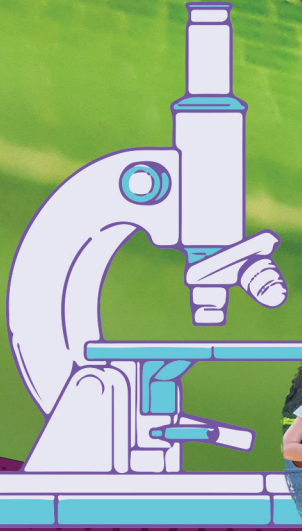


NURTURE

# Curiosity & Creativity



# BRIDGES

MAGAZINE

LANCASTER MENNONITE / FALL 2024



# THIS ISSUE

LANCASTER MENNONITE MAGAZINE - VOLUME 56



4-5

EDITORIAL: AWAKENING  
THE HEARTS OF  
STUDENTS

SETH BUCKWALTER '97,  
Middle School Principal

8-9

ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR  
BEN LESHER '05 shares  
about how he is using his  
talents for the good of  
people in his community.

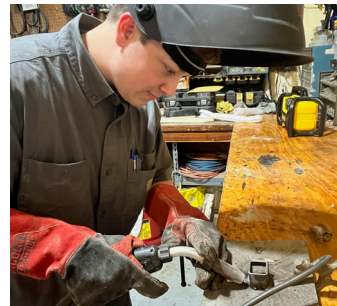


10-11

TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE  
Reflections from alumni  
about how this experience  
opened them up to  
curiosity and creativity.

12-13

ALL THE WORLD'S A  
STAGE  
Stories of how alumni and  
students have grown in the  
LM drama and tech depts.



14-15

MORE ALUMNI STORIES  
From welding to teaching,  
alumni are nurturing curiosity  
and creativity in themselves  
and in others.

22-23

EVENTS AND  
ALUMNI NEWS  
Homecoming Schedule &  
Upcoming Reunions

## SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OF OUR CONTRIBUTING WRITERS!

Dr. Michael Badriaki, Seth Buckwalter, Kate Grieser, Aubrey Kreider, Ben Leshner, Bekah Thrush, and Luis D. Torres.

Bridges Designer: Aubrey Kreider; Cover Design: Greg Yoder

The Spring 2025 edition of BRIDGES will focus on our core value EMPOWER LIFELONG LEARNING. If you have a suggestion for alumni, faculty, partner churches, or students we should feature, please email: KreiderAL@lancastermennonite.org.

ABOUT THE COVER: A COLLAGE MADE UP OF LANCASTER MENNONITE ALUMNI AND STUDENTS FEATURED IN THIS EDITION OF BRIDGES, WHOSE GOAL IS TO NURTURE CURIOSITY & CREATIVITY. ELEMENTS OF CURIOSITY AND CREATIVITY ARE DEPICTED THROUGH ICONS THAT REFLECT THE THEMES OF THIS ISSUE, SUCH AS: QUESTION MARK, PAINT BRUSH, MICROSCOPE, MUSIC NOTES, LIGHT BULB, FAITH, AND MORE.

# TOGETHER WE WILL

SEEK JESUS  
Wholeheartedly

LIVE  
Compassionately

BUILD  
Bridges of Peace

CULTIVATE  
Global Citizens

NURTURE  
Curiosity & Creativity

EMPOWER  
Lifelong Learning

# CHANGE THE WORLD

 LANCASTER  
MENNONITE  
FAITH • EDUCATION • COMMUNITY

# nurture CURIOSITY & CREATIVITY

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT: CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

Hello Alumni, Family, and Friends,

When we open up the Bible, we first learn about God as the Creator (Genesis 1). Additionally, we learn that Jesus, referred to as "the Word," was with God from the beginning. John 1:1-5 tells us, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind."

Jesus's creative and loving act demonstrated in "the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us" (John 1:14) to show us the glory of the Father, full of grace and truth leads us to be thankful for the gospel.

and talents that lead us to be creative too. As we practice living as creative and curious learners, we live more into this image of God within us and discover the goodness that God saw too. Exploring the world around us and finding our place in it leads us closer to the God who made us. And we want to help our students do this!

"As we practice living as creative and curious learners, we live more into this image of God within us and discover the goodness that God saw too."

In this edition of Bridges, you'll see how our teachers make learning fun and engage the curiosity of students. In the classroom, on the playground, on the stage, and on the athletic field, students are being taught to notice and delight in the Word of God. Students are encouraged as part of their learning experience and

discipleship to ask big questions, and think critically and creatively.

We're also excited to share stories of how LM alumni, like LANE CROUSE '04 who mixes audio for Warner Bros Discovery networks, welder ELIOTT SOMMERS '23, and Autistic Support Teacher EMILY STEVENS '17, as they integrate curiosity and creativity into their lives with how they are each uniquely gifted.

Thank you for the ways you also live curious and creative lives! We appreciate your ongoing partnership and prayer as together we nurture students in the way of Jesus.

In Christ Our Peace,



Dr. Michael Badriaki, Superintendent



1ST GRADERS DRESS UP AS WHAT THEY WANT TO BE WHEN THEY GROW UP. THEY ARE EXPRESSING CURIOSITY AND CREATIVITY FOR THEIR FUTURE CAREERS.

At Lancaster Mennonite School, we seek to center our lives on Jesus and to nurture students to become more like Christ each day. It is for this reason that **one of LM's core values is to Nurture Curiosity and Creativity.**

Each one of us is created in God's image and has been given gifts



# AWAKENING THE HEARTS OF STUDENTS

BY: SETH BUCKWALTER '97, LM MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL & HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHER

In my AP Biology class this year, I heard a student say, **"I just don't get it. How does this work?"**

**This question is music to a teacher's ears.** My response? "That's a great question. That's what you need to figure out."

