Anabaptist World

Mennonite news, inspiring stories

SeongHan Kim, left, and Kim Young-Ae discuss family separation at the border fence on South Korea's Gyodong Island.

TWO KOREAS, ONE WAR'S LEGACY

MCC and Korean Anabaptists work for peace 70 years later

PLUS

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ON THE COVER: MCC Northeast Asia representative SeongHan Kim, left, and Gyodong Island peace worker Kim Young-Ae on the South Korean island's shore, about a mile from North Korea. The blue line is a peace pilgrimage route that follows the border from coast to coast. **Photo by Tim Huber/AW**

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BY **DANIELLE KLOTZ**

Getting energized at MennoCon23

AS WE CONTINUE through this summer season, I hope you can enjoy the sunshine and the life that buzzes around us. I'm reminded of God's beauty and faithfulness when the flowers and berries appear in my yard. Their cycle of life in spring and summer and hiding in fall and winter point me to the now and not-yet-ness of the kingdom of God. Their small beauty gives me hope that in the larger unknowns the Holy Spirit may still bring forth life and fruit that I can't yet see.

As I enjoy the beauty of summer, I'm contemplating Psalm 33. Verse 5 stands out to me: "The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love" (NIV). It's inspired me to consider the ways God's love comes to us through nature and also how it points us to more righteousness and justice.

SOME OF YOU are reading this issue at MennoCon23, the Mennonite Church USA convention and delegate assembly July 3-8 in Kansas City, Mo. It is a gift to be present with one another, worship and learn together.

Three of our *Anabaptist World* staff are present at this year's gathering — Tim Huber, Paul Schrag and I. Together we are covering the news of the gathering, collecting participants' stories and representing *Anabaptist World* to everyone there.

Since we are a dispersed team, events like MennoCon23 are special occasions. I always benefit greatly from joining my teammates in person. I'm generally working from my home office in Goshen, Ind., and, while that is a privilege in its own right, joining my team in person energizes me for the work ahead.

Others who participate in MennoCon23 might feel the same way about seeing folks from the across the country in Kansas City. It's an energizing event for the denomination. Look for our coverage online and in our next print edition.

It's also a special time for me because I get to meet so many of you, *AW* readers. I can't begin to explain how meaningful it is to connect with you and hear how you are experiencing our work. It's lovely to hear praise but it is just as important to me to hear your hopes and dreams of how *Anabaptist World* can improve and grow.

For those who aren't able to participate in person, I hope that sometime our paths will cross also, so that I might be able to hear your thoughts about and hopes for *Anabaptist World*. I always welcome your emails or phone calls as well. ●

This issue was mailed ***June 30.*** *The next issue will be mailed in four weeks,* ***July 28****.*

Anabaptist World Inc. is an independent journalistic ministry serving the global Anabaptist movement. We seek to inform, inspire and provide a forum for Mennonites and anyone interested in Anabaptism to explore faith and culture.

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Gospel for those whose language isn't usually written

The Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference offers a seven-part video series — "Christianity Explored," based on the Gospel of Mark — for Mennonites in Canada and Latin America who speak Low German (*Plautdietsch*). The project came about because Low German is primarily spoken, not written. Many Old Colony Mennonites in Ontario who speak it have poor English skills. Previous efforts by an EMMC congregation to share written evangelistic materials ran into the problem that "even the most literate and determined [Low German speakers] had to first teach themselves to read *Plautdietsch*," says Louanne Enns in the EMMC *Recorder*. Enns works in London, England, for Christianity Explored Ministries, producer of the video series that's been translated into Low German. With other Canadian Mennonites, she wants to promote greater knowledge of the gospel in the "heart language" of the estimated 85,000 Low German-speaking people in Canada, many of whom live in southern Ontario, and about 300,000 worldwide, mostly in Latin America, especially Mexico, Bolivia and Paraguay. The EMMC has "extensive ministry with Low German speakers in various parts of the world," according to the *Recorder*. The videos are available at emmc.ca/christianityexplored.

Mennonite World Conference Executive Committee members César García (Colombia), Lisa Carr-Pries (Canada), Henk Stenvers (Netherlands) and Sunoko Lin (U.S./Indonesia) plant a maple tree in March at the Mennonite Heritage Museum in Abbotsford, B.C. PHOTO: KARLA BRAUN/MWC

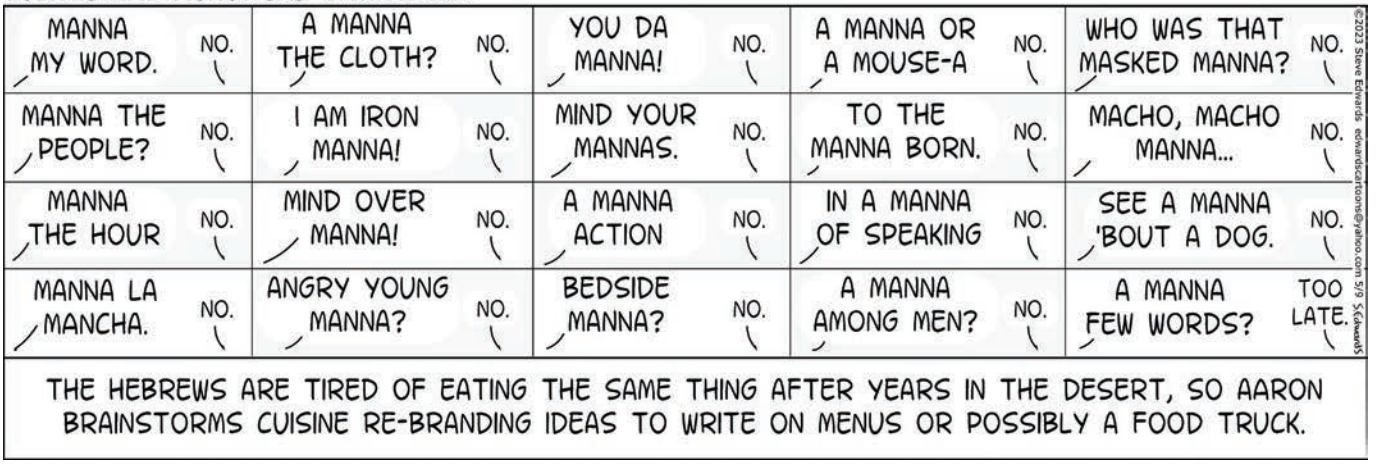
MWC roots spread anew

Mennonite World Conference continued a tradition in March of planting a tree on the grounds of a Mennonite institution where the MWC Executive Committee meets. Meetings were held this year in Abbotsford, B.C. The tradition began when a yellow bamboo was planted in 1999 at the GKMI synod office in Semarang, Indonesia. MWC general secretary César García says trees are rich in symbolism: "They remind us of the many branches of the global Anabaptist-Mennonite family; they leave behind an organic memento of a visit from MWC; they speak to our commitment to creation care."

Billi

Footwashing and other attractions

When the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria celebrated its centennial in March, *Messenger* magazine asked denominational president Joel S. Billi what makes the church so attractive. (It is the world's largest national body of the Church of the Brethren.) The first thing he mentioned was footwashing, particularly where people have never seen the ritual. Next he cited financial transparency, relating to people without looking down on them, and opposition to war and vengeance.



Letters & Comments

Write to: editor@anabaptistworld.org

Family model of unity

In choosing loving relationships over enforced unity ("Changing minds or following hearts?," June 16), S. Roy Kaufman's family models the church family. Differing minds, bodies and lives joined as Christ's body and building on Christ's foundation are the work of God and a gift to the world. What God hath joined together, let no one put asunder.

Dan Nester-Detweiler, *Evanston, Ill.*

Far greater issues

The June 16 issue, with its focus on unity, was enlightening and inspiring. I particularly enjoyed the articles by Harvey Yoder and S. Roy Kaufman. I, too, have observed with frustration how we Mennonites through the years let the issue of homosexuality carry such fervor while ignoring far greater issues affecting the Christian journey of all of us. Resolving these issues in our congregations and families has often succeeded with focusing on Jesus while following our hearts with love, but, unfortunately, some congregations and conferences don't experience that. Thanks for such relevant articles by respected Mennonite leaders.

Lloyd Kaufman, *Des Moines, Iowa*

Have we lost our love?

I am from a rural, traditional community and a church that has never considered the issues S. Roy Kaufman is addressing. However, we have encountered issues that have provoked power struggles and division. Kaufman is right that beliefs, practices and love all matter and that power struggles rarely produce redemptive change. We must ask ourselves: Have we lost our love for each other and Jesus? We must find a way to hold to our practices and beliefs while continuing to love the other. As Kaufman says, "Can we turn our backs on brothers and sisters on either side?"

Osiah Horst, *Cobden, Ont.*

More ethics, less theology

While I agree with Amy-Jill Levine's call for a more contextual reading of the New Testament ("AMBS symposium unites Jews and Mennonites to counter antisemitism," June 16), she goes too far in essentially asking Mennonites to stick to a "high Christology." Since the very beginning, views about Jesus' relationship to God have varied tremendously: There have been unitarians (remember the Polish Anabaptists!), adoptionists, subordinationists and classic trinitarians. We need more focus on the ethical teachings of Jesus and less theological speculation on how he is related to God. The ethical mess that has marred so much Christian history can be attributed at least in part to the demand that Christians stick to a high Christology. Indeed, denying the Trinity was even more dangerous than simply being an Anabaptist.

Mitchell Brown, *Evanston, Ill.*

An unusual purchase

It was good to see the article by Kayla Berkey on Seattle's Mennonite Voluntary Service house and its new life (June 16). It is a vital illustration of the transitions occurring within many of our urban congregations. I would like to offer further information on a few things mentioned in the article. The $24,000 loan to buy the house in 1976 was offered by the Mennonite Men's organization, which functioned under the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Robert Franz, an officer with the Mennonite Men, came to inspect the house and endorsed the purchase. The funds were sent to Seattle via Western Union. When I went to Pioneer Square Western Union in Seattle, I was handed 12 checks, each worth $2,000. Furthermore, the checks were written to me, personally. The next day I met with the sellers at a real estate office. The sellers had requested $35,000, but when they learned we had $24,000 in Western Union checks, they accepted our offer. The large house served the VS program very well over many years.

Lauren Friesen, *North Newton, Kan.*

A person, not an angel

I found myself both appreciative and offended by "More to offer than IQ" by Lucinda Kinsinger (June 16). I appreciate the inclusion of people with differing abilities in the conversation about life within the church. I believe that is extremely important, and we are just learning how to do that in healthy ways. I am offended, as I often am, by the limited voice and perspective that an article like this portrays about persons with disabilities such as Down syndrome. Broad generalizations, like some of the ones in this column, are at best naive and at worst damaging.

I have a 17-year-old daughter with Down syndrome, and she is a human being. Like all human beings, she is unique. Who she is cannot be summed up by this article. Persons with Down syndrome have widely varying gifts and can contribute in numerous ways to congregational life. However, she is a person and not an angel. Let us please stop putting walls around what we think people with disabilities can bring to a congregation. Each person will bring something new. But let us also continue these conversations. So, thank you, Lucinda, for writing the article.

Dan Stoltzfus, *Goshen, Ind.*

Repentance and recompense

An institution seeking to earn back trust after it has ignored or covered up abuse is wrong ("Hesston College officials vow to 'earn back trust' after sexual violence report," May 5). The goal should be to recompense survivors, following this example: "But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, 'Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount' " (Luke 19:8, NIV). The institution has cheated the survivors. Where is the repentance that will pay back four times the amount the survivor paid to attend the school?

Shary Hauber, *Campbell, N.Y.*

Important data

The graph of Mennonite enrollment in Mennonite colleges over the past half generation reports tremendously important data ("Mennonite enrollment still declining," June 16). I have wanted to see exactly that graph for many years. You would do well to show it again, perhaps in alternate years, adding new data.

Thomas Lehman, *Chapel Hill, N.C.*

Clarification

In "Returning land, repairing relationship" (June 16), the sentence that ends "how the land was stewarded by the Harders" should have continued: "and then returned in the spirit of Jubilee. The Harders donated the land, and the farmstand building was purchased below market value with funds raised by *Makoce Ikikcupi* and the Mountain Lake Repair Community."

*Join the conversation by writing to **editor@anabaptistworld.org** or Anabaptist World, Box 568, Newton, KS 67114. Letters are edited; 250 words or fewer are preferred. Include your name and hometown.*

BY **PAUL SCHRAG** • *EDITORIAL*

Not by proof, but persuasion

Linking science and faith, Gingerich saw God's hand in universe's design

OWEN GINGERICH described himself as a professional scientist and amateur theologian. I met him in 2004 when he visited Newton, Kan., where he grew up and befriended my father in the 1940s.

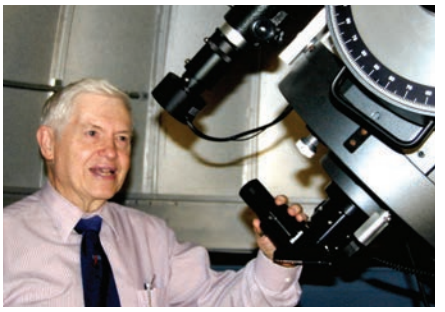
A noted astronomer and scholar on the history of astronomy, Gingerich died May 28 in Belmont, Mass., at age 93. His worldview could be summed up as "the heavens declare the glory of God." Or, as his obituary in *The New York Times* put it, he "was not shy about giving God the credit for a role in creating the cosmos he loved to study."

A professor at Harvard University and member of the Mennonite Congregation of Boston, Gingerich was a 1951 graduate of Goshen College, where a mathematics professor encouraged his interest in astronomy because "we can't let the atheists take over any field."

Throughout his career, Gingerich testified to the harmony of faith and science. His books *God's Universe* (2006) and *God's Planet* (2014) made the case that, as he told me in 2004, "it makes sense to believe in a universe with intent and purpose rather than one of incredible coincidence."

In a time when Christians and people with a secular worldview often square off as enemies, Gingerich's testimony as a scientist who saw the universe through the eyes of faith is instructive and inspiring.

MY PERSONAL TELLING of Gingerich's story begins in the 1940s, when his father, Melvin Gingerich, who was teaching at Bethel College, got to know my grandfather, Menno Schrag. (Melvin wrote book reviews for *Mennonite Weekly Review*, which Menno edited.) Their sons Owen and Robert struck up a friendship. Owen, the elder by four years, taught Robert to spot the brightest stars and learn their names:



Owen Gingerich tried out the telescope in Bethel College's Krehbiel Science Center in 2004.

PHOTO: PAUL SCHRAG/MENNONITE WEEKLY REVIEW

Arcturus, Vega, Betelgeuse.

Due to Owen's influence, Robert became a stargazer. Thirty years later, he bought a hobby telescope and set it up in the back yard for his children — my sister and brother and me — to discover the rings of Saturn, the moons of Jupiter and the craters of the Moon.

The Gingerich family moved to Goshen, Ind., in 1947, where Melvin would teach at Goshen College.

Gingerich's testimony as a scientist who saw the universe through the eyes of faith is instructive and inspiring.

Although Owen was a year short of completing high school, the college admitted him. He went on to join an exclusive club: high school dropouts with a doctorate from Harvard. He returned to Kansas 57 years later to accept an honorary diploma as the oldest member of Newton High School's Class of 2004.

Gingerich's career included a role in an infamous decision: the demotion of Pluto. In 2006 he chaired a committee of the International Astronomical Union tasked with defining a planet. Despite his panel's recommendation to keep Pluto on the list of full-fledged planets, the world's astronomers voted to downgrade Pluto to "dwarf planet" status, a decision still disputed by fans of the tiny orbiter.

GINGERICH HAD A passion for Copernicus, the 16th-century astronomer who promulgated the heresy that the Earth is not the center of the cosmos but orbits the sun. Did Psalm 104:5 not say the Earth cannot be moved?

"Very few people today would feel they have to accept a fixed Earth because of Psalm 104," Gingerich told me. "And yet the church is still being torn apart on certain issues on the basis of a few scriptures literally interpreted."

