



**MENUCHA**

*Sacred Space - Purposeful Work*

# The Menucha Meander

## UPDATE ON WRIGHT HALL RENOVATIONS...AND EXCITING NEWS!

**Phase one** of the most recent renovations in Wright Hall began in 2019. Through the generosity of donors, we were able to refresh paint, refinish some of the ground floor hardwoods, and renovate Room 3 as well as the Suite. **Phase two** was made possible in 2020 with a generous \$100,000 gift! An anonymous donor (look for more details below) presented us with an amazing opportunity to continue work in Wright Hall, specifically to focus on accommodations for sleeping. We purchased new beds, mattresses, and all other furnishings to completely transform the bedrooms. This gift allowed us to offer work to some of our part-time staff who had been laid off due to the closure, as well as infuse our local economy by hiring contractors from the community and purchasing locally whenever we could. **Phase three** will commence once we secure funding or can budget for the work. This will include updating bathrooms, and plumbing and electrical systems in Wright Hall.



**And now...for the exciting news!**

## **MENUCHA HAS BEEN BLESSED WITH A SECOND \$100,000 GIFT!**

Our anonymous donor has given us their approval to share their identity – our tremendous thanks to **The Johnson Family!** Don Johnson has been bringing student groups from Oregon State University here for over three decades. His son and daughter-in-law not only met at Menucha, but also got engaged here. We are beyond grateful to Don, his wife Sandra Hom, son and daughter-in-law Taylor and Shannon Johnson, and Don's beloved sister Beverly Johnson, who passed away in early 2020.

This second gift will be used to give Ballard Hall some much needed love, as well as Boyd Hall, and exterior paint on several Menucha buildings. We can't wait to share details on these projects as they progress!

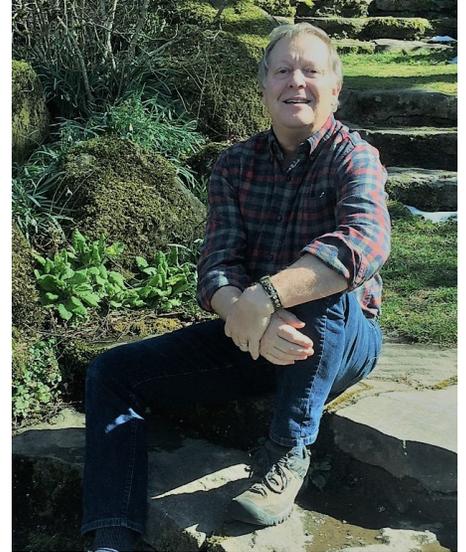
We also hope these transformative gifts will inspire others. If you've spent time at Menucha in the past ten years, you can probably easily call to mind other areas that might need updating. If you or your family have ideas on projects you might be interesting in funding, we encourage you to reach out to our Development Director, Cloie Cohen, 503-695-2243, [cloie@menucha.org](mailto:cloie@menucha.org).



## WELCOME BACK!

### Spencer Parks, Menucha Executive Director

As vaccinations become more widespread and the pandemic restrictions are being lifted I'm getting reacquainted with a few things that I've not done in a while. The first was hugging my daughter. She had managed to get vaccinated well before we did. We had talked and seen each other throughout the pandemic, but it felt really good just to hug her and be hugged back. Human touch is something that I've really missed over the past year. Then there was an outdoor gathering with friends (we'd all had at least our first dose) to wish a fond farewell to a couple who was moving to Montana. The conversation was lively, faces were smiling and the gathering had more of a family reunion feel than anything else. Over the course of the past year we had gathered together in groups of twos and fours, but seeing that many of my friends together in one place was absolutely delightful.



Finally, my congregation has started gathering together again. During the course of the pandemic, we have been broadcasting our services over the internet and we pastors have been conducting the service to a sanctuary of empty pews. Not my ideal situation. In our reopening, we've limited our attendance, but it's so refreshing to see people again and to catch up on their lives. There's just something about meeting in-person that Zoom or internet broadcasts will never be able to capture.

