



# Reports & Statistics Book 2019-2020

**LIVING  
AS THOSE  
MADE**

*Alive*

**IN CHRIST**



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## Mission

*Virginia Mennonite Conference equips pastors, lay leaders, and congregants for worship and service, and to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to neighbors near and far.*

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### Conference Staff

Clyde G. Kratz, *Executive Conference Minister*  
Jon Trotter, *Communications Manager*

## Vision

*God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.*

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*\* Not a Conference Endorsed Ministry but placed with other educational institutions.*

#### 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

## Assembly Schedule: Saturday, July 18

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### 8:30 First Session

- Prelude music – 8:20 a.m.
- Worship
- Ron Byler presentation
- Missional Story
- Strategic Planning Task Force—David Brubaker
- Missional Story
- Gifts Committee Report
- Worship

*Break at 10:00 with access to Zoom Rooms for informal fellowship.*

### 10:30 Second Session

- Worship
- Ron Byler presentation
- Missional Story
- VMissions Report
- Missional Story
- Race Relationships within Virginia Mennonite Conference—Alicia Manning
- Faith and Life Commission Report  
—Joe Longacher
- Commissioning
- Worship

12:00 End of virtual Assembly and opportunity for informal fellowship via Zoom.

## Message: Ron Byler, Mennonite Central Committee Executive Director

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### Message: “Living as Those Made Alive in Christ”

J. Ron Byler is the Executive Director for the Mennonite Central Committee US (MCC US). MCC US is a church-based relief and development agency working in approximately 55 countries worldwide assisting in areas of disaster relief, sustainable community development and justice and peacebuilding.

Additionally, Ron serves as a board member for InterAction, a national association of 200 relief and development NGOs, and as a board member for Ten Thousand Villages, a global maker to market movement of fair trade products. He is author of two *Thinking out loud* books about his travels, “Pursuing peace in a perplexing world” and “Brief meanderings from around the world.”

## Ministers Being Commissioned (Credentials completed between June 1, 2019 and May 31, 2020.)

### Credential Status Change

Name	Congregation/Organization	District/Cluster	Title/Role
Alfonso Alverado	Monte Moriah	Harrisonburg	Lead Pastor
Spencer Bradford	Durham Congregations In Action		Executive Director
Andrew Fairfield	Christiansburg Mennonite Fellowship	Central	Pastor
David Gingerich	Grace Mennonite Fellowship	Northern	Associate Pastor
Beth Good	Eastern Mennonite University	Leadership/Admin.	Director
Clair Good	Waynesboro Mennonite Church	Southern	Lead Pastor
Pearl Hartman	Big Spring Mennonite Church	Northern	Lead Pastor
Anna Janzen	Huntington Mennonite Church	Eastern	Associate Pastor
Mark Kimmert	3:16 Christian Community Church	TCK	Pastor
Mike Metzler	Mosaic of Grace	Harrisonburg	Pastor
John Myer	Interim Assignment		
Kinley Simmers	Trinity United Church of Christ		Pastor
John Stoltzfus	Ridgeway Mennonite Church	Harrisonburg	Co-Interim Pastor
Robert Wenger		Central	District Minister
Ken Wettig	Early Church	Harrisonburg	Co-Pastor
Don Yoder	Ridgeway Mennonite Church	Harrisonburg	Co-Interim Pastor

## VM Missions Workers Being Commissioned

Name	Assignment	Program
Victoria Barnes	EMU Campus Ministry, Harrisonburg	tranSend (US)
Tala Bautista	Community Ministry—Charlottesville	tranSend (US)
Bryce Bouldin	JMU Campus Ministry, Harrisonburg	tranSend (US)
Elena Buckwalter de Satalaya	Children's, Youth, & Women's Ministry	tranSend (International)
Lydia Musselman	College Ministry, Harrisonburg	tranSend (US)
D.J. Mitchell	Healing and Addiction Ministry, Harrisonburg	tranSend (US)
Anna Renfro	Education Ministry, Germany	tranSend (International)
Kailey Ross	Community Ministry—Lynside	tranSend (US)
Hannah Schultz	Children's Music Ministry, Harrisonburg	tranSend (US)
Gabrielle Thorne	JMU Campus Ministry, Harrisonburg	tranSend (US)
Nik Tucker	EMU Campus Ministry, Harrisonburg	tranSend (US)
Steve and Laura Campbell	Church Leadership Development, Montenegro	transForm (International)
Shawn and Laura Green	Church Planting and Leadership Dev., Italy	transForm (International)
Michael and Ruth Hershey	Int'l Student & Prayer Ministry, Millersville, Pa.	transForm (US)
Dan and Mary Hess	Church Planting, Albania	transForm (International)
Steve and Bethany Horst	Church Leadership Development, Thailand	transForm (International)
Mike and Risha Metzler	Church Planting, Harrisonburg	transForm (US)
Mark and Sarah Schoenhals	Church Leadership Development, Thailand	transForm (International)
Dini and Klementina Shahini	Education Ministry & Team Leadership, Albania	transForm (International)
David and Rebekka Stutzman	Church Planting, Germany	transForm (International)
Rafael and Solange Tartari	Church Leadership Development, Albania	transForm (International)
John David Thacker	Church Planting, Charleston, W.Va.	transForm (US)



## The New Normal



Elroy Miller

The business term *the new normal* has surfaced again during the COVID-19 pandemic. Political leaders, the news media and even church leaders have been using this term with regularity. In general, it implies that something which was previously abnormal has become commonplace. Perhaps this what the Apostle Paul had in mind when he wrote the words in Romans 12:3, “...*be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*”

This is not just a one time event, but something that needs to happen over and over. Also, most people of faith in Jesus appreciate just how purposeful one has to be to keep resisting and saying no to the propensities of our dark sides whatever they may be: fears, change, differences, prejudices, power, pride, greed, resentments, addictions, condemnation, lust, etc.

As most of us know, the dark side of our human nature seldom lets us alone for any length of time even when we experience transformation and renewal. It seems like there is always something for those with sufficient self awareness and courage need to confess to God, to say nothing about how difficult it is to confess our tendencies of heart, mind and body to those we love and care about.

Virginia Mennonite Conference (VMC) has embarked on the formation of a new five-year Strategic Plan. After Conference Council approves this draft document, it will be

distributed to the delegates and the congregations for further prayerful discernment and hopefully acceptance by the conference delegates. It will require willing hearts, purposeful individual and corporate effort, and Holy Spirit empowerment for VMC to live into the proposed new normal as communities of faith in Jesus Christ. Some may resist the implication that we must adapt to changing times. Yet, that is what the biblical narrative requires of us over and over, to embrace transformation and renewal, and “*To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God,*” Micah 6:9.

In summary, I have appreciated the opportunity that VMC delegates have given me to serve in the Moderator role for the past six years. It’s been challenging at times, and I have made mistakes, but I have also really enjoyed working with conference leadership, council and delegates in our efforts to be the church of Jesus Christ in our communities.

It’s exciting to see the formation of diverse congregations and to see those with a passion for the souls of our youth. It seems to me that our times require the formation of “new wine skins” from which eternal life can spring. May the Holy Spirit give us “*Wisdom that comes from heaven, ...that is peace loving, ... full of mercy and good fruit, ...and Peacemakers who sow in peace [to] raise a harvest of righteousness.*” James 3:17-18.

God bless each and every one of you as we live into the new normal.

Elroy Miller  
Moderator

## Made Alive in Christ



Clyde G. Kratz

**W**alking on a rural road around Broadway, Va., I have mused about the patterns of drivers as they encounter a person walking along the rural road. Some drivers direct their vehicle over the double yellow line in the center

of the road in order to insure my safety. Another set of drivers seek to adhere to their training not to cross the double yellow line in order to stay in their lane, but are willing to place me in danger. As the walker, I am the more vulnerable individual confronting a vehicle on the road, so my pattern is to step off the roadway regardless of the drivers' patterns of behaviors.

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced us to vulnerabilities, to our own and to other people's. We make choices about our safety and the safety of others. In March 2020, we had to make decisions based on safety. Meetinghouses closed. Committee meetings were postponed. We learned to engage in physical distancing as we struggled to comprehend the unknown impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. We were forced to rethink the habits and patterns of being an authentic community of faith. Our pastoral leaders adapted rapidly to creating meaningful worship online, provided opportunity for online leadership meetings, discovered ways to provide pastoral care, and clarified ways to receive charitable gifts from their constituency. These leadership adaptations were necessary for the wellbeing of the community of faith.

Our Conference Assembly theme this summer is "Made Alive In Christ," based on Colossians 3:12-17.

*<sup>12</sup> As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

This text addresses three areas of our life together as a regional community of faith. As members of Virginia Mennonite Conference, we are united by our common commitment to being dynamic followers of Jesus. In our own life, we acknowledge our experiences of transformative moments in our encounter with the risen Christ. Believing in the Gospel accounts and in the Epistles' interpretations of the life and purpose of Jesus, we have bound ourselves to be representatives of God in the world, exemplifying the way of Christ in all of our actions. We are committed to the importance of worship experiences that enrich the gathered community as we learn about discipleship, living in community, and the ministry of reconciliation.

Continued on next page

As an individual who grew up in a faith community and doesn't know a life separated from God's love, nor a life separated from a dynamic faith community experience, I continue marvel that I am made alive in Christ as I experience transformative moments that shatter the patterns of my formation. It is in the crisis moments of my life that I have discovered the safety of walking with Jesus, and a willingness to cross the double yellow lines of my faith training for the wellbeing of others and the community of faith. I make those adaptations knowing that I am loved by God and that I share in the promise that nothing can separate me from the love of God.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a crisis of community. We have been forced out of the safety and comfort of our meetinghouses, which have been a spiritual refugee for many people. Our patterns of healthy interaction with people that we trust and we greeted with warmth, has been taken away from us. In so doing, we needed to discover ways to have healthy interactions and caring encounters in different ways. We have adapted well, based on our need. We have also discovered, during this pandemic time, a new awakening to the realities of racism in our society as a result of the death of George Floyd. We are being confronted with the way that our society has harmed, and continues to harm, persons of color in a disproportionate way. This public reckoning of the treatment of Black and other persons of color also impacts our regional faith community.

As members of Virginia Mennonite Conference become more in tune with how our leaders, ministries, and relationships have been informed by a racist culture that has impacted our life and practices, we will need to respond. As followers of Jesus, we will want to take seriously the

instruction by the writer of Colossians in verse 12, to "clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience..." It may be our human pattern to become defensive, diminishing the impact of our attitudes and behaviors, and even justify the actions of the past, which now are seen in a very different light. But when we model the instructions from Colossians 3:12, our experience will lead to the transformative moments with Christ in order to see what we have not seen before, and to reexamine our past in order to forge a different future.

Finally, our life in Christ is not lived in isolation. We live in a broken world which includes our regional faith communities and our local assembly of believers. Our transformation moments where we see Christ in a new way is not just for our individual benefit, but shall be an experience that empowers—through the leading of God's Spirit—to new ways of being and acting in the world. Our message and ministries become reshaped by the encounter with the living God who continues to call us to salvation—even though we were saved and baptized with the full benefits of being saved—for we are continually being saved for the purposes of God's kingdom, whereby all people will know the living God.

In this time of cultural crisis that includes a pandemic, economic impacts, and anti-racism awakening, let us cross the lines of our patterns in life to ensure the safety of those who are most vulnerable: in our local assemblies, our regional faith community, and our society. As followers of Jesus led by God's Spirit, we are agents of reconciliation, in order that God's creation can be restored to God's purposes and God's vision for future generations.

Clyde G. Kratz  
*Executive Conference Minister*



# District and Commission Reports



## Central District

Worshipping God, cultivating discipleship among believers, and reaching out to those who do not know Christ remains our calling amid normal times and COVID-19. Though we have not walked this trail before, our ancestors have done so by clinging to Christ and his Word. We know that God is merciful and just and will not allow struggles beyond what we can bear (1 Cor. 10:13), so we strive to find Christ in others and the situations we face.

Central District is comprised of six congregations, four that are located in rural settings, one that is near Harrisonburg, and one in Christiansburg. While each finds itself in a unique setting, each one understands they are called to Christ's service. We rest in the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Beldor congregation reached its community through worship, Bible studies, and bluegrass gospel music concerts. In-person gatherings were suspended March 15 – May 31 amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Pastoral visitation and outreach continue using the telephone. Worship and Bible study is aided with written study guides, mailed weekly, and Zoom worship "gatherings" continue. Indoor gathered worship restarted June 7 with facemasks and distancing.

Christiansburg congregation remained active in missional work by supporting a preschool program, a county food assistance program, and working with their youth. Since the Covid-19 outbreak, they have provided prerecorded sermons online, followed by Zoom fellowship and prayer. It has facilitated reaching alumni who reach them by internet. They have not set a date for restarting in-person gatherings.

Gospel Hill continues to reach out into their community through family connections and compassionate ministry in the community as they have opportunity through life's traumas. Throughout the Covid-19 experience they reached out to their congregants and beyond by means of FaceBook-Live, which they are continuing after returning to in-person meetings. They began in-person meetings on May 24, either inside the building or outside, depending on the weather.

Mt. Clinton congregation worked within its community by conducting Kid's Club outreach (with Weavers), tending prison ministry, prayer outreach, and discipling. Their Wednesday night fellowship continued into March. They currently reach out for worship using Zoom and have not set a date for restarting in-person gatherings.

Weavers' ministry included Kids Club outreach, creating missional interest in youth, continuing to help with the "Backpack Food Program," and hosting its living nativity weekend in December. Since Covid-19, they reach out for worship and fellowship using FaceBook-Live, and use Zoom for committee meetings. They have not set a date for restarting in-person worship.

Zion Hill ended in-person meetings after March 8. Ministry continued through email devotionals each Wednesday, Sunday and daily through the Easter week. In-person services were started again on May 31, choosing to meet outdoors in the church's pavilion. The pastorate of Pastor Lowell Haarer ended August 31, 2019 upon his retirement. The congregation called Robert Wenger, who was installed on November 3, 2019, to serve as its pastor.

Robert G. Wenger and James Åkerson  
*District Ministers*

### Congregations:

*District Ministers: James Akerson  
and Robert G. Wenger  
Chair: Dale Hartzler  
Vice-chair: Phil Kanagy  
Treasurer: Clayton Shenk  
Secretary: Janie Heatwole*

#### Beldor Mennonite Church

Elkton VA (18) [21]  
\*James Akerson  
Emily Akerson

#### Christiansburg Mennonite Fellowship

Christiansburg VA (41) [50]~  
\*Andrew R.W.B. Fairfield  
Conrad Heatwole

#### Gospel Hill Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg VA (42) [65]~  
\*Daniel Horning  
Gwen Horning

#### Mt. Clinton Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg VA (110) [68]  
\*Jim Hershberger  
Les Horning

#### Weavers Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg VA (175) [117]  
\*Regina Brubaker  
\*Phil Kanagy  
Dennis Kuhns  
Edith Shenk Kuhns

#### Zion Hill Mennonite Church

Singers Glen VA (54) [43]~  
\*Robert Wenger  
Lois Wenger

\* Voting credentialed leader  
~Did not report

## Calvary District

No report provided.

### Congregations:

*Bishop: Leslie Francisco III*

*Vice Chair: Lesley Francisco McClendon*

*Treasurer: Nicole Francisco Bailey*

*Secretary: vacant*

#### C3 Hampton (Calvary Community)

Hampton, VA (800) [350]~

\*Leslie Francisco III

\*Caleb McClendon

\*Lesley Francisco McClendon

\*Nan Williams

Chris Cox

Alicia Manning

Shawn Manning

#### Fellowship of Christ

Rocky Mount, NC (50) [28]~

Katrina Lenard (interim)

### Other Outreach Ministries

**C3 South Africa** [200]~

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

\*Flinn Ranchod

**C3 Atlanta** (church plant) [50]~

Atlanta, GA

\*Natalie Francisco

Nicholas Jefferson

\* Voting credentialed leader ~Did not report

## Eastern District

This has been an extraordinary year. Eastern District churches are embracing the challenges brought on by the COVID crisis in a variety of ways. Responses have been tailored by the leaders in each of our seven congregations.

Though we all stopped in person services mid-March we are restarting at various times. Some began in person worship in May while others are waiting. Many tools are being used to stay connected in the new reality of keeping our distance... all the way from livestreaming services on Facebook to relying on our tried and true US mail. I applaud the creativity that I have seen as leaders have come up with new ways of being the church together. Some of these new ways will outlive this COVID outbreak, I'm sure.

We have been jolted awake, and I believe we are hearing God anew. We are aware afresh that the Church is not a building. The center of gravity of ministry has shifted towards our homes. We have been invited to consider questions such as: What is not working? What is missing? What is needed? This time of discernment and evaluation is a good thing as we allow God's pruning work to make us more fruitful. We are working together in new ways across church, denominational and

community lines. As leaders, we are meeting more often and can now collaborate more closely. Even as I battle a new level of weariness I am hopeful for I can see that God is at work among us.

In the past year there have been transitions. At Williamsburg Mennonite, I moved from full-time pastor to 70% in July to accommodate the new district minister role. Dianna Schiedel concluded her associate pastor role at Huntington Mennonite in August and Anna Janzen has begun as associate pastor as of November. Powhatan Mennonite is currently looking for pastoral leadership. At the beginning of this calendar year, Bill Eberly and family moved to Michigan to serve at Pigeon River Mennonite Church as associate pastor of youth and family ministries. Finally, Warwick River Christian School, in Newport News, has made the decision to close at the completion of the 2019-2020 school year. The Warwick River Christian Learning Center, the associated childcare ministry, will continue.

David Lehman  
District Minister

### Congregations:

*District Minister: David Lehman*

*District Minister of Williamsburg:*

*J. Harold Bergey*

*Chair: Ryan Ahlgrim*

*Vice-Chair:*

*Treasurer: Melanie Plato*

#### First Mennonite Church

Richmond, VA (82) [90]

\*Ryan Ahlgrim

John Bowman

#### Huntington Mennonite Church

Newport News, VA (110) [68]~

\*Howard Miller

\*Anna Janzen

Russell DeYoung

Betty Kurtz

#### Mt. Pleasant Mennonite Church

Chesapeake, VA (181) [87]

\*John "Johnnie G" Gnanamanickam

\*Nevin Mast

Debbie Bergey

Lynn Keffer

#### Powhatan Mennonite Church

Powhatan VA (64) [102]~

Andy Powell

#### Providence Mennonite Church

Newport News, VA (22) [14]

\*Carl Mericle

Evangeline Yoder

#### Warwick River Mennonite Church

Newport News, VA (150) [60]~

\*John Dey

Harold "Ted" Yoder

Sue "Snooky" Yoder

Lisa Ziegler

#### Williamsburg Mennonite Church

Williamsburg, VA (92) [60]

\*David J. Lehman

Heinz Plato

\* Voting credentialed leader ~Did not report

# Harrisonburg District

The two church plants in process are Garden City/Richmond in cooperation with Eastern District while under Eastside Church mentoring Tyler and Kendra Yoder. Mosaic of Grace has become a congregation in formation and is being led by Mike and Risha Metzler. Both church plants have the challenge of meeting virtually in their start up phases as communities.

