

The Mennonite

LOVING ENEMIES

INSIDE

My journey of forgiveness

Pacifism and politics

Roses and thorns



DIALOGUE, PRACTICE AND THE WORK OF LIBERATION
NOVEMBER 8-10, 2018

**Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary,
Elkhart, Indiana**

Early Registration: \$125 before Oct. 12

SPEAKERS:



Dr. Malinda Elizabeth Berry



Reverend Yvette R. Blair



Carolina Hinojosa-Cisneros

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The Mennonite

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Antiracism commitment

Concerning the article “Must Antifa Bear the Cross Alone?” (June), I appreciate the need to condense the original article because it was much too long to print in total. However, to experience the full flavor of the article, the website is printed at the end of the article or may be found here: <https://blog.menno.org/2017/09/03/sermon-must-antifa-bear-the-cross-alone>

—Cecil Graber, Eureka, Ill.

Loving community

“Love Community More Than Unity” (Editorial, June) seems relevant at this time in our history. Your quotation from Bonhoeffer’s *Life Together* is in agreement with this as well.

The whole June issue was tops.

—L. Jason Baer, Maugansville, Md.

An assault on truth

Thank you, Gordon Houser, for your outspoken article regarding the search for truth in a world where there is such a lack of it in today’s high places. (Mediaculture, September). You are brave to risk possible rejection from conservative Christian groups who so overwhelmingly support Donald Trump, regardless of how

much falsehood and distortion he tries to present as truth. As Houser points out, Trump made 4,229 false or misleading claims in the first 558 days of his presidency, according to the *Washington Post*. We may think, What’s the big deal, but there are consequences to believing a lie, ones that result in serious inequities in society—special benefits to the powerful and wealthy at the expense of the less privileged and needy.

I see few articles like this in the ministry of the Mennonite church. I wonder if this is due to the possibility that many (most?) members disapprove of speaking out. Leaders may feel it would cause division, resentment, confusion among the membership. But the question remains, What is truth, and how much do we want to “belong to the truth,” as Jesus said in John?

—Edwin G. Moyer, Quakertown, Pa.

Mennonite Church Canada staffer sentenced

(See “Mennonite Church Canada Staffer Sentenced to Seven Days in Jail,” page 7): An update since Steve’s court case: The ruling by the Federal Court of Appeal quashing the [Canadian] government’s approval of the TransMountain pipeline project, because of inadequate consultation with First Nations.

—Arli Klassen, Facebook

IN THIS ISSUE

Jesus calls his followers to “love your enemies” (Matthew 5:44). In this issue, we include stories of people seeking to put that call into action.

Joanne Gallardo (page 10) tells about her journey to forgiveness after a sexual assault. Tim Nafziger (page 14) interviews Jonathan Smucker, a political organizer who believes loving enemies can be an effective strategy. Yanett Palacios (page 18), a pastor in Guatemala, tells the story of a woman in her congregation who ended up praying for the man who killed her son-in-law. Jonathan Nahar (page 21) offers testimonies of people working for peace in Israel and Palestine. Amy S. Zimelman (page 25) reflects on the biblical story of the Samaritan woman and how it has been interpreted in a way that brings shame on her. The editorial (page 40) contends that the enemies we need to love may be within us.—*Editor*

READERS’ POLL



2.7%

Everything pumpkin spice

45.9%

Fall foliage

0%

Shorter days

51.4%

Cooler temperatures

Look for the next poll question on *The Mennonite’s* Facebook and Twitter pages.

News Briefs

COMPILED BY
GORDON HOUSER

Central District Conference votes to restore credentials of Pastor Isaac Villegas

At a regular meeting on Aug. 23, the Central District Conference (CDC) ministerial committee took a unanimous action to restore the credentials of Isaac Villegas, pastor of Chapel Hill (N.C.) Mennonite Fellowship (CHMF).

This action comes after CHMF's transfer of membership from Virginia Mennonite Conference (VMC) to CDC on June 22.

CDC leaders considered this action in consultation with VMC leaders, in

light of a decision made in May 2016 by VMC's Faith and Life Commission to place Villegas' credentials "under suspension" after his performance of a same-sex marriage ceremony.

Villegas conducted the wedding while serving as a member of MC USA's Executive Board and subsequently resigned from that position. CHMF, whose congregants discerned the process and gave their blessing to Villegas to perform the ceremony, remained in good standing with VMC.

CHMF's transfer to CDC followed the MC USA process on congregational transfer from one area conference to another, found in Article III.3.b of the MC USA bylaws, as well as CDC's two-step membership process, in which any new congregation is (1) initially introduced at an Annual Meeting and (2) voted on for membership by delegates one year later.

The VMC Faith and Life Commission stated on April 20: "FLC relinquishes

Isaac Villegas' ministerial credentials to Central District Conference, with Central District's knowledge that the designated status with MC USA Ministerial Leadership Office is 'under suspension.'"

—Mennonite Church USA

MC USA Executive Board discusses MennoCon19, strategic plan

Glen Guyton met with the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board (EB) for the first time as executive director Aug. 16-18 at the MC USA offices in Elkhart, Ind.

With MennoCon19 coming up in July 2019, the EB heard an update from convention planning staff and reviewed a draft of the overall schedule and Delegate Assembly. Guyton said all worship services will be held jointly with youth and adults.

The Journey Forward process will take center stage at the Delegate Assembly. Delegate sessions will feature storytelling and table discernment around questions shaped by MC USA's three "Renewed Commitments": Follow Jesus, Witness to God's Peace and Experience Transformation.

Iris de León-Hartshorn, director of operations for MC USA, presented the delegate process plan. The process will seek delegate feedback around a biennial denominational peace witness focus and resources needed at the congregational level to engage in transformative relationships across difference.

Board members asked questions about whether the Membership Guidelines would be voted on or discussed at the convention. Staff presented an initial proposal to design a two-year process leading up to the assembly in 2021 to gain churchwide clarity around some of MC USA's foundational documents, including the bylaws and Membership Guidelines, and how accountability works within the MC USA system.

The board affirmed a plan for staff to continue developing this proposal and to update the document "Developing Resolutions for MC USA," which will be



Photo courtesy of Ramnikth Siji

MCC helps those displaced by flooding in Kerala, India

As the monsoon flooding receded in India's Kerala State, people forced from their homes and land by torrential rains in August are returning home to see the devastation that claimed lives, buildings, roads and livelihoods (see above). The flooding across 13 of the 14 districts in the state is the result of what is believed to be the worst monsoon season in a century. An estimated 500 people died and about 540,000 remain in camps and temporary accommodations. In partnership with Gilgal Mission Trust in India, Mennonite Central Committee is providing essential supplies to about 2,500 people displaced by the flooding as they return home.—MCC

discussed at the next EB meeting in November.

The board voted and approved future convention locations in Cincinnati in 2021 and Kansas City, Mo., in 2023.

The EB reviewed a new strategic plan proposed by Guyton for 2019-2021, which included three overarching “global ends” for the work of denominational staff, with strategies and measures to work toward these ends. The global ends are based on the three “Renewed Commitments” of the Journey Forward process.

The EB discussed the potential dissolution of The Mennonite, Inc. (TMI), with board chair Barth Hague present and executive director Sheldon C. Good joining by video conference. In April, the boards of TMI and *Mennonite World Review*, Inc., proposed merging the two organizations and creating a new, independent media organization. The EB plans to receive delegate feedback in November.

—Mennonite Church USA

Mennonite Church Canada staffer sentenced to seven days in jail

Steve Heinrichs was found guilty of criminal and civil contempt of court in the Supreme Court of British Columbia in Vancouver on Aug. 8 and was sentenced to seven days in provincial jail. He was immediately taken into custody and transferred to the North Fraser Institute in Coquitlam to serve his sentence. According to a post on Heinrichs’ Facebook page, he was released from jail on Aug. 12.

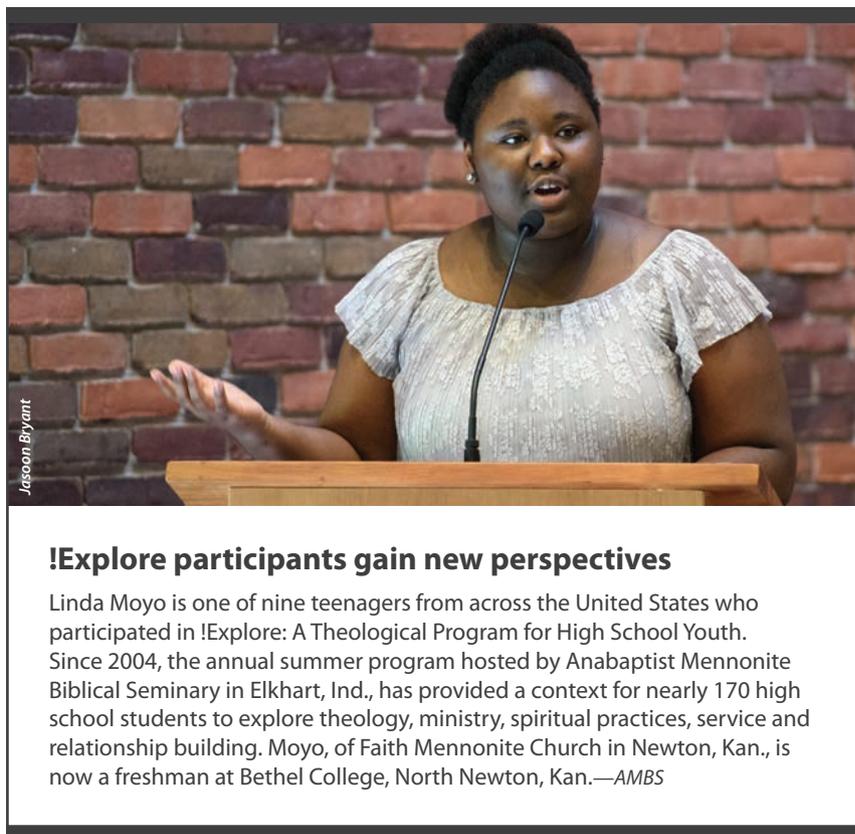
Heinrichs, director of Indigenous-Settler Relations for Mennonite Church Canada, pleaded not guilty on Aug. 7 to the charge laid as a result of his solidarity action on April 20 in Burnaby, British Columbia, with the Tsleil-Waututh land defenders, who are resisting the expansion of Kinder Morgan’s Trans Mountain pipeline. (That action, he wrote in his “Burnaby Mountain Prayer Witness” document, “effectively blocked construction at the site for the day,” which led to his arrest.) Heinrichs read a statement in

court, explaining the motivations for his action and how, in his mind, it was not in contempt of court or “the rule of law” but in defense of fundamental Indigenous human rights.

“I chose to act because at the center of the Christian faith lies the conviction that the Creator suffers with the oppressed, that God takes sides with the victims over against the dominant powers and that the people who see the issues of our day most clearly are those pushed to the sociopolitical margins,” Heinrichs told the judge.

After hearing the evidence presented by the Crown (government) and listening to Heinrichs’ statement, the judge concluded that to break the law is not a privilege afforded to those who appeal to a higher call in protesting matters of social injustice. There are many other legal options available to those wishing to express their disagreement, the judge determined.

—Amy Dueckman for Canadian Mennonite



!Explore participants gain new perspectives

Linda Moyo is one of nine teenagers from across the United States who participated in !Explore: A Theological Program for High School Youth. Since 2004, the annual summer program hosted by Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., has provided a context for nearly 170 high school students to explore theology, ministry, spiritual practices, service and relationship building. Moyo, of Faith Mennonite Church in Newton, Kan., is now a freshman at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.—AMBS

Man who caused Lancaster Mennonite school bus crash sentenced

The man who caused a loaded school bus to crash in May 2017 will serve five to 20 years in prison, a Lancaster County judge ruled Aug. 3, according to a story in *Lancaster Online*.