Gingerich used Copernicus' "proof" that the Earth moved to illustrate the convergence of science and faith. Scientific theories and religious beliefs, he said, stand or fall on the same principle: whether they provide coherent and persuasive explanations for what people observe and experience.

"Copernicus had no proof whatsoever that the Earth was moving," he said in 2004. "The Copernican system was adopted not by proof but by persuasion that the concept of a moving Earth provided a more convincing explanation for the apparent movement of the planets. Coherence is persuadability. Christian faith is an example of that."

Not by proof, but persuasion. This, to Gingerich, was the essence of honest faith and honest science. Science may not make room for God, for that is not its role. But a scientist may, and Gingerich was persuaded.

"If you use the phrase 'leap of faith,' it gives the impression that you are closing your eyes and hoping," he said. "But it's not a blind, irrational jump. Even when you can't prove it, you decide that it makes sense."

STILL SEEKING PEACE, 70 YEARS AFTER WAR IN KOREA

BY **TIM HUBER**

Pain and division linger generations after armistice

Japan occupied the Korean Peninsula from 1910 to 1945. After the Second World War, Soviet and U.S. negotiators divided Korea into two states, drawing a line along the 38th parallel. Gyodong Island sits roughly a mile from North Korean territory.

MAP: HANNAH GERIG MEYER/AW

KIM YOUNG-AE carries a vision of peace and reconciliation that reaches far beyond the razor-wire fence hugging her island's coast.

Gyodong Island is one of South Korea's most northwestern points, separated by only about a mile of water from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, also known as North Korea.

A bridge built in 2014 connects the island to the mainland, via a military checkpoint with gun-toting soldiers.

The security measures are reminders that the Korean War technically continues, though fighting ended with an armistice 70 years ago this month. No treaty was signed to end the war, imparting a legacy of militarization and divided families that continues to this day.

The war's active period, from 1950 to 1953, claimed some 5 million lives and displaced an estimated 5 million others. Confusion and panic reigned as the U.S. military dropped more bombs and napalm than in the entire Pacific theater during World War II. As many as 10 million people were separated from family members.

"When the refugees arrived, they just stayed on the beach because they thought they would go back after seven or 10 days," said Kim on June 1 during a Mennonite Central Committee learning tour focused on the war's lingering effects. Weeks turned into months, and months into years. "They weren't trying to escape the communists or reach the Americans, they were just trying to avoid the bombings. . . . They keep a longing to return, but they have almost all died."

Kim's parents were Catholic refugees, trapped on the island after foreign powers agreed to a line that hasn't been crossed since.

"They ended up here because they fled the war, and a line happened to get drawn on a map," said Stacy Nam, MCC's DPRK program director. "Many of them stayed here in the area in the hopes they can someday go back."

The refugees encountered locals whose ancestors had lived on the island for more than 1,000 years, but still they worked together. Rice paddies were developed to build up food sources. Residents toiled together to move earth and reclaim land from the ocean. That cooperation is why Kim now considers Gyodong a peace island.

She left the community to pursue other opportunities but couldn't escape a persistent tug back home. Kim found her way to Eastern Mennonite University's Summer Peacebuilding Institute. She attended SPI annually from 2009 to 2011 before attending EMU's Center for Justice and Peacebuilding for a year and a half. Then she returned home.

"For the last nine years I've learned from the people who live here about their stories. I need to keep their stories and keep them alive," she said. "Because the island is in a neutral water zone, maybe it could become a peace island that is a place for the governments to meet. This is only the beginning. It's not a mainstream idea

Korean Anabaptist Center director Sun Ju Moon, left, and Mennonite Central Committee Northeast Asia area director Phyllis Mann walk a trail at the Yanggu "punchbowl," a village surrounded by a circular ridge near the 38th parallel that was the site of fierce fighting during the Korean War. They are followed by MCC U.S. executive director Ann Graber Hershberger and her husband, Jim Hershberger.

PHOTO: TIM HUBER/AW

shared by politicians."

She traveled with a group to Switzerland and Austria for 10 days in June to discuss with scholars and activists what it means to be neutral.

"The Bible teaches to love your enemy, and that's still something we need to [achieve]," she said. "Somehow the government and religious people and civil society need to work together to heal the trauma, but many people are still stuck in their divisive ways."

"They weren't trying to escape the communists or reach the Americans, they were just trying to avoid the bombings."

— Kim Young-Ae

THE DIVISIONS run deep, exacerbated by the brutality of war and trauma that now spans three generations. At Gyodong, wartime scarcity, suspicion of communists and rapidly shifting front lines led to finger-pointing. People alerted security and intelligence units to "rats" among the population who were apprehended and often killed.

Scars are evident across the mainland. Paro Lake, a reservoir for a strategically vital hydroelectric power plant near the 38th parallel that divides North and South, appears serene but holds the corpses of at least 30,000 Chinese troops whose bodies were bulldozed into the water during the war.

The farming village of Yanggu, just to the east, saw similar bloodshed. Situated in a basin surrounded by a circular ridge of steep hills, the area was northern territory before the war and the scene of fierce fighting. Whole units were trapped by the terrain, becoming easy targets for machine gun fire or aerial bombings. Tens of thousands of lives were lost in the "punchbowl" basin.

Crops now blanket the floor. Military observation posts sit on high, with eyes trained northward. Slopes once reduced to dust by bombs are covered in forest because land mines make the area unfit to farm. More than 1 million mines were scattered across the peninsula during the war. Warning signs encourage hikers to stay on the trail.

Guide Kichan Lee said the last mine exploded in 2018, shattering the ankle of a Polish immigrant farmhand. He tries to counter the societal emphasis on military glory with a tourism company he founded that focuses on peace.

"When you visit the DMZ area, there are lots of museums and observatories, but they all have a very anticommunist narrative," Lee said. "Many South Korean museums are only focused on war but not the trauma on individual lives. A war museum should focus on the pain of death and displaced lives. 200,000 people were killed just to move a line an inch on a map."

He is taking doctoral courses on peace together with Sun Ju Moon, director of the Korean Anabaptist Center and one of five Mennonite pastors in South Korea. She echoed his sentiments on the lingering wounds.

"They just drew an arbitrary line and did not care about the people and their pain," she said. "It is human lives. You can't divide them like cutting a cake."

FOR NEARLY 30 YEARS, MCC has worked to overcome divisions and respond to suffering. Since its first response to famine in North Korea in 1995, it has given $25 million in humanitarian aid.

MCC U.S. executive director Ann Graber Hershberger, who participated in the learning tour, said humanitarian assistance sends a tangible message to people in North Korea that people outside the country do care about them.

"As a ministry of Anabaptist churches, we participate in God's reconciling work in the world. When MCC sends supplies to reduce suffering, when we build relationships with people in DPRK and when we encourage people to grow in their practice of peacebuilding, we are working toward reconciliation," she said. "As I looked across the dividing line between North and South Korea, I was struck anew with the church's unique and crucial call to share God's love with all people."

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. executive director Ann Graber Hershberger views the shore of Paro Lake on June 2. Paro Lake, whose name means "Lake Where We Crushed the Chinese Barbarians," contains the remains of about 30,000 Chinese troops whose corpses were bulldozed into the water during the Korean War. PHOTO: TIM HUBER/AW

MCC seeks to be a reconciling presence with the people of two Koreas, resisting hostility and isolation. Based in Chuncheon, South Korea, it has a history of supporting orphanages and

"They just drew an arbitrary line and did not care about the people and their pain. It is human lives. You can't divide them like cutting a cake."

— Sun Ju Moon

pediatric hospitals with canned meat and other resources, Nam said.

A six-year agricultural conservation project led to study tours with scientists visiting North America, sharing practices and meals. The COVID pandemic put a stop to exchanges with North Americans in 2020, and North Korea has been slow to reopen its borders.

"Our aim is always to increase the people-to-people exchanges, perhaps widening opportunities for engagement," Nam said.

Kim shares those goals on her island out west. Where others see a rusting metal building abandoned as a military observation outpost on the northern tip of the island, she sees the blueprint of a kids' camp that could gather youth from both sides of the water.

"When we go to Switzerland, we will ask the United Nations Human Rights Commission to recognize the human right to visit family members across the border," she said. "The birds can fly back and forth to nourish their babies, but we cannot. We are worth less than birds. We are all victims of the Korean War." ●

Tim Huber is associate editor of *Anabaptist World*.

Kim Young-Ae, left, describes a memorial to people displaced by the Korean War, including members of her family, to Mennonite Central Committee Northeast Asia area director Phyllis Mann on Gyodong Island. North Korea's southern shore lies roughly a mile across the water. PHOTO: TIM HUBER/AW

BY **TIM HUBER**

The church's role in South Korea's militarization

ONE BARRIER TO reconciliation among the people who live on the Korean Peninsula is not necessarily a disagreement on economic philosophy or the demilitarized zone, but the Christian church.

Christianity has played a significant role in Korea since Protestant missionaries arrived in the late 19th century. But the hardships of Japanese occupation, the Korean War, dictatorial rule and contemporary anticommunist sentiments have caused most South Korea Christians to align not with peace and reconciliation but with nationalism, militarism and consumerism, united against the neighbor to the north.

The Pew Research Center found in 2010 that Christians make up South Korea's second biggest religious group at 29%, behind only those with no religious affiliation. Six of the eight presidents South Korea has elected in the democratic era since 1987 have been Christians.

Christianity grew in the shadow of foreign rule by Japan, which lasted from 1910 until the end of World War II in 1945. A movement that started in 1919 in which 2 million activists called for independence was the world's largest peaceful demonstration ever, and 15 of its 33 leaders were Christian. The events influenced nonviolent resistance in India and many other countries and are remembered with a national holiday on March 1.

"In Korea, Christianity was not the colonizer's religion, so we didn't think it was a bad Japanese thing," said SeongHan Kim, Mennonite Central Committee's Northeast Asia representative. "That's one reason Christianity grew so rapidly. It was a way to overcome the Japanese occupation."

Ahn Su Hyun, Seodaemun Prison museum docent, describes prisoners' living conditions to a learning tour including Zachary Murray, legislative associate for Mennonite Central Committee U.S. National Peace and Justice Ministries, MCC Northeast Asia representative SeongHan Kim and MCC DPRK program director Stacy Nam. The May 31 prison tour was the first time Ahn met Mennonites in South Korea. She attended Willingdon Church, a Mennonite Brethren congregation in the Vancouver, B.C., area, where she lived for four years. PHOTO: TIM HUBER/AW

"I believe for us as Christians, as Mennonite Central Committee, God has put us in this dark, very complex work. That's the way we open our heart to the ministry of reconciliation."

— SeongHan Kim

Foreign rule was bitter colonialism, defined by Seodaemun Prison, an imposing brick facility and work camp for political prisoners. Many people died there from execution or torture, inspiring countless others to hold the Japanese empire — and its descendants — in contempt.

Now a museum comparable to German concentration camps, the prison is personal for Kim. His grandfather was tortured there as part of the armed resistance to Japanese rule.

"Growing up, that narrative was inscribed on my heart," he said on May 31, just inside the prison's main gate, as he reflected on his Christian upbringing and early 1990s mandatory military service. "But I'm also aware the ministry of reconciliation is not just 'Kumbaya.' . . . I believe for us as Christians, as Mennonite Central Committee, God has put us in this dark, very complex work. That's the way we open our heart to the ministry of reconciliation."

WHEN THE JAPANESE occupation of Korea ended in 1945, Koreans hoped to gain independence. Instead the United States and the Soviet Union

split the peninsula hastily into two occupation zones, divided at the 38th parallel. The states of North and South Korea, clients of the superpowers, were established in 1948.

Christianity was not the only thing that grew in the shadow of imperialism. Socialism's message of equality and sharing found converts among rural farmers and urban laborers weary of foreign rule and domestic collaborators. Christians had lived in large numbers in the north but fled the advancing communists, finding safety with the U.S. military to the south.

The nature of the fighting and Christianity's role within it fit neatly into communist teaching. South Korean troops were issued crosses when they went into battle. U.S. troops carried Bibles.

Tension mounted as clashes sprouted along an uneasy border, and rebellions grew among southern communists. Northern forces invaded the south on June 25, 1950, and nearly took the entire peninsula before a counteroffensive drove them back to the 38th parallel.

The southern half of the peninsula avoided the most severe fighting, leading to the imbalanced final body count. Up to 5 million people died related to Korean War violence, about 3 million in the north and 2 million in the south. The north, with a smaller population, lost a third of its people in three years. In the south, fewer than 1 in 10 died.

The nature of the fighting and Christianity's role within it fit neatly into communist teaching. South Korean troops were issued crosses when they went into battle. U.S. troops carried Bibles. Indiscriminate U.S. aerial support killed civilian and soldier alike. The most common identifier to survivors sifting through invader corpses were the symbols of the church, reinforcing communist criticism.

When the war ended, the border between north and south was about the same as when it began. The U.S. kept about a quarter million troops there following the 1953 cease-fire, and about 28,000 remain, as of the last figures available in 2020.

Buoyed by American aid and U.S. military presence, South Korea's economy boomed, but democracy lagged. The U.S. State Department's hand-picked rulers can be best described as dictators. Free and open elections did not come until 1987, the same year Seodaemun Prison closed.

As many South Korean Christians see it, prosperity has been proof of God's blessing ever since, cementing a form of Christian nationalism unique to Asia. ●

Mennonite Central Committee Northeast Asia representative SeongHan Kim speaks about his family's history at Seodaemun Prison in Seoul, South Korea. PHOTO: TIM HUBER/AW

BY **TIM HUBER**

Chang-Hwan Kim looks at a headstone in South Korea's Cemetery for North Korean and Chinese Soldiers, known informally as the "enemy cemetery," on June 7 as part of an outing during the Christian Forum for Reconciliation in Northeast Asia in Paju. PHOTO: HWAN CHEOL YUN

Working for peace, one relationship at a time

Korean Anabaptists pursue justice in churches and beyond

PEACE CHURCHES EXIST in South Korea, but their numbers are tiny relative to the numerous Protestant and Catholic steeples that poke above the buildings in every community. The six Anabaptist churches in the nation today trace their roots to a Christian book study group in 1993 that sought a return to early church practices.

Mennonite Central Committee operated a vocational school from 1953 to 1971 as part of its response to the Korean War. But no mission agency sent church planters, and no Mennonite church was established. The book study turned into Jesus Village Church, which was formed in 1996, followed by the Korean Anabaptist Center in 2003. It shares office space with MCC in Chuncheon.

On June 4, after a joint worship service of two Anabaptist congregations, Jesus Village Church and Jesus Heart Church, KAC board chair Sang-Uk Nam explained about education and publishing projects the center carries out to introduce Anabaptist values in Korean society.

"We also do book clubs and work to translate books about Anabaptism and peace, and that enlarges our network," he said. "I know people who hate churches but want to be a Christian. And those people are often attracted to us."

Anabaptist numbers continue to grow, but mainstream Christianity either disregards pacifism or defines peace through military strength holding back communism. Still, a collective of organizations has found a way to sow peace within the pro-military context by way of restorative justice work.

"I know people who hate churches but want to be a Christian. And those people are often attracted to us."

— Sang-Uk Nam

Jae Young Lee and Karen Spicher, part of Grace and Peace Mennonite Church in Namyangju, work with three entities: the Northeast Asia Regional Peacebuilding Institute, Korea Association for Restorative Justice, and Korea Peacebuilding Institute. MCC has provided volunteers for the programs, and the initiatives have been supported by Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada.

"Restorative justice is a simple way we can introduce Anabaptist concepts in Korean society," said Lee, executive director of the two institutes and chair of the association. "We work closely with teachers to shift in their classrooms from retribution to restoration."

The organizations he leads employ 20 teachers, who do about 1,000 trainings a year with teachers. A "restorative apartments" program works to train facilitators to handle noise complaints between neighbors in South Korea's ubiquitous high-rise apartments, cutting down on calls to the police.