Iglesia Discipular Anabaptista has changed its name to Esparanza de Vida and hired Pablo Hernandez in a half-time role as pastor.

Ridgeway Mennonite Church has called Chad Miller to be their next lead pastor. He and family will move from Calgary, Alberta in the late summer 2020. He has been an associate pastor there and in a church in Ohio over the past decades. He graduated from EMS around the year 2000. Don Yoder and John Stoltzfus are in roles as interim pastors at RMC.

Harrisonburg Mennonite Church has approved and begun a three year process to discern a potential transition in the lead pastor role from Craig Maven (as he moves toward retirement) and Jake Lee. This is a well-staged, three-step process with discernment at each step. The district minister will participate in this process.

Sabbaticals: Moriah Hurst (Park View) and Sherah-Leigh Gerber (Harrisonburg) have finished sabbaticals. Ken Wettig (Early Church) is beginning a sabbatical in June.

The district pastors who are able meet weekly by Zoom during this time of movement restrictions for mutual support and information sharing. The pastors' continue their third Thursday of the month longer meetings also via Zoom.

About six of the congregations in the district have building projects or facility rental changes in process that will be affected by the economic challenges and COVID restrictions.

COVID realities: Most of the churches in the district have gone to various online formats for Sunday worship. The churches are currently discerning how to gradually open up again. Churches in the district have responded to various charity needs in the community and some have made face masks. The district minister met weekly with district pastors by video and bi-weekly via Zoom with fellow district ministers to share and discern emerging ministry forms in this challenging time. Kids Club ministry has gone on line with Seth and Teresa Crissman developing videos for children to use and are finding new ways to connect.

Credentialing: Ken Wetting and Harrigan Bowmen are in process to be licensed for their roles at Early Church pastoral elders. Ordination transfer from Canada for Chad Miller is being processed.

Roy Hange  
District Minister

## Congregations:

*District Minister: Roy D. Hange*  
*Pastoral Consultant: Lonnie Yoder*  
*Co-chairs: Greta Bucher and*  
*Matt Schwartz*  
*Treasurer: Matthew Zimmerman*  
*Secretary: vacant*  
*Mission Advisory Commission rep:*  
*Theresa Peachey Crissman*

### Charlottesville Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (48) [45]  
\*Maren Tyedmers Hange  
\*Roy D. Hange  
Tim Nissley

### Early Church

Harrisonburg, VA (35) [75]  
\*Ken Wettig

### Eastside Church

Harrisonburg, VA (106) [160]~  
\*Peter Eberly  
\*Matthew Schwartz

### Family of Hope

Harrisonburg, VA (12) [11]  
\*Harvey Yoder

### Harrisonburg Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (564) [370]~  
\*Sherah-Leigh Gerber  
\*Jacob "Jake" Lee  
\*Craig Maven  
Pearl Lantz  
Steve Pardini  
Ron Pierantoni  
Jan Showalter

### Iglesia Discipular Anabaptista (IDA)

Harrisonburg, VA (0) [18]~  
Mario Hernandez  
Mark Miller

### Immanuel Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (45) [75]  
\*Matthew Bucher  
Greta Bucher

### Manantial de Vida

Harrisonburg, VA (80) [160]~  
\*Carlos Malvaez  
\*Wendy Malvaez

### Mt. Vernon Mennonite Church

Grottoes, VA (68) [57]~  
\*Gregory "Greg" Stenson

### Park View Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (369) [206]  
\*Moriah Hurst  
\*Philip L. Kniss  
\*Paula H. Stoltzfus  
Trisha Blosser  
Joe Lapp  
Joe Longacher  
Lloyd Mast

### Ridgeway Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (110) [103]

### The Table

Harrisonburg, VA (0) [14]~  
Alicia Horst, contact person

\* Voting credentialed leader  
~Did not report

# Northern District

Northern District is alive and well as we adapt to new ways to worship God, follow Jesus and love our neighbors near and far. District faith communities encompass the cities of Stephens City and Harrisonburg, as well as Northern Rockingham County, Shenandoah County, Page County in Virginia and Hardy County in West Virginia. District Ministers (FKA Overseers) also provide oversight support for 2 pastors credentialed by VMC and serving non-Mennonite congregations in Timberville, VA and Arkansas WV.

Relationships within the district are nurtured by quarterly delegate meetings and monthly pastor gatherings. We are grateful for the support and encouragement of the District executive committee: David King (Chair), Joan Kulp, (vice-chair), Dawn Monger (Secretary) and Darrell Wenger, (treasurer).

Monthly District Pastor Meetings are a special joy. These gatherings provide networking opportunities and spiritual nourishment through resourcing, discernment and prayer. Prior to Covid19, meetings focused on church membership, refugee camps in Greece, climate change and discipling persons unfamiliar with Anabaptist/Mennonite beliefs and practices. Northern District Pastors and delegates were part of the worship team for the winter delegate session at Waynesboro.

**Covid-19 responses**—On March 13, district pastors, after much discernment and prayer, issued a unified recommendation asking district churches to cancel services until further notice as a way of “flattening the curve.” There has been no

self-interest motivating the group, but a desire to discern together by sharing resources and guidelines from various places to suggest best practices for the well-being of everyone in the congregation. Pastors exercised servant leadership by providing creative online, drive-in, phone and mail worship experiences and resourcing during Lent, Passion week, Easter and beyond. Electronic communications supplement robust family and community networks of care that have sustained the life of the congregation during the crises. District pastors seek to be voices of compassion and understanding while acknowledging feelings of isolation, loneliness and fear connected with the pandemic. Some congregations have reported an increase in attendance since they switched to video conference worship and recorded or live streaming.

## Leadership Transitions

- Veronica Sanchez, Licensed Toward Ordination for ministry at Enciente Una Luz and Shalom Nuevo Comienzo (Southern District) on 09/07/2019.
- David Gingerich, Licensed Toward Ordination; installed as Associate Pastor at Grace Mennonite Fellowship on 10/13/2019.
- Sarah Piper- Ordained at Zion Mennonite on 10/27/2019
- Alfonso Alvarado Ayala, Licensed toward ordination at Iglesia Mennonita Monte Moriah on 02/23/20.

Aldine Musser and Michael Shenk III, *District Ministers*

## Congregations:

*District ministers: Aldine Musser  
and H. Michael Shenk III*

*Chair: David King*

*Vice-chair: Joan Kulp*

*Secretary: Dawn Monger*

*Treasurer: Darrell Wenger*

### Big Spring Mennonite Church

Luray, VA (32) [22]

\*Pearl Hartman

Kathy Yoder

### Crest Hill Community Church

Wardensville, WV (47) [30]~

\*Philip J. Yoder

### Crossroads Mennonite Church

Broadway, VA (27) [23]

Marian Buckwalter

\*James Musser

### CrossWay Mennonite Church

Harrisonburg, VA (0) [8]~

\*James Rhee

### the exchange

Winchester, VA (0) [30]

\*Chris Scott

Viqui Dill

### Grace Mennonite Fellowship

Lacey Spring, VA (250) [185]

\*Bradley Kolb

David Gingerich

Mike Oswald

Phyllis Martin

### Hebron Mennonite Church

Fulks Run, VA (66) [35]~

\*Mark Conley

### Iglesia Enciente una Luz

Harrisonburg, VA (0) [90]~

\*Armando Sanchez

\*Veronica Sanchez

José Louis Hernandez

### Lindale Mennonite Church

Linville, VA (297) [260]

\*Owen Burkholder (interim)

\*Deb Horst

Jim Engle

Peg Engle

Art McPhee

### Mathias Mennonite Church

Mathias, WV (24) [40]~

\*Dean E. Williams

### New Song Anabaptist Fellowship

Harrisonburg, VA (0) [20]

\*Basil Marin

Jerilyn Schrock

### Stephens City Mennonite Church

Stephens City, VA (20) [20]

\*Merle Christner

Linda Wenger

### Trissels Mennonite Church

Broadway, VA (107) [75]~

\*Harold N Miller

Dave Yutzy

Darrel Miller

### Valley View Mennonite Church

Criders, VA (53) [42]~

\*H. Michael Shenk III

Linford Gehman

### Zion Mennonite Church

Broadway, VA (147) [124]

\*Sarah Piper

\*Bonita Stutzman

\*Ervin Stutzman

Elwood Yoder

\* Voting credentialed leader

~ Did not report



## Potomac District

Potomac District pastors have gathered virtually twice during this time of Covid-19 Pandemic for fellowship, prayer, and resourcing on one occasion with Lonnie Yoder, EMS professor emeritus.

Daniel's Run Peace Church in Fairfax has completed a pastoral search process to replace retiring pastor Earl Zimmerman, who is finishing his almost 8 years of pastoring DRPC in July. The Congregation will hold a farewell celebration for Pastor Earl and wife Ruth on July 26. After a search committee led by congregational chair Glen Denlinger completed three interviews with potential pastoral candidates (two via Zoom), the congregation spent a Sunday morning in mid' May worshipping via Zoom with pastoral candidate Stephen "Tig" Intagliata, and enjoying a time of questions and sharing. By late May the congregation voted to issue a call to Tig to become the next pastor of Daniels Run Peace Church. During these months of physical distancing brought on by the Covid pandemic, DRPC has been worshipping via zoom, with worship leader, music leader and preacher present in the main physical sanctuary. In June, a few brave souls joined leaders in the sanctuary, but most continued to participate via Zoom.

"Like many churches, Washington Community Fellowship (WCF) quickly moved to online streaming of our

Sunday worship (something we had never done before). While we have missed seeing one other, there have been a few surprises. Participation and giving has been consistent. In fact, we have seen friends and family from abroad join our worship services and our discussion times. People are finding opportunities to connect over Zoom more frequently than in-person because they are generally available. Through these months, we have begun to realize that our "temporary" solution is not going to be so temporary. We continue to seek wisdom in how to continue in the mission of WCF as we prepare for the next stages of re-opening and transition." Rev. Andrew Cheung, Senior Pastor, WCF

Vietnamese Christian Fellowship, led by Pastor Peter Simon Nguyen, has continued to meet on Saturday evenings in the home of Pastor Nguyen throughout this pandemic period.

Iglesia del Evangelio Completo Alfa y Omega has continued to be led by long-time lead Pastor, Justiniano Cruz, who has served the congregation for over 35 years. The congregation has rented a basement space for worship and Sunday School from Living Faith Lutheran Church in Rockville, Maryland for over 7 years now, although during the pandemic shutdown small groups have been meeting in individual homes for fellowship and worship rather than in the church building. The congregation

has sought to bear one another's burdens as up to 40% of the members have been unemployed or underemployed during this Covid crisis.

Chaplains Eugene and Christina Kraybill's leadership of Sunday chapel services at Dulles Airport haven't stopped during the pandemic. They have reduced the amount of chairs in the chapel so that no more than ten persons can worship in one setting and can honor the physical distancing guideline. Highlight of their worship so far in 2020 has been hearing the gratefulness from the persons in attendance that "we are still meeting!" Chapel services attract a diverse group of believers from a variety of denominations: Episcopalian, Pentecostal, Catholic, non-denominational, Baptist, Mennonite, Seventh day Adventist. Christina opens with welcome and worship and Eugene shares the message and close.

DC City Church, new name for the congregation formerly known as Christian Conquest Word of God, is now led by Pastor Bruce Clark.

Fourth Street Fellowship, a church of the homeless and formerly homeless, led by Pastor Sangjin Choi, for nearly 20 years, continues to undergo transition as Pastor Choi has been spending the majority of his time in South Korea.

Luke Schrock-Hurst, *District Minister*

### Congregations:

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

#### Daniels Run Peace Church

Fairfax, VA (26) [30]~  
\*Earl Zimmerman  
Karen Zehr

#### DC City Church

Washington, DC (45) [66]~  
Bruce Clark

#### Iglesia del Evangelio Completo Alfa y Omega

Hyattsville, MD ~~  
\*Justiniano Cruz  
\*Jose' F. Borjas

#### Vietnamese Christian Fellowship

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

#### Washington Community Fellowship

Washington, DC (85) [98]  
\*Andrew Cheung  
Phyllis Miller

### Congregation in Formation

#### Fourth St. Community Fellowship ~~

Washington, D.C.  
\*Sang Jin Choi  
Ung Soo Kim

\* Voting credentialed leader  
~ Did not report



## Southern District

**F**or we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:15-16 (ESV)

By God's grace, the pastors, lay leaders and church members of Southern District having been rising to the challenges these last weeks and months to confront the circumstance brought on by COVID-19 pandemic. The district pastors have been meeting via zoom bi-weekly as a way of supporting each other and discerning together how to lead worship and provide pastoral care while respecting social distancing guidelines.

For some, the learning curve related to hosting online worship services was brand new and for others it was taking what was already in place to a new level. Celebrating rites of passage, like graduation and providing care during times of hospitalization and the death of loved ones has been among our many challenges. Pastoral care has meant driving to the homes of members and carrying

on conversations between one's car and the porch.

Some congregations hosted mid-week evening vesper services as a way of staying in touch. Others have set up zoom calls for small groups to share and connect with each other in between Sunday mornings.

Any interruption in our routine becomes a time to reevaluate how we function. This has been the case during this season as well. When situations force us to adapt, we begin to wonder about long held practices at a deeper level:

- what is working (what do we miss most),
- what isn't working (what no longer is serving us well), and
- what changes should be considered (what new ways of being church do we need to embrace)?

Time will tell what new practices form as a result of these experiences. At the very least, we will all come away a renewed appreciation for the privilege of gathering together for worship and fellowship.

Community engagement by our churches in Augusta County has continued with organizations such as: Waynesboro Area Refuge Ministry (WARM), The Staunton Rescue Mission, and LOVE, INC., to name a few.

Member churches of Southern District: Greenmonte Fellowship (Pastor, Seth Hankee), Lynside Mennonite (Pastor, Gordon Miller), Rehoboth Mennonite (Lay leader, Lewis Jordon, Sr), Signs of Life (Pastor, MaryBeth Heatwole Moore), Springdale Mennonite (Kevin Goertzen), Staunton Mennonite (Pastor, Kevin Gasser), and Waynesboro Mennonite (Pastors, Clair Good and Phil Lehman)

We are better being church together than what we could ever do and be on our own.

Beryl Jantzi,  
District Minister

### Congregations:

*District Minister: Beryl Jantzi*

*Chair: Phil Lehman*

*Assist. Chair: MaryBeth Heatwole Moore*

*Treasurer: Gerald Shenk*

*Secretary: vacant*

#### Greenmonte Fellowship Church

Stuarts Draft, VA (100) [150]~

\*Seth Hankee

Dave Brenneman

#### Lynside Mennonite Church

Lyndhurst, VA (58) [70]~

\*Gordon Miller

Susan Miller

#### Rehoboth Mennonite Church ~~

Schuyler, VA

Lewis & Terri Jordan

#### Signs of Life Fellowship

Staunton VA (Ø) [15]

\*MaryBeth Heatwole Moore

Thomas Knopp

#### Springdale Mennonite Church

Waynesboro VA (113) [77]

\*Kevin Goertzen

Steve Driver

Kristi Stoltzfus

#### Staunton Mennonite Church

Staunton, VA (38) [50]

\*Kevin Gasser

Garlan Yoder

#### Waynesboro Mennonite Church

Waynesboro, VA (89) [66]

\*Joe Arbaugh II

\*Clair Good

\*Phil Lehman

\* Voting credentialed leader

~ Did not report

~~ Has not reported for 2+ years

Ø Does not track membership

## TCK (Tennessee/Carolina/Kentucky) District

**T**CK district is made up of 10 churches and one congregation-in-formation. Our district ranges from Durham North Carolina to the Hill of West Liberty, Ky. We are one in the spirit of Christ but very different in many other ways. I praise God for the faithfulness of these congregations, who despite many of them currently being without pastors, are serving the body of Christ well and their communities.

For the last year, retired pastor Duane Beck has been mentoring and guiding Durham Mennonite Church. He has helped them to better understand themselves and their strengths. He established a prayer group to faithfully pray for the congregation and its future. The church has supported several community organizations by allowing the use of their building. They continue to look for a part-time pastor. In the present pandemic situation, they have been staying in touch with a Zoom service each Sunday and have made their building and property available for some temporary lodging for several individuals.

Greensboro Mennonite Fellowship-is finding ways to stay connected and directed by using the great gifts of the members of the congregation. They have asked former Winston Salem Pastor, Dave Kindy, to preach for them one Sunday a month and help shepherd them. They church has a great international feel with members from several different countries. During the pandemic they have stayed in touch by zoom and have continued to feel connected to each other.

A church in formation, Outlet 10.27 continues to meet in the home of Keith and Tami Nice. They enjoy good food together, Bible Study and swimming in the summer. This fellowship has built great bridges across nationalities and cultures. With the pandemic restrictions, their house church now connects with each other by phone or many of them work together so can stay in touch that way.

Mountain View Mennonite Church has been without a pastor since January, and have struggled through the pandemic. The church has stayed connected

through social media, emails and phone calls. The leadership team is working at forming new small groups that can meet and encourage each other. Several outdoor services have been planned, but are attended by smaller groups.

3:16 Christian Community Church-Mark Kimmet has moved into the sole pastor role and is doing a great job. Pastor Vernon Moyer retired his role as associate pastor. This winter they gathered the congregation and neighbors for a once a month fun night of bingo and snacks. They provide a Facebook live service during the pandemic and have enjoyed and good connection as well as providing an online service for many others

Asheville Mennonite Church- In August Pastor Sanford Yoder resigned and left the congregation. The leadership is looking for ways to keep the congregation attractive to new families. They have invited John Myer to provide part time interim leadership and preaching. They group has enjoyed good teaching and fellowship via Zoom during the pandemic.

The Mara Christian Church feels blessed with their own building. Pastor Cha Ki gets to the Charlotte Mara congregation 4-5 times a year and helps with communion, weddings and baptisms. During the pandemic Pastor Cha Ki has provided the online message for all four of the Mara churches in the United States. He is a licensed pastor from the Indianapolis congregation, and is the first ordained pastor among the four Mara Mennonite churches and ministers among the four churches as needs arise.

Their church membership hovers around 195 with an average attendance of about 150. They continue to function well with a leadership team and alternate preaching duties when no pastors are available.

Pat and Jan McFarin are good pastoral leaders of Knoxville Mennonite Church. The church has enjoyed great fellowship and teaching during the pandemic via Zoom with their congregation. Knoxville has an amazing group

of elders that do a great job throughout the week and the congregation is doing great under their love and care.

Concord Mennonite Church- They continue to gather together as a small ageing congregation. Several deaths have affected this group greatly in the last year. They are without a pastor, so three of the men take turns leading and preaching each Sunday. They continue to provide a fellowship meal for all who come. Pray for them as they seek to know God's will for them as they move forward. They have stayed in touch by phone with each other through out this pandemic period.

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. During the summer months they have a family movie night at the church and invite their neighbors and friends for a fun filled evening of good wholesome fellowship with food! They have provided a Facebook live service each Sunday during the Pandemic and have seen some new faces that have joined in.

