



# Neighbors: Strangers No More

**Virginia Mennonite Conference Assembly**

**July 20-22, 2017**

**Park View Mennonite Church**

**Harrisonburg, VA**

*No importa de dónde eres,  
estamos contentos que seas  
nuestro vecino.*

No matter where you are  
from, we're glad you're  
our neighbor.

لا يهم أين ولدتم، و لكننا  
سعداء انكم جيراننا.



**Reports & Statistics  
2016-2017**

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(Informes denominacionales están disponibles en español. Por favor, visite la mesa de registro.)

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## Acronyms

IBA	Anabaptist Biblical Institute
IDA	Iglesia Discipular Anabaptista
MC USA	Mennonite Church USA
MTTF	Ministerial Training Trust Fund
TCK	Tennessee/Carolina/Kentucky District
VMC	Virginia Mennonite Conference

## Delegate Key

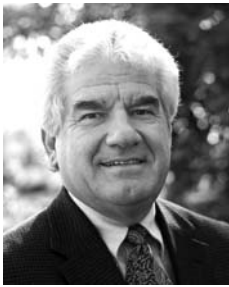
Ø	Does not track membership
*	Voting credentialed leader
()	Congregational membership
[]	Average attendance
~	Did not report
~~	Has not reported for two or more years

Reports current as of June 1, 2017

## Conference Staff

Clyde G. Kratz, *Executive Conference Minister*  
Anieta McCracken, *Administrative Services Manager*  
Jon Trotter, *Communications Manager*  
Rhoda Folmar, *Bookkeeper*

# A missional church engages in self-examination



**Elroy Miller**

In response to allegations of pastoral misconduct by Lindale Mennonite Church, and complaints about the Virginia Mennonite Conference (VMC) response

to those allegations, Conference Council engaged in a consultation with D. Stafford & Associates this past year.

Conference Council has received the recommendations, and is consulting with FaithTrust Institute to review and make necessary changes to VMC ministerial misconduct policy and procedure, especially to include a clear process for pastoral staff to report formal and informal complaints to Conference leadership.

VMC will also develop a misconduct policy and procedure for lay leadership within the Conference, provide ethics and boundary training for pastoral and lay leadership within two years, and complete an internal ministerial review process to determine if boundaries were violated by a ministerial staff member at Lindale. This latter process is underway.

VMC is committed to writing clear policy and procedure on ministerial misconduct (including abuse of power), requiring leadership training on ethics and healthy boundaries, and developing a protocol for timely reviews of allegations of misconduct by pastors and lay church leaders.

Virginia Mennonite Conference has also been grappling this past year with what it means to forbear with each other across our differences (see *Forbearance in the Midst of Differences Resolution*: <http://mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/ForbearanceResolution.pdf>). Together with other Mennonite

conferences, VMC continues to discern what it means to live in creative tension with our differences. As noted in last year's Moderator's report, we are trying to discern if we should emphasize the Conference's current membership guidelines and/or evolve a spirit of forbearance that extends grace to those districts and congregations that believe they have found a more discerning way forward for both pastors and congregations.

To that end, VMC is engaged in two discerning efforts. The first is a Polity Task Force, which began meeting in February 2017. Their goal is to discern the future authority and structure of VMC, the role and function of the commissions and districts in relationship to each other and to Conference Council, and the relationship between congregations and the Conference. Information gathering efforts include individual interviews, focus groups and a survey, which many have already completed. The task force is chaired by Phil Kniss. David Brubaker is a compensated coach. Other members are Nancy Heisey, Alicia Horst, Wendy Malvaez, Ryan Ahlgrim and Craig Maven.

The task force will submit a report and recommendations to Conference Council by December 2017. Conference Council will draw on these recommendations to propose organizational and polity changes in keeping with our theology and ecclesiology (nature and structure of the church).

The second discernment process underway by Conference Council is the development of a Biblical & Theological Task Force on Same-Gender Issues, which began meeting in April 2017. They are discerning how to frame this conversation to bring greater unity to the church than what we are currently experiencing. This task force consists of George Brunk III, Dorothy Jean Weaver, Mark Thiessen Nation, Peter Dula, Andrew Suderman and Ted Grimsrud.

Members of Conference Council and Faith and Life Commission recently participated in a two-day training event on Building Intercultural Competence, an initiative of Mennonite Church USA.

The intent and goal is to undo racism and advance intercultural transformation in our congregations. This undertaking will be a challenge, especially in light of church-related research. In *Road Signs for the Journey*, MC USA (2007), Conrad Kanagy found "only 11% of Mennonite church membership is racial/ethnic, but [the church is] making progress," (p. 52). In 2015, the Pew Foundation found in *Racial and Ethnic Composition by Religious Group* "less than 25% of Mainline church membership is racial/ethnic" (p. 1).

The good news is that Mennonite Church USA is making progress on racial/ethnic membership. One way we can engage is by inviting our friends, neighbors, and colleagues to church. In 2016, the Pew Foundation, *On Choosing a New Church*, found that "75% of the respondents said they made their decision about attending [a church] after speaking to members of the congregation or friends or colleagues." (p. 1).

The Pew Foundation research *Racial and ethnic composition by religious group*, (2015, May 12), found that "...only 42% of African Americans believe that the U.S. will ever achieve racial equality." (p1).

The Pew Foundation. (2016, June 27). *Our views on race and inequality, whites and blacks are worlds apart*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2016/06/27/on-views-of-race-and-inequality-blacks-and-whites-are-worlds-apart/>

The Pew Foundation. (2016, August 23). *Choosing a new church or house of worship*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewforum.org/2016/08/23/choosing-a-new-church-or-house-of-worship/>

Elroy Miller  
Conference Moderator

# Transformation: Pain and Hope



Clyde G. Kratz

In our history as Mennonites, transformation came through the annual renewal meetings that many congregations embraced following the success of revival meetings. The revival meetings or tent crusades were protracted meetings in local communities that brought Mennonites together, sometimes for multiple weeks.

George Brunk II and Myron Augsburger are two evangelists associated with Virginia Mennonite Conference who provided exemplary leadership to this movement. Both individuals demonstrated dynamic biblical proclamation, led by the power of the Spirit, guiding people into a deeper and refreshed experience with Christ.

Many people experienced life-changing transformation as they confessed sins, gained new insights into their faith pilgrimage, and made commitments to faithful discipleship and mission engagement. As congregational leaders experienced this powerful transformation in their midst, congregations began to hold their own annual renewal meetings.

Today, transformation occurs in a variety of ways. Youth and young adults often make first-time commitments to Christ at one of our Mennonite camps, instead of walking the sawdust path to a song like “Just as I am.” Pastoral leadership benefited from more training, which gave a different quality of pastoral care and leadership that nurtured faith and contributed to transformation, often without much public witness of that transformation beyond the local congregation.

Virginia Mennonite Conference seeks to transform our faith community, including pastors, congregations, and Conference Endorsed Ministries, in order to strengthen our communities of faith.

VMC and other conferences have established their own means for reaching the goals of Mennonite Church USA’s *Purposeful Plan*. Many of these seeds of opportunity will sprout into fruit that may not be fully experienced in one year. Over time, however, they will make a significant difference in our communities. Here are some ways Virginia Mennonite Conference is aligned with the priorities of MC USA’s *Purposeful Plan*:

### **Christian Formation: capacity building to make disciples**

With other Missional Partners, we hosted Dr. Scott McKnight for four days in the Harrisonburg area. The primary theme was “Kingdom Vision as a Way of Life.” This initiative sought to provide inspiration and discussion around the mission of the church.

### **Christian Community: biblical/communal discernment where differences exist**

We hosted Dr. Willard Swartley, who presented on “A Biblical Approach to Same Gender Relationships.” This event was limited to Faith and Life Commission members, and, by special invitation, to some scholars and pastors.

VMC created a Biblical-Theological Task Force on Same-Gender Relationships; six scholars are working together on this subject and eight pastors will be added to this group in the future.

**Holistic Witness:** VMissions, an essential ministry of VMC, is taking the lead on church planting wherever there is an opportunity.

### **Stewardship: fostering generosity as God’s stewards**

We partnered with Everence to educate pastors and lay leaders concerning the financial challenges pastors face with education, housing, and consumer debt. This initiative sought to secure funds for pastors and congregations who have limited financial capacities.

Eastern Mennonite University will manage the VMC Archives effective July 1; this clarification in VMC’s partnership with EMU will reduce a VMC staff position.

### **Leadership Development: training and nurturing pastors and lay leaders**

VMC, with Misisonal Partners, hosted Debra Hirsch on October 8, 2016, for a VMC event: “Youth Workers Summit: Yearning to Know and Be Known.” This event included a keynote address, workshops, and an update on the 2017 MC USA Convention in Orlando.

Dr. Willard Swartley was the keynote presenter for the Credentialed Leaders Consultation in November 2016 on “Healing Ministries.”

Ted Swartz and Sheryl Sherk led “Life is a Pilgrimage” at the annual pastors’ retreat at Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center.

Dr. Lonnie Yoder will provide input on “Challenging/Difficult People in Congregational Life...including Ourselves” at our Pastoral Summit prior to VMC Assembly.

Dr. Lonnie Yoder and Teresa Boshart Yoder have led, and will continue to lead, our Healthy Boundaries: Fundamentals training for pastors and lay leaders.

### **Undoing Racism and Advancing Intercultural Transformation:**

Ertell Whigham, Noel Santiago, and Yvonne Platt led two one-day workshops on Building Intercultural Competence for pastoral leaders. The second workshop was bilingual in order to offer educational opportunities to Hispanic leaders.

### **Church to Church Relationships:**

Conference Council has agreed to invite Jon Barton, Executive Director of the Virginia Council of Churches, to a meeting to discuss membership in this ecumenical association.

Beryl Jantzi, Kevin Gasser, and Clyde G. Kratz will provide a leadership training event for Jamaica Mennonite Conference pastors. JMC has asked Virginia Mennonite Conference to provide Anabaptist leadership training for their pastors.

**Continued on page 4**

## PAINFUL MOMENTS

Mennonite Church USA made recommendations to Virginia Mennonite Conference based on the finding of the D. Stafford & Associates report. Significant recommendations were made for reviewing and updating our policies and procedures for responding to allegations of ministerial misconduct. I provided a written report to Conference Council (May 19-20, 2017) on our progress. In June, an updated progress report was sent to leaders in VMC.

A Ministerial Review Committee has been created for handling allegations of ministerial misconduct. The members of this team have experienced the *Healthy Boundaries: Fundamentals* training conducted by Lonnie & Teresa Yoder. Those who participated in this June 29, 2017, training include Elroy Miller, Moderator, some members of the Faith and Life Commission, some representatives from Conference Ministries and Conference Endorsed Ministries, Anieta McCracken and myself.

M.L. Daniel, and an additional FaithTrust Institute staff member, will conduct the additional training on *Healthy Boundaries: Intervention—Responding to Misconduct*, July 14-15, 2017. The *Intervention* training will include members of the Ministerial Review Committee, some members of the Faith and Life Commission, and VMC staff. In this next year, Lonnie and Teresa Yoder, FaithTrust Institute certified trainers, will provide training in each district for credentialed leaders and lay leaders of our congregations.

In Fall 2017, the Faith and Life Commission will review the current policies and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct. As our policies are being reviewed, I will consult with FaithTrust Institute in order to shape our policies around best practices for responding to allegations of misconduct.

As VMC embraces the new paradigm, I shall lead out of the new normal concerning the handling of allegations of ministerial misconduct. District Ministers are being trained for the new leadership practices for handling allegations of ministerial misconduct. I am committed to transparency with the processes that will be utilized for this difficult, but necessary, leadership role.

The pain for me lies in three areas.

I realize that some of the past leadership responses did not always contribute to holistic healing for all persons involved.

It is difficult for me to hear the struggles of people who were harmed by a minister and continue to struggle with their relationship with God, the community of faith, and/or pastors in general.

It is also difficult for me to walk with pastors who feel like they have been accused unjustly and the church processes have not been fair to them.

I experience sadness with these realities.

At the same time, I experience God's grace in my role as I seek to move forward with the changes of expectation in handling allegations of misconduct.

## HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

While Virginia Mennonite Conference is faced with the turbulence of change in a variety of areas, I continue to be hopeful. In this next year, the following leadership initiatives will be part of our life together:

- Foster through nurture and inspiration the formation of a disciple-making culture
- Fulfill recommendations from Mennonite Church USA in our responses to allegations of misconduct by credentialed leaders

- Healthy Boundaries training by the Yoders for pastors and lay leaders
- Adapt policy and procedure on handling allegations of misconduct
- Discern difficult issues with the Biblical Theological Task Force on Same-Gender Relationships and the faith community
- Process the Polity Task Force recommendations with appropriate leadership bodies
- Educate leadership groups on intercultural competence

Recognizing the difficult work that lies ahead, I will be on sabbatical from October to December 2017. Plans are being made for a part-time leader for Virginia Mennonite Conference during my sabbatical. I will provide an update on my sabbatical plans during our Assembly.

Believing in the providential care of God,

Clyde G. Kratz  
*Executive Conference Minister*



# Calvary District Report

The Calvary District continues to collectively build a house of God in each of its regions throughout the world as we enlarge our coast for Christ.

## Calvary Community Church (C3 Hampton)

C3 Hampton's on-going mission of building community, restoring hope and transforming lives continues to be a driving force for all that we do. Caleb and Lesley McClendon were licensed and installed as Assistant Pastors of C3 Hampton. They partnered with Pura Vida Missions and took ten youth on a missions trip to Costa Rica in 2016.

C3 continues to annually contribute food and monetary donations to feed those in need in the Hampton Roads area during the holidays.

C3 is working with a church planting initiative in College Park, Georgia. C3 Atlanta officially appointed Pastor Nicholas Jefferson as Senior Pastor, and he and his family are relocating to the Atlanta area in August 2017.

## C3 South Africa

C3 South Africa (C3SA) continues to experience growth with its outreach program in the city of Pietermaritzburg.

Pastor Flinn and Karen Ranchod provide primary leadership as pastors and visionaries. Their ministry to young girls in the community is an integral part of the mission of C3SA. This congregation added eleven new churches in the area to their fellowship.

Lauren Francisco completed a one-year assignment in South Africa, working in the local public school as a counselor and teaching life groups in the community.

## Fellowship of Christ Church

Minister Katrina Lenard was installed as interim pastor while Pastor Pride continues to recuperate from a 2015 stroke.

The youth ministry is a viable part of the ministry of Fellowship of Christ as they recognize the growing need in their local community. FOC also continues to operate their Bethesda House Ministry which provides transition housing for males and females being released from drug rehab programs or prison.



Leslie W. Francisco III  
*Bishop*

### Congregations:

*Bishop: Leslie Francisco III*  
*Chair: Lesley Francisco McClendon*  
*Vice-Chair: Natalie Francisco*  
*Treasurer: Nicole Francisco Bailey*  
*Secretary: Xiomara Harris*

**Calvary Community Church (C3)**  
Hampton, VA (984) [465]  
\*Nicole Francisco Bailey  
\*Leslie Francisco III

\*Natalie Francisco  
\*Caleb McClendon  
\*Lesley Francisco McClendon  
\*Nan Williams  
Alicia Manning  
Shawn Manning

**Fellowship of Christ**  
Rocky Mount, NC (65) [65]~~  
\*Ronnie B. Pride, Sr.  
Katrina Lenard

### Other Outreach Ministries

**Calvary South Africa** ~~  
Pietermaritzburg, South Africa  
\*Flinn Ranchod

**C3 Atlanta** (church plant)  
Atlanta, GA  
Nicholas Jefferson

\* Voting credentialed leader  
~~ Has not reported in two or more years

# Central District Report

Central District consists of six older, well-established congregations and one congregation-in-formation. With the exception of Christiansburg Mennonite Fellowship, we tend to be located in more rural settings. Together, we enjoy strong ties as a District and look for ways to become more familiar with the communities we know as home.

**Beldor** experienced one baptism during the period. The congregation reaches out to its community with worship, Bible studies, and bluegrass gospel concerts, including twice-monthly men's Bible study and bluegrass jam at a cabin nearby. The women have a twice-monthly Bible study at the church several seasons of the year, and sew comforters in between those seasons.

The **Gospel Hill** congregation continues to enjoy growth in attendance, membership and fellowship. Pastor Dan Horning just completed his first term. He and his family are much appreciated by the congregation and community, and he has accepted another three-year term. They continue to have a strong VBS program with a good number of community children attending.

**Zion Hill** recently took a fresh look at their Mission and Vision Statements. This led to a time of reflecting on who they are and who they hope to become. It was a good process and is leading to some new perspectives on their life as a congregation. Pastor Lowell and Mim Haarer were strongly affirmed for their leadership in a recent mid-term evaluation process. Zion Hill enjoys a strong family feel.

**Weavers**, with the concurrence of the VMC Credentialing Committee, called Micah Hurst as its Assistant Pastor for Youth and Young Adults in July 2016. Weavers continues its presence in the larger community by hosting a living nativity in December and a passion play in April.

**Christiansburg**, with the concurrence of the VMC Credentialing Committee, called Andrew Fairfield as their new pastor beginning July 2017. Andrew and Molly, with their son Simon, were living in New York City while Molly completed her MPA. Many thanks go to Don Yoder, who provided excellent intentional interim assistance to the congregation with introspection and planning from July 2016 to June 2017.

**Mt. Clinton** said goodbye to Lee Martin, their pastor of 17 years, on June 4. Lee and Peg were called to mission work with MCC in southern West Virginia. The church will miss them. Lonnie Yoder has been asked to assist the congregation with intentional interim introspection and planning.

**El Camino Discipular** has begun a transition from worship at Community Mennonite Church to becoming a home-worship outreach. Brigido and Fernanda Carbajal lead the effort. They are very active in community outreach through jail ministry and poultry plant chaplaincy.

We rest in the promise that God is faithful and that He will guide us in the work that He has entrusted to us.



