

THE LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE
OF LIVING BRANCHES



Course Brochure

SPRING SESSION

March to May 2024





Living U is the Living Branches lifelong learning institute. Recognizing the many benefits of lifelong learning, Living Branches established Living U to give older adults opportunities to broaden their knowledge and learn new things. The best part — no grades! Living U is for your pure learning enjoyment.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Living U is not only for Living Branches residents! All adults 62 and older are invited to learn new things and grow together.

CURRICULUM COUNCIL

The Living U Curriculum Council consists of residents, future residents, and Living Branches team members. The purpose of the council is to assess interest and to organize and promote lifelong learning opportunities and experiences that empower older adults to lead lives of inquiry, purpose, and joy.

GET IN TOUCH

Maribeth Benner
Living U Coordinator
215-368-4438 ext. 44204
Maribeth.Benner@
LivingBranches.org

We welcome your ideas and suggestions regarding our course topics.

Brochure designed by
Emily Weber-Wood



A Warm Welcome

If you are an adult 62 years or older looking for engaging educational opportunities with peers, Living U offers friendly, enriching classes and trips for you. This spring semester includes an exciting array of topics – history, writing, art, farming, music, faith, nature, sports, gardening, technology, health, service, and life. I hope that many subjects will appeal to you. Welcome to Living U!

Maribeth Benner, Living U Coordinator
LIVING BRANCHES



2023 Living U Curriculum Council members (left to right): Susan Shade, Richard Lichty, Eileen Burks, Rich Fiedler, Maribeth Benner, Marvin Anders, Carol Pratt, Conrad Driver, Verna Colliver. Not pictured: Heather Scattergood

ENROLL IN LIVING U

— *at Living Branches* —

How to Enroll

Registration opens at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 24 and closes on Wednesday, February 7. You can register securely through the Living Branches website at livingbranches.org/livingu.

If you prefer not to register online, bring your completed course checklist (pages 14-15) to one of these registration times:

QUESTIONS?

We're here to help!

EMAIL

Maribeth.Benner@LivingBranches.org

CALL

215-368-4438
ext. 44204

SOUDERTON MENNONITE HOMES FRONT LOBBY

- ◇ Wednesday, January 24, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
- ◇ Wednesday, January 24, 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.
- ◇ Thursday, January 25, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
- ◇ Tuesday, January 30, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
- ◇ Thursday, February 1, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.
- ◇ Wednesday, February 7, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.

HEARTHSIDE BISTRO AT DOCK WOODS

- ◇ Wednesday, January 24, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
- ◇ Wednesday, January 24, 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.
- ◇ Friday, January 26, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
- ◇ Wednesday, January 31, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
- ◇ Thursday, February 1, 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.
- ◇ Tuesday, February 6, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Cost and Payment

Living Branches residents may pay by credit card or through their Living Branches account. All other students may pay by credit card.

Costs are as follows:

- 1-5 courses: \$25.00
- 6-10 courses: \$45.00
- 11 or more courses: \$65.00

Certain classes and field trips have extra costs. Please note these in the course descriptions.

Unless the course has an extra fee, Personal Care residents can take Living U courses free of charge. Please contact your life enrichment coordinator or Maribeth Benner to register.

Arrival

All classes are held in person. Doors open 30 minutes before each class.

Transportation

When registering for classes, Living Branches residents may sign up for shuttle service across each of our communities.

The Learning Environment

Living U provides occasions for teachers and students to learn from each other's stories, knowledge, and perspectives. Course content and discussion are offered for discovery, enrichment, and educational purposes and do not necessarily represent Living U or Living Branches.

Register starting January 24 at 9:30 a.m. at livingbranches.org/livingu



S2401

Discover Care & Share WITH SARAH BERGIN

Tuesday, March 5
10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Summit View Auditorium at
Souderton Mennonite Homes

Care & Share Thrift Shoppes has been a vital part of our community since 1975. It was established to provide an income stream for Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) work with peace, relief, and development around the world. Care & Share also provides a local opportunity for goods to be donated and resold as well as a space to serve others.

Everyone is needed to support Care & Share's overall vision: "To make a difference in people's lives in the name of Christ by becoming the thrift destination of choice."

Join this session to discover Care & Share's history as well as what the future holds for this local non-profit.