Tom Knapp reports that “James P. Irvin III, 48, was driving on a suspended license when he caused the multiple-vehicle collision that toppled a Lancaster Mennonite School bus carrying 14 students on May 17, 2017.”

Irvin fled the scene of the crash but turned himself in a week later.

“He was found guilty on all of nearly 70 charges stemming from the incident after a nonjury trial,” Knapp writes. Judge Howard Knisely, who returned the guilty verdict on May 16, 2018, issued sentence on Aug. 3.

—TMail



Read longer versions of these and other articles at themennonite.org.

Miscellany

COMPILED BY
GORDON HOUSER

Rape, and the power differences that facilitate it, is present in every aspect of society, in every one of our sacred institutions: the family, the workplace, the university, the church and the military.

—Charlotte Shane in Harper's

Partisanship drives religious attitudes

Most Americans choose a political party before choosing the religion to follow in their adulthood, if they choose a religion at all, according to Michele Margolis in her book *From Politics to the Pews: How Partisanship and the Political Environment Shape Religious Identity*. Sharpening this political-religious split is the fact that many white Americans who end up as Democrats don't come back to church, while Republicans tend to become more religious to better align with their political convictions. (She concedes the theory does not apply to African-Americans, who are highly religious and vote solidly for Democrats.)

—Religion News Service

48%

Between 1990 and 2013, the percentage of foreign-born people in the United States increased from 7 to 13 percent, while violent-crime rates fell 48 percent.

—Washington Post

Medical practice

Most people who make it through medical school or nursing school are motivated to help people, but once they get into practice they find themselves driven by expectations of bureaucratic efficiency rather than by the needs of patients. They spend more time in front of a computer screen than they do in the examining room. Research has shown that contact with patients reduces patient suffering and leads to better diagnoses. Burned-out clinicians are themselves vulnerable to drug abuse, divorce and suicide.

—Religion News Service

Math and gender

Two Stanford University researchers argue in a new study that the statement "girls are as good as boys at math" perpetuates sexist stereotypes. The 21-page paper claims the statement's "grammatical structure contradicts its ostensible content, assuming the truth of male math superiority." Comparing women to a male standard, researchers say, could be discouraging to women interested in math.

—The Week

2,208

The number of billionaires in the United States, which is one-fourth of the world's total. The richest 1 percent of the U.S. population earns 20 percent of the national income. Meanwhile, 40 million Americans live in poverty. According to a UN report, Americans are sicker and don't live as long as people in other developed countries.

—Christian Century



3 trillion

tons of ice have been lost since 1992 in the Antarctic Ice Sheet, which is melting nearly three times faster than it was in 2012.

—Sierra

Percentage of U.S. news stories about poverty that feature black families:

59%

Percentage of U.S. families living under the poverty line that are black:

23

—Harper's

LOAVES AND FISHSTICKS BY STEVE EDWARDS



Sharon Mennonite Church

Plain City, Ohio

1. Rachel Snyder, Alex Boggs, Baylor Petzinger and Eliza Watkins prepare a floor to be replaced during work camp. *Photo provided*
2. Pastor Jared Chase baptizes Elijah Hull (pictured), Matthew Hull and Erica Beachy. *Photo by Niki Hull*
3. Children and adults involved in Vacation Bible School share a medley of songs. *Photo by Sarah Chase*
4. Darryl Miller and Andrew Heisler work to complete a wheelchair ramp during work camp. *Photo by Jessica Yoder*





BY **JOANNE GALLARDO**

Photo by Olivia Copsey

My journey of *forgiveness*

**A survivor of sexual
assault tells her story**

I'll never forget when I became a pacifist. I was 12 and not a part of a church. My dad bought an old VHS tape for us to watch of the movie *Friendly Persuasion*, starring Gary Cooper. Cooper plays a Quaker man whose family refuses to engage in violence, including enlisting in the military during the Civil War. His reason, he says, is that the Bible teaches us to love our neighbors and enemies. He labels his belief "pacifism," and I knew I must be a Quaker, or at least a pacifist. Even though Cooper goes on to fight in the war, I knew I had encountered a theology I agreed with.

When I became a Mennonite, I was pleased to find that pacifism was a core belief. This was quite a transformative theology to have, regarding an enemy, for instance, with the same love as we have for ourselves. At first I found this easy. As a teenage Mennonite, I tried to see people I didn't like the way God would see them. It transformed me. As I grew into young adulthood with a strong personality, I encountered many people who fit into "enemy" territory. After particularly fractious encounters, I would take a step back, breathe and remember that this person was a beloved child of God. Most of the time, I was able to take the high road and remember Christ's teachings. I thought, Maybe I wasn't so different from these "enemies." Weren't we all just trying to do our best at any given moment?

A new concept of enemy entered my life when I turned

31. I had moved to work in Washington, D.C., as a case manager to the chronically homeless and severely mentally ill. I loved my clients, and I loved my job. I saw what I was doing as a different type of pastoral ministry. Then something terrible happened.

A few months into my job, a client of mine sexually assaulted me while I was in his home delivering groceries. I did everything I had learned to do as a woman living in a world where this happens to one in four of us at any given point in our lives. I told my sex-crimes detective I wanted to press charges. I thought this would bring me justice. I looked to the criminal justice system for my salvation, and like many of survivors of sexual assault, it let me down immensely.

This man was my enemy. He had personally wronged me in such an intimate way, and I hated him. I wanted him locked up and for him to spend the rest of his days rotting in a jail cell. But this was not to be. After a week on a psychiatric hospital unit, he was released and continued to be a client of my nonprofit agency. I didn't have to work with him again, but knowing that he was still around and that he was a short drive from my home caused me anxiety.

All my highly held theology, the entirety of my seminary degree and my lifetime of being taught to forgive and forget was tossed out the window and replaced with anger, hatred and a desire for vigilante justice. I dreamed of breaking into his house and hurting him, or maybe just scaring him. My blood boiled every time I

A few months into my job, a client of mine sexually assaulted me while I was in his home delivering groceries.

drove by his apartment. I wanted horrible things to happen to him, and I sat with these feelings for a long time.

I soon entered counseling, where I found healthy ways to deal with my anger. I took medication that lifted my mood and helped me see the good in life again. I met with friends as well as my pastor to talk about what happened and, bit by bit, I began to heal. But I did not address what the sexual assault did to me in regard to my faith. I avoided thinking theologically about this, as I didn't want my faith in God to be tainted by this life event.

This didn't last long, as I am wont to think theologically. "Loving one's enemies" was the mantra in the back of my mind every time I tried to reconcile what happened with what I believed to be the moral character of God. I knew that what had happened to me was not God's will but the choice of an ill man. I could not "love" this enemy. And I didn't know why.

I realized after some time that part of this block in my ability to love my enemy was my inability to love myself. At the root of it all, I blamed myself for what happened. I hated myself for having fallen for what was clearly a trap. As

much hate as I had for this man, I hated myself even more. This was blocking my ability to love my enemy, or even my neighbor. I needed to first love myself the way God loved me.

Loving myself didn't come easy, and honestly, it's still in process. But after I started loving and forgiving myself, old hurts and grudges from years past started to melt away and become less and less painful. I was able to see others the way my young adult self did: flawed but ultimately a child of the Creator. I was careful in dealing with people who had wronged me because I hadn't forgotten what happened, but I could forgive them and allow myself the freedom to move on with my life.

This left me thinking of my assailant. I drew on strength from my community, the empowerment and joy I found in music and my faith in an all-powerful God to release this man from the tangled roots of my mind and the snares of my anger and wrath. I imagined the roots unraveling from the image of this man and replacing themselves in rich soil, thereby anchoring me more firmly in the ground. The snares of my anger and wrath were pulled out of his skin and transformed into leaves and greenery to show strength and life. I released this man. I released him to God.

To think about loving and forgiving my enemy, my assailant, is a bit of a stretch for me at this point if I'm being intellectually and theologically honest. I respect the love God has for this man, but I also believe God will be the harbinger of justice for me. I forgive him in the sense that I no longer want to harbor ill will toward him; I would rather put my fire-fueled thoughts toward social justice and kingdom work.

In that sense, I've forgiven him. To love him is more difficult. At this point in my spiritual life, I can say I love that God can love him. And I pray that God might move my heart one day to look at him with the same love and compassion that God is capable of.

This has been my own, singular journey with sexual assault. The journey of forgiveness is different for each person, and I want to be clear that I in no way condone a prescribed way of loving or forgiving one's enemy after such a violation. That is between a survivor and God. In talking with others who've had an experience like mine, many feel they will never get to the point of forgiveness, let alone love. And I think that's OK. No one from the outside can understand the journey of someone who has experienced

this form of violence. As children of God, we are here to listen and not judge or dictate. It may be best to let God work in God's own way in the hearts and minds of others.

I've had a major lesson in loving my enemy, and I hope no one has to learn it in the same way. I'm thankful to God, my community and my Mennonite faith tradition for helping me navigate waters I never intended to enter. Maybe most central of all, I'm thankful to the teachings of Jesus, the voice of God incarnate, for helping me find the soil in which I want to grow.

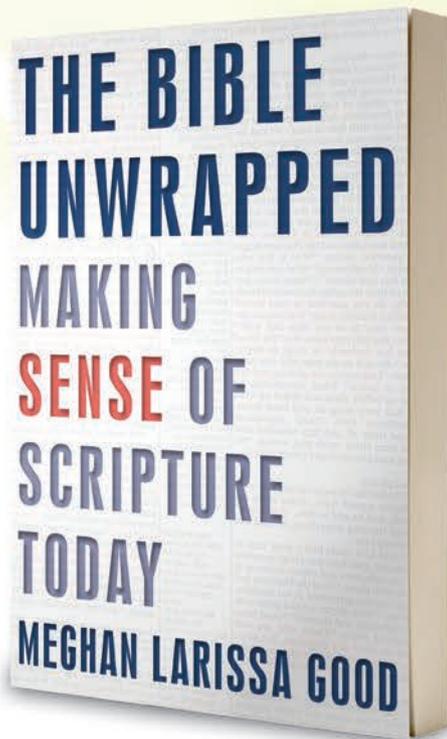


Joanne Gallardo is pastor of faith formation at Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship in Goshen, Ind.

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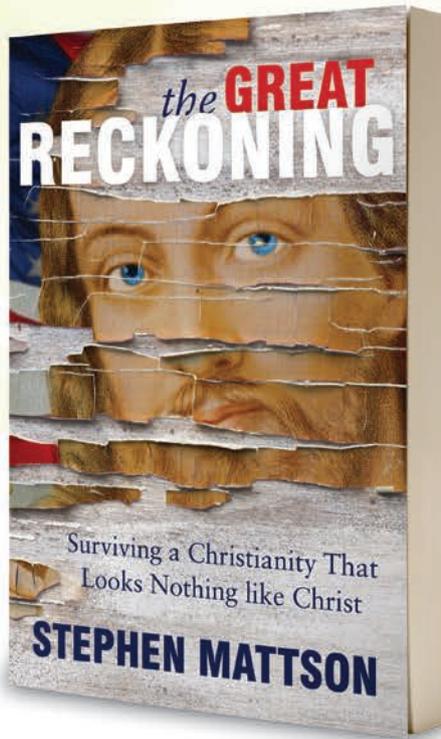
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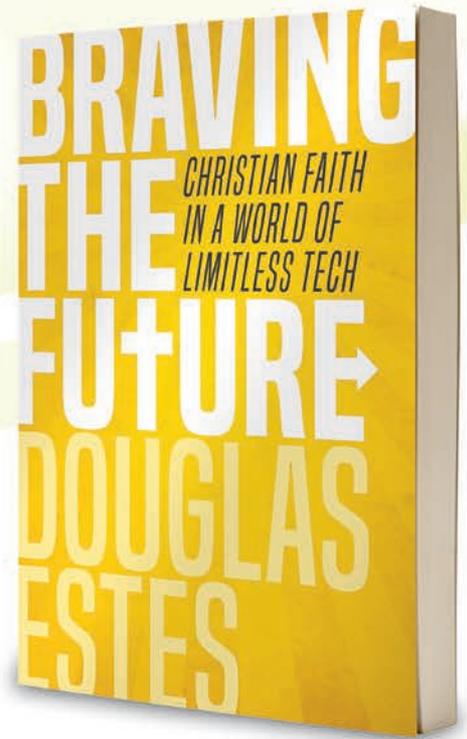
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HERALD PRESS



BY TIM NAFZIGER

PACIFISM POLITICS

◀ Jonathan Smucker (center, back) leads a training in canvassing.