James Åkerson  
District Minister



Robert G. Wenger  
District Minister

## Congregations:

District Minister: James Åkerson  
District Minister: Robert G. Wenger  
Chair: Floyd Blosser  
Vice-Chair: Phil Kanagy  
Treasurer: Clayton Shenk  
Secretary: Janie Heatwole

### Beldor Mennonite Church

Elkton, VA (26) [26]  
\*James Åkerson  
Emily Åkerson

### Christiansburg Mennonite Fellowship

Christiansburg, VA (Ø) [40]~  
\*Andrew Fairfield  
Conrad Heatwole

### Gospel Hill Mennonite Church

Fulks Run, VA (27) [70]  
\*Daniel Horning  
Gwen Horning

### Mt. Clinton Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (96) [83]  
Lonnie Yoder (interim)  
Dale Hartzler  
Paul Yoder

### Weavers Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (280) [160]  
\*Regina Brubaker  
\*Micah Hurst  
\*Phil Kanagy  
Edith Shenk Kuhns  
Dennis Kuhns

### Zion Hill Mennonite Church

Singers Glen, VA (53) [47]  
\*Lowell Haarer  
Lois Wenger

### Congregation in Formation

**El Camino Discipular** (0) [2]  
Harrisonburg, VA  
Brigido Carbajal  
Fernanda Carbajal

\* Voting credentialed leader  
~ Did not report  
Ø Does not track membership

## Eastern District Report

**Warwick River** will celebrate their 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary July 29-30. They are fundraising to repair and modernize the church building, and are about halfway to the goal.

**Huntington** young adults raised money and went to Convention. The church is also still searching for a pastor.

**First Mennonite** retired its debt last fall. With excess remaining funds, the church will install a system for the hearing impaired, update the nursery, improve sanctuary lighting, and install a new electronic church sign. In January, the congregation adopted a refugee family from Afghanistan. In the past year, three new infants have been added to the congregation, and three more are on the way.

**Williamsburg** celebrated God's faithfulness through the years at their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on November 12, 2016, entitled "Under God's Wings." The Peace by Piece sewing ministry continues to flourish. The community is involved in crafting items for the Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale and other events, such as making school kits. It's wonderful to see the fellowship that happens when people work together for a cause.

Williamsburg is also blessed by growing and vital connections with sister churches in the upper James City County region. Eight different denominations are represented at the joint Lenten and Thanksgiving services. God is leading and blessing this, for which we are thankful.

**Powhatan** completed their building project and it looks beautiful. The congregation supports William "Bill" Eberly for ordination.

**Mt. Pleasant** supports Nevin Mast for ordination.

**Providence** supports Carl Mericle as District Minister and pastor, allowing him to visit and support other Eastern District Congregations, and serve as Chaplain of Mennowood Retirement Community.



Carl Mericle  
*District Minister*

### Congregations:

*District Minister: Carl Mericle*  
*Chair: Ryan Ahlgrim*  
*Vice Chair: David Lehman*  
*Treasurer: Melanie Plato*  
*Secretary: Steve Fannin*

**First Mennonite Church**  
Richmond, VA (64) [85]  
\*Ryan Ahlgrim  
Jean Oswald

**Huntington Mennonite Church**  
Newport News, VA (117) [80]  
\*Anna Janzen, interim

**Mt. Pleasant Mennonite Church**  
Chesapeake, VA (170) [113]  
\*Nevin Mast  
Johnnie Gnanamickam  
Ronald Keffer

**Powhatan Mennonite Church**  
Powhatan, VA (74) [97]  
\*William "Bill" Eberly  
Luke Landis

**Providence Mennonite Church**  
Newport News, VA (25) [27]  
\*Carl Mericle  
Evangeline Yoder  
Mabel Nelson

**Warwick River Mennonite Church**  
Newport News, VA (178) [70]  
\*John Dey  
Sue Yoder  
Ted Yoder

**Williamsburg Mennonite Church**  
Williamsburg, VA (74) [52]  
\*David J. Lehman  
Heinz Plato

\* Voting credentialed leader



# Eastern Carolina District Report

In October, Eastern Carolina District (ECD) sponsored a well-attended fundraiser for Christian Peacemaker Teams, which featured a Ted & Co. performance held in Durham, N.C. In December, the District hosted a joint carol sing and potluck for District congregations in Chapel Hill.

Eastern Carolina District sponsors a fund to support continuing education and enrichment for congregational leaders, as well as expenses for those considering pastoral ministry. This past year, ECD also established a fund to collect and distribute matching funds for pastors applying for Lilly grant funding administered by Everence. Leftover monies in that fund will be made available for personal needs of ECD pastors.

Following last summer's suspension of the pastoral credentials of Isaac Villegas, and questions surrounding credentialing of other District personnel, Council meetings became a forum for discussing congregational affiliations.

At our February meeting, two congregations, Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship and Raleigh Mennonite Church, announced their intention to begin the process of leaving membership in Virginia Conference and seeking affiliation with Central District Conference. The remaining three congregations will be

too few for ECD to continue as a VMC district. Over the coming year, the remaining congregations: Greensboro Mennonite Church, Outlet 10.27, and Durham Mennonite Church will realign their district affiliations.

In April, ECD sponsored a week of work on a Mennonite Disaster Service project rebuilding homes in Princeville, in eastern North Carolina. Several hundred homes in the area had been flooded in the fall of 2016 during Hurricane Matthew. Over 40 District people participated in the work week, led by CHMF congregational member Steve Jolley.

Over this academic year, the ECD sponsored a Duke Divinity School intern, Sarah Jacoby. She has served all the congregations and the District in various ways throughout the year, including arranging for an extra day of MDS work for youth and their sponsors on the Saturday at the end of the work week, the best attended work day of the week.



Spencer Bradford  
*District Minister*

## Congregations:

*District Minister: Spencer Bradford*  
*Chair: Mary Jo Lehman*  
*Vice-Chair: Eliza Griffith*  
*Treasurer: Lowell Miller*  
*Secretary: Lowell Tieszen*

**Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship**  
Chapel Hill, NC (50) [70]  
Isaac Villegas  
Aspen Yordy

**Durham Mennonite Church**  
Durham, NC (56) [28]  
\*Spencer Bradford  
Eliza Griffith

**Greensboro Mennonite Fellowship**  
Greensboro, NC (20) [37]  
\*James Mellinger  
John Bender  
Keith Nice

**Raleigh Mennonite Church**  
Raleigh, NC (47) [50]  
\*Melissa Florer-Bixler  
Rachel Taylor

## Congregation in Formation

**Outlet 10.27**  
Graham, NC [21]  
Tami Nice

\* Voting credentialed leader

# Harrisonburg District Report

The Harrisonburg District of VMC continues to stoke the fires of our missional unity in the midst of our differences as a witness together to the power of the Spirit's working through our faithfulness.

Developments include:

- On June 4th, two members of Early Church were licensed for ministry as prison chaplains: Jason Wagner (serving with VMissions at the Rockingham County Jail) and Nick Meyer (serving with Grace Inside at the Coffeewood Correctional Center, Culpepper, Va.) Nick will be transitioning out of his role as co-pastor of Early Church. Jason's placement was found with the help of the District's Mission Advisory Council.

- Manantial de Vida purchased land for an envisioned new church building that would enable them to transition out of Ridgeway Mennonite Church facilities after over ten years of fruitful cooperation.
- Six District churches have building projects at various stages from just starting to near-completion.
- Kids Club participation continues to grow among District churches. Two of our churches are beginning this program under VMissions, through Seth and Theresa Crissman's leadership.
- Luis Martinez, the pastor at Iglesia Discipular Anabaptista, and his family moved back to Honduras for what is hopefully a short visa process. An

MST has been established to facilitate their return.

- The "welcome your neighbor" yard signs that began at Immanuel Mennonite Church, and were developed through seed money by our District Missional Advisory Council, became a national movement and got local and national press.



Roy Hange  
District Minister

## Congregations:

*District Minister: Roy Hange*

*Pastoral Consultant: Lonnie Yoder*

*Co-chairs: Greta Bucher, Matt Schwartz*

*Treasurer: Fred Miller*

*Secretary: Sherah-Leigh Gerber*

*Exec. Committee Member-at-Large:*

*Martin Rhodes*

### Charlottesville Mennonite Church

Charlottesville, VA (50) [40]

\*Maren Tyedmers Hange

\*Roy D. Hange

Tim Nissley

### Community Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (308) [251]

\*Jason Gerlach

\*Dayna Olson-Getty

\*Jennifer Davis Sensenig

Matt Carlson

Esther Stenson

Richard Stoltzfus

Dorothy Jean Weaver

### Early Church

Harrisonburg, VA (36) [70]~

\*Nick Meyer

Ken Wettig

### Eastside Church

Harrisonburg, VA (58) [235]

\*Peter Eberly

\*Matthew Schwartz

### Family of Hope

Harrisonburg, VA (12) [10]

\*Harvey Yoder

### Harrisonburg Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (560) [384]

\*Sherah-Leigh Gerber

\*Mark Keller

\*Jacob "Jake" Lee

\*Craig Maven

Benjamin Bergey

Mark Harmon

Don Hendrick

Sheryl Shenk

Twila Yoder

### Iglesia Discipular Anabaptista (IDA)

Harrisonburg, VA [35]

Pablo Hernandez

Carlos Madrid

### Immanuel Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (45)[35]

\*Matthew Bucher

Greta Bucher

### Manantial de Vida

Harrisonburg, VA (177) [250]

\*Juan Carlos Malvaez

\*Francisco Machado

### Mt. Vernon Mennonite Church

Grottoes, VA (64) [52]

\*Gregory "Greg" Stenson

### Park View Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (413) [253]

\*Moriah Hurst

\*Philip L. Kniss

\*Barbara Moyer Lehman

Ed Bontrager

Loren Mast

Ken Seitz

Steve Shenk

### Ridgeway Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (171) [120]

\*Ben Risser

James Good

Stephen Wilcox

### The Table

Harrisonburg, VA (12) [12]

Laura Lehman

\* Voting credentialed leader ~ Did not report  
Ø Does not track membership

This past year Northern District embraced the deep joy of welcoming four new pastors and one new faith community into the network of 17 churches even as we walked with leaders and congregations involved in painful and conflicted situations.

In the midst of significant challenges, we experienced God's presence in monthly pastor meetings and other settings where we found support and encouragement.

### New Leadership:

**Alfonso Alvarado** is leading a new church plant, Iglesia Menonita Monte Moriah, which meets at Grace Mennonite Fellowship on Sunday afternoons.

**Merle Christner** was installed as lead pastor of Stephen City Mennonite Church.

**Jason Kuniholm** was installed as the intentional interim pastor of Lindale Mennonite Church.

**Jeongih Han** was licensed for ministry and installed as associate pastor at CrossWay Mennonite Church.

### District Activities:

**Northern District Council** convenes quarterly with hosting responsibilities rotating among the congregations. Agendas included a conversation with Clyde Kratz, presentations from VMissions and Everence, and a special resourcing on Christian Spiritual Formation by Deb Horst, Associate Pastor at Lindale.

**Northern District pastors** meet once a month for networking, support and resourcing. This past year topics included how we engage or choose not to engage with polarities in our faith community, a discussion with Dave Gulman, co-pastor at Crossroads and pastor at Pleasant View Inc., based on his book "Teachers of the Soul," and a resourcing event by Kurt Boshart of the Harrisonburg Police Department on restorative justice.

District pastors also enjoyed a Christmas dinner at Highland Retreat with a presentation by Pat Turner Ritchie, a Brock's Gap folklorist, and stories from Millard Showalter.

### Missional Activities

Several District congregations support Alfonso Alvarado and the Monte Moriah church plant through VMissions' Covenant Partners for New Church Plants. This involves the formation of an MST for Pastor Alvarado and fosters the building of sister-church relationships with the new plant.

A number of rural congregations have experienced an increase in attendance and giving. Others are finding creative ways to meet the needs in the local community.

### Financial

There is deep appreciation for Darrell Wenger's excellent work as treasurer. He reported that most congregations have met their targeted amount in contributions. This generosity has allowed the creation of a fund to finance special events such as the pastors' Christmas dinner.

So far this year, Northern District has accessed \$1,552.50 from the Ministerial Training and Trust Fund (MTTF), six projects for the Spanish-language Anabaptist Biblical Institute (IBA) and one scholarship to help pastors.

### Future Initiatives

We are planning an event in Northern District for pastors, elders, and lay leaders on "Healthy Boundaries" with Lonnie and Teresa Yoder. Other districts will also host this training, so pastors throughout the Conference can learn together and operate from the same framework.

We plan to provide a resourcing event for pastors on ways that emotional and spiritual maturity relate to discipleship. We also plan for Northern District representatives to meet as a focus group with the Virginia Mennonite Conference Polity Task Force.



Aldine Musser  
*District Minister*



Michael Shenk III  
*District Minister*

*Northern District statistics and personnel are listed on page 11.*

## Northern District

### Congregations:

*District Ministers: Aldine Musser,  
H. Michael Shenk III  
Chair: David King  
Vice-chair: Joan Kulp  
Treasurer: Darrell Wenger  
Secretary: Deb Horst*

#### Big Spring Mennonite Church

Rileyville, VA (24) [26]~  
\*Rene Hostetter  
Pat Barrier

#### Crest Hill Community Church

Wardensville, WV (46) [28]  
\*Carolyn Lyndaker  
\*Milford Lyndaker

#### Crossroads Mennonite Church

Broadway, VA (29) [24]  
\*David J. Gullman  
Marian Buckwalter

#### CrossWay Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (Ø) [12]  
\*James Rhee  
\*Jeongih Han

#### Grace Mennonite Fellowship

Lacey Spring, VA (210) [227]  
\*Richard K. Early  
\*Bradley Kolb  
\*Richard B. Reed  
\*Kinley Simmers

Chan Gingerich  
Phyllis Martin

#### Hebron Mennonite Church

Fulks Run, VA (66) [33]  
\*Mark Conley  
Daryl Conley

#### Iglesia Enciende una Luz

Harrisonburg, VA (Ø) [100]~  
\*Armando Sanchez  
José Luis Hernandez

#### Lindale Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (504) [304]  
\*Deb Horst  
\*Jason Kuniholm  
\*Dawn Monger  
Mark Horst  
John Kiblinger  
Travis Trotter  
Peg Engle  
Jim Engle

#### Mathias Mennonite Church

Mathias, WV (29) [42]  
\*Dean E. Williams

#### New Song Anabaptist Fellowship

Harrisonburg, VA (15) [20]  
\*Basil Marin  
Jerilyn Schrock

#### Stephens City Mennonite Church

Stephens City, VA (27) [21]

\*Merle Christner  
Joan Kulp

#### Trissels Mennonite Church

Broadway, VA (115) [74]  
\*Harold N. Miller  
Dave Yutzy

#### Valley View Mennonite Church

Criders, VA (56) [42]  
\*H. Michael Shenk III  
Linford Gehman

#### Woodland Mennonite Church

Basye, VA (18) [12]~~  
\*Rodney Lebron

#### Zion Mennonite Church

Broadway, VA (154) [148]  
\*John Michael "Mike" Metzler  
\*Sarah Piper  
C. Edwin Miller  
Elwood Yoder

### Congregations in Formation

#### the exchange

Winchester, VA (Ø) [25]  
\*Chris Scott

#### Iglesia Menonita Monte Moriah

Harrisonburg, VA  
Alfonso Alvarado

\* Voting credentialed leader ~ Did not report  
Ø Does not track membership

## Potomac District

### Congregations:

*District Minister: Luke Schrock-Hurst  
Chair: Sang Jin Choi*

#### DC City Church

Washington, DC (87) [40]  
Dale Wafer

#### Iglesia del Evangelio Completo Alfa y Omega

Hyattsville, MD (115) [105]  
\*Justiniano Cruz  
\*José F. Borjas

#### Daniels Run Peace Church

Fairfax, VA (19) [30]  
\*Earl Zimmerman  
Karen Zehr

#### Vietnamese Christian Fellowship

Falls Church, VA (21) [13]  
\*Peter Simon Nguyen

#### Washington Community Fellowship

Washington, DC (26) [105]  
\*Del Glick  
Marjorie Macieira

### Congregation in Formation

#### Fourth St. Community Fellowship

Washington, D.C. (Ø) [65]  
\*Sang Jin Choi  
Ung Soo Kim

\* Voting credentialed leader  
Ø Does not track membership

# Southern District Report

*I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message, be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.*

2 Timothy 4:2

Southern District consists of six congregations and one congregation in formation. Our members call both Augusta and Albemarle counties home. Even though we meet in separate gatherings on Sunday morning, we are connected as one spiritual body.

We work at maintaining connections by partnering across the District in the following ways: monthly pastors lunches at Springdale, District Council meetings three times per year, working in MDS projects together, medical mission trips to Haiti, making apple butter for the Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale, a music night with special music and hymn singing each spring, support for Rehoboth Jail and Prison Ministry, Love INC (In the Name of Christ), WARM (Waynesboro Area Refuge Ministry, Inc.), Celebrate Recovery, and the Staunton Rescue Mission, to name a few. Besides our common mission of serving Christ in our local community, we also have unique ministry initiatives taking place within our congregations.

**Greenmonte** is excited to commission two individuals from its body for ministry internships: one in pastoral ministry and the other in community ministry through VMissions' tran-Send program. Greenmonte continues to strengthen its sending and giving partnerships with its local and global mission partners. It will be sending 23 people to minister with SWAP (Sharing With Appalachian People) this summer.

**Lynside** continues to strive to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ. In the past year, this has meant expanding its van ministry, both for its services and for Love INC. They are also in the dreaming stages of a building project consisting of a space for youth to engage their energy and excitement.

**Rehoboth** continues outreach to its neighbors, a ministry rooted in a tradition of hosting a week of Vacation Bible School in the Skyler community.

