



## Coming Attractions

All times are Eastern except as noted

### July 11-12

Medical Expense Plan Meeting  
Pittsburgh, PA

### July 19 7:30 – 9:00 a.m.

IN/MI Development  
Everence, Goshen, IN

### August 18 11:30 – 2 p.m.

OH CEO Circle  
Mennonite Home Communities  
Bluffton, OH

### September 13 10:30 a.m.

Marketing Aging Services

### September 20 12 – 2 p.m.

IN/MI Chaplains Affinity Group  
Greencroft, Goshen, IN

### March 9-11, 2017

ELG/MHA Conference  
Jacksonville, FL

## The Anabaptist Leader: MHS Takes a 'Unique Platform' in Leadership Formation

Since the MHS journey started several decades ago, there has been a strong focus on leadership. This focus has only intensified in the last five years. Organizations with Anabaptist connections are interested in finding 'leaders with Anabaptist values or church connections,' or in growing the capacity of leaders (who may or may not be Anabaptists) to highlight and integrate Anabaptist values within their organization. The interest for leaders to embrace Anabaptist values has occurred at the board, CEO, and senior team levels in many MHS organizations.

This ever-growing interest in having strong, qualified leadership that embraces an Anabaptist perspective has led MHS to intensify its efforts on leadership-related activities in the past five years. MHS has attempted to become clearer in what it means to "lead with an Anabaptist perspective" by increasing the leadership resources available to its members.

MHS has intentionally used the lens of "leadership formation" rather than "leadership development" and developed a specific vision statement, guiding principles and themes to deepen its leadership activities.

### A Vision for Leadership Formation

To grow, support, and enrich a widening circle of current and emerging leaders who are committed to leading MHS ministries and related organizations.

### Guiding Principles for Building Formational Leadership Capacity

The following seven principles help shape MHS leadership activities. While these principles are not unique to MHS, taken together they provide a platform for a unique approach to leadership formation.

1. The way of Jesus, and particularly, Anabaptist values provide a primary reference point for leadership capacity building.
2. It is more important for leaders to learn how to grow than to learn specific competencies.
3. Learning is lifelong, and growth is ongoing.

*"Leadership" continued >>*

## Resource Partners Announces New CEO/President

With a grateful nod to retiring President and CEO Keith Stuckey and his “exemplary leadership,” the Board of Directors of Resource Partners, Lancaster, Pa., announced the appointment of Russell (Russ) Shaner, effective beginning June 20.



The new CEO and President brings with him extensive experience within the insurance industry. Shaner most recently was the President of the Insurance Society of Philadelphia. Prior, he served in a variety of roles within AAA Mid-Atlantic Insurance Group and CSAA Insurance.

“Resource Partners is a unique organization and identifying the right leader involved an extensive search,” shared Jane Mack, Board Chair. “We are confident that Russ will be more than up to the task,” she said.

Shaner’s first months with Resource Partners, now underway, will focus on meeting and building relationships with customers and strategic partners.



Mim Shirk, Senior Vice President

## The First Word: Members are the (not so) buried treasure of MHS

In 2015, the MHS Board set a goal of adding 10 new members in the next three years. There are dozens of organizations with Anabaptist connections that could take part in the leadership programs, peer networks, governance resources, insurance and risk management programs, purchasing discounts and other benefits that MHS membership offers.

As Rick and I are reaching out to leaders of these organizations, sometimes the most attractive thing about joining MHS is to be part of a like-minded community. Often, the executive feels isolated, without a trusted peer network. In other cases, an

executive transition makes the board appreciate that MHS aligns with their organization’s values.

So, the real draw of MHS is you—the members—creating a community where leaders can name and claim a set of shared values and sustain them over time. Of course, education and bottom-line value are important too.

Do you know of an Anabaptist organization in your community that isn’t a member of MHS? Reach out and let them know what they’re missing--and send a note about it to me at [mim@mhsonline.org](mailto:mim@mhsonline.org).

>> *“Leadership” continued*

4. Leadership formation happens best with colleagues, not alone.
5. Leadership formation at its best includes the heart, mind, hands and soul.
6. Leadership formation activities will pursue practices that engage leaders of color and include content and activities that encourage inter-cultural leadership competencies.
7. Individual capacity formation must be seen in organizational and societal context.