The chief of the national police became interested in restorative justice about four years ago, and now Lee serves on a governmental subcommittee focused on restoration. One of the latest projects is a restorative prison.

Karen Spicher and Jae Young Lee speak outside the "Peace Building" in Namyangju, which is home to Grace and Peace Mennonite Church, multiple restorative justice organizations and a social justice-oriented coffee shop and bakery. PHOTO: TIM HUBER/AW

"It's a Christian prison supported 90% by the government, built with donations from megachurches," Lee said. "In two years, it now has 400 inmates and 120 staff. It's the first such prison, and we work closely with them."

Thus far, the anticommunist emphasis in South Korean society keeps restoration from making the leap from schools and prisons to national politics and diplomacy.

CHRIS RICE, MCC United Nations office director, works with diplomats to make change at a policy level. But he understands that transformation, reconciliation and peace are also critical on a person-to-person level. Based on his previous roles as MCC Northeast Asia representative and co-founder of the Center for Reconciliation at Duke Divinity School, he spearheaded the Northeast Asia Reconciliation Initiative, which held its first forum for Christian reconciliation and peace in Northeast Asia in 2014.

MCC co-sponsors the gatherings, which this year took place June 5-10 at a Catholic retreat center eight miles, as the dove flies, from the demilitarized border zone in Paju, a suburb of Seoul.

"God's reconciliation is as big as healing the divide between North Korea and South Korea," he said at

"God's reconciliation is as big as healing the divide between North Korea and South Korea. And at the very same time, God's reconciliation is never bigger than the person nearest to you who is most difficult to love."

— Chris Rice

the gathering of about 70 Christians from a dozen countries. "And at the very same time, God's reconciliation is never bigger than the person nearest to you who is most difficult to love."

He and other speakers stressed the biblical imperative and challenge of loving enemies, sharing tears and hugs as worship crossed national, racial and historical divides.

After an outing to an observatory overlooking the river dividing the two nations, participants visited an "enemy cemetery." Developed in 1996 in the face of strong opposition, it is the only location in the country offering individual graves for the remains of North Korean and Chinese soldiers, almost all of which are unidentified. No other cemetery for foreign opposition soldiers is believed to exist in the world.

The humble clearing sits in stark contrast to the South Korean cemetery not far away for displaced people from the North who died in South Korea. Row upon row upon row of manicured graves carpet a massive hill, all facing the same direction: the home to which they never returned. The outing concluded with worship at the Catholic Church of Repentance and Atonement.

"People have said repentance is something only North Korea should do," said Father Jusuk Kang, standing below a massive mosaic created by North Korean artists of Jesus holding a book saying "peace" while flanked by Korean saints. "Today I try to say that repentance is something the church and each of us need to do. It will require both North and South." ●

Father Jusuk Kang speaks June 7 at the Catholic Church of Repentance and Atonement in Paju, South Korea. The church was constructed in 2006 to provide education for peace and unification on the Korean Peninsula as well as the reconciliation of Koreans. The mosaic of Christ holding the book of peace flanked by Korean saints, designed by North Korean artists, is made of 1.5 tons of glass. PHOTO: TIM HUBER/AW

Korean Anabaptist Center board chair Sang-Uk Nam shares a children's story about Mennonite Central Committee June 4 during worship at Jesus Village Church in Chuncheon, South Korea. The service also included Jesus Heart Church, a fellow Anabaptist congregation in the city. PHOTO: TIM HUBER/AW

Tim Huber walks along military fencing along the shore of Gyodong Island, South Korea, on June 1. PHOTO: TIM HUBER/AW

BY TIM HUBER

OPINION

FEAR, LOVE AND WALLS THAT DIVIDE

Openness and relationships better than sanctions

FOR NORTH AMERICANS, the Korean War is a forgotten war. But on the Korean Peninsula, the three-year catastrophe is unforgettable, with trauma and distrust that continue today.

It doesn't have to be that way. But fear of a dehumanized communist enemy allows current U.S. policies of isolation to continue despite a minimal track record of success.

Fear of compromise is connected to polarization that makes the C-word political suicide. Fear of a nuclear-armed enemy is connected to a relationship based on a 1950s war that resulted only in 70 years of saber rattling. Fear of the economic burden of someday implementing real unification — a view on the future held especially among younger South Koreans — is connected to faith in financial security rather than an even higher power.

"Perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love" (1 John 4:18).

Diplomacy fails on the Korean Peninsula because the only methods being used are sanctions that punish — and the systems in place can withstand them.

Rice

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) outlasted the Soviet Union. North Korea's close relationship with China means economic sanctions imposed by other nations make life for many uncomfortable, but not impossible.

Mennonite Central Committee United Nations Office director Chris Rice shared June 9 during a Christian reconciliation forum in South Korea that exchanges between people are the best way forward, because recognizing others' shared humanity brings change.

"There's no nation we've encountered yet willing to take the lead in constructive diplomacy," Rice said. "There's pressure. Coercion. But there's no persuasion, and that's a very dangerous thing, because the U.S. does not have diplomatic relations with North Korea. There's no trust, no communication.

"The United States has diplomatic relations with all kinds of nations we don't like. With China there's interaction. Same goes for Vietnam. But there are no channels like that with North Korea, and that's very dangerous."

Through his roles with MCC as an area representative based in South Korea and later working at advocacy at the U.N., Rice has visited North Korea several times.

"We travel together, we eat together. We learn about each other's families," he said. "We have many disagreements, but these relationships give us an empathy for the people. That's different than the government."

IF ISOLATION HASN'T worked, the opposite might. Openness proved to be the downfall of East Germany, where hunger for freedom and prosperity proved too much for a wall thought to be impenetrable. A system didn't tear down that wall in 1989. People did. And the first thing that passed through it was an embrace.

Openness doesn't mean approval of certain North Korean positions or support for policies that run counter to the professed ideals of Canada or the U.S. It simply allows a door to be opened for relationships that could lead to peacebuilding opportunities.

Openness is a command in 1 John 4:21: "Those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also." If Christians in the U.S., Canada, South Korea and other sanctioning nations desire to love their North Korean brother and sister, the first step should be openness to starting a relationship. ●

BY **NATHAN PERRIN**

Prophetic patience: the life and legacy of Emma Richards

Radical strength doesn't always look like a storming of the gates.

Left: Emma Richards signed copies of a book about her, *According to the Grace Given to Her*, in 2013. PHOTO: MARY E. KLASSEN/AMBS

Right: Emma Richards in 1972. PHOTO: COURTESY OF LOMBARD MENNONITE CHURCH

Illinois church marks 50th anniversary of a milestone for women in ministry

AS A QUAKER applying for a Mennonite pastorate, I was unaware of Lombard Mennonite Church's unique legacy in the Mennonite world. During interviews in 2021, the story of Emma Richards came up frequently.

"We proudly support women pastors," members told me. "We were the first Mennonite congregation in North America with an ordained woman pastor." Their celebration of women in ministry drew me to the job even more.

Ordained in 1973 by Illinois Mennonite Conference, Emma Richards did not set out to become an important person in Mennonite history. Her only concern was teaching the gospel. Her first ministry experiences were in Japan with her husband, Joe Richards, whom she helped to teach and lead services. They started to raise a family there: son Evan and daughters Kathy and Lois. They relocated to the United States to give a more secure upbringing for the family.

When called to Lombard Mennonite Church in 1968, they were working in Fort Wayne, Ind., and studying at St. Francis College to become elementary teachers. Joe was providing pulpit supply for a Presbyterian church in Middle Point, Ohio. Due to the stress of the 90-minute commute and other circumstances, Joe had told the Presbyterian church he would work for them only if Emma was also allowed to preach. The congregation agreed.

Joe initially declined the call to

At first, she didn't want to be ordained. The congregation disagreed and advocated for her gifts to be recognized.

Barbara Krehbiel Gehring, right, co-lead pastor of Lombard Mennonite Church, introduces Anne Munley at the 50th anniversary celebration of Emma Richards' ordination. PHOTO: BOB ERCK

Lombard. He wanted to finish his education. But Emma and Joe could not shake the call to the Anabaptist way. Though raised a Presbyterian, Joe missed the Mennonites and their culture.

They accepted the call to a part-time position for Joe, who also found work as a school superintendent. They moved to the Chicagoland suburb and started their next chapter.

The years were kind to Joe as a pastor, but he felt overwhelmed being bivocational. One Sunday, Joe couldn't preach, so Emma did. Her first sermon, prophetically, was on Easter Sunday in 1970, announcing the resurrection. A woman in the pulpit! Everyone paid attention, even the children. From that point forward, she was a regular "guest" preacher.

Soon the church recognized Emma's gifts for ministry. They also saw the only way to keep Joe was to hire Emma to work alongside him, as she had done in Japan and Ohio. What followed was typical when theological shifts happen: Emma became a lightning rod for controversy.

At first, she didn't want to be ordained. She didn't want the messenger to distract from the message. The congregation disagreed and advocated for her gifts to be recognized. They expected an uphill battle but believed it was a cause worth striving for. After two years of debate in Illinois Conference and the national Mennonite Church, Emma was ordained in 1973.

FIFTY YEARS LATER, on June 11, Lombard Mennonite Church celebrated the occasion. The first speaker, son Evan, had started college when the ordination process began. Despite the controversy, things seemed normal. "Mom was just being mom," he said. He felt proud to be Emma's son and to celebrate her.

The next speaker, Anne Munley, came to Lombard Mennonite Church through Wheaton College, drawn in through Sharon and Norm Ewert, Wheaton professors and devout Anabaptists who hosted students at their house for free meals. She remembered Emma's patience with people who opposed her. "Emma viewed the world, and others, through a lens of love," she said.

Munley also recalled both Emma's and Joe's optimism and Emma's joy, compassion and empathy. She compared what happened with Emma to what is happening in Mennonite Church USA around issues of sexuality and gender. "May we learn from her example of patiently waiting on the Spirit for the way forward," she said.

Because of Emma's influence, Munley now serves as a pastor in North Suburban Mennonite Church in Libertyville and Community Mennonite Church in Schaumburg and on the credentialing team for Illinois Mennonite Conference.

Glen Guyton, executive director of MC USA, preached from the text Emma used in her ordination ceremony: Ephesians 4:4-16. He gave thanks for Emma and for the Christian women who have ministered to him. He also mentioned the first ordained Mennonite woman pastor, Ann Allebach, ordained by the General Conference Mennonite Church in Philadelphia in 1911 but never installed as a pastor of a Mennonite congregation. He noted the 60-year span between Ann's and Emma's ordinations, reflecting the slow progress of recognizing the gifts of women.

Guyton noted the irony that women have not been celebrated for ministry, though the first proclaimer of Jesus' resurrection was a woman: "Men have wanted the announcement of the resurrection without giving a title to the announcer."

As the first Black executive director of MC USA, he is grateful for Emma's and Ann's barrier-breaking legacies.

EMMA HANDLED controversy with prophetic patience and mercy that is rare in our culture. She showed positive change doesn't come through fights on social media but by listening to the Spirit.

Emma trusted that when people wait upon the Lord, the way forward will reveal itself. In this tumultuous time, when women's voices still aren't fully heard, Emma's example should be remembered. She displayed a quiet confidence that God was with her and that no one could take away her calling. She died in 2014 at age 87.

Radical strength doesn't always look like a storming of the gates. Sometimes it looks like a gentle woman, confident in her faith, who knows all will be well in the end. Emma Richards' spirit has shaped MC USA as a denomination and opened spaces for women to serve. ●

Nathan Perrin is pastor of Christian formation at Lombard Mennonite Church in Illinois. He holds a master's degree in Quaker studies and is a doctoral student studying Christian community development at Northern Seminary. He is also a screenwriter for an unannounced indie comedy series. See nathanperrinwriter.com.

BY **TIM HUBER** • Anabaptist World

Sudanese pastor, family flee civil war

Nation's only Anabaptist pastor leaves churches, schools to seek safety in Egypt

THE FAMILY OF A MAN believed to be the only Anabaptist pastor in Sudan is now safe in Egypt after a 3,000-mile circuitous journey to avoid civil war clashes.

Yasir Hamid Makki is a credentialed pastor with the Biblical Mennonite Alliance, a conservative body made up mostly of former Conservative Mennonite Conference congregations in the eastern United States and Canada.

In addition to a network of house churches that had baptized about 700 members as of 2021, Makki has started schools and medical facilities in his home country of Sudan.

But air strikes and fighting during a seven-day truce in May dampened hopes of achieving peace in the conflict, which broke out in April in the capital of Khartoum and the Darfur region.

Hundreds of thousands of Sudanese refugees have sought shelter across the border in Egypt to the north. Makki, his wife and children undertook a treacherous journey by minivan first into southern Sudan before making the lengthy trip back north through conflict zones.

"We have heard that in El Obeid, our school and medical clinic for refugees have been vandalized. The other two schools are fortunately OK," Makki said in a May 23 email to prayer partners. "While in Omdurman, three people from our church in that city got killed by stray bullets on [May 19]. I know that we will see them all again in heaven, but it's still painful to deal with."

Yasir Hamid Makki and his family enjoy a meal in Khartoum, Sudan, before starting the journey that brought them to Egypt as refugees of Sudan's civil war. PHOTO: YASIR HAMID MAKKI

Makki got to know BMA leaders as a student at Rosedale Bible Institute in the 1990s, when he began a mentorship with Walter Beachy. A bridge-builder at heart, Makki also relates to Columbus Mennonite Church after getting to know that congregation while a graduate student at Ohio State University.

His journey with Anabaptism started earlier still, when he got to know Mennonite Central Committee workers in the 1980s in Sudan. Ken Sensenig arrived in 1991 to teach English at a university, where Makki was a student.

Makki's efforts to convert Sensenig to Islam failed, but a friendship developed, and interest in following Jesus grew. This created complications in the community, so a student visa for classes at Rosedale got him to the United States, where he has worked to develop a diverse network of supporters for his ministries in Sudan, his home for the last 20 years.

In addition to planting churches, Yasir Hamid Makki's ministry has developed schools and clinics. PHOTO: YASIR HAMID MAKKI

Biblical Mennonite Alliance minister Walter Beachy baptizes a woman named Maysoon in 2021 as Pastor Yasir Hamid Makki, left, looks on. Makki learned recently that Maysoon was among those who died amid violence recently in Sudan. Makki is ordained with BMA, whose members have helped Makki grow an Anabaptist presence in his home nation of Sudan. PHOTO: YASIR HAMID MAKKI

"We call our church the Sudanese Fellowship of Christ," Makki said in a 2021 interview with *Anabaptist World*. "Sudan was known for persecuting Christians for many years, so for us to survive, that's a miracle. Only through God's provision and direction did we survive."

SENSENIG, WHO continues to work for MCC in Pennsylvania, said Makki's intercultural dexterity has allowed him to be a follower of Jesus who is culturally Muslim.

"He is able to be a conservative Mennonite pastor in an Islamic context, and he has all the right trappings to blend in — his name, the long flowing *jalabiya* he wears, the distinctive buildings housing his ministries," Sensenig said. "Biblical Mennonite Alliance and Columbus don't have a lot in common on the surface. They are very different groups. He has been able for many years to work with both under the umbrella of International Friendships Inc., which operates under Ohio State University."

Makki started house churches first. Last year was the 20th anniversary of the first mother church. The ninth was started in 2021 and immediately responded to local flooding by distributing relief kits to victims.

Schools and clinics followed, often built in partnership with BMA service teams.

"They come and help me for three weeks, and you would be amazed how much they can do," Makki said in 2021. "They are like machines, and they are booked two years in advance, with business booming now in building, but they make it a priority, for which we are grateful."

Recently he was able to purchase a 1,000-square-foot lot with the hopes of building a Mennonite center focused on peace and conflict transformation.

Those plans are now on hold. When Makki's van reached the Egyptian border in May, the family was told no vehicles would be allowed into the country. After the family cleared complicated immigration rules, it took eight hours to search a line of buses stretching three miles to find one not already full.