I personally didn't know the answer. This student, Jarod, wanted to explain the mechanisms that caused his group's plants to grow towards light. Jarod wanted to know something that went beyond the scope of the curriculum. "How is it possible that a hormone that is produced across the top of the plant has a different effect on one side of the plant than the other?" The answers that he found had to do with photoreceptors, transport proteins, and plants' ability to tell the difference between types of light.

**Jarod's curiosity and the explanation of phototropism ultimately made me say, "WOW, God's creation is absolutely amazing!!!"**

## Middle School Project Showcase Night

After our Middle School Project Showcase Night this spring a parent said, "What a great evening!"

His eyes were energized! We had just completed an evening where middle school students were able to showcase the airplanes they had designed in Mr. Todd Bowman's Engineering & Design class. The students explained the design process - the thinking, planning, and collaboration that was required to create and recreate their airplanes so they could accomplish the task of flying their plane as far as possible. After seeing the plane their child had created

**WE ARE NURTURING CURIOSITY AND CREATIVITY, WHILE INVITING GOD TO AWAKEN THE HEARTS OF OUR STUDENTS, SO THEY ARE EQUIPPED TO KNOW AND GLORIFY GOD ALL THEIR LIVES.**

SETH BUCKWALTER '97,  
LM MS PRINCIPAL & HS SCIENCE TEACHER

and the process that led to it, this parent was both excited and refreshed.

One of our core values at LM is to nurture curiosity and creativity. These attributes are planted in each of our students by their Creator. To nurture these traits, we simply need to care for them and encourage them to grow. Why would God instill curiosity and creativity within us? I believe one reason for this is to draw us, and those around us, closer to God and to glorify Him.

**Curiosity:** As we nurture curiosity, students become familiar with observing, asking questions, and digging deeper to find truth. God is truth and the source of truth. Truth is revealed generally as we observe creation, and truth is revealed in a special way in God's word. Before being saved by faith in Jesus, our hearts are hardened. We can be curious and discover truth, but it does not lead us to knowing or glorifying God. When, by God's grace, we are redeemed, our hearts are made new and truth leads us to know and glorify God.

**Creativity:** The first description of God in the Bible is as a creator. Shortly after that we are told that God created humankind in His own image. Part of God's image is creativity. When we create things, it reflects the image of God the creator in us. Again, for those whose hearts are made new, seeing creativity leads to glorifying God. In the case of the parent mentioned earlier, they were energized by seeing the creative image of God in their child.

**At LM, we are nurturing curiosity and creativity while inviting God to awaken the hearts of our students, so they are equipped to know and glorify God all their lives.** As our students leave LM, we pray that they will continue to grow these traits, that God will be glorified, and that "together we will change the world".

IN THE CLASSROOM



MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS USE DESIGN THINKING TO CREATE AIRPLANES TO FLY THE FARTHEST. THEY TEST, ADAPT, AND COLLABORATE WITH THEIR TEAM.





# HOW DO YOU *NURTURE* CURIOSITY & CREATIVITY IN YOUR CONTEXT?

## LUZ CASALLAS

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER



Kids are naturally curious and creative. By cultivating this in the classroom it motivates them to enjoy learning.

My students "travel" to a different country with me. We create a passport, view the map, learn about the dances, art, music, animals, and culture to be curious exploring about a new place together.

## DENISE BENDER

4TH GRADE TEACHER



Our social studies curriculum brings history alive to students.

Together we explore the history of our state. A unit about Native Americans and early settlers' interactions brought up many curious questions about how people lived, and led to deep faith discussions about how Jesus would respond and how we treat people.

## BROOKYE KEENEY

HIGH SCHOOL ART TEACHER



In art we focus on building skills and techniques that can be used to express ideas. Faith is incorporated through the lens we use. We want to be

intentional about what our artwork is communicating. We have a responsibility to use it to build others up or share stories that might impact someone positively.

## MAYA STAUFFER '24

RECENT LM GRADUATE



Science classes nurtured my curiosity of how the world around us works. The arts department nurtured my creativity in

strengthening my artistic and musical skills. The Spiritual Formation class I took as a senior helped me grow a lot in my faith.

## ETHAN BELL

12TH GRADE STUDENT

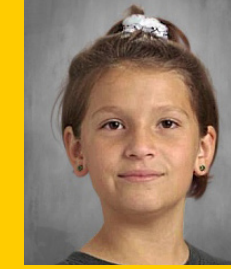


Teachers encourage us to engage, be curious, and dive deep. In a Bible class research project we learned about the history

of the church we attend. I attend Mission Church and it was cool to interview my pastor and learn new facts and history about the church I go to.

## MILA DENLINGER

6TH GRADER



I like that we get to be creative & curious by showing our emotions through art and singing. I play the upright bass and sing in

the choir, and I enjoy these classes as creative outlets during the school day.

## CARRIE SMUCKER '09

SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER



There are many aspects of my work that require creativity - figuring out how to translate the newest slang words in a middle school classroom or

explaining new concepts to a student with low language proficiency. During my time at LM, curiosity and creativity were valued and encouraged. The theater program was a fantastic and formative outlet for me.

## NANGA LIN '21

CLASSICAL PIANO GRADUATE STUDENT



As a classical piano performance musician in training at the Manhattan School of Music, it's fun because curiosity and creativity are things

that I do everyday. Part of my training is also to teach and ignite curiosity of music in kids.

## ALORA PAGAN

5TH GRADER



I love art and really like making stuff. I like that we get to make things with our hands, like using clay to act out parts of Bible stories and think about them in new

ways. I like that our Social Studies class is very hands-on and helps history come to life. I like that for science class we learned about plants and then got to go outside to plant seeds in the dirt and get dirty.

## REBECCA WOLGEMUTH

MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHER



In class, students observed images of extra muscular cattle and wondered how the cattle developed such large muscles.