Sarah Bergin has been Care & Share's executive director for 16 years. Born and raised in Bucks and Montgomery Counties, she earned her "retail stripes" with different mall stores before becoming a full-time foster parent. When Care & Share advertised to fill the role of executive director, she felt God's call to apply and hasn't looked elsewhere since.

S2402

Remembering and Writing Your Family Stories WITH RICHARD LICHTY

Thursdays, March 7 (Part 1) and 14 (Part 2)
10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Fisher Auditorium at Dock Woods

This interactive class, in two sessions, will enable each person to access their memories of family life and provide encouragement in preserving them in writing. The greater value is in attending both sessions, although one may benefit from attending either one.

The first session is centered on the what, why, and how of recall. The class will begin to write about a specific memory. The second session will focus on writing and request a volunteer or two to share a story they have written. In both sessions, the presenter, from his own journal, will illustrate the what-why-how of family storytelling and the joy in preserving those memories. Resources on family storytelling will be provided.

Richard Lichty retired after two careers as a high school history and religion teacher and as a congregational pastor. His third "career" in retirement has been equally rewarding in writing five family histories and two congregational histories. Richard and Mary Lichty are residents of Dock Woods and have three children and seven grandchildren.



S2403

The Beauty of the Celtic Harp WITH PAMELA DIMELER

Tuesday, March 12

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Summit View Auditorium at
Souderton Mennonite Homes

Pamela Dimeler will play many Irish and Scottish tunes on her Celtic harp. She will share a brief history of the songs she plays and talk about her unique instrument.

During the last portion of her program, she will have a sing-a-long including well-known tunes such as “Danny Boy,” “Loch Lomand,” and “When Irish Eyes are Smiling.”

Pamela Dimeler has been playing the Celtic harp since 2001 and is a member of the Brandywine Harp Orchestra, directed by Janet Witman. The orchestra plays over 15 concerts a year in the tri-state area. She is the director and founder of Parkside Academy of Music and Dance in Parkside, celebrating 37 years of teaching music and dance to children of all ages. Pam resides in Delaware County with her husband, Scott.



S2404

Floral Design Workshop WITH DEBORAH BELL

Monday, March 18

10:00 a.m. to noon

Recreation Room at Dock Woods

This class is limited to 20 students and includes an extra cost of \$25.00 for flowers and supplies.

This hands-on course will demonstrate tools, tips, and tricks that the instructor has picked up over the years. Students will learn standard and creative style designs along with some practical and useful ways to design from your own yard for the seasons.

All participants should bring a favorite vase of any style, shape, color (e.g., a teacup, pitcher, or crystal vase) so that you can create your own design to take with you. The size should be 8 inches in height and diameter, enough to hold a small bouquet. If you have a larger vase, please bring it along and we can discuss ideas.

Deborah Bell established a floral design business, debell design, over 20 years ago. Deb is a freelance floral designer for Gypsy Hill Floral and Event Design, in-house florist at Blue Stone Country Club, and a provider of weekly arrangements for Blue Bell Inn in Blue Bell. She also serves as the executive assistant to the executive director of Dock Woods.

S2405

Hydrangeas: How to Grow and Enjoy WITH MARIE MEIKLEJOHN

Tuesday, March 19

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Summit View Auditorium at
Souderton Mennonite Homes

Everyone loves hydrangeas, but people are often confused about how to grow and care for them. During this talk, we will discuss what hydrangeas require to bloom successfully, which ones can be challenging to bloom in our gardens, and which ones are native. Each student will receive a list of hydrangeas that can be found at most local nurseries.

Marie Meiklejohn has been working in the horticulture industry for over 20 years. She owns Marie's Garden, a business that helps homeowners and businesses with plant selection, garden coaching, and container design. Marie studied horticulture at Temple University, Delaware Valley University, and Longwood Gardens.



S2406

The Heresy of Christian Nationalism: Biblical and Historical Perspectives WITH MANFRED BRAUCH, Ph.D.

