



CROSSINGS NEWS

November-December 2023

“Loving God, loving people, and inviting all to do the same”

A Note From Pastor Rich

Dear friends at CCC,

As I reflect on the past couple months, I am grateful for you, my brothers and sisters at Crossings Community Church! I’m encouraged by your willingness to plug in and serve where needed.

“...in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.” - Romans 12:5-6

- *Tacos galore:* Thank you to the many volunteers who had given time to work in the Farm Show Taco Stand! Over \$7,000 profit was earned for the youth fund!
- *Families, Fun, Fellowship:* Twenty-eight of you came out to help at The Family Fall Fest! It was beautiful to see the connections with our community: chatting around the campfire, enjoying food, and playing games. Set up and clean up was amazingly quick with many helping hands!
- *Growing together:* This week is Supper Connections. Yes, we have 100% participants, plus a new friend or two! This intentional time of sharing over a meal, strengthens us as a body. Stay tuned for future Supper Connection opportunities!
- *The Meal:* Many of you are helping to provide 4-5 Thanksgiving meals for families in need through the ministry LOVE Inc.-Lancaster.
- *Feeling appreciated:* Thank you for your gifts, cards, and words of encouragement, which mean a lot to Julia and me. We are excited to enjoy using the Harvey BBQ gift card given by the church! Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve with you!

October 3, 2023 marked two years as ministering together as Crossings Community Church. These years have been a time of restart and emerging regrowth. Let’s continue to lean into what God puts before us.

It is helpful to reflect back on God’s goodness, even in the hard times. Thanks to Kathy Nissley for the following reflection on life as Crossings CC. **God was faithful then, and He is faithful now!**



Reflections on Congregational Change

By Kathy Nissley

Our congregation has experienced many challenges over the past few years. Recently, we celebrated the ordination of Rich Nolt. This is a pivotal milestone in the life of a pastor and for a congregation. Events like these lead us to reflect on where we have been and look forward to the future with hope and encouragement.

Over the past few years, I kept a prayer journal. I find it encouraging to look back and see how God has worked and answered prayers, often in unexpected ways. The journey of our congregation has often been mentioned in my prayers.

Just five years ago, in July 2018, Manheim and Mount Joy experienced the worst localized flood ever--10 inches of rain fell in a very short time. Floodwater surrounded our church and schoolhouse. The sump pumps couldn't keep up. The basement of the church filled with several inches of water. Our church was already struggling, and that catastrophe felt like God was closing doors for us. Our building was failing; many members had left. It took months until we cleaned out the basement. The classrooms were not usable, so we did not have Sunday School and the sewing circle moved their things upstairs to the anteroom. We did not resume using the basement space for over a year.

In the spring of 2019, I wrote of praying for our elders who had to make tough decisions about the future of the congregation. There was a lack of joy and enthusiasm. Our youth pastor resigned and so the youth lacked leadership. There was much sadness.

That summer, the leadership team, under the guidance of Bishop Dave Musser, made the bold decision to move forward with a restart. We weren't sure what that would look like. We prayed for a leader who would guide us in this direction.

By fall of 2019, I wrote of praying for our congregation to grow and strengthen. I prayed for wisdom and sensitivity. I prayed that we would see people through God's eyes. I prayed that we would be open to change, that we would be generous and forgiving. I prayed that we would be ready for the messiness that might come with change. At the end of December 2019, I prayed that God would work in unexpected ways in 2020. Little did I know what the future would hold.

In January 2020, the congregation supported the idea of the Schoolhouse 1884 project. This became a bonding and building time. Rapho township approved the plans to restore the schoolhouse into a facility that looked like a one room schoolhouse that could be used for group activities. The youth group began demolition in early March. The Restart Team began a pastoral search. We were building momentum.

Then on March 17, 2020 the COVID pandemic hit. Shelter in place was ordered and our congregation was challenged once again to find new ways to be a congregation without physically being present with one another. We became accustomed to masking, social distancing, isolation, zoom meetings and on-line church. It felt like huge obstacles to stay together as a small church. Despite these challenges, we continued to connect.

In May, the leadership team interviewed a potential pastoral candidate. My prayers focused on praying for our future pastor. We began the schoolhouse renovation in earnest. It was like this gave us hope that we were not going to die out as a church but had faith that "if we built it, they would come."

In July, 2020, the congregation voted to accept the pastoral candidate. It felt good to know we would have a leader. However, in August, we learned that the candidate declined the invitation. My journal notes questioned—what was God doing? What does God have planned for us? What do we do now? Who will lead? Will we need to close? Should we merge with another church? Should we move on? We waited for God to open another door for us. We trusted Jeremiah 3:15 where God says, “I will bring you to Zion and I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.”

