



# ZING!

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## Peace of Mind:

### Trauma and Mental Health in the Pandemic and Beyond

## VIRTUAL Faith & Life FORUM 2021

Join practical theology professor Rev. Dr. Heidi Miller and practicing psychiatrist Dr. Rachel Wilkenson for a discussion on how this pandemic has affected our brains and souls, and what the path of healing might look like.

Moderated by Conference Minister Rev. Amy S. Zimbelman.

**Saturday, April 10, 10:30 a.m.**

Note new time.



We'd love it if you'd [register here](#) so we have a feel for numbers by Friday at 5:00 pm. But even if you don't, you're still welcome. Zoom doors open at 10:25.

**COST:** We request a donation (suggested \$20/person). To pay, [click here](#). Select "Faith & Life 2021" from the pulldown menu. NOTE: The primary expense we are covering is our two guest speakers. Pay what you can, pay more if you can.

Plan on a discussion time (about 50 minutes), followed by breakout rooms and Q & A.



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85189000479?pwd=THBvSndnRjhuNGJWWFNaQ1FvWWZCdz09>  
Meeting ID: 851 8900 0479  
**Passcode: forum2021**



You can also join us on Facebook, having your own account is not necessary. *This option is to listen in to the discussion time only.*

<https://www.facebook.com/Mountain-States-Mennonite-Conference-417660451647225>

## Top 10 Reasons to attend Faith & Life Forum 2021

You know the facts. Now the question is: Why should you attend?

Here are Pastor Amy's top 10 reasons:

- 1) It's virtual. Showering and ironing clothes are highly overrated activities. Not to mention that getting in the car and going places is sooo 2019.
- 2) It's not someone else's problem. The American Psychiatric Association found that 2/3 of Americans feel more anxious than they did a year ago. You are struggling. I am struggling. It's been rough, so let's learn what all has happened to our brains and souls and some ideas and tools for healing.
- 3) All the cool kids are doing it. That's right, all your friends will probably be there. You don't want to miss out, do you?
- 4) It's biblical. Our Bibles are full of folks experiencing things like anxiety (think of Jesus sweating blood in anguish in Luke 22:44), depression (Elijah's depression and suicidal ideation in 1 Kings 19:1-18), or a bipolar-type experience (the Psalms naming the heights of joy and the depths of despair just a few verses apart), to name a few. An event like this helps us understand our own stories and the stories of biblical characters better as we cry out to God that things are not as they should be.
- 5) The speakers are amazing. A theology professor who's done work on trauma and ways that church and spirituality can be sites of healing. A practicing psychiatrist who thinks holistically about health involving all of our selves. A conference minister who's got a question or two up her sleeve. What's not to look forward to?
- 6) There's no corresponding book assignment, so you don't have to feel guilty about not reading the book written by the speaker this year. This counts as two.
- 7) See #6
- 8) What else do you really have going on that day? Be honest.
- 9) Tradition. MSMC has been having this forum for years. It's only right and proper that you would attend again. Tradition! (Yes, cue the *Fiddler on the Roof* song now, with my apologies that it will be stuck in your head for days.)
- 10) You're worth it. Why not take some time to learn (remind yourself?) how to care for your own brain and soul? (Btw, your best friend, spouse, and pastor agree with me on this.)





## Tell the Story Again

*A Palm Sunday reflection by Pastor Randy Spaulding  
Preached at Boulder Mennonite Church on March 28, 2021, in the  
wake of the mass shooting across the street at King Soopers on  
March 22*

### First Reading

#### **Malala Yousafzai, in a speech to the United Nations:**

Dear Friends, on the ninth of October 2012, the Taliban shot me on the left side of my forehead. They shot my friends too. They thought that the bullets would silence us. But they failed. And then out of that silence came thousands of voices. The terrorists thought that they would change our aims and stop our ambitions, but nothing changed in my life except this:

Weakness, fear and hopelessness died. Strength, power, and courage was born. I am the same Malala. My ambitions are the same. My hopes are the same. My dreams are the same.

