



# ZING!

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*Jen with one of her dog clients, Daisy*

## Jen Dudenhefer moves on from Conference Administrator role

Jen has served Mountain States faithfully since January, 2018. Here are some of the things folks who have worked closely with Jen have to say about her:

*From Katrina Toews, Assembly Planning Committee Co-Chair:* It has been a pleasure to work alongside Jen Dudenhefer. I first met her when we moved to Colorado and attended Assembly at Boulder Mennonite. She checked me in, as I gathered my registration materials as the events were beginning. Little did I know that I would get to work with her in the future. The following year, my husband Beuford and I were "training" to be the next Assembly co-chairs. All of our work with Jen was over Zoom. Luckily, she had a handle on the "how to" and a go get 'em spirit to at least give it a try as we all navigated COVID and being church together. She handily put together an entire online Assembly, complete with a performance by "Girl Named Tom," advertisements during the show, workshops, a delegate session and worship services. Phew, she did a lot.

Slowly over the next two years, we had the pleasure of seeing Jen in-person again at the hybrid gathering of Assembly in Canon City and this past year in Denver. She has been the glue that holds the conference together and I am grateful to have gotten to know her in this way. Wishing you all the best in your next chapter Jen!

From Ryan Koch: Thank you, Jen, for going above and beyond. Your love of the conference shows in the way you got everything done flawlessly (often behind-the-scenes). I'll miss working with you but I'm thrilled you found work that will fit your passions and goals. Best of luck.

From Marilyn Miller: When Jen Dudenhefer first arrived in Colorado as a member of the Voluntary Service Unit in Boulder, she worked as my administrative assistant. We worked in the areas of outreach and church planting for the General Conference Mennonite Church. Jen was a very positive, efficient, technologically savvy, responsible worker. She was a friend with whom I enjoyed working. After her VS term, Jen stayed in Colorado and was a much appreciated member of the Boulder Mennonite church. I was happy to see her take a job with Mountain States Mennonite Conference. Her work has been very much appreciated, notably by seniors like me who sometimes need help with responding to registrations and conference business online. THANK YOU, JEN!

From Amy Zimbelman: Jen, it has been a delight working with you these last few years! Your organizational skills, tech savviness, and ability to work under pressure ensured that everything came together for meetings and events—we owe the success of the Faith & Life Forum and Assembly largely to your behind-the-scenes expertise. Your clear communication skills and newsletter/social media presence helped everyone get on the same page and care more deeply about what our conference is up to. And your friendliness and kindness put folks at ease, which made working with you a pleasure. I've told people that you were a born administrator, but you're also a born servant leader and friend. Blessings to you as you embark on this next chapter.

#### **From Conference Minister Amy Zimbelman**

To apply for the Conference Administrator position, please send a resume, cover letter, and 3 names/emails/phone numbers of references (at least one of which is a current or former supervisor)

to [amyz@mountainstatesmc.org](mailto:amyz@mountainstatesmc.org) and [ryank@mountainstatesmc.org](mailto:ryank@mountainstatesmc.org). In the Job Description, please note the seasonal nature of the work and the newly added fundraising responsibilities. *Application Deadline:* Monday, October 17th.

[Job Description](#)

**Colorado MDS** (which includes all of us in MSMC!) is involved in a number of exciting projects! Come join us in Boulder to repair trailers damaged in 100 mph winds and/or join us at our annual meeting the day of the MCC sale!

MDS Colorado will sponsor work days on October 7 and 8 and the first two weeks of November to repair mobile homes in Boulder that were damaged in the 100+ mph winds during the Marshall fire. We need volunteers plus a coordinator who has experience with mobile homes. To sign up, please contact Mary Johnson at: [mjmanyik@gmail.com](mailto:mjmanyik@gmail.com) or 303-726-9890.

Colorado Mennonite Disaster Service is active in a number of projects, and we'd love for you to hear more! Our annual meeting will be held at 7:30 a.m., Saturday, October 15 at Christine's restaurant in Rocky Ford, just before the MCC sale. Breakfast is provided, as well as a Zoom option. To join in, contact Mary Johnson at: [mjmanyik@gmail.com](mailto:mjmanyik@gmail.com) or 303-726-9890.