All of these events have made me realize how important it is just to be with other people. That kind of human interaction strengthens us as families and communities. It helps us, as groups, to function better and more efficiently. It helps us as individuals to achieve more, reach higher, and realize our potential. It has the added benefit of feeling good as well. I truly believe that we were meant to function as loving and supportive communities.

Throughout our history, Menucha has been a place where communities have gathered. They have come here to plan, to learn and to grow. During the pandemic, we were not able to safely assemble people here. Realizing the importance of community, we found online ways to help people congregate together. We'll continue using some of the tools we developed during the pandemic, but now we look forward to a time in the near future when we can, once again, gather people together in person. We have missed old friends, smiling faces and the bustle of activity and we can't wait to welcome all of these back.

We have not been idle during this time. Through some very generous donations, we have been able to improve our facility and will continue to do so in the coming months. When you return to us, you'll notice more comfortable rooms and a fresh look to many of our buildings. More than ever, we want you to feel at home here. You are a part of our Menucha family and we look forward to welcoming you back.



## A NEW TRADITION – WELCOME HOME TO MENUCHA!

As most of you know, homecoming is a long-standing American tradition where colleges and high schools welcome alumni back to campus, as well as students, fans, and community members. Homecoming is also a tradition of churches, in the southern states predominantly, where former members and pastors return to celebrate church heritage and catch up with each other. A reunion of sorts.

Coming off of this most challenging year, when in-person assemblies just could not happen, we're welcoming everyone back for a Menucha Homecoming! It will be a chance to gather with friends, connect with those we may have lost touch with over our 70 year history (including former staff), and offer our gratitude for all the ways our community has sustained us. Many of you have shared memories of Menucha being the only constant as you grew up, or a place where you transformed significantly. We are glad that, while the world continually changes, Menucha is reliably a place where you'll always be welcome—it's time to come "home"!

### Menucha Homecoming Picnic (formerly known as Summer Fair)

**Saturday, August 7, 2021**

**11:00 am – 2:00 pm**

**Who:** Everyone!

**What:** Bring a blanket or chairs and a picnic lunch. We'll provide drinks and sweet treats! There will be live music, tours of the Wright Hall renovations (masks will likely still be required in Menucha buildings), old fashioned outdoor games, and more important, familiar faces, a warm welcome, and re-connection to this sacred space.

The reach of our mailing list is limited, so we hope you'll help us by spreading the word. Thank you!

### ALSO...CIRCLE SEPTEMBER 12th ON YOUR CALENDAR!





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## WE HAVE SO MUCH GOOD NEWS TO SHARE!

### MENUCHA CONTINUES THE PROCESS OF GROWING INTO OUR OWN 501c3 NONPROFIT

As we wrote in our last newsletter, we are moving toward a new chapter in Menucha's life administratively. The congregation of First Presbyterian Church voted in May to allow Menucha to incorporate separately as a 501c3 nonprofit organization. We have filed the articles of incorporation and expect to shift operational control later this year. There are many administrative details involved in this sort of process, and we are grateful for the work of many caring volunteers in making it happen.

### MENUCHA BOARD HONORS MAC AND CAROLYN McCALL WITH "McCALL HOUSE"

At their May 12 meeting, the Menucha Board of Directors voted to change the name of Lindsay House to McCall House. This new name honors Merritt "Mac" and Carolyn McCall for their excellent and dedicated service as Menucha's administrators from 1977-2004. This name is especially appropriate since the McCalls lived in this home for many years.



### MENUCHA SELLS PREVIOUS "McCALL HOUSE" TO OFFSET PANDEMIC LOSSES

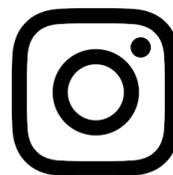
Some readers will recall that there was already a building here named "McCall House" and wonder what happened to it. Here's the news: In 2003, Menucha's leaders had the foresight to purchase a nearby home for possible use by Menucha's director or visiting instructors. The following year when Mac and Carolyn McCall retired, that building was named "McCall House" in their honor. Menucha's Executive Director Spencer Parks and his wife Sarah lived in McCall House for six years, then purchased a small farm. First Presbyterian Church members voted to sell that first McCall House in May 2021 to help Menucha endure massive financial losses incurred during the pandemic and bolster it for the future.

