

## 2024 Auction

**Katrina Shenk**

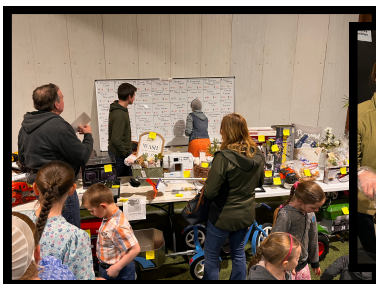
Our Annual Benefit Auction was held on a surprisingly warm February 10<sup>th</sup> Saturday at The Pitches, the sports complex right beside the GuideSpring offices. It was a day filled with wonderful fellowship, food, and fundraising. Many thanks to our auction committee; Ken Martin (chair), Salina Beachy (food coordinator), Ervin Beachy, Matt Bergey, Joanna Hoover, Lamar Martin, John & Lydia Reiff, Meryl Stoltzfus and Ivan and Wendy Yoder; who worked diligently for months, planning and preparing for this fundraiser that supports the ongoing work of GuideSpring.

We all missed our former co-auction chair, John Hoover, who passed away October 11, 2023. While it wasn't the same without John's presence, we are grateful for all the memories shared and support from family and friends at this auction that was an important part of John's life. Near the end of the auction, a rainbow appeared in the sky and was a special reminder to us of our dear friend and God's faithfulness.

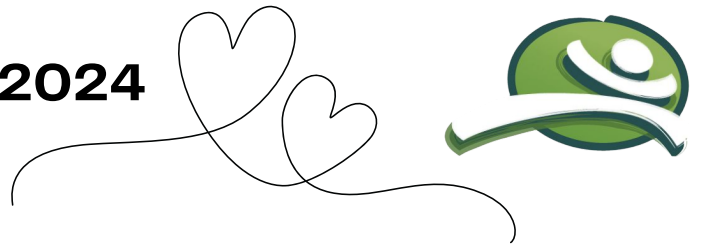
We are thankful for all the people who supported the Auction in various ways and helped to make it a great success! Thank you to all of you who came out to bid on the many items that came across the auction block. We are grateful for the individuals and businesses who donated goods and finances in support of GuideSpring. Many thanks to Alson S. Reiff and Meryle Stoltzfus for auctioneering all day long. We also appreciate those who ran the Silent Auction and all who participated in it. We had more donated items than ever before this year thanks to the generosity of many people.

Where would an auction be without good food? Salina Beachy and Wendy Yoder (auction food coordinators), many food donors and volunteer servers did not leave us in a place to find out! The food options were plentiful and absolutely delicious. Thank you for all of you who came with your appetites and were generous with your donations. From a salad bar in a canoe to pork BBQ, soup, French fries, pizza and Old Mill Creamery Ice Cream, plus many more tasty treats – no one would have to leave the auction hungry.

All in all – our Auction Day was full of good connections and hearty bidding. We are excited to share that the auction provided just under \$65,000 to help us continue in our work of Counseling, Mentoring, Journey Groups, Enneagram Coaching, Restorative Services, Conflict Mediation, Story Coaching, Pure Desire Groups and Spiritual Soul Care. While the funds from the auction help to pay for our office rental, utilities, staff salaries, office supplies and more – all of it is ultimately providing tender care to the painful places in people's lives and offering hope in their journey toward healing. We are honored to be part of this work and we thank you for partnering with us in this endeavor through the auction.



# Marriage Journey Group 2024



After being involved with Journey Group here at GuideSpring for a lot of years, Jim & I had a burden for marriages. We saw so many people wanting more for their lives. As we stepped away from our responsibilities of Journey Group, I realized I needed a break. I realized I was kinda burnt out from my responsibilities for so many years. The beginning of 2023, I very clearly heard the Holy Spirit saying, "it's time, it's time". The time was now to start the Marriage Journey Group. Jim was ready whenever I was. So we met with Mike & LaVonne and the planning started. Our first Marriage Group was in Nov 2023. We just finished our second one in Feb. While Journey Group helps individuals to look at and recognize how trauma or disappointments impacts and affects us personally, Marriage Journey Group helps us then to look at how trauma and disappointments affects our relationships in our marriages. Even after being married almost 48 years, Jim & I are still learning how our early traumas still affects some of the ways that we deal with conflicts that reoccur in our marriage.

If you are interested in coming to Group, contact the office at GuideSpring.

**Esther Lapp**

Marriage Journey Group was an incredibly valuable and amazing way to invest in our marriage. It took our marriage to the next level by increasing our communication skills, and helping us understand why our partner reacts the way they do because of previous life experiences. Truly marriage was designed to be the deepest and most intimate human relationship on earth, and by taking the time to invest in it we can impact generations in a positive way. We will forever be grateful to God and the incredible couple that lead the group that made this opportunity possible.