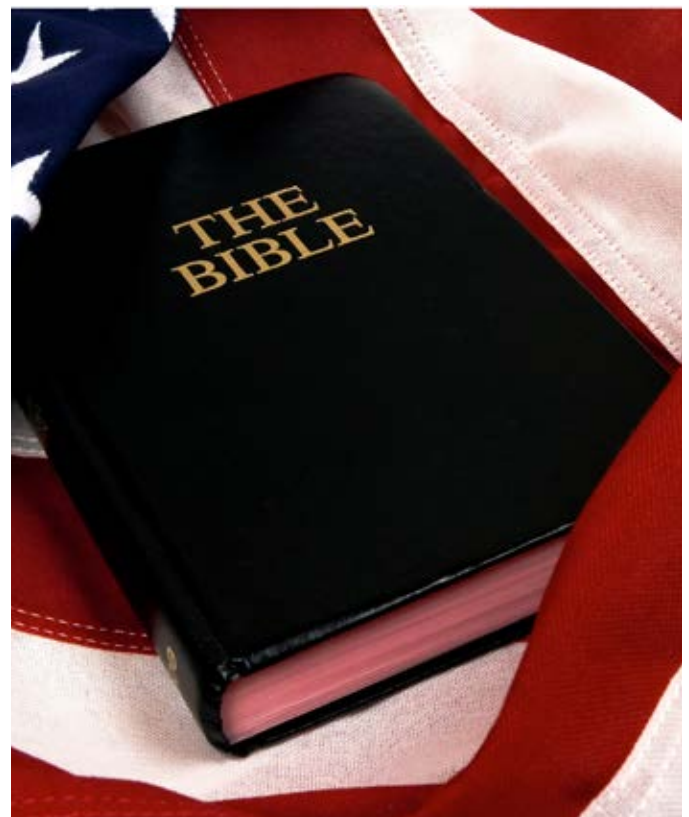
Wednesdays, March 20 (Part 1) and 27 (Part 2)

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Fisher Auditorium at Dock Woods

In our two scheduled presentations, we will explore the dangers of the renewed surge of (mostly "white") Christian Nationalism. In particular, we will look at its detrimental impact on the ideals of our constitutional democracy. We will also look at its undermining of authentic Christian faith and therefore its transforming power.

Manfred Brauch, Ph.D. taught New Testament Interpretation for eight years at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Oakbrook, Illinois. During 26 years at Eastern Baptist/Palmer Theological Seminary of Eastern University in St. Davids, he was professor of Biblical theology, academic dean, and president.





S2407

Super Moon Paint-Along
WITH VICKY McGARRY

Monday, March 25
10:00 a.m. to noon
Recreation Room at Dock Woods

This class is limited to 15 students and includes an extra cost of \$10.00 for supplies.

Explore your inner artist as you follow along step-by-step to create a beautiful painting of the moon.

No experience is required to participate in this relaxing, fun, and educational session in which you will learn basic acrylic painting techniques and leave with a completed painting.

Lansdale resident and professional artist **Vicky McGarry** is the owner of Paint Parties by Vicky. Since 2015, she has enjoyed sharing her artistic process at many local venues and in private homes. She instructs guests to recreate a painting step-by-step from a large selection of her original paintings. Her art has been admitted to juried art exhibits and is sold by local vendors.

S2408

I Did What I Had to Do
WITH JAMES E. DIAMOND, Ph.D.

Tuesday, April 2
10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Fisher Auditorium at Dock Woods

Come hear about an exciting life journey of joining the Peace Corp and working for Francois Tombalbaye, the president of Chad. To teach agricultural practices to rural people, Dr. Diamond employed the strategy of introducing practical techniques aimed at felt needs by using indigenous skills, education, and resources. This visual and storytelling presentation will address Dr. Diamond's work in Chad, guided by his philosophy of international agricultural development.

James E. Diamond, Ph.D. is dean emeritus of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at Delaware Valley University. With his late wife Betty, Dr. Diamond joined the Peace Corps in 1971 and lived overseas for more than 10 years teaching agricultural practices to rural people. Dr. Diamond has published 12 books, including *I Did What I Had To Do*, which describes his strategies used in the Peace Corps.



S2409

The Healing Power of Music

WITH CAROL ANN MULLER, Ph.D.

Thursday, April 4

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Summit View Auditorium at

Souderton Mennonite Homes

This class is limited to 25 students.

Join Carol Ann Muller as she discusses the work of music for individual and collective well-being. She will talk about music and the brain, music for personal regulation, and music as a force for community healing.

