



NEWSLETTER



Spring 2025

2025 Benefit Auction

Katrina Shenk

Our Annual Benefit Auction was held on a chilly winter day on February 8, 2025, at The Pitches, the sports complex right beside the GuideSpring offices. Thankfully the snow held off until after the auction and we could enjoy a day filled with warm fellowship, delicious food, and supportive 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, Josh 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 especially thank, Ken Martin, our Auction Committee Chair, for the countless hours he gives and the leadership he provides to the auction. We are thankful for all the people who supported the Auction in various ways and helped to make it a great success! We are grateful for the generosity of Eric Yoder and The Pitches for providing a great location for the auction again this year. To the individuals and businesses that donated goods and finances to the auction – we say a big “THANK YOU!” We couldn’t do it without you. Many thanks to Alson S. Reiff and Meryl Stoltzfus for auctioneering all day long. We also appreciate those who ran the Silent Auction and all who participated in it.

Thank you to all of you who came out to bid on the many items that came across the auction block. As always there were a variety of items to purchase from house plants, meat packs, gift baskets, and tools to a log splitter, furniture, a hunting blind, a mower and lots more. We hope everyone was able to go home with something you enjoy! (I have been enjoying watching the birds at the birdfeeder I got at the auction this year.) We had fun auctioning off mallets and spectator chairs again this year for the second annual Croquet Game that is hosted by the Hoover family. Thank you to all who bid and we look forward to a great game this summer!

Where would an auction be without good food? Salina Beachy (auction food coordinator), many food donors and volunteer servers did not leave us disappointed! The food options were plentiful and so delicious. Thank you to all of you who came with your appetites and were generous with your donations. From a salad bar in a canoe to pork BBQ, Chili, French fries, pizza and Old Mill Creamery Ice Cream, yogurt parfaits, donuts, pies and many more tasty treats – no one had 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 \$50,000 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 people GuideSpring serves and offers hope in their journey toward healing. The funds raised at the auction also support our financial assistance fund that provides support for those who are unable to fully pay for their services at GuideSpring. We are honored to be part of this work and we thank you for partnering with us in this endeavor through the auction.





My Anchor In the Storm

It was only a few short weeks ago,
That the songbirds all were singing.
The sun still shined with welcome glow,
And gladness in my heart was ringing.
I thought God's plan must not be hard,
And though I couldn't see ahead,
I thought, when He sent just sunshine,
"God led me to this path," I said.
But soon He sent a rainstorm and
The birds had ceased their song,
And trials also stopped my singing,
I cried, "Oh Lord, how long?"
What is your purpose for my broken heart?
Why must I walk this path of pain?
Will there be rainbows after every storm?
Is there a reason that you sent the rains?
Oh, Captain of my soul, draw near to me,
And calm Your anxious, fearful child.
Keep me safe and help me feel Your peace,
While storms are raging 'round me wild.
These storms have often nearly sunk my boat,
Many times I wondered what all lies ahead.
Oh, I had perished, were it not for thee,
For "Peace Be Still" is what you calmly said.
So, Lord, I'll always trust you through each storm,
Because I know that you will walk with me.
I'll look beyond the trials of today
In heaven they won't matter when I am with thee.

~RSF





“The Soul of Aging”



10-session small group experience
reflecting together on aging well

Meeting on Wednesdays from 5–8 pm

Biweekly from June – October 2025

Kathy Shelly

Last summer, a small group of 10 men and women began an intentional exploration of their own aging, guided by facilitator Kathy Shelly. The group met every 3-4 weeks for 2 ½ hours to explore topics related to common themes found in this later time of life. Questions of forgiveness, where we are in our spiritual development, our relationship with time, how to view parts of ourselves still yearning for expression, and the notion of befriending our own death, were some of the themes addressed.

By using poetry, story and art along with both individual reflection time as well as a circle process, the group created a safe, confidential and sacred space where participants could support one another in accessing the voice of their souls and inner lives. We learned how to listen deeply to one another and how to create spaces that are safe for honest sharing and self-discovery.

One participant shared,

“I liked the rhythm of the sessions... with ample time to explore in my journaling as well as times to share in the group.”

Comments included an appreciation for finding out that others had similar feelings and questions about aging.