"Once we got on the road north from the border, there was also a scary moment when the driver of our bus fell asleep at the wheel and had to be woken up to avoid getting us into an accident," he said.

"All throughout this process of fleeing to Egypt, I have not been able to stop thinking about the flight of another family to the same place: The family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus." ●

BREAKDOWN OF *ANABAPTIST COMMUNITY BIBLE* STUDY GROUPS

Total number of groups: 593

Denomination	% of total	No.	Denomination	% of total	No.	Denomination	% of total	No.
MC USA	49.92%	296	Bruderhof	2.19%	13	Brethren in Christ	0.84%	5
MC Canada	13.66%	81	The Brethren Church	1.85%	11	CMC	0.34%	2
Church of the Brethren	9.95%	59	Mixed Affiliations	2.36%	14	Amish	0.17%	1
Mennonite	8.60%	51	Anabaptist	1.01%	6	Quaker	0.17%	1
Mennonite Brethren	2.53%	15	International Churches	2.53%	15	Other	3.88%	23

Collective Bible project to include art

THE ANABAPTISM AT 500 project has commissioned four artists to create 40 line drawings to illuminate the text of the *Anabaptist Community Bible*.

To be published in 2025, the Bible will commemorate the 500th anniversary of Anabaptism. It will feature study material generated by more than 500 study groups from Anabaptist communities.

In a news release, the publisher, MennoMedia, cited the visual arts' capacity to communicate truths about God and God's people beyond the written word.

"We hope that the artwork accompanying the *Anabaptist Community Bible* will evoke a sense of the inner word — the surprising movement of the Holy Spirit — that sometimes illuminates meanings that are not apparent in the written text alone," the release said.

Four artists — Lisa Oberik, Dona Park, Randy Horst, Matthew Regier — will each make 10 illustrations in the woodcut or linocut style.

To create the new Bible, the Anabaptism at 500 project invited groups from a wide range of Anabaptist faith communities to write annotations that reflect the values and perspectives of the Anabaptist tradition.

The response exceeded the goal of 500 Bible study groups. Participants registered from 16 countries and 58 Anabaptist-Mennonite denominations and church bodies (see chart above).

The groups read assigned passages of Scripture and generated comments, questions or applications. The commentary they generated, supplemented by insights from biblical scholars and biblical commentary from early Anabaptist writers, will appear as marginal notes.

Women Wisdom (Proverbs 8–9), Dona Park

Mary and the Gardener at the Tomb (John 20:1–18), Matthew Regier

Drafts of two images submitted by Matthew Regier and Dona Park that give a sense of the artwork that will accompany the *Anabaptist Community Bible*. ILLUSTRATIONS: MENNOMEDIA

"We hope the project will inspire a renewed interest in reading the Bible together from a Christ-centered perspective," the MennoMedia release said. It suggests: "Pray for John Roth, Mollee Moua and the rest of the editorial team as they work through the massive amount of biblical commentary provided by the study groups. . . .

"Pray for the MennoMedia editorial team as they begin to work with writers and illustrators for the children's books that are part of the Anabaptism at 500 project."

The editors have chosen the Common English Bible translation, which uses simpler language than other popular versions and likely is a version that many potential purchasers do not have. ●

BY **PAUL SCHRAG** • Anabaptist World

Dan Hertzler, Gospel Herald editor, dies

DANIEL L. HERTZLER, 97, a longtime editor of Mennonite publications during a 38-year career with Mennonite Publishing House, died June 14 in Scottdale, Pa.

From 1973 to 1990, he edited *Gospel Herald*, the flagship publication of the Mennonite Church and a predecessor of *Anabaptist World*.

Beginning in 1952, Hertzler edited — with "a keen mind and sharp pencil," as former Scottdale Mennonite pastor and historian John Sharp put it — *Mennonite Community*, *Christian Living*, *Builder*, various Christian education publications and the MC denominational magazine, *Gospel Herald*.

As an editor of curricula and periodicals, Hertzler had a strong influence in shaping the Mennonite Church of the 20th century, said J. Lorne Peachey, who succeeded Hertzler as editor of *Gospel Herald*.

"Dan situated himself 'a little left of center,' as he put it," Peachey said. "He was not always viewed favorably by those on either side of that fulcrum. But Dan adroitly negotiated the turbulent years of biblical criticism, draft resistance and women in leadership — to name only three of the hot-button issues of his editing years."

Hertzler loved the church and "had a love-hate relationship with the state," Peachey said. "The closest I saw Dan get into an argument, in the years I worked for and beside him, was when someone equated the nation-state with the kingdom of God. That would get Dan red in the face."

Steve Shenk, managing editor of *Gospel Herald* during the last years of Hertzler's tenure, said: "In his gentlemanly and humble way, he passionately loved the church and the periodical he was entrusted with. Many readers commented on his weekly editorials."

BORN OCT. 19, 1925, in Elverson, Pa., to Melvin and Susan (Shenk) Hertzler, Dan Hertzler dropped out of high school to help his father on the family farm but never lost his desire for learning. He graduated from Eastern Mennonite College in 1951, Goshen Biblical Seminary in 1955 and the University of Pittsburgh in 1966 with a doctorate in religious education.

Dan and Mary Hertzler set out in 1979 on a 13,000-mile road trip for a book to capture the flavor of local church life. PHOTO: DAVID HIEBERT

In his editorial for the 75th anniversary edition of *Gospel Herald*, April 5, 1983, Hertzler reflected on the mandate of a Mennonite magazine to offer an alternative to "the selfish view that expects god to serve us rather than the other way around. . . .

"The alternative that the Mennonite Church has supported for 15 generations is the view that 'God so loved the world' and not just our kind of people. It is the view that the second commandment is as important as the first — that to love another whom we have seen is a way to demonstrate our love for God whom we have not seen.

"Is this such a strange doctrine that a separate denomination must be maintained with its own special institutions and its own official publication to highlight this one point? It seems odd when you think about it. It is embarrassing too when you consider how often we have failed to comprehend and follow through on this calling.

"Indeed, we Mennonites are given to flailing ourselves particularly because of our small numbers. It makes an interesting exercise, although I wonder about the value of beating our breasts about what we have not done — particularly if that is as far as we go with it."

Hertzler edited a book celebrating the magazine's anniversary, *Not by Might: Gospel Herald Sampler, 1908-1983*, featuring reprints of notable articles and profiles of the three editors who preceded him: Daniel Kauffman, Paul Erb and John M. Drescher.

HIS EXTENSIVE WRITING included two memoirs, *A Little Left of Center* (2000) and *On My Way: The View from the Ninth Decade* (2013). During a sabbatical in 1979-80, he and Mary took a 13,000-mile road trip to 18 communities and 31 congregations "around the perimeter" of the United States and Canada to collect material for a book, *From Germantown to Steinbach: A Mennonite Odyssey*.

Sampling congregational life in Mennonite outposts distant from traditional centers of power, he found encouragement in cultural and racial diversity as well as uncertainty about whether "the historic Mennonite doctrine of peace . . . is still believed in churches which are urbanized and have brought in people to whom this teaching is new."

When *Christian Living* ended in 2002 after 49 years, Hertzler wrote an article casting a critical eye on his own editorship: "The magazine was sometimes controversial, but I was never able to bring about the sort of controlled dialogue I would have wished. It may be that I was too cautious. After all, the specter of cancellations was waiting in the wings."

A periodical may die, but "if we need to be instructed about sin and redemption, we can always read the Bible," he wrote. "Yet at the same time we wait hopefully for discerning and courageous writers who will be able to skewer the old sins and point the way to a better life as understood in our own time and context."

He married Mary Yoder in 1952. She preceded him in death in 2017. Survivors include four sons.

An obituary with additional information is on page 43.

BY **EILEEN KINCH** • Anabaptist World

Colombia to Ecuador to North Carolina

Family's journey from danger leads to a new faith community and a wedding

LAURA MENDOZA, Juan Miguel Cruz and their two children were doing well in Colombia, except for persistent threats due to Cruz's peace work.

He was willing to die in Colombia for the cause of peace. "No one wants to leave their country," he said, but his family's safety was most important.

They began a journey from Colombia to Ecuador to Raleigh, N.C., guided by Mennonite connections that led them to a faith community that has embraced them and helped them to get married.

Through Mencoldes (Colombian Mennonite Foundation for Development), Cruz worked with Colombian churches that had been victims of armed conflict. Sometimes he helped arrange meetings for former members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebel group seeking reconciliation with their communities. Mendoza worked with a Cali neighborhood community center.

The couple fell in love with the social and community work Mennonites were doing in Cali and decided to attend services at the Mennonite congregation there.

When Cruz received threats for his peace work, the couple tried to settle in another area in Colombia. This did not work, so they decided to flee to Ecuador with their children, Miguel and Lauren.

Colombia has had a longstanding conflict between the government and guerrilla groups. In 2016, the Colombian government and FARC signed a peace agreement. Unfortunately, peace has not come quickly. Many are still fleeing violence; 6.7 million people are internally displaced in Colombia, according to a recent United Nations Refugee Agency report. Mendoza and Cruz are only two of 94,900 people from Colombia who are refugees or asylum seekers.

When the couple left Colombia, members of the Mennonite church in Cali gave them contact information for the Mennonite church leaders in Quito, Ecuador. Iglesia Menonita de Quito welcomed them, as Cruz put it, "with open arms."

Laura Mendoza and Juan Miguel Cruz with children Lauren and Miguel on the wedding day.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF LAURA MENDOZA AND JUAN MIGUEL CRUZ

"They lifted us up with their support at a time of crisis."

— Juan Miguel Cruz on the help his family received from the Mennonite church in Quito, Ecuador

The Mennonite church in Quito operates a refugee program, supported by Mennonite Central Committee. The congregation distributes food and supplies to refugees from Colombia, and many refugees decide to attend church services.

"In spite of not having much in terms of material wealth or creature comforts, [the Mennonite church in Quito] always served or ministered to us and sought out ways of supporting us and our well-being," Cruz said. "They lifted us up with their support at a time of crisis."

The couple were also able to help other fellow refugees.

They did not get involved with peace work in Ecuador because of their refugee status, but they did get an opportunity to work at a school in the rural town of Tena. Cruz taught social science, and Mendoza worked as a teaching assistant with the younger children. The couple found it meaningful to help the students.

After an episode in which someone fired shots at them, the couple knew they had to find another place of safety. With the support of the U.N. Refugee Agency, they and their children were able to leave the country.

They decided to go to Raleigh, N.C., at the recommendation of a musician friend. Mennonites helped, too. Peter Wigginton of the Mennonite church in Quito referred them to Mauricio Chenlo, who works for Mennonite Mission Network and attends Raleigh Mennonite Church.

MENDOZA AND CRUZ came to Raleigh in March and began to worship at Raleigh Mennonite Church. The congregation, which is committed to peacemaking and reconciliation, helped the couple and their two children find a place to live and navigate life in the United States.

Going to Raleigh Mennonite "has been the best decision that we have made in coming to the USA," Cruz said. "RMC is a beautiful community that opened its doors to us."

The couple are settling in and looking for jobs. Although they have papers to work legally, their employment options are limited to construction and cleaning work because they are still

Pastor Melissa Florer-Bixler officiated the wedding of Juan Miguel Cruz and Laura Mendoza at Raleigh Mennonite Church in April.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF LAURA MENDOZA AND JUAN MIGUEL CRUZ

learning English. Unfortunately, their academic studies in Colombia carry little weight in the U.S.

Even with all the hardships, Mendoza and Cruz now have something to celebrate in Raleigh. They finally accomplished a goal they had for a long time: to be legally married.

The couple had plans to be married in Colombia, but they needed to leave. In Ecuador, getting married as refugees required a lot of paperwork. In Raleigh, they wanted to get married as soon as possible and hoped to have a civil wedding ceremony in a park with five of their friends.

"Do you want a real wedding?" asked Melissa Florer-Bixler, pastor of Raleigh Mennonite Church. "We can make that happen."

In only 10 days, members of the congregation cooked food, cut flowers from their yards and decorated the church building. Florer-Bixler delivered a homily and a blessing. About 40 people attended and celebrated with the couple and their children. ●

Peace award honoring Sharp is given

PASTOR VICTOR DOGOS of N'djamena, Chad, is the first recipient of the Michael J. Sharp Global Peacemaker Award. The award was created by Mennonite Central Committee this year to acknowledge courageous peacemakers.

As a Christian, Dogos works with Catholics, Muslims, Protestants and tribal leaders in Chad to encourage people of all religions to live together in peace. National and community leaders call on him to resolve violent conflicts and intervene in situations with the potential for bloodshed.

He uses his training in theology, law, communication and peacebuilding to mediate and to teach how to resolve conflicts. He has negotiated with the government and the military for the release of innocent civilians and has worked with government security forces to help them see the long-term effectiveness of peace over violence.

Dogos

Dogos is a member of the Chad Advisory Council, which advises the government on matters of government policy and reconciliation with opponents. He helped pave the way to a peace accord between Chad's provisional government and 45 armed groups in 2022. This led to the creation of a new transitional government.

MCC established the $4,000 prize in honor of the courageous peacebuilding work of Sharp, a former MCC staff person in the Democratic Republic of Congo. While working for the United Nations in 2017 to verify human rights violations, Sharp, 34, and his colleague Zaida Catalán were executed by unidentified assailants.

Dogos is from a Muslim background but converted to Christianity.

"Against this background, he would not be easily accepted as a mediator, facilitator or bridge builder between Muslims and Christians in Chad," said Mulanda Juma, an MCC representative in Rwanda and Burundi. "It required creativity, courage and peace leadership skills to successfully build bridges between these two faith communities in conflict."

Dogos leads the peace and justice department of an ecumenical Christian organization in Chad.

Supported by MCC, Dogos trained at Eastern Mennonite University's School of Peacebuilding Institute in 2015 and 2018. — *MCC*

BY **MIKE STRATHDEE** • Mennonite Economic Development Associates

Rethinking development with MEDA

Senegal trip gives Germans, Americans new perspectives on African entrepreneurs

VISITING A PROJECT of Mennonite Economic Development Associates in Senegal gave Ben Horsch new perspectives to share with friends, family and neighbors back home in Germany.

One of the key narratives he plans to share is the need for a shift in European perceptions of Africa.

"The way Europeans think about Africa is quite different from the reality," he said.

Horsch will tell people about meeting committed entrepreneurs who are working to create jobs.

"We saw people that were well-educated," Horsch said. "Those entrepreneurs that we saw here, they knew exactly what they want. The biggest problem for them is access to capital. Success will come. They will do it."

Horsch was part of a group of 15 people who visited MEDA project sites in May. The group included three Germans, 11 Americans and two Canadians.

The group met several MEDA clients, including two food-processing firms, members of a horticultural co-op and a rice demonstration farm.

MEDA's AVENIR project aims to improve farming households' socio-economic well-being and resilience.

The project focuses on benefiting 11,500 women and youth, including creating decent work for 6,941 people. It focuses on four agricultural value chains: cashew, mango, baobab and rice.

Senegal's population is young, with a median age of 18.5. Over half the population of 18.1 million people is rural. The World Bank estimates that about 36% of the population lives in poverty, earning less than $3.65 U.S. daily.

For Horsch's wife, Agnes, the Senegal trip was her first visit to a MEDA project.

"I knew about the problems here [in the Global South]," she said. "But to see it was another thing."

Tina Ephraim shows Agnes Horsch mango pulp being dried for compost in Baconding, Senegal. Ephraim leads T&M, a company that makes cashew juice and is working to find ways to use all of the mango as well — juice from the flesh, cosmetics from the oil found in the pit and compost from what is left. PHOTO: RANDY SAWATZKY/MEDA

A farmer's wife whose parents were farmers, Agnes Horsch did farm field labor as a girl. That helps her to understand some of the challenges facing small-scale women farmers.

North Americans who have easy access to loans and banking services don't realize how different it is in the Global South.