Photo provided

Loving enemies can be an effective strategy

Jonathan Matthew Smucker is a Mennonite political organizer and author of *Hegemony How-To: A Roadmap for Radicals*. He is working in his hometown of Lancaster, Pa., with Lancaster Stands Up to support Jess King, a Mennonite candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives.

Tim Nafziger: How would you introduce yourself to Mennonites who aren't familiar with your work?

Jonathan Smucker: I grew up a Mennonite in Lancaster County in a rural, working-class area. My family attended Bart Mennonite Church until I was 9, when we went to Ridgeview Mennonite Church.

I attend Community Mennonite Church in Lancaster city. I work in politics. I've come to see that my work for my entire adult life has been in politics, even if it's been in social movements that are politics by other means.

I became politicized when I was a student at Lancaster Mennonite High School. Two things politicized me: racism at my high school and reading the Bible for myself for the first time.

I'd been given Bible memory verses my whole childhood in church and in school, but I was shocked at how much social and economic justice were central themes in the Scriptures. These had been de-emphasized. That raised questions and got me interested in the global economy and political matters.

After high school, I got involved with policing issues, anti-death penalty, economic justice and community issues. I'm currently the executive director of Beyond the Choir.

TN: You talk about the importance of bonding for groups. Or, to use a favorite Mennonite verse, being in the world but not of it.

JMS: When I read the Bible, I found a tension between being faithful and being concerned with impact and effectiveness. I felt called to speak out against the injustice of our economic system and of imperialism and empire. My reference point was the righteous person who stands up for what is right and dies on a cross. I had something of a martyr mentality. I figured I would stand up for what is right and likely go to jail or get killed. I expected to be persecuted, because that's the story I had.

In my book, I discuss a talk I gave in chapel my senior year of high school about the global economy and the biblical imperative to stand with the oppressed. Some students walked out, and later that week someone

swerved their truck toward me. I felt threatened. But I was surprised by a much bigger positive reaction from people who wanted to do something. That shifted my thinking, gave me hope and a sense of political agency. The story didn't have to end with the righteous people losing.

TN: This tension between faithfulness and effectiveness is one point of conversation between many Mennonite theologians and the tradition represented by Reinhold Niebuhr. How do you reconcile love of enemy with the reality that the nation state uses the threat of force to maintain itself?

My interest in loving our enemies is not only moral but strategic.

JMS: I don't know if I can fully reconcile pacifism with politics. I am probably 99 percent pacifist because I can imagine certain exceptional scenarios.

My interest in loving our enemies is not only moral but strategic. On a personal level, allowing myself to hate my enemies has a negative impact on me. Cultivating forgiveness, even for people who aren't asking for forgiveness and empathy or who are still causing harm is a spiritual practice. By forgiveness I don't mean excusing harmful action or allowing it to continue.



Jonathan Smucker (above) begins his book *Hegemony How-To: A Roadmap for Radicals* with his story of growing up Mennonite, but he has spent the last two decades largely working outside Mennonite communities as part of the wider movement for peace and justice in the United States. This book is a loving critique of the insularity he has seen in the organizations and communities he has worked with.

Through a detailed look at the Occupy and similar egalitarian movements, Smucker tells the story of prefigurative politics: movements that focus on building a “new world in the shell of the old” rather than dirtying themselves through contact with traditional political institutions. He recognizes the strength of *bonding* internally in these communities but also challenges his readers to be part of *bridging* and figuring out how to engage people who don’t identify as activists, a term he would rather discard completely because of how it sets people apart.

This book is a deep exercise in systematic thought from small group politics to the national level but is accessible to the general reader. It engages a timely and recurring question for Mennonites across the spectrum: When does our striving for purity get in the way of connecting with our Samaritan neighbor?

—Tim Nafziger

It’s not giving people a pass or making excuses for oppression or harmful behavior. Being empathetic toward people who are doing harm can help us engage them more strategically, trying to understand what happened to them, what structures constrain them or acting on them, what their situation is and how it contributes to them making the choices they’re making.

The racism at my high school was perpetuated against people of color I’d become friends with by people I had been friends with in elementary school and junior high. We grew up on farms. I knew I could have been the perpetrator, if things had gone a little different. I had shifted social circles because I joined a band and was hanging out with musicians and artists instead of the farm kids. I’m struck by the consequences of accidental junctures and how at our core we human beings are very much alike.

I always have had that awareness that I’m not so different from the people whose behavior I found unacceptable. Intuitively, I extended that empathy for enemies from the start of my political life.

Loving your enemies doesn’t mean thinking their behavior is acceptable. And it doesn’t mean not fighting your enemies politically. Loving your enemies and having compassion and empathy and trying to understand where they’re coming from makes you smarter at defeating them politically, because you’re not making them into a caricature. And you’re not underestimating them. For example, many people have underestimated Trump because they can’t grant that he’s smart at anything because he has to be stupid in their narrative. Because he’s their enemy.

Loving your enemies doesn’t mean thinking their behavior is acceptable. And it doesn’t mean not fighting your enemies politically.

Trump may be reprehensible morally and politically, but trying to understand him—his psychology and where he’s coming from—gives me insights into how he has navigated political terrain to gain power. I want to stop him, but making him into a caricature doesn’t help.

TN: Jesus makes a clear invitation to tax collectors, both his disciple Matthew and, later, Zacchaeus. Both men had considerable power and were part of an oppressive system. Jesus both loved them as opponents and called them to repent from their participation in oppression. He had heartfelt conversations with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman. Jesus took into account people’s social location. That’s often been erased from our reading of the Gospels.

JMS: Jesus challenges an elbowing-in culture where people are tuned to the center of the group instead of the periphery. He rejects trying to advance social status. You see this in politics and the church. When a meeting ends, leaders and the people with the most status in the room too often huddle and talk among themselves. It creates a culture where everybody tries to elbow their way into the center.

The Gospels are filled with stories of Jesus flipping that on its head. He talks to the prostitute, to the woman who was hemorrhaging, to lepers and tax collectors and despised people. They were despised by different groups, like the tax collector and the soldier he talked to. They were despised by the zealots who were his disciples. Others Jesus spent time with were despised by the religious authorities. He was subverting the social capital system. He has all this esteem, yet makes time for children. Peter says, “Why are you talking to these kids? Get these kids out of here.” But Jesus says, “No, they’re important.”

Jesus says, “Whoever wants to be greatest among you must be your servant.” He has this orientation toward serving and connecting to the periphery. In terms of leadership and social movements, don’t go huddle with the other important people after the meeting. Instead, talk to the person who looked visibly uncomfortable, talk to the person you haven’t seen before, who came by themselves, find out what brought them there, ask them questions, be warm, be inviting. And there are things from faith communities that are helpful here. Some have a tradition that when a new family shows up at church, there’s a family that will invite them home for a meal. That idea is powerful.

This is related to enemy loving. One way of moving toward the center of your own insular group is to exaggerate both what you love and what you hate. One way groups bond is by having common enemies, so exaggerating your hatred of enemies is a way of asserting status within your group.



Jonathan Smucker (right) leads a training in canvassing.
Photo provided

During the civil rights movement, James Forman, a leader in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, was sought after because he was important. When he knew someone was coming, he would be sweeping the floor or cleaning the toilet or other menial tasks. They would ask for James Forman, and he would get up from his work and introduce himself. He was sending the signal that it doesn’t matter how important you are, there’s no work that’s beneath you, no conversation that’s below you. Groups oriented toward the periphery are smarter, more in touch, and they’re going to be more effective and bring in more of a base. So politically, it’s important.

TN: So the opposite of loving your enemy isn’t just hating them but seeking to dominate and control them. And that’s true in the internal life of a group, wanting to control and dominate those we disagree with inside our community as well.

JMS: Yes. Right now, I’m helping run the independent expenditure side with Lancaster Stands Up to elect Jess King, who is running for Congress as a Mennonite. Her opponent, Lloyd Smucker, is my cousin. We have a campaign about “Where’s Lloyd?” because he’s not showing up for town hall meetings. We’re calling him out and using satire, but we’re not dehumanizing him. He’s probably a nice guy, but that’s not really the point.

TN: What crosses that line into dehumanization?

JMS: The principle for me is: Is there a path to redemption for your opponent?



Tim Nafziger is a Mennonite writer and web developer in Oak View, Calif.



Ravine Neighborhood: Terrain similar to where the prayer ministry team prayed for José*.

Photo Jerry Kennell

Praying for enemies

BY YANETT PALACIOS

Should she pray for the man who killed her son-in-law?

Iglesia Menonita Roca de Salvación (Rock of Salvation Mennonite Church) is located in a red zone of Guatemala City. In the neighborhood, many young people join gangs, sell drugs and take part in fights over drug-dealing territories and extortion.

Not long after we arrived at the church 16 years ago, we encountered a young man, Pedro*. He was a drug dealer and often sat on the church's curb. His mother-in-law, María,* and girlfriend, Ana,* lived across the street from the church. One day, a young man, José,* was paid to kill Pedro to establish territory. María witnessed the murder.

As time went by, we accompanied the family. Ana was young and was left with a

newborn baby girl. The baby had cataracts and couldn't see. For these reasons, they visited the church. Ana became a Christian and continued participating in the church.

Years went by.

Not long ago, a man in our church who lives near a ravine asked us to come to his house because his brother had arrived very sick and wanted us to pray for him.

My husband and I accompanied our church's prayer ministry team on this visit. To get to the man's house we had to go down about 200 steps. María came as part of the prayer ministry team.

We were told the sick man had migrated to the United States but was an alcoholic and, consequently, was deported. He was vomiting blood.

We drew closer to pray for him. As we prayed, he turned, and we saw his face. Upon seeing the man's face, María acted nervous, turned pale and trembled.

I asked her, "Sister, what is the matter?"

She said, "Sister, I just can't." So I took her outside the room and said, "Don't you feel well?"

She said, "No, I feel terrible. The man we are praying for is the man who murdered Pedro, my son-in-law, years ago. I feel angry. I don't know what's happening to me. I don't want to keep praying for him."

I told her to let it out and cry.



Pastor Yanett Palacios shared the testimony "Praying for our enemies" in the context of the Central American Anabaptist Mennonite Consultation (CAMCA) in August in Honduras. The theme of the consultation was "Building Healthy Communities from the Perspective of the Kingdom of God."

When asked by Linda Shelly, director for Latin America of Mennonite Mission Network, to record her testimony, Palacios went on to express appreciation to Mennonite Women USA for the scholarship that helped her to study at SEMILLA (Seminario Anabautista Latinoamericano), noting that these studies had transformed her life and led to the kind of teaching that transformed María, Ana, José and many others.

She wrote: "I want to tell you what it meant to me to have the opportunity to study. It was light at the end of the tunnel. It was a source of fresh water in the desert. It was a light of hope in my life, this life so full of violence since childhood... Now I am a transformed woman. I am totally different and willing to offer my gifts to serve the vulnerable.

"My husband and I are pastors of Iglesia Menonita Roca de Salvación (Rock of Salvation Mennonite Church) in Zone 6 in the city of Guatemala. It is a zone that has been characterized as one of the most dangerous for the delinquency, violence and the dominance of gangs. It is there that we developed our work of accompanying marginalized, abused and vulnerable people."

