



## **Mennonite Mission Network appoints new executive director**

Mennonite Mission Network board of directors has appointed Michael J. Sherrill, PhD, as the organization's new executive director. Dr. Sherrill is an ordained educator, scholar, administrator, and leader with 25 years of global experience. Dr. Sherrill has been the director of Asia and Middle East for Mennonite Mission Network since 2017.

Dr. Sherrill will assume the executive director role upon the retirement of Stanley W. Green on July 31. Green has served as the agency's first leader since its formation in 2002.

"Mike Sherrill brings a 30-year professional and spiritual journey that prepares him for this role: His global experience, educational preparation, and leadership strengths position him well to lead Mennonite Mission Network into the future," said Lee Schmucker, search committee chair.

In his current role, Dr. Sherrill supervises and nurtures partnerships in 20 countries across Asia and the Middle East. He provides leadership for collaborative direction and strategies for ministries in the region, nurturing the activities of workers, and developing constituency and partner relations. Under his leadership, Mission Network has worked closely with international partners to establish a regional Anabaptist theological training center in southeast Asia, extend our collaborative work for conflict transformation training and education in northeast Asia, and to encourage the beginnings of a network of Anabaptist home fellowships in the Middle East.

Prior to this administrative position, Dr. Sherrill and his family lived in Japan for nearly 25 years. As a mission worker under Mennonite Mission Network, Dr. Sherrill served in Christian higher education as professor, campus pastor, and board member of two universities and a Christian NPO. As a founding trustee of the Asia Pacific Association of Methodist Educational Institutions, he worked intensively to foster a vital consortium of institutions across the

region. At the completion of his tenure in Japan, he was serving as department chair of Religious Affairs at Aoyama University, responsible for curriculum planning, campus ministry, faculty development, and institutional advancement.

“We believe Mike will continue creative and careful leadership for Mennonite Mission Network, and we look forward to what God will do in the years to come,” said Mission Network board Chair and search committee member Madeline Maldonado. “We anticipate a smooth, uninterrupted leadership transition with Mike’s long-term experience as a missionary and his recent administrative leadership position. We are grateful to Mike for listening to and answering God’s call to lead.”

“I am grateful for this opportunity to serve Mennonite Mission Network as we pursue God’s calling on our agency, said Dr. Sherrill. “I feel the same pull of the Holy Spirit that called me into overseas service nearly three decades ago.”

Dr. Sherrill acknowledged the current challenge of the global pandemic.

“At present, as we walk a pilgrimage of unprecedented challenge presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, we cling to a steadfast hope. God is working in our world and in our church,” he said. “With our dynamic team at Mission Network, I look forward to working with partners and workers, conferences and congregations, to equip and empower the church to engage their culture and world with the whole gospel.”

Dr. Sherrill graduated from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary with an MDiv in Theology. He also earned two advanced degrees from Fuller Theological Seminary: a ThM and PhD, both in Intercultural Studies. He wrote his master’s thesis on the history of the General Conference Mennonite Mission in Japan. His doctoral dissertation focused on investigating and describing the vitality of churches in Japan flourishing in the context of the decline of the wider church. Key findings included being a church that actively fosters community, gives hope to those suffering, boldly challenges injustice, and joyfully proclaims God’s redemptive love for humanity. Dr. Sherrill has published numerous articles on religion, culture and spirituality, including a chapter in the 2003 Brill printing of *Handbook of Oriental Studies*, and editing the 2016 publication of *Understanding Japaneseness*, a theological anthropology of Japanese religious sensibilities.

Dr. Sherrill and his wife, Teresa, Enrollment and Financial Aid specialist and administrative assistant for !Explore at AMBS, are members of East Goshen (Indiana) Mennonite Church. They have three children, Isaiah (22); Jeremiah (21), currently attending Goshen College; and Sophia (17), enrolled for fall term at Eastern Mennonite University, in Harrisonburg, Virginia. His

ordination took place in 2000 held by the Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference.

Dr. Sherrill's appointment was approved by the Mennonite Mission Network board of directors as well as the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board. Mennonite Mission Network is the mission agency of Mennonite Church USA.

The search process was led by a committee appointed by the Mission Network board when Green announced his intent to retire. Serving on the committee were:

- Lee Schmucker, previous board member and chair of Mission Network board.
- Madeline Maldonado, current board chair of Mission Network board.
- Andrew Bodden, current vice-chair of Mission Network board.
- Steven Breidigan, Mission Network board member.
- Cindy Cumberbatch, Mission Network board member.
- Linda Dibble, Mennonite Church USA Executive Board representative.
- Glen Guyton, Mennonite Church USA executive director (ex-officio).

For more information contact Danielle Klotz, Marketing & Communication director at [DanielleK@MennoniteMission.Net](mailto:DanielleK@MennoniteMission.Net) or Toll-free: 1-866-866-2872

***Mennonite Mission Network exists to lead, mobilize and equip the church to participate in holistic witness to Jesus Christ in the world. Mission Network envisions every congregation and all parts of the church being fully engaged in mission – across the street, all through the marketplaces, and around the world.***