"The organization of these [small-scale Senegalese] farms will change," she predicted. "They need credit. They need systems."

Sandy Stauffer, a New York state dairy farmer, agreed.

"I've always known there was poverty in the world, and I've seen it before," he said. "But this trip just drilled into my mind how much poverty there is and how far we have to go to improve the conditions, especially for the [farming] women."

FOR ARON SHOWALTER, a member of Hyattsville Mennonite Church in Maryland, the Senegal trip was his first introduction to MEDA's work. He said North Americans who have easy access to loans and banking services don't realize how different it is in the Global South.

"These [services] simply didn't exist for many folks in Senegal, and you see how critical it is for organizations like MEDA and its partners to fill that space," he said.

Showalter was impressed that both Paulin Bossou, the director of MEDA's Senegal project, and Pierre Diegane Kadet, MEDA's West Africa regional director, were born in the region and

Hollins Showalter and Aron Showalter. PHOTO: RANDY SAWATZKY/MEDA

have worked in Canada. They can understand the local Senegalese languages and cultural nuances in a way Westerners simply can't.

"In the business development world, I think [having projects led by local staff] is pretty crucial," he said. "I was very impressed that MEDA sees this as well and is acting on it."

Hollins Showalter, Aron Showalter's brother, who attends First Mennonite Church in Indianapolis, was "impressed with the focus on women and youth, as well as the importance of factoring in environmental impact."

BERNHARD LANDES, a German farmer and renewable energy systems developer, was impressed by Moulaye Biaye and Tina Ephraim, a young African couple who left good jobs in Europe to create jobs for others in rural Senegal, processing cashew juice and making cosmetics from mangoes that have previously gone to waste.

"They come back, basically in the middle of nowhere, and start this business," Landes said. "They take their own money and invest it."

He was also struck by the commitment shown by Hamady Sow, a man who started a business processing baobab nuts and growing vegetables with no capital backing. Sow has built his firm, Vision Afrique, into a substantial enterprise, providing jobs for over 750 rural women.

MEDA is partnering with both firms, giving access to capital that will allow them to purchase equipment to expand and create more jobs.

When entrepreneurs succeed, Ben Horsch said, "it will be a big benefit for the region and the people." ●

Participants in a biography-writing workshop in the Democratic Republic of Congo shared articles with GAMEO. PHOTO: MENNONITE MISSION NETWORK

Online encyclopedia becomes more global

ONE OF THE MOST widely used sources of information about Mennonites and other Anabaptists continues to grow in quantity of articles and in global diversity of contributors.

The Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online added 117 new articles in the past year, bringing the total to 17,091.

"Over 830 users access and read GAMEO articles each day," said Elizabeth Miller, the general editor. "We anticipate that GAMEO will become even more relevant for global users as the list of contributors, publishing languages and entries expands."

Miller, who directs the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism at Goshen College, is one of three new members of the GAMEO management board.

The other two are Anicka Fast, secretary of the Faith and Life Commission of Mennonite World Conference; and Roberta Yoder, representing the Mennonite Church USA archives.

The board welcomed the new members at its annual meeting in May.

Also, in 2022 GAMEO welcomed the D.F. Plett Historical Research Foundation as an institutional partner. Foundation executive director Aileen Friesen subsequently joined the GAMEO board.

Volunteers worked to increase the scope of congregational profiles available on the site. Students at the University of Winnipeg and Goshen College and participants in biography-writing workshops in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burkina Faso are writing new articles.

SIX YEARS AGO, GAMEO committed to prioritize and expand entries related to global Anabaptism. At the recent board meeting, members celebrated advances toward that goal.

Fast has been instrumental in creating a structure for West and Central African church members to write biographies and congregational profiles. For greater accessibility, GAMEO committed to publishing global content in both English and another language spoken in the region where the article originated.

GAMEO counts recent entries by Mennonites in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Burkina Faso. Goshen College students adapted biographies by members of the Brethren in Christ Church of Zimbabwe.

GAMEO is maintained and expanded by a network of historians, librarians and archivists. ●

Canadian MB leader to become global director

Elton DaSilva, national director for the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, will leave that role in October and become global director of the International Community of Mennonite Brethren.


DaSilva

ICOMB announced the change in leadership at its annual gathering May 10-14 in Abbotsford, B.C.

DaSilva will succeed Rudi Plett, who will conclude his work with ICOMB next year after serving two three-year terms.

DaSilva will continue with CCMBC until October and begin with ICOMB in January.

A member of the ICOMB Executive Committee, DaSilva has "strong spiritual leadership qualities, an impeccable reputation, a clear and aligned theological position and extensive familiarity with conferences in both the Global North and South," said Paul Dück of Brazil, who chairs the Executive Committee. "His ability to connect with additional resources will greatly aid in the expansion and consolidation of conferences."

CCMBC Executive Board interim moderator Cam Stuart thanked DaSilva for moving the denomination forward "with a sharper vision for what God has called us to be and do in building his kingdom in Canada, following our principal value of scriptural authority." — *Christian Leader*

MC USA adds creation care to peace and justice work

To strengthen its commitment to creation care and climate justice, the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board is expanding its Peace & Justice ministries to include Mennonite Creation Care Network.

The transition is the result of an agreement with Everence, which has provided administrative services for MCCN and continues to provide financial support, and Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College, which has managed daily operations since MCCN formed in 2005. The transition will begin Aug. 1.

MC USA is creating a permanent, part-time position for a climate justice coordinator to oversee the work of MCCN. Jennifer Halteman Schrock, director of MCCN since 2016, will step down from her part-time role on Sept. 30.

MCCN's work has included developing MC USA's Creation Care Resolution in 2013; creating the "Every Creature Singing" curriculum; equipping churches to embrace solar through the "Considering Solar?" guide for churches; administering the Pam De Young Net Zero Energy Fund, which provides grants to churches installing solar panels; hosting informational webinars and providing resources.

After the transition, Halteman Schrock will focus on her other role, providing administrative support for Goshen College's Global Education department.

Primary sponsors of MCCN's work have been Merry Lea and Everence. Merry Lea is providing funding to support the establishment of MCCN at MC USA, and Everence will continue to contribute funds for three years. — *Mennonite Church USA*

Burkina Faso Mennonite leaders oppose war tax

Leaders of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso expressed their opposition to a war tax and were relieved to find out the payment was not required.


Bananzaro

The government of the West African nation recently levied a tax to fund military operations against Islamist fighters. The Federation of Evangelical Churches and Missions of Burkina Faso notified Mennonite leaders that their churches' share of the federation's $56,000 payment would be nearly $3,000.

Believing they should not pay a war tax, Mennonite leaders Siaka Traoré and Calixte Bananzaro met on May 26 with Henry Yé, president of the Protestant federation, to explain the Anabaptist stance on peace.

"Yé reassured us that the contribution was voluntary, contrary to what was initially communicated to us," Traoré reported in a release from Mennonite Mission Network. "Yé was open to the possibility that the Mennonite church could promote the well-being of our country in other ways." — *Anabaptist World*

Anabaptist Climate group names executive director

Douglas Day Kaufman began serving July 1 as executive director of the Anabaptist Climate Collaborative. He previously was ACC's director of pastoral ecology. In that role since 2018, he led pastoral and leadership retreats on climate change, helping congregations reduce their carbon footprint and engage in climate action.

Kaufman became passionate about creation care while serving as a pastor of Benton Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind. He discovered pollutants compromise the Elkhart River, a frequent baptismal location. His commitment to theologically grounded climate justice advocacy deepened as he completed a master's degree in theology and ecology at the University of Toronto and became trained as an Indiana Master Naturalist.


Kaufman

"Addressing climate justice is the critical issue of our time, and I am proud of the work we have done first as the Center for Sustainable Climate Solutions and now Anabaptist Climate Collaborative," he said. "I am pleased to be able to help sustain and grow the organization as we become both independent and more collaborative." — *Anabaptist Climate Collaborative*

Kansans celebrate migration from Ukraine

Celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the Mennonite migration from South Russia (present-day Ukraine) to North America are beginning, including a July 15 event in Kansas sponsored by descendants of the Swiss Volhynian immigrants, known as Schweitzers.

The Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association will host an old-fashioned plowing bee from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on 22 acres west of the Moundridge Museum. The event will feature demonstrations of plowing with horses and vintage tractors.

Future events include a demonstration of planting Turkey Red wheat with horses in October and a celebration at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Aug. 22-25, 2024.

Also in south central Kansas, on Memorial Day weekend, the Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum at Goessel placed about 540 small white flags at the graves of immigrants in the Alexanderwohl, Tabor and Goessel Mennonite cemeteries with the words, "Immigrant with faith, courage, action. Thanks be to God!" — *Anabaptist World*

Myanmar youth take pledge for peace

MENNONITE YOUTH at a peace conference in Myanmar pledged not to get involved in armed revolution.

More than 160 people between the ages of 16 and 35 registered for the conference, which included the baptism of seven people, April 13-17 in Akaw.

The conference focused on Ephesians 2:17: "[Jesus] proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near."

The subject of peace is relevant for young people living through the trauma of civil war in Myanmar, the Southeast Asian nation formerly known as Burma.

In February 2021, after national elections, the military seized power, installed its own leaders and responded with violence to pro-democracy protests. Opponents of the military takeover soon developed their own militias.

"We don't want our youth to get involved in armed revolution," said Amos Chin, a Mennonite leader and conference presenter. "All youth are convinced [about] the peace movement and made a declaration for peace not to get in armed revolution."

Myanmar Mennonite leader Amos Chin: "We don't want our youth to get involved in armed revolution." PHOTO: MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

John Stanley Puia, a church leader and conference organizer, said: "As these young people are living in the civil war and threatened by the extremists, they are strongly inspired and empowered by the message [of peace during the conference]. We need more peace conferences and peaceful programs for the unpeaceful generation." ●

Train trip to mark Canada migration

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, the first of 21,000 Mennonites who left the Soviet Union boarded a train in Quebec City for new lives across Canada. Some of their descendants and others will replicate that journey when they board a train July 6 for a trip that will conclude in British Columbia as part of "Memories of Migration: Russlaender (Russian Mennonites) Tour 100."

The cross-country tour is the brainchild of Ingrid Riesen Moehlmann. She came up with the idea when her father made a last request to her before he died to find a way to celebrate the arrival in Canada of Mennonites who experienced civil war, famine and disease in revolutionary Ukraine and Russia.

"That story was an all-consuming passion for him," she said. "He was afraid it was being lost and forgotten."

Participants will re-enact the historic migration of the thousands of Mennonites who left communities decimated by violence and tragedy in the Soviet Union to come to Canada between 1923 and 1930.

The tour will include stops in Montreal, Kitchener, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Rosthern and Edmonton before ending July 25 in Abbotsford, B.C. It is organized by the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, together with Canadian Mennonite scholars and heritage enthusiasts.

In addition to lectures and music along the way, the tour will include a gala sponsored by the Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railway in Montreal and tours of Mennonite-related sites along the way. Some presentations will address the migration's impact on Indigenous communities in western Canada.

"Canada saved these Mennonite families from the horrors of Stalinism but also made them part of the settler colonialism system. This element of the story can't be ignored," said Aileen Friesen, co-director and associate professor with the Centre for Transnational Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg and part of the organizing committee.

For Friesen, keys to the tour's success are the young people who have been sponsored to be involved. "For many, this is part of their heritage that they may not be aware of, so it's important to pass along this history to younger generations," she said.

About 123 people have signed up for one or all three segments of the tour.

— John Longhurst

Seminary conference on land to confront climate doom

Theological and pastoral care responses to climate doom will be the focus of the Rooted & Grounded Conference on Land and Christian Discipleship Sept. 28-30 at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary and online.


Curtice

"Climate doom" has surpassed climate change denial as the main reason people don't take action to confront the environmental crisis the world is facing, said conference coordinator Janeen Bertsche Johnson, director of campus ministries, alumni director and core adjunct faculty member.

"We want participants to gain tools to face the sense of climate doom that pervades our culture — especially among youth and young adults — and resistance and resilience are partner tools in this journey," she said. "We also wanted to use the biblical framework of a path or way to remind ourselves of how God's people have been called to faithful journeys in the past."

Kaitlin Curtice, a Potawatomi Christian author and speaker, will speak on "Resistance," sharing insights from her most recent book, *Living Resistance: An Indigenous Vision for Seeking Wholeness Every Day* (Brazos, 2023), and applying those to the climate crisis.


Thomas

Leah Thomas, assistant professor of pastoral care, will lead a workshop on "Resilience," showing how the climate crisis is a form of collective trauma and how practices of resilience can move people beyond classic trauma responses of freeze or flight.


Wyse-Rhodes

Jackie Wyse-Rhodes, associate professor of Hebrew Bible, will speak on "Seeking Hope when the Path is Crooked: The Bible and Climate Change," examining the biblical tradition of pathways to help Christians ground their work in their faith.

Visits to places of environmental and historical interest in the area will be offered as pre-conference activities.

Conference co-sponsors include the Anabaptist Climate Collaborative, Bridgefolk, Mennonite Creation Care Network and Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College. — *AMBS*

AMBS offering flexible leadership short courses

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary is launching a Practical Leadership Training program in August to help pastors, lay leaders, community leaders and leaders of nonprofit organizations provide effective Anabaptist leadership.

Many leaders have shared that while seminary prepared them for Bible study, preaching and pastoral care, they needed practical leadership skills to meet challenges resulting from the pandemic, polarization, shifting church commitments and an unpredictable future.

AMBS designed a program of modules focusing on four areas: administration, leadership, contextual engagement and well-being.

"We're hearing from leaders across the church that formation in practical skills in these four areas is most needed in our time and will be very beneficial for leaders' groundwork," said program director Luis Tapia Rubio.

Modules will be offered in-person or online.

Topics to be addressed this fall include leadership identity, guiding congregations through polarization, responding to trauma, leading in transition, intercultural inclusion, peacemaking, effective board practices and healthy congregational culture. — *AMBS*

AMBS leader appointed to second term

ANABAPTIST MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY President David Boshart has been appointed to a second four-year term, which began July 1.

The AMBS Board of Directors, Mennonite Education Agency Board of Directors and Mennonite Church Canada Joint Council made the announcement.

The AMBS board unanimously approved the nomination to reappoint Boshart during its April 20-22 meeting. The MEA Board and MC Canada Joint Council gave unanimous approval in early May.

During Boshart's first term, which included the COVID-19 pandemic, the seminary saw increases in enrollment, both in numbers and diversity; expanded its global partnerships; and launched its doctor of ministry in leadership program while reaching financial equilibrium.


Boshart

The seminary also conducted a listening process with church leaders in 2021 that resulted in the creation of Practical Leadership Training modules, which will launch in August. AMBS leaders are collaborating with MEA and *Seminario Bíblico Anabautista Hispano* (SeBAH) to offer the first Spanish-language graduate-level certificate program in Mennonite Church USA.

Boshart said he was "humbled and deeply grateful" for the church's invitation to a second term.

"I understand leading the AMBS learning community to be a sacred trust," he said. "It's been an honor to serve AMBS alongside a team of mature and spiritually grounded administrators, faculty and staff who love Jesus and the church.

"In the next four years, I hope to strengthen our partnership with the church so that we can both broaden and deepen the reach of all we are doing in order to educate followers of Jesus Christ to be leaders for God's reconciling mission in the world."

— *AMBS*

Philadelphia partnerships facilitate Hesston students' urban experience

HESSTON COLLEGE'S Urban Life and Culture student experience is made possible by sharing resources and working in partnership.

"They say it takes a village, but maybe the better word for us is partnership," said Bible professor Michele Hershberger. "And this partnership is a foretaste of the kingdom of God."

Hershberger leads Urban Life and Culture. The partnership she's referring to includes Mennonite Disaster Service, Crossroads Community Center, Everence and Kingdom Builders Network.