Over the past year, **Signs of Life Fellowship** has become increasingly involved with the Augusta County chapter of Love INC. Individuals from the congregation participate as neighbors, spiritual friends, prayer partners, warehouse volunteers, delivery assistants, financial supporters, interpreters, and advisory team members.

**Springdale** continues to be actively involved with WARM. This year, they hosted 30+ guests for one week, providing supper, lodging, and breakfast. The highlight was a banquet-style dinner provided and served by their junior high and high school youth.

**Staunton** is renovating the adjacent property for Sunday school and youth group activities. The additional green space will be used for an outdoor play area.

**Waynesboro** continues to minister in their neighborhood through Kid's Club and Middle School Adventure Club. Their relationship with these children has given them opportunities to get to know other family members and, on occasion, to minister to the whole household.



Beryl Jantzi  
District Minister

## Congregations:

*District Minister: Beryl Jantzi*

*Chair: Kevin Gasser*

*Assistant Chair: Joshua Fairfield*

*Treasurer: David Nice*

*Secretary: Marlene Wenger*

*District Discernment Comm. Chair: Richard Showalter*

### Greenmonte Fellowship Church

Greenville, VA (79) [145]

\*Seth Hankee

### Lynside Mennonite Church

Lyndhurst, VA (48) [72]

\*Gordon Miller

Sue Miller

### Rehoboth Mennonite Church

Schuyler, VA (10) [10]

Lewis & Terri Jordan, contacts

### Springdale Mennonite Church

Waynesboro, VA (146) [104]

\*Kevin Goertzen

\*Denise Goertzen

Debbie Frank

Mim Wenger

### Staunton Mennonite Church

Staunton, VA (33) [50]

\*Kevin Gasser

Garlan Yoder

### Waynesboro Mennonite Church

Waynesboro, VA (125) [79]

\*Joe Arbaugh II

\*Philip Ray Lehman

\*Howard I. Miller

### Congregation in Formation

#### Signs of Life Fellowship

Staunton, VA (Ø) [22]

\*MaryBeth Moore

\* Voting credentialed leader  
Ø Does not track membership

# TCK (Tennessee/Carolina/Kentucky) District Report

There have been many changes in the TCK district in the past year. God has been good and faithful through it all.

## Mountain View Mennonite Church

Pastor Chuck Hostetter retired from pastoring Mountain View Mennonite Church; the congregation welcomed Pastor Randy Smith and his family from Pennsylvania.

## 3:16 Christian Community Church

Pastor John Myer resigned and member Mark Kimmert has been called on to assist Pastor Vernon Moyer in leading the congregation. They purchased an office building and are adapting it to meet their congregational and worship needs. The new building also accommodates the Hmong congregation, Peace Mennonite. This group is led by Charpia Vang, who is reaching out to other Hmong families.

## Asheville Mennonite Church

They continue to reach out to their neighbors and have worked hard at developing a playground for the children of the congregation, as well as for the Hispanic church children who rent their building on Sunday afternoons. Their discipleship training priority is helping the members lead and disciple

others to a deeper and more meaningful relationship with Jesus. Pastor Sanford Yoder is doing a great job.

## Mara Christian Church

The newest member of TCK District is growing and thriving with lots of young couples and children. They have great lay leaders who serve the church well. They continue to pray about calling a pastor and finding a building of their own. Their services always include very dynamic worship and preaching.

## Knoxville Mennonite Church

Knoxville is preparing to celebrate 100 years as a congregation and witness to the community. As a congregation, they reach out to their neighbors and find ways to show God's love in their community.

## Concord Mennonite Church

They continue to gather together as a small congregation. As they are without a pastor, three men take turns leading and preaching each Sunday, followed by a fellowship meal for all who come. Pray for them as they seek to know God's will as they move forward.

## West Liberty Mennonite Church

Josh Fyffe continues to pastor this small congregation of mostly family members. The congregation is working to reach out to the families of the community. Once a month they have a family movie night at the church and invite their neighbors and friends for a fun-filled evening of fellowship and food. Pray for them as they seek to build bridges with the community.

TCK District is a group of churches that care and support each other in our places of ministry. Three Saturdays a year we gather for fellowship and connection. It has been great to have Clyde Kratz and others from Virginia Conference make the trip to our part of the world and be with us for many of these meetings.



Chuck Hostetter  
District Minister

## Congregations:

*District Minister: Chuck Hostetter*  
*District Minister for Mtn. View & Mara congregations: Daniel J. Yoder*  
*Chair: Leroy Kauffman*  
*Vice-Chair: Patrick McFarren*  
*Treasurer: David Hartzler*  
*Secretary: Roy Hunsberger*

## 3:16 Christian Community Church

Hickory, NC (47) [38]  
\*Vernon Moyer  
Charpia Vang

## Asheville Mennonite Church

Asheville, NC (39) [49]

\*Sanford Yoder  
Chris Conley

## Concord Mennonite Church

Knoxville, TN (12) [11]  
Jerry Hartness

## Knoxville Mennonite Church

Knoxville, TN [25]  
John Forsythe

## Mara Christian Church

Charlotte, NC (90) [90]  
Tei Do  
Bei Lua

## Mountain View Mennonite Church

Hickory, NC (87) [97]  
\*Randy Smith  
David Hartzler  
Kathleen Hartzler

## West Liberty Mennonite Church

West Liberty, KY (10) [16]~  
\*Joshua Fyffe  
Steve Stoltzfus

\* Voting credentialed leader  
~ Did not report



## Teaching Cluster

The Teaching Cluster is a supportive setting for those whose primary vocation and calling is in an academic teaching environment. The cluster also includes those whose primary role at Eastern Mennonite University is as pastors.

Within the university and seminary context, the dynamics of gathering together in formative collegial relationships gives us the opportunity for reflective critique and personal engagement with each other. We have continued to meet regularly throughout the academic year, providing support and encouragement for the intentional teaching practices that contribute to how we engage in ministry on the EMU campus.

Gathering together on a regular basis has also allowed for personal sharing and prayer across the academic year, creating a deeper awareness of God's work among us both personally and as a group, affirming the variety of gifts and disciplines we offer to students and colleagues.

Kevin Clark  
*Oversight Leader*

**Oversight Leader**  
+ Kevin Clark

### Teaching

Brian Martin Burkholder  
Joanne Gallardo  
Les Horning  
Lana Miller  
Wendy Miller  
Byron Peachey  
Carmen Schrock-Hurst  
Carl Stauffer  
Linford Stutzman  
Dorothy Jean Weaver  
+ Lonnie Yoder  
Nate Yoder

## Chaplains Cluster

**Oversight Leader**  
+ Carl Smeltzer

### Chaplains

Mary Jo Bowman  
Kenton Derstine  
David "Dave" Gullman  
Pearl Hartman  
Patricia Hendricks  
Phoebe Gerber Hershey  
Steve Landis  
Mark Lehman  
Ron Pierantoni  
Carl Smeltzer  
Jason Wagner  
Linda K. Wenger

## Leadership/Administration Cluster

Cluster members are those who provide significant administrative leadership in larger church settings, including the following:

### Virginia Mennonite Missions staff:

Aaron Kauffman, Janet Blosser, Ken Horst, Skip Tobin

### Eastern Mennonite University staff:

Daryl Byler, Phil Helmuth

### Mennonite Church USA staff:

Ervin Stutzman, Russ Eanes, Marvin Lorenzana

### Virginia Mennonite Conference staff:

Clyde Kratz

### Harrisonburg Refugee Resettlement

**Program staff:** Jim Hershberger

**At Large resource persons:** Owen Burkholder, Loren Swartzendruber, Angie Williams

New to the group this year is Marvin Lorenzana, who is credentialed with VMC and relating to the Central District. With his new church-wide assignment with Mennonite Missions Network, it is appropriate for him to connect to this administrative cluster. Loren Swartzendruber continues to keep his credentials active and maintains his relationship to this cluster.

Since each participant is accountable to their own board and/or supervisor, ours is not a work-related agenda. Collectively, the vision of the group is to see the ministries of the church prosper and to serve the church in the particular roles where each is installed. We try to empower each other through mutual encouragement and prayer support.

Twice a year, we gather as a group for general information sharing and mutual support. I also meet individually with each participant. Each participant completes a biennial review.

I will be concluding my role this fall after five years as Oversight Leader.

Gordon Zook  
*Oversight Leader*

**Oversight Leader**  
+ Gordon Zook

### Leadership/Administrative

Janet Blosser  
Owen Burkholder  
J. Daryl Byler  
Russ Eanes  
+ Phil Helmuth  
James Hershberger  
Ken Horst  
Loren Horst  
Aaron Kauffman  
Clyde Kratz  
Ervin Stutzman  
+ Loren Swartzendruber  
Skip Tobin  
Angie Williams

+ indicates voting delegate status

# Conference Council

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Officers	Role	Term ends
Elroy Miller	Moderator	2017
Kevin Gasser	Assistant Moderator	2018
Scott Beachy	Treasurer	2019
Edith Shenk Kuhns	Secretary	2019

## District Representatives

Leslie W. Francisco III	Calvary
Floyd Blosser	Central
David King	Northern
Carl Mericle	Eastern
Matt Schwartz	Harrisonburg
Sang Jin Choi	Potomac
Mary Jo Lehman	Eastern Carolina
Leroy Kauffman	TCK
Kevin Gasser	Southern

## Duties

- Serve as the executive body of Conference
- Project vision, define direction and promote unity in coordinating the work of Conference
- Decide what issues shall be brought to Conf. Assembly
- Provide for staffing of Conference
- Facilitate the work of Assembly between sessions
- Receive reports from and evaluate the work of Conference commissions and agencies annually
- Develop plans to meet the financial needs of Conference

As VMC continues to discern what it means to live in creative tension with our differences, Conference Council and VMC are engaged in two discerning efforts:

First, Conference Council initiated The Polity Task Force. Its intent is to discern the future authority and structure of VMC, the role and function of the commissions and districts in relationship to each other and Conference Council, and the relationship between congregations and the Conference. The Polity Task Force recommendations will help Conference Council propose organizational and polity changes in keeping with our theology and ecclesiology.

Conference Council also formed the Biblical & Theological Task Force on Same Gender Issues. This group is just getting underway. Its intent is to discern how to frame the conversation on same-gender issues to bring greater unity to the church.

Conference Council continued its discernment of revised mission and vision statements for Virginia Mennonite Conference in keeping with the feedback received by delegates at the 2016 Assembly and Winter 2017 Delegate Session. These statements will be presented to the delegates at the 2017 Conference Assembly for approval. We thank James Åkerson, pastor at Beldor Mennonite Church, for his leadership in the task of revising the vision and mission statements.

## Commission Representatives

Beryl Jantzi	Faith & Life
Patsy Seitz	Faith & Life
Vacant	Congregational Life
Jim Hershberger	VMMissions
Phyllis Miller	VMMissions

## Representatives to Constituency Leaders Council

Elroy Miller  
Clyde G. Kratz  
Vacant

## Non-voting Members

Clyde G. Kratz, *Executive Conference Minister*, VMC  
Aaron Kauffman, *President*, Virginia Mennonite Missions  
Paul Leaman, *Head of School*, Eastern Mennonite School

## Composition

- The Conference officers
- One representative from each district council executive committee
- The chair and one other officer from each commission
- The Conference representatives to Constituency Leaders Council

On Southern District's recommendation, Conference Council acted, with regret, to release Mountain View Mennonite Church, Lyndhurst, Va., from VMC membership this past fall. In the spring, Conference Council took action, with strong affirmation, on Southern District's recommendation that Signs of Life, a congregation-in-information, be granted full membership status.

This past year, Conference Council listened and gave feedback to the Faith and Life Commission's ongoing conversation with Isaac Villegas, pastor of Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship. This spring, Council processed the request from Chapel Hill Mennonite Church, Chapel Hill, N.C., and the Raleigh Mennonite Church, Raleigh, N.C., to transfer their membership to Central District Conference. This transfer of membership will take a year or more.

This spring, Conference Council approved a three-month sabbatical for Clyde Kratz, Executive Conference Minister, to be taken between September and December 2017. We intend to identify an experienced pastor to provide part-time leadership to Conference Council and FLC officers during his absence. The sabbatical includes time for self-care, spiritual formation and professional development. Please keep Clyde in your prayers.

Elroy Miller  
*Moderator*

# Congregational Life Commission

## Composition

- The commission shall be composed of the chairperson and up to eight members.
- Members are elected for three-year terms by the Conference Assembly through a gift-discernment process, with consideration for the constituent groups served.

## Duties

- Listen to and understand congregations and their needs, issues and solutions.
- Connect congregations to Conference and appropriate organizations to congregations.
- Resource congregations on issues related to worship, peace advocacy, phases of life and other topics as they are identified.

## Member

James Musser  
Nicholas Jefferson  
Edith Shenk Kuhns  
Kristin List

Sylvia Yoder  
Clyde G. Kratz  
Vacant  
Skip Tobin

## Role

Chair  
At Large  
Secretary  
At Large  
  
Mennonite Women  
Executive Conference Minister  
Peace Committee Chair  
USA Ministries Director

## Term

2017  
2019  
2017

The Congregational Life Commission provides resources to congregations and serves as a liaison between several ministries that are represented on the commission such as Mennonite Women of Virginia, Mennonite Men of Virginia, the Peace Committee, and Virginia Mennonite Missions. In years past, this also included representation by the Conference Youth Minister and the Congregational Resource Center, which are no longer part of the Conference program.

This year, the commission planned a one-day seminar to provide resources for pastors and lay leaders in our local congregations, entitled "Celebrating Congregational Life." Held on April 22 at Eastern Mennonite School, Art McPhee served as the keynote speaker on *The Missional Church: Missional Living and Community Weaving* with Acts 2:43-47 as his text. Two worship times were led by Sherah-Leigh Gerber. Additionally, 12 workshops were offered on relevant topics for leaders in our congregations. Approximately 60 people attended. Responses from the event suggest that it was a valuable day and that similar events should be offered in the future.

Planning workshops, in keeping with the theme for Conference Assembly, is another responsibility of this commission.

Mennonite Women of Virginia has been very active this year under the leadership of Sylvia Yoder and other members of the Executive Committee. They sponsored an annual fall retreat, a spring Missions Day, and an annual prayer breakfast in conjunction with Conference Assembly.

Mennonite Men of Virginia has been inactive since the resignation of its leader several years ago. The commission wishes to review this and determine whether or not an attempt should be made to revitalize it.

Our Conference has been without a Conference Youth Minister for several years. There has been some networking between several youth pastors in the conference. The commission wishes to review this and determine if we should organize some type of youth ministry for VMC, such as a youth council which could provide resources for those in leadership positions in our congregations with responsibilities for youth and a venue for networking among themselves.



James Musser  
Chair

# Faith & Life Commission

## Composition

- Active bishops and overseers of districts and special ministry clusters
- Three members at large elected by Conference Assembly

## Duties

- Provide leadership for Conference in spiritual, doctrinal, and faith and life issues
- Be a forum for leaders as they process concerns relating to congregational life and leadership
- Promote unity of faith and practice
- Issue ministry credentials
- Provide professional development, fellowship and inspiration for pastors

## Officers

Patsy G. Seitz  
Roy Hange  
H. Michael Shenk III

## Role

Chair  
Vice-Chair  
Secretary

## Term ends

2019  
2020  
2020

## Staff

Clyde G. Kratz

Executive Conference Minister

## Members

James Åkerson  
Spencer Bradford  
Kevin Clark  
Gloria Diener  
Leslie Francisco III  
Roy Hange  
Pearl Hartman  
Chuck Hostetter  
Beryl Jantzi  
Carl Mericle  
Aldine Musser  
Luke Schrock-Hurst  
H. Michael Shenk III  
Carl Smeltzer  
Robert Wenger  
Gordon Zook  
Open

## District (Cluster)

Central  
Eastern Carolina  
Special Ministries (Teaching)  
Member at large  
Calvary  
Harrisonburg  
Member at large  
TCK  
Southern  
Eastern (VA)  
Northern  
Potomac  
Northern  
Special Ministries (Chaplain)  
Central  
Special (Leadership/Administration)  
Member at large

In the second verse of the hymn, “For we are strangers no more,” the lyric reads: “Where hatred rages we will strive for peace.”

In the volatile year in our country and in our Conference, as churches and individuals discern relationships to the established institutions, the striving for peace takes resolve, patience and steps of faith.

Faith and Life Commission (FLC) has entered into two key periods of examination as two task forces examine our polity and our scriptural understanding of same-gender relationships. The Polity Task Force, launched in February 2017, is seeking input from the constituency of VMC to discern recommendations for changes to VMC structure. This work should be finished by December 2017, at which point FLC and Conference Council will process the recommendations.

Additionally, a group of scholars has begun examining a Biblical/Theological Approach to Same-Gender Marriage. The time frame for this group is approximately a year, with the understanding that they may need longer.

The Leadership Enrichment Committee planned several professional development gatherings for pastors and lay persons. In September, the Conference partnered with Eastern Mennonite School and Eastern Mennonite University to hold a Youth Worker’s Summit that included a presentation by Deb Hirsch and several workshops. Willard Swartley presented at the

November 4 Pastoral Consultation about healing ministries. The following day several persons including FLC members, pastors and professors, met to discern the next steps in the conversation regarding same-gender relationships in anticipation of the scriptural study already described.

The May consultation featured Ertell M. Whigham, Jr. on the topic of Intercultural Competency. This consultation was presented in English one day and in Spanish the next day.

Additionally, Lonnie and Teresa Yoder trained with the FaithTrust Institute regarding the topic “Healthy Boundaries.” This training was recommended by Mennonite Church USA. VMC will hold “Healthy Boundaries” trainings for the districts, a requirement for pastors, as VMC has added pastoral ethics as one of the core competencies for licensing and ordination.

Faith and Life Commission covets your prayers as we continue to strive for peace, resolved to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and to be sensitive to the call of the Spirit in our life together.