Dear sisters and brothers, I am not against anyone. Neither am I here to speak in terms of personal revenge against the Taliban or any other terrorists' group...I do not even hate the Talib who shot me. Even if there is a gun in my hand and he stands in front of me, I would not shoot him. This is the compassion that I have learned from Muhammad — the prophet of mercy, Jesus Christ, and Lord Buddha. This is the legacy of change that I have inherited from Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. This is the philosophy of non-violence that I have learned from Gandhi, Bacha Khan, and Mother Teresa. And this is the forgiveness that I have learned from my father and from my mother. This is what my soul is telling me: be peaceful and love everyone. *Malala Yousafzai: 16th birthday speech at the United Nations | Malala Fund Newsroom*

### **Pastor Randy's Reflection** [Mark 11:1-11](#)

Every year for over 2000 years, the story of Jesus' last days and of his passion has been told. Your mothers and fathers told the story, their mothers and fathers told the story, their mothers and fathers told the story—and so far back in time that we cannot see the faces of those that went before us. That the story continues to be told is a testament to the power of suffering love, sacrifice, and amazing grace, and to the steadfast, enduring Spirit of Love that holds all humanity.

And yet, it's hard to preach good news and a triumphal message on Palm Sunday when ten people were murdered just feet away from our church campus, from where I'm standing now. Where many of us shop and close to where many of us have eaten at the Tandoori Grill or Abo's pizza or Café Soleil, where our youth enjoy bagels and conversation after church. As a faith community that practices the way of compassion and love and teaches nonviolence, we always stand in solidarity with every community that has experienced violence. But we know that when it touches us so close to home, we feel it even deeper. We feel it because these were our neighbors, even whom some of us knew: Denny Stong; Neven Stanisic; Rikki Olds; Tralona Bartkowiak; Eric Talley; Suzanne Fountain; Teri Leiker; Kevin Mahoney; Lynn Murray; Jody Waters. I ask us to take a moment of silence to remember them, and to remember their grieving friends and family.

*Silence... may the dead rest in peace and may their families find comfort in these days.*

On this Palm Sunday, we remember that the word "Hosanna" is more than an exclamation of joy and praise. It comes from the Hebrew word, "hoshi'a na," translated in Greek as "osanna" or "hosanna." The original intent in our sacred texts actually meant "Save us!" Psalm 118:25 says "Hoshi'a YHWH anna" and it literally means:

"Save us, Eternal One, we pray! Heal us. Give us success" (Psalm 118:25).

The gospel storytellers turn the word into simply a shout of praise when Jesus enters Jerusalem. Later, we will sing, "Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang." But on this Palm Sunday, 2021, perhaps we may embrace the original meaning and allow it to guide us as we tell the story of Jesus' journey to his execution. May we embrace the original meaning as we enter the story ourselves, as we cry out, "Save us!"

Hosanna—Save us, we pray from a culture obsessed with power and domination and violence.  
 Hosanna—Save us, we pray, from leaders who choose not to pass common-sense legislation that keep weapons used for war and killing other people away from us.  
 Hosanna – Save us, we pray, from those who would vilify an entire faith because the name of the individual who did the shooting has a Muslim name.  
 Hosanna – Save us, we pray, from resigning ourselves so easily, saying that there’s nothing one person can do about the evils we deplore.  
 Hosanna – Heal us, we pray, as a community that grieves and mourns such horrific death.  
 Hosanna – Heal us, we pray, and give us strength to continue to be a voice for peace, for nonviolence, the ones who step up and have the courage to hammer dismantled weapons into gardening tools that will help to feed not only our bodies but our souls.  
 Hosanna – Save us, we pray, as we face our anxieties, our fears together as a Mennonite community, walking with one another so that we aren’t alone in this sometimes-mean world.

This morning I’m inspired once again by amazing people like Malala Yousafzai. A survivor of gun violence, terrorism, and misogyny, Malala’s message is the message of the gospel, in a nutshell.

[Click here](#) to hear the recording of the entire service.

[Click here](#) to read the full article online.

