



Mechanic Grove Church of the Brethren

Continuing the Work of JesusPeacefully, Simply, Together

May 25, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Mechanic Grove Church of the Brethren in the Diaspora.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Since I began as the interim senior pastor on February 1, I have been sending weekly letters to the congregation to help keep us connected when so many were not attending in-person worship because of COVID concerns. I felt it was very important for me to communicate with the congregation so that everyone was informed about church life when we were apart.

Now that more people have received their vaccinations and in-person worship attendance has increased, I do not feel the need to continue this weekly letter. Therefore, this letter will be my last. Sermon manuscripts will also not be sent out in advance of the Sunday service. However, printed manuscripts can be available upon request to Tina.

This coming Sunday will be one of three combined outdoor summer worship services in the grove. Worship will begin at 9:30 and followed by Sunday school at 10:45. The morning message will be in the form of a monologue featuring John Kline, a Brethren leader during the Civil War period who was killed by Confederate soldiers near his home in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. Kline will come with his famous horse, Nell. Accommodations have been made for people needing assistance to go from their cars to the pavilion. Reserved parking will be available close to the pavilion area with golf carts to transport those to the grove who need assistance.

On Sunday June 6 I will begin a series of sermons on *Scriptural Stories from the High Seas*. The first high sea story will focus on Peter: The Drowning Disciple. Check the newsletter for other sermons in this series during the month of June.

For this week's piece of personal trivia, I will focus on my German heritage. As a child growing up in Lebanon County my father told me that Pennsylvania Dutch was often spoken in his home. My father always had trouble with his V's and W's. Dad always enjoyed speaking Pennsylvania Dutch. He joined a group of other persons interested in perpetuating the Pennsylvania German (Dutch) language and culture in 1949 for a night class on the Pennsylvania Dutch language. Out of that class came a picnic to celebrate Pennsylvania Dutch culture which led to Pennsylvania Dutch Days in Hershey which took place for many years as a week-long celebration in August centered in Hershey Park, drawing tens of thousands to Hershey for Pennsylvania Dutch Days. Dad was vice-chairman of the event and my mom and I sold shoo-fly pies. I played the organ before the programs at the Hershey Park Bandshell

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for a number of years as a youth. Whenever dad came in contact with an Amishman, dad would launch into Pennsylvania Dutch. He liked to pray in Pennsylvania Dutch and as a child in church we would sometimes sing Pennsylvania Dutch choruses at prayer meeting. At dad's memorial service, I had an old minister offer the prayer in Pennsylvania Dutch. I know dad would have been pleased. I do not speak Pennsylvania Dutch but I took four years of German in high school and on occasion still read from my German Bible. With that, I will conclude by saying Auf Wiedersehen.

'May the Lord bless you and keep you; and make his face to shine upon you; and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you; and give you peace.' *Numbers 6:24-26*

Bob Kettering, Interim Senior Pastor