Carol Muller, Ph.D. is a professor of ethnomusicology at the University of Pennsylvania. She earned a bachelor's degree in ethnomusicology from the University of [KwaZulu] Natal and a doctorate from New York University. She teaches classes on music and health and a first-year seminar on well-being to help Penn freshman transition to the university.



S2410

Caring for the Dying Person: The Quiet Comforter at End of Life

WITH RUTH HOSKINS, Ph.D.

Tuesday, April 9

10:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Fisher Auditorium at Dock Woods

When a person comes to the end of life, they have physical, emotional, spiritual, mental, and practical needs and may experience pain or discomfort. Our role as caregivers, family, or friends is to increase the chance of a peaceful death by following the end-of-life wishes of the dying person.

Ruth Hoskins, Ph.D., HHS, LCSW is a licensed clinical social worker, psychotherapist, and trainer. Ruth has a Ph.D. in holistic health science and taught health psychology at a local college for 25 years. She works for Caring Hospice, providing support services and training on end-of-life issues to families and staff.

S2411

Cutting the Cable: Is It for You?

WITH JOEL F. W. PRICE

Thursday, April 11, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Summit View Auditorium at Souderton Mennonite Homes



Could you kiss your cable television bill goodbye? With the rising popularity and availability of streaming services and devices, there are more ways than ever to conveniently access all of the media you enjoy. However, it can be difficult to tell what would work best for you. This high-level overview class will help clarify all the jargon and empower you to make a well-informed decision (and maybe save a few bucks)!

Joel F. W. Price served as the technology outreach team lead at Swarthmore College before moving to a start-up focused on building empathy in the medical field. He has consulted for schools, musicians, and businesses and has spoken nationally on the topic of responsible and creative emerging media implementation.



S2412 Walking Tour of Historic Laurel Hill East Cemetery WITH SARAH HAMILL

Tuesday, April 16
10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (plus travel time)
Laurel Hill East Cemetery
3822 Ridge Pike, Philadelphia

This tour is limited to 20 people and has an extra cost of \$33.00, which includes shuttle service from one of our campuses.

Join us for a walking tour of historic Laurel Hill East Cemetery in East Falls. Opened in 1836, this Victorian-era cemetery is on the national register of historic places. Walk the grounds with an experienced guide, learn more about its history and symbolism, and meet some of the interesting residents!

The walking tour will be on both paved surfaces and grass, with some uneven ground and stairs to climb and walk down. Sensible shoes are a must. Please bring along a packed lunch and drink. Following the tour, we will eat our lunches in the medallion garden or a conference room, depending on the weather.

Our guide for this walking tour is **Sarah Hamill**, who is in her 10th year of leading tours in the sister cemeteries, Laurel Hill East and Laurel Hill West. She plans cemetery visits on every trip she and her husband take both here and abroad.

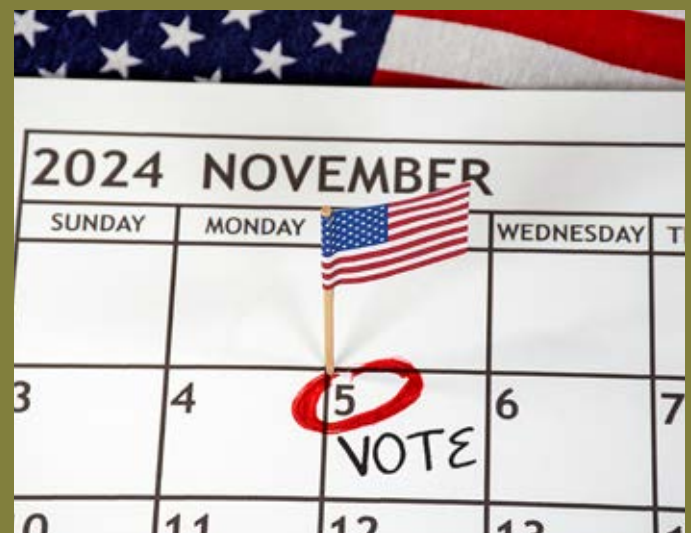
S2413 Presidential Elections WITH DAVID HUDIAK

Thursdays, April 18 (Part 1), April 25 (Part 2),
and May 2 (Part 3)
10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Summit View Auditorium at
Souderton Mennonite Homes

This course is part of a collaboration with Widener University's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and there is an extra cost of \$25.00.