Patsy Seitz  
Chair

# Historical Committee

## Composition

- Members are elected for three-year terms by the Conference Council through a gift-discernment process, with consideration for the constituent groups served. The Archivist shall be an ex-officio member.

Member	Role	Term
Timothy Stoltzfus Jost	Chair	2017
James Good	Member	2017
Simone Horst	Member	2018
Harold Huber	Archivist	Ex-officio
Paul J. Yoder	Member	2018
Ken Seitz	Member	2018

The Virginia Mennonite Conference Historical Committee has had an active and fruitful year holding up the history of our forefathers and foremothers in the faith in the Virginia Mennonite Conference. We were joined by Ken Seitz this year. James Good left the committee earlier this year. We thank him for his service to the committee and for his volunteer work at the Conference Archives.

A major change is taking place at the Conference Archives. For some time, it has been struggling with an almost completely full space and ongoing financial needs. Located in the basement of the Eastern Mennonite University library, the Archives have been unable to locate an alternate location with more space.

In late 2016, a solution was found. The VMC Archives and EMU Special Collections (the Menno Simons Historical Library and EMU Archives) are developing a partnership for their collections through which EMU Special Collections will manage user access and processing oversight to the Archives. Physical space allocation will, for the most part, remain the same at this time, although the partnership would allow reduction of duplication among the collections and digitizing of materials which will save space. This arrangement will also allow EMU Special Collections and VMC Archives to:

- Have simple, single-point access for researchers using collections, and provide longer hours and more space for researchers.
- Maintain collaboration between the EMU and VMC collections and materials. Many places, individuals, and topics in our collections overlap, and it is beneficial to patrons to have them all in one building.
- Work together on digitizing material and providing online access to collections and finding aids.
- Improve security and protection of sensitive collections.

The partnership will no longer have a paid archivist, although it will continue to pay rent for the space occupied by the Archives.

## Duties

- Provide oversight and guidance in establishing policies for Conference Archives.
- Provide personal counsel and assistance to the Conference archivist in the performance of those duties.
- Encourage and promote the gathering and preservation of documents and artifacts of historical significance and value.
- Promote programs and studies of historical interest within congregations and Conference in order to foster appreciation for their heritage.
- Encourage the publication of articles and books of historical significance or interest.

Harold Huber retired as Conference Archivist this spring after six years. We thank him for his faithful service.

We are also moving forward on the Virginia Mennonite history book. This is a joint effort of the VMC Historical Committee and the Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians, overseen by a committee representing both organizations. The book committee is headed by Elwood Yoder and consists of Jim Hershberger, Eunice Showalter, Harold Huber, and Timothy Stoltzfus Jost. Steven Nolt, head of the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College, will write the book. He will begin in August 2017 with the intention of completing the book by 2020 or 2021. We are hopeful that he will be able to address the delegates at Conference Assembly. The project will build on Harry Brunk's earlier two-volume history of the Virginia Mennonites, but will be a comprehensive retelling of the history.

While the focus of the book will be on VMC (including congregations in VMC not located in Virginia), it will also examine relationships with Virginia Mennonites who are no longer part of VMC. We expect the book to be a narrative history in roughly chronological fashion that will place our history in the broader American and world context. The book will include a comprehensive index and photographs. It will capture the distinctive features of VMC in its southern context.

We have raised about \$36,300 for the book, \$24,048 of which is being held by VMC and \$12,248 by the Virginia Mennonite Historians. We are grateful for gifts in 2016 from the Springdale, Immanuel, Zion, and Valley View congregations. We expect these funds to be used for research and publication costs and any remaining funds to be used to ensure the affordability of the book.

Tim Stoltzfus Jost  
*Chair*



## Eastern Mennonite School: “Neighbors – Strangers No More”

At school, we take seriously the command to love your neighbor as yourself. This requires knowing your neighbor by name, conversation, eating around the same table, sharing interests, learning to work and play together. Loving neighbor implies a respect, regard for, and appreciation of someone different from one's own household. We love our diverse Christian community at EMS and we strive to create an inclusive neighborhood in our school where everyone belongs within our community.

We also have a few programs that help broaden our neighborhood. The Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credits (EISTC) program currently boasts 46 students and we look to grow this number annually. This program offers financial scholarships to students who otherwise could not afford to attend EMS. This same program also provides donors a great way to contribute financially to EMS and receive tax benefits nearly equal to their gift.

# Students	EISTC
46	\$217,017

Isabella Madrid '20, one of our EISTC scholarship students, recently won first place in MCC's 2017 high school essay contest on the topic of immigration. Isabella wrote a moving and informative essay about her mother and father's stories of migrating to the United States from Honduras. In a touching story of a family seeking better jobs, safety from crime, and new opportunities for themselves and their children, Isabella's essay is a poignant American account of clear reasons for emigration to a new land. Isabella writes in her paper about the current U.S. government policies on immigration, commenting on changes that have happened since the recent presidential election.

Isabella's call in her paper is to “love your neighbor,” basing her title and conclusion on the biblical challenge from the gospels. Isabella's essay is a thoughtful piece from a student who understands immigration policies both from her own family's experience of moving to the United States, but also from her extensive reading from nine sources listed in her Works Cited page.

Isabella's first place prize earned her \$1000, a visit to Washington D.C. to meet with her representative in Congress. Isabella is in ninth grade at EMHS, and we are proud of her.

The yard sign, “No matter where you are from, we're **glad you're** our neighbor,” tells the message we want to ring from EMS. Join us in Jesus' calling of loving neighbor. It begins with learning to know our neighbors and including others in our community and school. You can broaden the EMS neighborhood network by recommending student applications to the EISTC program (K, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, or transfer from a public school) or contributing to the program in exchange for these Virginia tax credits. Contact Paul Leaman, Head of School, for more information ([leamanp@emhs.net](mailto:leamanp@emhs.net) or 540.236.6012)

Living as neighbors,

Paul Leaman





- **Participate:** Events and ways to get involved in VMissions activities
- **Pray:** Surround our work in prayer
- **Partner:** Invite workers serving in your area or those on home leave to share with your congregation

## New Mission, Vision and Strategic Priorities

VMissions undertook a strategic planning process this past year in an effort to discern God's direction for our next season of ministry. After several months of conversation and prayer that included the participation of board members, staff, workers, and various members of the VMC constituency and beyond, our board met on April 22, 2017, and affirmed the following mission and vision statements, along with five strategic priorities.

**Mission:** VMissions equips the church to share new life in Jesus Christ with neighbors near and far.

**Vision:** VMissions envisions a Spirit-filled church of many cultures living out God's kingdom in every sphere of life.

### Strategic Priorities:

1. Join the Holy Spirit's work of renewing and growing the church.
2. Partner in equipping and sending workers from anywhere to anyone.
3. Cultivate the next generation of global missional leaders.
4. Equip disciples to engage work as witness.
5. Nurture a culture of healthy church multiplication.

## Connecting congregations to stories of God's work through VMissions

VMissions is blessed with many missions-engaged people who help connect congregations to the work of VMissions. We encourage congregations to have a "Mission Communicator" who regularly tells stories of God's work through the people and ministries of VMissions to the congregation. Each month, Virginia Mennonite Missions sends an email to equip Mission Communicators with resources. There are ways to participate in events, to pray for ministries, activities and people, and to get to know our workers by inviting them to share in your congregation during a moment in mission.

Anyone interested can subscribe to the resource email. Enter your email address under "Mission Communicators" at [vmmissions.org/who-we-are/publications/email-list-signup/](http://vmmissions.org/who-we-are/publications/email-list-signup/)



## Mission auction raises over \$14,000

On May 20, Virginia Mennonite Missions held its second annual auction to raise funds for worker accounts and the Mission Fund. It included a live auction, and, for the first time, a silent auction. The auctions brought in over \$12,400, including nearly \$4,500 for the Mission Fund. Mennonite Hispanic Initiative hosted a fundraising meal and made \$1,123. Additional donations and pen sales raised \$655. The live auction featured a "paddle raise," which raised \$2,125 for the new Guri i Themelit church building in Albania.



## New church building in Albania

A special project of VMissions this past year has been helping a sister congregation, the Guri i Themelit church in Lezhë, Albania, to buy and move into a new space. The local church committed to raising 45% of the funds, with the rest being raised here in the U.S. This purchase has enabled the bursting-at-the-seams church to more than double its sanctuary and add a fellowship hall, Sunday school rooms, and a pastor's office.



Although our name remains the same, you may see the logo above in greater usage on our displays and other pieces. As we have refined our mission and vision, we are streamlining our visual identity with a simpler reference to VMissions, like our website: [vmmissions.org](http://vmmissions.org).

### SERVICE SNAPSHOT 2016-2017

- 106 People on assignment
- 22 Countries
- 39 Long-term workers
- 9 tranSenders
- 22 Partners in Mission
- 1 Seminary intern

# Newly appointed and reappointed mission workers

## tranSenders

- **Chris Beck** (Volunteer coordinator, Love INC – 1 year)
- **Taryn Zander** (Intern for Global Refugee Short-term Missions – 1 year)
- **Kris Hange** (Children's ministry and outreach to refugees, Mannheim, Germany – 1 year)
- **Jim and Pam Beachy** (Teaching at Lezha Academic Center, Lezhë, Albania – 1 year)

## US Long-term Workers

- **Seth and Theresa Crissman** (Kids Club Ministry – 2 years)
- **Marvin Lorenzana** (Mennonite Hispanic Initiative Director – 1 year)
- **Luis Martinez** (Hispanic ministries – 3 years)

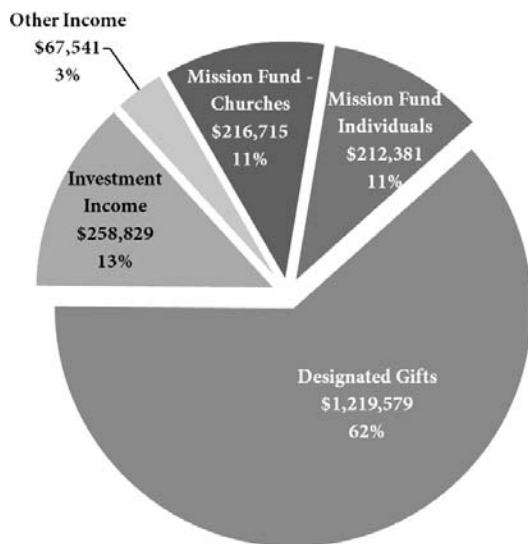
- **Jason Wagner** (Prison chaplaincy – 2 years)
- **Caitlin Tice** (New Creation – 2 years)
- **Tyler and Kendra Yoder** (Church planting residency – 1 year)

## International Long-Term Workers

- **Lindsey and Asher Fast** (Mother Theresa Resource Center, Botswana – 2 years)
- **Steve and Bethany Horst** (Nam Yuen, Thailand – 2.5 years)
- **Dini and Klementina Shahini** (Church ministry and Lezha Academic Center Head of School, Lezhë, Albania – 1 year)
- **Mark and Sarah Schoenhals** (Det Udom, Thailand – 3 years)
- **Norma Teles** (Joshua Center Director, Lezhë, Albania – 1 year)

## Financial Year in Review

(1 September 2015—31 August 2016)



**Income\*:**  
**\$1,975,045**

\*Does not include \$542,570 in endowment or estate gifts, which are spent out gradually over multiple years.

## STAFF

Janet Blosser  
David Gingerich  
Lizzette Hernandez  
Ken Horst  
Aaron Kauffman\*  
Steve Leaman\*  
Dianna Lehman\*

Jan Liskey\*  
Martin Rhodes

Melanie Sherer  
Lynn Suter\*

Carol Tobin  
Skip Tobin\*  
Jon Trotter

*Mediterranean Regional Director*  
*Seminary Intern*  
*Latino Church Leadership Trainer*  
*Development Associate*  
*President*  
*Director of Public Relations*  
*Executive Assistant and Human Resources Manager*  
*Director of Finance*  
*Short-term Missions Coach,*  
*Mission Support Teams Coach*  
*Administrative Assistant*  
*Director of Operations and International Ministries*  
*Asia Regional Director*  
*USA Ministries Director*  
*Communications Associate*

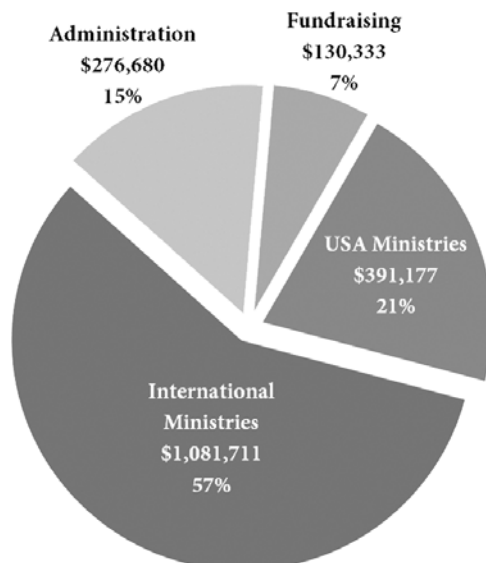
\*Member of Leadership Team

## BOARD (2016-2017 term)

Daryl Brubaker  
Christopher Conley  
Reuben Horst  
Margaret Keeler  
Eldon Layman  
Lavonne Lehman  
Shin Ji Kang  
Shawn Manning  
Phyllis Miller  
Rodney Nice  
Mary Thiessen Nation  
Sharyn Tieszen  
Terry Witmer  
Sarah Yoder

*Treasurer, Northern Tennessee/Carolina/Kentucky*  
*Member at Large*  
*Member at Large*  
*Central*  
*Eastern*  
*Harrisonburg*  
*Vice Chair, Calvary*  
*Chair, Potomac*  
*Southern*  
*Member at Large*  
*Eastern Carolina*  
*Member at Large*  
*Member at Large*

**Expenses:**  
**\$1,879,901**



Virginia Mennonite Missions is the mission agency of Virginia Mennonite Conference.



Virginia Mennonite  
Retirement Community

1501 Virginia Avenue  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802  
(540) 564-3400  
toll free (888) 564-8672

### Virginia Mennonite Conference – Assembly Report from VMRC

VMRC offers hope, meaning, growth for aging well

During its fiscal year ending March 31, 2017, leaders at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community (Harrisonburg) strategized and updated the retirement community's Mission and Values.

The result: Our **Mission** is that we are a community of hope, meaning and growth for people to age well and live fully. As we fulfill that mission, we reflect these Values:

**Heritage:** We are Christ-centered, rooted in Anabaptist heritage of stewardship, service, justice and compassion.

**Innovation:** We are inspired to think and lead creatively.

**Authenticity:** We are sustained by honest, caring diverse relationships.

### Woodland Park Expansion

VMRC will open in October five additional homes in its Woodland Park community modeled after the national Green House® movement. Woodland Park is a residential community which provides long term care in home environments that focus on meaningful life, empowered staff and real home. When Woodland Park is completed, 85 residents will live in the eight houses which make up the non-traditional nursing care community.

Research supports that resident satisfaction and engagement, family satisfaction and employee engagement are all improved in Green House homes.

### Farm-to-table still strong in retirement living

For the past three years, VMRC has operated The Farm at Willow Run on its property. The farm produces enough vegetables, greens and herbs to use in VMRC's Dining Services, to sell to local restaurants and to sell to residents and employees at a market café. About three acres of the property is cultivated for farm production. Last year the farm grew more than 36,000 pounds. We are projecting 54,000 pounds this year.

Interest in the farm-to-table phenomenon is high among people interested in retirement living. The proximity of the farm to VMRC reduces the carbon footprint as shipping and delivery are minimal as is the pollution from delivery vehicles. In addition to two paid farm employees, volunteers contributed nearly 700 hours of time at the Farm at Willow Run. Many of the volunteers are students associated with neighboring Eastern Mennonite University.

vmrc.org

### Cultural hub created at VMRC

Recognizing the value of the arts, VMRC has designated its Park Gables Gallery a community destination for three popular art shows: The VMRC-sponsored national Annual Juried Art Exhibition, the Shenandoah Valley Watercolor Society Annual Member Show and the 6 x 6 x 30 Exhibit in partnership with Spitzer Art Gallery. Additional exhibitions in 2016-17 included the Strokes of Distinction in partnership with Sentara RMH, the Spotswood Garden Club Flower Show and the Seven Pillars of Mennonite Theology. Resident and Staff Art Shows continue to be held on a quarterly basis.

### VMRC Foundation News

The VMRC Foundation awarded Gladys and Brownie Driver (posthumously) its Philanthropist of the Year award. The award is presented annually to an individual(s) who demonstrates exceptional direct gift support to VMRC, encourages and motivates others in philanthropy, demonstrates leadership in the organization, successfully achieves fundraising goals, and demonstrates involvement and participation in philanthropy in our community.

Brownie and Gladys have demonstrated the stated qualities for over a lifetime of involvement and engagement with VMRC and throughout the community. They have been an advocate of VMRC's mission and vision as residents, friends and family of VMRC. They also have supported Sentara-RMH, Eastern Mennonite School, Eastern Mennonite University, Mennonite Central Committee and Virginia Mennonite Missions and Conference.

VMRC is also grateful for the \$38,010 from 16 different Mennonite Churches over the past year to support our compassion care ministry.

### Volunteers

Mark and Margaret Lehman received the Claude Hess Distinguished Service Award. They have been volunteering on Sunday mornings in Oak Lea for the past 24 years serving as ushers and wheelchair escorts. Other volunteer highlights include:

- 46,079 hours of service by 662 volunteers
- \$1,112,347.00 of free service, \$79,000 increase from last year
- Bargain Center raised its highest amount ever of \$15,265
- Sales for Main St. Store were \$91,674
- Nursing students served 12,577 hours

## Family Life Resource Center

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Family Life Resource Center is an independent, Christian-based, 501(c)3 nonprofit counseling agency that meets the behavioral health needs of individuals, couples and families. Working from a Christian-based perspective, our counselors are committed to helping people pursue health and wholeness as individuals in their relationships. We work every day to be true to our name – Family Life Resource Center.