**- Written by a participant.**



Life can bring events that are very difficult to name and process. Sometimes things happen that leave us feeling alone, shredded of our identity, and hopeless. Unlike house fires or health problems where we can call 911 and get a frenzy of help in a matter of minutes, there are events that unfold, or conversations that exchange in real life that leave us feeling lost.

Life goes on whether we like it or not, even if our world crashes. As we face these difficult to name experiences, such as sexual abuse, domestic violence, physical abuse, emotional abuse, spiritual distortions, abandonment and many more, we do come to a place where we make the choice to stuff these hard experiences down inside, or, we dare to find help to sort through the sea of confusing thoughts, feelings, or emotions. We sometimes come to a T in the road in life. We can choose to muscle up with education and performance to make it look like we are all good and well, or we could dare to take a step out into our story of pain and say, "I need help with this."

I am going to give a peek into a Marriage Journey Group experience from GuideSpring. First, I would like to thank the staff at GuideSpring for the clean organized facilities, the delicious food, and the warm relaxing atmosphere I find at GuideSpring. I also want to make special mention to the staff for valuing those of us that come to GuideSpring, we feel cared about, and valued by the staff here.

Marriage Journey Group is an experience. An experience, or an adventure, that couples go through together. A safe place where we traveled with each other into our stories. Stories of joy, and stories of pain. This experience was unique because I got to do this with my wife. I could sit beside her, and hear her tell her story to our (Journey Group Parents). And my wife could sit beside me, while I shared my story in the group. I experienced a deeper connection with my wife, also redefined my understanding of how our view of sexuality in marriage is either helped or hindered, by our childhood experience.

**Jonathan Wise- Marriage Journey Group Participant**



# The Enneagram Panels

...continued Enneagram Panel Reflections

We have completed 4 more Enneagram panels since the last newsletter. My favorite part of continuing these panels is witnessing and experiencing the differences in real time, particularly as we moved from the gut triad to heart triad and now head triad. Some of the differences were: the energy in the room, there was a box of tissues on the table for the heart triad, the beauty and creativity of the snacks for type 4, the interaction during Q & A time, the amount of preparation put in beforehand and so much more!

Facilitating, meeting individually with panelists, the debrief meetings afterward, and interactions with each audience have all brought a lot of joy and fun for me! After we are done with all 9 types, there will have been 36 people who so graciously gave of themselves for others to see and understand them through their own unique lens. I'm already thinking about what to offer for future gatherings and would love to hear your thoughts and ideas too!

I want to give a huge thank you to LaVonne Yoder GuideSpring's Program Director, for her help in making these happen. I could not and would not have wanted to do these without her. She spent a lot of hours planning with me, preparing snacks, helping setup and tear down the room, closing each meeting, and much more. We always had some extra time after we set up the room for just chatting or eating dinner together before everyone would come. LaVonne, you have been my greatest Enneagram supporter since day one and that has meant so much to me. Thank you!

**Katie Bomberger- GuideSpring Enneagram Coach**

*Being a part of the Enneagram 2 panel was a very beneficial experience for me. The process of meeting with Katie individually before the panel, participating in the panel, and then the follow up debriefing, were all opportunities for self-exploration and an opportunity to understand and get to know other Type Twos. An unexpected benefit of the panel was actually the conversations I had with my husband following the panel. It opened up conversations between us about our Enneagram Types that we had never had. After the panel, I had an "aha" moment about the impact of shame in my life and also the theme of rejection. Before the panel I would express feeling "stupid" about different experiences, and I realized "shame" is more accurately what I was feeling. Having specific and accurate language brought clarity to me, and also helped my husband understand me better. Even though the panel came during a busy time in my life, I am glad I participated in it, and even now, months later, there are new moments of clarity as I continue to process through the Enneagram lens.*

**Kate Zelazny**

*It was an honor to be a part of the Type 4 Panel. I love being able to experience the space that Katie is able to create, and how she values each type. As a 4, I want to be considered different and often subconsciously depend some of my value on how I am unique compared to others. During this panel, I felt comfortable, unique, and very grateful to experience this connection with the other panelists. It felt natural to share that space with others who think similarly. While preparing for this discussion, it put a lot of aspects of my life and personality into perspective. It not only helped the audience better understand the mind and heart of a type 4, but it also helped me process my own tendencies and shadows in a healthy way that I may have not otherwise processed. I love watching the power of understanding that Katie has used through the Enneagram, and how it has impacted the relationships within my family. I am very grateful to have experienced being on the Type 4 Panel, and to be able to share that space with those who were eager to learn and those on the panel who view the world similarly to me.*