As we prayed, he turned, and we saw his face. Upon seeing the man's face, María acted nervous, turned pale and trembled.

She cried for a while. Then I said, "We can either walk you back to your house or you can go back in and accompany our brothers and sisters who are praying."

She reflected on our classes at church, where we'd been studying that we should forgive and love our enemies and ask, "What would Jesus do?" María said, "I think I am going to go back in."

"It's your decision," I said. We had been learning at church about discipleship, service of the kingdom and integral evangelism, as well as themes about women and how we accompany each other. All these teachings had helped her change her way of living.

María has suffered. She was abandoned. She was young when she had a partner, and he had been a guerilla. She held resentment and was a violent woman. However, we have seen her transformation. I was amazed that she went back into the room to pray for José. Before going back into the room, though, she said, "I'll go back in, and we'll pray for him because he is very ill, and I think he will die."

We entered the room and prayed for him, but we suggested the family take him to the hospital

and have him checked by a doctor. They did, and he spent a month in intensive care. He recovered and was moved out of the ICU. We continued to accompany José's family, and visited him at the hospital. María came with us. Soon after, José was released from the hospital.

The first thing José did was come to church. Upon arriving, he asked if he could be given a moment. It was Tuesday, a prayer day. "I want to thank you. You are my family. I also want to apologize to all the people I have offended because there are many people in this church I have offended. I have hurt you, and I want to say that I am so sorry. I want to also say that I want to be part of this church. I want to be a Christian who serves, not one who just sits but who goes out and does what you did for me."

This is a great testimony of what God is doing in people's lives. It is God's Spirit working, even in cases we think are impossible to overcome.

*Names have been changed.



Yanett Palacios and her husband are co-pastors of Iglesia Menonita Roca de Salvación in Guatemala City, Guatemala. She is also the president of the Iglesia Evangélica Menonita de Guatemala (IEMG). She graduated from SEMILLA (Seminario Anabautista Latinoamericano) where she now serves on the board and teaches classes. SEMILLA is a partner of Mennonite Mission Network.



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Participants in a Come and See
tour of Israel/Palestine sponsored
by Mennonite Church USA

Photo by MC USA

BY JONATHAN NAHAR

In search of a just peace



CPT photo



CPT photo

**Testimonies
of those
working for
peace in Israel
and Palestine**

In July 2017 in Orlando, Fla., Alex Awad stood in front of the Mennonite Church USA delegate assembly, which was about to overwhelmingly pass a resolution on Israel-Palestine, and challenged them, “I know churches have a tendency to pass resolutions, then move on. I hope you pass this resolution and that you do not just put [it] on the shelf.”

This was a tall order, given the ambitious scope of the Seeking Peace in Israel and Palestine Resolution. The seven-page document contained two major sections, one opposing the unjust Israeli occupation, the other addressing anti-Semitism. Both sections committed the denomination to concrete action steps. Yet despite the contentiousness of the content and the ambition of the commitments, people from various parts of MC USA are creatively implementing the commitments of the resolution.

Mennonites did not go into this work naïvely. **Steve Kriss**, executive minister of Franconia Mennonite Conference and a member of the resolution-writing team, recognized the difficulty of holding our political commitments and our relational commitments together. He writes:



I spent considerable time managing responses to the Israel/Palestine Resolution in the weeks following Orlando 2017, both on social media and in face-to-face conversations. As a committee, we did heavy and careful work together to attempt to craft a statement that honored commitments to speak peace to both Jews and Palestinians. Local Jewish partners and allies questioned our posture as we sought to work together around important issues in the Philadelphia region. This required me to reiterate our desire to work together toward mutual understanding and shared purposes locally. I do not regret our work as a committee or our statement, but our posture has required much interpretation and pressing work toward building and maintaining relationships with Jews and Palestinians to assure them of our commitment to a just peace. The rising issues of Mennonite participation and postures during World War II have also introduced a complicating factor in responding to charges of anti-Semitism. We have ongoing confessional and reconciliatory work to do.

A first step to the confessional work Kriss outlined is truth-telling. This was a theme for the Mennonites and the Holocaust conference at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., in March. **Mark Jantzen**, professor of history at Bethel College, was one of the organizers. He writes:



One of the conference’s goals, in keeping with the request of MC USA, was to engage a wider public in reflection on the findings and publicize them more broadly. Thus some presentations were more reflective than research oriented. The research revealed that Mennonites were perpetrators, helpers, beneficiaries and neighbors of the Holocaust. A small number also tried to aid Jews. Some of the findings presented at the conference were known only in family circles or among scholars who read German or Dutch; other findings were new even for scholars. The conference showed that we are at the beginning of researching what happened and how and why Mennonites played the roles they did.

Given the delicate nature of interfaith engagement in this context, **Michael Crosby**, pastor of First Mennonite Church of Champaign-Urbana, Ill., sought creative ways of reaching out to Muslim and Jewish leaders in his community, and talking about the resolution. He writes:



Ted Swartz of Ted & Co. proposed a performance of an old show (“I’d Like to Buy an Enemy”) for an interfaith audience, with opportunities for feedback around the concepts of “othering” and

“enemy making.” We used the opportunity to bring together as many faith voices as possible. At a brunch the day following the performance, a group of local clergy, including the local imam, a professor of Jewish studies, a rabbi of the local Reformed synagogue, and the rabbi of the Hillel Foundation on the University of Illinois campus had a profound conversation. Each talked about their settings for ministry or research. Each agreed to continue meeting toward a 2019 community-wide interfaith conference, with the modest hope of using the public conference to create private spaces for growing understanding among leaders. The meeting also offered several opportunities for me to begin individually sharing and discussing the “Seeking Peace in Israel and Palestine Resolution.”

Lamenting that Mennonites have “neglected to build relationships with Jewish... communities,” the resolution invites congregations like Crosby’s to reach out to local synagogues in particular. Three Mennonites have volunteered their time to ensure that as congregations reach out to Jewish neighbors, they do so respectfully. **Barbie Fisher**, a restorative justice practitioner who works with Franconia Mennonite Conference, is one who has offered to help. She writes:



There has always been a close connection between Jews and Christians. We share the same

roots of Torah, better known in Mennonite contexts as the Old Testament. This relationship has been tense at times, and the present moment is no different. Due to the actions of the state of Israel, anti-Semitism is on the rise, as there is a false assumption that all Jews support the state of Israel. In recent years, more light has been shown on Mennonites being complicit in the Holocaust, a difficult reality for many to grasp, given the Mennonite peace tradition. Building relationships between Mennonites and Jews is essential to reconcile the work of the life of Christ as a Jewish person, of the biblical story as rooted in the Jewish narrative and to work through our own past practices of anti-Semitism.

The resolution not only calls on Mennonites to foster peace through personal relationships within their communities but to advocate for more just and peaceful policies. **Rachelle Lyndaker Schlabach** of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Washington office helped organize a delegation of Mennonites to talk to their elected officials. She writes:



Delegation members shared their experiences in the region and asked their elected officials to support legislation to prohibit mistreatment and abuse of Palestinian minors by the Israeli military. The group also expressed concern about legislation that would criminalize

the use of economic measures such as boycotts against Israel or Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territories. Each year, U.S. taxpayers provide about \$3.8 billion in military aid to Israel, so it is vital that lawmakers hear from their constituents about this issue.

This advocacy includes economics. The resolution states: “We ask Everence, on behalf of Mennonite Church USA, to periodically convene representatives of Mennonite-related organizations and agencies involved in the region, in order to share counsel and review investment practices for the purpose of withdrawing investments from companies that are profiting from the occupation.” **Mark Regier** of Everence convened this gathering. He writes:



Everence has walked with MC USA and related organizations for nearly 15 years as we’ve sought to understand and respond to the polarizing conflict in Israel and Palestine. We’ve appreciated the openness, honesty and commitment to finding a common path forward, built on factual information and earnest relationships with those throughout the region. Being part of this process has allowed Everence to continually test and refine the application of our own stewardship investing values of respecting the dignity and value of all people and building a world

at peace and free from violence, while managing productive investment portfolios for those who depend on us.

We were happy to host the gathering and provide information to MC USA agencies as they sought to align their investments with commitments of the resolution. We've encouraged them all to look beyond the charged politics of the region to better understand how information and engagement can become better tools in helping concerned investors support peace and justice in this holy land and throughout the world.

Individuals and congregations were also urged to "avoid the purchase of products associated with acts of violence or policies of military occupation." **Esther Koontz**, a member of First Mennonite Church in Hutchinson, Kan., faced harmful consequences for taking this invitation seriously. She writes:



In July 2017, I opened an email asking me to certify that in order to get paid by the state of Kansas for some math trainings I was planning to give I would not boycott Israel. I knew Mennonite Church USA had just passed a resolution, and my church had completed an eight-week series hearing from a member who had been on a Come and See tour to Palestine/

Israel. In light of these influences, I had chosen to boycott Israel, so I filed a lawsuit claiming that this certificate was a violation of my freedom of speech. On Jan. 29, a district judge ruled that the antiboycott law was unconstitutional and blocked the law from being enforced. Now I can train teachers and boycott Israel. In the words of the judge, we boycott to "amplify our voices for change." I pray that peace with justice comes to the Holy Lands, and until that day I want to do my small part to seek peace and pursue it.

These are but a few of the ongoing stories. Others could include Western District Conference starting an Israel-Palestine Task Force, and a group of Mennonites in Elkhart and Goshen, Ind., starting Michiana Voices for Middle East Peace, David Shenk of Eastern Mennonite Mission's Christian-Muslim Relations team being honored at the largest yearly Muslim gathering, John Kampen representing the denomination in Christian-Jewish dialogue and the two men meeting together during a yearly gathering convening Mennonites doing interfaith engagement. MC USA extended the Israel Palestine Partners in Peacemaking coordinator position, created in 2016, for a second year with funding from MCC and Mission Network to coordinate the resolution's implementation. Four congregations have joined the HP Free churches campaign, demanding that Hewlett Packard stop designing

computers used in the Israeli occupation. The Mennonite Jewish Relations working group, the Mennonite Palestine Israel Network, and the Israel-Palestine working group continue to meet to ensure that none of the work gets dropped.

Rev. Awad is impressed with the efforts of the denomination. He writes:



The passage of the Seeking Peace in Israel and Palestine Resolution has created a momentum among many Mennonite individuals, groups and churches to double their efforts in seeking a just peace and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians and to strive for harmony among Jews, Muslims and Christians. I pray that this enthusiasm and momentum will continue until we all harvest the fruit of a lasting peace in Israel and in Palestine.



Jonathan Nahar (formerly Brenneman) was the Israel/Palestine Partners in Peacemaking coordinator for Mennonite Church USA from 2016 to 2018. He now consults with organizations, including MC USA, on Palestinian human rights and nonviolent direct action.

BY AMY S. ZIMBELMAN

THE SAMARITAN WOMAN'S **#METOO** MOMENT

Questioning
2,000 years
of blame
and shame

Photo by skitterphoto.com

The Samaritan woman who encounters Jesus (John 4:1-42) has been with me for the last few years, in the back of my mind. Ever since my (Bible scholar) mother said to me, “You know that the woman at the well is most likely not a prostitute, right?” I’ve been trying to recast her into a different role. She has been typecast in most every performance as not only an enemy of Jesus’ Jewish tribe because of her identity as a Samaritan but as a loose woman who should be ashamed of herself. But I’ve been looking for who else she might be, what other story she might have to offer me or the church.

When I look again, I see this woman is curious and intelligent. She asks good questions. She listens closely and offers her own insights on everything from history (v. 12) to comparative religion (v. 20).

She is a spiritual seeker who has the humility and wisdom to recognize the Savior of the World when she sees him.