This three-part course will cover the fascinating and colorful history of American presidential elections and those who have run for president. Learn how the system has changed over the years, how political parties have developed and affected presidential elections, how the process for nominating candidates has changed, and landmark presidential elections that shaped American history.

David Hudiak has been a faculty member of Widener University's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute for the past five years, where he presents courses on American history and law. Mr. Hudiak is a member of the Pennsylvania and New Jersey bars and two federal district court bars. Mr. Hudiak holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Haverford College and a juris doctorate from the Law School of the University of Pennsylvania.



S2414

Presentation: Dancing with the Classics

WITH JIM SMITH

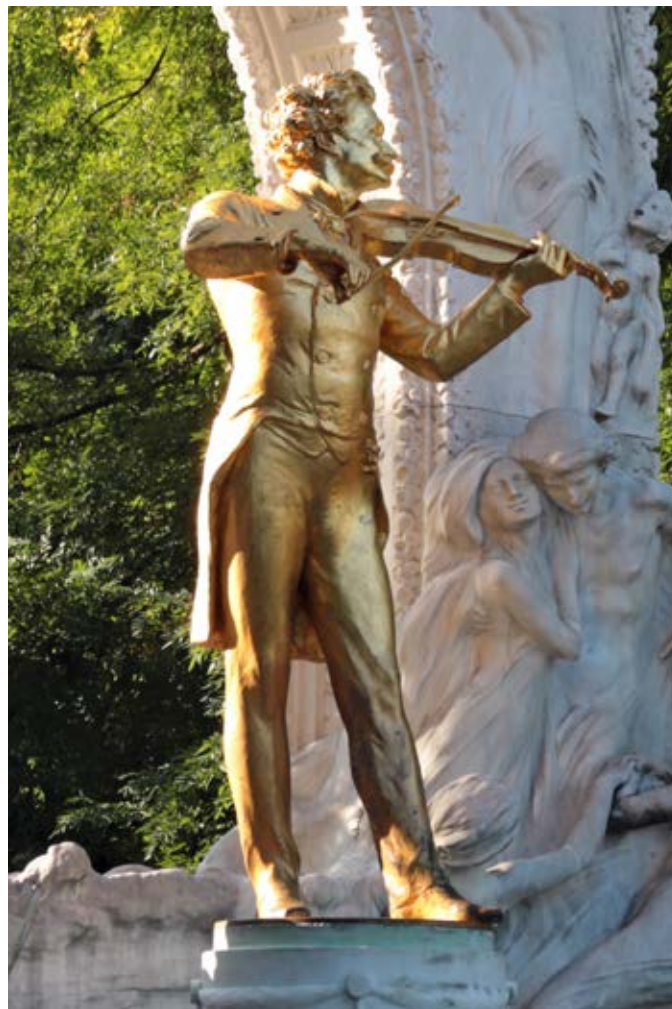
Tuesdays, April 23 (Part 1) and 30 (Part 2)

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Derstine Chapel at Dock Woods

This multimedia presentation will explore the various types of dance music written by classical composers. Session one will focus on music composed by Brahms, Dvořák, and Greig that was inspired by folk dances. Session two will start with a silly little waltz by Stravinsky and a famous waltz by Strauss. Then we will spotlight music composed for ballets by Delibes, Tchaikovsky, Falla, Gliere, and Copland, and two dances from an opera by Smetana.

Jim Smith earned a degree in music education from Mansfield University. A retired elementary vocal music teacher, he is the organist at Sanctuary United Methodist Church in North Wales. Jim and his wife, Sue, live at Dock Woods.



S2415

Religion and School Curriculum WITH REGINA WENGER

Tuesdays, May 7 (Part 1) and 14 (Part 2)

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Summit View Auditorium at
Souderton Mennonite Homes

This historical survey examines areas of cooperation and contention between religion and classroom content. Covering “The Old Deluder Satan Law” to the “history wars,” this class connects American educational history to trends from around the world.

Regina B. Wenger is a Ph.D. candidate at Baylor University and the educational curator at the Mennonite Heritage Center in Harleysville. Her dissertation examines what education programs illustrate about changes in American Protestantism and its relationship to public education.