Students created questions to guide our inquiry. As we studied the beauty of how detailed and intricate all of creation is we discuss how this can't be random chance, but the design of God.

## NATE SHEFFER

BAND TEACHER



I aim to create curious and creative students by engaging in student-centered learning and music-making. My classroom is a

space for all learners to explore music. Students are encouraged to bring their gifts, musical curiosities, and skills daily to class. Creating music is at the heart of the experience, and that is what we do!

## REBECCA FENNIMORE '97

HIGH SCHOOL CHAPEL COORDINATOR



In chapel, I encourage curiosity and creativity by highlighting the gifts within our community through play previews and art

receptions. I also nurture a curiosity of faith by inviting thought-provoking speakers who challenge us to live out and grow in our faith. I'm inspired by the students who share their faith reflections.



# YOUNG ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

## BEN LESHER '05

BY: KATE GRIESER, DIRECTOR OF DONOR GUIDANCE & DEVELOPMENT

**BEN LESHER '05** is the President & Founder of Parcel B Development Company, husband of **RACHEL (MOFFETT) LESHER '05**, and parent of two current LM students. Through his work, he places an intentional emphasis on developing buildings that promote economic vibrancy, sustainability, and community enhancement. Ben and Rachel live in Lancaster City and attend East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church.

We asked Ben about the way curiosity and creativity have affected his professional and personal life journey.

### Q: What role does curiosity and creativity play in your work and life?

I have always been a curious observer from a young age and asked questions about places I visited. Why do people live where they do, how are cities organized and built, what makes a place special and meaningful to its inhabitants?

One of the most exhilarating parts of being a developer is creating a vision for a place. Envisioning what something could become is an exciting process and takes a lot of creativity. It often feels like not just producing the pieces but also then fitting them together in a complex and sometimes impossible puzzle.

### Q: Were there particular experiences or teachers at LM that nurtured curiosity and creativity in you?

I think it may have been a Tech and Design class taught by Aiden Stoltzfus where my curiosity for engineering and technical design started. It was one of the first times I was



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BEN LESHER

able to explore my creativity for architecture and buildings. We had the opportunity to design a house using a computer software design program to create our own floor plan and elevation drawings. I remember being so excited to go that it almost didn't feel like a class.

### Q: Does curiosity and creativity play a role in your faith?

I think a lot about how my faith shapes my worldview and



**I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT DEVELOPING HOUSING BECAUSE EVERYONE NEEDS A HOME. IT ALLOWS ME TO USE MY BUSINESS ACUMEN AND TALENTS FOR GOOD - FOR PEOPLE IN MY OWN COMMUNITY.**

**BEN LESHER '05**

PHOTOS: GROUNDBREAKING AND CELEBRATION FOR STADIUM ROW APARTMENT PROJECT (TOP TWO PHOTOS); BEN WITH HIS WIFE, RACHEL AND THEIR CHILDREN (BOTTOM PHOTO).

how that may be different from other people's worldview. It helps me consider my own blind spots, what is important to me, and maybe some commonalities that we can build on.

### Q: Why have you chosen to work to address housing needs in our community?

Growing up in an Anabaptist family with parents and grandparents who worked in human services, I was exposed to the values of social justice,



reconciliation, and service, and they resonated with me from a young age. In college, I was particularly interested in poverty alleviation, income inequality and urban issues. I eventually found the field of urban planning and decided I wanted to pursue that as a career. Working for another developer and experiences in graduate school eventually led me to the adjacent/overlapping fields of housing development and advocacy.

I'm passionate about developing housing because everyone needs a home. It also allows me to use my business acumen and talents for good. I decided to move away from planning and into development because of the type of impact I could make. Instead of just making plans for good, as a developer I can implement and build housing to create meaningful places for people in my own community.

### LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR AMAZING ALUMNI!

To learn more about our Alumni of the Year, please visit our website: [lancastermennonite.org/alumni](http://lancastermennonite.org/alumni)



### NOMINATE THE NEXT ALUMNI OF THE YEAR!

We welcome your nominations for the next LM Alumni of the year! Send your submissions to: Kate Grieser, [grieserke@lancastermennonite.org](mailto:grieserke@lancastermennonite.org)



# THE HEAVENS DECLARE: CURIOSITY IN THE WONDER OF SPACE

BY: BEKAH THRUSH '17, DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE

When you think of outer space, what comes to mind? Images of the solar system, a vast open expanse, or unknowns yet to be discovered? No matter what you picture, there is a certain awe associated with space. This year, many of us had our eyes opened to a new kind of curiosity and creativity as we witnessed a total (or partial) solar eclipse - when the moon passes between the earth and the sun, blocking the sun from view. Alumni and students alike experienced the joy of this amazing and unique aspect of God's created universe.

**PHIL YODER '10** watched the event with his wife and daughter in their backyard in Ohio. "The highlight of the eclipse was by far the totality. Darkness rushed into the sky everywhere but on the horizon. In one moment, I felt both like a tiny human on a fragile planet and also a unique and precious spirit in God's hands."



PHOTO: PHIL YODER AND HIS WIFE WATCHING THE ECLIPSE IN OHIO

To Phil, "Curiosity is important because it lends to how we treat each other... we can be curious about different perspectives, people's stories, and hope to learn from each other." He also encourages anyone to "develop a curiosity for the everyday experiences of life. You don't have to go very far to have your curiosity nurtured. There are amazing and mysterious things happening in our own backyards everyday."

**JESSICA (LUSBY) BUCKWALTER '00** went to Vermont with her husband and daughters. "We stumbled upon a viewing party at the local ski lodge, where we were warmly welcomed. There was food, live music, and a playground for the kids...It was fantastic!"



PHOTO: JESSICA BUCKWALTER'S FAMILY WATCHING THE ECLIPSE IN VERMONT

The experience was fun, but also impactful on a deeper level. She shares that it helped her connect the world of science to faith. "Science helped me to understand what was happening, while my faith helped me to fully appreciate the awe that comes with experiencing a natural phenomenon."