In November 2020, I wrote in my prayer journal, Praise the Lord! Rich and Julia shared their hearts with the congregation and Rich expressed a desire to become our pastor. It was a joy to know that God was providing a shepherd from within the flock. One who knew our pains and struggles. Subsequently, we commissioned and licensed Rich Nolt as our pastor of Administration.

We continued to persevere. As I read through the Bible, I finished the book of Revelations at the end of 2021. Several verses in chapter 13 and 14 impressed on me the importance of endurance and seeking God’s wisdom. Rev 13:10 says, “This calls for patient endurance on the part of God’s people.” Revelations 13:18 says “This calls for wisdom.” And chapter 14:12 repeats, “This calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God who keep His commandments and remain faithful to Jesus.” I found these verses encouraging as we looked into the future of the coming year. I realized that patient endurance was the key.

By August 2021, the schoolhouse renovation was finished, and we started using it for activities, small group meetings and youth group gatherings. Then in September 2021, we had our last worship service as Erisman Mennonite Church. Our name changed to Crossings Community Church, and we restarted as a new congregation. Rich and the leadership team at Crossings facilitated these transitions.

Over time, we’ve learned to do things differently. We are connecting with new people. We see new faces at church. Sewing circle continues their work though not physically in the church building anymore. Another church shares our sanctuary. Recovery groups have used our facilities. We’ve hosted VBS for the community and continue to have youth attend youth group on Wednesday nights even though we may not see them Sunday mornings. Young adults meet regularly to worship in the schoolhouse. People are gathering to worship, serve, share, connect with one another, and to give glory to God. Isn’t that what church is all about?

Crossings Supper Connections

Your group is meeting this week! These times of intentional connection and discipleship have reflected the true heart of the church. These connections have grown relationships and discipleship among us. We do well to continue pressing into true discipleship and methods that promote spiritual growth and nurture faith communities among us. Continue trusting Jesus together!

Sunday 5:00 - 6:30 pm

Sept 10, Oct 8, Nov 5

Wednesday 6:00 - 7:30 pm

Sept 13, Oct 11, Nov 8

Friday 6:00 - 7:30 pm

Sept 15, Oct 13, Nov 10

Save the Dates

Sunday, Dec. 24, 9-10am- Christmas Eve “Brunch & Worship” in the Schoolhouse

Sunday, Jan.7, after morning worship- Fellowship Lunch for all Supper Connection groups plus friends!

Informal Worship Night at TEEN CENTRAL

Thursday, November 16 worship event is young adult led and is a great opportunity to worship together with new and old friends. The November 16 night of worship will take place at Teen Central in Manheim. A great way for young adults to encourage the teens of Manheim as they worship together!



Manheim Food Bank

The Manheim Central Food Pantry is in need of **reusable grocery bags** and **plastic grocery bags**, and non-perishable food items. Food and bag donations may be dropped off in large box on the front porch of the pantry at 334 West Gramby St. Manheim or placed in the box found in Crossings CC Welcome Center.



SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGERS NEEDED

Our Manheim Ministerial Association is responsible for organizing the Salvation Army Kettle stations at:

- **Longeneckers True Value**
- **Hilltop Acres Farm Market**
- **Pleasant View Retirement Community**

Church groups, businesses, or families generally sign up for a 4 or an 8-hour block of time at one of our locations. Bell ringers simply ring a bell and share the good news of how the donations get distributed. Please know that what you are doing is directly providing funds for an important ministry to people in need in the Manheim area, as all the donations are kept and distributed right here in the Manheim School District Area.



To sign up, scan the QR code below and add your name and contact information. The ringing will begin on Monday, December 4th.



*...or contact **Pastor Rich** to get signed up to be a bell ringer (717-669-0266)*

Address Updates:

Doris Brubaker
Pleasant View Room 225

544 N. Penryn Rd.
Manheim, PA 17545
Phone: 717-664-6263

Melvin Eby
1122 Town Square South
Manheim, PA 17545

Ph: 717-664-6374

Income and Expenses for September, 2023

Income - \$8,925.00

Expenses - \$12,189.74

Schoolhouse committed to date is \$81,967.57 + \$40,000 (Capital Funds) = \$121,967.57



November Birthdays

1 Joe Hess
2 Chuck Griffith
3 Carolyn Wakefield
8 Joyce Wenger
9 Rick Parmer
26 Stanley Witmer

November Anniversaries

14 Glenn & Marilyn Nolt (1970)

December Birthdays

6 Alyson Ebersole
8 Norman Shenk
10 Richard Miller
23 Dylan Ebersole
24 Jessica Ebersole
25 Arlene Shenk
27 Ken Clugston
28 Irene Shenk

CROSSINGS COMMUNITY CHURCH

8 S. Erisman Road, Manheim, PA - 717-653-4791

Crossingscc21@gmail.com | www.crossingscc.org

Pastor: Rich Nolt Elders: Marlin Martin, Tina Snyder