The program is not just another college course. The physical classroom setting shifts through Philadelphia neighborhoods, creating cross-cultural encounters. The classroom sometimes looks like a Puerto Rican row house or a bodega in Hunting Park. At other times it looks more like a church in South Philly, a food pantry on Broad Street or even an office in Kensington. It might even be a van.

"Sometimes we need to debrief all the things we've experienced, and the van is a safe place to ask all the 'why?' questions," said Wideline Charles, a student.

The classroom van is made possible through a partnership between Hesston and MDS, which rents one of its vans for the three-week class May 3-21.

Bishop Juan Marrero of Crossroads Community Center taught on Puerto Rican culture and systemic racism. Pastor Aldo Siahaan of Philadelphia Praise Center taught the second week on Indonesian-American culture and immigration. Leonard Dow, vice president of community and church development for Everence, tied it all together in the final week with his teaching on the African-American story of economic justice and the Great Migration to Philadelphia and other urban centers.

All three leaders connect their work to an Anabaptist context and show how the church is making a difference in Philadelphia.

Katie Claiborne, Shane Claiborne, and Hesston College students Bryce Blake and Smilla Burklin make hearts from gun barrels at RAWtools in Philadelphia. PHOTO: HESSTON COLLEGE

"I saw a Christian organization in a place many people write off," student Keith Showalter said. "We witnessed a passion that [Everence financial wellness manager Kevin Gil] and Leonard have for their community in regard to finance.

"I loved their ability to come up with creative ways to teach financial responsibility to those who were never taught another way. They are breaking generations of financial illiteracy. They are making a huge difference."

Marrero promotes boxing as a way to keep kids off the streets and teach them conflict transformation. He even gave Hesston students a chance to enter the ring and learn some basics. His staff runs a summer children's program, as well as a food pantry where students were on call during their stay.

"There is a lot of hope here, and that hope is nourished by the church working together," Hershberger said. "People of different cultures, different theological views — we have lots of differences, but we love God and we love this city, and that's really good news."

BY **JENNY GEHMAN** • *HOLY HOST*

Tell of the kindness

In a world where you can be anything, be kind.
— Message on a T-shirt I bought at a thrift shop

"WE TELL THE STORY of your kindness all the time," I wrote to Alberto in an email. "You are now famous."

He replied in broken English: "I did never imagine that something as simple as going for a run with your son would have that effect."

Alberto, who is from Spain, lived with our little family almost 20 years ago. He was not only a businessman who came to learn English but an athlete training for the New York City marathon. Every day, he would lace up his shoes and head out on a run. And every day, our 12-year-old son Ryan, who was on the autism spectrum and being home-schooled at the time, would watch him with fascination.

One morning, after about a month of witnessing this routine, Ryan asked me if he could join Alberto on a run. My reply was a fast and firm no. While Ryan had boatloads of energy, he lacked any and all physical coordination at that time and had never run before. I didn't want him to bother our new friend.

Ryan promptly ignored me and, possibly with an inner knowing that I lacked, marched up to Alberto. "Can I run with you?" he asked.

PHOTO: JENNY GEHMAN

Not yet having a command of the English language, Alberto simply smiled, said, "*Si, si*," and off they went, Ryan in his Velcro shoes.

Seven miles later they returned. Seven miles! Ryan's life has never been the same.

Alberto returned to Spain and then flew back to the United States for the marathon, arranging for us to join him in New York. At the age of 13, Ryan was afforded the opportunity to watch, in person, the marathon he will now run in a few short months. It will be his fifth one and, God willing, far from his last.

Ryan is now a sub-elite distance runner with the goal, and very good chance, of being a 2028 Olympic trials qualifier in the marathon. He tells others how running saved his life and Alberto's kindness opened the door. He has made Alberto famous.

ANOTHER PERSON NOW FAMOUS for her kindness is an elderly woman I met during local elections a year or so ago. When I went to our neighborhood polling place to vote and stepped up to the registration table, she was on the opposite side. After finding my name on her roster, she looked up at me, spoke my full first name, Jennifer, and surprised me by asking, "Do you know what your name means?" Before I could answer, she told me, "It means gracious gift from God." And kindness was bestowed upon my head.

I wrote a column about this (Aug. 19, 2022), and if you read it you might remember she got it wrong. "Gracious Gift" is not what my name means. It means "Fair One." But that night, she named me new, and it was holy ground.

When a man from Kansas by the name of Al read that column, he set about making little wooden coins emblazoned with the words, "Gracious gift from God." He wanted to give them out to others, to carry on the kindness.

As I write this, the story of that sweet woman's kindness has gone out to over 10,000 people. And those coins Al makes have been placed into the hands of women living at a shelter, a high school youth group, 79 people at a family reunion, a group of graduating seniors and a young girl freshly rescued from sex-trafficking. All named as gifts. As grace. And I wonder: to what effect? I bet this woman would be astonished to know the impact of her kindness.

JESUS MADE SOMEONE famous, too. In Matthew 26, we read about an unnamed woman who came to Jesus with an alabaster jar of expensive perfume and poured it on his head. When the disciples grew indignant over this costly act of kindness, Jesus came to the woman's defense.

Not only did he tell the curmudgeonly disciples to leave her alone. Not only did he acknowledge her gift as good. He also went on to say, "Truly I tell you, wherever this good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her" (Matthew 26:13).

Tell of the kindness, friends. Practice the kindness. Pass the kindness on. ●

Jenny Gehman is a freelance writer and retreat speaker who publishes a weekly devotional, Little Life Words, at jennygehman.com. She and her husband, Dan, attend Millersville Mennonite Church in Pennsylvania and enjoy hosting friends and strangers from around the world.

BY **JERRELL WILLIAMS** • *CHURCH AND CULTURE*

Am I following God's plan?

I HAVE BEEN PREPARING for a transition. I remember going to the Oregon coast alone and staring out to the ocean. My wife, Sierra, had just given birth to our daughter Orly, and we were really struggling being so far from home. I had gone to the coast to find time to think.

What would be our next move? Do we move away to be closer to family, or do we stay in Oregon where we have made our home? What is the right decision?

In church we often use special language when we are making decisions. We talk about discerning God's call for our lives and letting God guide our steps. In the church where I grew up, we were encouraged to give our lives to God and to follow God wherever God called us.

This often created a value judgment around decisions that one would make for one's life. Following God's call was good; going in a different direction was bad.

I grew up with the idea that God had a perfect plan for my life, and I needed to stick to the script. If not, then that would have been seen as defying God, which often ends badly. Jeremiah 29:11 was the verse commonly used to justify this idea. As long as I was following God, I was assured that everything would work out.

Jerrell Williams is pastor of Salem Mennonite Church in Oregon. A 2015 graduate of Bethel College, he has a master of divinity degree from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

But what do we do when the plan is not so neatly laid out for us? What the church had failed to mention to me, was that sometimes the decisions we have to make are not easy. At times we are faced with decisions and options that cannot be so easily characterized as right or wrong.

I grew up with the idea that God had a perfect plan for my life, and I needed to stick to the script.

Rather than feeling like God has a perfectly etched plan for my life, I have often found myself feeling like a rudderless ship. I was always told I should allow God to direct my life, but lately I have noticed God has not convinced me to move in any one direction.

Now, there are some clear decisions in our lives that are right and wrong. The Bible, the church and fellow humans can help us discern paths forward. But there are moments when no answer seems right or wrong. This lack of clarity can be anxiety-inducing.

WHEN I THINK ABOUT the lack of clarity on our life journeys, I am reminded of the story of the two disciples traveling to Emmaus in Luke's Gospel. This story takes place after the death and resurrection of Jesus but before Jesus appeared to his disciples.

I imagine the followers of Jesus as being those who had placed all their eggs in one basket. All their hopes and dreams were on Jesus' shoulders. And now he, to their knowledge, was dead, but there was no body to be found.

I imagine the disciples felt like a rudderless ship. Where were they supposed to go? What was the next step?

The text doesn't tell us why Cleopas and his unnamed companion are traveling to Emmaus. All we know is that this is the road they had chosen to travel. This is the direction they decided to go.

While walking and discussing all that had happened, they run into a man they think is a stranger, though it was Jesus. They walk, talk and learn from the resurrected Jesus before he vanishes after breaking bread with them.

God is not the one guiding the steps of the two disciples. Rather, God is the one who meets them on the journey. God meets them in their uncertainty.

IT MIGHT FEEL COMFORTING to see God as sketching out every part of our lives before we are born. But I think God gives us autonomy. God allows us to travel the road of uncertainty.

We may come to a fork in the road and need to make a tough decision. We might choose to turn right or left, but no matter what choice that we make, God walks it with us.

It is less about us making the right or wrong choice and more about God being with us no matter which direction we go.

Uncertainty can be scary or even immobilize us. But God travels with us in those difficult moments.

Through much conversation and prayer, Sierra and I have decided to move closer to our families. Many people have affirmed our decision, but this does not make the journey any less difficult. Leaving a beloved community breaks my heart. But I have confidence that God is with us on this journey.

I have no clue if all of this is according to God's plan. I believe God will show up on whatever road my feet touch. ●

BY **HENDY STEVAN MATAHELEMUAL** • *INTERCULTURAL LIFE*

Like Ruth, immigrants know risk — and the value of sharing burdens

I HAVE BEEN REFLECTING on what it means to be a first-generation immigrant. The biblical story of Ruth resonates deeply with me.

Before accompanying Naomi to a foreign land, Ruth expressed her profound commitment by saying, "Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge" (Ruth 1:16).

As an immigrant, choosing where to go involves an element of faith, as the future unfolds with unknown possibilities.

Ruth's commitment didn't end there. She continued: "Where you die, I will die — there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me" (Ruth 1:17, NIV).

Rejecting the easier option of returning to her own people, Ruth prioritized the relationship with her mother-in-law, Naomi.

Ruth, a Moabite, willingly left behind her family and homeland to venture into a foreign land, where she would reside among unfamiliar people. She knew the risks.

Hendy Stevan Matahelemual of South Philadelphia grew up in Bandung, Indonesia. After serving as a pastor in Indonesia, he moved to the United States. He received a master's degree in Christian leadership from Eastern Mennonite Seminary in 2019. He is an ordained minister in Mosaic Mennonite Conference of Mennonite Church USA.

One risk, for Ruth and for immigrants today, is being made to feel unwelcome. "Go back where you came from" — whether spoken or unspoken — is a common challenge.

If someone were to heckle me and demand I go back to my country, my response would be, "I am not a tourist. I am an immigrant, and I intend to stay."

When it is hard for immigrants to find a place to stay, Philadelphia Mennonites offer housing rent-free.

For some immigrants, returning to their home country is not an option. They may have fled persecution or violence or severe economic hardship.

WHEN IMMIGRANTS ARRIVE in a new country, they often isolate themselves, avoiding the settled population's rejection. This was not the case with Ruth and Boaz. They worshiped a God who breaks barriers and reconciles people, turning foes into friends.

Serving in an immigrant community in Philadelphia, it is crucial for me to journey alongside individuals and families, helping them settle in and preparing them for the tribulations that lie ahead.

Many immigrants have a hard time finding a place to stay. Property owners typically demand background checks, credit scores and proof of income, which new immigrants often lack.

To resolve this predicament, Mennonite churches and families in Philadelphia step in by offering temporary housing. They provide rent-free accommodations until the individuals or families can secure a more permanent residence.

Building friendships and alliances, sharing burdens across cultures and generations, are of utmost importance. We should not hesitate to ask for help and extend assistance to others.

"Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).

The burden of tests and tribulations is lightened when we face them collectively.

RUTH RELIED ON the generosity of others. As a first-generation immigrant, she did not own any land, so she collected food from leftovers. Her story reflects the experiences of immigrants who work in less desirable jobs — leftover jobs that others avoid.

Ruth recognized she needed a local person's wisdom. She placed her trust in Naomi, diligently following her instructions. She found another ally and friend, Boaz, who provided protection.

Ruth didn't hesitate to ask for help. She told Boaz, "Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer of our family" (Ruth 3:9, NIV).

Spreading the corner of one's garment symbolized a marriage proposal. Ruth boldly asked Boaz to marry her, and he said yes — although the Torah prohibited marrying a foreigner. But, as boldly as Ruth, he was willing to take a risk.

I believe that as our relationship with God deepens, we become more sensitive to the needs of others, fostering reliance on one another, regardless of our country of origin, taking risks and sharing burdens. ●

BY **SARAH KEHRBERG** • *CRAGGY VIEW*

That's my church

IT'S BEEN A HARD WEEK, and five people are gathered on a party bus, commiserating together. They offer each other support and escape from their various troubles as they dance, drink, eat and sing.

One of the young men leans to his friend and says, "This is church!" She throws her arms up and agrees, "This is church!"

That's a made-up scene, but not by me. It's from a new TV show.

Maren Morris' song, "My Church," is another interpretation of church.

In the music video, Morris is sitting on church steps smoking a cigarette. She sings that she's cussed on a Sunday and cheated and lied. "I've fallen from grace one too many times."

She stands up and walks to her car, singing "I find holy redemption when I put this car in drive; roll the windows down and turn up the dial."

The chorus continues:

Can I get a hallelujah? Can I get an amen?
Feels like the Holy Ghost runnin' through ya,
when I play the highway FM.
I find my soul revival, singing every single verse.
Yeah, I guess that's church.

It's an incredibly catchy song, using gospel music sonorities to suggest a revival service atmosphere full of emotion and excitement.

One more vignette, this one from real life.

A co-worker was venting about her church, which she felt was being judgy and critical. Another co-worker said, "Church is great if it is making you a better [happier, fulfilled] person. But if it isn't doing that for you, then you need to move on to something that will."

MY INSTINCTUAL REACTION is negative. I want church to be at church. Not on a party bus or listening to favorite tunes in the car. I want church to mean people are becoming more holy, not just happy.

But truthfully, I know exactly what these people are talking about.

I remember specific times and places, surrounded by people who know and accept me, where I felt like I could be my truest self. These weren't spiritual settings, but the presence of God was palpable.

I've had some of my most profound worship experiences in a car, by myself. The loud music and rhythmic motion of wheels gliding down the road came together and filled the enclosed, safe space of the car with God's beauty and power.

And I've known toxic churches. They bring God no glory. People should indeed be more happy, more content and more fulfilled in their lives because they go to church.

Like the party bus, church should offer a safe space to be your unvarnished self. Like the jukebox car, church is a place for an emotional encounter with the divine. Like my coworker, I want church to make me a happier person.

But life is not always any of those things. The party bus breaks down. An annoying song comes on the radio. People may not realize it, but living in the unhappy spaces is also church.

CHURCH IS KIND OF LIKE my son's baseball experience. He has had the same coach for six years. Coach Scott doesn't just play for fun, he coaches baseball so the boys improve. He expects them to come to practice and games and work hard. He tolerates no disrespect or bad sportsmanship. He pulls them aside if they pout after a bad throw or hurl their bat after striking out. He believes they can be better ballplayers and better humans.

I want church to mean people are becoming more holy, not just happy. But truthfully, I know exactly what these people are talking about.

At the same time, the boys know that Coach Scott loves them and values them, regardless of their performance on the ball field.

This mixture of expectation and love is what defines hope. The boys thrive in a relationship that hopes for great things and celebrates whatever is.

This is what the church offers, as well. Yes, there are commandments and teachings that come with being part of Jesus' church. It is hard work to love our enemies and forgive people who don't deserve it. No one likes to be told they struck out and need to go back to the dugout.

But then again, we also don't want to be told that there's no hope for us. Jesus told us to be perfect, like God is perfect. And he also invited all the tired and weary to come to him for rest.

Jesus says we can be better tomorrow, even while accepting every part of us today. That's my church. ●

Sarah Kehrberg lives in the Craggy Mountains of western North Carolina with her husband and three children.

BY **BRAD ROTH** • *SCRIPTURE*

If everyone's a priest, does ordination matter?

ONCE, IN MY EARNEST young seminary student days, I asked the pastor supervising my congregational internship if I could lead communion. He hesitated. Do you need a credential for that?