She is a passionate and articulate preacher, convincing many from her city to see the Messiah for themselves (v. 39). And she is courageous, speaking to the very folks who had rejected her.

Unfortunately, many commentators overlook these positive traits and heap on ways to other her. One Saturday, I went to the local seminary to grab a pile of commentaries to see what they had to say about this unnamed woman who meets Jesus. The writings I came across about her

spanned from around 400 C.E. to 2011. Not one was kind to her. They called her “markedly immoral”¹ and full of “evil deeds”² because she was “fornicating with a sixth man, not her husband but an adulterer.”³ They called her “nonspiritual” and “selfish” because, in asking Jesus about living water, “all she wanted was something to save the effort of the long, hot trip from the village.”⁴ Instead of curious and courageous, she was “a promiscuous flirt...holy men scurry from such women.”⁵

Making a woman feel less than because of her body and sexuality is a tool of control, a tool to keep her afraid and in her place. It is a tool of violence used to dehumanize a woman. This tool is so old it seems it should be falling apart by now, yet it finds new iterations every day. Whether it’s the woman who’s up for the

A recent study found that male public figures get an average of 3.7 threatening or sexually explicit messages on social media per day; for women the average is 100 per day.

promotion or the one who speaks up against her abuser, women know they are vulnerable to being othered through insults like “slut” or “whore” in a way that men are not. A recent study found that

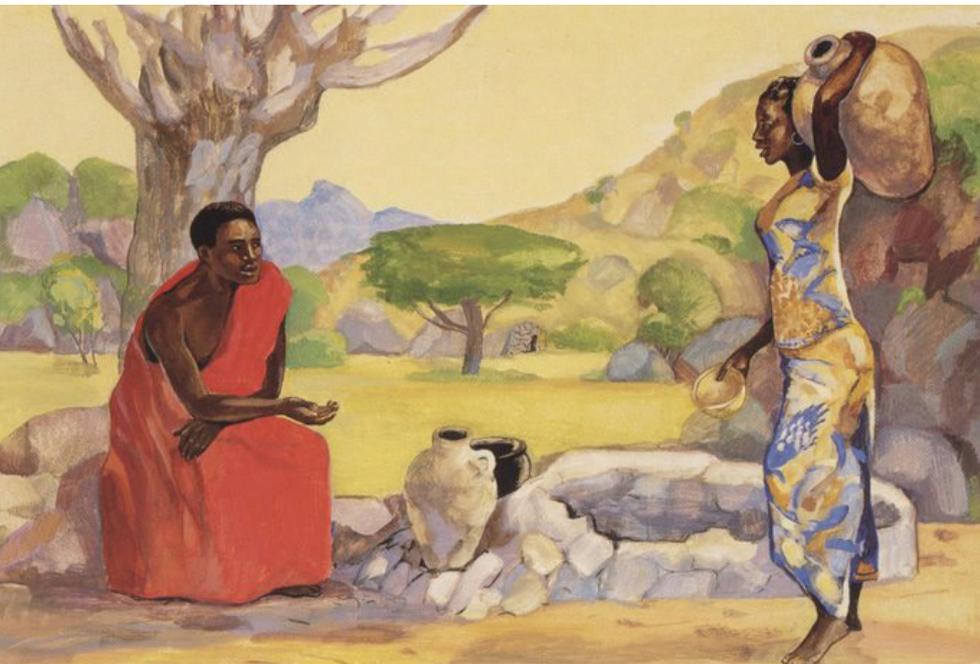
male public figures get an average of 3.7 threatening or sexually explicit messages on social media per day; for women the average is 100 per day.⁶

But are the commentators’ words, though overly harsh, based on a grain of truth? Was the woman at the well a prostitute?

The word used for her past relationships is “husbands” (ἀνὴρ in Greek), as opposed to her current relationship. She has not been sleeping around with random men but has been legally wedded five times to five different husbands. And while some of those husbands may have died, more than likely at least a few of them divorced her. Since women could not initiate divorce in first-century Palestine, each of those divorces was forced upon her; they were not her choice. She is not using the men in her life but is being rejected by them, over and over again.

Why would one woman be rejected by so many men? The text doesn’t give that answer. It is not because of her unfaithfulness—cheating women in Jewish and Samaritan societies were punished (i.e. stoned)—not divorced and remarried. The most likely reason for perpetual rejection in first-century Palestine was infertility: no children produced, she’s rejected; no children produced again, she’s rejected again. There could be other reasons: Maybe she had a disability or a mental health issue, or perhaps she burned the coffee one too many times. The text doesn’t say.

But we can say with confidence that she was not a career prostitute. And in all likelihood, the pain in her past was not



Jesus and the Samaritan Woman by Jesus Mafa, Creative Commons

due to her immorality. She was rejected by her own husbands and her village (she was at the well at midday, alone) and has been rejected via shaming in the 2,000 years since—yet the causes of her rejection are almost assuredly not her fault.

I wonder if she has been journeying at the back of my mind because I can relate to her, and I, too, need the courage and redemption she finds. As a spiritual seeker, I can relate to her desire for truth. As a woman in this world, I understand the type of shame and othering reserved particularly for women. And as a female preacher in a Mennonite context, I am sometimes undermined and overlooked in ways my male colleagues are not.

Our churches can be painful places for women—where women are treated like enemies just for speaking their truth. But while commentators through the ages

Our churches can be painful places for women—where women are treated like enemies just for speaking their truth.

may have harsh words for this intelligent and passionate seeker and preacher, Jesus never does. Even though he knows and names her painful history, Jesus regards the Samaritan woman with nothing but respect and love. She is not defined by her painful past; she is not an other or an enemy but is welcomed as an insider, an equal, maybe even a friend.

Jesus' act of welcome, then, is a healing act, and from this healing this woman is empowered to welcome others to come and see the Messiah.

And so this woman and her discovery of living water can be a guide for me, for all of us attempting to follow Jesus while female.

As she courageously makes her way through a patriarchal world that doesn't make it easy for her, maybe we can follow her.

Maybe if she can bring her doubts and questions about faith, ours are welcome as well.

Maybe if she can be recast in a different role, we can be, too—a role free of the blame and shame our culture heaps on the bodies of women.

And maybe if Jesus frees her to speak her truth boldly, he can do the same for us.

1. *Anchor Bible Commentary*, Raymond and Brown, eds. Doubleday & Co., 1966.
2. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, John-Merrill C. Tenney and Frank E. Gaebelin, eds. Zondervan, 1981.
3. *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture Jn 1-10*, "Commentary by Maximus of Turin (380-465 CE)," Joel C. Elowsky, ed. InterVarsity, 2006.
4. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, John-Merrill C. Tenney and Frank E. Gaebelin, eds. Zondervan, 1981.
5. *The Upside-Down Kingdom (Updated Edition)*, Donald Kraybill. Herald Press, updated edition 2011.
6. *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver: Online Harassment*. Citing a University of Maryland Study in 2006, www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuNlwYsz-7PI&t=333s.



Amy S. Zimbelman is a co-pastor at Mountain Community Mennonite Church in Palmer Lake, Colo., and a tutor of refugee children. (See www.openeverydoor.org)

Adding insult to injury

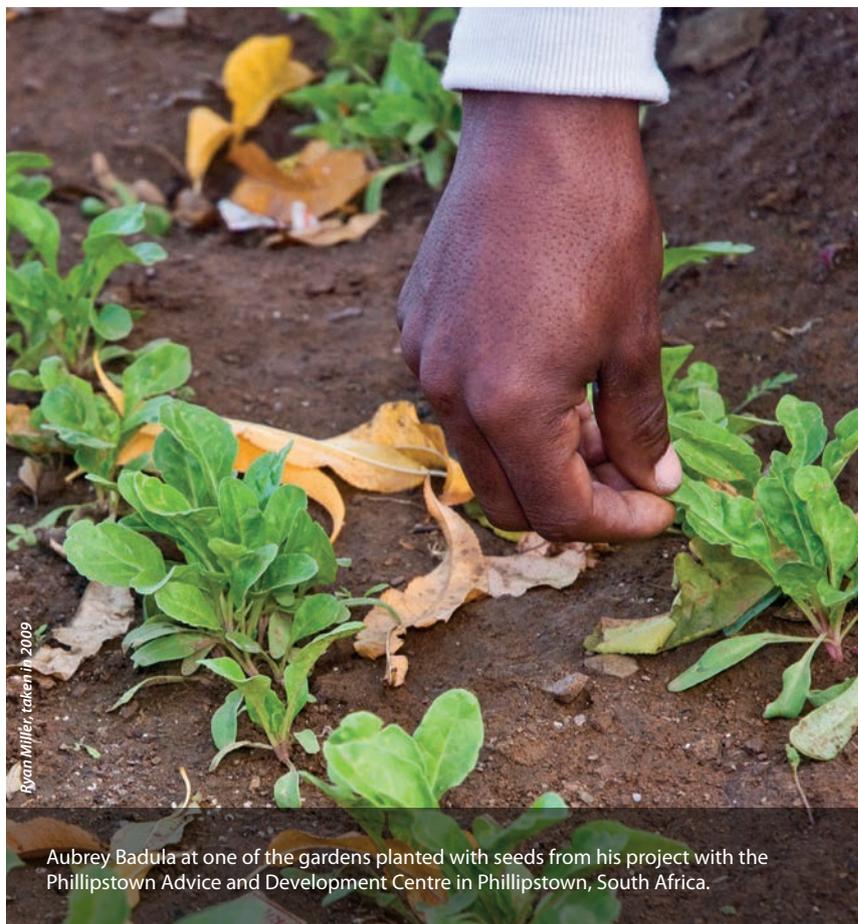
Mission Network stands with South African partners in fighting racist misinformation

ON AUG. 22, President Trump gave voice to false information being circulated in other media when he sent a tweet that said, “I have asked Secretary of State @SecPompeo to closely study the South Africa land and farm seizures and expropriations and the large-scale killing of farmers. South African Government is now seizing land from White farmers.”

These statements are both false and insulting to the citizens of South Africa.

These statements are both false and insulting to the citizens of South Africa. They are part of a campaign of misinformation spread by white South African organizations.

Staff at the Cato Institute, Fox News and other U.S. organizations received special briefings and personal visits this past spring from representatives of AfriForum, a South Africa-based group that advocates on behalf of white South Africans. AfriForum requested that the United States intervene on behalf of white South African landowners who they said fear potential seizure of their farms and political violence.



Aubrey Badula at one of the gardens planted with seeds from his project with the Phillipstown Advice and Development Centre in Phillipstown, South Africa.

Mennonite Mission Network and partners in South Africa are deeply troubled by these comments in support of white, racist South Africans who expropriated the land under colonial and apartheid laws while black South Africans, who make up about 80 percent of the population, currently own less than 10 percent of the country’s farmland. Land reform by the current South African government has used a “willing buyer—willing seller” model and has had only minimal impact on land ownership and control.

The debate over how to accomplish meaningful land reform in South Africa has been heating up since Cyril Ramaphosa was elected president in February. Some leaders have advocated that the government be given the power to seize land and

set the compensation for that land, but seizures have not taken place.

The claim of “large-scale killing” of white farmers has been investigated by numerous groups and found to be without basis. There is a high rate of violent crime in South Africa, and some white farmers have been victims, but white farmers are not victims at higher rates than the general population.

Oscar Siwali, founder and leader of the Southern African Development and Reconstruction Agency (SADRA), has asked people in the United States to “please be vocal and make sure Trump’s narrative doesn’t represent all of America.”

