

BRIDGES

MAGAZINE

LANCASTER MENNONITE / FALL 2025

Lifelong Friendships



THIS ISSUE

LANCASTER MENNONITE MAGAZINE - VOLUME 58



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SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OF OUR CONTRIBUTING WRITERS!

Dr. Michael Badriaki, Kate Grieser, Aubrey Kreider, Ana Martin, Jon Metzler, and Ladies of '72.

Bridges Designer: Aubrey Kreider; Cover Design: Greg Yoder

We are moving to one edition of *BRIDGES* per year and the *Blazer Bulletin*, which are
monthly emails with timely information. To be added to the email list or suggestions about
who to feature, please email info@lancastermennonite.org.

ABOUT THE COVER: A COLLAGE MADE UP OF LANCASTER MENNONITE ALUMNI AND STUDENTS FEATURED IN THIS
EDITION OF *BRIDGES*, FOCUSED ON THE THEME OF LIFELONG FRIENDSHIPS. THESE FRIENDSHIPS HAVE RANGED
FROM FIVE TO SIXTY-NINE YEARS LONG, BUT ALL ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT AND GROUNDED IN CHRIST-CENTERED
FOUNDATIONS.

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

LIFELONG FRIENDSHIPS ROOTED IN CHRIST



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Hello Alumni, Family, and Friends,

Jesus' love is the best foundation for lifelong friendships. In the Gospel of John 13:34-35, Jesus said, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another." The word of God continues to shape how we live, learn, and build relationships at Lancaster Mennonite School.

As we begin another school year, we do so with joyful anticipation and deep gratitude, for God's continued faithfulness, for the community we share, and for the opportunity to embody Jesus' love and teachings through the friendships and support at our school. Our theme for this school year, "Rooted in Christ," serves as an important reminder that everything we do, whether in academics or relationships, is nourished by our shared discipleship and firm foundation in Jesus. This theme is more than a guiding phrase; it is an invitation into a new year of growth, community, reconciliation, and ministry.

At LM, we continually witness how lives rooted in Christ yield friendships that flourish, not only for a season, but for a lifetime. One of the most beautiful fruits of our mission has been the formation of lifelong bonds grounded in a Christ-centered journey. These connections, formed in classrooms, during service projects, in times of worship, and even

through quiet conversations in hallways are living testimonies of God's ongoing work among us.

We've had the joy of reconnecting with LM alumni and seeing enduring friendships at reunions, athletic events, church gatherings, and beyond. Many of these relationships formed during early chapels, clubs, classes, Campus Chorale, recess, sports, trips, and dorm life. And while every relationship has its share of challenges, Scripture and the Holy Spirit gently guide us back to truth, forgiveness, and reconciliation. In Christ, our faith takes root and comes alive, as students, teachers, staff, alumni, families, donors, and board members walk together in the life-giving community He calls us to.

As you read this edition of *BRIDGES*, we pray you'll be encouraged by the stories that reflect God's work both in your life and in LM's Christ-centered mission. These stories are more than cherished memories; they are vibrant reminders of His faithfulness, evident in the enduring friendships and spiritual roots that have been cultivated at LM.

To our alumni, faculty, staff, administrators, donors, and board members, thank you for your support and prayers. Your partnership continues to make a difference, spreading Christ's message, reminding students of God's love and transforming lives for eternity.

In Christ Our Peace,

Dr. Michael Badriaki, Superintendent



FRIENDSHIPS THAT CROSS THE ATLANTIC

BY: JON METZLER '91, LM HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH, ESL AND GERMAN TEACHER

Having reached the 30-year milestone in my employment at LM, I've seen many high school friendships develop. Some friendships are long lasting, withstanding distance, challenges, and time, while others cool down or even dissolve over the years. In my own life though, rather than seeing one as more valuable than the other, I treasure the relationships which God brings into my life at each moment of my journey.

As I reflected over some of these friendships, I was struck by the various avenues through which I have connected with people through LM.

GERMAN EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The German Exchange program has now run for 25 years and has been

a significant source of relationships for me. This year's exchange had my wife Ann and I relating to a new teacher chaperone, Ingrid Röhr, and another, Susanne Press, who was the originator of the exchange in 2000. While Susanne is a long-time friend, Ingrid quickly became a wonderful part of our lives. In both friendships, we have enjoyed sharing about our children, faith, local places that are special to us (both sides of the Atlantic), the exchange, and what we see happening in our respective countries.

It has also been a joy to meet parents of the German students. Sasha and Susanne Weber are the parents a student at Kreisgymnasium, the Christian school in Bad Krozingen with which LM does the German exchange mini course with. Their student participated in the exchange



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IT'S A PRIVILEGE TO WALK THROUGH THE PHASES OF LIFE, AND SHARE A COMMON CHRISTIAN FAITH WITH PEOPLE WHO CARE DEEPLY ABOUT OUR WELL-BEING AND WHOM WE CARE ABOUT DEEPLY TOO.

JON METZLER '91
LMH ENGLISH, ESL & GERMAN TEACHER

TEACHERS, SUSANNE PRESS AND LENORE DIETRICH WITH MR. METZLER, THIS SUMMER, AT KREISGYMNASIUM SCHOOL IN BAD KROZINGEN, GERMANY FOR THE 25TH YEAR OF THE GERMAN/AMERICAN EXCHANGE.

this year and their younger siblings attend the local Christian elementary school. Though our connection was brief, the time we spent visiting with them and attending a church service proved to be really special. After we returned home, Susanne Weber messaged, "we are so fortunate to have learned to know you. It's unbelievable how quickly we have been locked in each other's hearts even though we had not known each other."

FORMER STUDENTS BECOME FRIENDS

One of the many gifts of a long teaching career is the opportunity to build relationships with former students. Last summer, Ann and I, while on a vacation with our family, had the opportunity to connect with a former student, **ANNIE (JOHNSON) DUTCHER '04**, her husband Andrew, and their two children when we visited Madison, WI. The years since we last saw each other (at their wedding!) seemed to evaporate as we spent the evening together. It's truly amazing to see former students grown, with families, and living out the LM motto "world changers."

