



Journey: A Missional Leadership Development Program

This year's Journey program includes twenty-three participants and twenty-one mentors. One participant and one mentor are from Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference: **Ursula Hess** (Waterford Mennonite, Goshen), and her mentor, **Mary Hochstedler** (Waterford Mennonite, Goshen).

Journey students and mentors from the U.S. and Canada gathered at Amigo Centre for the fall Weekend Learning Event September 8-10. Worship sessions, led by Allan Rudy-Froese, AMBS Professor of Christian Proclamation, and **Joanne Gallardo, Conference Minister**, laid the foundation for our time together and took place four times throughout the weekend. Learning sessions, led by Marilyn Rudy-Froese, Church Leadership Minister for Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, focused on spiritual disciplines and character formation for ministry. In other learning sessions, students developed personal timelines, including significant points of spiritual and vocational growth; explored personality inventories; and learned about spiritual direction. Mentors participated in a mentoring workshop (co-led by Joanne Gallardo) and mentors and mentees met together to develop updated learning covenants, which help to guide them through the program.

Following the fall gathering, in mid-September, participants joined online missional leadership development classes. As part of these studies, they also carried out a wide variety of ministry assignments in their congregations and communities. Throughout the session, they also met with their mentors, typically bi-weekly, to discuss their classes and ministry experiences. In February, participants joined new online classes and continued to meet bi-weekly in mentor-mentee pairs.

The winter Weekend Learning Event was held on the AMBS campus March 10-12. The theme, Anabaptism: A Way of Being Church, included a visit to Menno-Hof guided by Jamie Pitts, AMBS Associate Professor of Anabaptist Studies, and three additional teaching sessions by Jamie. The weekend also included worship sessions led by Joanne Gallardo; mentor and mentee meetings, and work on learning covenants. During the Sunday morning worship time, mentees in their final term of the program, including Ursula Hess, shared a reflection, and their conference minister or mentor provided a blessing and prayer.

Twice a year, mentees submit short reflection papers describing their learnings from the previous online class, and mentors submit reflections describing their observations of their mentees' learning and growth. These reflection papers are shared with mentees' conference ministers to help conference ministers stay informed of mentees' growth and development in the program.

The Journey Board plays a vital role in shaping and guiding the program. Many thanks to Joanne Gallardo and **Chris Kauffman** (previously a member of the Leadership Enhancement Team), for serving on the Journey Board.

Journey participants and alumni frequently tell us that Journey is a tremendous learning opportunity for pastors, lay leaders, church planters, and other emerging leaders! If you or someone you know wants to develop or deepen their ministry gifts or is exploring a call to ministry, please speak to Joanne Gallardo about whether the Journey program might be the right next step.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jewel Gingerich Longenecker".

Jewel Gingerich Longenecker
Dean of Lifelong Learning