Iglesia Christana Renuevo, Juan Jose and his wife CiCi are giving good leadership to this new emerging church planting work in Winston Salem, NC. Juan has been meeting with a number of individuals and families for discipleship is constantly reaching out to new people in their community. The pandemic has made his work more challenging but he and his wife continue to stay in touch with their congregation. They Zoom weekly for their service and have seen an increase in attendance with new people joining in to their online services.

Please continue to pray and support the work of the TCK district and the churches here.

Chuck Hostetter  
*District Minister*

## TCK (Tennessee/Carolina/Kentucky) District

### Congregations:

*District Minister: Chuck Hostetter, Jr.*  
*Assist. to District Minister: Daniel J. Yoder*  
*Chair: Vernon R. Moyer*  
*Vice-chair: Patrick McFarren*  
*Treasurer: David Hartzler*  
*Secretary: Roy Hunsberger*

**3:16 Christian Community Church**  
 Hickory, NC (28) [40]  
 \*Mark Kimmet  
 Vernon Moyer  
 Charpia Vang

**Asheville Mennonite Church**  
 Asheville, NC (23) [25]  
 Roy Hunsberger

**Concord Mennonite Church ~**  
 Knoxville, TN  
 Jerry Hartness

**Durham Mennonite Church**  
 Durham, NC (32) [22]~  
 Cheryl Van Horn

**Greensboro Mennonite Fellowship**  
 Greensboro, NC (21) [35]~  
 Contact: John Bender  
 Keith Nice

**Knoxville Mennonite Church**  
 Knoxville, TN (29) [35]~  
 \*Patrick McFarren  
 Katie Gencay

**Mara Christian Church of America**  
 Charlotte, NC (193) [150]~

Bei Lua

**Mountain View Mennonite Church**  
 Hickory, NC (117) [93]~  
 Cheri Hudson  
 Mark Hudson

**West Liberty Mennonite Church**  
 West Liberty, KY (12) [16]~  
 \*Joshua Fyffe  
 Steve Stoltzfus

Congregations in Formation  
**Outlet 10.27**  
 Graham, NC [15]~  
 Tami Nice

\* Voting credentialed leader  
 ~ Did not report

## Chaplains Cluster

Chaplains of Virginia Mennonite Conference offer spiritual nurture and support to those in exceptionally difficult times and places: in retirement communities, homes for the differently-abled, in prison, on hospice, those struggling with addictions.

The challenge of being present has been greatly magnified by the coming of COVID-19. Many of our chaplains could not be with the people they provide ministry for in a face-to-face setting. This cuts to the core of what it means to be present with those who are struggling and in need. The stamina and strength of the chaplains has been evident in how they adapted to be as near as they could to those longing for a word of comfort and encouragement. God has called them to a variety of people to minister to but they collaborate together on ideas for best practices for each place of ministry.

Please pray for the chaplains in these days of adaptation and grief; their parish is especially impacted by the health crisis of our time. As we develop new ways of remembering those we have lost, chaplains are on the forefront of creating meaningful services that provide comfort and safety. The chaplains who minister to those in isolation or in desperate circumstances are creating new ways of reaching out.

Chaplains are an extension of the life of Christ for those who need to see that Light in their unique place in the world.

Pearl Hartman  
*Oversight Leader*

**Oversight Leader**  
 Pearl Hartman

**Chaplains**  
 Penny Dreidger  
 Dave Gullman  
 Melvin Janzen  
 DJ Mitchell  
 Steve Landis  
 Ron Pierantoni  
 Carl Smeltzer  
 Steve Swartzendruber  
 Linda Wenger

## Leadership/Administration Cluster

Janet Blosser  
 J. Daryl Byler  
 Les Horning  
 Phil Helmuth  
 Ken Horst  
 Aaron Kauffman  
 Clyde Kratz

Marvin Lorenzana  
 Loren Swartzendruber  
 Skip Tobin  
 Angie Williams

## Teaching Cluster

Kevin Clark  
 Wendy Miller  
 Chris Riddle  
 Carmen Schrock-Hurst  
 Carl Stauffer  
 Linford Stutzman  
 Dorothy Jean Weaver

# Conference Council

## 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 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

## Composition

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

## Officers

### Role

### Term ends

Elroy Miller	Moderator	2020
Deb Horst	Assistant Moderator	2021
Scott Beachy	Treasurer	2020
Jim Hershberger	Secretary	2022

## 2020 Report

This past fiscal year (2019-2020), Conference Council engaged in the following activities and made the following decisions after careful discernment:

In the September 2019 meeting, in response to questions raised about the executive conference's minister's evaluation and job description, Council advised the Faith and Life Commission (FLC) to add a task to the conference minister's job description. "The Executive Conference Minister will facilitate misconduct processes in adherence with the Virginia Mennonite Conference Misconduct Policy." In the January 2020 meeting, Council also suggested that the FLC add "...to equip and provide pastoral care to oversight leaders..." as #5 to the conference minister's job description.

Secondly, Conference Council thoughtfully processed summer 2019 Conference Delegate feedback to the Restructure for Mission Committee's document *Recommendation for Overall Design for VMC*, Draft revised March 21, 2019. Delegate feedback reflected considerable frustration with the group discernment process, and had considerable misgivings about the proposed change in the role and function of Conference Council and the Faith and Life Commission. In general, the discernment process was perceived as promoting too much change too fast.

In response, a member of Council and the FLC were assigned to write a letter of explanation and apology to the delegates. The letter was written and approved by Council members and sent to the delegates in October 2019. In light

## District Representatives

Ryan Ahlgrim	Eastern
Greta Bucher	Harrisonburg (co-chair)
Sang Jin Choi	Potomac
Leslie W. Francisco III	Calvary
Dale Hartzler	Central
David King	Northern
Phil Lehman	Southern
Vernon R. Moyer	TCK
Matt Schwartz	Harrisonburg (co-chair)

## Commission Representatives

Michael Shenk	Faith & Life
Joe Longacher	Faith & Life
James Musser	Congregational Life
Edith Shenk Kuhns	Congregational Life
Johnnie Gnanamanickam	VMMissions
Lavonne Lehman	VMMissions

## Representatives to Constituency Leaders Council

Elroy Miller  
Clyde G. Kratz  
Marian Buckwalter

## Non-voting Members

Elwood Yoder, *Chair*, Historical Committee  
Clyde G. Kratz, *Executive Conference Minister*, VMC  
Aaron Kauffman, *President*, Virginia Mennonite Missions  
Paul Leaman, *Head of School*, Eastern Mennonite School  
Joe Longacher, *Chair*, Constitution & Bylaws Committee  
Steve Carpenter, *Chair*, Gifts Discernment Committee

of delegate feedback, Council decided to hold on further discernment of the Restructure for Mission document until the Strategic Planning Task Force has completed its work. After that, Council may decide to work on next steps for VMC restructuring efforts.

Thirdly, Council gave the Strategic Planning Task Force feedback on its initial draft proposal for engaging Virginia Mennonite Conference in the development of a strategic plan. Council is very supportive of the task force efforts to engage VMC in a three-step process of listening, analyzing and reporting. The members of the strategic planning task force members are: James Akerson, Deb Horst, Moriah Hurst, Clyde Kratz, Armando Sanchez, David

continued on next page



Brubaker (facilitator). Pearl Hartman and Aldine Musser participated in late winter and early spring after Deb Horst and Moriah Hurst went on sabbaticals.

Finally, Council approved an inter-agency agreement between VMC and Eastern Mennonite School stating that the school's records are to be kept in VMC's archives.

In the January 2020 meeting Council processed administrative and ministry issues. It approved Finance Committee's recommendation to hire a staff person from Beachy Arehart, Harrisonburg, VA to manage VMC's increasingly complex accounting and payroll systems. The intent is to have an external party bring consistency and independent accountability to VMC finances.

Given that discernment of VMC structure is on hold, Council encouraged the Congregational Life Commission (CLC) to reactivate and to continue providing oversight to the Youth Council, including to seek adult members to serve on CLC who are called to serve, able and skilled in supporting and encouraging Youth Ministry.

After carefully listening to Community Mennonite Church's rationale to withdraw its membership in VMC, Council approved Harrisonburg District's recommendation that the delegates in the winter Delegate Session 2020 approve the following action: *We the delegates of Virginia Mennonite Conference acknowledge with regret the withdrawal of Community Mennonite Church from formal membership in VMC. We are grateful for its ministry, and pray that God bless and guide the congregation in its new affiliation.*

Lastly, Council listened to a preliminary draft report from the Strategic Planning Task Force. The content reflected feedback to questions provided to focus groups from eight VMC districts and conference related groups. David Brubaker, facilitator, named five themes from the listening process: 1. focus outward, not inward; 2. support leadership, especially pastors; 3. prioritize relationships; 4. provide Spanish translation; and 5. improve VMC dialogue, discernment, and decision-making processes. Council affirmed the strategic planning process and requested that David Brubaker, facilitator, write a one-page summary report

for the Delegate session-winter 2020 and also post the six-page report on the VMC website.

The March 2020 Conference Council meeting was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Council met in May 2020 via Zoom. It worked reasonably well.

Council reviewed an executive conference minister's draft proposal to revise the VMC staffing profile in light of the VMC Administrative Services Manager's resignation in February. There was considerable support for potentially hiring a part-time associate conference minister. However, Council decided to hold off on hiring staff, other than a part-time office manager. It requested more study of costs, VMC bylaws accommodation, and the impact of COVID-19 on giving over the summer.

Council also reviewed and approved the following motions:

1. Approved a History Committee recommendation that Council accepts the ownership of VMC historical documents and covers the yearly cost of storing the documents at the EMU historical library. The details of the agreement are outlined in a Memo of Understanding between VMC and EMU.
2. Approved a request by Eastern Mennonite School to modify its bylaws. Henceforth, EMS will require 75% of its board members to have their membership in a VMC congregation, as opposed to 100%.
3. Approved a Gifts Committee recommendation that Richard Early be Council's candidate for Moderator of VMC for a three-year term beginning September 1, 2020. This recommendation needs VMC delegate approval.
4. Approved Harrisonburg District's recommendation that the Mosaic of Grace congregation be approved by VMC summer delegates as a congregation-information.
5. Approved TCK District's recommendation that the church

plant Iglesia Cristiana Renueva be approved by VMC summer delegates as a congregation-information.

6. Approved Northern District's recommendation that the emerging church Iglesia Monte de Moriah be approved into full membership by the VMC summer delegates.

Council is excited about the growth of these new identified congregations within their communities. May God bless them as they serve the church of Jesus Christ.

Council also reviewed and discussed the current draft report by the Strategic Planning Task Force. This report incorporated feedback from the winter delegates meeting in February 2020, and themes from the first draft. David Brubaker, facilitator of the task force, named five revised themes from the listening and analyzing process. They are to: 1. Renew relationships with God, each other and creation; 2. Engage in missional outreach; 3. Support leaders and embrace the span of ministry while adapting to new realities; 4. Hear the voices and welcome the leadership of people of color, the differently-abled, women and youth; and 5. Provide mutual aid to struggling congregations. Council gave the Strategic Planning Task Force considerable positive and poignant feedback and asked the task force to update the document to incorporate Council feedback before sending it back to Council in early June. Via Zoom Council will review the final draft, receive it, and hopefully be in a position to present it to delegates in the VMC summer delegate session. The intent is for the delegates to receive the final document only. Next steps will be discerned come later.

We thank all of you for your participation, discernment, feedback and prayers this past year and ask that you continue to do so this coming year as VMC finds its way to serve the church of Jesus Christ in our communities in a Covid-19 environment under the leadership of a newly appointed Moderator. May God bless all of you.

Elroy Miller  
Conference Moderator



# Faith & Life Commission

The Faith and Life Commission’s primary duties, as defined in the VMC Bylaws, are to “provide leadership for spiritual, doctrinal, and faith and life issues; exercise oversight for ministerial leadership credentials; and establish guidelines for ministerial categories, qualifications, and appointments.” The following activities are among those engaged in during the 12 months since our last report to the Assembly:

1. We met on 8/19/19, 10/25/19, 2/21/20, 4/17/20, and 7/13/20. The last two were virtual meetings via Zoom.
2. A highlight of all our meetings is the Oversight Leaders’ reports, as they share about life among the churches in their district, including worship, study, and outreach activities.
3. At each meeting the FLC is informed about, and provides counsel regarding many events, activities, and issues in the broader Conference through regular reports from Executive Conference Minister Clyde Kratz. Among them in the past year have been church planting, congregations in formation, churches leaving the conference, and Healthy Boundaries training for leaders. There have also been focused reports on ministerial misconduct policies and the Task Force on Reconciliation.
4. Specific issues have also been addressed:
  - a. A final report was received from the Biblical Theological Task Force on Same Gender Matters (George Brunk III, Peter Dula, Ted Grimsrud, Dorothy Jean Weaver). The FLC was discussing how to utilize the six page report within VMC when COVID-19 began, and plans to return to that discussion at a later date.
  - b. The 18-page report from the 24 member Study Group appointed by the MCUSA Executive Board to make recommendations on the denomination’s Membership Guidelines was reviewed in depth, and counsel provided to the VMC representatives to the Constituency Leaders Council where it was to be discussed on 3/25/20, but that meeting was cancelled due to the virus and has not been rescheduled.
5. At its February 21st meeting the FLC engaged in an in-depth study of its roles as spelled out in the Bylaws, as compared to the actual practice of the Commission and its oversight leaders, as revealed by a questionnaire completed by each individual member. The following conclusions were reached:
  - a. The Commission is carrying out its mandate very well, when the actual is compared with the expected.
  - b. The Oversight Leaders serving as District Ministers are not identical in hours worked or contacts made, but all of them are conscientiously filling their role and meeting needs in an exemplary manner. It was observed that these leaders serve a key communication role in the Conference, linking it together as they receive and send messages of all types, shared and integrated at regular FLC meetings,

Officers	Role
Joe Longacher	Interim Chair
Roy Hange	Vice-Chair
H. Michael Shenk III	Secretary
Staff	
Clyde G. Kratz	Executive Conference Minister
Members	District (Cluster)
James Akerson	Central
Leslie Francisco III	Calvary
Roy Hange	Harrisonburg
Pearl Hartman	Chaplains Cluster
Chuck Hostetter	TCK
Beryl Jantzi	Southern
Anna Janzen	Member at Large
David Lehman	Eastern
Craig Maven	Leadership/Administration Cluster
MaryBeth Heatwole Moore	Member at Large
H. Michael Shenk III	Northern
Luke Schrock-Hurst	Potomac
Robert Wenger	Central
Vacant	Teaching Cluster

thus serving as a kind of nervous system for the Conference (with both afferent and efferent limbs, in the words of the medically-oriented chair).

6. The Credentials Committee reports its actions at every meeting of the FLC. During the past 12 months a total of 97 actions were taken in regard to pastoral designations and appointments.
7. The coronavirus has had a significant impact on the Conference and the work of the FLC. After most VMC churches ceased in-person services beginning on 3/15/20, Clyde Kratz initiated a regular Zoom meeting for those FLC members who could attend, beginning on 3/25 and continuing weekly initially, then twice weekly, and now as needed. Those sessions have provided time for sharing about how various districts and churches have creatively responded to problems created by the virus.
8. There was a special Zoom meeting on 7/13/20 to review a set of actions taken by Conference Council on 7/6/20 designed to lead us as a conference in becoming anti-racist. Those actions were in response to a letter to the Council from Alicia Manning of C3 Hampton, on behalf of a group Clyde assembled on 6/19/20 to hear from six non-White leaders about their experiences of racism within the conference, which was also reviewed on 7/13. Following those reviews the Commission unanimously passed the following action, endorsing the actions of Conference Council and the letter accompanying them: “We affirm the need for this letter and the actions listed within it. We commit ourselves to prayerfully work to learn and participate in racial reconciliation.”

Joe Longacher  
*Interim Chair*

# 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.

The Congregational Life Commission serves as a liaison between two ministries that are represented on the commission, Mennonite Women of Virginia and VMC Youth Council. Additionally the commission plans resource events for lay leaders in congregations including resources for youth ministries.

## Mennonite Women of Virginia

The annual prayer breakfast was held in conjunction with the VMC summer assembly on Saturday, July 20. It was held at Eastern Mennonite School and attended by 110 women. Speakers were Hosanna Thomas, Bethany Horst, Melody Zimmerman and Jessamyn Bryant on the topic ‘Blessed to be a Blessing’.

During the summer assembly the MWV presented a quilt to the Walker family from West Virginia who were the recipients of the MDS house that VMC sponsored and built.

The annual retreat was held October 25-27, 2019 at the Richmond Marriot, Short Pump, Glen Allen, Va. It was attended by 104 women. Deb Horst was the speaker on the theme, “Rooted in Christ,” and Rachel Yoder was music leader.

The annual mission day, “Women encouraging Women in Diversity” “was hosted by Harrisonburg Mennonite Church and Iglesia Discipular Anabaptista and held at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church on February 20. It was attended by 101 women. The program featured stories by video from VMMIS- SIONS workers in Albania about the earthquake. An offering for the Albanian earthquake relief was received in the amount of \$3,360.68.

MWV is working at being more mindful and intentional about involving women from the Mennonite Hispanic church in VMC.

Member	Role	Term
James Musser	Chair	2019
Edith Shenk Kuhns	Secretary	2019
Clyde G. Kratz	Executive Conference Minister	
Marian Buckwalter	Mennonite Women of Virginia	
Skip Tobin	VMMissions USA Min. Director	
Vacant	Member at large	

## Virginia Mennonite Conference Youth Council

There are currently 11 youth from 10 churches on the council. All are from the Harrisonburg area. They are working at getting youth involved from churches outside the local area. Youth are being trained on how to develop and plan events. Opportunity is provided for the youth to give leadership at events. The council sees itself as a bridge between the congregation and the conference.

The annual Junior High Retreat was held at Highland Retreat on October 11-12, 2019. This one night event was attended by 112 youth.

The annual MYF winter retreat, planned for March 13-15 at Highland Retreat with 70 youth registered, needed to be cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. They are considering what retreats might look like over the next several years in response to the pandemic.

James Musser  
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
Elwood Yoder	Chair
Simone Horst	Archivist
James Rush	
Ken Seitz	

The Virginia Mennonite Conference Historical Committee worked this year to negotiate a new agreement between the Conference and Eastern Mennonite University for the storage and management of our Conference archives. It had been ten years since the Conference and EMU both examined the Memo of Understanding. The new Understanding took effect on July 1, 2020. The new Memo was presented to the Conference Council for review and acceptance on May 16, 2020. While Virginia Conference no longer has its own archivist, we rely on the excellent services of Simone Horst in the Menno Simons Historical Library to provide access to the Conference Archives as needed. The cost per year to store, manage, and provide access to the Archives annually is approximately \$7000.