In support of our mission, we will:

- Provide counseling with a Christian orientation
- Assist in individual, family, and marital problems
- Provide consultation and resources for pastors, students, and congregations
- Provide education and resources for early identification of problems requiring intervention

In 2017, Family Life Resource Center celebrates our 30th anniversary! It is such a blessing knowing that we have helped individuals and couples in our community for this length of time.

We continue to be grateful for the Virginia Mennonite Conference and its member congregations for their support and

encouragement. We are thankful for the many counselors, directors, office support and donors that work hard to make FLRC successful. Lastly, we could not have succeeded thus far without the dedication and service from our Board of Directors.



**FAMILY  
LIFE  
RESOURCE  
CENTER**

*Counseling for Hope,  
Health and Healing*

In 2016, our operating costs were \$416,700. Counseling income provides 86% of the total funding. Contributions and fundraising covered 7% of this cost. Community support is important to FLRC since we are a nonprofit that receives no government funding.

Family Life Resource Center continues to strive toward the commitment to our ministry that provides a basis for another successful year of offering Hope, Health, and Healing.

## Gift & Thrift, Inc.

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“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” —Leviticus 19:18

Harrisonburg Gift & Thrift, Inc. is a nonprofit organization. We are committed to Christian faith in action, offering a friendly, caring presence in the community while addressing the stewardship of our environment and supporting the primary goals of Mennonite Central Committee.

As Gift & Thrift continues to grow, we are always looking for more ways to serve our neighbors in the local community. When I think about community service, I am led to our volunteers. We are fortunate to have a group of passionate volunteers who take pride in their work and in our mission. This dedicated group of people have a wonderful way of caring for our community. Whether it's through the care they show each and every donation they sort, their welcoming smiles for customers, or the friendships they build and share among themselves, our volunteers continue to show our community how much they care.

Over the past year, we have found different ways to engage the community. We take pride in providing an outlet for the donation of gently used items. In turn, we are able to provide quality, low-cost essentials to the community. We believe this helps to connect different segments of our local community, from donors to volunteers to customers.

We continue to provide a service through our (L)earn-a-Bike program. We hope this alternative diversion program serves our community well by giving local at-risk youth a hands-on learning experience with positive role models. In addition to working with youth, we are proud to also offer assistance to the Bikes for Refugees program that is an initiative of the Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition.

Gift & Thrift is also concerned with taking care of our environment. We are able to help reduce the amount of items sent to the landfill through the sale of items in our store and recycling programs for books, clothing, and metal. We are also blessed to have the support of many volunteers who helped to install solar panels on our roof. This system will offset 50% of Harrisonburg Gift & Thrift's energy use and save us more than \$14,000 annually. This will, in turn, help us to increase support to Mennonite Central Committee.

We are thankful for the community's support of our mission at Gift & Thrift. We look forward to building relationships with our neighbors to show God's love here in Harrisonburg and around the world.

Shannon Secrist  
*General Manager*

## Highland Retreat

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Last summer, we had 465 campers attend Highland Summer Camps—our highest attendance in 10 years! This growth made staffing a challenge, but God faithfully provided quality summer staff. As one parent commented, counselors are “summer-time heroes that [campers] look up to.”

This summer is also shaping up to have a healthy attendance, and God has again provided faith-filled young men and women to serve. We are celebrating the wonders of our incredible Creator with our theme, “Worthy of WOW!” We are encouraged by outreach partnerships with conference churches, such as Ridgeway Mennonite’s Kids Club and Harrisonburg Mennonite’s Venture Club, which are using camp as a way to bless children in their communities.

Highland continues to serve a wide variety of guest groups and individuals. Last year, Highland served 41 church retreats, 40 youth and college groups, 27 family reunions, and many other groups and individuals. We are blessed to support many Christ-centered ministries and families with connections to Virginia Mennonite Conference. One VMC pastor wrote, “I love coming [to Highland] for rest, renewal, study, and time in nature!”

Volunteers, donors, and generous professionals drove many improvements at Highland this past year. Upper Highland Drive was paved for the first time. The summer youth office was completely renovated. Three graveled campsites with water and electric were completed at the Upper Highland campground. The summer camp kitchen received a brand-new double convection oven ready for use this summer. We are blessed by the generous people behind each project!



The opportunities ahead seem overwhelming at times: the clinic purchase and renovations, master planning, facility upkeep, and program opportunities. Nevertheless, God’s care and provision for Highland Retreat is abundantly shown time and again through friends who care for this ministry. Your prayerful care is felt and appreciated!

Kent Kauffman, *Executive Director*

## Mennonite Disaster Service of Virginia

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This past year, Mennonite Disaster Service of Virginia continued to respond to disasters in various locations. Since 1950, we are still focused on mutual aid and helping neighbors locally and throughout the East Coast U.S. Region.

Flooding from heavy rains in several counties in southern West Virginia happened on June 23, 2016. Numerous towns throughout the area were inundated, with the most extensive flooding occurring in Greenbrier County. MDS responded immediately and sent cleanup crews on June 27. Over the next months, daily and multi-day trips originated from Harrisonburg and the surrounding communities. This effort was coordinated by persons from both the Harrisonburg area, along with MDS Binational office, and involved removing muck, gutting dwellings and some excavation work to facilitate individual home access. The response leadership has been transitioned to the Binational office (Lititz, Pa.). Local groups are continuing to repair and rebuild homes mostly in White Sulphur Springs, W.Va. This project is continuing through this summer and groups can schedule through the Lititz office.

Construction continued on private access bridges in several W.Va. counties south of Charleston. Dozens of home owners had their old structures washed out in flooding during 2015, and Shenandoah Valley Unit persons and other MDS volunteers have continued the effort to provide access to homes located across small creeks and streams.

Eastern Virginia MDS had involvements with two calamities. On February 23, 2016, approximately 10 tornadoes hit numerous communities in Virginia. Particularly hard hit was the area around Appomattox, Va. Eastern Va. MDS persons were involved with major repairs of one home, other minor repairs, and with stump removal in the affected areas. Heavy rains from Hurricane Matthew dealt a significant blow to many low lying towns in North Carolina in October 2016. Princeville, N.C. was hit again, only 17 years after Hurricane Floyd inundated the town in 1999. There were major new MDS rebuilds after the 1999 event, and these homeowners reached out to MDS for help. MDS persons have given exemplary leadership to removing muck and the current repair phase. It is unclear how long rebuilding efforts will continue.

A group from Harrisonburg Mennonite and Waynesboro Mennonite churches extended love to an elderly woman in Waynesboro, Va. This initiative was accomplished in two days and involved building a retaining wall and diverting rain water so that it would not run underneath her house.

The Eastern Virginia MDS and Shenandoah Valley MDS units are thankful for Virginia Conference church support and ask for your continued prayers that MDS initiatives and activities would be expressions of love for Christ our Lord.

Rich Rhodes, *Mennonite Disaster Service of Virginia President*



## Mennonite Women of Virginia

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Mennonite Women of Virginia is excited to be part of this great event for all Virginia Mennonite Conference churches. We are proud to participate in Assembly and represent Mennonite Women of Virginia with our presence, mission and service. We seek to be neighbors and friends, not strangers.

This has been a very exciting year in many ways. The MWV Executive Committee welcomed some new faces. Jeongih Han, a graduate of Eastern Mennonite Seminary and a pastor of CrossWay Mennonite Church, will sit in on our meetings and volunteer for a couple of our events. We hope to become more acquainted with her as she learns, grows and engages the pastoral ministry God has prepared for her.

Evie Christner is filling the role of secretary for both the Executive Committee and Retreat Committee. We met at the annual fall women's retreat and were able to spend time getting to know each other. I am grateful that we are now able to serve together.

We enjoy a diversity of cultures and ethnic groups in Mennonite Women of Virginia. Being able to come together and serve the Lord and each other is such a blessing. God made us all different and we should embrace those differences so we can be more useful to further God's kingdom.

How is Mennonite Women of Virginia transforming lives? By the annual events we host and by the way we support mission workers all over the world. Each of our annual events emphasizes a different aspect of mission in our Conference.

The Annual Missions Day focuses on challenging each other in furthering the gospel of Jesus Christ and supporting our mission workers financially. The annual Assembly MWV Breakfast

## MENNONITE WOMEN OF VIRGINIA



*Empowered Women Creatively Building Christ-centered Relationships through Fellowship, Leadership, Mission and Service*

focuses on how is God working in our midst, here and abroad, and challenges us to be the best stewards of our organization's responsibilities. Our Fall Women's Retreat focuses on nurturing and encouraging each other in our own walk of faith. A fourth event later this year is specifically directed towards reaching younger women who are in college, so that all ages of women can be reached with the gospel, building God's kingdom on this earth, as it is in heaven.

Sylvia Yoder  
*President*



*On July 31, Sylvia Yoder completes three years as president of Mennonite Women of Virginia. Her commitment to the goal of empowering women in VMC has brought energy and creativity to MWV. She worked continuously with her focus on the goal of encouraging godly women during these years. We express our*

*gratitude for Sylvia's service, and say a hearty "thank you" for serving us so well. May God bless you, Sylvia, in the coming years. You are His beloved daughter, and we are your sisters!*

—The MWV Executive Committee

## Mennowood Retirement Community

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Hearts, hands, and spirits are opened wide at Mennowood Retirement Community in Newport News, Va.

Our occupancy is high, we are serving a greater depth of needs than we ever have, and our facilities are beautiful and accessible. Every hand that helps at Mennowood is serving the Lord, living out our calling as the hands and feet of Jesus. It is an honor and a blessing to usher in the peace of Christ in the midst of the difficult situations that arise as family members age.

Jon Aldridge, *Administrator*



## NewBridges Immigrant Resource Center

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NewBridges was founded by the Harrisonburg District in 2000 to serve newcomer populations in the Shenandoah Valley. We are located in downtown Harrisonburg, near the courthouses, government offices, and several other nonprofit agencies. Our mission is to engage immigrants, connect cultures, and build community.

The agency experienced a very full year in 2016. The Board, community agencies, immigrant communities, and agency staff all contributed to a Strategic Plan to guide the agency over the next three years.

We continue to represent people through our Immigration Law program, which served almost 50 people last year. We are also assisting with several hundred requests for help to navigate through our local healthcare systems and the truly expensive costs that patients face on a regular basis.

A number of local agencies provide English classes, transportation support, emergency shelter, legal representation, and listening skills training. We connect immigrants with these services and provide information that is needed to make a good connection. Last year we worked with almost 400 people.

Since November, we have been collaborating with community leaders, giving lots of workshops that inform families of changing immigration procedures and ways to prepare for a potential crisis. Churches and school systems have requested assistance and information for families regarding immigration concerns and the anxiety of living under a new presidential administration.

Many of our families are like that of Guadalupe, whose children were born in the United States and therefore are U.S. citizens. Her family faces an uncertain future because she and her husband are permitted to live here and work, but do not have any permanent immigration status, even though they have lived here for over 15 years.

This VMC Assembly's theme of "Neighbors: Strangers No More" is very timely. NewBridges is a Conference Endorsed Ministry and will be offering one of the workshops. We hope you will join us for conversation about communities in our Conference and what it means to be the church at this particular time.

Alicia Horst, *Executive Director*

## Pleasant View, Inc.

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### Continuing to Expand our Community

Each year, Pleasant View, Inc. employees, Board of Directors and individuals with disabilities strive to bring our vision to fruition: "All individuals will have the opportunity to live in and enrich their community."

This year we have expanded all of our day supports. There are more opportunities for people with disabilities to work, volunteer, and explore their communities. Individuals who live in our houses in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County live side by side with their neighbors in residential communities, shop in local stores, and participate in community activities and clubs.



New this year, Pleasant View has become the agency sponsor of the Harrisonburg Kiwanis Aktion Club.

*John (left) and Brad share a laugh. John was a volunteer from ComSonics for United Way's Day of Caring.*

Aktion Club is a service club for individuals with disabilities who are 18 and older. Through the club, Pleasant View supports individuals with disabilities as they learn more about community needs, decide what to do to meet those needs and take action. Through the Aktion Club, Pleasant View has expanded our community and empowered the members to explore community leadership roles.

Pleasant View, Inc. has also welcomed more volunteer groups this year. As part of volunteer orientation, we teach each group about the work and people of Pleasant View. It is fun to watch new relationships form as volunteers meet individuals we support.

Even with the expansion of our community, it is still our long-time neighbors and supporters we depend upon to continue to help us make new connections, build new relationships and educate the community about the benefits of living side by side with people with disabilities. Thank you for your invitations to our worship team, hospitality to our employees and individuals we support and your continued financial support. We wouldn't be who we are without you. God bless you.

Pam Miller  
*Development Director*

## Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale

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The 50th Annual Virginia Mennonite Relief sale in 2016 was a huge success, raising \$360,728 for MCC and relief efforts around the world! The annual auction of handmade quilts, artwork, and wood items raised \$127,114 of the total. Nineteen quilts sold for \$1,000 or more. Food sales totaled \$103,455. My Coins Count raised \$25,079 that helped support Virginia Mennonite Mission workers in Lezhë, Albania and also helped uprooted people in Honduras, Ethiopia, and other places where MCC works.

A wall hanging commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the sale was sold at the auction for \$5,100. Carolyn Bontrager pieced the wall hanging and Charlotte Swope quilted it. The wall hanging incorporated 50 different Civil War reproduction fabrics and over 325 yards of thread were used in the quilting.

*For the Least of These: 50 Years of the Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale: A Photographic History 1967-2016* was also published and sold, commemorating the 50th anniversary. The 81-page book contains more than 350 pictures covering the span of 50 years. The book includes a pictorial history of the sale, past directors, stories of long-time volunteers, statistics, and food—even the famous donut recipe! Karen Gonzol compiled the book. Copies are available for purchase at Gift & Thrift, Artisans Hope, or by mail order.



to benefit MCC

## VIRGINIA Mennonite Relief Sale

“An especially big ‘thank you’ goes to the approximately 1,000 volunteers who gave of their time and energy to make this event possible,” said Dave Rush, chair of the Relief Sale. “Also, many thanks to the donors and buyers. It brings much joy to me to see us all work together to raise money to help others around the world and to reach those Jesus calls us to serve,” Rush added. “May we continue to do this each and every day.”

Mark your calendars now for the 51st annual Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale on Sept. 29-30 at the Rockingham County Fair Grounds. Pictures of auction items, schedule, and more will be posted on the website, so check for updates frequently. For more information or to sign up to receive a monthly e-newsletter update, go to [www.vareliefsale.com](http://www.vareliefsale.com) and follow us on Facebook!

Lisa Lehman, *Publicity Committee Chair*

## Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center

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Now in our 33<sup>rd</sup> year of ministry, The Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center is thankful to be an Endorsed Ministry of Virginia Mennonite Conference.

Through hosting the VMC Conference Ministers Retreat, Eastern District Conference church retreats, and through programs like Kaleidoscope Camp, we continue to provide a place for the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of kids and adults through camping and retreats.

In looking at 2016, the word that best characterizes our year is “focus.” We have become more focused in three areas: programs, finances, and facilities. In 2015, our board identified that hosting church retreats and providing a Christ-centered summer camp are the two main programs we need to focus on. We decided to discontinue some programmed retreats that were not performing well in order to focus more time and energy on hosting and camp. As we moved into 2016, this focus has helped open up more weekends for guest groups, which in turn has helped our finances.

In the last two years the board and finance committee have helped us move into a place of greater financial strength. In

## Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center



*A Place to Begin A Relationship With Jesus Christ and Grow in Him*

2016, we were able to finish two consecutive years “in the black,” which has enabled us to focus on taking care of our facilities. In the coming year we will be replacing five roofs, and the mattresses and toilets in Oakwood Lodge.

All of this is allowing us to continue providing a place where people can focus on the Lord. Hebrews 12:2 says, “Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith...” For more information on our ministry visit [www.wcrc.info](http://www.wcrc.info)

Bob Briscoe, *Executive Director*



## MENNONITE CHURCH USA REPORT TO AREA CONFERENCES for 2016-2017

*"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love." —1 John 4:18 (NRSV)*

The theme for Mennonite Church USA this biennium—which will also be the theme for the 2017 Convention coming up in Orlando, Florida, in July—is “Love is a Verb.” It suggests that love is a kinetic concept, one that is only realized when it is put into action. Amid a challenging year for the church, the nation and the world, Mennonite Church USA continues to seek ways to live out God’s love in a variety of settings. Following are some glimpses of that work in 2016-2017:

The **“Hope for the Future” gathering** held in Hampton, Virginia, looked at issues of racial/ethnic diversity and followed up on an Intercultural Competence Call to Action to encourage continued transformation and undoing of racism in the church.

The **Gathering Place** ([thegatheringplace.us](http://thegatheringplace.us)) has continued to grow, offering a virtual space for youth workers to network and find resources and support. More than 40 youth workers met in person, as well, at “The Gathering 2016.”

**Ervin R. Stutzman** was appointed by the Executive Board to a third three-year term as executive director, through 2018, when he will retire. The board praised his “non-anxious style of leadership” and “ability to listen well.”

The **Mennonite Church USA Archives** made the move from Goshen College (Indiana) to the denominational office in nearby Elkhart. Jason Kauffman was named full-time director of archives and records management.

The Executive Board’s Leadership Development office and Everence are partnering to make **debt reduction grants** available to pastors. With matching funds from the congregation, individual grants can be for as much as \$5,000. About 115 grants have been issued so far.

The **Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)** is now widely available across the church, with 16 people qualified as IDI administrators. Mennonite Church USA provided 10 scholarships for training.

About 75 Mennonite church planters, coaches and other leaders met for a national church planting summit titled **“Sent 2017”** in Fort Myers, Florida.

**Culture Shock**, Mennonite Church USA’s first leadership conference for youth of color, took place in 2016 in Hampton, Virginia.