CONNECTIONS TO CURRENT STUDENTS & COLLEAGUES

It has also been a delight to discover connections that I have with current students. In this past year of teaching, one of my students, Lily Peifer '28, is the niece of a friend of mine, Mike Peifer, from my Locust Grove days. It was a joy

for me to connect back to that family, and I even got to meet and talk with Mike at a track meet. It's amazing to me how, even after more than 30 years, the connections that were forged in early childhood can still hold. Another privilege of teaching at LM has been the friendships with colleagues which have distinctly enriched my life and work. I'm grateful for those supportive and caring colleagues!

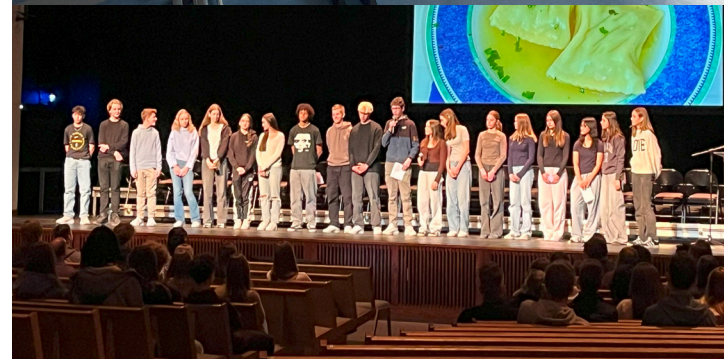
CLASSMATES FROM MY DAYS AT LM

Yes, some friendships can come as surprises and pop up quickly, but others have stood the test of time. I'm tremendously grateful for the friendships I developed while attending LM. Over the years, I have remained in touch with a number of those classmates, **RYAN KREIDER '91, MATT FORREY '91, TRACE OBERHOLTZER '91, KRISTIN (UMBLE) OBERHOLTZER '91**, and many others - whether we see each other once a year or more frequently, those connections remain strong! It's a privilege to walk through the phases of life, the challenges and

the joys, and share a common Christian faith with people who care about our well-being and whom we care about deeply too.

My early years held a lot of transition and honestly I didn't want to switch schools again to attend LMH. However, the peer influences at the public school I was attending were nothing like the positive friendships that I developed during my four years at LMH. I know that I'm a better person because of the friendships I developed at LMH!

IN THE CLASSROOM



TOP PHOTO: MR. METZLER WITH LMH STUDENTS ON SUMMER 2025 GERMANY MINI COURSE/EXCHANGE.
BOTTOM PHOTO: GERMAN STUDENTS PART OF EXCHANGE WITH KREISGYMNASIUM IN BAD KROZINGEN AT LMH CHAPEL.

WE HAVE A STORY TO TELL...

BY: THE FRIENDS OF '72

"Our story" began at the beginning of the school term 1970-1971, our junior year at LMH. Most of us did not know each other when we were assigned to the rooms on North Second of the Ladies dorm in Graybill Hall.

There are twelve of us, **JEAN (LEHMAN) SHOWALTER, LUANNE (EBERSOLE) HORST, SUE (GINGRICH) MARTIN, DEB (WEAVER) WEAVER, JEAN (LANDIS) SENSENIG, MIRIAM (RISSER) ZEHR, CHARLENE (LEHMAN) HARNISH, MARYANN (GOOD) HOOVER, NAOMI (MARTIN) MILLER, BETTY LOU (HORNING) EBERLY, ANITA FREY, AND KAREN (HOOVER) COPENHAVER** - which includes one day student, that formed a strong bond of friendship that continues after 55 years. During our last two years of school at LMH, we learned to trust and appreciate each other through studying, praying, singing, serving, working, spending weekends together, and also participating in shenanigans that brought consequences from Miss Hoover, our dorm matron.

We wanted to continue relating to each after our graduation in June, 1972. Initially, we got together on special weekends, eventually attending our weddings, and picnics with our growing families. We connected many years through hand-written circle letters, until we adapted to the convenience of e-mail, and more recently by group texts.

Through the years, our individual "ministries" have included nursing, teaching, pastoring, mentoring, secretarial work, painting, farming, and business owners. Our families



PHOTO: THE FRIENDS OF '72

1ST ROW: JEAN (LEHMAN) SHOWALTER, LUANNE (EBERSOLE) HORST, SUE (GINGRICH) MARTIN

2ND ROW: DEB (WEAVER) WEAVER, JEAN (LANDIS) SENSENIG

3RD ROW: MIRIAM (RISSER) ZEHR, CHARLENE (LEHMAN) HARNISH, MARYANN (GOOD) HOOVER

4TH ROW: NAOMI (MARTIN) MILLER, BETTY LOU (HORNING) EBERLY, ANITA FREY, KAREN (HOOVER) COPENHAVER



TOP RIGHT PHOTO: FRIENDS OF '72 AT GRADUATION TOGETHER AT LMH IN 1972.

BOTTOM RIGHT PHOTO: GIRLS LEAVING GRAYBILL HALL DORMITORY ON A FRIDAY NIGHT IN 1972.



**WE FEEL SO BLESSED
TO HAVE BEEN GIVEN
THIS WONDERFUL
GIFT OF FRIENDSHIP
STARTING AT LMH.
OUR PRAYER IS THAT
WE WILL REMAIN
FAITHFUL TO GOD
UNTIL HE CALLS US
HOME!**

- THE FRIENDS OF '72

collectively number 32 children and 103 grandchildren. One of us lives in Indiana, one in Ohio, and ten of us are in Pennsylvania.

When we turned 50, we renewed our purpose to stay connected and planned three-day getaways every two years. These are great times of visiting new areas, shopping, talking, singing, and praying together. And now that we're 70, our goal is to get together annually.

We feel so blessed to have been given this wonderful gift of friendship starting at LMH. Through the years our spiritual bond has been a source of strength and hope. We have experienced the Lord's care and protection through the hard times we faced over the years. Our prayer is that we will remain faithful to God until He calls us home!