Peter Graber for Mennonite Mission Network

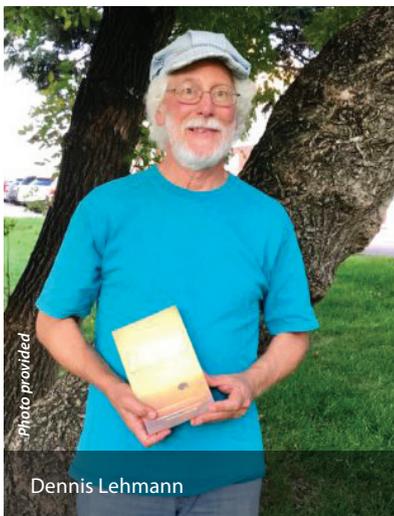
Following his conscience

Mennonite found guilty after protest at Standing Rock

DENNIS LEHMANN has dedicated much of his life working for peace and justice. In February 2017, that dedication landed him in jail. A year and a half later, he finally appeared in court.

On Sept. 7, a six-member Morton County, N.D., jury found the 65-year-old from Freeman, S.D., guilty of Class A misdemeanor charges of physical obstruction of a government function. Judge James Hill sentenced Lehmann to 90 days of unsupervised probation and ordered him to pay court fines.

According to a Sept. 10 release by the Water Protector Legal Collective (WPLC), Lehmann said after the conviction: “I see it more as an honor than as a stigma. Any time I have to report my conviction I’ll be able to communicate why I’m actually proud of what I did.”



Dennis Lehmann

What he did was serve as a “water protector,” trying to help stop the Dakota Access Pipeline from running through land north of the Standing Rock Sioux tribal land.

Jonathan Wallace, Lehmann’s attorney, does pro bono work for WPLC and was in North Dakota from his home in Long Island, New York, to help handle multiple cases. In a Sept. 11 phone interview, he said he has been representing about 50 clients in North Dakota.

He said he “has tremendous respect for Dennis. He’s a person who has wonderful values, a lot of compassion.” Lehmann is the first Mennonite he’s met, he said.

In a Sept. 14 phone interview, Lehmann explained why he chose to be tried by a jury rather than only a judge: “It was important to me to share my reasons with a jury of my peers, even if I didn’t expect to be found not guilty.” He said he wanted to talk to them about how Natives and non-Natives can understand one another better and work together on a better life for all, but the judge cut him off.

Wallace said judges treat testimony differently; some allow statements, others don’t. “This one allowed Dennis to say some things, but not all he wanted.”

In a July 31 phone interview, Lehmann related the story of his arrest on Feb. 23, 2017. He said he was “in the right place at the right time” with the water protectors when the police came and arrested everyone there, about 45 people, for “a physical obstruction of a governmental function,” and they refused to leave.

They were taken to Mandan, N.D., and put in steel cages, men and women separate, Lehmann said. About 30 of the men were taken four hours away to Grand

Forks, cuffed from behind with plastic cuffs. “We asked to be cuffed in front, but the guard refused,” Lehmann said. “The last three hours were like torture; we weren’t allowed to use a restroom during the [entire] trip.”

In Grand Forks, the guards allowed them one phone call. “One person was able to pay \$500 cash to get out, but the rest stayed,” Lehmann said.

The next day, they were released when a legal team from the Freshet Collective paid their bail. This was the bond Lehmann forfeited at his trial, thus covering his court fines.

He explained that the Dakota Access Pipeline wanted to put a pipeline under the Missouri River, where the tribe got its water. The water intake was downstream from where they wanted to put the pipeline.

Lehmann keeps a close watch on the section of the Keystone pipeline located closer to his South Dakota home, according to the WPLC release. “We had a leak eight miles from Freeman, which is north of the Keystone pipeline,” he said. “The oil spilled out for five to six hours. All their safety measures meant to prevent this kind of thing completely failed, and 16,000 gallons of oil fouled the farmland.”

“We’re all living on land that was once occupied by Native people,” Lehmann said, “and we often forget that. People should find out which tribes lived on the land where they live and try to develop relationships with those tribes.”



Read a longer version of this article at themennonite.org.

Gordon Houser for TMail



WHAT I'M WATCHING THIS MONTH



Minding the Gap

Directed by Bing Liu

This documentary takes an honest look at poverty and domestic violence but also shows the courage and strength of young people who face that head on. Three young men in Rockford, Ill., who were beaten by their fathers find solace in skateboarding.



Leave No Trace

Directed by Debra Granik

This excellent film not only tells a good story with complex characters but subtly confronts our way of life, so distant from nature. While the film moves slowly at times, the camera keeps us in the story, and we feel the beauty and the menace of nature.



BlacKkKlansman

Directed by Spike Lee

This humorous and timely film presents a story that seems incredible but is largely true. In the early 1970s, an African-American detective in Colorado Springs infiltrates the local Ku Klux Klan and helps arrest some of its members.



Look behind the headlines

WE ARE INUNDATED with information via social media, and it's natural to depend on headlines and merely scan stories that catch our attention. But it's important to look behind the headlines to get at a fuller understanding of what's happening.

Here are two of many possible examples of stories that go against people's general understanding:

Health costs are stealing your raise: We keep hearing about the booming economy and how wages are increasing, but Robert Samuelson offers a different slant in his column in the *Washington Post*. He notes that health-care costs have sucked up the raises that should be going to American workers.

Wages are inching up at 0.5 percent annually. The reason "workers feel they're not getting ahead," he writes, is because most aren't. And the single main reason is health costs.

Funds that in the past would have been reserved for wage increases are being diverted to employer-provided health insurance. And it's worst for low- and middle-income earners. For them, any wage gains they've received have been "wiped out by contributions for employer-provided health insurance," writes Samuelson.

This would be more tolerable if the medical system were improving, but "the opposite may be the case." Our inability to contain health-care costs

is "silently determining the nation's priorities without anyone assigning it that role," he writes.

What the media gets [sic] wrong about opioids: Maia Szalavitz reports for *Columbia Journalism Review* about how journalists who write about opioid addiction tend to write about a certain kind of addict.

Jillian Bauer-Reese, an assistant professor of journalism at Temple University in Philadelphia, created an online collection of opioid recovery stories and began to get calls for help from reporters. "They had essentially identified a story that they wanted to tell and were looking for a character who could tell that story," looking for people who had started on a prescription from a doctor or a dentist.

The problem is, this profile doesn't fit most people who become addicted. According to surveys conducted for the government's National Household Survey on Drug Use and Health, 80 percent of people who become addicted to opioids start by using drugs not prescribed to them, typically obtained from a friend or family member.

Furthermore, a 2016 review published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* put the risk of new addiction at less than 8 percent for people prescribed opioids for chronic pain.

Gordon Houser is editor of *The Mennonite*.



QUOTABLE

“At the center of the Christian faith lies the conviction that the Creator suffers with the oppressed, that God takes sides with the victims over against the dominant powers...”

—**Steve Heinrichs**,
director of Indigenous-Settler Relations for Mennonite Church Canada, who was found guilty of criminal and civil contempt of court after a solidarity action against construction of the Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline



MOST-READ ARTICLES ONLINE

4.3K

Mennonite found guilty after protest at Standing Rock

by Gordon Houser

1.9K

Mennonite Church Canada staffer sentenced to seven days in jail

by Amy Dueckman

1.4K

Federal agency reviews the draft, invites comment on military, national and public service

by Sheldon C. Good

1K

A place of refuge or oppression?

by Safwat Marzouk

FROM THE ARCHIVES



Longtime peace worker

Gene Stoltzfus (second from right) poses for a photograph with village leaders, including the village chief (center), at a Montagnard hamlet in the Vietnamese highlands. From 1963 to 1967, Stoltzfus worked with International Voluntary Services in Vietnam before resigning from his position in protest against the Vietnam War.

In the 1970s and '80s, Stoltzfus served and worked with several nonprofit organizations and became the founding director of Christian Peacemaker Teams in 1988. An internationally regarded peace activist, Stoltzfus died in 2010 at the age of 70.

Citation: Gene Stoltzfus Papers, 1940-2012. HM1-101. Photographs: Vietnam, International Voluntary Service, 1963-1967. Box 4 Folder 2. Mennonite Church USA Archives. Elkhart, Ind.

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RECIPE OF THE MONTH | Aunt Mary's spiced pumpkin bars
 You can find the recipe on our website at themennonite.org/hungryhounds

PERSPECTIVES FROM READERS

Time to redefine pacifism

I REMEMBER TURNING 18 and having my parents make sure I registered as a conscientious objector. It made me proud to do so, as a public statement of my opinion on war and violence. I can flip through the two books I was given at Slate Hill Mennonite Church in Camp Hill, Pa., upon my baptism, *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* and *God's Story, Our Story*, and find many references to our pacifist beliefs, from “to resist evil without violence...” to

We need to redefine pacifism because our modern pacifism has become too easy. It's not easy to truly question the consequences of our smallest actions.

“The church is called to live out the justice and peace of the reign of God right now.” Our higher education institutions, such as Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., are loud and clear about our focus on service, social justice, discipleship and peacemaking. But all the talk of pacifism, nonviolence and peace seems to be more at a surface level than to be transformative in our lives.

As we humans have learned more about the amazing Earth God created, we have learned

more about our relationship with it. We have learned that our actions can affect people and societies we may never meet or hear about, even to the point of creating violence and hardship. But often our pacifism stops right before these connections, because this type of nonviolence would disrupt our day-to-day lives too much.

But was living like Jesus ever supposed to be easy?

And to be honest, there are almost too many aspects of our everyday lives that implicate us in violence to find every item. Whether from where our clothes are sourced to the energy we use, everyday lives are damaged, even killed, because we have chosen to forget about pacifism in those parts of our lives.

According to the World Health Organization, 4.2 million deaths are caused by ambient air pollution, and most of these deaths are in low- to middle-income countries and among young children. Modern society has decided it's more important to have fast transportation than to protect innocent lives. True pacifism would look to redefine our relationship with energy in order to avoid causing harm and violence.

Therefore, we must redefine our “modern” pacifism. It must include changing our energy sources to ones that are renewable and clean. This may mean driving an electric car or choosing to bike to work and church, installing solar panels on our homes and churches or decreasing our consumption of energy. This may mean donating

to a voluntary gas or carbon tax or increasing our charitable giving to green charities.

And it may mean we cease our ownership in companies sustaining violence worldwide. Everence Financial holds over \$22 million in fossil-fuel companies, \$22 million in companies that profit and succeed when a child dies from asthma, when a grandmother dies from a heart attack. And while our share of ownership in the global fossil-fuel market may be small, it matters.

If I were to say I was a pacifist because I only got into a fight once every six months, that would make no sense. Just so, it makes no sense to own companies that perpetrate violence worldwide.

We need to redefine pacifism because our modern pacifism has become too easy. It's easy to go through life without serving in a war. It's easy to go through life without getting into fights. But it's not easy to go through life living outside our comfortable habits that harm others. And it's not easy to truly question the consequences of our smallest actions.

But our faith in Christ and daily commitment to live a life like his requires that we do so. So if we are truly to be Christlike, then we must redefine pacifism according to its truest definition, not to what makes life easy.



Austin Sachs is a senior at Eastern Mennonite University and attends Shalom Mennonite Congregation in Harrisonburg, Va.

BY AND ABOUT YOUNG ADULTS

Why read?

MY NEW NEIGHBOR asked me what I do for a living. I replied instinctively, “I read.” It’s true; 80 percent of what I do at this point in my graduate program involves reading. However, it was the automatic nature of my response that caused me to contemplate why I’ve found myself in a profession so saturated with books. Why do I love reading, and what is it about books that draws me to them?

Fortunately, I grew up in a family that values reading. My parents read to my sister Charlotte and me from the books that abounded in our home. When we were old enough, summers involved getting dropped off at the library while Mom and Dad were at work so we could capitalize on Dad’s incentivized reading program, “A Penny a Page.” That rewards program only lasted a couple of summers before Charlotte and I acquired the desired habit and read so much that we “broke the bank.” It was also at age 7 when I picked up my first presidential biography and fell in love with American history, the subject I’m now pursuing for my doctorate. I had a privileged childhood that granted me easy access to books, and that has done much to cultivate my love of them.

