



MENUCHA

Sacred Space - Purposeful Work

The Menucha Meander

REVIVE AND RESTORE MENUCHA Cloie Cohen, Development Director



I often start an email with, "I hope this message finds you well." Now the sentiment feels even more true, and I want to add, "and healthy, keeping up with friends and family, still employed, finding purpose, or just hanging in there."

As of this writing, Multnomah County has yet to enter Phase 1 of the reopening. This means Menucha is still shut, having hosted our last guest group on March 6th. The efforts to keep people safe have struck at the heart of what we do at Menucha. Yet through these challenging times, we remain focused on the day when we can once again welcome guests and friends to the property.

We find hope recalling the excitement of group members as they arrive, and the bustle of getting everyone settled. Or in the screams as people jump into the pool after a long day of purposeful work. And the happy faces at dinner, the smells of fresh bread, and the gratitude for good food and sparkling conversation. This is the vision we hold for the future of Menucha. And what we're preparing for as soon as it's safe to gather once again.

Until now, we've managed the closure with quick decisions, financial support from a payroll loan, and spending down reserves. Today we find ourselves at a critical moment in Menucha's history.

Today, we are calling in all of the love that exists for Menucha out in the world. From those who have been enriched by their time at Menucha. Those who have experienced a moment of clarity and connection that bettered their life. Those who need Menucha to remain a constant in this world.

The Revive and Restore Menucha campaign represents a bold effort to sustain Menucha through these challenging times. Our goal is \$375,000 to cover fixed costs and retain our core staff.

We can't influence the tides of the virus or the mandates set to keep us safe, but we can steward Menucha to not only ensure our survival but that we'll once again meet our mission well.

It *will* take all of us, with gifts of all sizes, to weather this storm. We hope you will consider a gift to Menucha today.



WE REMAIN HOPEFUL

Rev. Spencer Parks, Executive Director

So how are things at Menucha?

I've heard that question countless times in the past few months. My stock answer has been...It's been quiet. Truer words have never been spoken. Our last guest departed from Menucha on March 6th. Since that time we've either canceled or transferred to next year roughly 100 group reservations...and we know that there will be further cancellations and transfers to come. At the time of writing this, we have one group scheduled for July and a few more sprinkled about through the end of the year.



Truth be told, even under Phase 2 reopening guidelines it will be a challenge for us to operate. We will be providing private rooms for guests. Guests will be served boxed meals from our dining hall. The number of people that can safely gather here will be severely limited in order to comply with social distancing guidelines. Many of the things that make Menucha warm and special will not be allowed until after there is a vaccine. Be that as it may, we will do our best to make those groups who can attend feel safe, comfortable and well cared for. We know that there are many communities who still need to gather together during this time. We are committed to make that happen as best we can.

Being good stewards of a place like Menucha means that we had put money away in our reserves for emergencies. This definitely qualifies as such. But as our reserves had been prudently invested, they took a hard hit when the stock market dropped (a loss of about 20-25%). At present we have not dipped into those reserves and hope that we can put that off until they can recover.

We will be unable to host our two fundraising events this year. Both our Summer Fair and Ice Cream Social (scheduled for August) and our Annual Fundraising Dinner (scheduled for September) have been canceled. As you may have noticed by now, a good bit of this newsletter is dedicated to fundraising. To be completely honest, we are going to need your help if we are going to make it through this time.

This year we celebrate 70 years as a retreat and conference center. This is not how we expected or wanted to spend our 70th anniversary year. In the end, I am confident that Menucha will be around for many more years to come. How we operate in the near future and what we look like when we come through on the other side of the pandemic depends largely on you and your generosity.

We look forward to a time when we can gather communities together again here. We miss seeing guests. We miss offering programs in faith, music and art. We miss you. We know that some of you are going through hard times of your own. Whether you've lost a job or a loved one, please know that you're in our prayers daily.

So until we can once again gather together, we hope that you and those you love will stay safe and well. We'll do our best to make sure you have a place to come home to. We remain hopeful. We hope you do as well.



