

the Mirror

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Froschauer Bibles on display

In honor of the 500th anniversary of Anabaptism, the 2025 Collections Feature, held at Mennonite Life on November 6, centered around the Swiss Froschauer Bible, a version of the Bible loved by early Anabaptists.



Archivist & Librarian Julia Wiker and guest speaker Isaac Lowry highlighted the Froschauer Bible at the 2025 Collections Feature.

After selecting the topic, Mennonite Life Archivist & Librarian Julia Wiker reached out to Isaac Lowry, Curator at Washington County Mennonite Historical Library in Maryland. Isaac had been researching the various editions of the *Täufer testament*, or

Anabaptist New Testament—a term for New Testament reprints that used the Froschauer as a model. He graciously agreed to collaborate on the event.

Julia and Isaac's joint research and findings revealed a wealth of information. Keep an eye out for a future in-depth article in *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage*! They also enjoyed practicing their German language skills together, and would not have been able to uncover some of the finer details without the ability to read German.

At the Collections Feature, sixteen seldom-seen books, including a sermon book and a rare concordance, meant to be used with Froschauer Bibles, were on display. Some of the books were donated, while others were purchased. They were acquired over a span of 55 years, from 1964 to 2019. Sharing the history and beauty of these treasured volumes with over sixty attendees was a rewarding experience.

Select Bibles and findings featured at the event are now viewable in an online exhibit, *Traces Inside Treasures: Interesting Discoveries in Froschauer Bibles at Mennonite Life*. View the exhibit at mennonitelife.org/learn.



Tour Guide Training at the 1719 Museum

The 1719 Museum seeks community members to guide tours of the Herr House and Lancaster Longhouse in the spring, summer, and fall. Volunteers are asked to commit to attending all training sessions and at least one tour date per month during the museum's open season.

Tour Guide training will be held the following dates:

- ▶ Saturday, February 21, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
- ▶ Friday, March 6, 6:00 – 8:00 pm
- ▶ Friday, March 20, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

For more information, contact **Heather Strahin** at museum@mennonitelife.org or **717.464.4438**.

Saturday Open Libraries are back!

The Mennonite Life library will be open three Saturdays this winter and spring, with staff and volunteers ready to assist you.

February 21 | March 21 | April 18
10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Use of the library's research materials is complimentary for Mennonite Life members, and \$7 for non-members. The Mennonite Life Museum and museum store will be open as well.



Director's Reflection: Lasting Values

Christa Mylin, Executive Director

Sausages are not known as weapons of resistance. But that is exactly how the Swiss reformers used them during Lent in 1522. Reformers ate sausages to protest the Catholic Church, and, more recently, the Swiss Reformed Church, Catholics, and Anabaptists reconciled with a sausage meal. Lent begins this month, and it is not typically celebrated by Anabaptists. I wonder if, in their protest, the Swiss reformers lost some of the goodness of Lent and the opportunity it provides to reflect on what God has given us.

Throughout history, people have used food to demonstrate their allegiance to a group. The food is a symbol of the deep convictions each group holds. As we enter Lent this year, I wonder what "sausages" I am holding onto today that will be less meaningful in 500 years. This season is an opportunity to re-evaluate the things in life that we value and to put our energy into those values so they will last another 500 years.

A Shared Story

"When I was in school, my school bus driver picked up the daughter of Irene, my mother's cousin, in New Holland. Little did I know the quilt was carefully preserved in that house, later to be delivered to the [Mennonite Life] museum." - Sylvia Yoder

In November 2025, a group of women from Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster visited Mennonite Life to see the Decorated & Plain museum exhibit and explore the library. As they engaged with facilitators Mary Lou Weaver Houser and Donna Stoltzfus, several women shared about their personal connections to displayed items.

When Mary Lou emphasized the unique style and value of a quilted coverlet on display, Sylvia Yoder recognized the quilt, made by her great, great grandmother, Susanna Sensenig, married to Moses Gehman. The quilt was made around 1900 and features appliqué farm scenes.



This intricately detailed coverlet is on display at the Mennonite Life museum



"I like all the details of children going to school, picking apples, carrying water, geese flying, buildings and animals, the outhouse and working in the fields," said Sylvia. "I wonder if [Susanna] sensed things would soon change and she wanted to capture life as one would a photograph."

"I have made quilts for each of our children and am now working on quilts for our grandchildren," Sylvia said. "My daughter, Rebecca, and her 7-year-old daughter also quilt. Rebecca is working on a randomly pieced quilt not following straight lines, and my granddaughter is using the applique technique. It feels like it is coming full circle back to my great, great grandmother, Susanna."