## SAVE THE DATE

### BOULDER, CO

Gun Violence Roundtable June 25-27

Friday Evening June 25th: Documentary Screening

Saturday June 26th: Workshops and Panel Discussions

Sunday June 27: PeaceMaker event with live gun to garden tool demo

Location TBA

Contact [info@rawtools.org](mailto:info@rawtools.org) to sponsor, volunteer, or participate



## SAVE THE DATE

Assembly 2021

July 30 - Aug 1

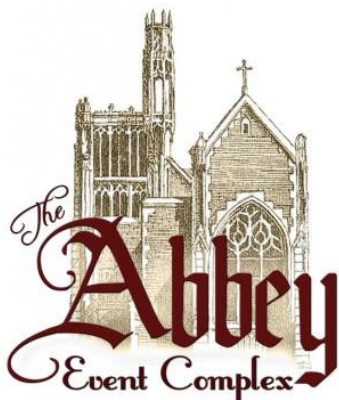
Theme: Blessed Unproductivity

Whether in person at [The Abbey](#) in Canon City, CO

Or via our hybrid virtual option on Zoom,

You will definitely not want to miss it this year!

Contact [assembly@mountainstatesmc.org](mailto:assembly@mountainstatesmc.org) with questions



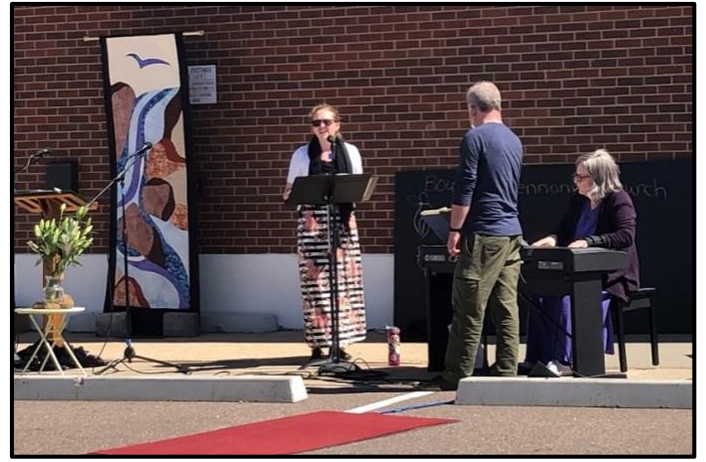


# Photos from the Good Friday Vigil at Boulder Mennonite

## Speakers and Musicians



*BMC Singers*



*Lily Mast and Eve Kia, BMC*



*Mike Martin of RAWtools*



*Pastor Randy Spaulding, BMC*



*Herm Weaver*





*Activity Table*



*Rev. Nicole LaMarche,  
Community UCC of Boulder*



*Cindy Firnhaber of BMC*



*Beulah, the Prayerstream*



*Mary McKay of BMC at one of the Chalkboards*

[Video + Article from Fox 31.](#)  
[Boulder Daily Camera article](#), reposted to [The Denver Post](#)

Good Friday in the parking lot of BMC was a blessed event! A 5-hour vigil in honor of lives lost to gun violence right across the street and all across the country. Hearts were open, anvil, forge and hammering transformed guns to garden tools; disarming our fears and bringing us back to life after the shock of the shooting. Music and prayer were offered with deep sorrow and solidarity.

MSMC came together in a testimony of how community, faith, action, and prayer can step in boldly to such traumatic and incomprehensible events. Mike and Fred Martin made the first move offering their RAWtools vigil to BMC and the broader Boulder community. Pastor Randy had already opened the church during holy week and spent many hours in community services since the shooting. Amy Zimbelman, conference minister, offered support with a spirit-filled reflection that read like thunder. Brenda Fox and the Prayerstream team joined with the entire BMC community, to make the parking lot a welcoming and safe space. And most certainly, God set the stage with the full warmth of the sun and blue skies throughout! – *Brenda Fox*

# Get to Know MSMC Leadership Board

## Meet Eldon Mast: “A spiritual commitment to doing the next right thing”

By Rev. Amy S. Zimbelman



Eldon Mast's professional life has been rich and varied. He's worked as a paperboy, an auto mechanic, a firefighter, a paramedic, a weatherman, and a programmer of a system that allows people to text 911 to get help. He now works as a director for Sierra Wireless from his remote location in Longmont, using his training as a computer scientist and mathematician.

But as interesting as his career has been, his volunteer life in service to the church might be even richer.

“It was always demonstrated to me growing up that it's important to be involved,” Eldon says. “With regard to doing church, I learned: *Just say yes*. I have a spiritual commitment to doing the next right thing in service.”

And so, from his youth, Eldon has served the church in many capacities.