## 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.

The Archives, housed in the basement floor of the EMU Library, help us tell our historical story, provide the information needed when a congregation wants its history written, and most basic, the Virginia Mennonite Conference has always cared deeply about its history. Steven Nolt is working on writing a new history book about the Virginia Mennonite Conference. Nolt held a meeting with the History Book Committee earlier in 2020. The EMU Library is closed to visitors in the summer of 2020, though the many boxes of the Trissels Mennonite Church collection are spread out on the main floor so that the writing of Trissels’ bicentennial book can move forward.

Elwood Yoder  
*Chair*



# Denominational Agency Reports



## 2020 Report to Virginia Mennonite Conference of Mennonite Church USA

*"Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!'" John 20:19b*  
Highlights from Mennonite Church USA during 2019-2020.



**MennoCon19** took place in Kansas City, Missouri, July 2-6, 2019. The lively youth-adult joint services and Bible study session for delegates were among new additions that received positive feedback. Over 2,800 people attended.

**#BringThePeace**, a call to action for individuals and congregations to extend peace in our communities, was introduced. #BringThePeace is also the church's prayer inviting God to bring the peace that expands our capacity for empathy, compassion and love that actively seeks to dismantle oppression and violence.



The 2019 Delegate Assembly voted to change the bylaws to add **youth, ages 16-21, as official delegates**. Congregations may now nominate one youth, and area conferences and racial/ethnic groups may each nominate two, as additional delegates.

The 2019 Delegate Assembly passed the "**Churchwide Statement on the Abuse of Child Migrants**," which condemns the abuse of migrant families and children at the border and calls for a change in policy and action by the United States government. In response, a group of the MC USA Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) visited Tucson, Arizona in Oct. 2019 to learn about **immigration initiatives and organizations**.



MC USA's Executive Board formed a **Membership Guidelines Advisory Group** to recommend a process for continuing the church's conversation on its Membership Guidelines. The 21-person group met for a one-time working session in Nov. 2019 and shared its recommendations with the board for further discernment.

**Peace Academic Center**, formerly Hopi Mission School, re-started classes for Kindergarten and pre-K students in Sept. 2019, Kykotsmovi, Arizona.

**MC USA Transformative Peacemaking** released several calls to action in 2019, urging prayer, conversation and individual and corporate action in response to the issues of gun violence, the death penalty and racism.



MC USA Archives launched an **oral history project** in July 2019 to collect interviews of young people ages of 24-40 within MC USA. Forty people participated in interviews recorded at MennoCon19.

MC USA held a "Learn, Pray, Join" initiative on **church planting**, together with Mennonite Mission Network, introducing the Sent Network process for equipping MC USA congregations and conferences for church planting.



MC USA relaunched **The Gathering Place**, a virtual space where Anabaptist faith formation leaders can gather, learn, share and grow. Webinars focused on baptism instruction, social media, and Anabaptism and American politics.

MC USA's Church Vitality office updated **Menndata** and the **Ministerial Leader Information (MLI)** process with user-friendly interfacing and better access for church leaders and potential pastors.

### Stay Connected



**Subscribe to PeaceMail**, MC USA's weekly digest that highlights news and blogs from across the Church at [mennoniteusa.org/peacemail](https://mennoniteusa.org/peacemail).



**Save the date** for MennoCon21, the MC USA convention, in Cincinnati, Ohio on July 6-10, 2021.

**Follow Jesus    Witness to God's peace    Experience Transformation**

[MennoniteUSA.org](https://MennoniteUSA.org)





*Commit your work to the  
Lord, and your plans will  
be established.*

– Proverbs 16:3 (NRSV)

# Invest in what lasts

## Everence 2020 report

Virginia Mennonite Conference  
Annual Assembly  
July 18, 2020

### Strong church partnerships a vital part of Everence mission

Everence® works closely with churches and their members, as we have since our organization started as Mennonite Mutual Aid in 1945.

We're celebrating our 75th anniversary in 2020 – three-quarters of a century of helping brothers and sisters in Christ “build up the common life” through decisions about their money and other resources.

We look forward to many more years of helping your church members create and implement plans tailored to their needs and their goals to share with others.

We value our connections and will continue to serve the faith community as partners in stewardship throughout 2020 and beyond.

### Pastoral Financial Wellness Program extends its reach



Everence expanded our Pastoral Financial Wellness Program in 2019 to credentialed and active

pastors from more than 30 affiliated Anabaptist and like-minded denominations and church networks.

A second \$1 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. – through its National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders – helped make widening the program possible.

“Hopefully, through our expanded program, we can help more pastors find a healthy financial balance so they can continue following their calling in the ministry,” said Beryl Jantzi, D.Min., Everence Stewardship Education Director.

The program includes direct financial assistance grants, financial education events and subsidies for financial planning. More details are available at [everence.com/pastoral-financial-wellness](https://everence.com/pastoral-financial-wellness).

### Is church management software right for you?

A new resource from Everence can help you decide whether your church needs church management software for organizing and automating certain tasks.

Hundreds of options are available to help churches with:

- Membership management.
- Contributions/donor management.

- Accounting.
- Event/facilities management.
- Communications and outreach.
- Volunteer management.

Everence doesn't endorse any specific software in our new guide, *Church information management systems*, but we do identify some of the possibilities. Consider it a starting point for exploring your options.

Visit [everence.com/resources/church-finance-manual](https://everence.com/resources/church-finance-manual) and look under “additional resources” to download your own copy.

### Take advantage of new webinars for churches



Everence is offering your church new educational webinars in 2020.

They are designed as an easy-to-share stewardship education resource for pastors and others in your church.

Talk to your Everence stewardship consultant to make sure you're on the mailing list for invitations to these webinars.



*Pon en manos del  
SEÑOR todas tus obras, y tus  
proyectos se cumplirán.*

—Proverbios 16.3 (NVI)

# Invierta en lo que perdura

## Informe del 2020 de Everence

Conferencia Menonita de Virginia

Asambela Anual

18 de julio de 2020

### Fuertes sociedades con iglesias son parte vital de la misión de Everence

Everence® trabaja estrechamente con las iglesias y sus miembros, tal como ha sucedido desde los inicios de nuestra organización bajo el nombre de Mennonite Mutual Aid (Apoyo Mutuo Menonita) en 1945.

En el 2020 estaremos celebrando nuestro 75° aniversario, tres cuartos de siglo ayudando a hermanos y hermanas en Cristo a “desarrollar la vida en común” mediante decisiones sobre su dinero y otros recursos.

Nuestro anhelo es ayudar durante muchos años más a los miembros de su iglesia a crear e implementar planes a la medida de sus necesidades y objetivos de compartir con otros.

Valoramos nuestras conexiones y seguiremos sirviendo a la comunidad de fe como socios en la mayordomía a lo largo del 2020 y más allá.



### El Programa para el bienestar financiero de pastores extiende su alcance

En el 2019, Everence expandió el Programa para el bienestar financiero de pastores a pastores acreditados y activos de más de 30 denominaciones y redes de iglesias anabautistas afiliadas y afines.

Una segunda subvención de \$1 millón de Lilly Endowment Inc., otorgada a través de su Iniciativa Nacional para Abordar los Desafíos Económicos que los Líderes Pastorales Enfrentan, permitió ampliar el programa.

“Al expandir nuestro programa, esperamos poder ayudar a más pastores a hallar un equilibrio financiero saludable, de modo que puedan seguir respondiendo a su llamado en el ministerio”, dijo Beryl Jantzi, doctor en ministerio y director de educación sobre mayordomía de Everence.

El programa incluye subvenciones directas de asistencia financiera, eventos de educación financiera y subsidios para la planificación financiera. Para más detalles, vea [everence.com/pastoral-financial-wellness](https://everence.com/pastoral-financial-wellness).

### ¿Es el software para la gestión de iglesias adecuado para usted?

Un nuevo recurso de Everence puede ayudarle a decidir si su iglesia necesita de un *software* para la gestión de iglesias que permite organizar y automatizar ciertas tareas.

Hay cientos de opciones disponibles para ayudar a las iglesias con las siguientes tareas:

- Gestión de la membresía.
- Gestión de aportes/donantes.
- Contabilidad.
- Gestión de eventos/instalaciones.
- Comunicaciones y actividades comunitarias de extensión.
- Gestión de voluntarios.

Everence no respalda ningún *software* en particular en nuestra nueva guía, *Church information management systems* (Sistemas de gestión de información para iglesias), pero sí mencionamos algunas posibilidades. Considérelas como un punto de partida para explorar sus opciones.

Visite [everence.com/resources/church-finance-manual](https://everence.com/resources/church-finance-manual) y diríjase a “Additional Resources” (Recursos adicionales) para descargarse una copia.



### Aproveche los nuevos seminarios web educativos para iglesias

En el 2020, Everence estará ofreciéndole nuevos seminarios web educativos a su iglesia.

Los mismos están diseñados como recursos de educación sobre mayordomía fáciles de compartir para pastores y otras personas de su iglesia.

Hable con su asesor de mayordomía de Everence para asegurarse de que está en la lista de envío para las invitaciones a estos seminarios web.



**The Corinthian Plan Report for  
2020 Virginia Conference Annual Meeting**



The Corinthian Plan is health coverage sponsored by Mennonite Church USA. The Corinthian Plan provides access to health coverage for pastors and staff of congregations and conference offices. The Corinthian Plan works because of participation by congregations of conferences such as Virginia Mennonite Conference. The Corinthian Plan is now in its' 11<sup>th</sup> year. Thank you!

Everyone has been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. It has changed the way we do family, business, church, everything, at least for now. So, it has been for The Corinthian Plan (TCP). We spent most of March, April and May keeping up with COVID-19 developments and adjusting Plan benefits to address congregational and conference needs.

For example, The Corinthian Plan has expanded our coverage for COVID-19 medical expenses. For specific information on COVID-19 benefits go to our [webpage](#) or call us. See names and contact information below.

In May 2020, The Corinthian Plan offered a Premium Holiday, a \$0 bill. We did this in recognition of the economic impact, both short-term and long-term, for congregations during the COVID-19 outbreak.

As a part of the Premium Holiday congregations/conferences were invited to contribute to a fund for ongoing premium assistance, as needed through the COVID-19 outbreak. At the time of this writing 64 congregations have contributed over \$84,000! As Director of TCP I am appreciative and moved by the generosity of this mutual aid. A crisis, as COVID-19, gives us opportunity to live out the ethics of being disciples of Christ. This is just one many.

There are 25 Virginia Conference congregations, (plus the conference office) that participate in the Corinthian Plan: 13 have the full coverage, 7 have partial coverage (wave the health portion due to their employees have health coverage through their spouse), and 4 participate, but currently have no eligible employees. In addition, two conference congregations receive a subsidy through the plan's 'Fair Balance Fund' .

The Corinthian Plan staff and Church Benefits Board continually seek to find ways to improve the Plan and serve you. Our goal continues to be to provide access to health coverage and other benefits for Mennonite Church USA congregations and conferences. Your feedback to us is welcome.

Go to our webpage: <http://mennoniteusa.org/what-we-do/the-corinthian-plan/> or contact.

- James Miller, [jmm\\_smc@yahoo.com](mailto:jmm_smc@yahoo.com), Virginia Conference Area Advocate
- Ingrid Friesen Moser, [Ingrid.wellness@gmail.com](mailto:Ingrid.wellness@gmail.com), Wellness Coordinator
- Duncan Smith, [duncans@mennoniteusa.org](mailto:duncans@mennoniteusa.org), Director
- Denise Henke, [denise.henke@everence.com](mailto:denise.henke@everence.com) (Third-Party Administrator)

## REPORT TO VIRGINIA MENNONITE CONFERENCE

Summer 2020

At MennoMedia we publish curricula and books that call readers to follow Jesus in word and deed. We publish resources about Christian discipleship, spirituality, reconciliation, justice, and theology from an Anabaptist perspective. Our curricula, periodicals, and hymnals reach a broad spectrum of evangelical, mainline, and Anabaptist readers and congregations, cultivating passion for faith formation and an active life of discipleship.

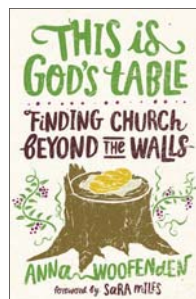
## NEW RESOURCES FOR THE ENTIRE CHURCH, FROM HERALD PRESS



### Speak Your Peace

What the Bible Says about Loving Our Enemies

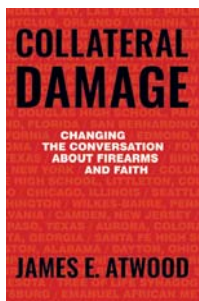
Author Ronald J. Sider plumbs Scripture to build a persuasive case that Jesus meant what he said when he commanded us to love our enemies. Sider takes on enduring questions about nonviolence, showing how the church has largely set aside Jesus' call to love our enemies and traded its birthright in Christ for nationalism and militarism. In *Speak Your Peace*, Sider reminds the church of its true vocation in a world of hatred and war.



### This Is God's Table

Finding Church Beyond the Walls

This is the story of what happens when people garden, worship, and eat together—and invite everyone to join them. Pastor Anna Woofenden describes how the wealthy and poor, the aged and young, the housed and unhoused become a community. Together they craft a place of authenticity where all are welcome. What would it take to carry the liturgy outside the gates? What if we discover that in feeding others, we are fed?



### Collateral Damage

Changing the Conversation about Firearms and Faith

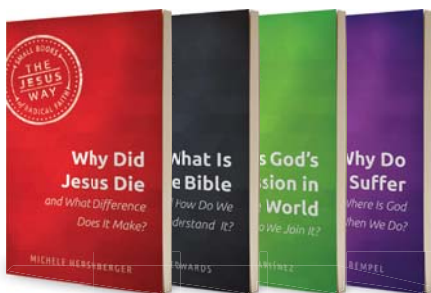
One hundred people die from gun violence every day in the United States. Yet many Christians say gun violence shouldn't be talked about in church. In *Collateral Damage*, pastor and activist James E. Atwood issues an urgent call to action to Christians to work together to stop gun violence. The church has a moral and spiritual obligation to side with life against death. Will we rise to the occasion?



### Signs of Life

Resurrecting Hope out of Ordinary Losses

Whether it's the demise of expectations, beliefs, a relationship, or our image of ourselves: we all experience losses. In *Signs of Life*, pastor Stephanie Lobdell leads readers into the grand story of God's saving action and resurrection power. Hope isn't cheap, and there's no sense in pretending everything is fine. Yet through it all, God breathes life into what seems beyond redemption.



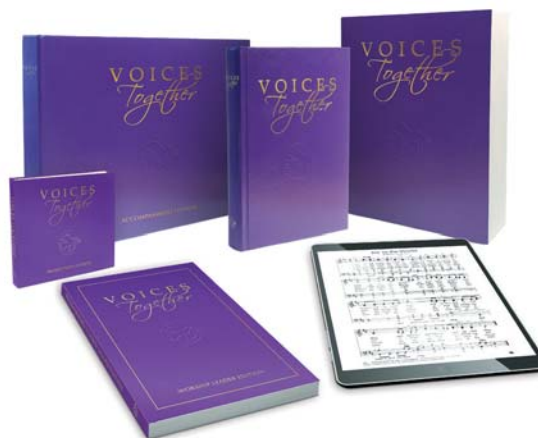
### The Jesus Way

Small Books of Radical Faith

The Jesus Way series delves into big questions about God's work in the world. These concise, practical books are deeply rooted in Anabaptist theology. Crafted by a diverse community of scholars, pastors, and practitioners, The Jesus Way series helps readers deepen their faith in Christ and enliven their witness.

## VOICES TOGETHER

*Voices Together* is a new worship and song collection for the Mennonite church to deepen our lives of faith. This robust collection will be available for congregations in Fall 2020.



### Voices Together will offer:

- Pew Edition
- Large-Print Edition
- Projection Edition
- App Edition, available through the Hymnals app
- Accompaniment Edition
- Worship Leader Edition
- Audio recordings featuring choirs from Mennonite colleges and universities

Visit [VoicesTogetherHymnal.org](https://VoicesTogetherHymnal.org) for more information.



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

Since 1920, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches, has shared 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 continues to envision 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 over the past 100 years!

#### MCC/Virginia Mennonite Conference connections

- MCC deeply appreciates supporters of the 53rd Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale, which took place on October 4-5, 2019 at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds (Harrisonburg, Va.) and raised a record of \$300,000 for MCC. The 2019 sale also included the SOS (Sharing Our Surplus) Campaign, which encourages donors to give cash donations toward refugee aid, resulting in over \$28,300 in generous gifts.
- MCC invites you and your congregations to celebrate with us through special centennial events surrounding the Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale on October 1-3, 2020. Visit [mcc.org/events](https://mcc.org/events) to receive updates and RSVP.
- Bike Shenandoah, a collaborative bike ride fundraising effort with MennoMedia and Virginia Mennonite Missions, raised about \$20,000 for MCC and other Mennonite service agencies. The event also raised funds for 85 MCC relief kits.
- Volunteers at the Hinton Mennonite Relief Center canned 40,000 lbs. of turkey meat in February 2020. Members of VMC congregations collaborate on this project with volunteers from many other Anabaptist conferences and denominations.
- MCC is thankful for the service of Virginia Mennonite Conference member Maren Hange, MCC East Coast executive committee board member and co-pastor of Charlottesville Mennonite Church.
- We are grateful for the service of the many Virginia Mennonite Conference members who contribute to MCC's work in the name of Christ by serving with MCC both here and overseas. We thank the many volunteers and supporters of Gift and Thrift, an MCC Thrift shop in Harrisonburg, Va.

#### 100 years of MCC at work here and around the world

**MCC meat canning:** The first portable meat cannery was built in Virginia at the request of the Mennonite church in 1945. Mennonites in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley began to transport canning equipment on a wagon between their local canning sites in the 1940's. It was supported by Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (now Virginia Mennonite Missions) and donated to MCC in 1952. MCC currently sends around 450,000 pounds of canned meat overseas each year and has canned and shipped 31.5 million pounds (over 18 million cans) of meat from the start of the mobile cannery in 1946 to 2019.

**Vietnam War:** MCC came to Vietnam in 1954 to support suffering Vietnamese people following the French Indochina War. MCC continues responding to human need in Vietnam by partnering with Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin (VAVA). They provide medical care, physical rehabilitation and livelihoods training for people affected by Agent Orange (AO), a highly toxic substance sprayed by the U.S. military over large portions of Vietnam during the Vietnam War. MCC and partners have petitioned the U.S. government to address ongoing health and environmental devastation created by AO.



*The first portable meat cannery, seen here in Virginia circa 1946. (Photo courtesy of Dean-Kaylor Studio)*





## 2020 Annual Report to Area Conferences

Mennonite Men is the men's organization of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada. Our mission: *Engaging men to grow, give and serve as followers of Jesus*. Our two programs, *JoinHands* and *JoinMen*, served this mission in several ways in the last year.

### JoinHands: Grants for New Churches

Thanks to generous contributions from individuals and congregations, Mennonite Men has granted over 2 million dollars through its JoinHands program to assist new congregations in acquiring their first church building.

In 2019 we extended grants to three Mennonite churches.

\$30,000 to Eden Life International Church in Kansas City, Missouri. This congregation in South Central Mennonite Conference serves four language communities: Amharic (Ethiopia), Anouk (Sudan, Ethiopia), English (second generation immigrants), and Swahili/French (Congo).