ROOTED IN FAITH, SUSTAINED BY FRIENDSHIP

BY: ANA MARTIN '20, MARKETING INTERN



KRISTINA MARTIN & DEBORAH WEAVER OUTSIDE OF THE GYM AT GRADUATION. PHOTO CREDITS: KRISTINA MARTIN

In 1985, six young women graduated from LMH—**KRISTINA (ROTH) MARTIN, KATHY (RUTT) BEILER, JOY (FREY) MARTIN, MARCY (LEAMAN) SIMS, BETH ANN BRUBAKER, AND DEBORAH WEAVER** (an additional friend, Andrea Martin, a graduate of Eastern Mennonite High School and EMU, joined the group). Four decades later, despite now living in Lancaster and Cochranville, PA; Portland, OR; Chicago, IL; and Chapel Hill, NC, their bond remains strong—a friendship that began in high school and has only deepened with time.

Their connection was sparked by a shared sense of humor and the joy of laughter. During high school, they supported one another through the challenges of teenage life, finding refuge

in each other's presence. "We went to each other's houses, stayed up late and did things like eat cereal at midnight and laugh till we cried," they recall. "Through the years many of us would have a class or two together, and this provided the opportunity to send each other notes, or doodle in the margins of each other's notebooks." These everyday moments laid the foundation for lifelong friendships built on connection, encouragement, and fun.

Despite the demands of careers and family, the group has prioritized reconnecting through long weekend gatherings every couple of years. A group text keeps them in close contact between visits, and their reunions have become sacred times of laughter, storytelling, and honest conversation. Through life's celebrations and hardships, they've chosen to show up for each other.

Central to their connection is a deep-rooted commitment to Anabaptist principles—particularly peacebuilding and nonviolence. Kristina shares, "We are committed to peacebuilding and that is a common thread that we share. We work intentionally at this commitment to peace - be it

interpersonally, at our places of work, in the broader community, and globally."

Their friendship is more than nostalgic; it's become a sustaining force. Kristina reflects, "We are deeply grateful for our friendships that have spanned the many years from high school to the present day. There's something rare and precious about growing up with people you love and know so well. It's an irreplaceable treasure."

Their story reminds us that when friendships are rooted in love, laughter, and shared faith, they truly can last a lifetime.



JOY MARTIN, ANDREA MARTIN, DEBORAH WEAVER, KRISTINA MARTIN, MARCY SIMS, BETH ANN BRUBAKER, AND KATHY BEILER AT THE BEACH IN SOUTH CAROLINA. PHOTO CREDITS: DEBORAH WEAVER

FROM FIELD HOCKEY TO FOREVER FRIENDS

BY: KATE GRIESER, DIRECTOR OF DONOR GUIDANCE & DEVELOPMENT



ALICIA HORST, COLEEN HURST AND KRISTIN KREIDER
IN HIGH SCHOOL ALL DRESSED UP FOR A TRIPLE DATE!

When **ALICIA (GODFREY) HORST '92**, **COLEEN (ROHRER) HURST '92**, and **KRISTIN (WILE) KREIDER '92** first arrived at LM from public schools, they found each other through field hockey—Kristin and Coleen as players, and Alicia as the team manager all four years. That shared connection quickly became the foundation of a lifelong friendship.

High school brought countless adventures: triple dates with three close

friends from Forest Hills Mennonite Church Youth Group (who later became their husbands), Chi Chi's dinners, shopping trips, girls' nights watching 90210, and cheering each other on through every field hockey, basketball, and baseball season.

The three stayed connected long after graduation, bound by Christian faith, laughter, and a shared history. Marrying their high school sweethearts—

JEFF HORST '91, CHAD HURST '91, and BRENT KREIDER '91 —

created a unique family bond, with yearly traditions and plenty of fun for the next generation. Over the decades, they've prayed together, celebrated victories, weathered hardships, and offered each other grace that fosters deep trust and safety.

They see their friendship as a rare treasure—35+ years of laughter, tears, and unwavering support. "Lancaster Mennonite provided us with a smaller Christ-centered community that encouraged

relationships both during our years on campus and beyond," they reflected. "If any of us need something, we're each other's first calls or texts."

Looking back, their advice for current LM students is simple: "Don't take friendships for granted. Give grace, be kind, be patient, and be grateful. Embrace every opportunity to make memories—you never know which ones will last a lifetime."



ALICIA HORST, COLEEN HURST AND KRISTIN KREIDER AT COLEEN'S
DAUGHTER, CYLEIGH'S '00, WEDDING. PHOTO CREDITS: ALICIA HORST.

RECESS PLAYMATES BECOME LIFELONG SUPPORT SYSTEM

BY: KATE GRIESER, DIRECTOR OF DONOR GUIDANCE & DEVELOPMENT



LMH GRADUATION 2003. LEFT TO RIGHT: JOSH HYKES, JON HEINLY, JARED NISSLEY, AND ADRIAN GROFF.

ADRIAN GROFF '03, JON HEINLY '03, JOSH HYKES '03, and JARED NISSLEY '03 first met while attending Kraybill Mennonite School. They quickly became friends playing at recess. But what they didn't realize was that they would become much more than just elementary recess playmates.

Throughout the years, their friendship continued to grow. As they moved on to LM for high school, athletics continued to be a favorite activity, whether soccer, basketball or baseball, or cheering on their favorite team. In their free time, they could also be found doing science experiments together, building on concepts they learned in chemistry class with Mr. Duane Evans, or spending time together at Adrian Groff's family cabin.

After graduation but before they headed separate ways for college, they gathered a group of eight guys, **ADRIAN GROFF '03, JON HEINLY '03, ANDY HOOVER '03, JOSH HYKES '03, RANDY KEENER '03, JARED NISSLEY '03, CLINTON SIMMONS '03,** and **JUSTIN WEAVER '03,** for one last epic adventure. With the shared dream of seeing a polar bear, they all piled into an old Suburban and drove deep into Canada. Several breakdowns later, one of which included laying hands on the Suburban to pray for it, and then successfully driving all the way home afterwards, they arrived home with memories and friendships to last a lifetime.

After college this initial group of four guys had weekly calls to support and prayer for one another. They don't agree on everything, but there is enough substance to their relationships that carry them through even the differences and help them learn from one other. Even now they continue to check in regularly with updates, prayer requests, and encouragement for each other.

Last year when Jared Nissley was being honored as alumni of the year, a group of these guys from their class surprised him by reserving seats at the Gala event

so they could be there to support and celebrate with him.