S2416

Beginner Croquet WITH KEN HANDRICH

Wednesday, May 8
10:00 a.m. to noon
Croquet Court at Dock Woods

This course is limited to eight students.

Come learn about the basic skills needed to play croquet. The course will introduce the rules of nine wicket croquet. During the second hour, all participants will be able to play a real game. Dress for the weather, wear comfortable clothing and shoes, and bring a water bottle. All needed equipment will be supplied.

After moving to Dock Woods, **Ken Handrich** began playing croquet with other residents. Ken and a partner won first place in the advanced division of the Harleysville Rotary Club's Wicket Good Time Croquet Tournament and the second place trophy for Dock Woods in the advanced division of the Whack and Roll Croquet Tournament at the Mennonite Heritage Center.

S2417

Plants, Herbs, and Trees of the Bible WITH NANCY DeVOGEL

Thursday, May 9
10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Fisher Auditorium at Dock Woods

What tree is considered the Tree of Life, and what tree is considered to be the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? Why did the Magi give Jesus frankincense and myrrh? What are the health benefits of herbs that grew in the Middle East when the Bible was written? You will leave this lecture with a new appreciation for some of the 206 plants mentioned in the Bible.

Nancy DeVogel has always been interested in growing and using herbs, but interest became a passion in 1996 when she purchased a book on medicinal plants from the Cherokee Indian Reservation. In 2007, Nancy transitioned from hobby to career and enrolled in a herbology apprentice program with renowned herbalist Rosemary Gladstar.

S2418

Field Trip: Theology of Food and Farming

WITH KEVIN AND KRISTIN JONES

Thursday, May 16

10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (plus travel time)

Like a Mustard Seed Farm

1200 Butler Lane, Perkasio

This trip has an extra cost of \$17.00 per person and is limited to 20 people who will ride the shuttle from one of our campuses.

The Jones family will share Like a Mustard Seed Farm and their testimony of how God called them to farming. As you observe the animals and property, they will share the lessons God has taught them along the way, from how they raise food to how they see God's character through His creation. Afterward, students are welcome to enjoy a packed lunch at their picnic grove.

Please wear walking shoes and bring a packed lunch and drink. Participants need to be able to stand for more than one hour and walk on uneven, hilly ground.

Kevin and Kristin Jones are first-generation farmers who founded Like a Mustard Seed Farm in 2020. Kevin and Kristin and their three children raise eggs, meat chickens, meat turkey, and honey for the community, and pastured pigs, beef, and a dairy cow for themselves. While practicing regenerative farming techniques, they also educate the community about baking with sourdough, starting a garden, beekeeping, and processing chickens.

S2419

Herb Container Workshop WITH MARIE MEIKLEJOHN

Tuesday, May 21

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Pavilion at Souderton Mennonite Homes

This course is limited to 15 students and has an extra cost of \$35.00 for supplies.

At this workshop, we will plant herbs in a decorative container and learn how to care for the herb containers and use fresh herbs in recipes. There will be an assortment of herbs to pick from and flowering annuals to add some additional color.

All materials are supplied, including a container (11 inches tall and 12 inches wide), soil, and plants. Each participant will leave with a planted herb container, which should be placed in a sunny spot to enjoy all summer.

Marie Meiklejohn has been working in the horticulture industry for over 20 years. She owns Marie's Garden, a business that helps homeowners and businesses with plant selection, garden coaching, and container design. Marie studied horticulture at Temple University, Delaware Valley University, and Longwood Gardens.





S2420

Highlights Tour of the Michener Art Museum

Wednesday, May 22

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (plus travel time)

Michener Art Museum

138 South Pine Street, Doylestown

This field trip and luncheon has an extra cost of \$53.00 and is limited to 20 people who will ride the shuttle from one of our campuses.

Join a highlights tour led by a docent at the Michener Art Museum in Doylestown. This tour will offer a taste of the rich artistic and cultural heritage of Bucks County.

Following the tour, we will enjoy a boxed lunch provided by Catering by Design in the museum gathering room, and then have some free time to explore the museum before our departure.

