



[Click to view this email in a browser](#)

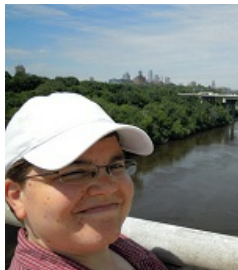


## NewsNet - August 2011

1. Sad Good-bye to Kirsten Freed
2. BMC Welcomes Reuben Sancken
3. July's Denominational Conferences Reports
4. Thank you Mennonite Church in The Hague, Netherlands
5. Sing Every Story - Call to action
6. On The Male Side of Middle - New film from BMC
7. West Coast Connecting Families Weekend
8. Fierce and Fabulous: 35 Faithful Years - BMC Gathering details
9. SCN Pastor's Theological Retreat
10. Travel

---

### 1. Sad Good-bye to Kirsten Freed



It is with sadness but great appreciation that we say good-bye to Kirsten Freed in her capacity as the Kaleidoscope Coordinator for BMC. For two years Kirsten has been our full time volunteer, reaching out to lgbt youth and young adults, writing new resources, offering safe zone and youth sponsor workshops, updating our website and doing general administrative tasks. Her professionalism, skills, insights and good humor have been a valuable gift to our BMC community. We wish her great success as she returns to Winnipeg.

Click [here](#) to read Kirsten's final reflections upon her two years at BMC.

### 2. BMC Welcomes Reuben Sancken

BMC welcomes Reuben Sancken as the new BMC Kaleidoscope Coordinator and full time volunteer. Reuben is a 2011 graduate of Goshen College, where he majored in Bible and Religion. He grew up in the First Mennonite Church of Champaign-Urbana in Illinois, a congregation that has recently joined SCN (Supportive Communities Network) as a congregation that is publicly affirming of lgbt people. While in college, Reuben did a ministry internship at Southside Mennonite Fellowship in Elkhart, IN. He will be serving through the Lutheran Volunteer Corps, a service organization that recognizes BMC as a placement project, and will begin on August 23. Welcome, Reuben!



### 3. July's Denominational Conference Reports

The first week of July saw national gatherings of the Church of the Brethren, Mennonite Church Canada, and Mennonite Church USA. All three had major things going on related to the welcome movement:



Church of the Brethren - Report on [ProgressiveBrethren.org](http://ProgressiveBrethren.org)

Mennonite Church Canada - [Summary](#) of actions related to an lgbt welcoming motion and the Being a Faithful Church process

Mennonite Church USA - Reflections by a number of attendees, on [Pink Menoo Press](#)

#### Staff reflections:

[Kirsten](#)'s reflection on stepping out of shame and Mennonite culture

[Carol](#) on the meaning of the death threat at the COB Annual Conference



### 4. Thank You Mennonite Church in the Hague, Netherlands

BMC would like to publicly thank members of the Mennonite Church in The Hague, Netherlands, for their very generous financial gift to BMC in support of our work. Tjibbe Jagersma and Stoffer Quist, members of the congregation, worked very hard to make the gift possible because they were disturbed by the unwelcoming posture of Mennonite Church USA. Tjibbe and Stoffer's expressions of encouragement and solidarity have been a source of great hope and joy to BMC. We value and appreciate their friendship and generosity. Thank you so much!

### 5. Sing Every Story - Call to Action



Randall Spaulding served as one of the contributing editors to the Sing the Journey and Sing the Story song books, and is the pastor of Covenant Mennonite Fellowship in Sarasota, FL. After expressing his intention to enter into a committed relationship with his male partner, he was stripped of his pastoral credentials and on March 8, 2011 was expelled from the Bi-National Worship

Council. The fruits of his labor remain evident in nearly every Mennonite congregation in North America. In order to remain conscious of the source of the source of this fruit, [Sing Every Story](#) invites individuals and congregations to affix small rainbow stickers with a loving and open spirit into copies of Sing the Journey and Sing the Story. To request stickers, ask questions or provide feedback, contact [singEVERYstory@gmail.com](mailto:singEVERYstory@gmail.com).