\$40,000 to Unity Church of God in Homestead, Florida (pictured to the left). This Haitian Mennonite congregation in Southeast

Conference is active serving their community.

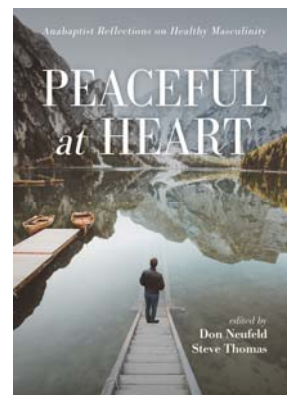
\$40,000 to Centro de Alabanza in Philadelphia, PA (below). This Mennonite congregation in Franconia Conference has a rich diversity of members from Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico, the United States and Venezuela. The church is active with Instituto Bíblico Anabautista (Anabaptist Biblical Institute) and engaged in several ministries in their neighborhood.



These racial-ethnic congregations represent a significant growth edge in our Mennonite church. We are grateful to share our resources with these churches and receive their witness of dynamic engagement in mission.

### JoinMen: Resources and Retreats for Men

What does Anabaptism have to teach us about healthy masculinity? Our new book, *Peaceful at Heart: Anabaptist Reflections on Healthy Masculinity*, seeks to answer this question. Working with the Institute of Mennonite Studies, this project of Mennonite Men is by and for men, promoting an Anabaptist Christian perspective on masculinity.



Mennonite Men had the opportunity to lead retreats with



men in Shirati, Tanzania (pictured to the left) and Cradock, South Africa (below).

These were rich interchanges, addressing traditional expressions of masculinity and their impacts and what it means to be men following Jesus and serving God's peace.



### Join Us: Individual and Congregational Support

Mennonite Men invites contributions to support our projects and grants for church buildings. Please consider how you and your congregations can partner with us.

To learn more, support our work, download resources, or schedule a retreat, visit [MennoniteMen.org](http://MennoniteMen.org).

Together in Christ,

Steve Thomas, U.S. Coordinator

# **2019 Mennonite Women USA Report**

Cyneatha Millsaps, MW USA Executive Director

December 2, 2019

OUR MISSION: Mennonite Women USA is a sisterhood of Anabaptist women following Jesus.

OUR VISION: Engaging the prophetic voices of all women as we honor our stories, share grace, practice justice and embrace healing.

## **Executive Summary**

Mennonite Women USA (MW USA) is amidst transformation. We are living into our new vision at a time in church history where the denomination is experiencing major changes. MW USA is prime to lead and empower women throughout the church to assist the broader church in carving a new path.

### **I. Cooperation with Churches and Agencies**

1. MW USA has visited 20 Mennonite churches as a guest and speaker.
2. MW USA met with female church leaders across the United States and internationally to discuss our work.
3. MW USA sponsored several gatherings encouraging women in the church to connect across traditional divides through our Choosing Sisterhood initiative. Women in Conversation has provided a platform for women to address issues facing our families and communities. These gatherings have been well attended.
4. MW USA has prioritized listening to young women in the church. We have visited three Mennonite Colleges with the sole purpose of listening to the needs of our younger sisters.
5. MW USA also met with international students at Hesston College, listening to the needs of women of color on campus. Together we brainstormed ways in which women throughout MW USA might be of service.
6. MW USA continues to provide over 20 scholarships annually to international students through our International Women's Fund. These scholarships assist women studying in the field of theology, Anabaptist and church history, ministry and pastoral care and counseling.
7. MW USA attended the Everence Development Conference obtaining useful material to support our work.
8. MW USA is currently working with Rhoda Blough, Everence stewardship consultant, to provide financial webinars for MW USA beginning January 2020.
9. MW USA attends the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) gathering where conference and constituency groups reported on their connection with MC USA.

### **II. Next Steps**

1. Website. Our primary means of communication with constituents is through our website. Watch for our new interactive website that allows engagement in a timely manner and will enliven our communication and connection with the broader church.
2. Social Media. The focus will be on two social media platforms: Facebook and Instagram.
3. Fundraisers. We are working on fundraisers for MW USA in 2020:
  - a. Annual Golf outing, September 2020
  - b. 5k and 10k walk/runs at one or more women's retreats, 2020

### **III. Conclusion**

I am encouraged by the many connections we are making with women and agencies within the Mennonite church. In addition to our faithful constituents, Mennonite Women USA is supported by pastors and leaders of the church. As we continue to live into our vision, these connections and others will become stronger. This is good for the church, but even more so for women and girls throughout the church.

# Be local. Be global. Be the Gospel.



Changes are the construction blocks of our lives. We exult when changes move in a positive direction of greater support and deepened

partnership. When changes are in a negative direction, we realize how much we appreciate the generosity of those whose support remains strong during the tough times. Mennonite Mission Network is

eager to strengthen our support of partners all around the world as they engage in advancing God's purposes for healing and hope. We cannot do this without you, so we're grateful for your sharing of prayers

and financial contributions that allow us to continue God's mission in the world. Thank you!

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

## Virginia Mennonite Conference + Mennonite Mission Network

### Worker support around the world



#### 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.

#### Worker support

**Mary Raber**—Teaches at theological schools in Ukraine. She also translates theological books and writes.

» Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship

#### Couple working in a sensitive

**Middle East location**—Train leaders and help with administration in a home for the elderly.

» Harrisonburg Mennonite Church

### Prayer partners



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

### Service participants



#### Service sites

##### SOOP sites

- » Highland Retreat
- » Unique World Gifts
- » Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center

#### SOOP

**Ben and Mary Jane Newcomer**,  
Aibonito, Puerto Rico

**Gloria and Jack Rutt**, Petiscodiac,  
New Brunswick

**James and Martha Snavelly**,  
Glendale, Arizona

### Congregational giving to Mission Network



During Mission Network's last fiscal year, Aug. 1, 2018, through July 31, 2019, 23 of 68 Virginia Mennonite Conference congregations gave **\$169,771. Thank you!**



*Celebrate with me God's faithfulness this past year!  
I pray that God will bless each congregation in your ministries and mission this next year.*

*Sandy Miller*

Sandy Miller  
Senior Executive for Resourcing and Mobilization

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

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

# Sé local. Sé global. Sé el evangelio.



Nos regocijamos cuando los cambios avanzan en dirección positiva de mayor apoyo

Los cambios son los ladrillos con los cuales se construye nuestra vida.

y coparticipación más profunda. Cuando los cambios ocurren en sentido negativo, nos damos cuenta de cuánto valoramos la generosidad de quienes mantienen su apoyo firme aún en tiempos difíciles. La Red Menonita de Misión

busca fortalecer el apoyo de los coparticipantes alrededor de todo el mundo al comprometerse con los propósitos de Dios de sanación y esperanza. No podemos hacer esto sin usted, y por ello le agradecemos sus oraciones y aportes financieros

que nos permiten continuar la misión de Dios alrededor del mundo. ¡Gracias!

*Stanley W. Green*

Stanley W. Green  
Director ejecutivo

## Conferencia Menonita Virginia + Red Menonita de Misión

### Apoyo a obreros alrededor del mundo



#### Virginia Mennonite Missions (Misiones Menonitas de Virginia)

Como agencia hermana, la Red Menonita de Misión coparticipa con las Misiones Menonitas de Virginia a fin de ampliar las oportunidades de ministerio y el apoyo a trabajadores internacionales mas allá de las congregaciones de la Conferencia Menonita de Virginia.

#### Apoyo a obreros

**Mary Raber**—Enseña en institutos teológicos en Ucrania; además, traduce libros teológicos y escribe.

» Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship

**Pareja que trabaja en un área sin revelar en Medio Oriente**—

Capacitan a líderes y ayudan con la administración de un hogar para ancianos.

» Harrisonburg Mennonite Church

### Oración



28 personas se han comprometido a orar diariamente por los ministerios de la Red Menonita.

### Participantes y lugares de servicio



#### Sitios de Servicio Cristiano

##### Sitios de SOOP

- » Highland Retreat
- » Unique World Gifts
- » Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center

#### SOOP (Oportunidades de Servicio con Nuestros Hermanos)

**Ben y Mary Jane Newcomer,**

Aibonito, Puerto Rico

**Gloria y Jack Rutt,** Petitscodiac, New Brunswick

**James y Martha Snavely,** Glendale, Arizona

### Aporte congregacional a la Red Menonita



Durante el último año fiscal de la Red de Misión, desde el 1 de agosto de 2018 hasta el 31 de julio de 2019, 23 de 68 congregaciones de la Conferencia Menonita de Virginia ofrendaron **\$169.771. ¡Gracias!**



*¡Celebren conmigo la fidelidad de Dios durante este último año! Ruego que Dios bendiga a cada congregación en sus ministerios y misión durante el próximo año.*

*Sandy Miller*

Sandy Miller  
Directora Ejecutiva de recursos y movilización.

**¡Gracias por su colaboración continua en la misión de Dios!**

www.MennoniteMission.net Línea Gratuita: 1-866-866-2872



# Conference Related Ministry Reports





## A #FlamesStrong Year

*The 2019-20 academic year brought unique opportunities for EMS to fulfill its vision to be a learning community... where each student “belongs, thrives, and lives God’s call.”*

### Racial Equity

Along with the conference, broader church and country, we have been awakened to systemic racial injustices in our country this spring which we have too long left unchallenged. EMS launched a **Racial Equity Working Group** in early June, to build on past work of a Diversity Committee, and our restorative justice initiatives. We commit to look at every aspect of our school from curriculum to admissions process through the lens of race. We also commit to hearing from students of color who may have experienced pain at EMS that was not processed adequately, or at all. We are sorry for that pain and want to learn how to do better. See [easternmennonite.org/racial-equity](http://easternmennonite.org/racial-equity)

### COVID-19

EMS was able to pivot quickly when COVID-19 caused us to close in-person learning mid March. Our teachers, principals, and counselors were in touch with every student and family throughout the spring to provide emotional and social support as learning continued. We celebrated 39 graduates in the auditorium parking lot on June 14, even as we began to plan the next academic year with pandemic-related restrictions. Directives from Governor Ralph Northam and the Centers for Disease Control permit us to develop plans to open in fall 2020 with physical distancing and improved online learning if that becomes necessary again. See more at [easternmennonite.org/today](http://easternmennonite.org/today), spring 2020 issue.

### Earlier in the year

- In October, our Board of Directors adopted our *Strategic Pathways to Guide EMS Toward 2022*. See [easternmennonite.org/strategic-plan](http://easternmennonite.org/strategic-plan)
- In early December we said goodbye to hosting K-5 in our upper building and all helped them move into the newly completed lower building. We celebrated and thanked donors, held a dedication, and offered tours. Students and teachers loved their space; they continued to use the library, dining hall and Commons in the upper building, which will be needed until the Gathering Space -- part two of the renovation -- is built.
- A covered bridge between our two buildings was completed in January with donated supplies and some labor, providing outdoor learning space and safe drop off and pick up site for elementary. Donors purchased engraved bricks for a pathway that were installed in late spring.
- In athletics, the girls varsity volleyball team had the first-ever undefeated season and won the Blue Ridge Conference title. The boys varsity basketball team captured the first VIC title since 1994 and went to the state final for the second year in a row. Spring athletics were cancelled.
- In the arts, we produced the musical *Little Women*, and hosted the London-based a capella group VOCES8, together with the Shenandoah Valley Children’s Choir, before two spring plays, numerous concerts, and the Touring Choir season were cancelled due to COVID-19.
- We continue our sustainability efforts by installing a solar array on top of the upper building this August. The 136 kW array will provide approximately 33% of our electricity. Live data will be available at [easternmennonite.org/solar](http://easternmennonite.org/solar)

**Thank you for ongoing prayers, advocacy, student referrals, and financial gifts as we join home and church in calling students to faith in Jesus Christ, academic excellence, personal integrity and compassionate service in the world.**

## Catching the Wind of the Spirit: VMMissions Celebrated 100 Years in 2019



Hundreds gathered to celebrate the centennial year of Virginia Mennonite Missions in Harrisonburg, Virginia, during the first weekend in November 2019.

Leaders from the Italian Mennonite Church, the Jamaica Mennonite Church, and the Mennonite Church of Trinidad and Tobago were in attendance, in recognition of the key role that VMMissions has played in their own histories.

They were featured guests at events that included a reunion brunch for present and former workers, staff, and board members, a banquet to honor financial and prayer partners, an evening worship service, and a Sunday afternoon *a cappella* concert.

President Aaron Kauffman framed the entire celebration with the image of a sailboat. “The church in mission is like a boat,” Kauffman explained, “built upon the good news of Jesus, powered by the wind of the Spirit, seeking the far horizon of God’s new creation.” Read more at [vmmissions.org/vmmissions-celebrates-100-years/](https://vmmissions.org/vmmissions-celebrates-100-years/)

## Albania Earthquake Relief Fund Goal Met

After Albania’s 6.4 magnitude earthquake struck on November 26, 2019, VMMissions workers and the local church coordinated with government officials to provide a temporary shelter in Lezhë for 15 Roma families who lost their homes. To support the expenses of the shelter and food, VMMissions launched the Albania Earthquake Relief Fund. All told, VMMissions received \$32,067 towards this effort. The 15 families were then resettled by the local government in early January. VMMissions has residual funds to meet the need for trauma counseling for persons affected by the earthquake and continuing aftershocks.

Read more at [vmmissions.org/albaniarelief/](https://vmmissions.org/albaniarelief/) and [vmmissions.org/30-seconds-that-threw-lezhe-into-chaos/](https://vmmissions.org/30-seconds-that-threw-lezhe-into-chaos/)

## Coronavirus Sparks Responses of Compassion and Creativity at VMMissions

The last three months of the coronavirus pandemic have introduced unimagined challenges and tragedy to the entire world community. At the same time, this adversity has unearthed deep wells of adaptability, creativity and compassion. This is certainly the story at VMMissions.

International workers and staff processed decisions of whether to stay or evacuate amidst the anxiety and chaos of cancelled flights and closing borders.

Of the workers in Albania, four of the five families, already having endured the trauma of a major earthquake just a few months prior, made the decision to leave Lezhë. Dini and Klementina Shahini made the difficult decision to stay. Klementina, who serves as executive director of Lezha Academic Center, oriented all of the teaching staff to online instruction. Through social media they also maintain daily connection with the Guri I Themelit church members. Remotely from his home country

of Brazil, pastor Rafael Tartari offers an online version of his preaching and teaching ministry to the congregation. Others have also continued their work from a distance.

Beyond this, mission workers Dan and Mary Hess are using their time in the US to help organize a two-month relief effort among their Roma neighbors in Lezhë and nearby Milet. VMMissions workers in Ecuador, Italy and Indonesia are involved in similar expressions of care for vulnerable members of their communities, demonstrating and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.

Regardless of location, VMMissions workers are noticing an important role they can play as followers of Christ, a role sometimes overlooked in busier times: simple presence. In Germany, Dave Stutzman has focused his efforts on meeting one-on-one online, doing discipleship, Bible study and coaching.

For Tyler and Kendra Yoder, serving in Richmond, Virginia, the pandemic is pro-

viding new and vital ways to serve. They have been able to help in the distribution of food to families who rely on school meals. Tyler has pitched in with others to “adopt” a recovery house in their neighborhood, providing cleaning supplies and food for them during the crisis. Tyler wants to emulate the example of Christians throughout history who have seen trials, both persecution and plague, as an invitation to join God’s mission, even to their own peril.

Responses of creativity and compassion are not limited to VMMissions mission workers. Office staff have also launched several new initiatives. Seeing a particular need within the constituency immigrant community, Lizzette Hernandez, Latino Ministries Coach, led the way in the establishment of the Coronavirus Immigrant Care Fund ([vmmissions.org/cicfund/](https://vmmissions.org/cicfund/)). Hernandez works with a team of Latino pastors to field requests from immigrant families in need. They also coordinate their efforts with New Bridges, an immigrant resource center in

## BOARD (2019-2020 term)

**Lavonne Lehman**, *Eastern, Chair (2020)*  
**Terry Witmer**, *Member at Large, Vice-Chair (2020)*  
**Reuben Horst**, *Member at Large, Secretary (2021)*  
**Daryl Brubaker**, *Northern, Treasurer (2020)*  
**Lauren Francisco**, *Calvary*  
**Paul Yoder**, *Central*  
**Rebecca Roberts**, *Harrisonburg*  
**Elizabeth (Liz) Driver**, *Potomac*  
**John David Kenney**, *Southern*  
**Christopher Conley**, *Tennessee/Carolina/Kentucky*  
**Shelley Abline**, *Member at Large*  
**Johnnie Gnanamanickam**, *Member at Large*  
**Juan Carlos Malvaez**, *Member at Large*  
**Arthur (Art) McPhee**, *Member at Large*  
**Sarah Yoder**, *Member at Large*

## STAFF

**Janet Blosser**, *Mediterranean Regional Director*  
**Abe Hartzler\***, *Associate Director of Advancement*  
**Lizzette Hernandez**, *Latino Ministries Coach*  
**Aaron Kauffman\***, *President*  
**Dianna Lehman\***, *Executive Assistant and Human Resources Manager*  
**Jan Liskey\***, *Director of Finance*  
**Martin Rhodes\***, *Discipleship Ministries Coach*  
**Melanie Sherer**, *Administrative Assistant*  
**Jason Showalter\***, *Global Ministries Director*  
**Lynn Suter\***, *Director of Operations*  
**Carol Tobin**, *Mission Advocate*  
**Skip Tobin**, *USA Ministries Director*  
**Jon Trotter**, *Communications Associate*  
**Tom Yoder**, *Associate Mediterranean Regional Director*

(\*Member of Leadership Team)

Harrisonburg. With the help of generous donors, the team has provided \$21,400 in aid to 73 families in Virginia and North Carolina as of June 19.

Immigrant church planters also made staff aware of the need for face masks at local poultry processing facilities. Under the leadership of Lynn Suter, Director of Operations, a face mask drive was launched. Masks poured in from across the community, including a significant number from Old Order Mennonites, in batches of fifties and hundreds, enabling the timely distribution of over 2,500 masks.

Online training has become a priority for Discipleship Ministries Coach, Martin Rhodes, who recently completed a pilot project with a cohort of eight persons from within and beyond Virginia Mennonite Conference. The cohort tested and refined six online learning modules, ranging in topic from worship to race relations to the Great Commission

and more. These modules will serve as training resources for both new mission workers and church leaders.

Equally important, VMissions staff have sensed the impulse to pray, grounded in the belief that crisis is an opportunity to turn and embrace God's kingdom in new ways. Accordingly, VMissions has begun hosting a monthly Kairos Prayer Gathering via Zoom, drawing participation from workers and partners from Europe, Asia, South America and the Caribbean, as well as board members, supporters, and staff. As Klementina Shahini has expressed it, "The challenges and changes we are experiencing require greater resources of love, care, creativity, inspiration, strength and a host of other qualities which we can only find in God's grace." Read more at [vmmissions.org/coronavirus](http://vmmissions.org/coronavirus).