They acknowledge that these types of friendships are really unusual. Jon Heinly shares, "to have people that have known you for so much of your life, and walked through making major decisions together - career, relationships, and more. We have accompanied each other on these journeys - it really makes a difference."

His encouragement to current students is to, "have the courage to make the first move towards friendship with others. Your peers are looking for it too. Don't be afraid to step towards them."



PLAYING BASKETBALL AT THE GROFF'S CABIN. LEFT TO RIGHT: JUSTIN WEAVER, JON HEINLY, ADRIAN GROFF, JARED NISSLEY, AND JOSH HYKES.

FINDING LIFELONG FRIENDS FAR FROM HOME

BY: AUBREY KREIDER, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

When **SANGBIN LEE '18** transferred to Lancaster Mennonite as a sophomore, he had just moved from South Korea and faced the daunting challenge of starting over in a new culture, a new language, and a new school. Despite the uncertainty, he found community faster than he expected.

"I was pretty nervous at first coming in, not knowing anyone and adjusting to a new environment," Sangbin recalled. "Lucky enough, I quickly found my people through baseball and Campus Chorale. Whether it was just hanging out in the dugout or traveling for a choir concert, I started building friendships that felt real and welcoming."



SANGBIN LEE '18 ICESKATING WITH LM FRIENDS.
PHOTO CREDITS: SANGBIN LEE

Sangbin credits the LM environment for helping him form authentic relationships with students from many different backgrounds. He especially remembers the everyday moments—little conversations with friends, shared experiences on the field or stage, and the comfort of being accepted just as he was.

One of his most meaningful LM experiences came during his senior year during mini course—a backpacking trip to the Grand Canyon led by teacher Mr. Thurber. "We didn't have our phones the whole time, which gave us a chance to just talk, hike, make meals together, and bond with one another," he said. "I still look back at pictures from that trip and remember how special it felt to just disconnect from everything and be fully present with friends."

Now several years out of high school, Sangbin still values the friendships he



SANGBIN LEE '18 ON MINI COURSE IN THE GRAND CANYON. PHOTO CREDITS:
SANGBIN LEE

formed at LM. "We've all gone in different directions since high school, but there's something special about people who knew me during those years," he said. "Having friends from a whole new background speaking my second language feels unique, and I'm truly thankful for the friendships that we built."

For Sangbin, those connections remain lifelong.

RUNNING TOWARD FRIENDSHIP: MILE BY MILE

BY: ANA MARTIN '20, MARKETING INTERN

When **MINGYANG "FRANK" WANG '16** arrived at Lancaster Mennonite in August 2012, he was a 13-year-old stepping onto U.S. soil—and outside of China—for the first time. The dorm became his first home away from home, and his earliest LM friendships began there.

"My earliest friendships in the dorm, like the one with **ZHENGCHENG LI '15**, gave me a sense of belonging and stability when everything around me was unfamiliar." Zhengcheng, a sophomore transfer from Shanghai, was known for his tech skills, love of gaming, and deep

knowledge of world history that sparked great conversations. The two still keep in touch more than a decade later.

Some of Frank's most formative experiences came from an unexpected place—running cross-country. "The team became my bridge to others. Running side by side with teammates from different backgrounds, united by the same goal, dissolved those invisible walls. In every practice, every race, and every shared moment of exhaustion and triumph, I found friendships that transcended culture. Cross-country taught me more than how to run—it taught me how to push past limits, connect across differences, and find common ground in shared effort. Those lessons have stayed with me long after the races ended."

Over the years, Frank has maintained LM friendships

in surprising ways. He and **ALEX MALAVE '16**, who met on their first day at LM, later attended Franklin & Marshall College together and years later found themselves living in the same city—Durham, North Carolina—while Frank was earning his master's at Duke University and Alex was working there. Another lasting bond is with **QIAODAN LOU '16**, a fellow member of LM's Chinese international freshmen when he started, with whom he volunteered with teaching English in Guizhou, China. "Instagram has been one of my main tools for staying connected with friends over the years," he shares.

Now ESG Manager at Norin Mining in Beijing, Frank credits LM's multicultural environment for broadening his worldview and preparing him to work with diverse communities. "In many ways, my LMH friendships taught me how to listen with empathy, respect different worldviews, and collaborate toward shared goals—skills I carry with me in both my professional and personal life."

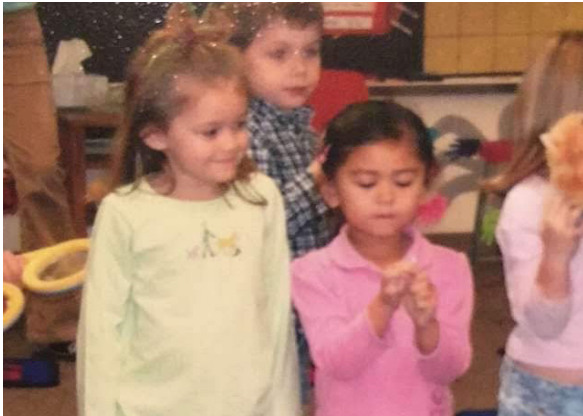
His advice to students: be open, intentional, and step outside your comfort zone—friendships formed here can last far beyond graduation.



MINGYANG WANG AND QIAODAN LOU, IN GUIZHOU, CHINA WHERE THEY VOLUNTEERED TO TEACH ENGLISH. PHOTO CREDITS: MINGYANG WANG

SISTERS IN SPIRIT

BY: ANA MARTIN '20, MARKETING INTERN



ELAINA AND LAUREN AS YOUNG GIRLS.
PHOTO CREDITS: LAUREN HOOVER

ELAINA (DINSE) BRUBAKER '20 and **LAUREN (WILL) HOOVER'S '20** lifelong friendship began in preschool at Kraybill Mennonite School and grew stronger through every shared interaction—from



LAUREN AND ELAINA PLAYING SOCCER AT LMH.
PHOTO CREDITS: LAUREN HOOVER

soccer games and school projects to faith-filled conversations and carpool rides to LMH. As teammates and classmates, their bond deepened during high school through shared experiences like planning prom, attending homecoming, and traveling to Peru together for mini course.



