

Calendar of Events

First Term .....	Sept. 17 - Oct. 27
Post-Term Opportunities .....	Oct. 17 - 27
Wrap-up .....	Oct. 27
Second Term .....	Oct. 31 - Dec. 8
Christian Nurture Conference .....	Nov. 11-13
Thanksgiving Vacation .....	Nov. 24-25
Choir Tour .....	Dec. 9-16
Third Term. ....	Jan. 2 - Feb. 9
Missions Involvement. ....	Jan. 14-15
Annual Night of Music. ....	Feb. 3
Choir Tour .....	Feb. 10-17
Ministers' Week .....	Feb. 13-17

◆ We have openings for men & ladies in second & fifth terms.  
Please contact the office or check our website for an application.

REMINDER!!!

Save the Date!  
May 26 – 28, 2017  
SMBI 40th Year Anniversary Celebration  
1977 – 2017

Tentative plans for this celebration/reunion weekend include sharing times by former staff and board members, chicken Bar-be-que on Saturday, and a music program on Sunday afternoon led by former music directors. Come and join us for a time of reconnecting with friends, sharing memories, fun, and inspiration. Watch for more information in coming newsletters.

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A Quarterly  
Newsletter Of  
Sharon Mennonite Bible Institute  
Vol. 44 Issue 03

03

July - September 2016

the Monitor

THE WORST THING?

By: Clifford Schrock

Have you ever heard someone say, “Well, the worst thing it could do is kill you!? Or, when listing side effects or possible complications of a medical procedure, the list may conclude with, “or even death” implying it is the worst possible result. Is death really the worst thing that can happen to us?

Judging by the way we often talk about it and the extreme lengths we go to in avoiding it, the answer seems to be, “yes.” There are reasons for this reaction to death, but for a Christian, it is actually one of the best possible things that you can ever experience.

Over the last few years, I’ve discussed end of life issues numerous times with my aging mom. Her perspectives on death changed significantly in recent months. As recent as Christmas time, heaven was not really something that she anticipated. She was happy where she was. She enjoyed her life in her little apartment, and liked spending time with her family. At 87, she wasn’t ready to die yet.

This perspective is perhaps normal and to be expected. We were not wired or created for death. It is contrary to our created nature. Also, we often think about death in terms of what and who is left behind. That is a very real pain and loss suffered by family and friends.

We may also fear the process of death as it can often be a very difficult, wrenching journey for the one dying or those giving care.

However, my mom’s perspectives began to change the beginning of June. Just after returning from a two week trip to Montana and Wyoming to spend time with family, a series of mini-strokes radically changed her life. Over a period of a couple weeks her mobility, strength, and ability to care for herself were significantly reduced. Suddenly, escape from this life and the corruption of the world was much more attractive. When we visited in MN at the end of July or I talked with her on the phone, she frequently talked about being ready to go home.

On Sunday afternoon, September 11, She was admitted to the hospital. Her question was, “Doctor, can

you give me any hope I might die soon?” He replied, “It may come to that.”

When initial tests and treatment were inconclusive and ineffective, she and the family faced a decision. Should she transfer to a larger hospital for more tests and treatment or should she return home and be made as comfortable as possible in her final days? Her choice was clear, “I just want to go home.”

Mom never liked change and could be fearful at times about the new or unknown. But she faced this time in her life with surprising courage and confidence. I believe her understanding of life, death, and the work of Christ in her life, gave her peace at this difficult time.

I was privileged to be with her twice in these final weeks. As her strength waned and she slipped away, she was so sick, so miserable, and so longed for Jesus to call her home. She became a shell of her former self. Yes, there were many tears and much sorrow. It was not a fun or desirable journey, but she faced it with courage, gratitude, and grace. Over and over, as we cared for her, she would say, “thank you.”

Just minutes before writing this article, I received the call that Mom arrived at her final destination. Her life’s

work is over and her journey is complete. She is at rest, free from struggle, pain, and suffering. Is that really the worst thing that can happen?

As I reflect on dad’s death fourteen years ago and now mom’s death, I wonder what those first moments are like as they slip from a worn out, suffering body into the next life. I am fully confident that it is far from the worst thing they ever experienced. Rather, I am convinced that it is better than anything they ever even imagined in this life. What an amazing moment that must be! A granddaughter wrote, “Grandma Schrock has only been in Heaven for about 40 minutes, but I wonder how much beauty, delight, and glory she's already experienced!” In her words, she planned first to thank Jesus and then worship.  
Continued...



Ruth Schrock

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So, what do we really believe about death? Is it the worst possible thing to be avoided at all costs? Do we approach end of life issues and questions differently than those who have no hope? We may face many difficult decisions in this area of life. May our thoughts and values be shaped by a biblical perspective.

While it is a painful journey for those of us left behind, death is not the worst possible thing that can happen to us or our loved ones. It is the gateway to joy unspeakable and full of glory!

*“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true.” (Rev.22:1-6a)*



## Building Project Update

As the pictures document, the house project progressed quickly once it was underway. We are grateful for the many willing workers, discounted and donated labor and materials, and financial resources that have brought the project this far. As of Sept. 27, we are ready for dry wall hanging and finishing with a projected occupancy date of November 23. If you wish to be involved in the project, additional labor is needed for the finishing stages and finances are needed to complete the project.

## ~Marriages~

Matthew Gingerich & Deborah Miller ~ 6.11.16

Andrew Petersheim & Marjorie Stoltzfus ~ 7/9/16

Travis Weaver & Janessa Kurtz 7/9/16

David Yoder & Sharilee Yoder ~ 7/30/16

Nevin Bergey & Heather Sapp ~ 8/13/16

Brandon Yoder & Katy Eash~ 8/13/16

Darren Riehl & Lois Dienner ~ 7/2/16

Angel Lopez & Mary Buhler ~ 9/3/16

David Yoder & Camille Krabill ~ 9/3/16

Kenneth Neufeld & Sheryl Friesen ~ 9/11/16

Terry Krabill & Mindy Miller ~ 9/17/16

Daniel Stoltzfus & Ruth Ann Stoltzfus ~ 9/17/16



## A Collector of Leaves



Yes, I am a collector of leaves  
I have found that,  
Autumn brings my heart joy.  
You might ask, “But,  
Isn’t autumn a time of dying?”  
I say, “Yes, but...  
Is it not in dying that we receive life?”  
It is in letting go  
And resting on the Solid Ground  
In sinking deep  
Into our source of life  
That we, may then  
Rising out of our Father’s love  
Grow Stronger  
Fuller, Greener,  
Sharing this Life we are given  
With others in the next season  
One of new life  
Spring forth.



This is what I see when  
I look at a leaf.  
Some are large.  
Others only small  
Some bursting with vibrant color  
Others only brown  
But each has a part to play.  
I look at a leaf  
And see  
A promise  
Of hope for the future  
And a reminder  
Of redemption.  
Because, think of it  
A rotted leaf, a mighty tree.  
So, yes...  
I am a collector of leaves.

*Julie Atkinson*



## ~Births~

Daniel & Anita (Breneman) Burkholder  
~Brandon James

Tim & Katie (Koop) Croft  
~Layton Matthew

Leonard & Jolene (Eicher) Dueck  
~Acacia Crystelle

Titus & Daisy (Atkinson) Kuhns  
~Rowan Eli

Kenneth & Audrey (Rohrer) Martin  
~Christopher David

Kevin & Alissa (Schrock) Maust  
~Kyrell Bryce

Karlin & Megan (Ledoux) Stutzman  
~Declan Arthur

DJ & Maria (Yoder) Troyer  
~Hudson David