—Carol Tobin, Mission Advocate

**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.

## VMissions joins accountability agency ECFA

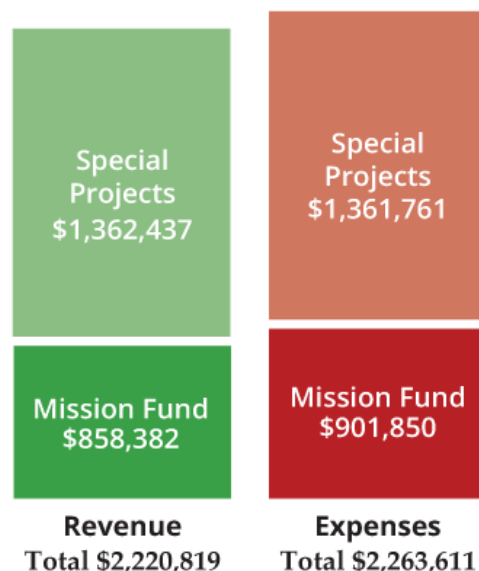
In an ongoing commitment to financial transparency and best practices, VMissions joined the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA), an organization that uses Seven Standards of Responsible Stewardship. ECFA members must comply with all of the standards. Learn more at [ecfa.org](http://ecfa.org)

## 2019-2020 BY THE NUMBERS

Donors	1305
Prayer Partners	145
Mission Communicators	65
Ministry Support Teams	30
MST team members	120
Countries	19
transForm workers	44
tranSenders	9
E <sup>3</sup> Collective team members	28
Total number of workers	81

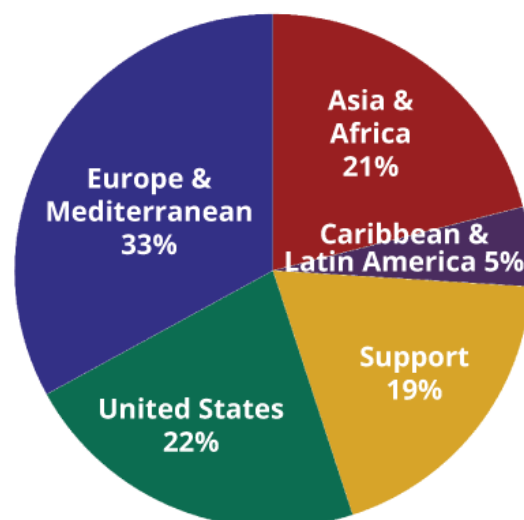
## Revenue and expenses

September 1, 2018, to August 31, 2019



**Mission Fund:** undesignated giving by households and churches. **Special Projects:** giving to specific workers or ministries

## How funds were used



June 29, 2020

Virginia Mennonite Conference-

2020 Assembly Report from Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community

In the 12 months since last year's Conference Assembly, VMRC has devoted nearly half of that time to managing operations during the global coronavirus pandemic. Although the health crisis impacted our plans for 2020, it did not deter us from our vision of being a community of hope, meaning and growth for people to age well and live fully.

Consider this example from our community partner Eastern Mennonite High School:

"This year, for the first time, 10 VMRC residents volunteered to be matched with a freshman from the Eastern Mennonite School U.S. History class in order to share first hand stories with students about modern U.S. History. Students and residents were paired and spoke by phone or communicated through email. Each participating resident shared stories about historical events that occurred in the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s with students who have little to no first-hand experience of those timeframes. Not only did students get to learn about events from people who witnessed them first hand, they also got to learn unique personal perspectives. The project gave the opportunity for intergenerational communication and another chance at a relationship in this isolating time of coronavirus. The EMS students benefited greatly from the short-term relationships and were able to connect with others while still learning important curriculum. Eastern Mennonite School thanks the VMRC community and residents for the time and effort they put into sharing about themselves and about important elements of our country's history. We are blessed!"

As we were able during this time, our community continued to serve. (Data unless otherwise noted, represent statistics from our fiscal year ending March 31, 2020.)

Volunteers from our resident population and the greater community make a tremendous impact:

- Farm volunteers: Served 344 hours at the Farm at Willow Run
- Express cart drivers: Provided 5,963 rides around campus
- Medical appointment escorts: Went with Supportive Living residents to 90+ medical appointments
- Main Street Store reached \$98,331 in total sales (The Main Street Store offers fresh produce, personal products, greeting cards, nonperishable and frozen foods.)
- VMRC Bargain Center: Raised a total of \$13,584 in total profit The Bargain Center sells used and donated items. Its proceeds provide emergency assistance to staff. Last year, \$6864.93 was distributed to offset living expenses for 11 employees.
- Juried Art Exhibition Team: gave 2,133 hours of their time
- Mending volunteers: Mended 152 pieces of clothing for residents in Supportive Living

- Nursing students from surrounding universities and programs contributed 7,208 hours of clinical time

Supporters of VMRC’s mission through giving to the VMRC Foundation (unaudited numbers):

- Gifts totaling more than \$1,254,032 – All cash receipts.
- 825 donors giving 5,430 gifts contributed an average of \$1,532 per donor
- Total cash gifts for Compassion Endowment of \$434,315
- An additional \$717,375 in new planned gifts written (future gifts)
- More than \$25,000 for The Farm at Willow Run equipment and a new drive to help deliver fresh produce to our VMRC kitchens for residents and families.
- We received more than \$280,000 toward the Good Samaritan Fund.

The Good Samaritan Fund and Compassion Endowment supported an average of 30 residents per month to help people who have outlived their personal resources. We initiated The George B. Showalter Giving Circle for donors giving \$83.33 a month or \$1000 per year to the Good Samaritan Fund and have 43 new members.

In response to the issues surrounding racial injustice in our country, we have assembled a group of leaders to identify specific actions that will help us recognize and address the economic and racial disparities that impact our campus, community and beyond. How do we as a Christ-centered organization model justice, compassion and service in these times? We don’t have answers yet, but we are entering an educational phase of learning and listening to help us.

The VMRC Foundation endorsed The United Way’s focus in the Great Community Give in our local community which was to support local organizations led by communities of color and whose mission is focused on justice for communities of color.

Heritage Haven, the government subsidized apartment complex on VMRC’s campus which it manages for HUD, received a “Superior” rating – the highest rating awarded – from the contract administrator. Six categories were scored and individually received the Superior rank, yielding the comprehensive Superior rating.

During the height of COVID-19, VMRC offered its employees telecommuting opportunities, Emergency Paid Sick Leave, bonus pay for jobs in direct care or in support of employees in direct care, and COVID-19 treatment at zero cost for our covered employees for a specific timeframe. A free family catered meal was given to all employees as an appreciation of their hard work.

Due to coronavirus and isolation precautions, VMRC relied on technology more to keep residents engaged. Programming on our internal cable channel included daily devotions, exercises, campus news updates and special events.

During this time of the unfamiliar, we witnessed many examples of the VMRC community coming together to ensure the social, emotional and physical well-being of residents is a top priority.

Maureen Pearson  
VMRC, Director of Public Relations and Outreach  
540-438-4205





## Resources for faith formation and leadership development

### Academic programs

AMBS serves the church as a learning community with an Anabaptist vision, educating followers of Jesus Christ to be leaders for God's reconciling mission in the world. Our programs integrate academics, spiritual formation and practice. Join us — whether in person or at a distance — and deepen your understanding of Scripture, faith and Anabaptist theology!

- **Study at a distance**
  - **Master of Divinity Connect** (online and hybrid courses)
  - **Master of Arts: Theology and Global Anabaptism** (fully online)
  - **Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies** (fully or partially online; customizable)
- **Study on campus**
  - **Master of Divinity Campus**
  - **Master of Arts in Christian Formation**
  - **Master of Arts: Theology and Peace Studies**
  - **Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies**  
[ambs.edu/academics](https://ambs.edu/academics)
- **Financial aid:** AMBS offers generous need-based financial aid, grants and scholarships to help make your education affordable. [ambs.edu/financialaid](https://ambs.edu/financialaid)
- **Want to explore seminary study?** Take an online, campus or hybrid class, even if you're not yet admitted to AMBS, and your first class is 50 percent off! Check out our upcoming offerings: [ambs.edu/onecourse](https://ambs.edu/onecourse)
- **Experience AMBS:** Talk with students, faculty and staff and learn what AMBS has to offer! [ambs.edu/visit](https://ambs.edu/visit)

### Center for Faith Formation and Culture

- **!Explore: A Theological Program for High School Youth:** Students in grades 10–12 can explore ministry and theology, grow in spiritual practices and listen for God's call through a summer congregational internship and a Group Experience (at Mennonite World Conference in 2021). Participants receive a \$1,000 stipend. Deadline to apply is Oct. 31. Tap a shoulder! [ambs.edu/explore](https://ambs.edu/explore)

### Conference connections

- **Joyce Peachey Lind** (Community) is a Master of Divinity Connect student.

### AMBS statistics

- In 2019, 13 men and seven women from nine countries on five continents graduated from AMBS. Nine of them studied at a distance.
- In 2019–20, AMBS's graduate student body included 58 U.S. students, eight Canadian students and 22 international students.
- In 2019–20, 24 students are enrolled in the Journey program in Canada, Southeast Asia, Tanzania and the U.S.

### Lifelong learning

AMBS's Church Leadership Center offers various nondegree options for you to continue your education and strengthen your leadership skills:

- **Online short courses:** Join the forum discussions in these six-week online courses.
  - Exploring Anabaptist History and Theology
  - Exploring Peace and Justice in the Bible
  - Understanding Anabaptist Approaches to Scripture
  - Transforming Congregational Conflict and Communication
  - A Worship Leader's Introduction to *Voices Together*
  - A Song Leader's Introduction to *Voices Together*  
[ambs.edu/shortcourses](https://ambs.edu/shortcourses)
- **Pastors and Leaders 2021** (March 1–4)
- **Leadership Clinics** (March 1, 2021)  
[ambs.edu/pastorsandleaders](https://ambs.edu/pastorsandleaders)
- **Journey: A Missional Leadership Development Program:** This nondegree program offers mentor-mentee partnerships, distance-learning opportunities and community support.  
[ambs.edu/journey](https://ambs.edu/journey)
- **Spiritual Direction Seminars:** Cultivate your ministry of spiritual direction. [ambs.edu/seminars](https://ambs.edu/seminars)
- **Invite AMBS!** Faculty and staff are available to speak on topics such as intercultural competence, undoing racism, Reading the Bible with Jesus workshops, improvisational leadership, healthy boundaries and more. [ambs.edu/invite](https://ambs.edu/invite)



*Prepared to serve and  
lead in a global context*

SUMMER 2020

VIRGINIA MENNONITE CONFERENCE

EMU ANNUAL REPORT

### **President Susan Schultz Huxman sends warm greetings to Virginia Mennonite Conference**

This pandemic has been disruptive and disorienting, sad and scary on an unprecedented scale. Yet our students, faculty and staff have shown creativity and courage; responsiveness and resilience. From quickly getting all students safely back to their homes, including those studying abroad, to moving all courses and support services online, our campus community has shown an impressive “can-do” spirit. Our students validated this effort by responding to a recent survey with a 94% vote of confidence for the exemplary care they received through the all-on-line, personalized instruction and other key forms of support these last six weeks of the semester.

Now, along with every other college and university across the United States, we have moved nimbly from a rapid response stage to a repurposed virtual platform of learning, to now reimagining scenarios for the Fall. We intend to reopen for in person instruction this Fall, even as we will be ready to adopt any one of several scenarios.

EMU has much to build upon, including our reputation as a caring community of learners, with small classes and professors, mentors and coaches committed to walking with our students and nurturing them personally, socially, intellectually and spiritually. This was an appealing educational model before the pandemic for many students and parents. It may be even more important today.

We continue to commit to new pathways of access and opportunity with our new Emergency Student Compassion Fund and the UFund for Resilience, focused on helping students and our institution to help offset financial difficulties caused by this pandemic. (Visit [emu.edu/resilience-funds](http://emu.edu/resilience-funds) for more information.)

We have expanded our outreach to offer wider engagement with EMU’s mission and values. The recent push into online learning, and EMU’s own 20 years of experience with online learning, has accelerated innovation in our areas of expertise. Our globally renowned Summer Peacebuilding Institute is now entirely online, and has welcomed more participants who could not get visas or afford to travel. We’ve expanded summer undergraduate offerings and reached into the healthcare and teacher education areas with special offerings related to restorative justice and trauma and resilience.

In this time of contraction and new growth, we invoke Psalms as we prepare, persist and pray together (*Psalms 46: 1-2; 10-11*). We continue to seek ways to be the loving embrace of God to each other and those in need, even at a physical distance. And we give thanks for the sustaining presence of you as well in this community.

#### **How can EMU serve you?**

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

#### **Virginia Conference Connections to EMU**

##### **Trustees**

Randall Bowman, Hans Harman,  
Louise Hostetter, Clyde Kratz,  
Kevin Longenecker

##### **Undergraduate Students**

Seventy-six undergraduate students from Virginia Mennonite Conference were enrolled in the spring 2020 semester.

##### **Giving**

Virginia Mennonite Conference churches gave nearly \$72,000 in matching grants to their students.

- ▶ **Susan Schultz Huxman**, *president*
- ▶ **Kirk Shisler**, *vice president for advancement*
- ▶ **Jasmine Hardesty**, *director of development & planned giving*
- ▶ **Braydon Hoover**, *director of development & annual giving*
- ▶ **Matthew Ruth**, *director of admissions*

#### **Our Vision**

*We will open new pathways of access and achievement for all students who aspire to grow as unifying leaders equipped with intercultural competence, oriented toward peace and justice, and rooted in an active faith modeled on the life and teachings of Jesus.*

Things are happening at EMS! We are excited that Sarah Bixler, doctoral candidate at Princeton Theological Seminary, has joined our faculty, leading our Formation curriculum. The Seminary is now embedded in EMU's School of Theology, Humanities and the Performing Arts. This move maintains Seminary identity as we offer a full range of graduate theological programs, while strengthening connections to the undergraduate Bible, Religion and Theology department as well as undergraduate programs in music, language and literature, and history. The Seminary Dean, Sue Cockley, as well as Associate Dean, Nancy Heisey continue to lead the Seminary.

### 2020 School for Leadership Training: January 13-15

January 13-15 marked the 51<sup>st</sup> annual SLT. The keynote speakers were Shannan Martin, author and speaker from Goshen Indiana; Rev. Dr. Leroy Barber, Director of Innovation for Engaged Church Greater NW Area of United Methodists Church and Co-Founder Voices Project; Pastor Jennifer Davis Sensenig with guests from Faith in Action; and Dr. Kenton Derstine with Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Alumni. The theme was "Shalom in the Streets: Recapturing God's Vision in Ordinary Places" and provided participants with a worshipful and renewing encounter and to reimagine ministry in our communities from God's desire. Jeremiah 29:7 was the focus scripture.

Visit <https://emu.edu/seminary/slt/> for more information

### Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

The CPE Celebration was held on Tuesday, January 14. Following the celebration dinner attendees enjoyed honoring the Lena and Norman Yutzy family for the CPE Program Endowment, sharing memories and stories from ministry and the keynote address by former EMS associate dean, Dr. Sara Wenger Shenk.

Visit <https://emu.edu/seminary/cpe/anniversary/> for more information

### EMS Graduation 2020

Our spring semester was like no other. Due to COVID-19 our classes were all moved to online via Zoom for the rest of the spring semester and for summer. In May, we celebrated the accomplishments of the seminary graduating class of 2020. They chose the theme, "Hope Born of Renewal: On to the Next Season!" and the scripture focus of Lamentations 3:21-24 and 2 Corinthians 5:16-21. Plans are to award eight Master of Divinity and five Master of Christian Leadership degrees to the graduating class of 2020. We hope to join the University in the Fall for a Commencement ceremony, ideally during Homecoming and Family Weekend, October 17-18, 2020. Class officers include President, Nathanael Hofstetter Ressler, (MDiv); Vice President, John David Kenney, (MDiv); Secretary, Alanna McGuinn, (MACL); and Treasurer, David Gaylor, (MDiv).

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# Conference Endorsed Ministries navigate ministry in the time of COVID-19

# Loss, adaptability, and hope at Highland Retreat

By RACHEL MILLER

During this pandemic, few people or businesses have escaped the negative effects; in particular, grief over lost plans and the troubling weight of an uncertain future are part of nearly everyone's shared experience this year.

At Highland Retreat, COVID-19 has upended plans for guest groups, summer campers, and employees, forcing us to grapple with the unexpected, find ways to adapt, and cling to each reason for gratitude and hope.

Most people who come to Highland do so for a retreat with a church, school, or family group. This part of Highland's ministry is also our main source of income, as guest groups of various types can come to Highland at any time of the year – until, of course, a pandemic comes along.

The first cancelled event at Highland was the Sr. High Youth Retreat that we had planned in partnership with VMC's Youth Council and several local Mennonite churches. Since that cancellation in mid-March, we have had to cancel about three months of guest groups, into early June, with some groups also choosing to already cancel reservations further into the future.

Though we are now again able to host groups of up to 10 people, the majority of our existing reservations this summer are still uncertain as we wait to find out how Virginia's reopening will proceed and how people will respond. Keeping guest groups updated and informed about changing restrictions, safety guidelines, and policies has been a challenging and ongoing process.

The cancellation of so many guest reservations has definitely had a significant financial impact on Highland – this year's loss of income will continue to be felt next year and beyond – but it has also had an emotional impact on us as Highland staff.

Our very purpose as an organization is to minister to people by bringing them together to “meet Jesus Christ, explore nature, and build relationships,” and being unable to fulfill that mission at the moment grieves us. Recently, though we've had more staff meetings than usual to keep abreast of the frequently changing situation, we have

had no guest groups to pray for. There are real feelings of loss in even these seemingly small things.

Our recent decision to cancel this year's summer camps is perhaps even more heartbreaking. In many ways, Highland Summer Camps are the core of our ministry, our most direct outreach and our greatest opportunity to speak the love of Jesus directly into individual lives. We held out hope that we might be able to hold summer camps in some form for as long as we could, but eventually it became clear that maintaining safe physical distancing this summer will make it impossible to give campers an experience that actually feels like camp. Many beloved camp activities involve the kind of close interactions that are not safe right now for people from different households, so choosing not to hold traditional summer camps this year is the right decision, though a difficult one. More than one staff member became a little teary as the idea of no summer camp took hold.

We are not wallowing in grief and despair, though! We have felt each loss, but then adjusted our focus to figuring out how we can make each new situation work. With the support and guidance of Highland's wonderful Board of Directors and a special COVID-19 taskforce, we have been able to adapt to the challenges that face us, zero in on the options that are still available to us, and find ways to make the most of those opportunities. Even as we finalized the decision to cancel summer camps, we were able to redirect some of our passion for that ministry into the possibility of bringing more individual family groups to Highland this summer. We will have more facilities available than ever – including our newly renovated cottages, which are typically utilized by summer camp – and will be able to offer families some of that special summer experience in a safer, more flexible form. We also have plans to open our pool. Ideas like these that spark enthusiasm and hope are so important right now.