LAUREN AND ELAINA ON MINI COURSE TO PERU.
PHOTO CREDITS: ELAINA BRUBAKER

Though college took them to different states, their friendship remained rooted in consistency, faith, and mutual support. Today, they live just ten minutes apart, recently stood by each other at their weddings—both married their high school sweethearts, **HUNTER BRUBAKER '20** and **EVAN HOOVER '20**, —and continue walking through life as chosen sisters.

Their years at LM helped form a strong spiritual foundation—giving them space

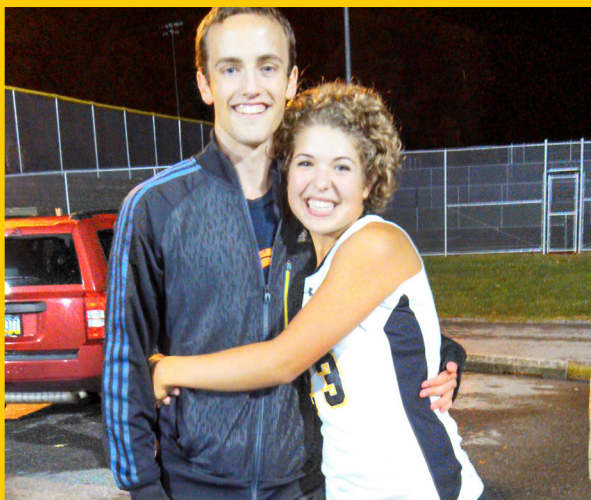
to ask deep questions and grow in their Christian faith side by side. "It's been awesome to see how the Lord has worked in both of our lives," Elaina shared.

Their advice to current LM students? Invest in deep, faith-rooted friendships. "Find friends who love you for you," says Elaina. Lauren adds, "Be open and honest—there's so much you can learn from both your friends and your teachers."



LAUREN AND ELAINA AT LAUREN'S WEDDING.
PHOTO CREDITS: AUTUMN ROSE PHOTOGRAPHY

LIFELONG ALUMNI FRIENDSHIPS



**DAN '14 & SOPHIA (MAST) '14
ZOOK**

They first connected during English 9, where sitting one seat apart sparked conversation, shared interests, and eventually, a relationship. "It's pretty special that we got to experience so much of high school side by side—from classes and musicals to sports and Campus Chorale," Dan reflected. Their time at LM included cross country meets, field hockey games, banquets, and a life-changing trip to South Africa—"Marrying your high school sweetheart means you really got to grow up together," Sophia shared, "and that feels incredibly special."

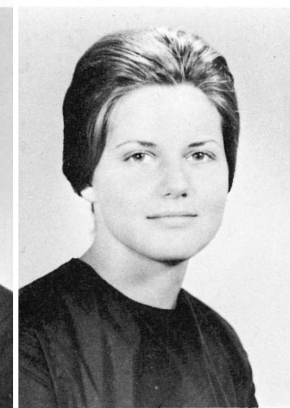


**DORIS (MELLINGER) '56 &
DON '56 SENSENIG**

Don and Doris are one of six couples from the Class of 1956 who married their LM classmates—a love story that began in plane geometry class. Their high school days were filled with fond memories, including a prank by classmate **JOSEPH SHENK '56**, who once disguised a cardboard box as a birthday cake—thankfully bringing real cupcakes for the class. Don and Doris married five years after graduation and have now shared 65 years of marriage. Their story is a beautiful reminder of the lifelong connections and lasting love that can begin at LM.



Kendra E. Crist
Hellam, Pa.



Mary Etta Lapp
Parkesburg, Pa.

**KENDRA (CRIST) CROSS '66 &
MARY ETTA (LAPP) KING '66**

Kendra arrived at LM feeling out of place as the only non-Mennonite in her class, but was quickly welcomed by Mary Etta, whose friendship helped her find belonging. "Mary Etta recognized my insecurity and immediately included me in her social circle," Kendra shared. More than 60 years later, their friendship remains strong—spanning weddings, moves, and long-distance calls—and now continues in Sarasota, Florida, where they reconnect each winter.

THAT HAVE STOOD THE TEST OF TIME



LUKE '08 & MELISSA (SAUDER) '08 SCHLOSSER

They first crossed paths at LM through chapel and shared classes, but their most memorable interaction came as senior mini course counselors for 8th graders. Though part of overlapping friend groups, most of their time at LM was spent with each other's siblings. "We never thought we'd end up together when we were at LM," they shared, but after reconnecting in college, they've now been married 12 years, have two kids, and still keep in touch with many LM friends.



KARISTEN (EMERY) '99 & SETH '97 BUCKWALTER

Seth and Karisten's story began at LM, though they first met at her house while Seth was hanging out with her brother. Their friendship grew through student council, watching each other play sports (basketball and field hockey), and mutual friends. They began dating the summer after Karisten graduated high school and married three years later. Their shared faith and values laid the foundation for a Christ-centered marriage that continues to grow. Today, with three children at LM, their love story continues where it first started.



LYDIA BELAMO '22 & TSION BEKELE '22

Lydia and Tsion's friendship was deeply shaped by their experience in the dorms at LM, where living, learning, and growing together created a bond more like family than friendship. From late-night study sessions and celebrating Ethiopian holidays to aligning class schedules just to spend more time together, their connection was built on shared memories, spiritual encouragement, and mutual support. Even after graduation, they continue to show up for each other in every season, cherishing the lifelong, faith-rooted friendship that began at LM.

FROM LM TEAMMATES TO COLLEGE ROOMMATES

BY: KATE GRIESER, DIRECTOR OF DONOR GUIDANCE & DEVELOPMENT



PHOTO PROVIDED BY LEAH FRIESEN

Lancaster Mennonite wasn't where the friendship between **ADELYN (ADY) KING '25** and **LEAH FRIESEN '25** began—but it's where it was truly rooted and strengthened. The two first connected in childhood through club soccer and church events, including a memorable week together at the Mennonite Youth Convention. But it was during their high school years at LM that their relationship deepened into a lasting friendship.

