



PO Box 918
Goshen, IN 46527-0918
Phone: 1-888-406-3643
Email: info@mennohealth.org
Web: www.mennohealth.org

Press Release

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For more information, contact Paul Leichty at info@mennohealth.org or 1-888-406-3643

Healthcare Fellowship Considers Moral Dilemmas

“Moral Dilemmas in Healthcare” is the theme for the second Annual Gathering of Menonite Healthcare Fellowship (MHF), June 21-23, 2013, on the campus of Goshen College in Goshen, Indiana. Among the plenary session speakers will be Timothy Stoltzfus Jost, a national expert on healthcare law and healthcare reform, and Ervin R. Stutzman, Executive Director of Menonite Church USA.

Formed in 2011, MHF is an inter-disciplinary association of healthcare workers who identify themselves as Menonite or Anabaptist and desire to integrate their faith with their professional life. MHF invites all interested persons and their families to register for and attend the family-oriented Annual Gathering which runs from Friday evening through Sunday noon.

Jost, a law professor at the Washington and Lee University School of Law and co-author of the major textbook on healthcare law, will give the opening presentation on Friday evening, June 21, on the subject, “Challenges of a Changing Healthcare System.” He will look at both the moral issues that ground health care reform in the U.S. and the moral issues presented by that reform.

On Saturday morning, participants will consider the theme from both a personal and international perspective as Patricia Ebersole Zwier, bilingual therapist at Oaklawn Center in Goshen speaks on the topic, “Don’t Be Afraid: Anxiety in a World of Moral Dilemmas.” Zwier is a recent arrival in Goshen after over 30 years of service as a mental health worker in Central America and the Caribbean.

During the middle of the day on Saturday, both Jost and Zwier will follow up their presentations with smaller group workshops on their respective topics. Additional workshops will also be offered on a variety of topics including the church's mission in healing and healthcare, end-of-life issues, trauma and spirituality, enhancing compassion through gazing prayer, and international healthcare partnerships.

Saturday evening’s plenary presentation will be a panel discussion on the topic, “Healthcare Access for All: A Community’s Response.” Leaders from a variety of Goshen-area healthcare institutions will share their perspectives moderated by J. Nelson Kraybill, pastor of Prairie Street Menonite Church in Elkhart, Indiana and president-elect of Menonite World Conference. Panelists include leaders of IU Health Goshen Hospital; several innovative medical clinics; Oaklawn, the regional mental health center, and Greencroft, a large retirement community.

Sunday morning's closing activities will be highlighted by a joint worship service with College Mennonite Church in Goshen with a message by Ervin Stutzman entitled "Healing as a Gift of God's Grace." Stutzman has served the Mennonite Church in the roles of pastor, district overseer, missions administrator, conference and denominational moderator, and seminary professor and dean, and is also a frequent speaker throughout the country and a prolific writer. He was the keynote speaker at the closing joint convention of Mennonite Medical Association (MMA) and Mennonite Nurses Association (MNA) in June 2011 as the two groups officially merged and became Mennonite Healthcare Fellowship (MHF).

Since MHF began, it has opened its doors to a whole variety of healthcare professionals including Chaplains, Dentists, Dietitians, Medical Anthropologists, Medical Ethicists, Medical Researchers, Medical Technologists, Nurses, Occupational Therapists, Pharmacists, Physical Therapists, Physicians, Social Workers, Speech Pathologists, as well as others with health and wellness-related backgrounds. The Annual Gathering is open to MHF members and prospective members as well as others interested in the intersection of health and faith.

The Annual Gathering also continues the tradition of MMA and MNA to make the weekend enjoyable and inspiring for the whole family. Worship times at the beginning of each plenary session will be led by Goshen folk singers, Gwen and Les Gustafson-Zook. The couple will also present a late evening concert on Saturday. Throughout the weekend, childcare and children and youth programs are offered for all families who register by May 31. Highlighting the activities planned for school-age children will be a visit to the Merry Lea Environmental Center, operated by Goshen College.

More information and registration instructions are available online at www.mennohealth.org, by email at info@mennohealth.org, or by calling the MHF Office at 1-888-406-3643.