Photo credit: Jessica Buckwalter '00

**STEPHEN EDWARDS '03** is no stranger to the awe of outer space. In his role as Mission Architect at NASA - Marshall Space Flight Center, he is responsible for developing spacecraft designs and space mission concepts.



PHOTO: STEPHEN EDWARDS

Edwards says, "I consider my work to be a worshipful act. Proverbs 25:2 says 'It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.' Through our seeking and finding, more of God's glory is revealed."

Curiosity and creativity play a big part in his work as well! He shares that, "Curiosity motivates our science and exploration objectives, which in turn call forth our creativity to figure out how we might achieve them. God has placed us in His great creation, and He has made us in His image! Exercising our creativity is necessary if we are to explore what this image-bearing means and learn to be good stewards of it."

# LM ECLIPSE EXPERIENCES

"The eclipse sparked scientific curiosity for our students! They were excited and delighted to experience looking at the eclipse, especially since the glasses made it so clear. Curiosity is important because it leads to investigating and learning, which lead to knowledge."

- **KAREN MADDOX '97**, LM Teacher



PHOTO: 2ND GRADERS CREATED A PINHOLE SOLAR VIEWER OUT OF CEREAL BOXES FOR AN INCREDIBLE SOLAR ECLIPSE EXPERIENCE. THEY TOOK THEIR BOXES OUTSIDE WHEN THE ECLIPSE STARTED AND HAD TO ADJUST THE ANGLE UNTIL THEY SAW THE SHADOW OF THE SUN SHINE THROUGH THE PINHOLE.



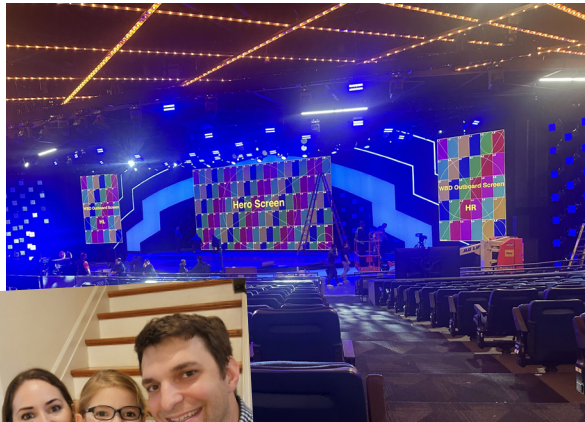
PHOTOS: (LEFT) 4TH GRADERS IN MRS. MADDOX' CLASS VIEWING ECLIPSE WITH SPECIAL GLASSES. (MIDDLE) MIDDLE SCHOOLERS VIEW THE ECLIPSE. (RIGHT) PREK STUDENTS PRACTICE USING ECLIPSE GLASSES.



# ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

BY: BEKAH THRUSH '17, DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE

Curiosity and creativity are found in many fields, but maybe none so clearly as the theater. The Drama Department has been a part of Lancaster Mennonite for years, but it's not just about the stage. No production would be possible without the LM Tech Crew behind the scenes. These groups have provided an outlet for creativity while providing valuable skills to students.



**LANE CROUSE '04** mixes audio for the Warner Bros. Discovery networks, streaming services, and corporate marketing and brand experience. He has worked on projects with NBC at the 2006 Olympics, mixed nightly promos for Conan, and toured as lighting designer with a band! He shared that, "Tech crew taught me pretty much all the skills I use in my current position today. Ryan Rohrer brought so much institutional knowledge that anyone working with him learned industry standard equipment and techniques."

*"Creativity is problem solving, and life is full of problems that will not have a straightforward answer. I find these traits have made me a more well-rounded individual."*  
- LANE CROUSE '04

**HUNTER ROHRER '19** recently started as Video and Streaming Producer at Landis Communities. Lancaster Mennonite not only provided skills for his future career but more importantly, "LM helped me to explore my curiosity in faith and Jesus by surrounding me with like-minded peers who were also exploring their faith. It was helpful to have others journeying through faith alongside me."



*"Learning isn't something that only happens in school. Being curious and asking questions is how I continue to sharpen my skills. Creativity has led me to finding better ways to accomplish my goals."*  
- HUNTER ROHRER '19



**KATELYN CORYELL '15** is the Executive Director with Creative Pursuits Academy, an instructor for several classes and personal lessons, as well as the LM Drama Director. She has been inspired by Matthew 5:16 which says "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Katelyn's heart was pulled to theater education early in her studies. She loves, "Empowering students to make character choices, and ask intelligent questions of the story and themselves."



Students like 11th grader **Jasper Baunee** have learned a lot from her. Jasper says, "I got involved with drama because I thought it would be a great way to spend my time and a valuable new experience. At LM, I was able to explore my curiosity in faith and Jesus by learning through others who gave me courage to grow."

Katelyn loves the students at LM, their hearts for the world, and their desire to make it a better place. She believes that they will change the world and is honored to be a part of their journey.

*"Curiosity and creativity make us better contributors to society and give us the tools we need to truly make an impact on the world we're living in."*  
- KATELYN CORYELL '15



**MICAH CARLSON**  
8TH GRADER



"I got involved with the Tech Crew because I was interested and offered to help. Working with technology is more creative than you think! You enhance the speaker and create an experience for the audience. I would definitely encourage someone who has the skills and interest to get involved!"

**TESSA KENNEDY**  
11TH GRADER



"I started acting in 2nd grade and have loved it ever since. It is important to be curious and creative because curiosity is how we learn, and creativity helps us to express ourselves and learn what makes you unique. In drama you can be creative by interpreting your character and connecting them to yourself."