It began in his hometown of Lancaster, a conservative Mennonite community where his father was a social worker and his mother was a homemaker and administrative assistant.

“My congregation asked younger people to be involved in church leadership so I was able to observe how those meetings were held and given an opportunity to provide insight,” he says.

As a young man, Eldon moved to Washington, D.C. to spread his wings. There he began working in telecommunications and met and married his wife Terry, a writer and editor who now works as a master nutrition therapist. Eldon connected with a Mennonite church in Fairfax, Virginia and soon became their church chair.

When his company needed to open an office out West, Eldon and Terry jumped at the opportunity, as they were drawn to the area and had various family members in Colorado. Once they moved in early 1995, they became committed to deep relationships within Mountain States Mennonite Conference and Mennonite Church USA. The first year, they visited many of the churches in the conference and before joining Boulder Mennonite Church (BMC).

Unsurprisingly, Eldon again found himself in church leadership. As his family settled here and he and Terry raised their three daughters, Eldon has served as church chair of BMC and board chair for Mennonite Urban Ministries in Denver. He currently serves on the Leadership Board of Mountain States Mennonite Conference and the nominating committee at BMC.

But what is it about the Mennonite Church that makes him want to give up so much of his precious free time?

“Being a bit different from the dominant culture and dominant Christianity has always been important to me,” he says. “I am an ethnic Mennonite and I no longer call myself a Christian; I call myself a follower of Jesus. I ask myself: *What am I doing to make a difference? To be distinctive? To follow an upside-down kingdom?*”

He continues: “It's not like I planned my life to be in church leadership/service/volunteering, but when I'm invited, I take a look, pray the serenity prayer, and say yes if it's the right thing.”

[Click here](#) to read the full article online.

## Conference Minister's Corner

**Feeling disconnected, conference-wise?  
These things might help...**

*By Amy Zimbelman, Conference Minister*



"If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it." 1 Cor 12:26-27

How do we connect with one another more effectively?

When one of our churches is right outside of the police tape of a horrible tragedy that has garnered international attention, we lift up our prayers. As we must, for the healing of us all. This event has reminded us that when one part of our body is throbbing, the rest of us feel it too.

But what about the day-in day-out experience of being church? The small joys and sorrows? The sometimes-skipping and sometimes-slogging that makes up our community's walk with God? How do we share our lives in those times too?

Right now, we do have some gatherings and publications that connect us. We have the Zing! coming out monthly and a social media presence. We have our annual Faith & Life Forum this Saturday, April 10th. We have a hybrid Assembly at the end of July this year. We have regular Prayerstream gatherings. We have various nonprofits like Mennonite Disaster Service, Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, RAWtools, and more that bring people together from various congregations to socialize and serve.

But as I've preached at about half of the churches in our conference, I've heard this refrain: "Pastor Amy, I know intellectually that there are 17 churches and various passion ministries in our conference, but I don't know much about them. How can we feel more connected to each other?"

In response to this, some of the pastors and I have come up with two additional ideas to help us connect more:

Starting this month, we'll be adding something to the bulletin announcement emails: Conference Connection. This will be a couple sentences of a prayer request: a joy and/or concern submitted by one of the churches or passion ministries in our conference. Each week we'll be praying together for that ministry. This is an easy way for our churches to honor and learn about one another over the course of the year—all we have to do is add the bulletin announcement to our weekly written and/or verbalized prayer requests and there we are: more connected with each other! (Also, post-prayer, calling or sending a text to an old friend you haven't talked to in a while at said church is also encouraged.)

Secondly, I'm offering to facilitate Pulpit Swap 2021, as there's been interest from various pastors. Pastors can opt-in and then will trade pulpits with another randomly-selected church in our conference. So be on the lookout for a strange and interesting new pastor coming your pulpit's way!

These ideas won't solve everything, but they're a couple more ways we can be reminded that we are one body connected to each other.

Got any more ideas for connecting our churches? Talk to me! (Warning: I may ask you to volunteer to help with any ideas you share): [amyz@mountainstatesmc.org](mailto:amyz@mountainstatesmc.org). [Click here](#) to read the article online.