The pastor decided to check up the line, and eventually, though I was not ordained for ministry, I got the green light to break the bread and bless the cup at the Lord's table.

Why does the church grant credentials for ministry? What does ordination mean?

In my experience, we Mennonites often don't have much in the way of a working theology of ordination. I sat on a conference's credentialing body for a number of years, and nearly to a person, the men and women who came before us struggled to articulate the significance of ordination. They wanted it, but they didn't know what for.

Most of the people identified ordination in functional terms, something akin to obtaining a professional license — like what you need to become a nurse or a lawyer or a barber.

Some of their puzzlement could probably be chalked up to a wayward understanding of the "priesthood of all believers" (1 Peter 2:9). If everybody's a priest, so the thinking goes, then what would ordination offer that any God-fearing nurse, lawyer or barber couldn't do already?

PHOTO: MENNONITE MISSION NETWORK

THE APOSTLE PAUL spoke to the unique called-out character of ministry when he told Timothy not to "neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders" (1 Timothy 4:14).

Just as the Levites were selected to serve from among the whole priestly people of Israel (Exodus 19:6), ministers are called out to the work of tending the Lord's flock. They ought to serve "not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it — not for sordid gain but eagerly" (1 Peter 5:1-2).

That priestly work flows from Christ's own self-gift of love (Ephesians 4:7-12).

Jesus gave himself "for the life of the world" (John 6:51).

Christ the High Priest "did not glorify himself" (Hebrew 5:5) but "offered himself" to the Father as a sacrifice for sin "once for all" (Hebrews 7:27).

Ordination is Christ giving the gift of ministry to an individual through the church.

According to Paul, Timothy received the gift through the laying on of hands and prophecy. That means there's a supernatural dimension to Timothy's calling to ministry, but it's channeled through the earthly structures of the church.

I SOMETIMES WONDER if we place undue weight on an individual's internal sense of calling. "Call" risks becoming overly subjective. God's voice can be counterfeited by wish or ego or hurt.

Paul grounds Timothy's ministry less in feeling and more in the church's gift. By saying yes to the church, Timothy was saying yes to Jesus.

Of course, the church had no doubt already discerned Timothy's intelligence and wisdom before they laid hands on him. Surely the elders had witnessed his developing skills and earnestness. They had seen the fingerprints of the Holy Spirit all over the clay of his life. But Timothy received the gift of ministry when the church ordained him.

There's a supernatural dimension to Timothy's ministry, but it's channeled through the earthly structures of the church.

This matters, because ministry belongs to the church. When we set someone apart for the pastorate, what we're really saying is that this person is working on behalf of the church. We're saying Christ is continuing his ministry through this man or woman.

I'm older these days. My earnestness comes in fits. But I still catch myself feeling a little awe at the work I get to share as an ordained minister: the preaching, the teaching, the baptizing. Especially the breaking of bread.

What a gift! ●

Brad Roth is lead pastor of Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston, Kan., and author of *The Hunger Inside: How the Meal Jesus Gave Transforms Lives* (Paraclete, 2022).

REVIEWED BY **RACHEL WALTNER GOOSSEN**

A novel of Ukraine in a time of crisis

THE ACCLAIMED Canadian poet Sarah Klassen's newest work is a novel about Mennonite family life in Ukraine during the early 20th century. The story centers on a Mennonite couple's adoption of a Russian infant about 1904 and their family life during the last years of Romanov imperial rule.

Set in a fictional Mennonite village as well as in the Ukrainian regions around Kharkov (Kharkiv) and Barvenkovo, this book provides a compelling point of access into ordinary (and extraordinary) people's lives against a backdrop of cultural upheaval, political instability and economic uncertainty.

In the prologue, we learn that most of the main characters, members of the Albrecht family, have recently emigrated from Russia, escaping civil war and compounding violence. Left behind is an adult daughter, Sofia, who hopes she will soon join her parents and siblings abroad but is making one last visit to the family's home village of Friedental. By the time she returns there, most of Friedental's Mennonites have already departed. It is a liminal moment for Sofia, whose childhood and coming-of-age years have been marked by her dual identities (born Russian and raised Mennonite); her physical disability (mobility issues due to a "crooked back"), her outsider status within a tight-knit community and her grief stemming from personal tragedy.

As the novel unfolds, we learn more about Sofia's earlier life. An inquisitive and thoughtful child, she wonders about her birth parents and the circumstances through which the Albrechts took her into their home. At times, the novel's storytelling shifts to the parallel perspectives of her adoptive parents. Her mother Amalia and father Isaak, while loving and generally well-intentioned, are troubled by conflictual family dynamics and fretful about an unraveling social order. The biblical allusion "war and the rumor of wars" hovers as a shadow over the Albrechts' lives and those of their extended family, as well as their landless Russian employees, whose daily labor is essential to the functioning of the Albrechts' household and farm.

Over the story's 20-year time frame, Amalia and Isaak Albrecht face challenge upon challenge. Some are highly personal and closely-guarded — infertility, depression, the breaking of sexual taboos and generational conflict. With neighbors and friends, including an endearing preacher to whom they often turn for counsel, they navigate trials through revolution and war, including a typhus epidemic, falling land prices, changing conscription policies that draw young Mennonites into militias and edicts requiring the housing and feeding of military officers as Russia's civil war drags on.

Through all this, Sofia is for her parents both a source of joy and consternation. Her questioning of cultural mores within village life, as well as ideas that she picks up while boarding at the *Zentralschule* (a secondary school aimed at training future teachers and ministers), in turn influence her younger twin siblings. These younger Albrechts are precocious in their own way. Sofia's adolescent brother Boris asks a question that must have been anathema to Friedental elders: "Does God love the Mennonites more than he loves Russians?" Sofia's younger sister Hannah is an aspiring teacher whose passion for Russian language and literature threatens her Mennonite family's sense of cohesion.

THIS NOVEL APPEARS at a time of heightened interest in Russian-Ukrainian relations. Now in her 90s, author Sarah Klassen has spent much of her life in Manitoba, teaching literature in addition to publishing poetry and fictional portrayals of early 20th-century Russian Mennonite life. Her knowledge of Ukrainian landscapes and culture is informed, in part, by having taught English briefly at a language institute in Kharkiv. The storylines in *The Russian Daughter* have their origins in an account that Klassen's mother (herself an émigré from Ukraine) once told her about a Mennonite couple from her own village who, long ago, tried to adopt a child.

The Russian Daughter, by Sarah Klassen (Canadian Mennonite University Press, 2022)

An interview of Klassen in the *Winnipeg Free Press* suggests the thematic material in this novel offers a historical opening for readers "barraged with media reports of unspeakable destruction of cities, infrastructure and human life in Ukraine." Klassen suggests that "while the shape of suffering may be different," the quest for solace and reclaimed peace among people of Ukraine today echoes, and perhaps even mirrors, the wartime struggles of her cast of characters. It is a notion that lingers well past the closing pages of this finely detailed work.

Rachel Waltner Goossen is professor emerita of history at Washburn University in Topeka, Kan.

BY **JONATHAN MERRITT** • Religion News Service

Attendees pass through the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in New Orleans. PHOTO: EMILY KASK/RNS

Opinion: Baptist rejection of women pastors is a self-inflicted wound

FOR 17 YEARS, the Southern Baptist Convention has worked tirelessly to slow its decline. Now the struggling denomination seems to be trying to hasten it.

Earlier this year, the SBC's Executive Committee expelled five churches for having women serving as pastors, in accord with the denomination's statement of faith, known as the Baptist Faith and Message, which was amended two decades ago to state that "the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture."

Southern Baptists doubled down to amend their constitution to say that churches must have "only men as any kind of pastor or elder as qualified by Scripture."

One of the expelled churches is the 57,000-member Saddleback Church, an influential multisite congregation and church-planting juggernaut in Southern California founded by Rick Warren, author of the bestselling book *The Purpose Driven Life*. Warren is not only popular inside the denomination, he's likely the Southern Baptist preacher most Americans would recognize.

The move is baffling given the shambled state of the denomination, which has been steadily hemorrhaging members since 2007. Last year alone, the SBC reported 416 fewer churches and shed nearly 500,000 members — the largest single drop in 100 years. The SBC's public image has been severely tarnished by a clergy sex abuse scandal bungled and mishandled by leaders at numerous stages. It's difficult to imagine a worse time for the denomination to wage a war to narrow its borders.

The recent move is only the latest in a wave of self-inflicted wounds. In 2019, an investigation by the *Houston Chronicle* and *San Antonio Express-News* uncovered some 700 cases of sexual abuse in Southern Baptist churches spanning decades. A subsequent task force and internal investigation unearthed a cover-up scheme in which victims of clergy sexual abuse were stonewalled and denigrated by the denomination's top leaders.

Members have fled the SBC, too, because of its perpetually aggrieved and bitterly divided politics. While the denomination has been entangled with Republicanism for decades, many Southern Baptists have been disoriented by some of their leaders' full-throated support of former President Donald Trump. This partisan turn cost them the allegiance of Beth Moore, the denomination's most popular Bible study teacher, and Russell Moore, the prominent former head of the SBC's political arm.

Then there are the recent debates on race. The denomination, overwhelmingly white and founded on tolerance for slavery, opposes any suggestion that institutional and systemic racism even exists. After the six SBC seminary presidents, all white men, released a sweeping statement in November 2020 condemning so-called critical race theory as "antithetical to the Bible," many prominent Black pastors publicly broke with the SBC.

WITH THESE NIGHTMARES swirling, the SBC chose last month to further alienate Warren, a fourth-generation Southern Baptist whose credentials and credibility any declining institution would leap to capitalize on.

In the weeks leading up to the gathering in New Orleans, Warren launched an online campaign

to convince the SBC that this issue was not worth dividing over. Having turned over Saddleback's pulpit last summer to a younger man, Warren told the press this week that the SBC "can't hurt me," explaining that he was fighting instead for his denomination. "It's not really smart when you are losing half a million members a year to kick out people who want to fellowship with you," he told reporters.

In his speech from the floor of the convention center appealing the decision to disfellowship his church, Warren noted that the denomination's constitution states that churches must "closely identify, not completely identify" with the statement of faith: "The Baptist Faith and Message is 4,032 words. Our church disagrees with only one word. That's 99.99% in agreement. Isn't that close enough?"

Not, apparently, close enough for his fellow Southern Baptists, who voted resoundingly to turn their back on a pastor they once revered and sever ties with their largest congregation.

YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND a debate apart from the cultural context in which the debate takes place. And the vote against women pastors arises in part from a fear that has gripped the wider conservative world about gender norms and definitions. It's not incidental that the ultraconservative SBC leader and pastor Mike Stone preached a sermon ahead of the annual meeting in which he accused those who advocate for women pastors of supporting "theological transgenderism," a nonsense phrase concocted to connect female church leaders with the controversy unfolding around gender in the wider culture.

The vote against women pastors arises in part from a fear that has gripped the wider conservative world about gender norms and definitions.


Warren

It is estimated that nearly 1,900 of the 47,000 SBC churches have a woman serving in a pastoral role. Women have served in these roles long before and since their supposed disqualification in 2000. Subjecting these women and their churches to an inquisition will accelerate the exodus of Southern Baptists.

Enforcing the ban on female pastors changes the nature of the denomination. The Baptist Faith and Message has historically functioned only as a summary of common beliefs, not as a binding or governing document. What held the SBC together traditionally is trust and an enthusiasm for spreading the gospel, not doctrine and rules.

MANY WHO HAVE LEFT the SBC are heartbroken by what we witnessed. But we are not surprised. Beginning in the late 1970s, fundamentalist factions seized control of the SBC's agencies and seminaries, purging so-called liberals and installing themselves in positions of power.

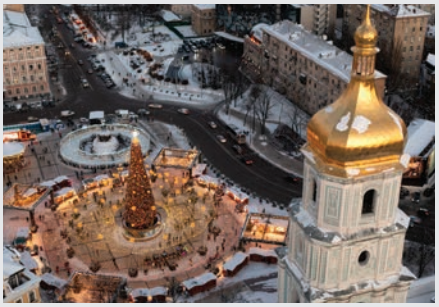
If you ask Baptists who found themselves on the other side of this struggle — many of them far from "liberal" by any modern definition — they'll describe the ordeal as a power grab by fundamentalists who wanted to remake the denomination from a big tent movement that allowed for doctrinal diversity into something harsher. Having successfully fundamentalized the Southern Baptist Convention, they've ensured that its glory days are numbered.

Ukrainian church rejects Russian calendar

NEARLY FIVE YEARS after the Orthodox Church of Ukraine was recognized as independent from the Russian Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian church has further cemented its split from the Russian counterpart by adopting a new liturgical calendar.

The decision still needs to be approved by the church's ruling council in July, but it is expected to pass. The calendar shift is then slated to go into effect on Sept. 1 of this year.

The most palpable impact will be that millions of Ukrainians will celebrate Christmas with the Western world on Dec. 25, instead of two weeks later when Russian and other Eastern Orthodox churches, following the Julian calendar, mark Christ's birth. Westerners adopted the Gregorian calendar introduced by Pope Gregory XII in the 16th century.


St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv, Ukraine, with a Christmas tree in 2021. PHOTO: EFREM LUKATSKYI/AP

The shift has a distinctly political character. The church described its decision to use "the living Ukrainian language in worship instead of the traditional Slavic one" as a desire for the newly independent church to replace "centuries-old subordination."

The "centuries-old subordination" refers to the 16th-century move to put Orthodox faithful in what is modern Ukraine under the purview of the Patriarchate of Moscow. In the wake of Russia's 2014 invasion of eastern Ukraine and annexation of Crimea, it became clear that Orthodox Christians in Ukraine needed to exit from Russian authority, which they did in 2019.

— Religion News Service

BY **YONAT SHIMRON** • Religion News Service

The world is losing its religion

Revival is unlikely, say three sociologists who've studied the data

THE CLAIM THAT religion is declining and giving way to secularism may not seem so controversial these days.

But it's a relatively new one for many American sociologists who have held that the United States — a modern, wealthy and industrialized nation that is also highly religious — is proof of religion's staying power.

As recently as 2008, the late sociologist Peter Berger argued that the United States represented "the big nail in the coffin" of the theory that modern countries are all becoming more secular.

Now three sociologists have penned a primer showcasing data from around the world that proves religiosity is undeniably declining in most if not all modern industrial countries — at least when measured by beliefs (in God or the Bible), belonging (to a particular congregation) and behavior (such as church-based baptisms or weddings).

Kasselstrand

In *Beyond Doubt: The Secularization of Society*, Isabella Kasselstrand, Phil Zuckerman and Ryan T. Cragun lay out a theory that can be summed up in a simple phrase: "Modernization creates problems for religion."

They explain that countries that have gone through a process of "differentiation," or the separation of religion from government, and "rationalization," or the emphasis on modern, scientific ideals, have seen dramatic drops in the levels of religiosity.

Further, they argue that once countries undergo those processes, the likelihood that secularization can be reversed and religion regain its footing is very small. In one chapter, they examine four countries on four continents where secularization has taken root: Chile, Norway, South Korea and the United States. Conversely, they say, countries with low levels of development and high levels of government regulation of religion are the most religious. Among them: Bangladesh, Rwanda, Yemen.

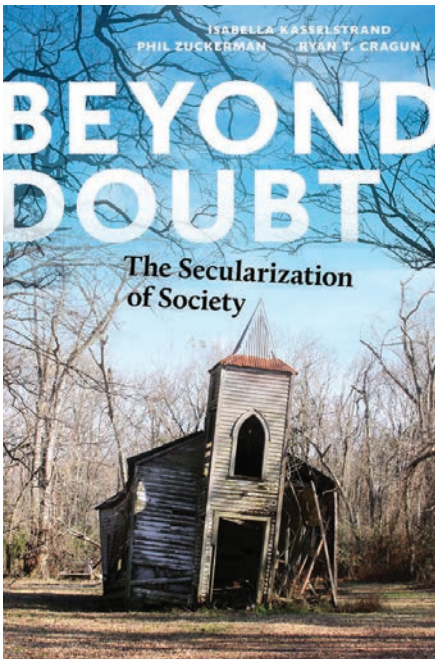


PHOTO: RELIGION NEWS SERVICE

People need a sense of identity, and religion provides this. As people lose religion, they turn elsewhere for a sense of identity.