Another said,

“The voice of my soul can be heard through my own writing after hearing another’s stories....”

“I want to approach my aging consciously and use the time I have left to remember to ‘be still’ so I can hear what I am prompted to be and do”.

***If you are drawn to such an exploration, contact GuideSpring at (570) 428-2077.**

Kathy Shelly, one of GuideSpring’s RJ co-facilitators, will lead the sessions.

No set fee for 10 sessions but donations are appreciated.

*** REGISTER BY MAY 15. Space is limited.**

The first session is planned for Wednesday, June 11 from 5:00 - 8:00pm.

*“Beautiful young people are
accidents of nature, but beautiful old people are works
of art.”
Eleanor Roosevelt*

My experience with finding out I have anxiety

Anthony Gamache



Last year, about three months into school, I got sent to the office. It was around the time school was leaving, and I was sitting down when I realized the buses were there. I asked to go out and get on my bus, but I was told I needed to wait. Then, about 15 minutes later, the Principal, came in and asked, "Did you not get on the bus?" I told him I was told to stay. He then called my mom, and my aunt came to pick me up and took me home. At that point, I was frustrated. I told my mom what happened, ate my food, and slept.

I remember waking up and going to the bus stop the following day. I got on the bus and sat with my sister. As I looked around, I suddenly felt my chest tighten, and I became terrified, feeling like I needed to get off the bus. However, the bus driver wouldn't let me. I tried to open the door myself, but the driver told me I couldn't do that and that my mom would have to come pick me up.

When we got to the school, I ran out the door as soon as possible and hid behind the building so no one could find me. But they eventually found me and called my mom to get me. From that moment on, I was convinced that school wasn't safe, and I felt I couldn't leave my mom because she was the only one I deemed safe. My mom even sat outside the school all day and made me do my work while I was anxious because I wanted to be home where I felt safe.

Then, the school had me start doing online classes, but that didn't work either because I couldn't focus on my work. My mind was filled with so many thoughts, spinning like a mixer. My mom and I would argue about me doing my work. One day, I got so mad that I ran outside and walked to my older sister's house. My mom came to get me and was upset, but I couldn't explain why I took off because I didn't know how to express my feelings.

Eventually, my mom took me to the doctor, who said I was experiencing anxiety. He mentioned that it would be okay to prescribe medication if my mom wanted that. At first, she said no, but after I ran away, she had me start taking them. She also had me see LaVonne every week. I liked LaVonne; she would give me M&Ms and talk with me. Initially, I didn't feel like the medication was working, but when my mom introduced me to my teacher for the new school year, I noticed I wasn't scared anymore. That's when I realized the medication had started to help me.

Now, I can return to school without feeling like I need to leave or something terrible will happen. I still see LaVonne, but now I go every other week. If I didn't have LaVonne, my mom, Ron, and Mike to support me through all of this, I would have ended up in a children's hospital indefinitely.



Grace and Anthony



Anthony on his First Day of School 2024!

A Mother's Walk with their child through anxiety

Grace Gamache



My son Anthony started to experience significant anxiety attacks three months into the 2024 school year. Out of seemingly nowhere he started fighting me to go to school. He would be waiting for the school bus and say that he had missed it. I would drive him to the school and then I would have to fight him to get out of the car when we would get to the school. I would drag him into the school and then run back out the door, drive home only to get home and get a call from the school to come and get him again. For three weeks this was the constant battle. The school couldn't hold him. I refused to give in and give him what he wanted, which was to go home later finding out that that wasn't helping anyways. Instead I would sit outside of the school and make him do his schoolwork.

I didn't understand what was happening. The worst thing was not knowing how to help my child get through the school day. I ended up sitting outside of the school for two weeks while Anthony was in school. Eventually the schools only option became having him do his classes online. I wasn't willing to do this, but that didn't matter as no one knew what else to do and it quickly became my problem alone.

I talked with Ron Musselman for some ideas and he suggested that I talk with LaVonne at GuideSpring to see if she could help with anything. I talked with his Doctor to see if there was anything medical going on. I opted to start doing the online classes for Anthony as this was the only option to get him to do his schoolwork, however eventually this option became an issue and another constant fight. I was done, I didn't want to do the constant school fight. I chose to call the school and say he isn't going to be doing any classes and instead is going to focus on his mental health.