**CALEB BOWMAN**  
11TH GRADER



"There are many different roles on tech crew, and my goal has been to learn all of them. I can easily tell that it is giving me real, meaningful experience that I can use later in life! There are many ways to be creative, such as learning to do fun things with panning or cool lens effects. I think it is important to be creative and curious in life, so you can improve as a person!"



# CURIOSITY DRIVES GROWTH IN EDUCATION

BY: BEKAH THRUSH '17, DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE



PHOTO PROVIDED BY EMILY STEVENS

**EMILY STEVENS '17** teaches kindergarten through 2nd grade autistic support. Her students are significantly impacted by their autism, so her primary focus is working with them on communication and verbal behavior skills.

She says, "Most of the learning that my students do is driven by their own interests and curiosity, and my goal is to help them make sense of the things they encounter in their environment through that curiosity. The students that I work with impact my life in so many ways. They help me to laugh, to challenge myself, and to be curious about the world."

A highlight of her experience at Lancaster Mennonite was the teachers and how they each took a genuine interest in helping her grow. "I hope to be the type of teacher that makes that kind of an impact on my students as well." She especially loved social studies courses with Sheri Wenger. "I originally went into my undergraduate college experience planning on becoming a high school history teacher. God just had different plans."

In addition, LM helped her to learn more about faith and pursue Jesus. She felt immersed in a "Christ-centered community and environment. I was constantly encouraged to be curious in my faith, to ask questions, and to continue to push myself."

Emily experiences the importance of curiosity and creativity in education each day. She says that, "Without curiosity we wouldn't be open to learning new things, to adapting our perspectives, and to growing as individuals. Without creativity, we wouldn't have an outlet through which we can express our emotions, our faith, and ourselves."

# USING CREATIVITY IN WELDING

BY: AUBREY KREIDER, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

As one of the welders/fabricators at The Farfield Company **ELLIOT SOMMERS '23** is tasked with daily challenges that make him use his creative side. One day he can be found welding a pipe and the next making a manhole cover lift. It is always fun for him to see what he will be working on each day and he loves the variety of the job.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ELLIOT SOMMERS

In addition to enjoying the work, some of the highlights of working for The Farfield Company so far have been getting to know great people. He has really appreciated his boss and how he has taught him about welding and fabrication.

One thing that influenced him to get into welding was Ryan King's welding class that he took as an 11th grader. He says, "I loved working with my hands and just the whole idea of it. I then talked with my Guidance Counselor, Mrs. Shenk. She told me about an opportunity to go to the Career and Technology Center (CTC) in Mt. Joy for my senior year for welding, which I wanted to do immediately. I signed up and got in for my senior year. I learned a lot that year and it was definitely worth it. I got a job right after graduation."



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ELLIOT SOMMERS

Some of his fondest memories from LMH were helping out on the tech crew with RYAN ROHRER '95 in chapels and drama productions. He also loved taking all of the tech ed and shop classes he could with Mr. King, from small engines to construction tech and welding.

Elliott's advice to students exploring their future path is, "Find something you love doing and follow that passion, like how I found welding. Look into the trades if you like working with your hands. They are always hiring and you will meet great people!" and "Stay creative. It's important to remain creative and curious. It helps me a lot to try to think of different ways to do things in the shop that might make the project a little easier."

# CREATIVELY USING A FARMHOUSE TO MINISTER TO OTHERS

BY: LUIS TORRES, DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE

**JUAN MARCOS RODRIGUEZ '93**, better known as **MIKE**, has always been an "outside-the-box" thinker. His approach to expanding boundaries is a common theme in all that he applies himself to do, whether it be as a kitchen designer, art teacher, Christian rapper, church planter, DJ, or farmhouse owner. Mike has never been afraid to push the envelope and encourages everyone to develop meaningful expression towards God by nurturing curiosity and creativity.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY JUAN "MIKE" RODRIGUEZ

Recently, he and his family have embarked on a hospitality ministry to serve those that often go unnoticed. With the purchase of an old farmhouse in Landisville, Pennsylvania, Mike has been able to merge his four primary passions: 1) the gospel of Jesus Christ, 2) his family, 3) passion to serve, and 4) creativity. This is an effort to strengthen and encourage individuals that need a break from the monotony of life and are seeking refuge and answers to life's dilemmas but would never step foot inside a church. The "Pan de Vida (Bread of Life) Farmhouse" is a

ministry of love and service staffed by Mike, his wife **ADIENEZ GONZALEZ '97**, and their four children. It is a hospitality ministry to feed and serve the stranger while providing an example of God's love via a family dinner and art class. It's a missional and intentional version of a Paint & Sip event. The last several years Mike and his family have invited Lancaster area widows to participate in a Valentine's Day Dinner & Painting event.

Being a member of the class of 1993, Mike fondly remembers the opening of the new art wing in the Fine Arts Center. The new space, dedicated to his passion for art, provided him with the opportunity to experiment with various



PHOTO PROVIDED BY JUAN "MIKE" RODRIGUEZ



PHOTO: MIKE, HIS WIFE, ADIENEZ, AND THEIR FOUR KIDS.

artistic mediums. In these classrooms his love of art grew, curiosity and creativity were nurtured, and he began to consider pursuing art as a career.

He encourages young people to think outside-the-box and to, "Go before the Lord, into Scripture, and look at the apostles and how they took risks. They left an ordinary fishing village to become fishers of men - not exactly the career outlook move!"

When reflecting on the core values of nurturing curiosity and creativity, Mike shares, "Curiosity is huge. Especially when looking at the life of Jesus. Look at the questions He asked. It led to a discovery process for all that heard His voice, and that discovery process led to learning for His audience. The closest disciples would get bigger nuggets of information because they inquired. This model of nurturing curiosity and creativity led the disciples, and now the students of LM, to innovative thought patterns."

"Like the Creator we are creative. We are made in the image of the Creator and must do all that we can and be creative with what is given to us."