The Mennonite Church USA **Panel on Sexual Abuse Prevention** continues to refine and prioritize its work as the church grapples with this important topic. The panel’s term runs through 2017.

A **reconciliation process** begun in 2010 bore further fruit this year when the annual assembly of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America welcomed 25 local Mennonites to continue that story of repentance and forgiveness related to the historic persecution of Anabaptists.

Plans continued for the **2017 Convention**. A new model for the Delegate Assembly is envisioned, largely clearing the agenda to make space for consideration of church identity and mission at the “Future Church Summit.”

The **“Deep Faith”** conference was a cooperative venture of several US and Canadian Mennonite entities, including Mennonite Church USA. It energetically looked at faith formation for all ages.

**Joy Sutter**, a hospital administrator from Harleysville, Pennsylvania, was nominated as moderator-elect of the church beginning in 2017.

A team of Mennonite Church USA scholars began a **series of conversations with Pentecostal counterparts in the Church of God** (Cleveland, Tennessee) to seek mutual understanding and common witness.

The **Mennonite Church USA Offices in Elkhart, Indiana**, are debt-free thanks to the generous giving of 23 donors, years ahead of schedule. The building was completed in January 2012.

Women from across the country gathered in Leesburg, Virginia, for the **Women Doing Theology conference, “I’ve Got the Power,”** exploring power at work in people and systems.

# A shared tomorrow

## Everence 2017 report

Virginia Mennonite Conference  
July 20 - 22, 2017

*Look out for one another's  
interests, not just for  
your own.*

– Philippians 2:4  
(Good News Bible)

### **Everence® values our strong congregational partnership**

For more than 70 years, Everence has worked with congregations and their members to help people of faith “build up the common life” through their financial decisions.

These connections are vital to us, and we look forward to many more years of focusing on the best interests of your members – helping them create and implement plans tailored for their needs and aspirations to share with others.

As we have since 1945, we will continue to serve the faith community as partners in stewardship throughout 2017 and beyond.

### **Congregations do more good with help from Everence Sharing Fund**

The Everence Sharing Fund encourages churches to help people in their communities by providing matching grants. Thousands of individuals and families benefit each year, including a former pastor and district minister in Virginia.



Several congregations pitched in to help Randy Coblentz when his doctor prescribed medications to treat a disease that affected his speech and mobility. The disease wasn't responding to an oral medication, and a different form of medication often works better in situations like Randy's when an infection affects the brain.

But his insurance didn't cover the type of long-term treatment prescribed, and the cost topped \$30,000. Grants from the Sharing Fund supplemented the congregational assistance.

### **Reaffirming our commitment to strengthen the broader church**

Everence is reviewing our church relations programs and activities to find ways to strengthen our focus on helping congregations remain healthy during a time of shifting member participation and changing patterns of giving.

We are reaffirming our commitment to the broader church and evaluating how Everence can be most effective in supporting the faith community.

Our five-year plan includes a priority to strengthen our church relationships. We will continue to partner with congregational leaders on lifting the faith community through stewardship, mutual aid and generosity.

## **Generous living in a self-centered world**

A new Everence curriculum, *Generous living in a self-centered world*, is designed to help us live counter to our culture through biblical models of generosity. The curriculum starts with Cain and Abel and ends with the Apostle Paul, exploring biblical stories and the connections with our modern-day American context.

The six-lesson study is an exploration of the biblical world to help first-world Christians wrestle with how to embody generosity while living as citizens of the most privileged and wealthy nation in the world. It takes a sense of purpose and discipline to not get caught in the riptide of culture that draws us into the world's flow.

Download the leaders guide at [everence.com/resources-for-adults](http://everence.com/resources-for-adults).

## **Using our credit card aids more charitable groups**

Everence Federal Credit Union donated \$16,200 to Friends United Meeting and Christian Peacemaker Teams (\$8,100 to each organization) in 2016 from our Rebate for Missions program. Rebate for Missions is supported by the credit union's 10 percent tithe of income generated when people use their Everence Visa credit cards.

Our members voted online to choose the recipients, and we had a record of nearly 2,000 votes cast – more than triple our number from previous years.

In addition to these awards to national agencies, our credit union branch offices share Rebate for Missions money with charities in their communities.

Since the program started in 1995, Everence Federal Credit Union has given more than \$400,000 in grants

to churches, missions and relief organizations. Learn more at [everence.com/banking](http://everence.com/banking).

## **MCC volunteer honored with National Journey Award**

Johanna Sutter of Goshen, Indiana, received the Everence National Journey Award for 2016 because of the ways she models Christian stewardship. As part of this recognition, Everence donated \$5,000 to Mennonite Central Committee in her honor.



Johanna has volunteered for years at the MCC Great Lakes Material Resource Center in Goshen, collecting items for school kits and relief kits and assembling them for distribution to people in need throughout the world.

Johanna grew up in Germany during a time when food, clothing and other essentials were in short supply after World War II. Her family received a bundle from MCC, and she later worked at an MCC children's home in Germany. She moved to the United States in the mid-1950s and started volunteering for MCC after a long teaching career.

## **Pastoral Financial Assistance Program helping in a variety of ways**

Our Pastoral Financial Assistance Program, overseen by Stewardship Education Director Beryl Jantzi, has been more successful than imagined,

strengthening the financial health of pastors and building capacity for their ongoing financial support from their congregations.

In 2016, more than 100 financial assistance grants for pastors were approved. Half of the assistance money came from a \$1 million grant from the Lilly Endowment, Indianapolis, and half in matching dollars raised by congregations and church conferences.

In addition to direct financial support, Everence is hosting educational events across the country for pastors and their spouses. And we're offering financial planning subsidies to help pastors and their families get the support they need for long-term financial stability.

## **Stewardship education resources for all ages are available from Everence**

If you need a good topic for study for a Sunday school class or another setting, visit [everence.com/resources-for-adults](http://everence.com/resources-for-adults) to see all kinds of adult education resources. Leaders guides and curriculum resources are available for you to download. We offer a variety of topics related to stewardship, including discipleship and Jesus' stories about money.

Everence also offers educational resources for church leaders at [everence.com/resources-for-church-leaders](http://everence.com/resources-for-church-leaders), featuring tools for increasing generosity within your congregation and ways to assess stewardship initiatives you already have in place.

Stewardship-related resources for youths and children are available at [everence.com/resources-for-youth](http://everence.com/resources-for-youth), including materials on how real-life topics relate to biblical perspectives about how we use our gifts of time, talents and money.



# Be local. Be global. Be the Gospel.



One day we will celebrate with sisters and brothers from every culture, tribe, tongue and nation God's healing of creation and reconciliation of all things in

Jesus. We not only anticipate that day with joy, we are also invited to be partners and co-laborers with Christ in inviting and welcoming people from every tribe and tongue to be a part of that celebration, which will gather around the throne

of God. We celebrate the brothers and sisters, and each congregation in Virginia Conference, who have shared their lives, their prayers, and their resources to realize God's dream of healing the nations and of a world redeemed through Jesus

Christ. Thank you for your generosity and partnership with Mennonite Mission Network in God's project. With sincere appreciation!

*Stanley W. Green*  
Stanley W. Green  
Executive Director

## Virginia Conference + Mennonite Mission Network

### Partnerships



**Mary Raber**—Teaches at theological schools in Ukraine.

» Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship

**Asher and Lindsey Fast**—

Developing collaboration with existing partners and programs in relation to Mother Theresa Resource Centre (MTRC), and with local African Initiated Churches (AICs). Jointly appointed with Virginia Mennonite Missions.

» Community Mennonite Church

**Garry and Ruth Denlinger**—Garry trains leaders and Ruth works in a nursing home in an undisclosed area.

» Harrisonburg Mennonite Church

### Missional Discipleship Initiative

- » El Camino Discipular
- » Iglesia Discipular Anabaptista (IDA)
- » Iglesia Enciende una Luz
- » New Song Anabaptist Fellowship

### Virginia Mennonite Missions

As a sister agency, Mennonite Mission Network partners with Virginia Mennonite Missions to expand ministry opportunities and support for international workers beyond Virginia Mennonite Conference congregations.

### Service participants



#### Service Adventure

**Daniel Miller**, serving in Broadway, Virginia.

**Erin Rhodes**, serving in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

**Margaret Smeltzer Miller**, serving in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

#### Mennonite Voluntary Service

**Hanna Heishman**, serving in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

**Andrew Hostetter**, serving in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

**Carly Kraybill**, serving in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

#### SOOP Sites

**Highland Retreat**, Bergton, Virginia  
**Unique World Gifts**, Hickory, North Carolina

**Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center**, Toano, Virginia

#### SOOP

**Ronald and Lila King**, Harrisonburg, Virginia

**Abram and Ruth Rittenhouse**, Harrisonburg, Virginia

### Congregational giving to Mission Network



During Mission Network's last fiscal year, August 1, 2015, through July 31, 2016, 29 of 71 Virginia Conference congregations (41 percent) gave **\$160,541**, or an average of **\$5,536**.

### Mission banks



Children from Beldor and Immanuel Mennonite churches gave a total of **\$353.66** to missions.

### Prayer partners



**26** people have committed to pray daily for Mission Network ministries.



*May God's redeeming love be ever present among you as we journey together in being a church that is a living, breathing example of God's kingdom on earth, as it is in heaven.*

*Sandy Miller*

Sandy Miller  
Director of Church Relations  
and representative for Virginia Conference

**Thank you for your continued partnership in God's mission!**

[www.MennoniteMission.net](http://www.MennoniteMission.net) Toll-free: 1-866-866-2872

### **“NEIGHBORS: STRANGERS NO MORE”**

For eight years, The Corinthian Plan (TCP) has served Mennonite Church USA congregations, conferences and their employees. The Plan provides congregations with the opportunity to obtain health coverage for their credentialed and non-credentialed employees. TCP is an employer based program with each congregation being the employer.

### **LIVING AS ‘NEIGHBORS’**

Churches participating in the plan are part of a community that chooses to share with each other, the financial risk of their health care costs, (as well as in some cases, disability, dental, and life). This is a practical way that we connect with, and support each other across the Mennonite church.

The ‘Fair Balance (subsidy) Fund’ is another way that congregations live together as neighbors. Each TCP congregation contributes \$10 per average attendee, annually, to this Mutual Aid Fund. This Fund directly supports premiums for TCP congregations with need. The Virginia Mennonite Conference currently has 3 congregations receiving this subsidy. Throughout the larger church, TCP supports 37 congregations through this fund.

### **AN ‘ENCOURAGING’ COMMUNITY**

TCP seeks to encourage good health. Our lives are a gift from God. We encourage TCP participants to take advantage of their Wellness benefits. To learn more, contact TCP Wellness Coordinator, Ingrid Friesen Moser ([ingrid.wellness@gmail.com](mailto:ingrid.wellness@gmail.com); 574-596-0540), or go to our website <http://mennoniteusa.org/what-we-do/the-corinthian-plan/>. NEW! Beginning in March of 2017 those participating with waived coverage (and their spouses) are also eligible to receive the Wellness Incentive!

### **AN ‘ACCOUNTABLE’ COMMUNITY**

The Virginia Mennonite Conference is represented on the Benefits Board by Marcy Engle. Other board members include: Dave Weaver (Chair), Yvonne Sieber (Hesston, KS), Marlin Groff (Lancaster, PA), Byron Pellecer (Wichita, KS), Ken Hochstetler (Everence), Steve Garboden (Goshen, IN), and Mark King (Indiana).

Look for Area Representative James Miller (941-400-9937) at the Virginia Conference annual meeting, and/or go to our website: <http://mennoniteusa.org/what-we-do/the-corinthian-plan/>. Feel free to contact Duncan Smith, Director (316-281-4255) for more information. TCP has open enrollment every fall.



*Greetings from MEA! In this report, you can get a glimpse of some of the work we do in cooperation with five colleges and universities, two seminaries, two Ministerios Hispanos programs, more than two dozen primary and secondary schools in the Mennonite Schools Council (MSC), Mennonite Early Childhood Network (MECN), and others. In 2016-2017, a total of 10,787 students are enrolled at Mennonite institutions (not including Ministerios Hispanos).*

*By providing networking, support, collaboration, resources, professional growth opportunities, scholarships and more, we ensure the opportunity to provide exceptional academics with Anabaptist values. Our distinctives include: following Jesus Christ, being peacemakers, intentionally building community, developing dedicated and disciplined learners, serving others, and embracing differences. Some of the particular activities and initiatives of the past year include the following:*

- MEA staff assisted with the search for and **calling of two new presidents** for Mennonite higher education. Eastern Mennonite University (Harrisonburg, Virginia) called Dr. Susan Schultz Huxman, and Hesston College (Kansas) called Dr. Joseph Manickam. Both are beginning their terms in 2017. In addition, MEA continues to work with Goshen College (Indiana) as it seeks a successor to Dr. Jim Brenneman and also is supporting Bethel College (North Newton, Kansas) in its presidential search.

- MEA staff worked with Eastern Mennonite University through the **investigation process** into allegations against former EMU Vice President of Enrollment Luke Hartman and a review of EMU policies related to Title IX and the Clery Act.

- The March 2017 **Education Leaders Gathering**, “Beyond Buried Treasure,” was held in partnership with MHS in Jacksonville, Florida. It was the second joint conference for Mennonite Health Assembly and MEA.

- The annual **Hope for the Future** event, co-sponsored by MEA, brings together people of color who are leaders in Mennonite churches and institutions to network and generate change. About 70 people participated in 2017.

- MEA executive director Carlos Romero continues to assist with administration of the **Intercultural Development Inventory**, providing the training for Mennonite college, university and seminary boards and other Mennonite Church USA organizations.

- A monthly calendar of **Prayers for Faith and Learning** is sent out to help people focus their prayers for schools affiliated with MEA.

- MEA expanded its advertising and outreach with a **four-page color insert** in the January 2017 issue of *The Mennonite*, which can be used as an ongoing promotional piece.

- A group of 36 people began training in this year’s **Values-Based Leadership** program in October. The program, co-sponsored by MEA, has seen more than 500 people take part since it began in 2001.

**Finally, from all of MEA, we want to say THANK YOU!**

Thank you to members of your conference who are serving on Mennonite educational boards and committees, and thank you to the 20 congregations who supported Mennonite education with total giving of \$39,667.84 from Sept. 1, 2015, to Aug. 31, 2016\*.

*(\*Giving includes gifts for higher education, MEA, Racial/Ethnic Leadership Education and Hispanic Ministries.)*



## Report to Virginia Mennonite Conference

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary: Sara Wenger Shenk, president

### Area conference connections

AMBS students from Virginia Mennonite Conference congregations

- **Master of Divinity Connect:** Joyce Lind (Community)
- **Master of Arts: Peace Studies:** Rebekah York (Eastside)

### Resources for faith formation and leadership development

**Commencement:** Twenty-one students graduated from AMBS on May 20. Eleven graduates earned the **Master of Divinity** degree; three the **Master of Arts in Christian Formation**; two the **Master of Arts: Peace Studies** and one the **Master of Arts: Theological Studies**. Four students received a **Certificate in Theological Studies**, representing one year of study. [ambs.edu/commencement](http://ambs.edu/commencement)

**MDiv Connect:** Are you feeling drawn to deepen your understanding of Scripture, Anabaptist theology and faith — without relocating? Through AMBS's **Master of Divinity (MDiv) Connect** program, you can earn a seminary degree in your current setting. By taking 12–14 credit hours per year in online and hybrid formats, you can complete the 80-hour program in five and a half years. Connect students can receive the full amount of need-based tuition aid by taking at least 12 credit hours per academic year. [ambs.edu/mdivconnect](http://ambs.edu/mdivconnect)

**Schedule a visit:** Those interested in learning more about AMBS are invited to attend a Seminary Preview Day or Evening in the fall or spring, or to schedule a personal visit on another date. Meet students and professors in person, attend classes, join us in worship and get first-hand information about financial aid and scholarships. Explore how we educate leaders for God's reconciling mission! [ambs.edu/visit](http://ambs.edu/visit)

**Lifelong Learning:** The Church Leadership Center offers many opportunities for you to continue your education and strengthen your leadership skills: webinars, short courses (both on campus and online), workshops, Pastors Week, Leadership Clinics and more. (These are non-degree options.) [ambs.edu/lifelong-learning](http://ambs.edu/lifelong-learning)

**Host a "Reading the Bible with Jesus" workshop:** Encourage your congregation or area conference, or join with other area congregations, to host itinerant Bible teacher **Bryan Moyer Suderman** for 1–2 days of digging deep into one of the Gospels to gain tools for reading and interpreting Scripture like Jesus did, in light of today's world. These workshops are available in English and Spanish. [ambs.edu/workshops](http://ambs.edu/workshops)

**Pastors Week:** Participants in the 2017 event, held Jan. 23–26, focused on *Cultivating Intercultural Leadership for Diversity-Oriented Churches*. Save the dates for **Pastors Week 2018:** Feb. 26 – March 1.

**!Explore: A Theological Program for High School Youth:** Students (grades 10–12) can explore ministry, develop their leadership gifts and listen for God's call through a Congregational Experience and a Group Experience. Encourage someone you know to apply for 2018! [ambs.edu/explore](http://ambs.edu/explore)

*We thank God for your support and ask for your prayers as we prepare leaders for the church through programs that are biblically, spiritually, ethically and theologically grounded.*

Rooted in the Word, Growing in Christ

July 2017 • AMBS • 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, IN 46517 • 574.295.3726 • [ambs.edu](http://ambs.edu)

### Conservation photography course unique in the nation

Macson McGuigan, a senior environmental sustainability and digital media was recently named one of 12 North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA) College Scholars. He is the second EMU student to win the scholarship. The prestigious award enabled McGuigan to attend NANPA's biannual summit in Jacksonville, Florida, from Feb 26-March 4.

"This is an opportunity of a lifetime," says Professor Steven David Johnson, who teaches conservation photography. "Many former scholarship-winners are now recognized in the nature/conservation photography world as explorers, filmmakers and leaders. NANPA's president, Clay Bolt, has called this opportunity a 'career-maker.'"

