



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



BMC NewsNet October 2013

- 1. Nonconformity, Authenticity and Conscience**
- 2. Kay to be Steward at World Council of Churches Assembly**
- 3. Biblical and Theological Foundations for Inclusion**
- 4. Lacey Community Church Joins SCN**
- 5. BMC Oral History Project Interviews**
- 6. Kaleidoscope News**
- 7. Progressive Brethren Gathering - Registration Open!**
- 8. COB Pastors and Board Chair Retreat**
- 9. Intercultural Gathering to be Held October 25-28**
- 10. Help us Grow!**
- 11. Travel**

1. Nonconformity, Authenticity and Conscience

In the past few weeks, two Church of the Brethren members, [Ken Kline Smeltzer](#) and [Adam Ackley](#), have made national news. Carol Wise, the Executive Director of BMC, comments upon the circumstances in her piece [Nonconformity, Authenticity and Conscience](#).

2. Kay to be Steward at World Council of Churches Assembly

Kay Guyer, Kaleidoscope Coordinator, is serving as a young adult steward at the [10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches](#) in Busan, Republic of Korea. From October 22 to November 10, she will be a part of the young adult stewards program. The stewards program facilitates a space for young people to learn from one another about key issues in the ecumenical movement while also assisting with communication support at the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

Kay enters the gathering with a focused interest in learning how the movement for full lgbtq inclusion manifests in various global and denominational contexts. The goal of these conversations is to inform and strengthen our own efforts in the Mennonite and Brethren realms. A key way you can become a part of these discussions is by following Kay's blog at [BMCinBusan](#). Click the "Follow" button at the bottom right-hand corner of the webpage and enter your email address to receive notifications of a new posts.

3. Biblical and Theological Foundations for Inclusion

The [Welcoming Dialogue Group of Lancaster](#) (a member of the Supportive Communities Network) and BMC are sponsoring a special evening with Megan Ramer, pastor of Community Mennonite Church in Chicago, IL. Megan will discuss her essay, *Biblical and Theological Foundations for Inclusion*, a paper that was prepared for her conference as part of a credential review after she officiated at a same sex union ceremony. The event will be held on November 17 from 5:00 – 8:30 at the Eden Resort in Lancaster and will include

dinner. Over 100 people are already expected, and tickets are still available. To learn more, contact Bob Wyble, the convener of the Welcoming Dialogue Group, at wyble@ptd.net. It promises to be an inspirational and very informative evening.

4. Lacey Community Church Joins SCN



BMC is very pleased to welcome [Lacey Community Church](#) as the newest congregation to join the Supportive Communities Network (SCN) as an open and affirming congregation. Lacey Community Church is located in Lacey, Washington, and is dually affiliated with the Church of the Brethren and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ.) They are a small, but vibrant congregation that is active in a variety of social justice and equality concerns. Their welcoming statement begins, *As a Christian community, we are called to love our neighbor as*

Jesus loved us, and are called by Christ to be inclusive, caring and peace minded.... It is wonderful to welcome Lacey Community Church to the SCN community. They are the tenth new congregation to join SCN this calendar year!

5. BMC Oral History Project Interviews

Amy Short and Carol Wise will travel to Washington, DC and Philadelphia, PA in early November in order to collect a series of interviews for the BMC Oral History Project. The project was begun three years ago in order to celebrate and record the lives and experiences of older LGBT BMCer's, as well as collect a history of BMC. Since its inception, Amy has taped over 40 hours of interviews with nearly 20 individuals. This upcoming trip is particularly important as planned interviews include Martin Rock, the founder of BMC, and key individuals from [Germantown Mennonite Church](#), the oldest worshipping Mennonite congregation in the United States. Germantown was expelled from its conference over 15 years ago because of its welcoming stance in a particularly brutal and disturbing fashion.

Please contact the BMC office (bmc@bmclgbt.org or call 612-343-2060) if you would like to either interview someone for this project or be interviewed. Amy has developed helpful guidelines for questions and topics for the interview.

6. Kaleidoscope News

Bethel College (Newton, KS) - The Bethel College Gay-Straight Alliance is hosting a booth at this year's Fall Fest in order to raise funds for activities. In addition, a queer support group has begun meeting and sharing in fellowship.

Bluffton University (Bluffton, OH) - Bluffton Safe Spaces is planning to attend *Love Across the Spectrum* conference at Ohio Wesleyan University in early November. Members look forward to meeting with other students from across the state and engaging in discussions at the intersections of Christianity, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Eastern Mennonite University (Harrisonburg, VA) - In celebration of National Coming Out Day on October 11th, EMU Safe Space is holding the *Affirm that I Am* campaign. This project invites everyone in the EMU community to share their own stories of coming out as a way to celebrate and affirm authenticity.