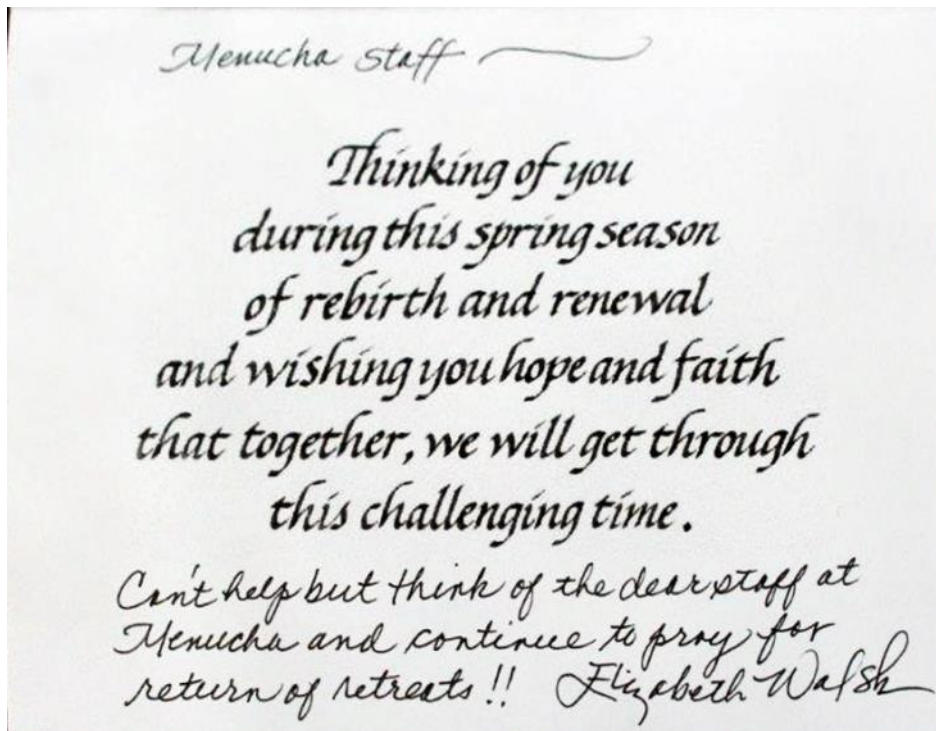
FACILITIES UPDATE

Tim Kurkinen, Facilities Manager

Since our last newsletter, a few things have happened around Menucha. For a while we spent time working diligently on various projects like painting, deep seasonal cleaning, reorganizing, decluttering, working in the gardens and on the grounds, as well as making steady progress on our large projects like the renovations in Wright Hall.

The opportunity to get our family of staff out of their normal routine and working together across departments was wonderful for morale. It has been, in some small way, a refreshing harbor from the dizzying anxiety we've all come to find normal. The lack of guests to prepare for has not meant a ceasing of our hospitality for each other.

With things changing weekly, we know that at the very least we can count on each other for support of any kind, and our mission of stewardship goes beyond what we call routine. Our hospitality towards one another makes us stronger amidst the struggle, adding to the foundation of a purpose and place we call home.



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CELEBRATING THE 70th ANNIVERSARY OF MENUCHA'S PURCHASE FROM THE JULIUS MEIER FAMILY IN JUNE, 1950

MENUCHA—A DREAM COME TRUE

By Janet Moore The Sunday Oregonian Magazine, August 23, 1953



"If I only were a rich man, I'd buy it on the spot and present it to the church." Dr. Paul Wright, pastor of Portland's First Presbyterian Church, so dreamed as he stood that January day in 1950 for the first time on Menucha's high knoll, 800 feet above the Columbia River. To the east, wooded hills bordered the river on its way through the gorge. To the west, a peaceful valley stretched toward Portland 20 miles in the distance.

All this in addition to an 18-room residence, 8-room guest house, 6-room caretaker's cottage, together with a maintenance building, greenhouse, garages, beautifully landscaped grounds, and fruit and nut orchards. Erected in the late 1920s as his country estate by our late Governor Julius L. Meier, it was available at a fraction of its original cost.

Dr. Wright could vision youth groups housed here under Christian influence for summer camps. For modern youth, he knew, religion must be closely linked with everyday life or not at all. And what about business and professional women, even tired businessmen, too often the church's "forgotten generation" except where money is concerned? Here, if only for weekends, they could get away from it all, and think on higher things.