**Hayley Yoder**

*There's few things in my life that impacted me the way the Enneagram did. It really helped me at a time in my life when I really needed it. Hearing different numbers talk about how they feel and how they respond to situations has been a lot of fun and it really shows us how we are all created differently but no one is better or worse than the next. Just knowing how people around me feel and look at situations I think has been a big help in my relationships. Being on the panel showed me that there's other people that feel and think the same way I do. How many times did someone say something that the whole group knew exactly what you mean? God created each and everyone perfectly and I think it is up to us to get along with each other and I think the Enneagram is a great way to do that.*

**Elton Nolt**



# Grand Examen

LaVonne Yoder



On Saturday January 13th, we gathered together to experience a contemplative retreat at GuideSpring- The Grand Examen. Seven people spent the day together in prayer, sharing, and times of silence and solitude as a way to be present to what God might be saying and doing in our lives over the past year and listening to the Divine Whispers for 2024. Please listen to the stories from 2 of the participants:

*What a special opportunity and experience it was to be part of the Grand Examen held at GuideSpring this past January. The theme of "Looking Back to Go Forward" really spoke to me. It had been a difficult and challenging year for me & I was eager to give attention, time and prayer to truly gain insight to what God was revealing to me.*

*The day spent at GuideSpring was very special in as many ways as one might imagine. The facility itself is lovely, comfortable and inviting. LaVonne Yoder, as our guide and facilitator, echoed those same aspects. She provided a safe, open and gentle approach for us to "look back, look through, look forward and look around" at the year that had passed. She suggested some prompts to help us sort out our emotions and talk with God, pray, journal and rest. The times of solitude were precious. I personally sifted through a deep loss and felt healing as I held the grief along with the paralleled joys.*

*Though we were strangers, our group time was beautiful and authentic as we listened to one another. I am so thankful to GuideSpring and LaVonne for the retreat that provided a much longed for time of reflection and solitude, as I rested in the presence of God. - Jane*

*The hymn, "I Need Thee Every Hour," came to mind immediately when asked to speak of my experience this year at the Grand Examen retreat. It's one of many hymns that still moves me to tears whenever I utter its lyrics, but how strongly this simple song resonated with me was curious to me.*

*I think hymns remind me of what I believe, who I am, where I've been, yet don't give my attention to. I think the desire for intimacy in this song and the longing for attending to my own life echoes my experience— the challenge I faced and the gift I received— during my time there.*

*The retreat's design- including both time in solitude and together with others going through this experience- moved me. It literally and figuratively involved transitioning into different rooms and orientations which for me facilitated the movement of energy and prompted thoughts and feelings that weren't one-dimensional or sedentary, and neither were they contained in a vacuum or meant solely for display. I felt alive, invited in to other people's journey that day and also recognized boundaries I wanted to honor to protect the precious insights I gained there for myself.*

*The questions offered for us to consider were helpful guides that led me to finding rest, becoming aware of themes and patterns occurring in my life, and open to receiving messages I am not sure I would have heard through all of the noise in my everyday life.*

*Put shortly, this was a beautifully curated and holy experience for me— time and space set apart for me to arrive as I was, be met with kindness, listen and share, and leave a bit more whole, clear, peaceful, and hopeful about the year before and the one ahead. - Amber*







## Community Restorative Justice Gathering

Katherine Weaver

The education branch of Guidespring hosted the Restorative Justice Co-Learning Community Gathering from January 22-January 25, 2024. We had 27 attendees from a variety of backgrounds including but not limited to conservative Amish and Mennonite, Brethren, Baptist, and Mennonite USA. In four days, we met for a total of 26 hours to learn about and discuss and process Restorative Justice principles.

Marvin and I were tasked with building a container of learning and sharing. The goal was to help the group reach a place where they felt they could share what was really deeply going on for them in our four days together, so that we could truly learn from one another in the area of Restorative Justice. The first evening, we focused on relationship, singing, listening to each other's stories, naming our emotions so that they assist our learning instead of interfering with our learning. We ate together, prayed over the meal, laid some boundaries for a respectful circle, and took the time to remember the people who couldn't attend but whose stories and words had come with us. Over the next three days, we repeated some of these rituals around relationship: a capella singing, lunchtime prayer, and naming our emotions and telling our stories.