# Erin Kauffman, New Future Anabaptist Leader Intern

Welcome Erin Kauffman, the current intern in the Future Anabaptist Leaders program. The program is designed for 18-30 year olds to explore leadership roles in churches and passion ministries throughout Mountain States conference. Erin's application stood out as someone who is curious about the intersection of faith and agriculture, and she already walks the talk as a full-time farmer/rancher in Alamosa.

As part of the internship, Erin has been reading multiple books and having sacred conversations with Alice Price, the pastor of her home church, and Conference Minister Amy Zimbelman to explore these interests. She will be preaching at some of your congregations, making site visits to places like La Junta and Taos, seeking spiritual direction, and planning next spring's Faith & Life Forum. And **be on the lookout for a book study that Erin will be leading this winter that the whole conference will be invited to.**

We're excited to have Erin's thoughtful, industrious, equanimous, kind leadership presence serving and learning throughout the conference this academic year!

*Here are Erin's own words of introduction:*

I'm guessing many of you are familiar with the first recorded word of Jesus' ministry: *metanoeite*. It may be one of my favorites. Richard Rohr writes that it "literally translates as 'change your mind' or 'go beyond your mind') Matthew 3:2, 4:17, and Mark 1:15)" and further describes that it "is talking about a primal change of mind, worldview, or your way of processing." I hope that I will experience *metanoeite* in the Future Anabaptist Leaders program with Mountain States Mennonite Conference this academic year.

For those of you I haven't met yet, my name is Erin. I grew up in Lancaster County, PA, and I first came to the MSMC region when I moved to Fort Collins to attend Colorado State University in 2016. For the last 2.5 years, I have lived in the San Luis Valley, first as a volunteer at the Rio Grande Farm Park through Mennonite Voluntary Service and now as a farmer/rancher in training on an organic farm/ranch.

As they say, change is the only thing you can count on in life, and I would say that has been true for me. It wasn't until fairly recently that I imagined I might become a farmer. Now, looking back, I can see that the seed was always there. Growing up, I would frequently complain to my parents that it wasn't fair that they had both grown up on farms and I didn't get to! Visiting my Grandpa and Grandma's farm was one of my favorite activities, and to direct that agricultural energy in my weekly routine, I started riding horses in sixth grade.

When it came time to choose a college, I picked Colorado State for its strong equine sciences program (and the fact that there was a Mennonite church in town!). But I quickly found that the program wasn't a good fit. So I switched my major to environmental sciences, but I discovered that to me, the most interesting and practical thing they were talking about was agriculture. That's when I first came face to face with the beginnings of my calling to farming and ranching, a significant change from the uncertainty I had been feeling about my vocation up to that point.

So it was many changes of mind that guided me through college, and I discovered that having followed such a winding path, I was living in some interesting and quite paradoxical middle ground. I found myself with friends and family members who farm/ranch with a wide variety of contradictory worldviews. I completed one internship where pesticide use was a major focus of the organization's research, and I've worked on a strictly organic farm. I'm a lifelong vegetarian, and I currently raise sheep, many of whom will be sold for meat.



*Erin and her horse.*

[Click Here for Full Article](#)



# From the Ashes

By Todd Wynward

Hello MSMC! This is a warm invitation to reserve some space in your calendars for some or all of **From the Ashes: Four Days of Conscious Community Celebrating the Comeback of TiLT** (Taos Initiative for Life Together).



Two years after an arson fire rocked our world and disrupted our lives, TiLT is reborn and rebuilt, ready to open its doors again to the community. Come on in!

Join us October 27-30 for courageous conversations, provocative presentations, engaging activities, fabulous feasting, multicultural music and ceremony, and more! 10am - 10pm each day. We all love a good comeback story—come and be part of the restoration!

You can register at our event website: <https://www.eventcreate.com/e/tilt-conference>

With this gathering we aim to bring together the following four cultural streams that inspire and animate TiLT: the permanence, presence & people of Taos Pueblo; the place-based wisdom and legacy of the Hispanic agricultural tradition and Acequia culture; the innovations and creative contributions of Anglo settlers; and inspiring and inclusive strands of justice-seeking, community-based eco-Christianity. We intend these four days of events to bring our region together in new and powerful and spiritually-rooted ways—to strengthen the intercultural bonds in our diverse community and build our imagination and our capacity and our trust, so with shared strength we may face an uncertain future together.