Dr. Wright recalled how Hillockburn, the church's longtime rustic retreat in the foothills of Mt. Hood, but now lately abandoned, had enriched hearts. How there, with the majestic mountain in the background and a cathedral of mighty trees about them, persons had come to know the touch of God's presence in a way that enriched their whole lives.

Menucha was the perfect answer for a new location. But was Menucha possible? Dare he broach so huge a proposition? Why not? "Without vision, the people perish."

The matter could not be delayed, perhaps fortunately, for three other denominations were considering the property. A short while later, a rather reluctant church board approved the taking of an option. On June 30, 1950, the day before the option was to expire, the final papers were signed, with nearly half the purchase price coming in cash, the rest in pledges. And Menucha, "a place of quiet rest," so christened by its former owner, became the property of First Presbyterian Church of Portland.



Many conferences, though, preceded that final achievement. Many the doubts of hard-headed businessmen who well knew wishes do not spell cold cash. After one such session, an elderly member remarked jokingly, "Every time I attend one of these, it costs me another \$500."

As soon as it was theirs, church members buckled down to the task of putting the 93-acre estate into shape for use. Unoccupied since 1941, the landscaped grounds were untidy and overgrown; buildings were in need of cleaning. Women rolled up their sleeves and polished the cobwebbed windows, mopped floors and oil-dusted the grooved paneling. Men gave holidays and weekends to tidying up the grounds and tailoring the broad sweep of lawn.

Now, three years later, the change is miraculous. Three hotel-type ranges provide cooking facilities for 150 guests. Enclosure of a portion of the veranda with plate glass gives extra dining space. Double-decker bunks in each bedroom accommodate from 8-16 per room, rooms that once were graced with polished furniture.

The governor's study, equipped with a fireplace, provides a conference or small classroom. One of the larger bedrooms on the first floor of Wright Hall, the main building, has been converted into a little gem of a chapel seating from 50-60. Red velvet hangings forming a background for pulpit and crucifix, and a fine handmade reed organ, the gift of the family of the deceased organ maker, lend an air of sanctity. This little room has been christened the Levi Johnson chapel in honor of a former Presbyterian assistant pastor largely responsible for the development of Hillockburn.

Yet with each swish of the polishing cloth, each clip of the pruners, the worker knows a fresh sense of ownership and a sharing in the contribution Menucha makes to the lives of those it serves. That number has constantly grown from the first conference there in September 1950. During the remainder of the year, 20 more conferences were held. In 1951, 78 groups had reservations for weekends or longer. Besides First Presbyterian members, several other denominational and interdenominational groups from western states and Canada have enjoyed Menucha's hospitality. All conferences have high praise for the atmosphere, housing and food, served at an unbelievably low figure for the present day. This has been made possible by the untiring devotion of two women, Mrs. Roy Beam and Mrs. Paul Heller, who have taken turns overseeing the preparation of all meals—33,000 in one year.

Following a weekend at Menucha, a businessman of another denomination wrote, "The retreat at Menucha was the first affair of its kind I have attended, and I can say most sincerely that every busy man and woman should afford themselves a privilege such as this at frequent intervals. The richness of life's deeper meanings become very evident when we pause sufficiently long to give them consideration."

First the dream, now the dream realized.





LOOKING AHEAD TO MENUCHA'S PROGRAMS

Lori Nance, Program Director

In the uncharted waters of frequently changing regulations and recommendations, we are proceeding with caution for upcoming programs. How will programs look in the coming months? It is hard to speak with a great deal of certainty given the ever-changing nature of the times.

WHAT WE DO KNOW

- Menucha will continue to offer the highest quality programs in our three core areas of faith, art and music.
- Menucha will communicate changes and expectations through email and our website. There will be some modifications to our on-going programs:

LODGING ACCOMMODATIONS

While physical distance is needed, we will make all rooms single occupancy (or double for couples and folks who live in the same household) for our programs. This means we will have fewer participants overall. Those who would normally have paid a little more for a room to themselves will pay a little less, and those who usually chose to share a room to lower the cost will pay a little more. This too may change as scientists learn more and it is clearer how to prevent spreading this novel coronavirus.

MEALS

The changing needs for space between guests will determine how we handle meals. Breaking bread together is so important, but it will have to take on different forms for the time being. We will continue to make sure you are well-fed in body and spirit.