2024 SENIOR DEPARTMENT AWARDS

AGRICULTURE Jacob Ripperger	ART Tessa Armstrong
BUSINESS Cameron Bruso	ENGLISH Rhylee Brennan
FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE Olivia Foster	HEALTH & PHYS. ED Remington MacKay
MATH Claire Thomas	MUSIC Maya Stauffer
SCIENCE Nathan Bowman	SOCIAL STUDIES Emma Williams
WORLD LANGUAGE Anya Friesen	

2024 HIGH SCHOOL AWARDS

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD Helen Omsted '27
GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AWARD Hevin Khilo '24
GROWTH AWARD Kiefer Hertzog '25
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARD Chaemin Kang '24
LMH EBENEZER AWARD Adelyn King '25
PEACEMAKING AND SERVICE AWARD Jesse Longenecker '24
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SENIOR AWARD Ava Glick, Emma Williams, Ian Kennett, Maya Stauffer, Alice Miller

ART

**Landis Homes Art Student Scholarship Award**  
Julia Fisher '24, digital photography



**LM Art Purchase Award**  
Ilse Ness '24, digital art



**Scholastic Art Awards**  
Annie Reinhart '24: Honorable Mention in Photography  
Maya Stauffer '24: 2 Honorable Mentions in photography and 2 Gold Key Awards in photography  
Julia Fisher '24: 6 Scholastics Honorable Mentions  
Tessa Armstrong '24: Honorable Mention in Painting

MUSIC

**1st Place in the 5th Apex International Music Competition in New York City**  
Yulan Chi '27

**Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) Regional Orchestra Festival**  
Jared Bowman '25 (Trumpet), Claire Thomas '24 (Horn)

**PMEA All-State Orchestra Participant**  
Jared Bowman '25 (Trumpet)

**L-L Music Educators Association County Band South Festival**, participating middle school students included: Jake Paulinellie, Rylan Lapp, Sophi Buckwalter, Elliot Leaman, Jackson-Malachi Bethel, Daniel Thomas, Caroline Clement, and Olivia Zook.

WRITING

**Latin American Alliance Spanish Writing Contest Winners**



PHOTO OF LATIN AMERICAN ALLIANCE SPANISH WRITING CONTEST WINNERS

Level II, Poem: Elilta Kndshih '27, 3rd place  
Level IV, Poem: Sophi Buckwalter '28, 1st place  
Level V, Short story:  
- Sofia Brubaker '27, 1st place  
- Munira Siegrist '27, 2nd place  
- Josh Reinford '26 and Molly Horvath '27, tied for 3rd place  
- Paityn Gerz '27, Honorable Mention

ATHLETICS

**A. Landis Brackbill Scholar-Athlete Award**  
Claire Thomas '24, Adam Nolt '24

**Fackler-Hower Sportsmanship Award**  
Mia Ponessa '24, Caleb Binkley '24

**Jerry Brooks Academic Excellence Award**  
Samiya Krady '24, Claire Thomas '24

**BOYS BASKETBALL**  
2024 District Champs - 4 years in a row!  
**1st Team All-Star:** Cody Fisher '26  
**1st Team All-Star:** Chase Hurst '26  
**Section 4 All Defensive Team:** Jady Taylor '24  
**Selected to Play in the L-L Senior All-Star Game:** Myles Halvorsen '24

**GIRLS BASKETBALL**  
1st Round of States  
**Defensive All-Star:** Adelyn King '25  
**Academic All-Star:** Avery King '27  
**2nd Team All-Star:** Liviiiah Sweeney '25

**BOYS VOLLEYBALL**  
Qualified for District 3 AA playoffs  
**1st Team All-Star:** Adam Nolt '24  
**2nd Team All-Star:** Jamie Eshleman '24, Jesse Longenecker '24



**TRACK & FIELD**  
*This year we partnered with Pequea Valley, so you'll see their students listed as (PV) after their names*

**Broke school record for shot put 47' 7.5"** (previous record was 46'): Nathan Bowman '24



**Placed in Districts:**  
**Shot put** - 4th place - Nathan Bowman '24  
**3200m run** - 4th place  
Caleigh Vincent (PV), with a PR; 6th place - Aubrey Ressler (PV); 7th place - Olivia Zook '26, with a PR.  
**1600m run** - 6th place - Caleigh Vincent (PV), with a PR; 8th place - Jonah Zink (PV)



PHOTO OF MEDALING GIRLS AT DISTRICTS AND NATHAN BOWMAN '24

*(Track & Field - Placed in Districts continued)*  
**800m run** - 6th place - Claire Thomas '24  
**300m hurdles** - 8th place - Jorja Eby (PV), with a PR  
**4x800m relay** - 6th place - Claire Thomas '24, Aubrey Ressler (PV), Olivia Zook '26, and Caleigh Vincent (PV)

CHESS TEAM

**High School:**  
**Team Won 5th Place in Pennsylvania State Scholastic Chess Championship:**  
Liam Huber '27, David Astuto '27, Caden Wiere '27, Landon Nyveldt '26, Lukas Muenstermann '25, and Joshua Reinford '26  
**Won 2nd Place Individually:** Joshua Reinford '26  
**K-12 Open Division Tied for 1st Place and Won 3rd Place Individually:** Donovan Stoltzfus '26




PHOTO OF HIGH SCHOOL CHESS TEAM

**Middle School:**  
**Won 3rd Place as a Team**  
**Individually students placed:**  
- Ethan Buckwalter '30 - 2nd place  
- Grant Weaver '28 - 1st place  
- Andriel Tamang '29 - 4th place  
- Vincent Pagano '28 - 5th place

WORLD LANGUAGES

**Pennsylvania Seal of Biliteracy Recipients - High School:**  
Tessa Armstrong '24, Kai Esbenshade '25, Anya Friesen '24, Zachary Jacobs '24, Samiya Krady '24