We are feeling led to frame this community experience as a four day prayer. Fire is what destabilized us two years ago and caused us to rebuild; fire is what will bring us together into new life. To ignite and initiate our time together on Thursday, we expect to kindle a sacred fire that we will tend as a community through Sunday's end.

Come join us and gather round the fire that heals and transforms--there's room for all!

[Click Here for Full Article](#)

# Conference Minister's Corner

## A Couple Resources for Dealing with Conflama (Conflict + Drama)

By Rev. Amy S. Zimbelman

If you frequent a church, you will never find a shortage of conflict and drama (a.k.a. conflama). As I like to say: Where two or three are gathered in his name, there Jesus is with them, and there's Conflama too: also attempting to pull up a chair.

Conflict and/or drama arise from this: the GAP between what we want and what the reality currently is.

This gap could be a gap of resources (between what we have and what we need), expectations (what we hope would happen and what is happening), vision (where we are and where we're headed, as in a pastoral search), knowledge (what we know and what we need to know), etc.

This gap creates energy. That energy can lead to productive conflict. The word *conflict* is from a Latin word that joins the prefix *con* meaning "with/together," and the verb *fligere*, which means "to strike." To be in conflict is "to strike together." It looks like people/churches working together to solve problems in healthy ways.

OR this gap can lead to drama, which is unproductive and sucks the life out of people. Instead of striking together, drama involves striking at others involved in the situation, or even at one's self.

But how do we do conflict well rather than create painful, unproductive, and unnecessary drama? Here are a couple resources I've discovered recently to help answer this question:

### Conflict Without Casualties, using the Drama Triangle

In the spring, MC USA brought in trainers to educate Conference Ministers, Moderators, and other leaders in this *Conflict Without Casualties* curriculum as a precursor to the Kansas City delegate session. And I must admit: I was skeptical at first. It seemed too simple. But as I started analyzing conflicts in our churches and personal conflicts in my life through the lens of the Drama Triangle, I realized that there's a lot to be learned from this framework.



**"The purpose of conflict is to create."**

-MICHAEL MEADE



The training asked some self-assessment questions:

- Do you ever lose patience with people who aren't as committed as you?
- Do you do things for people even when they don't ask for help?
- Do you avoid sharing your feelings about a situation because it'll just cause more problems?
- Do you find yourself saying: "Ergh! If only they would do things *my* way, we wouldn't be in this mess!"
- Do you take negative feedback as a sign of personal rejection?
- Do you choose compromise to avoid conflict?

[Click Here for Full Article](#)

# OUR LABYRINTH IS OPEN TO ALL. WALK. PRAY. REST.

*By Venita King Birky, Prayer Ministries at Beth-El Mennonite Church*

After two years of planning, and thanks to our “Village” at Beth-El Mennonite Church in Colorado Springs, our Prayer Labyrinth is ready to be walked! Many hands helped make this.

This vision began with my reading the book “Sensible Shoes” by Sharon Garlough Brown, which is a realistic fiction story of the spiritual journeys of 4 women who meet at a retreat. There is one scene where each walk a labyrinth with totally different experiences, which caught my interest. (I have walked labyrinths and have found them to be more interesting and grounding than I first expected.) The thought occurred to me that our church grounds have plenty of room for a labyrinth. The wonderings continued, the vision grew and did not go away.

I started by going to look at other outdoor labyrinths around town. Merv joined me and it turned out to be kind of a fun project together. We checked out size, materials, patterns, etc.

Mike Martin was consulted many times about materials and process for our Labyrinth since he had offered to help. He is part of Rocky Top, a landscaping company that has many kinds of gravel and rock.

There were many steps to making this. Marking the path was the most difficult because the measurements needed to be exact. The circle is approximately 43 ft in diameter, around a tree. Paths are lined with edgers and the 33” walking paths are filled with Colorado granite gravel. The walking paths pattern is a shortened version of a Chartres Labyrinth. Benches are added in the middle for resting. Eventually, the vision is to put xeriscape plantings, grasses, rocks around the perimeter.

The actual construction of the Labyrinth took parts of three days. The first day was marking the path and laying the edgers by four volunteers. This was heavy and exacting work. Day two brought 12 persons to fill wheelbarrows with gravel, carry to the site, dump and even it out. Again, hard and heavy work! Another evening was spent putting mulch around the perimeter.

