Book Signing with Ken Reed

Join the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society for a presentation and book signing with Ken Reed, author of the new novel Both My Sons, at 7 PM on Thursday, October 6, at the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster.

Both My Sons is about Mennonites who migrated from the Palatinate in modern Germany to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in the mid-1700s.

Reed is also the author of the popular novel Mennonite Soldier (1974)
Annual Storytelling Night Set for September 12

“Telling stories and hearing stories from other people’s lives is one of the great human experiences,” says Phyllis Pellman Good, moderator of LMHS’s annual Storytelling Night.

“Stories touch us deeply. Listening to someone else’s stories reminds us powerfully that we are not alone.”

On Monday evening, September 12, Charles Longenecker, beloved biology teacher retired from Lancaster Mennonite School (LMS), and Janet Breneman—teacher, writer, and pastor—who spent many years in Honduras and Guatemala, will share the stage. Beginning at 7:00 p.m. at Landisville Mennonite Church, Longenecker and Breneman will each tell seven three- or four-minute-long stories from their lives, alternating throughout the evening.

Longenecker grew up on a farm in Rapho Township, Lancaster County, where he developed a deep interest in the world of nature. He is a graduate of LMS, Eastern Mennonite College (EMC), and Cornell University (with an M.S.). He taught science at LMS for forty years, where his enthusiasm for the subject struck contagion in nearly all his students. He is married to Barbara Rutt. They are the parents of four and grandparents of six.

Longenecker enjoys history, photography, reading, and volunteering. He is a longtime member of New Holland Mennonite Church. He has served on the boards of Eastern Mennonite University and the Mennonite Association of Retired Persons.

Janet Breneman grew up in the Central Manor area between Millersville and Washington Boro. She began her teaching career at LMS (home economics) and then moved on to Honduras, where she developed a domestic science curriculum for and then taught at the Mennonite Vocational Institute.

Later she spent thirteen years at SEMILLA (Latin American Anabaptist Seminary) teaching, consulting with church leaders, and writing Christian education curriculum. Fluent in Spanish, Janet led retreats and workshops and preached widely throughout Central America. When she returned to Lancaster, she pastored the Laurel Street Mennonite Church for more than fourteen years. Married to Wesley Newswanger, she is currently a member of the board of Philhaven.

Breneman is a graduate of EMC, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminaries (with an M. Div.), and Lancaster Theological Seminary (with a D. Min.).

“These two people have led rich lives. We’ll all be surprised by what we learn about their childhoods and teenage years, their mid-lives, and their current experiences and passions.

“Surprising energies often emerge between the two storytellers and what they choose to share with us as the evening unfolds,” says Good. “It’s an event you don’t want to miss!”
Experience Maize & Snitz Fest at Herr House

Learn about the life and cultures of Native Americans and early European settlers during Maize & Snitz Festival from 10 am to 3 pm on Saturday, October 15, at the 1719 Hans Herr House & Museum, 1849 Hans Herr Drive, Willow Street, Pa.

Check Out a Book: Recent Acquisition in the Library

Religion/Theology


Troyer, Marty. The gospel next door: following Jesus right where you are. Herald Press, 2016 (BV5790 .T76 2016)

Yoder, Don. The German Bible in America: an exploration of the religious and cultural legacy of the first European-language Bible printed in America. Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center, 2016 (BS447.5 .U6 Y63 2016)

Biography


History/Miscellaneous


Byler, John M. Amish homesteads of 1798. J.M. Bylers, 2016 (F153 .B95 2016)


Pennsylvania German Classes Start This Fall

Preservation of  the distinctive language tradition of early German immigrants to Lancaster County continues at the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society. Butch Reigart will serve as the instructor for two ten-week courses on different levels this fall.

A beginner class will meet on Thursdays, September 15 to November 17, 7 to 9 pm An intermediate class is also offered Saturdays, September 17–November 19, 10 am to 12 pm Both classes take place at 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, on Route 30 (Lincoln Highway East), beside Tanger Outlet Center. Those familiar with German have an advantage and can usually start at the intermediate level.

Pennsylvania German originated in the southeastern region of the state, coming from the German-speaking Swiss, German, and Alsatian immigrants who arrived between 1683 and 1808.

Today the language is often associated with Old Order Amish and Mennonite communities in Pennsylvania although historically descendants of Lutheran, Reformed, and other immigrant groups coming from southwestern Germany spoke it widely. Reigart notes that “the Amish percentage of  current dialect speakers is ever increasing as the Amish continue to hold onto and teach it to their children as part of  their efforts to maintain separation from the modern world.”

Reigart, who lives in Columbia, Pennsylvania, grew up hearing Pennsylvania German in his childhood home in York County. He later became fluent, received degrees in German and Russian, and served as a foreign-language specialist for the United States government for more than thirty-five years.

Registration can occur online at www.lmhs.org or by calling (717) 393-9745. Basic instructional materials are included in the course fee of  $100 for Historical Society members and $115 for nonmembers. Supplemental texts, dictionaries, recordings, and other study aids are available from the Society bookstore.
An Anabaptist View of History in a Season of Politics

This political season has drawn dark lines between optimistic and pessimistic views of our country’s recent history. These two competing views of history have influenced key arguments of presidential campaigns. They have influenced each campaign’s historical perspectives on subjects such as violence, the economy, and social life.

For example, when one campaign highlights instances of horrendous violence as signs of a society that is in decline, the other emphasizes decreasing rates in violent crime over the last decade, signaling a growing sense of security in many communities. When one campaign points to significant job loss among the working class in an increasingly globalized economy, the other highlights decreasing rates of unemployment and lower governmental debt in recent years. Similarly, while one campaign suggests that failure to stop the flow of immigrants may reduce availability of jobs or may bring terrorism, the other argues that immigrants historically have enriched the economic and social fabric of communities.

When the focus of campaigns is on gaining votes, arguments from either side often seem exaggerated. We feel as though we have few tools to decide how best to think about our own personal choices.

Can an Anabaptist view of history help us? I like to think so.

Anabaptists view history from a faith perspective. Our faith compels us to look beyond politics and beyond human effort. We believe in a God that actively interacts with human beings and, through Jesus, seeks to reconcile with a broken world. As Christians, we seek “the mind of Christ” as the ultimate tool for making decisions. As Anabaptists, we take seriously the teachings of Jesus, especially those in the Sermon on the Mount.

His teachings compel us to love our enemies and be a witness for peace. Foremost, Jesus calls us to follow him daily in life and act in ways that Jesus would. As part of the “priesthood of all believers,” we also discern together with sisters and brothers in the community of faith how to be agents of healing and hope in the world.

We have a faith that helps us make good choices to influence history.

Registration

Beginner Pennsylvania German Dialect Class: Thursdays, September 15-November 17, $100 members, $115 nonmembers.

Intermediate Pennsylvania German Dialect Class: Saturdays, September 17-November 19, $100 members, $115 nonmembers.

Greenywalt’s Boys: October 8, $75 members, $90 nonmembers. Registration due September 8.

My check is payable to Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society.

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Please return to LMHS, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602-1499.

Emergency Contact: Name ____________________________ Phone __________