Johnson's course is one of two in the United States highlighted by The International League of Conservation Photographers; the other is taught at Stanford University.

### EMU offers new minor in criminology and restorative justice

Students interested in careers in law enforcement, law, social work, forensics or other related fields can now add a criminology and restorative justice minor beginning in fall 2017.

"We want our students to understand and be aware of how the criminal justice system works, and be aware of alternatives that exist," said Gloria Rhodes, peacebuilding and conflict studies professor and Department of Applied Social Science chair.

Rhodes describes the program's restorative justice perspective as one that "promotes justice as healing, wholeness and reconciliation for all parties touched by crime." Coursework will introduce students to restorative justice as a growing field of practice that offers alternatives to the traditional criminal justice system.

Howard Zehr, a longtime professor of restorative justice at EMU, notes that many colleges and universities have begun offering programs in criminal justice as the industry has grown in recent decades.

"Most, however, are taught with a conventional and rather uncritical perspective of criminology that assumes that if crime is violent, then our response must be as well," Zehr said. "It is both timely and appropriate that a university rooted in an Anabaptist tradition would incorporate the peacebuilding approach represented by restorative justice."

### How can EMU be of service to your congregation and conference?

Contact the church relations office to schedule the president, dean or a faculty guest speaker at 540-432-4597 or [ChurchRelations@emu.edu](mailto:ChurchRelations@emu.edu).

#### Virginia Conference Connections to EMU

##### *Trustees*

Myron E Blosser, Clyde Kratz, Kevin Longenecker, Amy L Rush, Judith Trumbo

##### *Constituent Conference Representative*

Brenda North Martin

##### *Students Enrolled*

29 Undergraduate and 15 Graduate students from Virginia Mennonite Conference were enrolled in the spring 2016 semester at EMU.

##### *Giving*

Virginia Mennonite Conference churches gave more than \$85,000 in matching grants to their students at EMU as well as more than \$10,000 to the university fund during the year ending June 2016.

— **Susan Schultz Huxman**, *president*

— **Kirk Shisler**, *VP for advancement*

— **Les Horning**, *director of seminary admissions, and associate director of church relations*

— **Braydon Hoover**, *associate director of development*

— **Matthew Ruth**, *director of admissions*

*ChurchRelations@emu.edu*  
540-432-4597      [www.emu.edu](http://www.emu.edu)

#### *Our Vision*

*EMU envisions a learning community marked by academic excellence, creative expression, professional competence, and passionate Christian faith, offering healing and hope in our diverse world.*

*To this end, we commit ourselves to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God.*

## Summer 2017

## VIRGINIA MENNONITE CONFERENCE

## Seminary Annual Report

**Seminary alums making a difference,  
“Welcoming the Neighbor.”**

During the divisive election season, **Matt Bucher** (2014 grad), pastor of Immanuel Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg created a simple wooden sign that read, in Spanish, English, and Arabic, “No matter where you are from, we’re glad you’re our neighbor. This sign was planted in the church lawn. Some months later, **Nick Meyer** (2014 grad), pastor at Early Church in Harrisonburg, suggested that this message needed to be broadcast to a wider audience. A graphic artist helped Matthew and Nick develop a colorful version of the sign that could be easily printed and displayed.

These signs have now appeared in all 50 states, and are starting to show up around the world. Information about ordering signs can be found at the “Welcome your neighbors” Facebook page.

**Change in seminary leadership**

After seven years as dean of Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Dr. Michael King is stepping down, effective June 30, 2017. He is looking forward to re-engaging with his publishing company, Cascadia Publishing House LLC, whose mission is to “...support examination of faith, history, and contemporary life from an Anabaptist perspective.” Dr. Nancy Heisey will continue in her role as the seminary’s associate dean, which she has held since August 2016. Dr. Fred Kniss, university provost, will be stepping in as interim dean for the 2017-18 academic year, as a search for dean commences.

**EMS Commencement**

Seminary commencement was held on Saturday, April 29. Nine students received the Master of Divinity degree, one student received the Master of Arts in Religion degree, and three students received certificates in ministry leadership. The commencement speaker was Erin Dufault-Hunter, Assistant Professor of Christian Ethics at Fuller Theological Seminary.

**Fall semester distance learning options:****Online:**

- New Testament: Text in Context, 3 SH, **Dorothy Jean Weaver**
- Christian Tradition I, 3 SH, **David Evans**

**Hybrid:**

- Leadership and Administration, 3 SH, **Lonnie Yoder**
- Christian Ethics, 3 SH, **Mark Thiessen-Nation**

For more information:

<http://emu.edu/seminary/distance-learning/>

***Statement of Purpose***

*Eastern Mennonite Seminary prepares men and women to serve and lead in a global context. In response to God’s saving grace, we educate students to bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of God’s Spirit as wise interpreters, mature practitioners, discerning communicators, and transformational leaders.*

**Susan Schultz Huxman**, university president

**Fred Kniss**, interim seminary dean

**Les Horning**, director of seminary admissions,  
associate director of church relations

For the most up-to-date information on EMS,  
give us a call, visit us on the web, “Like” us on  
Facebook!

**[www.emu.edu/seminary](http://www.emu.edu/seminary)**

540-432-4260

*Relief, development and peace in the name of Christ*

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches, shares God's love and compassion for all in the name of Christ by **responding to basic human needs** and **working for peace and justice**. MCC envisions communities worldwide in right relationship with God, one another and creation.

MCC relies on our partnership with Anabaptist churches in the U.S., Canada and around the world. Much of MCC's work is possible because of your generosity. Thank you for your ongoing support of MCC's ministries!

**MCC/Virginia Mennonite Conference connections**

- Last year marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale benefitting MCC. Thank you to all conference members involved in the sale and to those who have made it a success over the past five decades.
- MCC is grateful to the many Virginia Mennonite Conference members who support MCC through Gift & Thrift and Booksavers of Virginia in Harrisonburg. Gift & Thrift is finishing their expansion project and is working on their second and third phases of a solar array on the roof, offsetting 50% of their energy use. Partial funding for these phases of the solar project came from the Department of Energy SunShot Challenge, where a \$50,000 grant was awarded to the "Thrifty Community Solar Barn Raising Team" comprised of MCC, Gift & Thrift, Secure Futures and SolarWorld Americas.
- Thank you to all who hosted board members and staff and helped organize the MCC U.S. board meeting in Harrisonburg in October 2016.
- Last June, Patrick Maxwell, a returned MCC service worker from the Congo, spoke at the spring "Friends of MCC" event with over 50 people in attendance.
- MCC appreciates the Virginia Mennonite Conference's participation at the annual meat canning project in Hinton.
- MCC is grateful for the service of Virginia Mennonite Conference members who serve throughout the organization, both in the U.S. and overseas.

**MCC at work here and around the world**

**RELIEF** MCC has designated more than \$40 million through 36 partners in response to the Syria and Iraq crisis since 2011, including more than 60 shipments of hygiene items, blankets and other humanitarian supplies. MCC currently has 11 ongoing humanitarian relief projects in Syria and Lebanon and additional work in Jordan and Iraq. Projects include provision of food, cash allowances, water, hygiene supplies and heating fuel, as well as support for education, employment, trauma healing and peacebuilding. This is MCC's largest humanitarian response ever.

**DEVELOPMENT** MCC teams up with the Office of Development of Evangelical Churches (ODE) in Burkina Faso to teach new agricultural techniques including half-moon farming and food security plans. "Now the whole family eats well and we have enough food for everyone," says participant Etienne Tiendrébeogo.

**PEACE** In Philadelphia, Pa., MCC works with partners to address racial disparities in the U.S. criminal justice system. MCC East Coast created prisoner care kits to help meet basic human needs of current and former prisoners. Distributed to those currently incarcerated or those who are participating in re-entry ministries, they help men and women "feel loved in an unlovable place," says MCC East Coast staff member, Chaplain Ron Muse.

Thank you for all of the ways in which you join MCC to share God's love and compassion for all in the name of Christ. Learn more about MCC's efforts around the world at MCC's website, [EastCoast.mcc.org](http://EastCoast.mcc.org).

Grace and peace to you,

Bruce Campbell-Janz, MCC East Coast executive director

Maren Hange, MCC East Coast board member



*Farmers in Yé, Burkina Faso are trained by MCC agriculture partner ODE to use conservation agriculture techniques. These help control erosion, improve soil fertility, and increase water retention in the soil.  
(MCC Photo/James Souder)*

## Other VMC Leaders (non-voting)

### *Credentialed leaders not assigned to a VMC congregation or cluster*

**Calvary**  
Glen Guyton  
Nathaniel Jefferson

**Central**  
Richard Bowman  
Marvin Lorenzana  
Lee Martin

**Eastern**  
Randy Coblentz  
Barry Loop  
Don Yoder

**Eastern Carolina**  
Brenda North Martin  
Larry Wilson

**Harrisonburg**  
Myron Augsburger  
Shirley Yoder Brubaker  
Ronald "Ron" Copeland  
Ross Erb  
Richard F. Keeler  
Luis Martinez  
Frederic "Fred" Miller  
Bonita L. Stutzman

**Leadership/  
Administration Cluster**  
Owen Burkholder  
Loren Horst

**Northern**  
George R. Brunk III  
Gary Koontz

**Potomac**  
Steven Swartzendruber

**Southern**  
Edith Shenk Kuhns

**TCK**  
Willis Hunsberger

### *Spouses of deceased credentialed leaders*

Mary Troyer Bergey  
Marilyn Brenneman  
Betty Brunk  
Helen Burkholder  
Betty Byler  
Virginia Derstine  
Naomi Francisco  
Bertha Fyffe  
Belinda Gaskins  
Eva Glanzer  
Lila May Janzen  
Ruth Kaufman  
Charlene Kiser  
Wilhemina Littlejohn  
Lois Mumaw Martin  
Ruth Martin  
Virginia Martin  
Eleanor Minninger  
Evelyn Nice  
Mary Nissley  
Doris Amstutz North  
Mildred Pellman  
John Shenk  
Evonne Showalter  
W. Dean Smith  
Marie Stevanus  
Martha Weaver  
Virginia E. Grove Weaver  
Betty White

### *Retired*

**Central**  
Floyd Blosser  
Glendon L. Blosser  
Emma Frederick  
J. Mark Frederick  
Richard Good  
Harley D. Good  
Roy F. Good  
Paul Kratz  
Wilmer Lehman  
John Petersheim  
Clayton Shenk  
Amos Witmer

**Chaplains**  
Melvin Janzen  
John Paul Lehman  
Shirlee Kohler Yoder

**Eastern**  
David Bartow  
Kenneth J. Brunk  
J. Harold Buckwalter  
Ernest Godshall  
John T. Kreider  
Robert W. Mast  
James Meador  
Merlin Miller

G. Preston Nowlin  
Paul L. Swarr  
Lloyd Weaver  
Harold Bergey  
I. Keith Miller

**Eastern Carolina**  
A. Don Augsburger  
Duane Beck

**Harrisonburg**  
Donald Bare  
G. Edwin Bontrager  
Ray Gingerich  
Timothy Green  
Noah Helmuth  
Daniel A. Hoopert  
Al Huyard  
David Huyard  
Rose L. Huyard  
Paul Kniss  
C. Norman Kraus  
Philip Kreider  
Catherine S. Longenecker  
Daniel M. Longenecker  
John Martin  
David F. Miller  
Edmond F. Miller

Sharon Wyse Miller  
Millard E. Osborne  
Erwin Remple  
Kenneth J. Seitz  
Dorothy J. Shank  
Orval Shank  
Raymond Shank  
Eugene Souder  
James K. Stauffer  
Edward B. Stoltzfus  
Lawrence Yoder  
Lawrence M. Yoder  
Paul T. Yoder

**Northern**  
Otis Dove  
Anna Margaret "Peg" Engle  
Kathy Hochstedler  
Lloyd Horst  
Edmund Hoy  
Thomas Kauffman  
John Kiblinger  
Kathleen W. Kurtz  
Mark Landis  
Art McPhee  
D. Paul Mishler  
James Musser  
Laban Peachey

Clifford Poirot, Sr.  
Elwood Schrock  
Rowland Shank  
H. Michael Shenk II  
Hazel Shirk  
Omar V. Showalter  
Marvin Stutzman  
Irvin Weaver  
Samuel O. Weaver

**Potomac**  
Jim Delp

**Southern**  
John Miller  
Richard H. Showalter  
Marion Weaver

**TCK**  
Frank E. Farrow  
Edwin M. Godshall  
Floyd "Matt" Matteson  
Wellington Moyer  
James L. Roth  
Arthur Emanuel Smoker

## Conference Related Ministries Giving to Virginia Mennonite Conference

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Virginia Mennonite Conference is grateful for our Conference Related Ministries and their support of our ministries. Below is a list of CRMs that gave \$250 or more to VMC from May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016. **Thank you!**

- **Eastern Mennonite School**  
[emhs.net](http://emhs.net)  
*A Mennonite K-12 school that joins home and church in calling students to faith in Jesus Christ, academic excellence, personal integrity, and compassionate service in the world.*
- **Virginia Mennonite Missions**  
[vmmissions.org](http://vmmissions.org)  
*As a mission agency of Virginia Mennonite Conference, Virginia Mennonite Missions invites people to new and faithful life in Jesus Christ by forming and enabling congregations and individuals to continue God's reconciling work in the world.*
- **Eastern Mennonite University**  
[emu.edu](http://emu.edu)  
*Undergraduate, seminary and graduate programs educate students to live in a global context. An Anabaptist Christian community which challenges students to pursue their life calling.*
- **Family Life Resource Center**  
[flrc.org](http://flrc.org)  
*A nonprofit counseling agency meeting the behavioral health needs of individuals, couples and families, working from a Christian faith perspective.*
- **Gift & Thrift, Inc.**  
[giftandthrift.org](http://giftandthrift.org)  
*A nonprofit organization committed to Christian faith in action, stewardship of our environment and supporting the primary goals of MCC.*
- **Highland Retreat**  
[highlandretreat.org](http://highlandretreat.org)  
*A year-round Christian camp and retreat center developed to provide a place where people meet Jesus Christ and explore His creation.*
- **Mennonite Disaster Service of Va.**  
[mds.mennonite.net](http://mds.mennonite.net)  
*A local chapter of Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), which coordinates volunteers from Anabaptist churches for disaster response.*
- **Mennonite Women of Virginia**  
[facebook.com/mwofva](https://facebook.com/mwofva)  
*Empowered women creatively building Christ-centered relationships through fellowship, leadership, mission and service.*
- **Mennowood Retirement Community**  
[mennowood.com](http://mennowood.com)  
*An oasis of peace on 12.5 wooded acres in the midst of a cosmopolitan city, providing independent and assisted living to 100 residents.*
- **NewBridges Immigrant Resource Center**  
[newbridgesirc.org](http://newbridgesirc.org)  
*A resource center for the spiritual, social and economic needs of immigrants in the Shenandoah Valley.*
- **Pleasant View, Inc.**  
[pleasantviewinc.org](http://pleasantviewinc.org)  
*Providing a variety of residential and day supports for individuals with intellectual disabilities in Harrisonburg and Rockingham Co.*
- **Roberta Webb Child Care Center**  
[robertawebb.org](http://robertawebb.org)  
*Providing quality, affordable, licensed child care in a safe and nurturing environment and providing children with a good start.*
- **Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale**  
[vareliefsale.com](http://vareliefsale.com)  
*Held annually on the first Saturday in October at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds to raise money for Mennonite Central Committee.*
- **Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community**  
[vmrc.org](http://vmrc.org)  
*Providing a broad continuum of quality senior services in a manner that demonstrates Christian love and compassion.*
- **Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center**  
[wcrc.info](http://wcrc.info)  
*A year round, Christ-centered retreat ministry providing services and programs to encourage fellowship, growth and renewal.*



# Individual Giving to Virginia Mennonite Conference

Virginia Mennonite Conference is grateful for our contributors' generous financial support. Below is a list of voluntary financial contributors from September 1, 2016 to July 1, 2017. **Thank you!**

