

the Mirror

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A Renewed Partnership

There was just enough sunlight shining through the doors of the Lancaster Longhouse on a Tuesday evening this past spring for leadership from Circle Legacy Center and Mennonite Life to sign their names at the bottom of a new memorandum of understanding, kicking off a renewed commitment to partnership. The inked signatures followed an evening gathering at the 1719 Museum, where



(Left to right) MaryAnn Robins, president of Circle Legacy Center, watches as Heather Strahin, 1719 Museum administrator, and Joann McLaughlin, Circle Legacy Center vice president, sign a new MOU.

representatives of both organizations shared stories, gifts, and words of gratitude and intent.

Circle Legacy Center (CLC) is a non-profit dedicated to empowering local Native Americans through education and community representation, honoring enduring traditions of the

past and celebrating today's thriving contemporary cultures. The 1719 Museum and CLC have worked in partnership since 2007, collaborating on projects like Maize & Snitz Fest at the 1719 Museum and representation at local Indigenous cultural events, such as the Lawilowan American Indian Festival, and at Blue Rock Heritage Center events.

Exchanging gifts is an important element of renewing this partnership. One of the gifts shared by Mennonite Life at this year's signing—beebalm plants—symbolized the intertwined history of the land beneath the longhouse and its cultural communities. The native herb has been used by both Indigenous and Swiss-German cultures for a variety of culinary and medicinal benefits.

As Circle Legacy Center and Mennonite Life signed a new MOU, the gathering was an opportunity to reflect on years of partnership and to look forward to future collaboration.

A symbol of friendship and respect

At the 2019 Memorandum of Understanding signing between Mennonite Life and Circle Legacy Center, former Executive Director Jean Kilheffer Hess received a gift from Joann McLaughlin.

The small bundle wrapped in red fabric and ribbon holds tobacco, a sacred material in Indigenous traditions and used in ceremonies for prayer offerings as a way to give thanks and show respect. Tucked into the knot of the ribbon is a feather, a bridge between the earth and sky, carrying prayers for healing and connection.

The signing itself carried symbolism as rain began to fall as the signing started, prompting MaryAnn Robins to reflect that it was "the Creator crying tears of joy" at the renewal of the relationship. The gift remains a reminder of partnership and mutual respect.

Mennonite Life welcomes Christa Mylin!

Read a reflection from our new Executive Director



Director's Reflection: Encountering Generosity

Christa Mylin, Executive Director

After college, I did a year of service and learning through Mennonite Central Committee in Southeast Asia. There, I encountered generosity in many ways. A family graciously welcomed me into their home and family routines. Coworkers provided cultural insights and tours of their hometowns. Christians from around the world invited me in as we worshipped together as one body with many different traditions and languages. It was in this international setting that I first met, befriended, and worked with Mennonites. Growing up in Pennsylvania but outside of Mennonite circles, I did not know much about Mennonites. The positive experiences in Southeast Asia are part of the reason why I am now with Mennonite Life. Like my own introduction to other Christians in Southeast Asia, Mennonite Life is tied to an international community of people with a wide variety of faith experiences, that flows from a generous God. How have other people been generous to you? What do you have in abundance that you can offer others? What stories in your community are valuable to you? I look forward to learning more together in this place.

Collections Feature: Froschauer Bible

Join Mennonite Life as we continue to commemorate 500 years of Anabaptism at a special Collections Feature showcasing centuries-old Froschauer Bibles. Mennonite Life Archivist & Librarian Julia Wiker and guest speaker Isaac Lowry, Curator at Washington County Mennonite Historical Library in Hagerstown, Maryland, will review the history of the Froschauer Bible's multiple printings and highlight the unique traits of several Bibles owned by Mennonite Life. This event takes place Thursday, November 6, 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room.

The Froschauer Bible, completed in the year 1529, was the earliest complete Bible of the Protestant Reformation, as well as the first German-language Bible to be used widely by Anabaptists. Though it was not initially intended for an Anabaptist audience, the Froschauer Bible was quickly adopted by the movement in its early years. Some Plain Anabaptist communities still use the Bible today.

A prominent highlight of the event is a rare, illustrated 1560 Meyer Family Froschauer Bible. The Bible features beautiful hand-colored images throughout the text.

This Collections Feature will not be recorded or live-streamed. The event is complimentary but requires registration.

Register at: mennonitelife.org/events



The 2025 Collections Feature will showcase the 1560 Meyer Family Froschauer Bible and its vivid hand-colored illustrations.



COLLECTIONS FEATURE: Froschauer Bible

November 6, 2025
7:00–8:30 p.m.
in the Mennonite Life
Community Room

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Help preserve and store museum objects

Mennonite Life Curator Emily Immel recently invited members, donors, and guests into museum storage for a behind the scenes look at how Mennonite Life preserves objects like show towels and quilts in our collection. These delicate textiles are rolled onto archival, acid-free tubes with archival tissue, wrapped in protective Mylar, and tagged with their identification number and photograph to ensure long-term care and accessibility.

Our collection currently houses 86 show towels and 83 quilts. Will you join our effort to give these cultural treasures the careful treatment they deserve? Visit mennonitelife.org/donate or take part in ExtraGive! ExtraGive is a one-day fundraising event for non-profit organizations that serve Lancaster County residents.



► **ExtraGive is on Friday, November 21.**

Scan the QR code or visit extragive.org/organization/mennonite-life to donate.



Online Catalog Featured Artifact

Got an eye for faces? A recent addition to our archive—a panorama photo of the 2017 Herr family reunion (and 300th anniversary of the family's arrival in Lancaster County) features a lot of people, and a lot of smiling faces! We're working at identifying the family members pictured.

If you would like to help, you can view a larger version of the photo at mennonitelife.catalogaccess.com/photos/52047. Send your insights to Julia Wiker at archives@mennonitelife.org.

You can also visit the Mennonite Life Library to see the photo in person.



Native American Heritage Month Tours



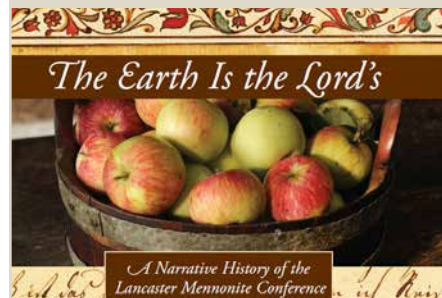
November 8, 10:00 & 11:30 am
1719 Museum

Rare & Used Book Auction



November 14, 6:30 pm
Community Room

The Earth is the Lord's: Updated Edition Release



December 4, 6:30 pm
Community Room



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Don't forget to renew!

Membership renewals are coming up. Don't miss out on exclusive member perks and access in 2026.

- Unlimited complimentary admission to the 1719 Museum, Mennonite Life Museum, and the Biblical Tabernacle Experience (one adult with Individual membership; two adults with Family membership)
- Members-only access to online research materials
- Complimentary access to our archives and library
- Free on-site use of [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)
- And more!



Sign up or renew at mennonitelife.org
or call **717.393.9745**



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