Another favorite ritual of all four days was breaking out into pairs and practicing listening to each other and then mirroring the other's words. Mirroring means repeating back to the story-teller what he said using as many of his words as possible. This shows that you, the listener, have heard him, and it gives him, the story-teller, an opportunity to feel heard. Amazingly, feeling heard is quite therapeutic and totally free, and it's a rare experience. However, as a few attendees expressed, mirroring feels awkward, fake, and condescending when you first practice it. It's also a challenging practice, as Marvin and I proved when we demonstrated mirroring for the group! In a bumbled moment of improvisational leadership, I turned to Marvin and just prattled on and on to him about how I was feeling insecure in my role in that moment. When I finally paused, his response was, "Uhh...I didn't have my recorder on." I started backpedalling, apologizing, "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to overwhelm you." (Meaning, "And in front of all these people when we're supposed to be competent leaders..."). Marvin pushed back with, "Now, hold on. Let me give it a try." He was then actually able to mirror my dissertation in a few succinct sentences using some of my own wording to show me he'd been truly listening. Even in the awkward blush of bumbling, I felt good to know he'd heard me.

A capella singing, a piece of many of the attendees' current lives or backgrounds, proved to be more than just a connecting activity. We sang English-language hymns and German selections from the Gesangbuch and the Ausbund. The first evening, we sang at our seats and then separated into four parts and sang some more. Here was a basic tenet of our cultures that I had thought ought to be an easy activity, and it turned out to be an open door to our relationship as a group. When we gathered again in our circle to connect through sharing our personal stories of singing, we were in awe of how poignant this simple act of singing had been for so many of us. Some had had disturbing experiences around being taught to sing in parts, while some had loved to sing, but had painful experiences around congregational singing. Some expressed loss around being untrained in singing, while some of us simply enjoyed ourselves, not realizing the effect it was having on our neighbors. Because we took the time to hear each other, this circle of sharing took us into a new level of self-awareness and a deeper awareness and curiosity for those who sit right beside us. Now, we were ready to learn about Restorative Justice.



## The Soul of Aging

Kathy Shelly- RJ Co- Facilitator

How often do you think about aging? What feelings come up when you think about getting older? Do you want to try to approach aging more intentionally and better understand, surrender to and be transformed by the aging process? If so, please join us.

GuideSpring is offering a 10 session series to explore together topics around the aging process. Themes will address many of the spiritual aspects of this season of our lives., including questions of forgiveness, where we are in our spiritual development, what aspects of ourselves are yearning for expression, our relationship with time, how to love and serve others, and the notion of befriending our own deaths.

Using a circle process, we will create a safe, confidential and sacred space where participants support one another in accessing the voice of their souls and inner lives. Through the curriculum we will learn how to listen deeply to one another and how to create spaces that are safe for honest sharing and self-discovery.

If you are drawn to such an exploration, consider attending the introductory session on  
**Tuesday May 28th from 6pm to 8:30pm.**

**Attendance of the introductory session is a pre-requisite for the rest of the series.**

The series will be facilitated by Kathy Shelly, one of GuideSpring's RJ co- facilitators. Please contact the office with any questions or to register, at 570-428-2077, or [info@guidespring.org](mailto:info@guidespring.org)

*"Beautiful young people are accidents of nature, but beautiful old people are works of art."*

*Eleanor Roosevelt*





## Welcome Miriam Esh



As I am embarking on a new journey, I have felt so many different emotions. My heart has been grateful and humbled at becoming a mentor at Guidespring. Since 2018 storywork has become very important to me. I see how important it is to know how our past stories affect our present. I had always tried to pray more, to be better, and not think about my past, or even my present. I usually thought, maybe if I could just "do more" then life would be different. What I discovered more than anything was there are people willing to enter hard stories, they are curious about the "whys" in my life. That is what I want to offer to people. To let them know that no matter what, they matter. Their stories matter. To let them know they are not alone.

In the meantime, I still homeschool my 2 youngest. I love being a Grammi to our grandson. I also love being outside with my little goats, and all the fun outdoor things like growing flowers, and mowing grass, and just being in nature. I love interacting with many of you as I see you at Guidespring. I look forward to meeting new people and learning together.



### Mark Your Calendars

#### COVID Conversation

**June 25 6-9 pm**

**LOCATION: GuideSpring Office**

**Fee: Donation**

When we are hurt in community we also need to heal in community. COVID was a very difficult experience for us individually, our families, our churches, our communities and our world. Please join us for an evening led by Mike and LaVonne Yoder to hear stories from varied experiences and to be together in a space of listening and learning.

#### GuideSpring Co-learning Gathering Restorative Justice and Trauma

**July 24- 27**

**LOCATION: GuideSpring Office**

We invite you to be an active participant in a learning cohort at Guidespring along with Mike and LaVonne Yoder, Marvin and Katherine Weaver, and community representatives from multiple Anabaptist-descended faiths, and others who feel called by Psalm 85:10 to stay with people in their story.

#### Annual GuideSpring Banquet

**Tuesday, September 10, 2024 6pm**

**LOCATION: Buffalo Community Church**

You're not going to want to miss this evening of great fellowship, food and supporting our ministry. We would love to have you join us. This is a place to invite new friends to learn about GuideSpring as well as reconnect with old friends.