



Loving Friendship by Carol Landis

*"A friend is one who overlooks your broken fence
and admires the flowers in your garden." – Unknown*

Valentine's day is a celebration of friendship as well as the romantic love highlighted in *Making Connections*. Friendship is an important component of romantic love. I cherish friends who note good, in the midst of obvious faults. Like those who lavishly praised the zinnias in our flower bed, and didn't mention the decaying wood supporting the porch screens behind them. Susan Lenzkes describes these friends as: "*dear ones who pad barefoot through the soul.*" Such persons allow us to be ourselves and let our guard down. With these we can breathe freely. However, of those who highlight flaws & mistakes, she describes: "*tromping in with work boots...good intentions...and spiked heels of advice and pat answers.*" [[A Silver Pen for Cloudy Days](#)] This doesn't feel so good. I like the reminder Dorothy Ferguson, in her poem, "If We Knew Each Other Better," offers:

*If we knew each other better
In each circumstance we'd see
That in the same predicament
No different might we be.*

Yet there is time for truth. Our contractor needed to tell us the extent of damage to the boards supporting our porch. Those boards did need to be removed and replaced. John 1:14 describes Jesus as embodying grace and truth. Pastor Gary Wilkerson highlights the entire verse: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth," and writes, "*Grace and truth are contained within Christ's glory...they proceed from it. ...Our lives are meant to express Jesus in all his glory, and that requires his transformation of us.*" When I recognize a quickness within me to see, or note change I think others need to make, this reveals a need to humbly recognize my own "broken fences," and my own need for grace.

As our transformation evolves, I believe the last stanza of Dorothy Ferguson's poem occurs:

*"What joy it always brings to you
When someone clasps your hand,
And softly whispers with a smile,
"Dear friend, I understand."*

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, with the power of the Holy Spirit living within us, please continue transforming us, so we reflect Your glory and love like You. Full of grace and truth.

February 2023 |



WOMEN'S MINISTRY MISSION STATEMENT: Encouraging women to connect in deeper, genuine relationships both with each other and with Jesus Christ.



Making Connections

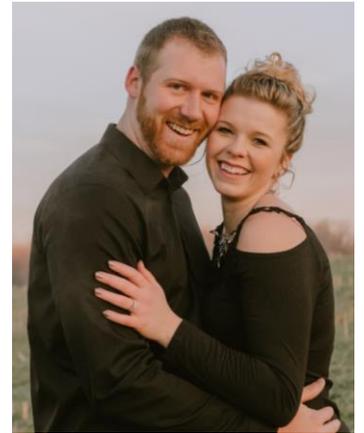
Meet our Brides!



Kaylee Paul and Marshall Leaman. We met through Marshall's sister, Sydney. After spending some time together we realized we both wanted to get to know each other better. We dated for the next year and got engaged in November of 2022! We will be getting married May 20th, at Finland Mennonite Church. We're looking forward to what the Lord has in store for us as we pursue Christ and the Lord's will within the covenant of our marriage!

Janelle Knechel and Derek Cassel. My name is Janelle Knechel, and I am the daughter of Darryl and Stacey Knechel who attend Towamencin Mennonite Church. I visited Franconia in May 2021, and over the summer, began coming to young adult activities. I was starting to learn who many of the young adults were, and after the yearly Ham Dinner Fundraiser in October, Derek got my number from Renae Derstine to 'thank me' for helping out! His simple thank you text turned into a conversation, that became a quick friendship full of teasing and laughs! He asked me out a couple weeks later!

We dated for just over a year, and although I expected him to propose soon, I didn't expect him to pull it off in the middle of a dark, rainy Saturday! Our wedding will be on May 27th, at Franconia Mennonite Church. We are so grateful to the Lord for bringing us into each other's lives. We appreciate your prayers over our relationship as we are planning our wedding and entering into beautiful new chapter of our lives!



Susanna Mewha and Dylan Derstine. I (Dylan) grew up in Harleysville, PA, and Susanna grew up in Mystic, CT. Our story began with a mutual friend and a step of faith. In both of our junior years, while we were attending Messiah University, we were set up on a blind date. And while it wasn't love at first sight, we both realized that there was something beautiful and special with the other person that was worth pursuing. Over the next 2.5 years we grew closer together, falling in love and growing with the Lord, both together and as individuals. We got engaged on October 8th, 2022, in Watch Hill, Rhode Island. We are beyond excited about entering into this next season of life and look forward to getting to be with one another every day and serving the Lord and each other. We both enjoy exploring the outdoors, traveling to new places, meeting new people and finding good places to eat. Our wedding is on August 26th, in New Providence, PA. Our future plans are uncertain as of right now, as we are discerning where the Lord would have us live and what He wants us to do. I am an engineer, currently employed at CHL Systems, and Susanna is studying nursing at Southern Connecticut State University. We would appreciate your prayers as we enter this new and exciting season of life!

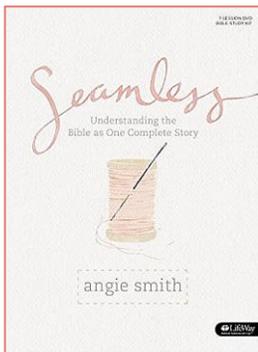




Get Involved!

Spring Women's Bible Study

Seamless: Understanding the Bible as One Complete Story



7-week video study
by Angie Smith

Seamless covers the people, places, and promises of the Bible, tying them together into the greater story of Scripture.

One study – Two options
Pick morning or evening, whichever is better for you!

Morning: Thursdays, 9:30-11:00 am
(facilitated by Helen Eastburn)
Childcare provided

OR

Evening: Thursdays, 7:00-8:30 pm
(facilitated by Lori Menzies)

Starts March 16th

Cost for study guide: \$10

Please **SIGN UP** at the Women's Ministry Table in the foyer, or by emailing franconiawomen@gmail.com

Upcoming Spring Events

Walks in the Park

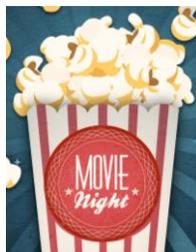
April 4th, May 2nd

Outing to Chanticleer Garden

May 20th



Ladies' Christian Movie Night



Wed, **March 15th**, 6:30 pm

At the **Broad Theater**
in Souderton
(Women's Ministry has reserved a theater)

Stay tuned for more details!

Pictures from our MRC Service Night



Thank you to everyone who came and helped!

February 2023

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
			Knottling 1 Comforters 8am-1pm Church Meal & Bible Study	2	3	4
5	6	7	Knottling 8 Comforters 8am-1pm Church Meal & Bible Study	9	10	11
12	13	14	Knottling 15 Comforters 8am-1pm Church Meal & Bible Study	16	17	18
		Sewing Circle 8am-4pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 7pm				
19	20	21	Church Meal & Bible Study	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

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