News from:

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN MENNONITE CAMP



709 County Road 62  
Divide, CO 80814

719-687-9506  
info@rmmc.org  
www.rmmc.org

### MARCH STORMS NEARLY DOUBLE SNOW TOTAL FOR SEASON

During the month of March, Rocky Mountain received an impressive 45 inches of much needed snow. In comparison, it took 6 months to receive the first 47 inches of snow that fell this season beginning with the first storm back on September 9, 2020. Our hope is to reach our season average of 125 inches of snow to keep the life-giving streams flowing and to minimize the threat of fires. If we've learned anything over the years, never underestimate the storm potential of April and May here at RMMC!



**PICTURED:** All the snow received in the month of March required the use of the camp's big snowblower to make room for more. A good snowsuit is also required!

### SPRING MENNONITE QUILTERS RETREAT



**PICTURED:** Attention to detail and keeping the pattern straight is all part of the joys and challenges as part of the retreat.

Just around the corner is camp's first quilters retreat for 2021 coming April 22-25. These retreats are a great opportunity to get away and get those projects done that have been waiting. While there will be some short, fun breaks, the main focus of this weekend will be giving participants plenty of time to sew. Bring lots of projects, or that one big project you've been waiting to start. Sharing ideas, tips and techniques are part of the weekend along with bringing any show and tell items to share with the group.

## SPRUCE BEETLE PACKET WORKDAY APRIL 17TH

Since 2015, camp continues the effort to minimize the impact of the spruce beetles desire to make a home and reproduce in the mature Engelmann spruce trees here at RMMC. Pheromone packets disbursed around camp facilities are intended to “communicate” to the beetles that camps part of the forest has a “no vacancy” sign and they should move on to another part of the forest.

Please signup to come help with this years distribution by visiting our Volunteer page and selet “Signup for Maintenance“. Friday night accommodations are offerd by request and breakfast will be served Saturday morning at 8:00 and lunch at 12:30. Hope to have you join us!



**PICTURED:** John Lammon shows how tricky it can be to staple the pheromone packets to the trees. Very carefully!

## PAYING THE LEGACY FORWARD CAMPAIGN UPDATE

We're getting closer! Only 3 months and \$5,855.56 more to go to reach the ambitious goal of \$180,000 goal over the 12 months of the campaign which began July 1st, 2020. Camp estimated that it would take \$15,000 per month from donor support representing half of the \$30,000 needed each month to sustain and care for staff, program offerings (as able), guest groups and facilities through this significant coronavirus “storm”.

Additionally, camp is investing in improvements to better serve our campers, guests and staff AND respond to guidelines that restrict the number of people that can be inside together. THANKS for your support and we couldn't do it without you!

➤ Click [here](#) to read the full April 2021 Newsletter.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

Rocky Mountain Hmong Mennonite Church (<https://www.rmhmc.org/>) was recently awarded a \$40,000 JoinHands grant from Mennonite Men. The money will be used towards the purchase of this congregation's first church building. We celebrate with you! [mennonitemen.org/joinhands](https://mennonitemen.org/joinhands).



# MSMC Communication Updates

**Zing!** Please note the 2021 deadlines and schedule:

Aug/Sept – Release Date: Aug 31; *submission deadline: Aug 15*

**May - Release Date: May 10; *submission deadline: Apr 30***

Oct – Release Date: Oct 10; *submission deadline: Sept 30*

Jun – Release Date: Jun 10; *submission deadline: May 31*

Nov – Release Date: Nov 10; *submission deadline: Oct 31*

July – Release Date: July 10; *submission deadline: Jun 30*

Dec – Release Date: Dec 10; *submission deadline: Nov 30*

**Bulletin Announcements** – We email MSMC congregations every Wednesday with bulletin announcements. If you have something to share out to our community, please email Jen, [MSMC Administrator](#), by 9am Wednesday morning.

**ZING!** is published for the congregations of Mountain States Mennonite Conference and can be [viewed on the website](#).

**Conference Website:** [MountainStatesMC.org](http://MountainStatesMC.org)

*Email contributions as Word files to Jen Dudenhefer at [administrator@MountainStatesMC.org](mailto:administrator@MountainStatesMC.org). Articles should be 300 words or less in length.*

## Conference Calendar

April 10	Virtual Faith & Life Forum
June 25-27	Gun Violence Round Table, Boulder, CO
July 30-Aug 1	Assembly, Virtual / Canon City, CO

## MSMC Staff and Leadership

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