Religion News Service spoke to the three sociologists about their book and their theory that secularization is ascendant around the world. (According to the scholars, more than a billion people around the world are now secular.) The interview was edited for length and clarity.

Why did you want to write this book about secularism now?

Cragun: There was a debate for the past 30 years about whether the U.S. is an exception to secularization. We decided the data are overwhelming. It's time to end the debate. It's beyond doubt: The U.S. is not an exception.

Prominent 19th-century intellectuals first proposed the theory of secularization. How are today's theories of secularization different from those advanced earlier?

Zuckerman: You have the classical theorists who predicted the demise of religion. But they didn't offer any theory of secularization. There was no proposition or testable claims. There were no hypotheses. They didn't have the data. We have decades of data, and it seems to bolster earlier claims.

One thing you don't address in the book is the political situation in the U.S. Christianity is ascendant on the political level, especially at the Supreme Court, which is arguably more influenced by religion than ever. Why?

Zuckerman: Our book is not about the politics of faith. Our book asks if people are more or less religious than in the past. If you have a society full of nonreligious people, but those in power are religious, is that a religious society? Donald Trump had the most religious Cabinet of any in the United States. But simultaneously, the citizens of the United States are less religious than they've ever been. So, both things can happen simultaneously. These things are actually related. As the U.S. becomes more racially and ethnically diverse and more secular, you're going to see the white Christian nationalists assert their dominance. If we could do it over again, we would add a chapter

on the U.S. secularizing and simultaneously these power players exerting even more of their religious zealotry on all of us.

Kasselstrand: There's no evidence that people are becoming more religious as a result of this.


Zuckerman

Poland is another interesting case. The Catholic Church enjoys a privileged position and gets a ton of financial support from the government. The country recently put in place a draconian abortion law.

Cragun: There are instances where you could potentially see a reversal of secularization. We talk in the book about Russia and the former Soviet republics, where you have a collapse of the economy and rise of authoritarian governments. Those governments often turn to religion to provide the justification of the new government. People need a sense of identity, and religion provides this. As people lose religion, they turn somewhere else for a sense of identity. For many people, it's politics. But I don't think there will be a reversal of secularization in Poland.

One country where there is a clear reversal of secularism is Israel. Have you considered it at all?

Zuckerman: You're correct. Israel was way secular, and that's completely changing, and it's mostly a matter of babies. Haredi Jews have 12 kids per couple, and secular Jews have three. Demographically in the next 40 years the Orthodox will outnumber secularists. Also, Israel conforms to the theory we talk about, which is cultural defense. Any time a society is threatened from the outside by another religion or national ethnic group, we expect that religion will be stronger. Ireland was the least secularizing part of Western Europe because it had centuries of Protestant domination and oppression at the hands of the English. In Israel, you've got a small, Jewish ethno-nationalist state surrounded by Muslim, Arab ethno-nationalists. So Jewish and Israeli identity all become heightened. I'm not one who says secularism theory has to be right 100% of the time. It is possible a nation can buck that. If Israelis are becoming more religious for other reasons — not due to birthrates or cultural defense — we would acknowledge that as an exception.

There was a debate for the past 30 years about whether the U.S. is an exception to secularization. It's time to end the debate: The U.S. is not an exception.

You cite a 2015 Pew Research study showing the world's share of religious people will likely increase by 2050. What are the implications of secularization in the future?

Kasselstrand: There are demographic models that predict the world will get more religious. That assumes these countries will not secularize. We would argue that if these countries go through this process of modernization, they will see religious decline. But we're not saying religion will go away.


Cragun

Cragun: Freedom of and from religion is key in those instances. In countries where you're not allowed to leave Islam, for example, it'll be harder to see a decline of religiosity. Those things have to change. The theory is contingent on those changes. We want to establish that secularization is happening and that the evidence is overwhelming, and we want to formalize the theory and allow people to test it. ●

Classifieds

classifieds@anabaptistworld.org

EMPLOYMENT — CHURCH

Mt. View Mennonite Church in Lyndhurst, Va., is seeking a full-time lead pastor. We are a Bible-believing, Christ-honoring rural community church. We represent a variety of ages including young families and lots of children. We have a Youth Pastor and active youth group, have mid-week children and youth activities, adult prayer time and Bible study. For more information or to send a resume, send email to our Search Committee at denluhatter@gmail.com. (9)

Watertown Mennonite Church, an Anabaptist group of 10, is seeking a bivocational church planter/replanter to bring a peace presence in an area heavily influenced by a large military base. If interested, contact New York Mennonite Conference Minister at office@nymennonite.org. (9-10)

North Lima Mennonite Church in northeastern Ohio is looking for a half-time associate pastor. The church is affiliated with LMC, a network of Anabaptist congregations that seeks to be a Spirit-led movement to make disciples of Jesus. The pastor will serve the church primarily in the areas of pastoral care, administration and by preaching once a month. The Mennonite salary guidelines will be used to determine a support package. Direct inquiries to nlmennonite@att.net or 330-549-2333. (8-9)

EMPLOYMENT — GENERAL

Western District Conference seeks a quarter-time Fund Development Coordinator beginning July 2023 to cultivate donor relationships and congregational giving, promote planned giving and generate creative fundraising initiatives. Qualifications include communication, fund-raising and development skills. Position description and application form at mennowdc.org/employment. Please submit application and letter of interest to heidirk@mennowdc.org. (9)

Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community (VMRC) is currently seeking a new president/CEO who desires to lead, strengthen and dedicate themselves to a vibrant not-for-profit, continuing care retirement community located in Harrisonburg, Va. This candidate will exhibit the highest level of integrity, compassion and an ability to demonstrate a faith commitment consistent with the values and culture of VMRC. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO is responsible for the overall operation of VMRC. Interested persons are invited to send cover letters and resumes to MHS Consulting at mhssearches@mhsonline.org. All inquiries will be held in confidence. Full job description: mhs-association.org/jobs. (9)

EMPLOYMENT — SCHOOL

Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, is hiring a new Director of Student Services to build a community where students find belonging, form lifelong friendships and develop as both successful university students and as whole persons, in alignment with the mission, values and identity of the college. The successful candidate will have significant leadership experience in university or college student affairs or in a similar setting. Applications will be reviewed beginning July 21, 2023. Grebel is committed to employment equity and welcomes applications from all qualified persons. Canadian citizens and permanent residents will be given priority. For further information see grebel.ca/positions. (9)

Canadian Mennonite University seeks an experienced, human-skilled, student-centered academic leader to serve as Registrar. The Registrar is a key member of the CMU's academic leadership team, reporting directly to the Vice-President Academic. Providing leadership to enact the academic vision of the institution, the Registrar will work closely with the Dean of Student Life to ensure a cohesive student experience across academic and non-academic programs and student services. View details at cmu.ca/employment. (8-9)

TRAVEL

This Christmas in Europe. Register today! Holiday trip of a lifetime to Germany and Austria! Dec. 5-13, 2023: Scenic Alps, Lodge in 12th-century castle, "Silent Night" Chapel, Christmas Markets and Concert in Vienna. $2,969 plus air. Reservation deadline: Aug. 24, 2023. See a video at vimeo.com/790944746 and facebook.com/groups/847981909644550 on Facebook for more information. Brochure and registration at pilgrimtours.com/groups/martensgroup2023.htm or contact Pastor Weldon Martens, weldon.martens@gmail.com; 402-202-9276. (9-11)

2024 Greece Tour and Cruise. Following the Footsteps of Paul. May 27-June 6, 2024. $3,219 plus flights. Details coming soon! Join the interest roster. Contact Pastor Weldon Martens, weldon.martens@gmail.com; 402-202-9276. (9-16)

LODGING

North Newton guest housing — 316-283-5231; vadasnider@cox.net. (10-9)

*$1.50 a word. Send ads to **classifieds@anabaptistworld.org**. For information about display ads or online advertising, see **anabaptistworld.org/ads**. To inquire about display ads or online advertising, email **advertising@anabaptistworld.org** or call 316-283-3670.*

Obituaries

obituaries@anabaptistworld.org

Leon D. Farmwald

Leon D. Farmwald, 91, died May 18, 2023, at home in Goshen, Ind.

He was born May 13, 1932, in Nappanee, Ind., to Alvin and Martha (Kaufman) Farmwald.

He married Esther Stahly in 1955 at North Main Street Mennonite Church in Nappanee, where he was a member for most of his life and served in a variety of leadership roles and on numerous committees.


Farmwald

While performing 1-W service in Indianapolis, he was a founding member of First Mennonite Church in Indianapolis. For most of his adult life, he used his entrepreneurial and leadership skills as a board member for several nonprofit organizations, most notably chairing the board of the Michiana Mennonite Relief Sale and serving on the boards of directors and building committees for Amigo Centre and Little Eden Camp.

He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Esther; children Kevin (Dawn) Farmwald of Elkhart, Ind., Hal (Vicki) Farmwald of Central City, Colo., and Leanne (Rich Preheim) Farmwald of Elkhart; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and brothers Stanley (Alma) Farmwald, Donald (Joyce Troyer) Farmwald, Kenneth (Ruby) Farmwald, Royce (Elva) Farmwald and Paul Farmwald.

A celebration of life was held at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen. Memorial contributions may be made to Mennonite Central Committee.

Sharon Wyse Miller

Sharon Wyse Miller, 79, of Harrisonburg, Va., died May 16, 2023. She was born Nov. 26, 1943, in Henry County, Iowa, to Mahlon and Frances Wenger Wyse. She graduated from Iowa Mennonite High School, pursued a nursing degree at Hesston College and graduated from Kansas City General Hospital School of Nursing.

In 1965 she married Duane K. Miller of Wellman, Iowa, and they raised their family on a rural Wellman farm. She used her nursing skills in a local doctor's office and nursing home. Once the children arrived, she always said she upgraded to "pediatric nursing." Her family, church and farm activities were most important, but she also involved herself in many volunteer functions such as editing a church conference periodical, Sunday school teaching, serving in leadership and speaking positions in the Mennonite conference women's organization.

Sharon "manned" the Mennonite Central

Committee hot line during the 1980s farm crisis. She served as part-time chaplain at a local nursing home for several years, served a term on the Hesston College Board of Overseers and worked as director of development at Iowa Mennonite School for two years. She journaled extensively about farm life, the children, church and current events.


Miller

Her varied activities whetted her appetite for further education. At the University of Iowa, she earned a bachelor's degree in global studies. She yearned for mission or church work in another setting, and she and Duane transitioned from farm life to Mennonite Central Committee in Haiti. There for over three years she hosted a guest house and helped to train peasant leaders to use their gifts in rural leadership.

After Haiti she enrolled at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, graduating in 1998 with a master of arts in religion degree. She then pastored smaller Mennonite churches, first in Burlington, Iowa, and then in Ambler, Pa. She and Duane retired to Rockingham County, Va., to be near their grandchildren.

She is survived by her husband, Duane; her children, Annette Marie (Rick) Martin, Steven Duane (Jessica Alexander), Susan Beth (Dwight) Huyard and Jonathan Yung Jin (Katie Quayle); brothers Gene Wyse (Alice), Ronald Wyse (Barb) and sister Rebecca; 11 grandchildren and three great-grandsons. She was predeceased by a brother, Richard.

A celebration of life service was held at Community Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Daniel Levi Hertzler

Daniel L. Hertzler, 97, of Scottdale, Pa., long-time editor of Mennonite publications, died June 14, 2023, in Scottdale.

He was born Oct. 19, 1925, in Elverson, Pa., to Melvin and Susan (Shenk) Hertzler. He married Mary Yoder, daughter of Eugene and Esther (Miller) Yoder, in Aurora, Ohio, on July 12, 1952. She preceded him in death in November 2017.

He dropped out of high school to assist his father on the family farm but never lost his desire for lifelong learning. He would go on to earn multiple educational degrees: a bachelor of arts from Eastern Mennonite College in 1951, a bachelor of theology from Eastern Mennonite College in 1952, a bachelor of divinity from Goshen Biblical Seminary in 1955 and a doctor of philosophy, religious education, from the University of Pittsburgh in 1966. In retirement he earned another graduate degree, a master of sacred theology, from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 1995.

He had a 38-year career with the Mennonite Publishing House, from 1952 to 1990. His work involved editing a variety of Christian education publications as well as *Mennonite Community*, *Christian Living*, *Builder* and, for 17 years, *Gospel Herald*. He retired in 1990.

In 1945 after World War II, he signed up to work on a cattle boat heading to Poland. The relief effort included delivering horses and heifers to Europe, and in 1947 he decided to again participate in a crew organized by Mennonite Central Committee.


Hertzler

This experience was the start of worldwide travels, including attending Mennonite World Conference assemblies beginning in 1962 in Canada and ending in 2003 in Zimbabwe. His travels took him to Africa, Europe, India and Australia and many U.S. cities.

His hobbies included grafting trees, gardening and beekeeping. His extensive writing included authoring articles and books, including his memoirs, *A Little Left of Center* and *On My Way: The View from the Ninth Decade*.

Survivors include four sons, Dennis of Monesson, Pa., Ron (Laurel) of Telford, Pa., Gerry (Mary) of Goshen, Ind., and Dan Mark (Christie) of Lancaster, Pa.; nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren; a brother, Truman Hertzler of Elverson, Pa.; and a sister, Katherine Hallman of Kansas City, Mo. A sister, Martha, preceded him in death in 2021.

Memorial gifts may be designated for Mennonite World Conference.

Ruth E. Martin

Ruth Eleanor Hartzler Martin, 88, died June 16, 2023, at Landis Homes, Lititz, Pa. She was born Oct. 14, 1934, in Wakarusa Ind., to Roy and Katie (Lichty) Hartzler.


Martin

She graduated from Goshen College with a BSN in 1956. She spent three years in Pakis/Taju, Java, Indonesia, with Mennonite Central Committee from 1959 to 1962. She worked in nursing — ob-gyn, psychiatry and nursing administration — for over 50 years.

She and Jay W. Martin married in August 1968 in California. They met while both were working at Kings View Hospital, Reedley, Calif. She became director of in-service education in 1968 and director of nursing in 1969 at Centre Community Hospital, Bellefonte, Pa., now Mount Nittany Medical Center, State College. She completed her MSN in nursing administration at Penn State University in 1979. In 1988 she became director of nursing at Philhaven Hospital, Lebanon, Pa. She also worked at Inglis House in Philadelphia and part-time at Landis Homes prior to her retirement.

She was involved in the National Organization of Nurse Executives and the Pennsylvania Chapter. She was an active member of the Mennonite Nurses Association and Mennonite Health Association, serving on the board and as president of each. She was the first female chair of University Mennonite Church in State College. She served on the pastoral team at Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster. She served 12 years on the Board of Mennonite Mutual Aid, now Everence.

A caring person, she worked to understand people who felt they were different and were marginalized by society. She was the first straight person to serve on the board of the Brethren/Mennonite Council for LGBTQ+ Interests. Friendly and outgoing, she had a gift for making people comfortable. She and Jay enjoyed traveling together, meeting new people, cooking together and entertaining friends.

She is survived by her husband; two sisters, Freda (Paul) Friesen of California and Isabelle (John) Blough of Kansas; and two brothers, David (Mary) Hartzler of Tennessee and Dwight (Margaret) Hartzler of Florida. She was predeceased by a sister, Mary "Marty" Hartzler, and a brother, Phil Hartzler.

*Send obituaries to **obituaries@anabaptistworld.org** or Anabaptist World, PO Box 568, Newton, KS 67114. From your text, we will prepare an obituary, up to 350 words, compliant with our style. The fee is $50. Send check or pay online at **anabaptistworld.org/obituaries**.*