WORKSHOP/CLASS SPACE

We'll make sure there is plenty of space to spread out, and when needed, modify the schedule to keep inside-the-class time shorter. We will ask participants to wear a mask indoors.

We believe in the power of learning, reflecting and connecting that happens when people come together to learn and encourage one another as musicians, artists and people of faith.

When you have questions about our programs, please don't hesitate to send me an email (lori@menucha.org).

We look forward to hearing the sounds of music-making, and conversations between friends, and seeing creativity take shape as art skills are practiced. We miss you and will be so glad to welcome you when you come back!





THE COOKTOP - We look forward to cooking for you!

Anadama Bread from Chef David Bell - makes 2 loaves

The name "Anadama Bread" first appeared in print in 1915, but it was undoubtedly baked in many New England hearths before then. What distinguishes Anadama from other breads is the inclusion of cornmeal and molasses. Both are common ingredients in Northeast cooking, but they truly shine in this bread.

8 cups unbleached flour 1/3 cup butter, softened
1 1/4 cups yellow cornmeal 3 1/2 cups warm water (105-110° F)
1 1/2 tsp. salt 2/3 cup molasses
2 packages yeast (4 oz)



Preheat oven to 375° F. In a large bowl, mix 2 1/2 cups flour, cornmeal, salt and yeast. Gradually add butter, water and molasses and beat 2 minutes on medium speed. Add 1/2 cup flour and beat for 2 minutes on high speed. Keep adding flour by 1/2 cup until a stiff dough forms.

Turn onto a floured surface and knead for about 10 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, cover and allow to rise in a warm place for 30 minutes until doubled. Punch down and cut into two pieces. Roll each piece into a rectangle and form into a loaf. Place loaves into greased loaf pans, brush with a little soft butter and allow to rise another 20 minutes.

Bake at 375° for 45 minutes. Remove from pans to wire racks and allow to cool.

KOLOKITHOKEFTEDES (Zucchini Patties) from Chef Colin Bradley

Serves 12



3 large zucchinis	1/2 cup fresh mint	1/2 tsp cumin
1 tsp. salt	1/3 cup fresh cilantro	Pepper to taste
1 yellow onion, grated	1/2 cup chickpea flour	1-2 tbsp. olive oil
2 cloves garlic, crushed	1 tbsp. cornstarch	

Grate zucchini into a medium sized bowl. Add salt and set aside for 5 minutes while you prepare the other ingredients. Grate onion into another large mixing bowl. Using your hands, squeeze out all of the liquid, making sure to get every last drop. Discard liquid. Add garlic, mint, cilantro, chickpea flour, cornstarch, cumin and pepper. Stir gently and set aside.

After the zucchini has rested, using your hands, squeeze out all of the liquid. After you get out as much of the liquid as possible, add the zucchini to the onion mixture in the large bowl. Using your hands, mix well. Divide the mixture into about 12 equal portions and roll each into a ball. Flatten each ball into a little patty.

Warm the olive oil in a frying pan over high heat for one minute. Add 6 or 7 of the patties at a time and cook for about four minutes on each side. They are ready to flip when they are completely golden brown and not sticking to the bottom of the pan. Repeat until you've cooked all the patties. Enjoy hot or cold. Goes great with Tzatziki sauce



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Menucha is a sacred sanctuary held in stewardship as an ecumenical, community-based mission of First Presbyterian Church – Portland. Our mission is to enrich lives through hospitality, learning, reflection and renewal.

CONTACT INFORMATION



You may join our mailing list or update the information we have for you by returning this form to us, or by contacting us:

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Name _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
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I would like to receive Menucha communications via:
 Email Regular mail

MAXIMIZING YOUR GIFT

Setting up a **Recurring Gift** can be a great way to make a larger gift than you might be able make at once. \$25 over a year adds up to \$300, or \$100 totals \$1,200! Sustaining gifts like this secure the day-to-day operations at Menucha and are greatly appreciated.

Matching Gift programs offer a way to sometimes double your gift as well as an employee benefit you don't want to miss out on utilizing. You might also consider asking family members to match your gift. This is a great opportunity for older generations to talk to younger family members about what is important to them and how Menucha has impacted the family.

If you are 72 or older and must take **required minimum distributions from your IRA**, you can transfer up to \$100,000 annually from your IRA directly to Menucha without having to recognize the distribution as income.