*James R. & Emily K. Åkerson	*Ray W. & Betty M. Hertzler	Daryl & Marcia Myers	Dorothy Jean Weaver
Richard D. & Louise H. Alderfer	Robert A. & Marie Hertzler	*Gerald E. Nauman	*Kenneth Weaver
David D. & Julia H. Alleman	Wayne L. & Kathryn J. Hochstetler	Evelyn Nice	*Marion C. Weaver
*Devon C. & Teresa B. Anders	Lloyd & Elverta Horst	Doris I. North	Michael D. & Rachel J. Weaver
*Myron S. & Esther Augsburg	Kenneth R. & Sue Horst	Byron Peachey	Samuel O. Weaver
Frank E. & Susan B. Barrow	Loren E. & Earlene Horst	Laban Peachey	M. Lloyd & Sarah Y. Weaver
R. Scott Beachy	Alden L. & Louise O. Hostetter	*Samuel Petersheim	*Weaver's Floor Covering
Paul & Leanna Beiler	Ella C. Huber	Kenneth & Carol Peterson	David W. & Miriam S. Wenger
*Harold Bergey	*Harold E. Huber	Ronald E. & Myrna B. Piper	J. Lowell & Janet Wenger
Benjamin D. & Sarah Ann Bixler	J. Roy & Joanne Hunsberger	Heinz D. & Melanie Plato	J. Lowell & Marlene J. Wenger
Glendon L. Blosser	*Beryl M. & Margo M. Jantzi	Calvin Redekop	*Robert G. & Lois B. Wenger
Nelson G. & Peggy H. Blosser	Lila Mae Janzen	Joel & Valerie Reinford	Angie & Rivers Lee Williams
*Blue Ridge Architects PLC	Aaron & Laura Kauffman	Mary E. Reitz	Daniel & Lois Yoder
*C. P. & Izetta Yoder Mission	Glenn E. & Sandra Kauffman	Raymond & Naomi Ressler	Don Yoder
Endowment	*Rosemary G. King	Abram & Ruth Rittenhouse	*Joni & Marlin Yoder
*Evangline Yoder Endowment	Walter King	Jay & Pat Rohrer	Ed & Laura Yoder
Fund	*Betty M. Kniss	Amy Rush	Elwood E. & Joy Yoder
G. Edwin & Edie Bontrager	*Paul G. & Mary Naomi Kniss	Kurtis Sauder	Harvey & Alma Jean Yoder
*Randall Bowman	Philip L. & Irene H. Kniss	Laurence & Evelyn Sauder	Lawrence M. & Shirlee K. Yoder
*John D. & Hazel M. Bowman	*Arlan & Alda Kratz	Carolyn See	Paul T. & Daisey B. Yoder
Lawrence & Sylvia Bowman	Paul L. & Evelyn W. Kratz	Orval & Dorothy Shank	Gordon B. & Bonneta B. Zook
Lois B. Bowman	Eugene & Christina Kraybill	Stuart & Helen T. Shank	
Richard L. & Elsie Bowman	John & Betty O. Kreider	Alan L. & Sharon B. Shenk	
Anna Brenneman	Norman H. & Dorothy L. Kreider	*Jewell Shenk	
*Daryl Brubaker	Roland G. & Darlene M. Landes	*Jonathan D. & Sheryl L. Shenk	
J. Mark & Beryl Brubaker	Richard & Pearl Lantz	H. Michael III & Ramona Shenk	
J. Allen & Erma R. Brubaker	Joseph & Hannah Lapp	Ronnie & Lana Shifflett	
*Kenneth & Twila Brunk	David & Lavonne Lehman	Glennys Shouey	
George R. III & Ruthann M. Brunk	Edwin & Dianna Lehman	Donald E. & Marlene Showalter	
Victor & Christina Buckwalter	*Mark & Margaret Lehman	Evonne S. Showalter	
Ruth L. Burkholder	*J. Paul & Erma Lehman	Millard E. & Mary Showalter	
*Steven P. & M. Christine Carpenter	John & Barbara Lehman	*Omar & Lena B. Showalter	
*Russell De Young	Mark & Pauline Lehman	Richard H. & Bertha H. Showalter	
Kenton & Rhoda Derstine	N. Can Le	*Carl L. & Margaret M. Smeltzer	
Ellis & Caroline Detwiler	Wilmer R. & Mary Louise Lehman	Steven & Jeannie Smith	
Otis Dove	*Joseph W. & Constance E.	Gloria H. Snider	
Russell & Jane Eanes	Longacher	John D. & Susal L. Stahl	
*Allen K. Early	Sean & Meanech Yeath Lonn	Carl and Carolyn Stauffer	
Frederick & Karen Eberly	Milford & Carolyn Lyndaker	James K. & Ruth Y. Stauffer	
*J. Robert & Rosalie Eshleman	Shawn & Alicia Manning	Glenn & Arnedo Steiner	
Barbara Frank	Dale L. & Paula Martin	Grant & Susan Stoltzfus	
*Linford K. & Rebecca L. Gehman	John R. & Marian S. Martin	Edward Stoltzfus	
Lee & Rosemary Good	Ruth Y. Martin	Ervin R. & Bonita Stutzman	
Ray & Sandra Good	Wendell L. & Lois E. Maust	Eldon and Lynn Suter	
Harley D. & Irene E. Good	Chad & Stephanie May	Paul L. & Bertha W. Swarr	
James M. & Dorcas M. Good	Carl E. Mericle	Louise H. Swartz	
Mark & Tamela Gray	*The Mervin & Nina Troyer	Loren & Pat Swartzendruber	
Paul E. & Pam Groff	Foundation	Nelson & Gloria Swope	
Bruce W. & Janet Hankee	James Moore & Lodema Miller	Skip & Carol Tobin	
Nancy E. Hardin	Merlin & Linda Miller	Matthew & Crystal Trost	
*Merlin D. Harman	*Elroy & Linda Miller	Jon & Meredith Trotter	
Pearl Hartman	Samuel & Viola B. Miller	Brent & Judith Trumbo	
David S. & Kathleen Hartzler	*Sara Grace Miller	Doris L. Trumbo	
June Hartzler	Eleanor V. Minniger	Gary & Debra Turner	
*Kathryn S. Heatwole	*James & Dawn Monger	Carol L. Van Donk	
Kenneth M. & Ruth K. Heatwole	Carroll A. & Lois Moyers	Virginia Harman Estate	
James L. & Ann Hershberger	James & Aldine Musser	Nelson & Marjorie Waybill	

An asterisk (\*) indicates that the donor is a Philippiian level donor who gave \$500 or more from September 1, 2016, to July 1, 2017. Philippiian level donors receive a quarterly newsletter that highlights reflections and events of the Executive Conference Minister and an overview of the Conference's financial mission.



**Making a donation**  
to Virginia Mennonite  
Conference is easy!

Donate online at  
[virginiaconference.org/  
donate/](http://virginiaconference.org/donate/) or donate by  
mailing checks to:

VMC  
601 Parkwood Dr.  
Harrisonburg, VA  
22802



## ***Congregational Giving to Virginia Mennonite Conference***

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***More than \$25 per member, in addition to congregation membership fee, between May 1, 2016 and April 30, 2017***

3:16 Church	Knoxville Mennonite Church	Williamsburg Mennonite Church
Beldor Mennonite Church	Lindale Mennonite Church	Zion Hill Mennonite Church
Big Spring Mennonite Church	Park View Mennonite Church	Zion Mennonite Church
Concord Mennonite Church	Powhatan Mennonite Church	
First Mennonite of Richmond	Springdale Mennonite Church	
Harrisonburg Mennonite Church	Staunton Mennonite Church	

***Up to \$25 per member, in addition to congregation membership fee, between May 1, 2016 and April 30, 2017***

Asheville Mennonite Church	Family of Hope	Mt Pleasant Mennonite Church
Calvary Community Church	Gospel Hill Mennonite Church	Mt Vernon Mennonite Church
Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship	Grace Mennonite Fellowship	Mountain View Mennonite Church
Charlottesville Mennonite Church	Greensboro Mennonite Church	New Song Anabaptist Fellowship
Christiansburg Mennonite Fellowship	Huntington Mennonite Church	Providence Mennonite Church
Community Mennonite Church	Iglesia Alfa y Omega	Ridgeway Mennonite Church
Crest Hill Community Church	Iglesia Enciende Una Luz	Stephens City Mennonite Church
Crossroads Mennonite Church	Immanuel Mennonite Church	Waynesboro Mennonite Church
CrossWay Mennonite Church	Lynside Mennonite Church	Weavers Mennonite Church
Daniels Run Mennonite Church	Manantial de Vida	
Durham Mennonite Church	Mt Clinton Mennonite Church	

\* In addition to the annual membership fee, VMC asks congregations to contribute \$25-35 per member annually to VMC. For churches who do not track membership, attendance numbers were used.

## ***Estate Benefactors to Virginia Mennonite Conference***

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Michael Beckler	Rosie Jones
Glendon Blosser	Paul & Evelyn Kratz
Steven & M. Christine Carpenter	Richard & Pearl Lantz
John & Mary Ann Heatwole	Wilmer & Mary Louise Lehman
Ruth Virginia Heatwole	Joe & Constance Longacher
Raymond & Betty Hertzler	Richard & Bertha Showalter
Elizabeth Hostetter	Eugene & Alice Souder
Grace Hostetter	Ken & June Marie Weaver
Lila Mae Janzen	

### ***Is VMC in your estate plans?***

*Inform Clyde G. Kratz, Executive  
Conference Minister, at 540-434-9727.*

# Conference Financial Summary

## Statement of Income and Expense Year Ended August 31, 2016

	Unrestricted Operations	Restricted Funds		Total
		Special Projects	Endowments	
Income				
Contributions - individuals	\$ 60,995	\$ 19,185	\$ -	\$ 80,180
Contributions - congregations	116,875	2,335	-	119,210
Contributions - associated ministries	10,944	3,145	-	14,089
Congregation membership fees	22,075	-	-	22,075
Investment income	1,225	-	68,642	69,867
Registrations	-	34,544	-	34,544
Fees for services	14,772	-	-	14,772
Grants	650	5,350	500	6,500
Other	3,960	4,215	575	8,750
Transfers	24,143	(6,130)	(18,013)	-
Total income	255,639	62,644	51,704	369,987
Expense				
Administrative support	56,220	-	-	56,220
Archival services	10,839	-	-	10,839
Church planting and development	18,900	-	-	18,900
Communication	31,161	-	-	31,161
Facility costs	14,644	14,035	5,000	33,679
Honorarium	-	12,575	-	12,575
Leadership development	106,878	-	-	106,878
MCUSA-related expenses	7,616	-	-	7,616
Office expense	5,539	3,328	-	8,867
Other	8,699	16,052	362	25,113
Scholarships and grants	-	-	16,190	16,190
Total expense	260,496	45,990	21,552	328,038
Increase (decrease) in net assets	(4,857)	16,654	30,152	41,949
Beginning net assets	43,334	21,556	1,432,662	1,497,552
Ending net assets	\$ 38,477	\$ 38,210	\$ 1,462,814	\$ 1,539,501

### Expense Category Definitions:

**Administrative support** - wages and benefits for VMC support staff.

**Archival services** - expenses related to maintaining VMC and congregational archives.

**Church planting and development** - VMC share of VMM USA Ministries Director position.

**Communication** - expenses related to VMC publications and communications.

**Facility costs** - rent.

**Leadership development** - wages, benefits, and related costs for conference minister.

**MCUSA-related expenses** - travel and related costs for MCUSA meetings and events.

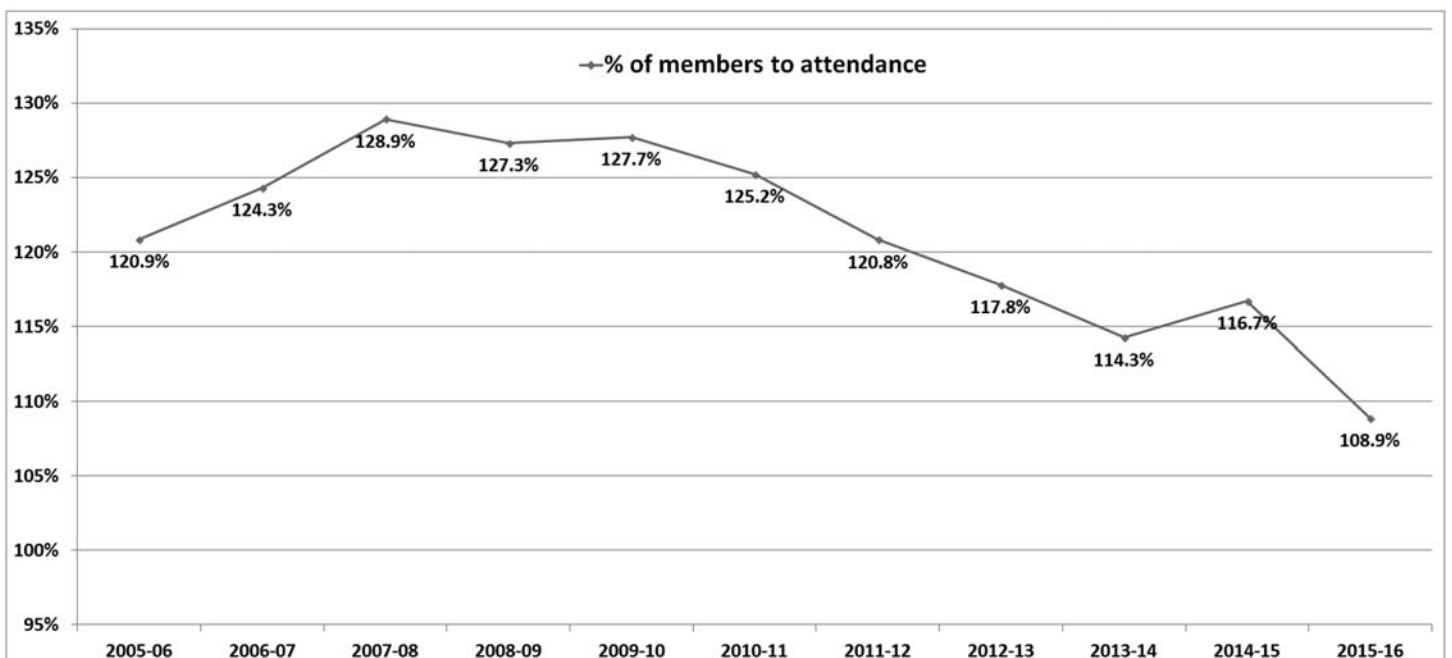
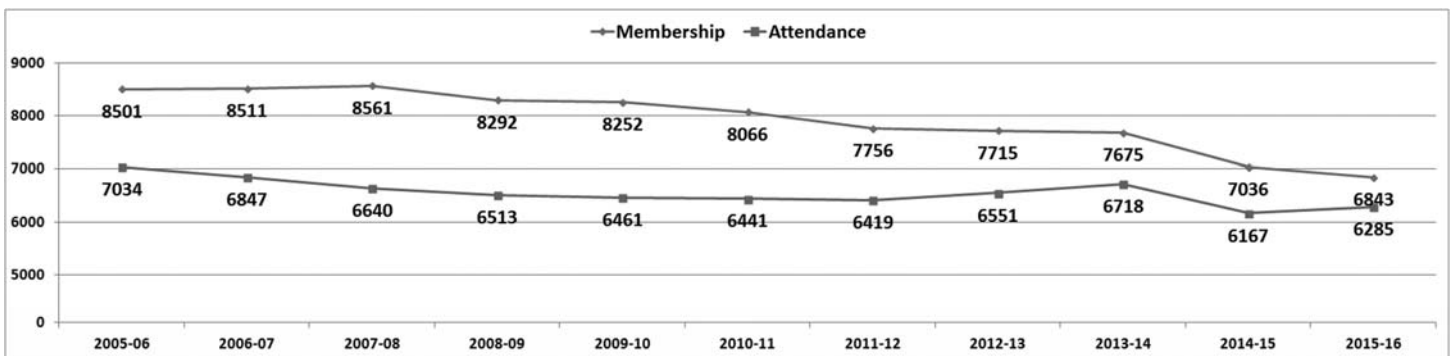
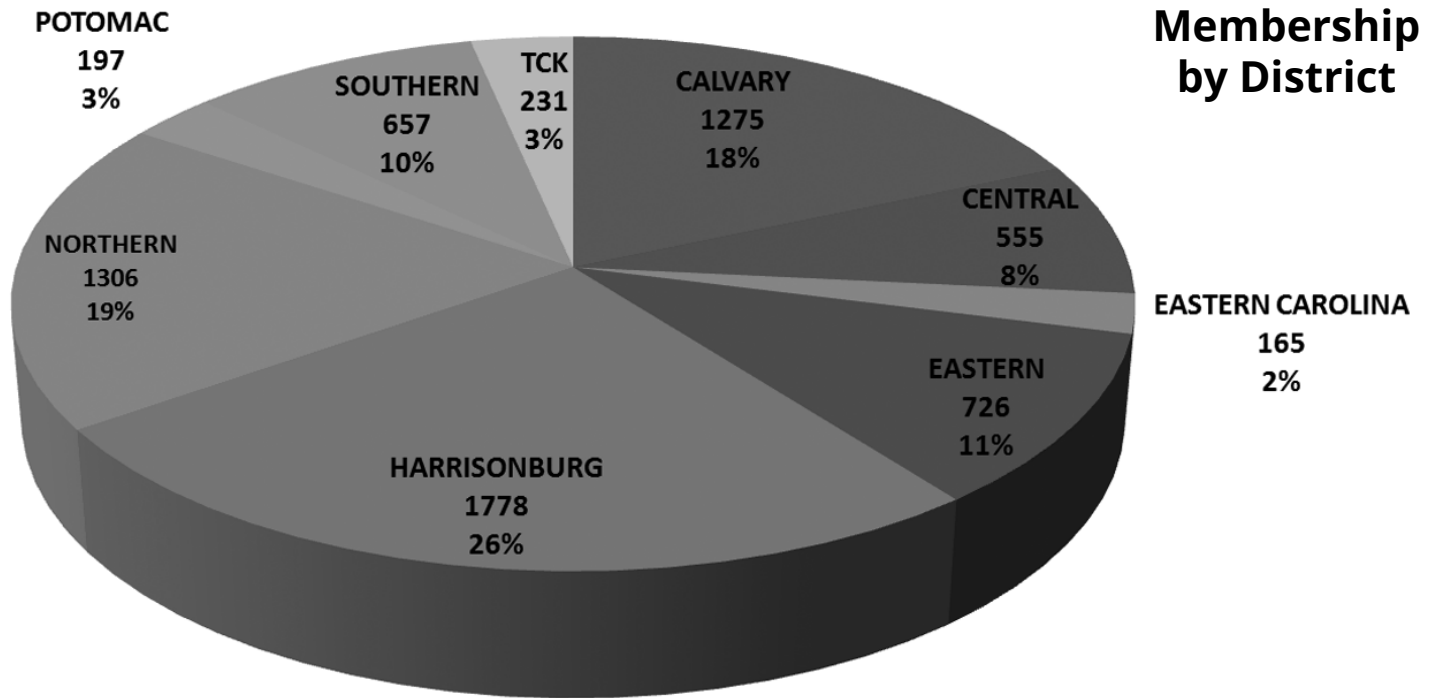
### Restricted Funds:

**Special Projects** - includes Conference Assembly, various retreats, and other projects as necessary to carry out the work of VMC.

**Endowments** - includes restricted funds for leadership development, retired church worker aid, congregational resource center, and MCUSA.

## Conference Membership Statistics

### Membership by District





601 Parkwood Drive  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802  
[virginiaconference.org](http://virginiaconference.org)