Reuniting as teammates on the girls' soccer team helped bring them closer. "Between weeks at camp, preseason, and games, we got to know each other very well," Ady recalled. "That time built trust and brought us together in a special way."

Their shared involvement extended far beyond the field—collaborating in Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) leadership, tackling challenging classes together, and serving on the Senior Class Committee.

Beyond athletics and classes, the two found strength in their faith and community. "Ady is so good at listening and giving advice," Leah shared. "I can count on her to give advice that aligns with my values, and I'm so fortunate for the friendship we've built over the last four years."

Both girls credit the LM environment for fostering a Christ-centered, tight-knit community. "Being able to be open with our faith takes friendship to a whole other level," said Ady. "LM gave us a safe space to grow together."

Now, the two started attending Messiah University this year as college roommates—an exciting next chapter

in a friendship that's been shaped by shared experiences, faith, and mutual encouragement. "I'm so excited she'll still be alongside me," Leah said.

Their story is a beautiful example of how Lancaster Mennonite's Christ-centered, supportive community helps students form meaningful, lifelong friendships grounded in faith, trust, and shared experiences.

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It's so unique to LMH to have friends that I can discuss God with them. These relationships align with my morals and values. I am so grateful for that!

- LEAH FRIESEN '25

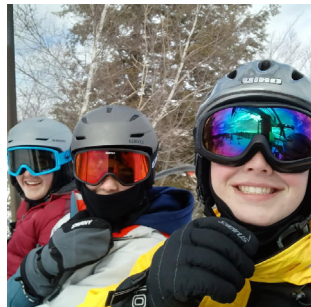
WE ASKED CURRENT STUDENTS: WHAT MAKES A GOOD FRIEND?

We asked current elementary, middle, and high school students - what makes a good friend, how were they welcomed when they first came to LM, and what their favorite memories are of spending time with their friends. Here is what they told us:



BEATRICE MOYER, 2ND GRADER

"A good friend is kind, and we like to play together. When I first started at LM people would say, "Hello" or "Hola" to greet me when I walked into class in the morning. I also talked with kids to find out what we both like so we could play together."



DANIEL THOMAS, 11TH GRADER

"To me, friendship means being accepted for who you are, and having fun with people who share your interests and have a sense of humor. Some of my best LM memories are from sports, Ski Club trips, school events, and just hanging out with friends."



BLAKE MADONNA, 8TH GRADER

"When I first started at LM, a classmate introduced me to everyone and I felt welcomed instantly. I've built a lot of strong friendships through basketball. I really enjoy practicing and traveling

to the games together. Our friendships are built on fun, friendliness, and encouragement."



DELANEY LEWIS, 7TH GRADER

"True friendship means honesty, loyalty, encouragement, and accepting others just as God made them. I've been at LM since PreK, and I'm still close with the first friend, Kaia, who welcomed me—our friendship has lasted to this day and I hope forever! My friends and I like to have fun and be silly together."



ASHLEY ROTHWEIN, 11TH GRADER

"A good friend is someone who lifts you up, walks with you through the highs and lows, and reflects Christ in how they treat others. From the moment I arrived at LM, I was welcomed with smiles and support, and I've made so many

great memories with friends—from homecoming and birthday celebrations to serving together on World Changers Day."



HENRY LESHER, 1ST GRADER

"When I first started school I met a kid on the playground and we started playing together - he's in my class and we're still friends! We have fun playing balls, tag, and LEGOs together."

COMMENCEMENT 2025

We joyfully celebrated the 83rd graduating class of Lancaster Mennonite School with Senior Dedication on May 30 and Commencement on May 31 in the Calvin & Janet High Fine Arts Center. The weekend featured inspiring reflections from students, parents, and teachers, powerful music, theme Bible verse Matthew 5:43-44 read in seven different languages, and a commencement address by Andrés Prins encouraging graduates to live with purpose and connection. From heartfelt dedications to caps in the air, it was a beautiful milestone weekend—congratulations, Class of 2025!



STUDENT STATS



2024-25

Demographics

Top 5 Faith Backgrounds Represented

- 32.1% Mennonite
- 23.9% Non-Denominational Christian
- 3.4% Other Anabaptist (Church of the Brethren, Brethren in Christ, etc.)
- 3.2% Evangelical/Evangelical Free
- 1.9% Baptist

Top 5 School Districts Represented

- 26% School District of Lancaster (SDOL)
- 14% Manheim Township
- 13% Conestoga Valley
- 9% Lampeter Strasburg (LS)
- 9% Hempfield

International Students Per Country

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 12 - China | 5 - Vietnam |
| 6 - Ethiopia | 1 - Germany |
| 6 - Spain | 1 - India |
| 5 - Japan | 1 - Kenya |

Class of 2025

- 79% went on to a 2-4 year college
- 11% went into volunteer service or a gap year
- 10% went into the workforce

YOUR GIVING TOOLBOX: PLANNED GIVING & IRAS

Many people use their IRAs as a tool for generosity during their lifetime. Through Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs), you can both avoid income tax and support your favorite charities!

What people may not realize is that IRAs are also a tax-wise asset to leave to charities.

IRAs that are inherited are taxed as income. The average retirement account in the U.S. for people over the age of 60 is over \$250,000. This means that the account would be taxed at a rate of at least 32% or \$80,000.

In designating a charity as your IRA beneficiary, you completely avoid this tax, providing the organization with the maximum benefit of your gift. Other assets, like life insurance, do not incur income taxes and are a much more efficient way to provide for your children and loved ones.

If you'd like to make Lancaster Mennonite (or another charitable organization that you love) a beneficiary of your traditional IRA, please talk to your accountant or financial advisor. Our friends at Everence Financial would be glad to assist you if you don't know where to start!

And if you've already made a plan to include Lancaster Mennonite in your planned giving, please let us know! We'd love to thank you and share about what these gifts mean to our students!



Kate Grieser
Director of Donor Guidance and Development
grieserke@lancastermennonite.org
(717) 740-2425

How IRAs Are Taxed

Value of IRA	\$250,000
Federal income Tax (32%)	\$80,000
Available to Beneficiary (non-spouse)	\$170,000

Contact Kate!

Want to learn more about creative ways you could impact the future and give more families the chance to be part of Lancaster Mennonite? Contact me! I'd love to help you make the impact you want and hear your creative ideas!