### 6. On the Male Side of Middle - New Film from BMC



A story of love, honesty and integrity, this film about female-to-male transgender Mennonite Calvin Neufeld, captures a special moment in time between him and his family. Filmed a year after he began transitioning and a year after marrying his partner Sharon, this story shows how strong a family can be when they love, care and listen to each other. In collaboration with BMC.

Writer, Director, Editor Paul Neudorf. 12 min. [Watch on YouTube.](#)

## 7. West Coast Connecting Families Weekend

BMC Oregon is planning a West Coast Connecting Families Weekend March 30 - April 1, 2012 at Camp Mrytlewood, Bridge OR. Connecting Families weekend is intended to be a safe, relaxing time to share our common thoughts regarding sexual minority issues as they affect our families, our friends, our churches, and ourselves. We welcome families and supporters of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. More information regarding registrations will be coming in the fall. If you have any questions, please contact [bmcoregon@earthlink.net](mailto:bmcoregon@earthlink.net). (Information regarding the "traditional" east coast Connecting Families Weekend is forthcoming.)

## 8. *Fierce and Fabulous: 35 Faithful Years* - BMC Gathering details

The long anticipated details are here! Plan to arrive at [Ronora Lodge](#) in southwestern Michigan around 4 pm on Friday October 7 to give yourself a chance to get settled and enjoy the beautiful setting before dinner. We gather this weekend to celebrate our strengths and persistence as a queer community. There will be ample free time to enjoy each other's company, as well as opportunities to take in an evening of storytelling, workshops, and a worship service. The Gathering will conclude after lunch on Sunday October 9. A registration brochure will be released imminently. Registration fees per attendee, including meals, is on a sliding scale (pay what you are able) of \$160-225. Limited scholarships may be available for first-timers. For children under 14 the registration fee is \$75. Childcare will be provided. Accommodations at Ronora Lodge are \$50 for the weekend. We encourage you to take advantage of this beautiful, rustic (and economical!) location.

Remember that you are **within a day's drive** if you live in Indiana, southern Ontario, Michigan, western Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio, western New York, West Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin or southern Minnesota! Invite a friend and start a carpool. If you are flying from farther afield, the Gathering is just 40 miles from airports in Kalamazoo MI and South Bend IN, and 85 mi from Chicago O'Hare. If the train is more your style, the South Shore Line ([www.nictd.com](http://www.nictd.com)) commuter train goes to South Bend and can be picked up just a few blocks from Chicago's Union Station.

We're looking forward to a fun and fantastic time together!.

## 9. SCN Pastor's Theological Retreat

Pastors who are serving a welcoming congregation that is part of the Supportive Communities Network (SCN) are invited to a time of conversation, reflection and engagement with other SCN pastors at Camp Friedenswald in Cassopolis, Michigan on October 17-20, 2011. Goals for the retreat include:

- a) The greater integration of LGBT justice and the welcoming movement in worship, pastoral care, theological and biblical reflection, spiritual practice, etc.
- b) Strengthening of relationships between SCN pastors.
- c) Greater appreciation of the opportunities and challenges we face as welcoming congregations within often hostile settings.
- d) Development of strategies and/or plans to address specific denominational needs.
- e) Sense of renewal and preparation for the work ahead.

We anticipate a variety of formats to engage us intellectually, including individual presentations, panels, open conversations, and specific denominational time. In addition, the retreat will include opportunities for worship, free time to rest and/or enjoy the camp, and lots of coffee and tea to keep us going.

Cost for the event will be \$125, which includes housing and meals. A brochure and registration materials will be out shortly.

## 10. Travel

August 3-5: Carol to Welcoming Church Program Leaders meeting in Minneapolis

September 5-9: Carol to Church of the Brethren National Older Adults Conference in NC

September 23-25: Carol to La Verne, California

September 30-October 1: Carol to Northern Plains Storytelling Event

October 6-9: Carol and Reuben to BMC board and BMC Gathering in Michigan

October 17-20: Carol to SCN Pastor's Theological Retreat in Michigan

*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

[Kirsten Freed](#) - Kaleidoscope Coordinator, BMC Volunteer

To subscribe or change your email address, send us an [email](#).

To unsubscribe, click the link below.

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!

BMC  
Box 6300  
Minneapolis, 55406  
US

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