Manchester University (North Manchester, IN) - United Sexualities' Pride Week took place September 30 - October 5. Students wore a different color of the rainbow each day to show support for everyone in the spectrum. Among many events, the week included a coming out vigil and gay prom.

McPherson College (McPherson, KS) - GLOW (Gay, Lesbian or Whatever) is hosting an LGBTQ themed film series once a month. The group is also planning to hold awareness-raising events on October 11th for National Coming Out Day.

7. Progressive Brethren Gathering - Registration Open!

The sixth Progressive Brethren Gathering will be held at the [Beacon Heights Church of the Brethren](#) in Fort Wayne, Indiana on November 15-17. We are particularly pleased to feature Dr. Sharon Groves, the Director of the Religion and Faith Program for the Human Rights Campaign in Washington, DC. Sharon will help us to think about meaningful social change through an examination of the insider/outsider life of Bayard



Rustin. Rustin was a Quaker, a conscientious objector, and an openly gay, African American man who played an important role in the Civil Rights Movement and remains an important voice for our times.



Early registration for the Gathering will end on October 25. To register, go to www.progressivebrethren.org. It promises to be a great event!

8. COB Pastors and Board Chair Retreat

Church of the Brethren pastors and board chairs of congregations that are part of the Supportive Communities Network (SCN), are invited to meet following the Progressive Brethren Gathering for a time of retreat and conversation. The retreat is an opportunity to offer mutual support, share about what is happening in our individual congregations, assess the larger denominational and district situations, and strategize for collective action. The meeting will be held at the Beacon Heights church beginning with dinner on Sunday, November 17 and ending on Monday afternoon. Please let Brian Flory, pastor at Beacon Heights, know if you will be attending. He can be reached at pastorbrian@beaconheights.net or by calling 260-482-8595.

9. Intercultural Gathering to be Held October 25-27

Intercultural Ministries is hosting the next intercultural gathering on the theme, [*The Great Multitude: A Symposium Bringing Us Together*](#), from October 25-27 in Wirtz, Virginia. The gathering invites participants into an intercultural experience of prayer, fellowship, worship, and study of the theological basis for an ethnically diverse church. Speakers include Barbara Daté, Daniel D'Oleo, Dava Hensley, Gimbiya Kettering, Samuel Saripya, Jonathan Shively, and Dennis Webb. For more information, visit their [website](#).

10. Help Us Grow!

In the past month, BMC has helped to connect a gay member of an Old Colony Mennonite community with local support, sent resource materials to two Mennonite colleges for students and faculty, welcomed a new congregation to the Supportive Communities Network, responded to six requests from congregations who are considering a welcoming process, offered two interest groups at the Church of the Brethren National Older Adult Conference, aided in the planning of the next Progressive Gathering, oriented our new Kaleidoscope Coordinator to her work at BMC, and initiated the beginning of "Along the Arc," a new worship and ritual resource. And that's just a few of the things that have been happening! Demands upon our resources and time are accelerating, which is a great thing. Please help us to be able to meet these growing programmatic demands by contributing to BMC. Click [here](#) to make an online contribution, or send a check to BMC/Box 6300/Minneapolis, MN 55406. Thank you!!

11. Travel

October 9-10 - Carol to Iverster, Iowa

October 15-17 - Carol to Kansas City for Prairie to Pacific Roundtable

October 17 - Kay in McPherson, Kansas for discussion with McPherson Church of the Brethren allies and McPherson College

October 18-20 - Carol and Kay to Lawrence, Kansas for BMC Board Meeting

October 22-November 10 - Kay to Busan, Republic of Korea for the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches

October 31-November 4 - Carol to DC and Philadelphia for BMC Oral History Project

November 15-17 - Carol and Kay to Fort Wayne, Indiana for Progressive Brethren Gathering

November 17-19 - Carol in Indiana for COB SCN Pastors and Board Chair Retreat

November 18-19 - Kay at Manchester University and Goshen College

November 21 - Kay at Bluffton University for Safe Zone training

November 21-23 - Carol in DC for Bishop and Elders Meeting

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

[Kay Guyer](#) - Kaleidoscope Coordinator, BMC Volunteer

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

BMC
P.O. Box 6300
Minneapolis, MN, 55406
US

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

