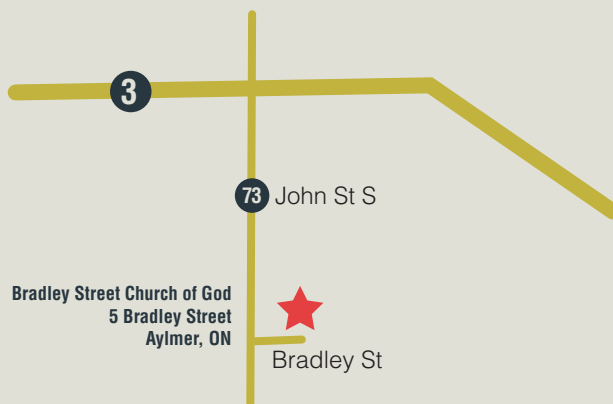


Agenda

- 9:00-9:30 **Welcome and Networking**
9:30-10:40 **Keynote Session**
10:45-11:00 **Break**
11:00-12:10 **Low German 101 and 102**
12:15-1:00 **Lunch**
1:00-1:50 **Breakout Session**
2:00-3:00 **Living Library**
3:15-3:30 **Closing and Evaluation**

Register today at:

mcco.ca/aylmer-low-german-conference



REGISTRATION

\$50 Earlybird Registration Deadline: April 8th
\$60 Registration Deadline: April 25th

Please register online:

mcco.ca/aylmer-low-german-conference

No refunds available. If you register and cannot attend, feel free to send a representative in your place.

Please advise us of medical dietary restrictions and physical accommodations required.

Please bring a reusable water bottle and dress in layers in case of temperature variance at the venue.

Displays and book table available during breaks. For book purchase, cheques or cash only please.

For more information:

Contact Laura VanderGriendt

Phone: 519-745 8458 ext 214

Email: lauravandergriendt@mcco.ca

Conference organized by local service agencies with the support of Mennonite Central Committee Ontario



**Mennonite
Central
Committee**

A Low German Mennonite Sampler

A day of conversation and learning

**Annual Networking Conference for
Service providers of Low German
speaking families**

Monday May 9th, 2016

**Bradley Street Church of God
5 Bradley Street
Aylmer, ON**



WORKSHOPS

Keynote Presentation

Research and Practice with Low German Mennonites: To treat, to intervene, or to accompany?

A Conversation between Luann Good Gingrich, York University Associate Professor, and **Abe Wall**, Vice Principal at East Elgin Secondary School

Large Group Session

(Please select one) If you have not attended one of these Networking Conferences before, please select 101

Low German 101: Cultural sensitivity when working with Low German families

This session will give a brief overview of Mennonite history, highlighting Anabaptist roots and discussing the foundations which unite all Mennonite groups. We will explore issues such as pacifism, education, gender roles and the impact of cultural values versus faith-based doctrine. It will also address the distinctive beliefs and sensitivities to be aware of when working with this population. *Presented by Anne Wall, Kinship Finder, Family and Children Services Elgin St. Thomas*

Low German 102: Understanding and relating with Low German men

Service providers will learn about some of the social, cultural and emotional barriers faced by the Low German speaking Mennonite men when they come to Canada. Service providers will have an opportunity to see Canada through the lens of these men, and learn strategies on how to make meaningful connections with them and how to assist them in moving ahead in a new culture. *Presented by Jacob Enns, Pastor, Leamington Evangelical Mennonite Church and Board member of MCC Ontario*

Further conversation with Luann and Abe

This session is an extension of today's keynote with Luann Good Gingrich and Abe Wall. Bring your questions and join in the conversation. (Limited to 30 people)

The significance, meaning and origins of distinctive Low German dress

Distinctive dress is a part of some Low German people's life and it stands out significantly in today's society. This presentation will summarize the results of an interview-study about the meaning and origins of Low-German dress. *Presenter: Anna-Lina Bombardier, Independent scholar and full-time mom.*

Language

Did you know that Low German is mainly an oral language? Are you interested in why information isn't often translated into Low German? Join us in this session to look briefly at the fascinating history of the Low German language before exploring the alphabet and the sounds of the vowels and consonants. Time will be spent learning and practicing a few key phrases in Low German. *Presenter: Anita Harms, former teacher and Low German Academy founder.*

Food

This session will provide information about staple and traditional foods that are enjoyed by many Low German families. The foods that families choose are closely tied to culture and heritage, and is sometimes a way to hold on to "home" even after assimilating in other ways. Low German values related to food, and beliefs about diet will be discussed as well. *Presenter: Anna Unger, former Public Health Nurse in Elgin County, now full-time mom.*

Mennonite history for young people

What does it take to write and produce a set of nine Mennonite History readers for young people? In this session-besides "showing and telling" the first, hot off the press volume- participants will learn the whys, whats and hows of producing this new resource for schools and other education programs engaging Mennonite students and/or clients. *Presented by Rosabel Fast, Educator and Freelance writer.*

Low German families and sensitive cultural values: during home visits, clinics, group sessions and conversation.

An event as seemingly innocent as a child coming home to report that a teacher is expecting a baby can cause tension in a Low German speaking family. The beliefs held by the general public around valuing information and being well-informed may come into conflict with the Low German values and beliefs. This tension creates challenges when interacting with the Low German families and can close the door between the service provider and the Low German client. During this breakout session, participants will explore important elements that keep the doors open with Low German clients. This session will be of special interest to all healthcare providers, teachers and social workers. *Presenters: Teresa Tratnyek, Public Health Nurse and Loreen Plett, Immigrant Advocate*

Holidays and naming practices

An important part of the Low German identity is celebrating religious holidays and understanding the family origins of a name. In this session we will discuss the observation of religious holidays and naming practices among Low German newcomers. We will walk away with a better understanding of the religious holidays, why there is so much confusion around names, how this relates to identity, religion and what we can do to make the intake process easier. *Presenter: Helen Bergen, Settlement Worker*

ASPIRE-ing to student success

In this session, participants will learn about a project that created a culminating course for ASPIRE (Arbeit Schule Program in Rural Elgin) students using the technological program Desire 2 Learn. This project was funded by the Ministry of Education and details about the application process will be shared with those interested in creating their own self-directed project. *Presenters: Caterina Vindasius and Sharon Devries, Secondary Teachers, ASPIRE*

Living Library (*Sign up will take place at the Conference during Registration and during the morning program*)
Select a "human" book and sign up to listen to his/her story of migration, settlement, participation in Canadian life, or work with the Low German speaking community. Hearing personal stories is an effective way for people to learn about cultural sensitivity, customs, and practices.