The flexibility of our employees is also giving us purpose and hope. An extended period without guests creates a dilemma for staff whose jobs specifically center around

serving guest groups. With no buildings to clean or meals to cook, what would keep our housekeepers and food service staff employed? As it turns out, many of these part-time employees were ready and willing to take on a variety of atypical tasks, such as painting and landscaping, and thanks to a loan through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), we have been able to pay them to do so.

Similarly, projects that are funded by designated donations, such as renovating the former Green Valley Clinic, building two new bridges, and finalizing upgrades to our cottages, have kept our guest services coordinator busy, along with some of the young people who had already committed to working this summer.

Pre-funded projects and employees willing to bend with the unusual circumstances have been blessings to us, though now that our PPP funds are nearly gone, we are again facing difficult decisions regarding Highland's long-term health and the staffing necessary to serve this summer's guests, including the families who may enjoy a Highland experience.

As we face these hard times, we are grateful to do so amid a supportive community. Group leaders and camper parents have generally been understanding of the changes we've had to make; friends of Highland have spent extra time volunteering with us; and those with the means to do so have generously offered financial support, aware that donations are more vital than ever as we seek to keep Highland healthy and functioning in this strange season.

We are always grateful to our donors, but each gift these days is a special cause for rejoicing and another reminder that, even while we don't fully know what the future holds, the God of all time and creation is still our loving Provider.

■ *Rachel Miller is Bookkeeper at Highland Retreat, Criders, Va.*



# God is still working at WCRC

By RENEE HOGAN

At the Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center (WCRC), things have slowed down. Some employees are working remotely or with reduced hours and groups have been limited to under ten people. Though numbers have been reduced, WCRC continues to provide a place for the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of kids and adults. In the weeks since the state's stay-at-home order was announced, we have been encouraged by testimonies of God's goodness to those in our community. Two individuals shared their stories of the way God has worked in their lives at WCRC through this time of quarantine.

Lang Craighill and his family have attended Family Camp at WCRC for the past several years. WCRC has been a significant place for them as both he and his son Shane first publicly declared their relationships with Christ while here. Recently WCRC has been the host of another significant time of connection and growth for the Craighill family. After deciding to go through Family Life's *Passport2Purity* curriculum with his oldest son, Lang said, "It came up naturally to consider the WCRC facility and we were able to rent a cabin there. So Shane and I spent the weekend there and Shane still characterizes the weekend as the best weekend of his life."

Since the experience was so positive with his oldest son, Lang decided to have another retreat, this time with his younger son, Joshie. When they returned home, Lang's wife, Wendy, noticed a behavior shift with both boys and thought that Joshie was thinking of himself differently as a result of the weekend.

Lang stated, "Not that they weren't already brought up thinking of God's Word and His plan, but [the weekend] kind of personalized it for them and was significant coming from a parent in that close, focused amount of time."

Lang was glad that COVID-19 did not prevent him from having this life-changing experience with his sons and even explained that the isolation made the time more special. "It added to the overall experience in a weird sort of way. We had the place to ourselves. It was a solitary time alone, talking about important things and

God's Word and being able to focus on that and each other." Lang also said it was a perfect environment for the weekend.

Another family, Amos and Sandy Goldie, along with their dog Murray and cat Charlie, traded the busyness of Richmond for our peaceful grounds to wait out the quarantine. In November, the pair bought a Travato camper van to get away on the weekends. Early on they booked a stay at WCRC and immediately felt at home.

Sandy said "We just loved it! We were surrounded by the woods and it's so serene and there are birds everywhere. It's so peaceful but we still have Wi-Fi capability and showers and things like that so it's not totally off-road. Every weekend [when] it was time to leave we were like: 'Well let's just go back to Williamsburg!'" Once their jobs were moved online, Amos and Sandy took the opportunity to spend extended time enjoying the peaceful outdoors. Now a month into their stay in the RV campground, they have a beautiful setup for living and working.

During this isolation and stillness, Amos and Sandy have still managed to thrive in their careers and have a positive impact on their community—all from the comfort of their RV site. Sandy works for Virginia Commonwealth University teaching music and Amos is the organist and choir director at St. Matthews Episcopal Church in Richmond. Sandy practices her viola, conducts youth orchestra, grades final exams, and coaches students; while Amos helps produce their church's Sunday service.

According to Sandy, "What's been amazing to me is that physical distancing hasn't always meant social distancing" and she explained that the quarantine has given her time to connect with family from other states and grow closer with her fellow faculty members. Likewise, their church community has thrived with choir members sending voice recordings of their vocal parts and Scripture readings." Gesturing toward the leafy forest, Sandy smiled and said, "When you're out here you're just sur-



The Craighill family L-R Shane, Wendy, Joshie, and Lang. Photo courtesy of WCRC

rounded by trees and nature, even though you still have to work, it gives you increased clarity when you realize that there's other purpose in life. When you come to this place it gives you peace and it reminds you to savor the good things in life, to slow down and enjoy that crackling of the fire, and that purring kitty, or that snuggly dog, or the birds singing... to appreciate the people in your life. Everything else in life disappears and you're just down to the basics of what's important. God gave us pretty much all the things we need to survive and be happy, and the rest is just dressing. Our hope is that we will come out of this pandemic somehow stronger or better people than when we went into it."

At WCRC, God is clearly working during this time, and we are grateful that He is using our peaceful grounds to give guests the space to connect with one another and to hear God's voice more clearly. Thank you to Lang Craighill and Amos and Sandy Goldie for sharing their stories with us.

■ *Renee Hogan is Administrative Assistant at Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center, Toano, Va.*

Sandy and Amos Goldie. Photo courtesy of WCRC



# Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers 'still surprise us all' even after 70 years

By KEVIN KING

**W**e at Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) recently had the honor of hearing from one of our original founders, 94-year-old Marcella Diller. She lives at Schowalter Villa in Hesston, Kansas, where her normal visits from family members and friends have been taking place over the phone. She still remembers the church picnic she attended back in 1950, at which the very first conversations about MDS began over (of course) delicious food. “We had fried chicken, potato salad, and baked beans...everybody brought something and every dish was special,” she said. Marcella said that those early conversations that formed MDS felt like a natural extension of everyday life in Hesston: “Those were the kind of people who lived around here. They helped each other.”

Over 70 years since then, MDS has grown into an organization through which, every year, nearly 6,000 volunteers from across the U.S. and Canada help those in need. Last year, volunteers built more than 68 new homes and repaired 313 more. But this year, on March 13, it all stopped—because of COVID-19. One of the most difficult decisions I’ve ever had to make was closing our projects and sending our volunteers home. Yet I found that, when they got home, they couldn’t sit still! They began helping in the ways that they could—all while safely social distancing. At this point, MDS volunteers have made over a half million masks for everyone from health-care workers to great-grandmothers like Marcella Diller.

In Virginia Mennonite Conference, Harrisonburg resident Betty Brunk, on her 87th birthday, penned a poem that colorfully tells the story of how MDS volunteers just won’t stop (safely) serving, even in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. In her poem, entitled “GIVE ME A TASK!” Brunk wrote (in part):

*Give me a task!  
Please give me a task!  
Is this too much to ask?  
That you give me a task?*

*What’s this about masks?  
Somebody needs masks?  
That sounds like a task  
that I could do.*

Brunk was among dozens of volunteers in Harrisonburg who helped deliver over 1,000 masks and 600 TyVek gowns to first responders, including rescue squads, firefighters and police officers; 1,200 masks to the Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community; and 2,000 masks to Catholic Charities. I would like to extend my personal thanks to all the volunteers involved in that effort. This has turned into an ecumenical response that includes other faith groups as well.

On a national level, MDS, with our partners Everence<sup>®</sup> and Mennonite Central Committee U.S. have joined together to launch a COVID-19 Congregational Relief Fund to aid churches facing a financial crisis due to the pandemic. Already, more than \$750,000 has been committed. The need is quickly growing: Within the first two weeks, churches submitted more than 250 applications.

As much as COVID-19 surprised us all, the volunteers keep surprising us with their creativity and compassion. The relief fund donors have surprised us with their willingness to share their own precious resources during an extremely uncertain financial time.

That “surprise” power of compassion is one thing that simply has not shut down for MDS—and I hope it never does. Marcella Diller also vividly remembers when, some 40 years after MDS was created, a devastating tornado tore through Hesston. Weirdly, the date was March 13, 1990—the very date this year, 30 years later, when MDS projects were temporarily closed.

The home in which Marcella and her late husband, Bob, had brought up five children, was badly damaged. “I remember, after the tornado, we went to my son’s place to stay. When we went back to the house the next day, the MDS people



Marcella Diller, one of the original founders of MDS, shares a moment with her grandsons, Kyle and Ryan.  
Photo: Mark Diller

were there already. I couldn’t believe it!” Marcella said.

Even one of the original founders of MDS was surprised by the compassion that volunteers showed! So was her grandson, Mark Diller, who was 11 years old at the time. As Mark Diller remembers today: “That was a pivotal, developmentally important event in my life,” he said. “Seeing people come to volunteer really was impressionable for me.”

Mark Diller went on to volunteer many times with MDS, most recently with his wife and their two boys, ages 16 and 14, in Eureka, Kansas, to help repair a home damaged by a flood.

Meanwhile, his grandmother is still regularly delighted by news about MDS. “I follow the newspapers and read about MDS all the time,” she said, “and even what they are doing during this virus—it’s so helpful.”

As we look back on the 70-year history of MDS, I am reminded of some time-honored traditions that have not changed. One is that we tend to get our best ideas over delicious food! The other is the surprising strength of the fresh compassion of our volunteers. May it continue for 70 more years and beyond. To God be the glory.

■ Kevin King is Executive Director of Mennonite Disaster Service.



# Challenges and grace at Pleasant View, Inc.

By DAVE GULLMAN

As an agency that supports a vulnerable population, Pleasant View has had to make significant changes in our day-to-day operations. Pleasant View is honoring the Governor of Virginia's stay-at-home order. Our community-based services which include supported employment, our center-based day supports, and our volunteer services through Community Connections are closed. Over fifty people who do not live in one of our houses are not able to attend their usual supports. Needless to say, this has forced us to rethink how we operate day to day.

Most of the individuals whom Pleasant View serves have had to make schedule changes and many have had to stop working as a result of the current restrictions. This has been very difficult for many, as they have had to curtail all outside activities such as daily interactions with friends, Special Olympics, Best Buddies, eating out and so on. Remarkably, most of our residents have risen to the challenges brought on by this pandemic and have made the necessary adjustments with grace.

In order to keep staff working and our residents as safe as possible, we have shifted the work load of the direct support professionals working in day support services into residential assignments. This requires new work shifts as well as new duties. The staff have done remarkably well in making this change and have risen to the challenges which these changes entail. Many of our staff have been cross-trained in several programs and have become familiar with people from the different residences. This has served Pleasant View well as these current changes have become necessary.

Highlighting some of the examples of grace and hope in the midst of great loss, we share the following stories:

A few weeks into the shut down one of the Community Connections staff who was reassigned to a 3 to 11 PM work shift, took it upon himself to arrange a video conference call with Community Connections participants every Wednesday at 10:00 AM. The response has been phenomenal, with individuals Zooming in from family and group homes. This weekly connection has

enhanced the lives of many. They do not feel so alone and this gives them something to look forward to when the time at home seems long.

Part of the mission of Pleasant View is to support the individuals spiritually. We continue to do this in multiple ways:

- For almost 20 years, Pleasant View has sponsored a monthly worship service for individuals with disabilities, family members and friends, called Faith & Light. Since meeting as a group is not possible, the planning team decided to try using Zoom as a way of connecting and maintaining community when everyone feels so distant. The joy we all experience in seeing friends is palpable. The opportunity to sing and pray together is very important. As the planning team reflected on the first of such meetings, they decided to have similar video meetings twice a month.
- Dave Gullman, Pleasant View's pastor, continues to monitor the spiritual health of all the individuals a little more differently because of the current restrictions. One aspect of his work, which is a direct response to the pandemic, is to send out a brief reflective devotional five days a week to the homes and to other individuals. This has been well-received by those we support, as well as by staff and family members.

Another area of grace received is through the community support we have received throughout this pandemic. Pleasant View would like to thank the many donors in the community who have made face masks, face shields, and other PPE for our staff.

The community support has lifted our spirits and reminds us that we are not forgotten. There are also businesses which have shown flexibility in meeting our needs. As staff found it risky to shop for groceries, SYSCO, a local food supplier, stepped in and has begun delivering food for all of our homes. This helps take the burden of safety off our staff and we are grateful.

Finally, as spring shared its beauty with all of us, many of our residents found emotional release by getting out for walks around the house and taking short drives in the beautiful countryside.

Some of the challenges we have had to overcome and some we continue to face:

- Schedule changes have brought on many challenges for our staff. As we look to the future, a question that will need to be answered is "how do we go back to somewhat normal functioning?"
- The virus has affected some of our staff and we have had it in one home. This adds stress and anxiety to an already anxious time so we appreciate prayers for everyone as we negotiate our way through the coming days.
- Some of our individuals have not been able to work and are feeling the loss of meaningful employment. This will definitely be something we need to address as the restrictions ease up.
- We have had significant losses in program, investment, and fundraising revenues over the past few months. As we go forward and strategize safe ways to be in the community as the world opens up, we need to continue to communicate our need for financial support of our mission. We are participating in the Great Community Give on Wednesday, June 24, 2020, with a \$25,000.00 goal ([donate.greatcommunitygive.org/organizations/pleasant-view-inc](https://donate.greatcommunitygive.org/organizations/pleasant-view-inc)). We also plan to have our Charity Golf Tournament on Friday, August 14, 2020.
- Finally, this pandemic has raised the anxiety level of many staff and individuals. There is a deep sense of loss and there will be ongoing need for response in the areas of emotional, mental and spiritual health.

■ *Dave Gullman is Pastor at Pleasant View, Inc., Broadway, Va.*



Four Tobin sisters (from left) Melody, Jessamyn, Bethany, and Hosanna) shared their stories from a vast array of experiences in ministry and personal growth at the February 20 Women Encouraging Women in Adversity event. Photo: Deb Pardini

# Mennonite Women: Engaging and encouraging women even as gathering events go remote

By ANITA CLYMER

On the evening of February 20 this year, over a hundred women gathered in the fellowship hall of Harrisonburg Mennonite Church for Mennonite Women of Virginia's annual missions day event to pray and give financial love gifts to our sisters who work as missionaries around the world. We clustered in groups of eight to ten around tables to share a meal and get to know one another as we enjoyed the evening's program together.

One of the topics of conversation at my table that evening was travel plans. My mom was wondering whether or not she should cancel an upcoming trip to Thailand due to concerns about a viral outbreak in Asia and possible travel restrictions. Little did we know how quickly that virus would travel around the world and change all of our lives for the foreseeable future. No one was going anywhere (including my mom, who postponed and then ended up canceling the trip)!

The theme of that evening in February was "Women Encouraging Women in Adversity." How fitting the theme has become as we've all faced weeks and months of isolation. One way we've attempted to keep connecting with and encouraging women is through a blog that was started almost a year ago ([mwva.home.blog](http://mwva.home.blog)). Without needing to be in close contact, women (and men!) may access the poetry, stories, and reflections there that will hopefully encourage them to continue steadfastly and faithfully in whatever life God has called them to at this time. In late March I shared a poem on the blog about how small I have felt in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, yet how as a community we can have a great impact on the spread of the disease.

The poem is called "Juice."

## Juice

*I'm not a superhero  
many times not even a great mom  
or a wonderful person at all*

*Caught up with all of you  
in the throes of a national crisis  
a global pandemic*

*I find myself feeling quite ordinary  
my efforts infinitesimal  
compared to the magnitude of the galloping  
beast*

*Living here at the foot of the mountain  
there are not even other humans  
within six feet of me whom I could avoid  
(family counting as a single organism)*

*So here I just am  
making juice for jelly  
from the collected bodies of canned grapes  
whose first juice we have already drunk*

*these discards are heated on the stove  
poured through a sieve  
gently mashed to release their final goodness  
(no, actually the chickens will still eat the  
skins)  
dark purple pulpy juice runs down  
gathered in surprising quantity in a bowl  
and the fragrance is like early fall all over  
again*

*[gorging ourselves on grapes beneath the  
arbor  
juice running down our chins  
the sweet, pungent aroma lingering on our  
stained fingers]*

*And so I too  
offer my one small body  
joined with many others  
a collected offering of good will and intentions  
producing together an urn-full after all  
a pleasing aroma*

We invite you to visit the blog and use it as a way to connect with other women across our conference. Everyone is welcome to participate in discussion to encourage and uplift one another.

While Mennonite Women of Virginia has not had to cancel any events this spring, we have faced the challenge of continuing our planning—without meeting in person—for the summer prayer breakfast and fall women's retreat, both of which usually take months of preparation in advance.

This year's prayer breakfast will be unique in that we plan to meet virtually. We encourage you to prepare your coffee, tea or breakfast and join us online as we anticipate having VMissions workers share with us on the topic of *Experiencing God Through COVID-19*. If you are not currently on Virginia Mennonite Women's email list and would like to be a part of this event, please find our page under the "Ministries" tab on the Virginia Mennonite Conference website and send an e-mail to our secretary to get on the list.

Mennonite Women of Virginia plans to hold our annual fall retreat (in-person if possible) on the weekend of November 13-15, 2020, in Richmond, Va. See the blog or check our page on the VMC website for updates and announcements concerning these events.

■ Anita Clymer is a writer on behalf of Mennonite Women of Virginia



# Roberta Webb: Rising up to the challenge

By MELODY M. PANNELL

**O**n March 18, 2020, S. Duke Storen, Commissioner for The Virginia Department of Social Services, released the following statement:

*"The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) is closely monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic and all guidance that is being distributed to child care facilities at the federal level. For centers that remain open, we encourage you to adapt your service settings as much as possible to align with public health recommendations, which include social distancing. Please encourage your families to remain at home to care for their children if at all possible. This will help ensure spaces for essential personnel in need of child care as they directly support the COVID-19 efforts. For now, classroom childcare settings should limit capacity to ten individuals to include staff."*

The Virginia Department of Social Services also mandated that child care centers should continue to follow a number of guidelines for safety and to maintain social distancing. VDSS ended this comprehensive list of mandated guidelines with this empathetic yet firm and clear statement:

*"Understanding this may be very challenging, we ask that child care centers only remain open if they can adhere to these guidelines for protecting vulnerable populations."*

**Vulnerable populations.** Those words rang in my heart and placed a heavy burden, deep responsibility and sense of urgency on our board members, administrative team and child care staff at the Roberta Webb Child Care Center. This was not just a mandated guideline for a singular aspect concerning the life of a vulnerable child. This was a multifaceted, multilayered "calling" to respond to the intersections of public health, socio-economic disparities, emotional stressors, family dynamics, mental wellbeing and the critical educational needs of our children.

This was a "call" for compassion, courage and creativity to rise up and meet the challenge to continue our mission "to serve ethnically diverse families by providing quality and affordable childcare." As the mandate was clear from the Virginia Department of Social Services in this time

of unprecedented health crisis, so is our mission.

