



BMC NewsNet October 2012

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1. New BMC Video Clip



Amy Short, in her work on the BMC Elder History Project, has been busy collecting stories, primarily from older BMC individuals, but also from some younger ones as well. Currently she has over 40 hours of taped interviews that will be preserved for our archives, with some utilized for trainings or simply shared as a celebration of our strength and variety as a community.

Amy has pulled some of the material together into a short video clip. [Click here](#) to view the clip.

2. Time to Register for the Progressive Brethren Gathering!

Holy Work: Becoming a Beloved Community is the theme of this year's Progressive Gathering, which will be held at the La Verne Church of the Brethren on October 26-28 in La Verne, California. It promises to be an intriguing and exciting weekend. Katy Gray Brown and Abby Fuller from Manchester University will explore the dynamics of social justice movements and help us understand how the Church of the Brethren has both impacted, and been impacted by, important social change. A film screening, a night of music coordinated by Shawn Kirschner that features the music of social movements, powerful worship by the La Verne congregation, including a sermon by Father Greg Boyle (founder of Homeboy Industries), good food and lively conversations, will all be included in the weekend. Everyone is invited to the event, which is co-sponsored by BMC, Womaen's Caucus, and Open Table Cooperative. To register, do to progressivebrethrengathering.eventbrite.com/.



3. New SCN Congregation

BMC is very pleased to welcome [Southside Fellowship](#) as the newest member of the Supportive Communities Network (SCN) as a publicly affirming congregation. The growing congregation worships at the chapel on the Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana. Their beautiful statement of welcome reads:



Southside Fellowship is an inclusive Anabaptist/Mennonite congregation that understands faith as a journey. At the core of our community is the boundless love of God, the justice-centered life of Jesus, and the mystery of the Spirit. We welcome all people to join us, including those who have been excluded elsewhere because of gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, ability, economic status, marital status, age or religious uncertainty.

4. Positions Open

The Supportive Community Network (SCN) is comprised of Mennonite and Brethren congregations and groups that are affirming of LGBT people. Two SCN congregations have listed job openings with BMC:

Calgary Inter-Mennonite Church in Calgary, Alberta, is beginning the search for a new pastor following the retirement of Brenda Dyck, who skillfully served that congregation for seventeen years. Calgary Mennonite has been an SCN congregation since 1997, and is a vibrant and engaged community despite being expelled from three Mennonite conferences for its welcoming stance. Please encourage qualified individuals to apply by contacting the search committee at cimchurchsearch@gmail.com. Additional information about the congregation can be found on the church's website at: www.cimchurch.org.

Hyattsville (MD) Mennonite Church, a vibrant, growing congregation of 150 located adjacent to Washington DC, seeks a part-time (.50 FTE) associate pastor. The successful candidate will be strongly committed to Anabaptist-Mennonite theology and practice. A primary focus of the position is the spiritual formation and Christian education of our children,



youth, and young adults. A secondary focus is furthering the congregational emphasis on peace and justice issues, primarily through teaching and preaching. Responsibilities include preaching up to 10 times a year. A seminary degree is desired. Denominational guidelines for pastoral salaries and benefits will be followed. Interested candidates should contact the search committee at pastorsearch@hyattsvillemennonite.org

5. SCN Pastors and Board Chairs Gather

Church of the Brethren SCN pastors and board chairs are scheduled to meet for two days after the Progressive Brethren Gathering in La Verne, California. The purposes of the meeting are to build community, offer support, explore ideas for mutual action, and discuss options as progressive congregations within the Church of the Brethren.

6. Community News

James Schwartz was featured in an interview on the [Huffington Post](#) about his experience of growing up gay and Amish in Michigan. He has developed a website at www.lgbtamish.com and has also published a book of poetry titled *The Literary Party: Growing Up Gay and Amish in America*, available on amazon.com.

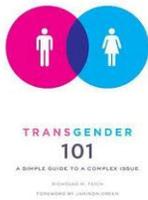
Bonnie Kline-Smeltzer, pastor of the University Baptist and Brethren Church in State College, Pennsylvania, preached a sermon that we like, [Saving Jesus From the Church](#), which is especially helpful during this election season. University Baptist and Brethren Church has been an SCN congregation since 1999. They are also part of the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists.

BMC'ers are speaking about their life experiences at several college settings. JB Miller, a former BMC board member, spoke to a social work class at Taylor University in Indianapolis for the second year in a row. Barb Swartley and Eric Knagy presented to Keith Graber Miller's Human Sexuality Class at Goshen College and then joined Wilma Harder to meet with the on-campus Prism group. Finally, Reuben Sancken, BMC's Kaleidoscope Coordinator, will be traveling to Bluffton University this month to offer a safe zone training.

Congratulations to the La Verne Church of the Brethren (an SCN congregation) for being one of three finalists for the Energy Oscars awarded by California Interfaith Power and Light. The organization honors churches with outstanding achievements in energy stewardship education and advocacy. La Verne, whose investment in solar panels has nearly made them grid-free, is nominated in the category of Energy Efficiency. Winners will be announced in November.

If you have news to share, then please let us know!

7. Transgender 101



The experiences of transgender people are varied and often invisible to the general population. In *Transgender 101: A Simple Guide to a Complex Issue*, published by Columbia University Press in 2012, author Nicholas M. Teich attempts to explain the basics of transgender experience to broaden the reader's understanding. This book is a recommended read for those that consider themselves well-informed to those that feel like they are just beginning to learn about transgender issues.

It is available on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

8. LGBT Older Adult Aging and Health Study

Caring and Aging with Pride is the first national federally funded project that examines lgbt aging and health across the United States. Read the entire report at [CaringAndAging.org](https://www.caringandaging.org) Key findings include:

- Nearly half have a disability and nearly one-third report depression
- 82% have been victimized at least once, with 62% reporting three or more experiences of victimization
- More than 20% do not disclose their sexual or gender identity to their physician
- 91% engage in wellness activities
- Most need services such as senior housing, transportation, legal services, or social events.
- Racial and ethnic minority lgbt older adults experience heightened and cumulative risks of aging and health disparities.

9. Travel

October 26-30: Carol in La Verne, CA.

October 19-21: Reuben to Bluffton University.

If we're going to be in your area, let us know! We'd love to meet with you.

BMC Staff

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

[Reuben Sancken](#) - Kaleidoscope Coordinator, BMC Volunteer

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Donations to BMC can be made [online](#), or by sending a check to PO Box 6300, Minneapolis, MN 55406. Your contributions make a difference. Thank you for your generous support!