

5. Board Meeting Report



The BMC board enjoyed the hospitality of Peace Mennonite Church in Lawrence, Kansas on October 18-20. The board welcomed Keith Gerber of Sarasota, Florida, as its newest member, and worked its way through a lengthy agenda that included fundraising strategies, program reports, and new program proposals for a BMC/Pink Menno Conference, a BMC Gathering and BMC Family Camp. In addition, the board adopted a balanced budget and scheduled its next meeting and schedule of phone conferences calls. [Click here](#) to

read the Executive Director Report by Carol Wise.

6. BMC Family Camp - Interested?

What is often a source of fun and excitement for many children is camp. But for LGBTQ families and also for families that do not fit the "traditional" concept of what constitutes a family, the idea of camp can bring anxiety and concern for parents because of the potential for harmful things to be said or taught. A group of families in Indiana is interested in the possibility of offering a weekend BMC Family Camp for queer families and non-queer families who are interested in a welcoming and affirming environment. Interested? Please contact the BMC office at bmc@bmclgbt.org and let us know.

7. Kaleidoscope Coordinator to Midwest Schools

After the Progressive Brethren Gathering in Fort Wayne, Indiana, the Kaleidoscope Coordinator will be on a collegiate circuit of the Midwest. Kay will speak in classes at Manchester University and Goshen College on the intersections of LGBTQ and Christian identities. From there, she will offer a nonviolence training for queer organizers at Goshen College before heading to Bluffton University to lead a Safe Zone Training. Such exchanges will support efforts of providing safety, education and equality on these Brethren and Mennonite campuses.

8. BMC Community News

Helen Herbst, a long time supporter and friend of BMC, died on October 19th at the age of 97. Helen grew up in Pennsylvania, graduated from Elizabethtown College, and taught high school before marrying and moving to La Verne, California, where her husband, Albert, taught at the University of La Verne. Helen was an ardent fan of PFLAG, a faithful member of the La Verne Church of the Brethren, an avid learner, and exceptional, accepting woman. BMC extends our deep sympathies to her family. Helen will be dearly missed.



Josih Hostetler and Jon Magley were married at the La Verne



Church of the Brethren on October 13. Jon and Josih both attended Manchester College, and Josih was the BMC volunteer for two years following his graduation. Congratulations, Jon and Josih!

Congratulations are extended to former **BMC board member, David McFadden**, who was recently named as the new president of Manchester University in North Manchester, Indiana. Dave will leave his position as the Dean of the new College of Pharmacy to become president in 2014. Well done!

Jane Ramseyer Miller, artistic director of the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses ([GALA Choruses, Inc.](#)) and the [One Voice Mixed Chorus](#) in Minnesota, shares how her Mennonite background helped to shape her as an artist in a [recent interview](#) done for GALA Choruses.

Amy Short and Carol Wise traveled this month to Hyattsville, Maryland and Germantown, Pennsylvania, to conduct interviews for the BMC Oral History Project. A dozen interviews were conducted. They capture important moments in the history of Hyattsville Mennonite and Germantown Mennonite, two congregations who experienced discipline and even expulsion (Germantown) from their conferences for their welcome of lgbt people. Amy has now compiled over 35 interviews and 50+ hours of tape for the Oral History Project.



9. Marriage Equality Update

Hawaii and Illinois are poised to become the 15th and 16th states to enact marriage equality. Bills for marriage equality have made it through both houses of the legislature in Illinois and Hawaii, and now await the signature of the governors, both of whom are expected to sign. Can you name the other 14 states that practice marriage equality?*

10. Season of Gratitude

Upon us is the spirit of thanksgiving. Please consider expressing your gratitude for all BMC is and has been by making an [online contribution](#), or by sending a check to BMC/Box 6300/Minneapolis, MN 55406. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

BMC Staff

[Carol Wise](#) - Executive Director, SCN Coordinator

[Kay Guyer](#) - Kaleidoscope Coordinator, BMC Volunteer

*In chronological order: Massachusetts, California, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Maine, Maryland, Washington, Delaware, Rhode Island, Minnesota, New Jersey. In addition, the District of Columbia, the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Suquamish Tribe, the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, the Santa Ysabel Tribe, the Colville Tribal Council of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Nation, and the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes all issue same-sex marriage licenses.

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