### **Unique Anabaptist Themes with Relevancy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

To help answer the question “how are Anabaptist values and practices relevant for today?”, MHS has identified four specific themes. These themes were important to early Anabaptist groups and are part of the current leadership context. The following four themes are known as the “4Cs”:

1. **Character** – Increase self-awareness of the leader’s call, strengths and commitments, and explore practices to increase wisdom, integrity, courage, love, and spiritual wellness.
2. **Collaboration** – Learn best practices to develop internal and external collaborative relationships and how to encourage effective communication, engagement and participation among all stakeholders.
3. **Culture** – Understand the language, faith, ethics, stories, rituals, images, and brands of organizational culture and how to develop practices that build a healthy, thick and integrated culture that embraces the organization’s heritage yet is welcoming of all persons served and those who serve.
4. **Change** – Increase the capacity of working with uncertainty and conflict, creating things not yet seen and embracing initiatives that show the fruit of more compassion, justice, beauty, stewardship and transformation!

### **MHS Leadership Formation Programs and Services**

MHS staff have formed the Leadership Formation Guiding Group to plan and implement new and continuing leadership opportunities for MHS members and related leaders. In the coming months, MHS will be sharing more details about specific leadership formation activities for 2017, but here is a brief overview of what MHS currently offers:

To advance leadership formation capacity, MHS staff have formed the Leadership Formation Guiding Group to plan and implement new and continuing leadership opportunities for MHS members and related leaders.

*“Leadership” continued >>*

## Program Feature: International Affinity group releases “Around the Globe”



Not exempt from an increasingly interconnected world, MHS continues to expand its reach internationally. In response, the International Affinity group, led by a group of executives from MHS member organizations, is pleased to announce *Around the Globe*, a newsletter aimed to increase awareness of MHS’ growing international programs and initiatives.

“[The group] represents executives who recognize that we operate our Anabaptist/Mennonite organizations in an increasingly intercultural and globally-connected world,” noted MHS President/CEO, Rick Stiffney. “They are seeking ways that their organizations can learn from and contribute to like-minded entities around the world,” he said.

*Around the Globe* will feature stories from MHS members involved in international programs, including Executive in Residence, Mennonite Central Committee’s International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP), workshops with China Christian Council and various learning tours.

Readers will also be among the first to receive information on upcoming internationally-related opportunities, including webinars and tours.

Anyone with interest in international learning is welcome to subscribe and encouraged to spread the word to others. To receive *Around the Globe*, contact Emily Reese at [emily@mhsonline.org](mailto:emily@mhsonline.org).



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# Consulting Corner: Report from Tim Ficker

## “Leadership is everything”: Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community undergoes Executive Team Retreat

Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community (VMRC) is a long-time MHS member organization situated in picturesque Harrisonburg, Va. At VMRC, the residents of this large and bustling community *age well and live fully!* That’s not just their motto; it is a visible reality to anyone who takes the time to tour the many active community spaces. On my first visit to the campus, CEO Judith Trumbo took me through the Wellness Center where I observed the weight room, the blood-pressure station, the swimming pool and the aerobics room. Each space was so full of exercising residents that I was compelled to ask whether they were staging it for a marketing video.

“No, this is pretty much a typical day here,” was the answer.

Several months later, I was invited to facilitate an Executive Team Retreat to guide the VMRC Executive Team in the development of a Succession Planning / Leadership Formation system. My initial question, while quietly cringing on the other end of the phone was, “Why? Is someone planning to retire soon?” My cringe was based on years of work with organizations who engage in succession planning only upon the announcement of their CEO’s retirement, and I have long ago come to the conviction that that is almost always a too-little-too-late proposition.

To my great joy, the response was something along the lines of, ‘No! We want to begin to prepare our team for the future and this will enable us to assess our bench strength and provide leadership development for a whole bunch of up-and-coming leaders who will be guiding this community into a bright future!’

Hallelujah!

The current leaders of VMRC understand that, in order to maintain their mission to support seniors as they *age well and live fully*, they must practice what they preach. They need to ensure that the organization and its leadership team *age well and live fully*, which means wisely preparing for its own growth and replenishment.

*“Consulting” continued >>*

## Online Resources

### Web

[mhsonline.org](http://mhsonline.org)

### Valued Leadership

[valuedleadership.org](http://valuedleadership.org)

### Facebook

[facebook.com/pages/Mennonite-Health-Assembly](https://facebook.com/pages/Mennonite-Health-Assembly)

### Rick’s Blog

[mhsalliance.wordpress.com](http://mhsalliance.wordpress.com)

## Contact Us

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>> “Consulting” continued



In my career of organizational leadership in four different large non-profit retirement communities, and my subsequent career of consulting with many more, I have become convinced that leadership formation and replenishment should be among the top three priorities of every CEO—not when they are considering their own exit strategy—but from Day 1 of their tenure.