The Michener Art Museum has acquired what is arguably the finest collection of Pennsylvania impressionist paintings in public hands. The museum collects contemporary paintings, sculpture, works on paper, and decorative arts.

S2421

Indian America: The Spirit World WITH JIM TUFANO

Wednesday, May 29

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Fisher Auditorium at Dock Woods

This class will examine some of the similarities and differences between Native American spirituality and Christian religious beliefs. Prior to contact with European invaders and Christian missionaries, the traditional Native American concept of spirituality was characterized by the belief that life cannot be separated into the secular and sacred. Life is colored by a deep faith in supernatural forces believed to link humans with all other phenomena in their environment.

Students, especially those of Native American descent, will be invited to share with the class.

Jim Tufano has made a lifelong study of Native American history and cultures, traveling extensively to visit many reservations, museums, and places of significance to Native Americans and Canada's First Nations peoples. Jim and his wife, Jean, are residents of Dock Woods.

SPRING 2024

Prefer to register in person? Bring this completed checklist to one of the registration sessions on page 3.

Attending?	Shuttle?	Course Title	Date	Location
		S2401 Discover Care & Share	Tuesday, March 5	Summit View Auditorium Souderton Mennonite Homes
		S2402 Remembering and Writing Your Family Stories	Thursdays, March 7 and March 14	Fisher Auditorium Dock Woods
		S2403 The Beauty of the Celtic Harp	Tuesday, March 12	Summit View Auditorium Souderton Mennonite Homes
		S2404 Floral Design Workshop	Monday, March 18	Recreation Room Dock Woods
		S2405 Hydrangeas: How to Grow and Enjoy	Tuesday, March 19	Summit View Auditorium Souderton Mennonite Homes
		S2406 The Heresy of Christian Nationalism	Wednesdays, March 20 and March 27	Fisher Auditorium Dock Woods
		S2407 Super Moon Paint-Along	Monday, March 25	Recreation Room Dock Woods
		S2408 I Did What I Had to Do	Tuesday, April 2	Fisher Auditorium Dock Woods
		S2409 The Healing Power of Music	Thursday, April 4	Summit View Auditorium Souderton Mennonite Homes
		S2410 Caring for the Dying Person	Tuesday, April 9	Fisher Auditorium Dock Woods

COURSE CHECKLIST

Please be prepared to provide payment and contact information (including your phone number).

Attending?	Shuttle?	Course Title	Date	Location
		S2411 Cutting the Cable: Is It for You?	Thursday, April 11	Summit View Auditorium Souderton Mennonite Homes
		S2412 Walking Tour of Historic Laurel Hill Cemetery	Tuesday, April 16	Laurel Hill Cemetery East Field Trip
		S2413 Presidential Elections	Thursdays, April 18, April 25, and May 2	Summit View Auditorium Souderton Mennonite Homes
		S2414 Presentation: Dancing with the Classics	Tuesdays, April 23 and April 30	Derstine Chapel Dock Woods
		S2415 Religion and School Curriculum	Tuesdays, May 7 and May 14	Summit View Auditorium Souderton Mennonite Homes
		S2416 Beginner Croquet	Wednesday, May 8	Croquet Court Dock Woods
		S2417 Plants, Herbs, and Trees of the Bible	Thursday, May 9	Fisher Auditorium Dock Woods
		S2418 Field Trip: Theology of Food and Farming	Thursday, May 16	Like a Mustard Seed Farm Field Trip
		S2419 Herb Container Workshop	Tuesday, May 21	Pavilion Souderton Mennonite Homes
		S2420 Highlights Tour of the Michener Art Museum	Wednesday, May 22	Michener Art Museum Field Trip
		S2421 Indian America: The Spirit World	Wednesday, May 29	Fisher Auditorium Dock Woods



242 W Reliance Rd
Souderton, PA 18964

THE LIVING BRANCHES MISSION

Together we empower older adults and families to lead lives of purpose and joy, guided by the Mennonite tradition of care and service to others.

The Willows of Living Branches

2343 Bethlehem Pike
Hatfield, PA 19440
Tel: 215-822-0688

Souderton Mennonite Homes

207 West Summit Street
Souderton, PA 18964
Tel: 215-723-9881

Dock Woods

275 Dock Drive
Lansdale, PA 19446
Tel: 215-368-4438

livingbranches.org