STUDENT AWARDS



ACCOMPLISHED ADVANCED MUSIC PROGRAM PIANISTS EXCEL AT 6TH APEX INTERNATIONAL MUSIC COMPETITION 2025

A BIG congratulations to our accomplished Advanced Music Program students for their amazing piano performances in the 6th Apex International Music Competition in NYC. Jiarui Li '27 won the Grand Award & Top Winner for her age group (15-17), and Yulan Chi '27 won the 1st Place Plus and the invitation to perform at the Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall.

8TH GRADERS EARN GLOBAL SEAL OF BILITERACY IN SPANISH FLUENCY

¡Felicidades! Join us in celebrating these amazing 8th graders for earning the Global Seal of Biliteracy at the Functional Fluency level in Spanish: Rachel Leaman, Lucas Denlinger, Ana Ponessa, Avery Iovino, Maya Johnsen Martin, Avery Horst, Jed Siegrist, Lukas Snyder, Micah Carlson, Kristian Martiny, and AJ Ross. This impressive achievement recognizes their ability to communicate effectively in two languages—a skill that will serve them for life! ¡Buen trabajo, estudiantes!



4TH GRADERS GET 2ND PLACE IN L-L LEAGUE READING OLYMPICS

4th graders placed 2nd in the L-L Elementary Reading Olympics! This county-wide event encourages students to develop a love of reading, learn teamwork, and explore different genres of books. Together the team read books from a curated list, answered quiz-style questions about the books, and competed to earn points for the correct answers. The LM team of 12 students scored 43 points overall to get 2nd place. Way to go 4th grade Blazers!!



JARED BOWMAN '25 RECEIVES IMPRESSIVE TRUMPET ACCOLADES

His trumpet honors this year: PMEA 2025 All-State Concert Band, NAFME 2025 All-Eastern Division Concert Band, PMEA D7 District Band, PMEA D7 District Orchestra, PMEA Central Region Orchestra, Lebanon Valley College Honors Band. Congrats Jared!

We just can't fit it all!

**SEE ALL THE STORIES
& NEWS ON INSTAGRAM:
@LMBLAZERS**

MEET OUR NEW TEACHERS



KARINA YODER, *1st Grade Teacher*

A graduate of Eastern Mennonite University, she brings a passion for teaching from an Anabaptist perspective, a love for math, and meaningful experience from Eastern Mennonite & Spotswood Schools in Harrisonburg, VA and Jakarta, Indonesia. Her global experiences, including time spent in

Israel/Palestine and volunteering with Servants to Asia's Urban Poor, have shaped her compassionate approach to education.



KATRINA SIEGRIST, *2nd Grade Teacher*

Katrina holds degrees from Eastern Mennonite University and Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, and has spent many years teaching in Mennonite education—most recently at Roslyn Academy in Kenya, she has also taught in public schools and a charter school. She is

also currently pursuing additional studies in English Language Development.



LAUREN ZIMMERMAN, *Academic Support (K-8)*

Lauren '15 returns to LM, bringing experience from her previous LM teaching roles and her work in special education at Solanco High School. A Millersville University graduate now pursuing studies in School Counseling, she is passionate about helping students discover their talents and grow

through real-world, Christ-centered learning.



ANNALI TOPF, *MS & HS Bible Teacher*

Annali has her Master of Divinity from Fuller Theological Seminary and BA from Goshen College. She worked as a hospital chaplain, interim pastor, and admissions counselor. She volunteered with SALT in Uganda, Hospice in Indiana, Offender Victim Ministries in Kansas, and has lived and

worked all over the United States.

MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS



AARON BUCKWALTER

Member-At-Large

Aaron Buckwalter, a 1997 graduate of Lancaster Mennonite High School and a graduate of Eastern Mennonite University, is the President of Punctual Pros, which includes One Hour Heating and Air Conditioning,

Benjamin Franklin Plumbing, and Mister Sparky Electric of Southeast PA. He and his wife Kristen (Weatherlow), also an LMH '97 alumna, are members of Mellinger Mennonite Church and proud parents of three LMS students - two are alumni and one is a current student. Aaron has also served on the PA Classics Board since 2022.



JOSHUA LEAMAN

Member-At-Large

Joshua Leaman, a 1993 graduate of Lancaster Mennonite High School, serves as Vice President at CCAB Insurance and Benefits, Inc. He earned his B.S. in Business Administration from Millersville

University. He is an active member of Mellinger Mennonite Church. Joshua and his wife Andrea (Good), LMH Class of '99, have four children currently attending Lancaster Mennonite.

CURRENT LM BOARD MEMBERS



UPCOMING EVENTS

lancastermennonite.org/events

- Homecoming - Saturday, September 27, 2025
- HS Open House - Monday, October 13, 2025
- Fall Play - Thursday-Sunday, November 6-9, 2025
- Lancaster County's ExtraGive Day - Friday, November 21, 2025

SAVE THE DATE

- World Changers Gala - Friday, February 6, 2026
- World Changers Week - April 20-24, 2026
- Spring Celebration - Saturday, April 25, 2026
- Annual Golf Tournament - Tuesday, May 12, 2026



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW
FOR SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2025**
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. 1022
Check the website for updates or event changes

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

ATHLETICS - Turf Field

- 10 AM → Varsity Girls Soccer vs. Lancaster County Christian School
- 11:30 AM → Varsity Boys Soccer vs. Lancaster County Christian School
- 1 PM → JV Boys Soccer vs. Lancaster County Christian School

ATHLETICS - Gym B

- 12 PM → JV Girls Volleyball vs. Lancaster County Christian School
- 1:15 PM → Varsity Girls Volleyball vs. Lancaster County Christian School

FOOD TRUCKS → 10:30 AM - 1 PM

Grab some lunch or tasty treats from one of our food trucks as you enjoy the games and fall activities!

Food truck vendors → Taco RV, Brickers Famous French Fries, Penny's Ice Cream, and Mocha Motion Coffee!
A percentage of food truck sales will be donated to support LM!