**Recipients - Middle School, 8th Graders:**  
Vincent Pagano, Colette Carlson, Solomon Denlinger, Sophi Buckwalter, Lia Charles, Vicky Diaz, and Joanna Stoltzfus

**National German Exam Award Winners**  
Level 1 - Ava Hiller '26, Caleb Bowman '26, Ezra Kauffman '26  
Level 3 - Marian Castillo-Garcia '26, Mara Carlson '25, Noah Niehans '24, Lukas Muenstermann '25  
Level 4 - Ashton Jobes '24, Ilse Ness '24

MATH

**MathCOUNTS**  
**Middle School Team awarded "Gold Level Status" by the National Math Club 2 years in a row!**  
LM is one of only eight schools in PA to have been awarded the Gold Level Award this year. In addition, they also participated in a competition against schools in the Lancaster and Lebanon region and placed 14th out of 25 schools. MathCOUNTS members this year are: Noah Zeevaart '29, Isaac Bare '28, Colette Carlson '28, Lilian Peifer '28, Clayton Smith '28, Grant Weaver '28, and Theo Zook '28.

SCIENCE

**Lancaster County Envirothon**



PHOTO OF HIGH SCHOOL ENVIROTHON PARTICIPANTS

**High School Team:** 4th place overall - Nathan Bowman '24, Jacob Ripperger '24, Cameron Bruso '24, Logan Heisey '24, Landon Nyveldt '26

**Middle School Team:** 4th place overall

QUIZ BOWL

**High School Team:** Placed 43rd out of 55 in their division at the national competition. Sim Spurrier '25 earned 39th place and Owen Esch '25 earned 130th out of 286 participants.

**Middle School Team:** Won the L-L tournament! The team members at the tournament were: Elliot Leaman, Katherine Ruggiero, Rachel Leaman, Jakob Kehler, and Lisa Suliman.

**SPRING SHOWCASE 2024** Thanks to everyone who supported the LMH Drama Department at our Spring Showcase 'What I Did For Love: A Musical Dissertation on Life's Relationships,' a journey through romantic, familial, and platonic relationships of all types. It's thanks to people like you that we are able to continue making quality performing arts education and experiences available to students in the Lancaster Mennonite community.

**FALL 2024 show: November 7-10, 2024**



PHOTOS BY PAUL JACOBS







THANK YOU FOR INVESTING IN THE FUTURE // 2023-2024 Donor List



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For a complete list of our donors  
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lancastermennonite.org



UPCOMING EVENTS

lancastermennonite.org/events

- Homecoming - Saturday, October 5, 2024
- Fall Open House - Tuesday, November 5, 2024, 9-11 AM
- Fall Play - Thursday-Sunday, November 7-10, 2024
- Lancaster County's ExtraGive Day - Friday, November 22, 2024

SAVE THE DATE

- World Changers Gala - Friday, March 7, 2025
- World Changer Week - March 10-14, 2025
- Spring Celebration - Saturday, April 26, 2025
- Annual Golf Tournament - Tuesday, May 13, 2025



MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW FOR SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2024  
Get ready for an exciting Homecoming at Lancaster Mennonite! Alumni, students, families, and community members are all invited to join us for the activities and events. There will be something for everyone to enjoy!



REGISTER ONLINE

lancastermennonite.org/homecoming or call at 717.509.4459, ext. 1020  
Check the website for updates or event changes

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5

CORNHOLE & SPIKEBALL TOURNAMENTS → 9 AM (FREE)  
Sign-up in teams of two to compete. Prizes will be awarded to winners! Register online: lancastermennonite.org/homecoming

PLAYGROUND OPEN & FOOD TRUCK → 9-11 AM  
Free play time on the Elementary playground will be available throughout the morning! Stop by to spend time with friends and connect as a community. Enjoy doughnuts and coffee from local food truck, Here We Dough, while you're watching the cornhole/spikeball tournament or hanging out at the playground.

HOMECOMING BRUNCH → 9:30 AM (\$20/PERSON)  
Join us in the Alumni Dining Hall to fellowship as a school community! Enjoy a catered meal, time to chat with Lancaster Mennonite Superintendent, Dr. Michael Badriaki, and conversations around the table. A brief program will be provided as well. Registration is required for this event. Please RSVP by September 20: lancastermennonite.org/homecoming

Alumni, include your graduating class with registration to help us connect you with classmates!

STUDENT SHOWCASE → 11 AM  
Enjoy a concert featuring a sampling of LM student music groups in the Fine Arts Center. We will also take time to lift our voices in worship as a congregation for a song or two!

ATHLETICS  
10 AM → Varsity Girls Soccer vs. Lampeter-Strasburg High School  
12 PM → Varsity Boys Soccer vs. Lampeter-Strasburg High School  
Games are in the stadium on the turf field; see website for a full schedule & any changes.

Blazer Nation: We will celebrate all Lancaster Mennonite senior athletes and alumni athletes at halftime of the Boys Soccer Game!

LMYA: Boys Soccer players currently in the Lancaster Mennonite Youth Athletics (LMYA) program and girls who participated in the soccer program this spring are invited to walk-out with High School Varsity players when they announce the starting line-up before their respective games. Keep an eye out for additional details closer to the event.

FAMILY CARNIVAL & FOOD TRUCKS → 12 - 3 PM  
Enjoy the Family Carnival stations including face painting, carnival games, and fun fall activities for FREE as much as you like in the Baseball Outfield across from the Turf Stadium. NEW THIS YEAR! We will have a dunk tank available for a chance to soak some of your favorite Lancaster Mennonite teachers. \$5 for 3 throws, or \$10 for a PUSH.

Food truck vendors → Penny's Ice Cream, Egg Roll Lady, Taco RV, and Fries!  
A percentage of food truck sales will be donated to support LM!

WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU ALUMNI?