I’ve also tried to be intentional about engaging different types of literature other than the nonfiction that so dominates my life. For the last year, two friends from high school and I have been in a monthly Skype book club that has us working through unread titles from PBS’s “Great American Read” list. I’ve also fed

my poetry fix by chatting weekly with a friend in Indiana as we work our way—act by act—through Shakespeare’s *Richard III*. These habits are important to me because, as my graduate director put it, “It reminds us why we love reading.” In that spirit, here are three reasons I love reading and why I think it’s important to read regardless of level, genre or medium.

Books can give us the ability to view the world through another’s eyes.

1. Reading improves writing.

It’s been documented how reading results enriches vocabulary and the ability to articulate complex ideas. However, creativity is the most important thing that comes from the reading-writing relationship. One practice stokes a desire to partake in the other. Books introduce ideas and provide them space to germinate, while writing supplies the means to express and expand those ideas as refracted through one’s imagination and experience.

2. Reading cultivates empathy and perspective.

Books can give us the ability to view the world through another’s eyes. *The Diary of Anne Frank* helps us see the horrors of the Holocaust from the vantage point of a Jewish girl caught in its jaws. Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* or Shūsaku Endō’s *Silence*, though fiction, provide helpful counternarratives on

Christianity and colonialism. It’s more difficult to alienate a person or dismiss a point of view once we’ve encountered them and their world. This enlarges our capacity to love. It requires going outside our comfort zones, but if we are taking the risk, one place to venture is in the pages of a book.

3. Reading is counter-cultural.

In our instant and busy world, books require us to slow down. It takes time to savor the pleasure of a good book. Also, grasping the intricacies of a finely honed plot or argument requires an investment of time. Especially in a world that communicates in 280-character statements, books compel us to take the long view and remember that words have power. In books we also recall that everything has a beginning, middle and end. That’s a strange message in a world rife with aimlessness and feelings of invisibility.

As people of *the Book*, we should call to mind these realities often, for we know the transformative power of story. More than just a literacy tool, the Bible provides the narrative from which we gain our primary identity and purpose. Whether literature, the Bible or any other text, read so that you may be changed, growing more in knowledge and love for your neighbor and your Lord.



Regina Wenger is a doctoral student in history at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.



FROM MENNONITE CHURCH USA

Don't complicate it

I'M MORE AND MORE convinced the reason peace and justice movements don't reach a broader public is because not enough people understand them.

Not that they can't understand the core concepts. They can. But

I don't want to admit that Einstein was correct when he said, "If you can't explain it to a 6-year-old, you don't understand it yourself."

we make it so understanding takes too much effort. We've set the cost of admission too high.

Most people don't know the jargon peace and justice comes wrapped in. They don't have the time or patience to read long, unconvincing explanations. It's like peace initiatives are designed to keep as many people away as possible.

I can't fully explain why this is. Most peace people I know are smart. Very smart. They recognize communication needs to be clear, simple and direct to reach a broad audience.

But somehow, though not always, when these fine people get together to undertake an endeavor, too often the outcome is opaque, obscure,

long-winded or needlessly complicated; furthermore, only a small percentage of the rest of the population can surmise what the point may or may not be, depending on a variety of factors.

I'm guilty of this as well, of overcomplicating things. I know better, but it's hard to stop. There's so much nuance I feel the need to explain, so much to unpack. I don't want to admit that Einstein was correct when he said, "If you can't explain it to a 6-year-old, you don't understand it yourself."

Other times it's the result of a good impulse to include multiple viewpoints on a topic. That's especially important when working with a diverse group. I support that goal but encourage finding ways that don't read like a Faulkner novel.

We need look no farther than Jesus for an example. His simple stories and parables conveyed eternal truths and new ways to look at complicated topics. But they made sense to everyone—from high priests to wealthy merchants to the crowds of fishermen and laborers who followed him.

I'm not suggesting simplified communication would make everyone a pacifist. I do believe we'd have a lot more people interested in peace and justice causes if we made it easier to engage with the ideas.

Jason Boone is coordinating minister for the Peace and Justice Support Network of Mennonite Mission Network.

UPDATES

HYMNAL VOLUNTEER HOURS VALUED AT \$296,280 ANNUALLY

The 12 members of the Mennonite Worship and Song Committee and affiliated networks of scholars, writers, pastors and musicians are donating an estimated 12,000 hours annually for *Voices Together*, the new hymnal. Independent Sector values volunteer time at \$24.69 per hour. Applying this to volunteer hours brings the annual monetary value of hours donated to the project to roughly \$296,280.

OHIO CONFERENCE NAMES CONFERENCE MINISTER

The Ohio Conference Leadership Team has hired Dick Barrett to serve as conference minister of the conference. Barrett has worked the past 16 years at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio. He will begin in his new role full-time on Jan. 1, 2019.

GOSHEN NAMES NEW ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Goshen (Ind.) College has named Harold M. Watson the new athletic director. The Evanston, Ill., native comes from Georgia Southern University, where he most recently served as assistant athletic director for strategic marketing. He had previously been the assistant athletic director for marketing and promotions at Armstrong State University, a job he held from 2014.

A WORD FROM PASTORS

We all make many mistakes

I CRITIQUED my husband for the way he cleaned the kitchen. I failed to follow up in a timely way with a nearly homeless family that came to our church seeking help. I had an opportunity to pray with a church member and chickened out. I insulted a professional by offering him a pittance for remuneration. I “forgot” to express gratitude for others’ contribution to a big project. I disappointed a family member who asked for a simple but important favor. And this is just what I remember from the last few days.

Then I read from the book of James: “For all of us make many mistakes” (3:2). Some translations fittingly use terms for stumbling rather than mistakes. While it may not be so different from Paul’s “all have sinned,” the statement that “all of us make many mistakes” strikes me as different. Many of us with Christian theological education—from the university or from the church—have learned to focus less on “sins” and more on “Sin,” the latter being a matrix of resistance to God’s love that affects us even when we’re not so aware of it. Sin encompasses individual sins but also includes systemic sins such as racism, patriarchy and economic exploitation. We pastors preach sermons about the stranglehold of sin and uphold the alternative biblical vision of shalom.

But some of these sermons—the very ones I preach—don’t always connect the good news with daily discipleship in ways that acknowledge “we all make many mistakes.” My weekly litany of errors, omissions, slights and grudges sounds a lot like many

mistakes. It all seems so petty and not worth a prayer. Why even bother confessing this stuff? Why not just trust that it’s all swept away with the singing of “Kyrie, eleison” (“Lord, have mercy”) and move on with addressing

I’ve begun to notice my many mistakes as the humiliating deaths I die each week.

more important matters in the world, our community and our church? Or perhaps, given how much I know about others’ bigger mistakes, I could invest more time in keeping them accountable.

One reason is James. This New Testament contributor addresses big-picture, gospel matters, not least of which is the wealth gap between rich and poor, yet he’s also concerned with daily living. For example, chapter 3, from which this “many mistakes” phrase comes, focuses on training oneself not to say the wrong thing and dispense with arrogance, a couple of perennial “mistakes” made by teachers—and the rest of us. I assume James was indeed a wise teacher in the early church, a respected elder, the kind of leader I aspire to be, with a character affirmed by the community as Christlike. Perhaps, according to tradition, he was even the half-brother of Jesus. Yet he writes as if he knows from personal experience the results of an unbridled tongue and an arrogant heart. He uses

riveting metaphors and has clearly thought about these matters rather than dismissing them as minor disturbances in an otherwise saintly life.

I don’t want to make a mountain out of my molehill mistakes, but I also don’t want to brush them aside. I want to yield to the exercises of the Spiritual Trainer who usually lines up a new (and familiar) challenge for me each day and each week.

In her memoir *Pastrix*, Lutheran church planter and pastor Nadia Boltz Weber speaks of grace neither so much as forgiveness nor empowerment—two dimensions of grace I can trace through my spiritual and theological growth. Boltz most often speaks of grace as death and resurrection. While my pastoral scene doesn’t have the inky bling of Boltz’ Church for All Sinners and Saints—Boltz is sleeved out with Christian tatoos—I appreciate her spiritual integrity as she sees death and resurrection not only in her victory over addiction but in her stumbling and spectacular daily life as a pastor. Since reading Boltz, I’ve begun to notice my many mistakes as the humiliating deaths I die each week. And time and again I’m given new life, resurrection life. This is the daily grace I rely on increasingly.



Jennifer Davis Sensenig is pastor of Community Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, Va.

For the record

To submit births, marriages or deaths, log on to themennonite.org, use the "About Us" tab and select "Contact Us" from the drop-down menu. You may also use email, editor@themennonite.org, or mail, 3145 Benham Ave., Suite 4, Elkhart, IN 46517.

BIRTHS

Haines, Madeline Rose, was born Aug. 21, to Seth and Laura Haines, Mishawaka, Ind.

Klassen, Eliza Renee, was born Sept. 8, to Wes and Keren Klassen in Elkhart, Ind.

MARRIAGES

Barwick, Beth, Elkhart, Ind., and **Stephen Brown**, LaPorte, Ind., were married July 28 at the bride's family home, Mishawaka, Ind.

Brenneman, Tyler, Goshen, Ind., and **Claire Fry**, Archbold, Ohio, were married Aug. 4 at Gautsche Barn, Archbold.

Gwaltney, Madelene, Rustburg, Va., and **Logan Martin**, Rustburg, were married July 28 at The Old Mill Farm, Bedford, Va.

Lothrop, Shea, Cincinnati, Ohio, and **Daniel Sauder**, Wauseon, Ohio, were married Aug. 11 at Sauder Village, Archbold, Ohio.

Miller, Peter, State College, Pa., and **Ida Short**, Kalona, Iowa, were married Aug. 25 at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich.

Pletcher, Justin, Wakarusa, Ind., and **Allison Schrock**, Goshen, Ind., were married Sept. 2 at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa.

DEATHS

Beck, Esther F. Liechty, 88, Bryan, Ohio, died Aug. 10. Spouse: Gaylord J. Beck (deceased). Parents: Jonas and Addie Nichols Liechty. Children: Anna, Paul, Dawn; four grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 14 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Brenneman, Orval E., 88, Wellman, Iowa, died Aug. 23. Spouse: Norma Jean Showalter Brenneman. Parents: Emery and Alice Bender Brenneman. Children: Robert Brenneman, Jerold Brenneman, Ruth Ann Brenneman Graber; six grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 2 at First Mennonite Church, Iowa City, Iowa.

Eby, Mary Jane Breneman, 84, Albany, Ore., died Aug. 16. Spouse: Lawrence Eby. Parents: Clyde and Mary Ann Breneman. Children: Douglas, Donald, Thomas, Janette, Karl, Suzette; nine grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 17 at Fisher Funeral Home, Albany.

Hill, Gary Lynn, 63, Denver, Colo., died July 25, of multiple myeloma. Spouse: Carlene Hill. Parents: James and Doris Baughman Hill. Children: Sean Hill, Ashford "Ash" Hill, Alijah Hill. Funeral: Aug. 12 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Martin, Esther "Sue" Davis, 94, Stuarts Draft, Va., died Aug. 12. Spouse: Clinton Earl Martin. Parents: George W. and Lena Weaver Davis. Children: Gary Martin, Dale Martin, Dean Ray Martin; four grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 15 Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

Maust, Clayton Ray, 88, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 31. Spouse: Thelma H. Martin Hershberger Maust. Spouse: Berniece Albrecht Maust (deceased). Parents: Richard and Elizabeth Gunden Maust. Children: Cherie Yoder, Jerry Maust, Lynette Yoder, Debby Graber, Lori Beachy; step-children: Leon Hershberger, Evie Showalter; 25 grandchildren; 50 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren.

Memorial service: Aug. 2 at Strite Auditorium, Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Harrisonburg.