FALL FESTIVAL → 10:30 AM - 1 PM

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| - Hayride | - Corn hole | - Hay bale maze |
| - Pumpkin decorating | - Carnival games | - Corn bin |
| - Fishing for apples | - Face painting | - Petting zoo |

The **dunk tank** will be available again for a chance to **soak some of your favorite LM teachers**. \$5 for 3 throws, or \$10 for a PUSH.

ALUMNI TENT → 10:30 AM - 1 PM

Stop by the Alumni Tent under the blue canopy to grab an Alumni Bingo Card. Return your completed card to spin the prize wheel for your chance to win some great LM merch!

CAMPUS TOUR → 1 PM

There have been many changes to our campus over the past few years! Haven't had a chance to see them for yourself? Join us for a guided tour. Meet outside under the Sky Bridge (between the high school and art building) if you are interested.

Unable to make it? Contact us if you want to schedule a private tour at events@lancastermennonite.org.

ALUMNI RECEPTION → 1:30 - 2:30 PM

Come to the Gathering Area (by the Alumni Dining Hall) for refreshments, sharing memories, and the chance to connect with teachers and classmates. Families are welcome!

The event is free, but registration for this reception is appreciated! Please let us know you plan to attend by RSVPing online at: lancastermennonite.org/homecoming



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 lancaftermennonite.org/alumni/update-info or scan the QR code to submit an update.



ALUMNI NEWS

REUNION RECAP



CLASS OF 1950: They gathered together for their 75th reunion on June 4 at Landis Homes. It was a wonderful time of fellowship, sharing, and prayer. And lots of sharing memories!

Check out the list to see if your class is getting together soon! If you don't see your class on the list, please reach out to our Alumni Relations office to schedule your next reunion event: events@lancaftermennonite.org.

DEATHS

James R. Thomas '64, Lancaster, PA, July 6, 2025
Dwane L. Hostetter '62, New Holland, PA, July 28, 2025
Gladys E. (Swartz) Keener '49, State College, PA, June 9, 2025
Eunice (Good) Miller '52, Spring City, PA, April 16, 2025
Susan (Shreiner) Hess '47, Mount Joy, PA, April 15, 2025
Ruth (Shenk) Landis '46, Lancaster, PA, April 2, 2025
Richard W. Kauffman '72, Harrington, DE, March 25, 2025
Alicia (Anderson) Houseal '88, Columbia, PA, March 20, 2025
Doris S. Stauffer '60, Lititz, PA, March 12, 2025
Thelma (Blank) Delong '70, Quarryville, PA, March 3, 2025
Susan P. (Patterson) Martin '74, New Holland, PA, November 8, 2024
J. Nelson Horst '66, Lancaster, PA, November 1, 2024
Verna M. (Sweigart) Gockley Hertzler '55, Sarasota, FL, August 21, 2024

MARRIAGES

Katelyn Coryell '15 and Nate Petley, March 15, 2025
Rhoda Shirk '06 & Sevag Bakalian, March 3, 2025
Anne (Renner) 'HC '13 & Gage Cossari, February 23, 2025
1) Elaina (Dinse) '20 and Hunter Brubaker '20, July 20, 2024
3) Evan '20 and Lauren (Will) '20 Hoover, June 16, 2024

BIRTHS/ADOPTIONS

Kayla (Sauder) '17 & Brock '17 Rohrer, Lainey Grace, July 31, 2025
Cohen '15 & Hannah Peifer, Shepherd Ren, June 15, 2025
Cassidy (King) '17 and Grant Harding, Maris Dot, March 25, 2025
Adrienne (Kuhlengel) '02 & Eric '02 Weber, Micah Jay, March 25, 2025
2) Karla Santiago '06 & Alfredo Puma, Valentina and Ezra Puma Santiago, May 24, 2025
Sherri (Glick) '02 & Devon Mowday, Hadley Marie, March 7, 2025

REUNIONS

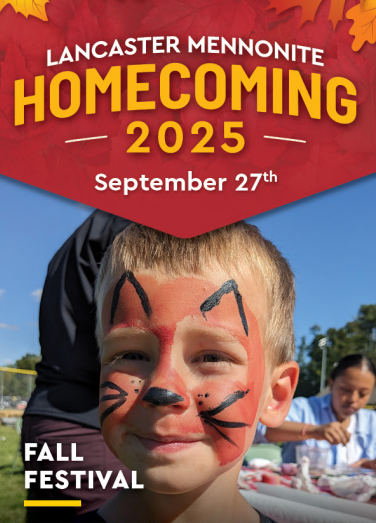
CLASS OF 1955 70TH REUNION: September 20, 2025 at Landis Homes. Contact Orpha Newswanger at 717-509-4201 to RSVP and for more details.

CLASS OF 1965 60TH REUNION: October 4th at the LM Alumni Dining Hall. Contact RuthAnn Martin at cbmartin1978@gmail.com for more details.

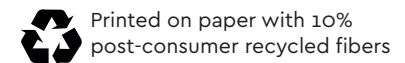
CLASS OF 1970 55TH REUNION: September 20, 2025 at Stumptown Mennonite Church. Contact Jay Carpenter at jcarpenter52@frontiernet.net or (717) 341-7062.

CLASS OF 1975 50TH REUNION: October 19th at Brick Gables, Lititz, PA from 5-8 PM. Contact Tim Landis at pappylandis@aol.com to RSVP and for more details.

CLASS OF 1995 30TH REUNION: September 13, 2025 at 6pm at Sickman's Mill. For more information contact Jonathan Stoltzfus at jonacs2@hotmail.com.



2176 Lincoln Highway East / Lancaster, PA 17602



HOMECOMING 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Registration Open Now!

ALUMNI RECEPTION @ 1:30-2:30 PM

Enjoy refreshments and time to connect with alumni and friends. Free, but registration is appreciated.

DUNK TANK @ 10:30 AM - 1:30 PM

The **dunk tank** will be available again at our Fall Festival for a chance to **soak some of your favorite LM teachers**. \$5 for 3 throws, or \$10 for a PUSH.

FOOD TRUCKS @ 10:30 AM - 1 PM

Taco RV, Bricker's French Fries, Penny's Ice Cream, and Mocha Motion Coffee!



LEARN MORE
(717) 740-2425

lancastermennonite.org/homecoming