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## STAY CONNECTED!



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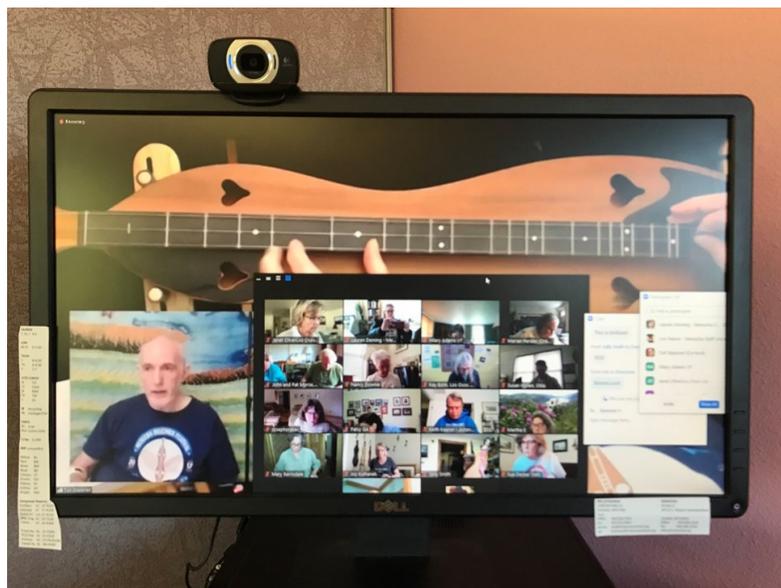
## “BRINGING MENUCHA TO YOU” Lori Nance, Program Director

The phrase sounded catchy, and appropriate back in August of last year when we began planning and inviting participation in online events. Over the months since we started saying it, the depth of meaning in the name of this place has added to the purpose of programs we have been able to people in their homes. As we introduced many new friends to “Virtual Menucha” we had more occasions to share the Hebrew meaning of the name of this place: “Renewing stillness” and “still waters”.

In these days that have demanded so many changes in our patterns of living, for us to bring some *menucha* into people’s lives through online gatherings has meant a great deal to the 548 people who participated in our Blues “in” the Gorge, Lunch & Learns, Ukulele Band Camp and Dulcimer Festival. Since September of 2020, Menucha has offered online 3 of our major music camps and 19 Lunch & Learns consisting of one to four sessions each. Fun fact: we have 132 hours of videos archived in our YouTube channel for the participants in those events to revisit to continue learning the song or skill taught and you can purchase access to the archives, too!

So, where are we going? Forward, with a mix of in-person and online gatherings. This fall we will welcome our acoustic blues guitar enthusiasts back to Wright Hall and can’t wait to have Mary Flower, Jim Kveskin, Kristina Olsen and Phil Wiggins in the house! Look for more virtual/online gatherings to be available in December, January and February, while in the Spring and Fall we will have (celebrating joyfully) in-person programs. At in-person events, here it is possible and makes sense, we will offer virtual participation, too.

Stay tuned for details about the upcoming programs in art, faith and music that will bring you to *Menucha*, and will bring *menucha* to you!