The doctor did various tests to clear that there wasn't anything medical going on, but Anthony was suffering from anxiety. I asked what options we had, was the doctor willing to treat with medicine? What medication would he prescribe? I needed more time to think about it. I then decided to discuss with LaVonne and she offered to have weekly visits with Anthony. I started bringing him, but the visits didn't seem to be helping. Anthony didn't seem to be getting any better, he instead started running from the house and not caring about the outcome. When he started running off was when I decided it was time he start the medication offered by the doctor.

A month after starting the medication, we finally started to see some breakthrough. I knew we had a long road ahead of us and we needed to get to the bottom of why he didn't want to go to school. Anthony eventually shared what happened and it came down to when he was in the office he felt no one remembered him, that's what sent him into a full tailspin, a year of not being able to feel safe, calm or in control of himself.

With concerns over the upcoming new school year, I talked with LaVonne to see about setting up a meeting with the school. We were able to set up a time to meet with the assistant principal and Anthony's teachers he would have this new school year. They were able to come up with a plan for when Anthony's anxiety kicks up. Some of the topics of discussion were, What can we do to help Anthony work through his feelings? And what can we set up at the school to help him feel more safe and comfortable? It was helpful to all be in discussion and for Anthony to have a voice. That was the key to our successful school year! He needed to have control over letting everyone know his needs. He was able to start the new year without any issues. This was a game changer and allowed Anthony to take control of his anxiety.

It's been remarkable to see Anthony's progress. He's thriving academically and at home. This wouldn't have been possible had we not had the support GuideSpring was able to offer. It was important to listen and actually hear what my son needed. That was when I understood that he could not control what was going on. He wasn't trying to make me feel like the worst mom. It had nothing to do with me. So if you or someone you know is struggling, know there is support out there! Don't be afraid to reach out for help. The saying "it takes a village", it sure does and GuideSpring has become my family and my village. They know how to support and reassured me that I'm not alone on this journey. The most important thing you can do is listen and really hear what is being said.



Taking GuideSpring to the World!

When I met Mike Yoder in the summer of 2024, I had no idea our encounter would lead me to Central Pennsylvania the following year. We were part of a class filled with peacebuilding practitioners from all over—Somalia, Uganda, Burkina Faso, and Pakistan—the kind of diverse mix that makes the Summer Peacebuilding Institute at Eastern Mennonite University such a magical experience. You never know who you'll be sitting next to!

That's how I first heard about GuideSpring, and from the moment I started learning about their work, something just clicked. As someone born and raised in Kenya, I immediately saw familiar threads in the stories from this community—different landscapes, yes, but shared struggles, shared hopes. As I researched potential organizations for my practicum, I kept finding myself drawn back to GuideSpring's website. There was just something about this place that spoke to my heart, and I knew I had to experience it firsthand.

Fast forward two months and let me tell you—no number of pages could do justice to what an incredible journey this has been. The moment I arrived at Katherine and Marvin Weaver's home, my hosts, I felt an overwhelming sense of warmth and welcome. That same kindness and hospitality echoed through everyone I met at GuideSpring. Each day has been a rich lesson—about the community, the culture, the deep-rooted traditions. And the more I immerse myself, the more I see parallels with my Kenyan upbringing: the farm life, the home-cooked meals, the hearty handshakes, and the ever-present welcoming smiles.

From co-facilitating Restorative Justice circles to help restore dignity and heal relationships, to engaging with the peacebuilding communities' cohort, to sitting in staff circles where we share our griefs, hopes, and gratitude—it's been nothing short of transformative. And let's not forget the time I found myself participating in a benefit auction for the first time. I'm pretty sure I can still hear the auctioneer's rapid-fire chant in my head! I had no clue what they were saying half the time (besides the prices) but watching it all unfold was absolutely fascinating.

Above all, this experience has reinforced a deep truth: pain, joy, heartbreak, healing, belonging—these emotions don't recognize borders, cultures, religions, or gender differences. They are the threads that tie us together as humans. One of my biggest takeaways? When we work through our own pain, we become better equipped to hold space for others in their healing. And when we learn to truly celebrate the things that bring us joy, we open the door for others to do the same—even when we don't fully understand their reasons. What a journey it has been! And something tells me...it's only just beginning.