VMRC’s CEO and Executive Team get it! So, during their recent retreat, I facilitated a discussion about the current team’s key strengths, utilizing the StrengthsFinder 2.0 ® profile. It revealed a very well-balanced team, each member of which appears to be operating largely in the areas of their greatest strengths, and relying on their colleagues to do the same, bringing balance and synergy to their efforts.

The rest of the workshop was focused on tools and methods for assessment of the larger team of staff associates who will become the future leaders of VMRC. These tools combine together to create a 360-degree view of the VMRC team, highlighting the places that exhibit depth and capacity and revealing areas that will require focused attention and resources to fill the gaps and ensure a strong outlook for the residents of VMRC in 2025 and beyond.

As Renowned Leadership author and speaker John C. Maxwell says, “Leadership is *everything* – *Everything* rises and falls on the leadership of the organization!”

When asked about the value of taking this approach to planning for their community’s future leadership, Ms Trumbo said, “Life is a team sport. As an organization, we need to learn how to most effectively leverage strengths and minimize weaknesses in order to fulfill our mission and to grow leaders. We want VMRC to be a community of hope, meaning and growth not only for residents but for employees as well! Through his years of experience with organizational development, Tim brought the toolkit to help us get there.”

As talented leaders are the rarest and most valuable resource of any organization, and as the best ones are typically not standing on the street corner looking for work, why don’t all organizational leaders focus more energy and resources on developing leaders from within? If we can assist you in the design and implementation of a leadership formation/succession

planning system, please don’t hesitate to contact MHS Consulting.



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>> "Leadership" continued

**Online Leadership Formation Resources (available at [www.mhsonline.org](http://www.mhsonline.org)):**

- Speaking of Non-Profit Boards Blog
- [www.valuedleadership.org](http://www.valuedleadership.org) website on "Leading with Anabaptist values"
- ValuedLeadership Blog
- ValuedLeadership Webinar
- A Quick Guide to Anabaptist Values (Book)
- The Quickest Ever Guide to Anabaptists and their Values (DVD)
- CEO Performance Assessment Survey
- Board Self-Assessment Survey
- Board Works Newsletter
- White Papers on Leadership and Governance Topics

**Face-to-Face Leadership Formation Resources:**

- Mennonite Health Assembly
- Values-based Leadership Program
- Professional Affinity Groups
- Executive Circle
- Gift Development Leadership Initiative
- Great Transitions Retreat (for leaders 55 and Better)

**MHS Consulting Leadership Services**

- Executive Transition and Planning
- Senior Team coaching and development
- Governance coaching and development

In addition to this list we are also very interested in having members share new ideas that might be helpful in build leadership formation capacity.



If you are interested in learning more, or have ideas you would like to share, please contact Emily Reese or myself.

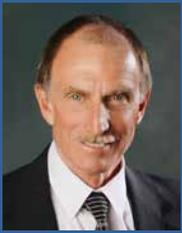
Emerson L. Leshner,  
Senior Vice President, MHS



*Executive Circle*

**Online Leadership Resources for Members**

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- [www.valuedleadership.org](http://www.valuedleadership.org) website on "Leading with Anabaptist values"
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- ValuedLeadership Webinar
- A Quick Guide to Anabaptist Values (Book)
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- Board Works Newsletter
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Rick Stiffney, President/CEO

## The Last Word: Collaboration leads to exceeded expectations, new possibilities

“We stand stronger together than alone.”

Across the country, whether in the disciplines of health and human services or education, there are many stressors. The future is full of vexing questions. Ironically, though, the future is also full of strategic opportunity.

Matthew 13:44 reminds us of ‘hidden treasure,’ worth far more than can be imagined. Perhaps searching for the best way forward in our various areas of service is similar to looking for hidden treasure. Could we be more successful searching as a party, with others, versus searching alone?

Increasingly around the country we are realizing that new kinds of cooperation and collaboration introduces new possibilities—often far beyond expectations.

The Mennonite Health Assembly always offers us a chance to build relationships and share resources between one another, as member organizations. The 2017 event, done in conjunction with leaders from across the field of Mennonite education, affords an extraordinary opportunity to seek new possibilities in our diverse markets. As we imagine new possibilities together, we significantly increase the odds of sustaining and expanding our mission of healing and hope.

Join us in Jacksonville as we move *Beyond Buried Treasure*.