## THE COOKTOP - A Recipe from the Menucha Kitchen David Bell and Colin Bradley, co-Kitchen Managers

### STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE – makes 8

#### BISCUITS

2 cups all-purpose flour, spooned into measuring cup and leveled-off	1 teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons cornstarch	10 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into ½ -inch chunks
1 tablespoon baking powder	¾ cup buttermilk
¼ teaspoon baking soda	2 tablespoons turbinado sugar
2 tablespoons granulated sugar	

#### STRAWBERRIES

2 pounds strawberries, hulled and sliced ¼ -inch thick  
3 tablespoons seedless raspberry jam  
½ cup granulated sugar

#### WHIPPED CREAM

1½ cups heavy cream and 3 tablespoons granulated sugar



**BISCUITS:** Preheat the oven to 425°F and set an oven rack in the middle position. Line a 13x18-inch baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, cornstarch, baking powder, baking soda, granulated sugar, and salt. Add the pieces of cold butter. Use your fingertips to rub the butter into the dry ingredients until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs with pea-sized clumps of butter within. Add the buttermilk and stir with a rubber spatula until the dough comes together into a sticky, shaggy mass. Do not overmix. With lightly floured hands, form the dough into 8 craggy-looking balls and place on the prepared baking sheet. (They should be bigger than golf balls but smaller than tennis balls.) Don't worry about making them perfect; it's better if they are a little rough around the edges. Sprinkle the tops with the turbinado sugar. Bake for 13 to 15 minutes, until the biscuits are golden.

**STRAWBERRIES:** Put one-third of the berries in a medium bowl and, using a potato masher or a fork, mash them into a chunky purée. Mix in the remaining berries, along with the raspberry jam and granulated sugar. Let the berries sit at room temperature for 10 minutes, until saucy.

**WHIPPED CREAM:** In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment (or beaters), whip the heavy cream until soft peaks form. Sprinkle the granulated sugar over the cream and beat until soft peaks return. Do not overbeat. (Alternatively, the whipped cream can be beaten by hand in a deep mixing bowl with a whisk.)

To assemble the shortcakes: Using a serrated knife, split the biscuits in half horizontally and transfer the bottoms to 8 dessert plates. Spoon about three-quarters of the macerated berries and their juice evenly over the biscuit bottoms. Let some of the berries spill out onto the plate. Top with a generous dollop of whipped cream and cover each with a biscuit top. Spoon more berries and cream over each shortcake and serve immediately.



# THE REVIVE AND RESTORE MENUCHA CAMPAIGN

## Wrapping Up This Most Remarkable Year With Gratitude

*Thank you!*

When the future felt scary and unsure, 437 of our friends, community members, guest groups, and program participants stepped up to help us through.

Menucha has not only been Revived and Restored, but we all feel reassured as well that our mission to enrich lives continues to be needed in the world. And fortunately, because of your help, we can get back to that work.



### PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER - Tim Kurkinen, Facilities Manager



I am looking forward to wrapping up the renovations in Wright Hall. I'm delighted to say we're in the home stretch. Putting the pieces together after so much time has been very rewarding for our team. The bedroom floors are refinished, rooms are coming together with new beds, mattresses and linens, new lighting, paint and stains.

There are still a few more details left, but we are nearly there and that feels amazing. It's time to enjoy all of our hard work. In fact, there may be an opportunity for you to come join us very soon and marvel at the transformation.

***"We should never forget our struggles, nor dwell on them too much, but learn from them, and when the time comes, celebrate like crazy!" Anonymous***

### NEWS ABOUT OUR GIFT SHOP

Due to the pandemic last spring, we had to lay off our part-time staff. We are currently in the process of hiring them back. Unfortunately Rose Grace, who has done a marvelous job managing our gift shop and stocking it with wonderful items, will not be rejoining us. We will miss her warm smile and the gracious way she interacted with our guests.

Without a staff member to manage the gift shop, we have made the difficult decision to close it for a year. As part of the Wright Hall renovation project, we are converting Room 1, where the gift shop was located, back into a bedroom. We will re-evaluate next year and decide if we will reopen the gift shop in a different location.

Don't worry - we'll keep a few essentials (toothbrushes, toothpaste, razors, etc.) in the office in case you forget to bring something.



**MENUCHA CONFERENCE CENTER**  
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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:

**PHONE** 503-695-2243  
**FAX** 503-695-2223  
**EMAIL** office@menucha.org  
**MAIL** PO Box 8  
 Corbett, OR 97019-0008

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email address \_\_\_\_\_

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.