Dorothy



Inspiring Words from GuideSpring Clients



Has God Forgotten?
They say that " God is in brokenness".
But is He really?

What if I can't feel Him- or see Him?

And it 'most seems like He has
Forgotten to make a plan for my life?

Is HE still here?

It feels to my lonely heart, that for
'Most everyone else He has a glorious plan...

That after the rain the rainbow... That
The things they are going through now are
"Preparing them for greater."

But my life??

I look back and see- brokenness, trauma,
hurt, and lots of painful memories.

I see the people all around me-
Busy with their purposes... Doing things they could do for awhile,
But me? I wonder if my purpose in life is just
These daily or weekly duties & this struggling forever?
What thing could those things be leading to?
I long for purpose, for meaning, for a plan!

Has God forgotten??

But for all that... Faith is all I have left... Faith means believing without seeing...
And then I realize that there's faint whispers of God healing the broken places in
my heart.

So, there is hope! And He is here!.... He.... has not...

Forgotten.



Update from 2025 Peacebuilding Communities Cohort

Katherine Weaver



The 2025 Peacebuilding Communities Cohort is meeting for the third time this April. We are a group of 13 adult learners gathering for a total of twelve days of teaching and discussion. We dive deep into how communities meet the needs of individuals and how conflicts naturally develop within the systems we set up to help each other. Our hope is to discover how we can care for each other better through self awareness, intentionality and studying our human default patterns. If you're interested in participating in 2026, please contact GuideSpring.



Words from a participant :

"Peacebuilding Communities has been a fun way to learn about becoming more aware of what's going on in the hearts of the people around us. I have been learning that conflict is not the problem, but how we respond to it.

Since being involved in Peacebuilding Communities I am finding out that there are no strangers among God's children- we all have similar needs and desires. We all have unmet needs and the potential to be triggered by someone near us, which can cause conflicts to arise. Looking for heart- value in people instead of taking them at face-value can go a long way towards resolving conflicts quickly and peacefully. "



HELLO

my name is

Justin Fry

Spiritual Director/ Pastoral Counselor

WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

There is a story in the Hebrew scriptures about a man who finds himself in the dark, loneliness of a cave. He is exhausted, burned out, and in despair. He can no longer hear or sense the divine in the overwhelming noise of his life. It is in this place--in the tender space between desperation and surrender--the intimate whisper of the divine is heard. Have you ever, like this man, found yourself, in a moment or season, aching to hear and know this divine whisper? Me too. Spiritual Direction is a sacred space where we listen, in curiosity and tenderness, unhurried and courageously, for this voice in our lives. This is one of the great joys of my life, to share the raw and holy ground of this space to listen alongside others for the divine whisper of love. I am from Milton, Pennsylvania, but have lived the last 11 years in Atlanta, Georgia where I've been a pastoral care pastor and preacher. Being with my wife and two boys is the greatest joy of my life. I like to read theology books and watch soccer. Most days I am learning to see beauty and live joyfully in a world disfigured by division and violence.

If you are interested in learning more or getting scheduled with Justin please call GuideSpring at 570-428-2077.



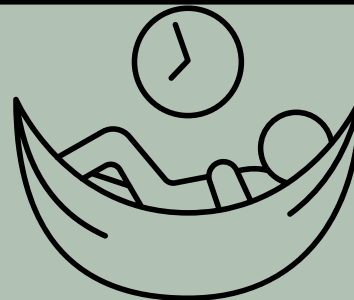


Mark Your Calendars



Coming Soon

Leisure & Technology



Join us for an evening of thoughtful discussion on leisure and the influence of technology. Leisure has long been an essential part of the human experience, but with the rise of digital media and technology, our understanding and participation in leisure have shifted.

Hosted and Facilitated by: Mike Yoder & Joel Yoder

When: August 5, 2025 6-9pm

Where: GuideSpring



*You're
invited*

2025 Annual GuideSpring Banquet

Come join us around the Table
for a Homecooked Meal and learn more
about the ministry at GuideSpring!

September 9th

Buffalo Community Church

4445 Hoffa Mill Road

Lewisburg PA 17837

Arrival 5:30pm ~ Dinner at 6pm

Please call
570-428-2077 or email
info @GuideSpring.org