Did you just get married? Grow your family? New job or degree? Did you recently receive an award or recognition? Have a special life event?

We'd love to share your news! Visit [lancastermennonite.org/alumni/update-info](https://lancastermennonite.org/alumni/update-info) or scan the QR code to submit an update.



ALUMNI NEWS

REUNIONS

CLASS OF 2004 20TH REUNION: October 5th, 5-8 PM at Speckled Hen, RSVP by September 7th to Janae Dagen at janae@speckledhencoffee.com. \$35/person for appetizers, dinner, and dessert.

CLASS OF 1999 25TH REUNION: September 14th, 5-7 PM at Tellus 360 (www.tellus360.com), RSVP to Kate Goree at hasskate@hotmail.com or (484) 886-5893.

CLASS OF 1984 40TH REUNION: September 7th, 4 PM at Lancaster Mennonite School, RSVP to Vanessa King Boyer at vkingboyer@gmail.com or (717) 799-0551.

CLASS OF 1964 60TH REUNION: October 12th, at 12 PM at Lancaster Mennonite School, optional tour at 10 AM, RSVP to Ralph Nafziger at rfanafziger@aol.com.

CLASS OF 1954 70TH REUNION: October 19th, 12 PM at Landis Homes, RSVP to Mary Ellen Ness at umbleness@gmail.com or (717) 392-1405.

CLASS OF 1959 65TH REUNION: October 5th at Landis Homes. More details will be coming from Lloyd and Beverly Wert at lbwert50@gmail.com or (717) 509-5827.

DEATHS

- Krystal J. Boll '94, Manheim, PA, June 15, 2024
- Ethel M. (Ranck) Miller '51, Lancaster, PA, June 4, 2024
- Mary Alice (Denlinger) Kreider '50, Lancaster, PA, June 4, 2024
- J. Kenneth Hershey '61, Willow Street, PA, May 29, 2024
- Dorcus M. (Reed) Danner '55, New Oxford, PA, May 25, 2024
- Kenneth A. Bucher '68, Manheim, PA, May 11, 2024
- Dorothy V. (Reifsnyder) Huber '49, Muhlenberg, PA, April 28, 2024
- Mary Ann (Hershey) Shreiner '60, Goshen, IN, April 28, 2024
- Donald C. Mast '49, New Holland, PA, April 14, 2024
- Steven L. Reiff '91, Ephrata, PA, April 6, 2024
- Leona E. (Zook) Oberholtzer '58, Lititz, PA, April 1, 2024
- Harold W. Stauffer '71, Washington Boro, PA, March 31, 2024
- Mabel I. Pickel '51, Quarryville, PA, March 19, 2024
- Carl K. Newswanger, Albany, OR, March 7, 2024
- Susan A. (Frey) Steffy '76, Lititz, PA, February 28, 2024
- Dorothy L. (Wissler) Zehr '57, Goshen, IN, February 10, 2024
- Ruth (Harnish) Hertzler '58, Seven Valleys, PA, February 13, 2024
- Anna E. (Lefever) Hershey '44, Lititz, PA, October, 29, 2023

MARRIAGES

- 1) Isaac Sommers '16 & Anya Danielson, July 5, 2024
- Benjamin Zook '15 & Aleana Glah '15, June 22, 2024
- Andrew Furjanic 'HC '16 & Lauren Littleton, May 11, 2024
- Taylor Kinney '00 & Ashley Cruger, April 30, 2024
- Elice (Gingrich) 'HC '09 & Devin Harner, March 23, 2024

BIRTHS/ADOPTIONS

- Seth '10 & Lauren Moffet, Freya June, June 16, 2024
- 2) Karina (Kreider) '10 & Andrew Kreider-Glick, Elias Will, May 20, 2024
- Katie (Sadowski) 'HC '10 & Abiyan Amente, Ezra Hershey, May 10, 2024
- 3) Logan '12 & Amy Kreider, Theo Jay, May, 4 2024
- Kaitlin S. (Black) '07 & Eric Yoder, Ethan, April 20, 2024
- Randal '03 & Emily Keener, Aiden Elias, March 3, 2024
- Adrienne K. (Kuhlengel) '02 & Erick J. '02 Weber, Nora Rose, October 14, 2023

REUNIONS (CONTINUED)

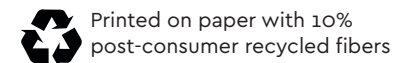
CLASS OF 1974 50TH REUNION: October 19th, optional tour at Lancaster Mennonite School at 2:30 PM, reunion at Stumptown Mennonite Church at 4 PM, RSVP to Bonnie Rohrer at rohrerhomestead@gmail.com or (717) 371-1599. Each member of the class is invited to share several photos and a nutshell version of their life story digitally. All submissions will be combined and shared digitally. Please submit responses here: <https://forms.gle/8R2W9wGG1sLQtfdW7> or scan the QR code. Submission deadline: October 1, 2024. Class members are invited to join our Facebook group "LMH Class of '74".







2176 Lincoln Highway East / Lancaster, PA 17602



## HOMECOMING 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Registration Open Now!

### HOMECOMING BRUNCH @ 9:30 AM

Enjoy a catered meal, time to chat with LM Superintendent, Dr. Michael Badriaki, and connect with alumni and friends around the table. Register by Sept 20th.

### NEW! DUNK TANK @ 12-3 PM

We will have a **dunk tank** available at our Family Carnival for a chance to **soak some of your favorite LM teachers**. \$5 for 3 throws, or \$10 for a PUSH.

### FOOD TRUCKS @ 9-11 AM & 12-3 PM

Here We Dough, Egg Roll Lady, Taco RV, Penny's Ice Cream, and Bricker's Fries!



◀ **LEARN MORE**  
(717) 740-2460

[lancastermennonite.org/homecoming](http://lancastermennonite.org/homecoming)