Miller, Emma Kramer, 93, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 23. Spouse: George S. Miller (deceased). Spouse: Rev. Neil E. Beachy (deceased). Parents: Joseph D. and Clara Miller Kramer. Children: Roger Beachy, Veronica Denlinger, Phillip Beachy, Jeffrey Beachy, Kenneth Beachy, Leah Beachy; step-children: Georgia Davis, Glenda Miller, Gordon Miller, Gina Coburn, Gerald Miller, Galen Miller; seven grandchildren; 15 step-grandchildren; numerous great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 8 at Greencroft Health, Goshen.

Neufeld, Peter J., 89, Hutchinson, Kan., died May 31. Spouse: Onale Stucky. Parents: Jacob B. and Katherine Pauls Neufeld. Children: Sandy Wetzel, Cindy Kroeker, Jon Neufeld; four grandchildren; one grandson-in-law; one great-grandson. Funeral: July 7 at First Mennonite Church, Hutchinson.

Schrag, Vera Grace Clocksen, 96, Freeman, S.D., died July 19. Spouse: Erwin Schrag (deceased). Parents: Ellis and Gertrude Preston Clocksen. Children: Ruth Schrag, Stephen Schrag, Anne Sanchez, David Schrag; six grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 25 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Shumaker, William Howard, 87, West Liberty, Ohio, died Sept. 5. Spouse: Eleanor Stoltzfus Shumaker. Parents: William Howard and Anna S. King Shumaker. Children: Sharon Shumaker, Patricia Shumaker Chisholm, Teresa Swartley; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 8 at Bethel Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Spencer, Jean, 87, Kauai, Hawaii, died June 17. Spouse: Charles P. Spencer (deceased). Parents: Paul and Effie Wittrig. Children: Rebecca, Joel; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: July 14 at Lihue Missionary Church, Lihue, Hawaii.

Steinbaeher, Gerald "Jere" P., 77, Lancaster, Pa., died July 31, of cancer. Spouse: Miz E. Good Steinbaeher. Parents: Paul and Josephine Hahn Steinbaeher. Children: Shelly R. Vitale, Noelle S. Hobson; three grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 6 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Stuter, Esther K. Hostetler, 91, Belleville, Pa., died Aug. 18. Spouse: Earl E. Stuter (deceased). Parents: John Y. and Katie Yoder Hostetler. Step-children: Dennis Stuter, Bonnie Bigelow. Funeral: Aug. 10 at Valley View Haven Chapel, Belleville.

Wideman, Florence Martin, 96, St. Jacobs, Ontario, died Aug. 20. Spouse: Aaron Wideman (deceased). Parents: Annanias and Susanna Steckle Martin. Children: Elaine Hershberger, Beulah Gerber, Elroy Wideman, Reta Derksen, Eva Woodard, Cliff Wideman, Maynard Wideman, Stewart Wideman, Marilyn Wideman, Alice Martin; 26 grandchildren; 48 great-grandchildren; many great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 23 at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

Wittrig, Robert, 76, Commerce City, Colo., died March 20. Parents: Paul and Effie Wittrig. No service.

Wyse, Mahlon Curtis, 93, Archbold, Ohio, died Aug. 19. Spouse: Valeria Stuckey Wyse. Parents: Henry and Lydia Wyse. Children: Edward Wyse, Charlinda Huffman, Patricia Short, Donna Dawes, Debra Vanderkooy, Diane Callison, Norma Harais; 19 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 25 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Yoder, Richard W., 88, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 12. Spouse: Barbara Weldy Yoder (deceased). Parents: Henry and Velma Miller Yoder. Children: Sanna Yoder Walters, Lisa Caskey; step-children: Al Weldy, Stanley Weldy; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 23 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

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Consider the fund's investment objectives, risks, and charges and expenses carefully before you invest. The fund's prospectus and summary prospectus contain this and other information. Call (800) 977-2947 or visit praxismutualfunds.com for a prospectus, which you should read carefully before you invest. Praxis Mutual Funds are advised by Everence Capital Management and distributed through FINRA member BHIL Distributors LLC. Investment products offered are not FDIC insured, may lose value and have no bank guarantee.

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North Newton Guest Housing—Serenity Silo, Barnview Cottage, Woodland Hideaway. Email or call for brochures: vadasnider@cox.net, 316-283-5231.

Lead pastor: Waynesboro Mennonite Church, a congregation in the Virginia Mennonite Conference is seeking a pastor to join and lead our staff and congregation. The congregation of about 65 active and open participants is located in Waynesboro, Va., and has a blended worship style. Applicants must be committed to preaching, teaching and guiding people in a continually maturing relationship with Christ in accordance to the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*. Submit résumé to pastorsearchwmc@gmail.com.

Encounter Cuba in an up close and personal people-to-people experience sponsored by the MEDA Sarasota Chapter. Explore this fascinating country that's been off-limits to most Americans for more than 50 years. Led by expert Cuban guides, you'll experience the sights and sounds of Cuba and see Cuban life through the eyes of artists, chefs, entrepreneurs, students, medical practitioners, farmers, senior citizens and more on this unique and affordable adventure. Dates are Feb. 16-23, 2019. Scholarships available for full-time students and recent graduates. For further information contact MEDA.Sarasota.Cuba@gmail.com or 574-849-2751.

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) is seeking a **full-time communications manager** who can effectively shape, enable and promote the MDS story through the lens of its vision, mission and values, strategically collaborating with staff

and our grassroots volunteer base in the process. This role is based in Lititz, Pa., and covers the United States and Canada. Applicants must be active in an Anabaptist church and committed to the Anabaptist faith and peace position. See the full job description at mds.mennonite.net/about-us/employment. Résumés may be sent to jobs@mds.mennonite.net or MDS, Attn: Human Resources, 583 Airport Rd, Lititz, PA 17543. Review of résumés begins immediately. Recruitment continues until the position is filled.

Maple Grove Mennonite Church, a congregation of about 116 members in Hartville, Ohio, seeks a **lead pastor** with a strong commitment to Anabaptist values and theology with skills in preaching, leadership, teaching and congregational care. M.Div. degree (or equivalent) and pastoral experience preferred. For more information contact searchcommittee@maplegrovemennonite.org.

Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church seeks **part-time church administrator**. Some duties: coordinate congregational communications, create and distribute weekly bulletin, scribe at council meetings, coordination of building use, supply ordering. 12 hours/week at church office. Call 303-443-3889 or email beritjany@aol.com.

Peace Mennonite Church in Dallas, Texas, seeks a **60% FTE pastor** to begin in 2019. PMC is an open and affirming congregation and an active member in Western District Conference of MC USA. Interested persons are encouraged to contact Western District Conference: wdc@mennowdc.org.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP

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I certify that all information furnished in this is true and complete.

Sheldon C. Good, Managing Editor

STORIES FROM THE GLOBAL MENNONITE CHURCH

Lessons from language learning

IN THE SPRING of 1978, shortly after my 18th birthday, I left college to see the world. The “world,” as it turned out, was concentrated mostly in a tiny village in Lower Austria, where I lived with a kind, hardworking family who gave me food and shelter in return for my labor in their fields. Since the family spoke little English and local villagers communicated only in a strong Austrian dialect, I spent the first several months in a linguistic fog, struggling to make sense of even the most basic exchanges. At one point, I recall, my family was astonished to learn that I could drive a car; my verbal interactions were so limited that they had come to regard me as a child. To this day I can still recall the exact setting in which I learned many specific words, largely because the learning was associated with some form of acute embarrassment.

There is no doubt my time in Alberndorf changed my life for the better. The process of learning a new language opened up a new world, and my friendship with the family endures. But the experience of being completely immersed in a foreign context left me shaken. Indeed, it called into question my very identity.

Some 20 years later, those memories of learning German came flooding back when our family moved to Costa Rica, where my wife and I led Goshen (Ind.) College’s Study-Service Term for a year. Once again, I found myself in a completely new linguistic and cultural context. As I tried to carry out my responsibilities—at banks and

government offices, in meetings with host parents, organizing field trips or sharing in churches—I was constantly frustrated by my limited Spanish. As a writer, I cared deeply about nuance and precision. Now I heard myself stammering, resorting to trite phrases, grasping desperately for verb tenses that frequently eluded my reach. Often, just when I thought I was making progress,

Language learning calls us to inhabit the mental and cultural space of a world very different from our own.

an unexpected encounter left me fumbling for the most basic words.

Learning another language is hard work, not just because verb tenses are difficult but because the only path to success goes through the valley of vulnerability, confusion and repeated failure. In order to grasp a new language, we must let go of the cognitive grip that anchors us to the familiar comfort of our mother tongue. Language learning calls us to inhabit the mental and cultural space of a world very different from our own and to recognize that all along native speakers have been perfectly at ease in this world, assuming it to be the norm.

Like others who grew up in a superpower—but unlike the great majority of the world’s population—I did not have to

learn a second (or third) language as a child. That is a profound deficit in my education that I am still trying to recover from.

By one reckoning, Mennonite World Conference member groups speak more than 60 different languages, which calls for enormous patience, creativity and forbearance whenever we gather for conversation and worship. Nevertheless, in our gatherings a remarkable number of people are able to communicate in one of the three official MWC languages—English, French and Spanish.

Recently, I received an email from Duolingo, an online language-learning platform, that a basic program for learning Bahasa Indonesian, which they had promised long ago, was finally available. In 2021, MWC will celebrate its 17th assembly in Semarang, Indonesia. I know from experience that the best way to learn a new language is full immersion. But since that is not possible, I’m hoping 15 minutes a day will yield enough basic phrases to enter, even if modestly, the linguistic world of my Indonesian brothers and sisters by the summer of 2021.

What about you? It’s never too early—or too late—to learn a new language.



John D. Roth is professor of history at Goshen (Ind.) College, director of the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism and editor of *Mennonite Quarterly Review*.



FROM THE EDITOR

Roses and thorns

SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY, my 3-year-old's bedtime routine developed into (at least) three parts: read, "rose and thorn," pray. Sometimes it all takes 10 minutes, sometimes a half hour.

For "rose and thorn," my wife, toddler and I each share "something I liked about today" (rose) and "something I didn't like about today" (thorn).

Naturally, my toddler's answers are the most memorable. Recent roses: spending time at Nana and Grandpop's, sleeping in a bunk bed with sheets, having a baby sister. Recent thorns: not staying very long at Nana and Grandpop's, not staying very long at Sunday school, not eating more ice cream.

What captures my attention is the specificity and honesty of a 3-year-old. Sometimes I struggle to come up with roses and thorns. This makes me wonder whether I am sometimes inattentive to the day's highs and lows, to the joys and pains of daily life.

Over the past few years I have

realized, slowly, what is one of my consistent, challenging enemies: avoiding pain.

The pain might be around or within me, but either way, I want it to go away. For example, when I sense my partner is struggling, I try to step in to help "solve" the

I am a Seven, which needs to be happy and avoid pain.

situation. When I get bored with a task, I move on to another one, nothing completed, everything an adventure waiting for me.

According to the Enneagram, a personality test that identifies folks as one of nine dominant personalities, I am a Seven, which needs to be happy and avoid pain.

The irony is that it's impossible to be happy and avoid pain at the same time.

"We cannot selectively numb emotions," writes Brené Brown in *The Gifts of Imperfection*. "When

we numb the painful emotions, we also numb the positive emotions."

Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest who has written extensively about the Enneagram, says "the invitation to Sevens is cooperation with God...When they cooperate with God, they confront the reality of the world, which is always a combination of joy and pain, and they accept both sides of life. They go God's way, which leads through death to resurrection."

Naming "thorns" can help me notice how I am running from or ignoring or being indifferent toward pain. Slowly, I'm learning how to engage the pain within and around me, how to practice childlike honesty with myself.

Where might I, where might all of us, cooperate with God—roses, thorns and all—today?

Sheldon C. Good,
Executive director of *The Mennonite, Inc.*

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