A Labyrinth may be used for various purposes: Prayer, Meditation, Centering, Contemplation, etc. A Labyrinth is NOT a maze. There is one winding path to the center, and back out again. Labyrinths have been used for centuries in France, England, and North Africa as a religious practice.

For many, in walking a Labyrinth, one intentionally slows down to give God prayerful attention. The journey to the center is opportunity to seek guidance, release burdens, identify fears, confess sins. The center is intended as a resting place to be held in God’s embrace. In the outward journey, the Spirit is sought to release, strengthen, empower. This is sometimes called “Walking a Sacred Path.” This is, in short, a Prayer Walk.

Thank You to  
Terry & Millie  
Troyer for  
creating and  
installing the  
Labyrinth  
sign.

Thank You to  
Amy & Ken  
Linfield for  
donating and  
delivering the  
bench  
alongside the  
Labyrinth.

*-VENITA BIRKY*





## Additional Labyrinth Photos



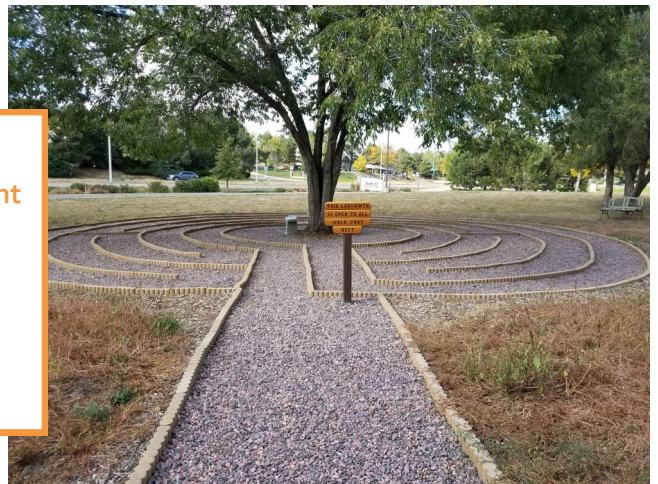
Setting the edgers  
was exacting work.



Wheelbarrows  
and muscles  
required for the  
path.



Plaque in front  
of Labyrinth  
by Terry  
Troyer





News from:

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN MENNONITE CAMP



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### Aspens On Full Display



*Pictured: The beauty of the changing seasons from summer to fall is in full swing here at Rocky Mountain. The beauty of God's creation with Aspen trees is on full display!*

### Sam Hershberger Joins RMMC Staff



A celebration of Sam Hershberger's first day as year around staff was enjoyed at the Hungry Bear. Sam's parent who helped with his move to RMMC joined in as did Evelyn Brubaker who was volunteering from Lancaster, PA. Sam is settling into the role of maintenance and volunteer coordinator.

Click [news and stories](#) for a variety of updates from Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp.



# MSMC Communication Updates

Zing! 2022 deadlines and schedule	
• <b>Jan</b> —Release Date: Jan 10; <i>submission deadline: Dec 31</i>	• <b>July/Assembly Edition</b> – Release Date: July 10; <i>submission deadline: Jun 30</i>
• <b>Feb</b> —Release Date: Feb 10; <i>submission deadline: Jan 31</i>	• <b>Aug/Sept</b> – Release Date: Aug 31; <i>submission deadline: Aug 15</i>
• <b>Mar</b> —Release Date: Mar 10; <i>submission deadline: Feb 28</i>	• <b>Oct</b> – Release Date: Oct 10; <i>submission deadline: Sept 30</i>
• <b>Apr</b> – Release Date: Apr 10; <i>submission deadline: Mar 31</i>	• <b>Nov</b> – Release Date: Nov 10; <i>submission deadline: Oct 31</i>
• <b>May</b> - Release Date: May 10; <i>submission deadline: Apr 30</i>	• <b>Dec</b> – Release Date: Dec 10; <i>submission deadline: Nov 30</i>
• <b>Jun</b> – Release Date: Jun 10; <i>submission deadline: May 31</i>	

**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.

## Conference Calendar

Oct 14-15	Rocky Mtn MCC Relief Sale
Oct 27-30	TiLT from the Ashes
Nov 11-13	Pastor Retreat
July 21-23, 2023	Annual Assembly, RMMC

**Zing!** Is published for the congregations of Mountain States Mennonite Conference and can be viewed on the website.

Conference Website: [www.mountainstatesmc.org](http://www.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.

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