The Mirror is a newsletter published by Mennonite Life, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602; Abby Hershberger, editor. Phone: 717.393.9745; fax: 717.393.8751; e-mail: storyteller@mennonitelife.org. Please send address changes to The Mirror, Mennonite Life, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602-1499.



Communion at the Biblical Tabernacle Experience

The Visitors Center recently welcomed a local church congregation to the Biblical Tabernacle Experience. Over 100 people of all ages gathered to worship, see the tabernacle, and take communion together. For church groups, Sunday school classes, and youth groups, the tabernacle can be a dynamic part of a sermon illustration or lesson series.

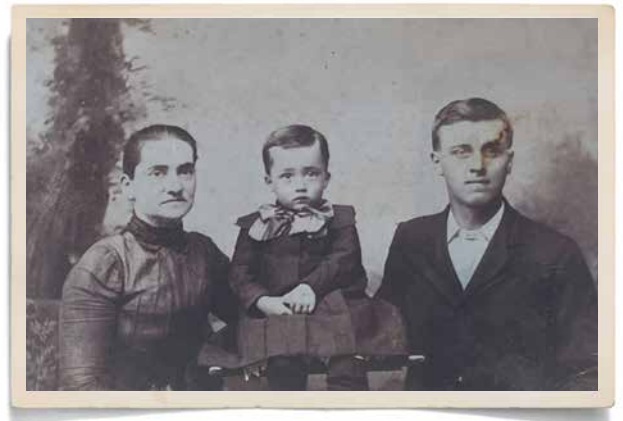
Visitors Center staff and volunteers encourage guests from visiting congregations to focus on God's desire to dwell among people as they learn the story behind the structure. Some guests notice a difference as soon as they step into the tabernacle room, feeling a closer connection with God as well as their fellow worshippers.

The Visitors Center would love to welcome your congregation to a private viewing of the Biblical Tabernacle Experience! Visit mennonitelife.org/biblical-tabernacle or call 717.299.0954 for more information.

Featured Object: Hand-knit Stockings

The pair of hand-knit stockings pictured here is made from homegrown Lancaster County flax. Around 1900, Jonathan (Jonie) Kauffman (pictured top left) grew and processed the flax on their farm, while his wife, Annie Kauffman (top right), spun the fibers and knitted the stockings. Before the rise of inexpensive factory-made garments, many households relied on their own fields and skills to clothe their families. Flax demanded months of labor including planting, harvesting, breaking, scutching, and spinning, before any knitting could even begin.

The photographs of Jonathan and Annie and their family remind us that this work was done by real people. At the turn of the century, Mennonite families worked together to accomplish farm and household tasks. This example of stockings is evidence that everyday garments were once a product of knowledge, time, and collaboration rather than something simply bought off the shelf. Their creation from seed to clothing reflects the values of thrift, resourcefulness, and self-sufficiency that shaped Mennonite farm life.



Author Talk:
Inside Mennonite Life & Thought

with Karl Landis



March 5, 6:30 pm
Community Room

Workshop:
Genealogy for Tomorrow



March 24, 6:00 pm
Community Room

Author Talk:
Little Life Words

with Jenny Gehman



May 14, 6:30 pm
Visitors Center

View more event details at mennonitelife.org/events

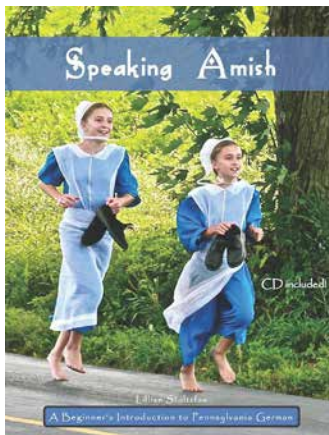


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Spring 2026 Pennsylvania Dutch Conversations

Kannst du Deitsch schwetze? Join others eager to learn and speak Pennsylvania Dutch together! All levels of experience are welcome — from beginner to fluent speaker. Lessons will focus on casual conversation.

▶ Sessions meet **March 3, March 17, April 7, April 21, May 5 and May 19, from 6:30–8:00 pm in the Mennonite Life Community Room**

The recommended text for the group is *Speaking Amish: A Beginner's Introduction to Pennsylvania German* by Lillian Stoltzfus. Please plan to attend all sessions and register for the series by calling **717.393.9745** or emailing Ruth Martin at customercare@mennonitelife.org. Each session has a \$5 suggested donation.

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