RWCCC made the challenging decision to "rise up," remain open and implement creative, innovative and strategic classroom structures to recreate a safe and welcoming learning environment. We not only felt called to meet the needs of our children, we were also deeply concerned about the health and financial wellbeing of our staff members and their families.

In order to remain viable, conscientious and socially responsible, we would need to rely on the continuous communication and collaborative efforts of our state and local community leaders, local businesses, child care center networks and non-profit administrators during this coronavirus outbreak.

Under the leadership of our Executive Director, Mrs. Angela Rouse, we issued a temporary two-week closure in March and implemented a deep cleaning plan in order to effectively prepare and make the necessary adjustments for our reopening. Our board, Executive Director, administrative Team, and classroom staff worked diligently together to ensure that all policies, best practices and state regulations will be executed in an efficient manner.

We have relied on the wonderful relationships that we built with our families and community to trust that we would utilize all of our resources to be intentional in recreating an innovative and adaptive RWCCC program.

When we reopened on March 30, we watched with great delight as our parents partnered with our teachers to make sure that their children were safe and ready to learn. Children were educated about COVID-19 through storytelling, new social distancing individual learning stations, and new routines emphasizing creative personal hygiene practices. In the midst of the horrors of COVID-19, children were laughing, playing, learning and growing. Children were being educated through compassion, courage and creativity.

RWCCC team members were working together like never before, taking on extra time, being mindful of one another and being open to learning new skills.

As some self-quarantined and some sheltered in place, we learned how to Zoom

together, meet up on G Suite, and offer grace to one another in this radical transition and "new normal." It has and continues to be a steep learning curve of being courageous, living out our mission and depending on one another to keep RWCCC afloat.

Becoming more collaborative has been a positive aspect of COVID-19, along with operating on an even higher level of compassion concerning responding to the sufferings and needs of others. I believe that this time has been character-building for everyone involved. We were also reminded of our deep connection to the community in this coronavirus crisis. We are interconnected with our Virginia Mennonite Conference and Harrisonburg community. We are interdependent on the support of our local churches and organizations.

There is a Nguni Bantu term that I believe embodies and exemplifies the core of our new growth mindset: *ubuntu*, which is "a quality that includes the essential human virtues, compassion and humanity." According to Angela Thompsell, Professor of British and African History, "One meaning of *ubuntu* is correct behavior, but correct in this sense is defined by a person's relations with other people. It refers to behaving well towards others or acting in ways that benefit the community. Such acts could be as simple as helping a stranger in need, or much more complex ways of relating with others."

We are grateful for our many friends who have donated to the RWCCC throughout our 25 years of service. Now more than ever, we need your financial support to ensure that we can continue providing quality and affordable child care. We invite you to consider giving a special gift to support our efforts as we respond to meeting the needs of our children and families during this public health crisis. So many of our parents are dependent on having a safe place to care for their children. Join us as we rise up to the challenge and answer the call to compassion, courage and creativity. We thank you in advance for your support in empowering us to continue this important work of educating society's future citizens, our beloved children.

■ Melody M. Pannell is Director of Development for Roberta Webb Child Care Center.

# FLRC serves a needy and anxious community

By MARIE BRADLEY

Family Life Resource Center remains open. The agency is taking necessary precautions to protect our clients. We have some counselors working from home and offering teletherapy to clients who are seniors, immunocompromised, or are just unsettled about coming into the office. However, we have counselors still continuing in-person sessions for those clients that may not have access to the internet or clients in dire need of face-to-face sessions.

We find that the counselors here at FLRC are needed as much as ever as anxiety and depression are at all-time highs. We are seeing an increase in anxiety, depression and fear of the unknown concerning COVID-19. The agency allows a safe and nurturing environment to explore and process feelings. We have been told numerous

times that right now counseling is the only constancy or “normalcy” in their lives. Clients also have the ability to speak openly about their faith. We welcome this as we know people are missing their church families and support.

People are also worried about how they are going to pay for sessions as more clients are experiencing financial hardships due to COVID-19. The FLRC scholarship program is continuing to allow clients to receive the services that they otherwise would not be able to afford. The agency also feels the crisis as scholarship funds are limited, cash flow is diminishing and the counselors are earning less.

The agency will stay true to our name and continue to promote Hope, Health and Healing. We have remained consistent

during this crisis by remaining open so that we show our community that they are not in this alone. We choose to walk with our clients as Jesus serves as our guide. *Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”* (John 8:12)

If you would like to help the agency during this time, we greatly appreciate any donation amount to the scholarship fund. Please visit our website to donate at [www.flrc.org](http://www.flrc.org) or mail checks to:

Family Life Resource Center  
273 Newman Avenue  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

■ *Marie Bradley is Administrative Director of FLRC, Harrisonburg, Va.*



# Appendix

Other VMC Leaders

Conference Related Ministries Giving to VMC

Individual Giving and Estate Benefactors

Congregational Giving

Conference Membership Statistics

Conference Financial Summary

## Other VMC Leaders (non-voting)

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

#### **Calvary**

Ronnie B. Pride, Sr.

#### **Central**

Richard L. Bowman

Micah Caleb Hurst

Lee A. Martin

#### **Eastern**

I. Keith Miller

#### **Harrisonburg**

Seth T. Crissman

Shawn T. Green

Stephen Horst

Francisco Machado

Nicholas "Nick" Meyer

Bethany Tobin

Jason Wagner

Tyler Yoder

#### **Northern**

David A. King

Gary Lee Koontz

J. Michael Metzler

Dawn K. Monger

#### **Potomac**

Del J. Glick

Christina J. Kraybill

Eugene D. Kraybill

#### **Southern**

Ronald Baker

#### **TCK**

Spencer Bradford

Rufus "Matt" Cubbage

John Myer

Charpia Vang

### Spouses of deceased credentialed leaders

Mary Troyer Bergey

Marilyn Brenneman

Betty Brunk

Helen Burkholder

Bertha Fyffe

Belinda Gaskins

Wilma Gingerich

Eva Glanzer

Lila May Janzen

Ruth Kaufman

Charlene Kiser

Wilhemina Littlejohn

Lois Mumaw Martin

Ruth Martin

Virginia Martin

Anna Miller

Eleanor Minninger

Mary Nissley

Doris Amstutz North

Carolyn Nowlin

John Shenk

Bertha Showalter

Evonne Showalter

W. Dean Smith

Marie Stevanus

Martha Weaver

Virginia E. Grove

Weaver

Betty White

### Retired credentialed leaders

#### **Central**

Floyd Blosser

Glendon Blosser

E. Richard Good

Roy F. Good

Paul Kratz

Dennis Kuhns

Wilmer Lehman

David F. Miller

Clayton O. Shenk

Edith Shenk Kuhns

Amos P. Witmer

#### **Chaplains Cluster**

Phoebe G. Hershey

J. Melvin Janzen

John Paul Lehman

Carl L. Smeltzer

Shirlee Kohler Yoder

#### **Eastern**

Kenneth S. Brunk

J. Harold Buckwalter

Randy Coblentz

Ernest M. Godshall

John T. Kreider

Robert W. Mast

James B. Meador

Merlin L. Miller

#### **Harrisonburg**

A. Don Augsburg

Myron S. Augsburg

G. Edwin Bontrager

Emma Frederick

J. Mark Frederick

Timothy Green

Kimberlee Greenawalt

Noah B. Helmuth

Kathryn J. Hochstedler

Alvin M. Huyard

David S. Huyard

Rose L. Huyard

Richard F. Keeler

Mark Keller

Philip R. Kreider

Catherine Longenecker

Daniel M. Longenecker

John R. Martin

Edmond F. Miller

Frederic A. Miller

Sharon Wyse Miller

Barbara Moyer Lehman

Millard E. Osborne

John R. Petersheim

Erwin H. Rempel

Dorothy J. Shank

Orval M. Shank

Raymond W. Shenk

Eugene K. Souder

James K. Stauffer

Edward B. Stoltzfus

Paul L. Swarr

Lawrence M. Yoder

Shirley Yoder Brubaker

#### **Leadership/Admin.**

Russell Eanes

Loren E. Horst

Gordon Zook

#### **Northern**

Donald Bare

Otis Dove

Richard Early

Margaret "Peg" Engle

Harley D. Good

Daniel A. Hoopert

Lloyd R. Horst

Thomas E. Kauffman

Kathleen Weaver Kurtz

Milford E. Lyndaker

Arthur McPhee

Donald P. Mishler

Laban Peachey

Clifford S. Poirot, Sr.

Elwood G. Schrock

Rowland Shank

H. Michael Shenk II

Hazel Shirk

Omar V. Showalter

Marvin Stutzman

Irvin D. Weaver

Samuel O. Weaver

#### **Southern**

James S. Delp

Bruce W. Hankee

Glenn M. Steiner

Marion C. Weaver

#### **Teaching Cluster**

George R. Brunk III

#### **TCK**

David W. Bartow

Duane E. Beck

Edward M. Godshall

Willis G. Hunsberger

Floyd Rogers Matteson

James W. Mellinger

Arthur E. Smoker

# Conference Related Ministries Giving to VMC

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Virginia Mennonite Conference is grateful for our Conference Ministries and Conference Endorsed Ministries, and their support of our ministries. Below is a list of agencies that gave \$250 or more to VMC from September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019. **Thank you!**

## Conference Ministries

- **Eastern Mennonite School**  
[easternmennoniteschool.org](http://easternmennoniteschool.org)  
*A 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)  
*VMissions equips the church to share new life in Jesus Christ with neighbors near and far. VMissions envisions a Spirit-filled church of many cultures living out God's kingdom in every sphere of life.*

## Conference Endorsed Ministries

- **Eastern Mennonite University**  
[emu.edu](http://emu.edu)  
*EMU educates undergraduate, graduate, and seminary students to serve and lead in a global context for the common good, grounded in the enduring biblical values of community, service to others, sustainability, peacemaking and discipleship.*
- **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 and committed to helping people pursue health and wholeness as individuals and in their relationships..*
- **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**  
[virginiaconference.org/mennonite-women-of-virginia/](http://virginiaconference.org/mennonite-women-of-virginia/)  
*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)  
*Through extensive training and experience, NewBridges works diligently to engage immigrants, connect cultures, and build community with a vision for a thriving community that everyone can call home.*
- **Pleasant View, Inc.**  
[pleasantviewinc.org](http://pleasantviewinc.org)  
*Pleasant View supports individuals who have disabilities through a variety of residential, day, and spiritual supports needed for individuals to not only live in the community, but become a part of and enrich the community.*
- **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)  
*A vibrant continuing care retirement community offering a full spectrum of living options in the city of Harrisonburg. VMRC strives to be a community of hope, meaning and growth where people can age well and live fully.*
- **Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center**  
[wcrc.info](http://wcrc.info)  
*Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center provides a place for the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of kids and adults through camping and retreats.*



# 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 June 1, 2019 to May 31, 2020. An asterisk (\*) indicates that the donor is a Philippiian level donor who gave \$500 or more in the same time period. 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. Thank you!*

*Emily and James R. Akerson Richard D. and Louise H. Alderfer Ruth K. Alger	David S. and Kathleen Hartzler Benjamin and Lavonne Heatwole Conrad and MaryJane Heatwole	Philip and Marcia Lehman Rita and Dale Lehman Wilmer R. and Mary Louise Lehman	*Alan L. and Sharon B. Shenk H. Michael and Peggy Shenk H. Michael (III) and Ramona Shenk
*Devon C. and Teresa B. Anders	Dewitt and Kathryn Heatwole Trust	Milton M. and Regina M. Lewis	James A. and Eileen M. Shenk
*Esther and Myron Augsburgers Bare Farms	Linda C. Heatwole	*Joseph W. Longacher	*Jonathan D. and Sheryl L. Shenk
*Harold Bergey	Nancy Heisey	Eric D. and Susan Martin	Donald E. Showalter
James V. and Anna M. Bishop	Irvin M. and Anna J. Heishman	John R. Martin	Evonne S. Showalter
Benjamin D. and Sarah Ann Bixler	Phillip and Loretta Helmuth	R. Larry and Pauline Martin	Millard E. and Mary Showalter
Blauch Brothers	James L. and Ann Hershberger	Ruth Y. Martin	*Omar and Lena B. Showalter
James W. Blauch	Robert A. and Marie Hertzler	Roger and Cheryl Mast	Samuel G. and Janice S. Showalter
G. Edwin and Edie Bontrager	Willard and Dorothy Hertzler	Wendell L. and Lois E. Maust	Marvin T. and Sarah Ellen Slabaugh
*Randall Bowman	Wayne L. and Kathryn J. Hochstedler	Keith May	*Carl L. and Margaret M. Smeltzer
Richard L. and Elsie Bowman	Kenneth R. and E. Susie Horst	Anieta McCracken	Sherwyn J. and Deidre L. Smeltzer
Alfred and Delma Brenneman	Loren E. and Earlene Horst	Carl E. and Lois E. Mericle	Steven and Jeannie Smith
Anna Brenneman	Samuel Horst	Craig M. and Lois Miller	Arthur E. and Nova J. Smoker
*Daryl and Rebekah Brubaker	Charles and Joyce M. Hostetter	*Elroy and Linda Miller	Gloria H. Snider
David and Martha Brubaker	Harold E. Huber	*Sara Grace Miller	Eugene and Alice Souder
Myron and Regina Brubaker	J. Roy and Joanne Hunsberger	Viola Miller	John D. and Susan L. Stahl
George R. (III) and Ruthann Brunk	*Beryl M. and Margo M. Jantzi	David N. and Marian L. Mininger	James K. and Ruth Y. Stauffer
*Kenneth S. and Twila Brunk	Philip C. and Janine Kanagy	Eleanor V. Mininger	Grant and Susan Stoltzfus
Steven C. and Marian B. Buckwalter	Glen E. and Sandra Kauffman	Vernon R. and Sandra R. Moyer	Ervin R. and Bonita Stutzman
Ruth L. Burkholder	Ruth M. Kaufman	Odessa and Carroll Moyers	Louise H. and Bruce E. Swartz
Steven C. and M. Christine Carpenter	Rosemary G. King	James and Aldine Musser	Loren and Pat Swartzendruber
*Russell and Catherine De Young	Walter King	Gerald E. Nauman	Nelson P. and Gloria Swope
Ellis and Caroline Detwiler	Jeff and Becky Kiser	Peter Nguyen	Erma and Donald Taylor
V. Eugene and Gloria Y. Diener	Philip L. and Irene H. Kniss	Donald and Jean Oswald	*Judith Trumbo
Nelson Driver	*Arlan and Alda Kratz	Edward C. and Carol L. Parks	Carol L. Van Donk
*Dr. J. Robert and Rosalie Eshleman	*Clyde G. and Eunice Kratz	Kenneth and Carol Peterson	Jennifer R. and Jason A. Wagner
Elaine Evans	Eugene and Christina Kraybill	*Heinz D. and Melanie Plato	Nelson and Marjorie Waybill
Lareta H. Finger	John T. and Betty O. Kreider	Monique S. Randolph	Weaver's Floor Covering, Inc.
Barbara Frank	Lois Kreider	*Carolyn and John Reed	Dorothy Jean Weaver
J. Mark and Emma L. Frederick	*Norman H. and Dorothy L. Kreider	Joel and Valerie Reinford	Irvin Weaver
Linford K. and Rebecca L. Gehman	Dennis R. and Edith Shenk Kuhns	Mary E. Reitz	Michael D. and Rachel J. Weaver
David Scott Gingerich	Joan Kulp	Raymond and Naomi Ressler	Samuel O. Weaver
E. Richard Good	Betty Kurtz	Gloria Rissler	J. Lowell and Janet Weaver
*James M. and Dorcas M. Good	Glen and Carol Landis	Jean and Edward Rissler	C.P. and Izetta Yoder Endowment
Gloria and Christopher Gredler	Pearl L. Lantz	Amy Rush	Daniel and Lois Yoder
Steven (II) and Sara Halteman	N. Can Le	James L. and Geraldine W. Rush	Elwood E. and Joy Yoder
Bruce W. and Janet Hanke	Jay and Judy Leaman	B.G. Sain and Helen Sain Williams	*Evangeline Yoder
Nancy E. Hardin	Stephen and Doris Leaman	Laurence and Evelyn Sauder	Lawrence M. and Shirlee K. Yoder
Merlin D. Harman	David and Lavonne Lehman	Randall and Patricia Seitz	Philip J. Yoder
Pearl A. Hartman	Dorothy Lehman	Helen T. Shank	
Dale E. and Barb E. Hartzler	Edwin and Dianna Lehman	O.M. and Dorothy Shank	
	Galen and Gloria Lehman	Rebecca K. Shank	

## Estate Benefactors

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

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

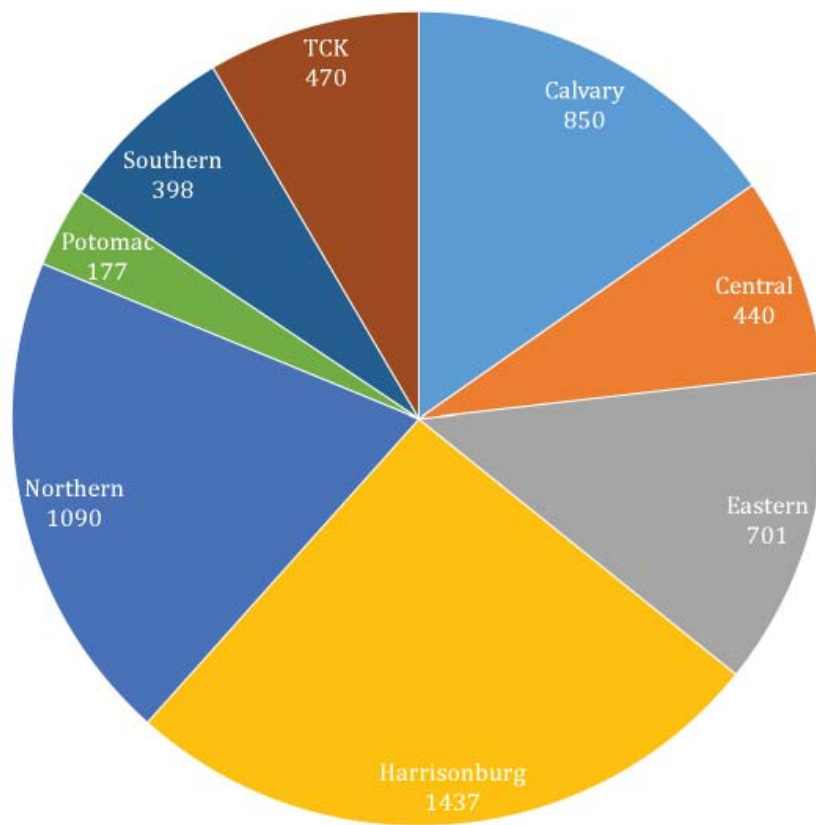
Donate online at [virginiakonference.org/donate/](https://virginiakonference.org/donate/) or by mailing checks to:

Virginia Mennonite Conference  
601 Parkwood Dr., Harrisonburg, VA 22802

## Conference Membership Statistics

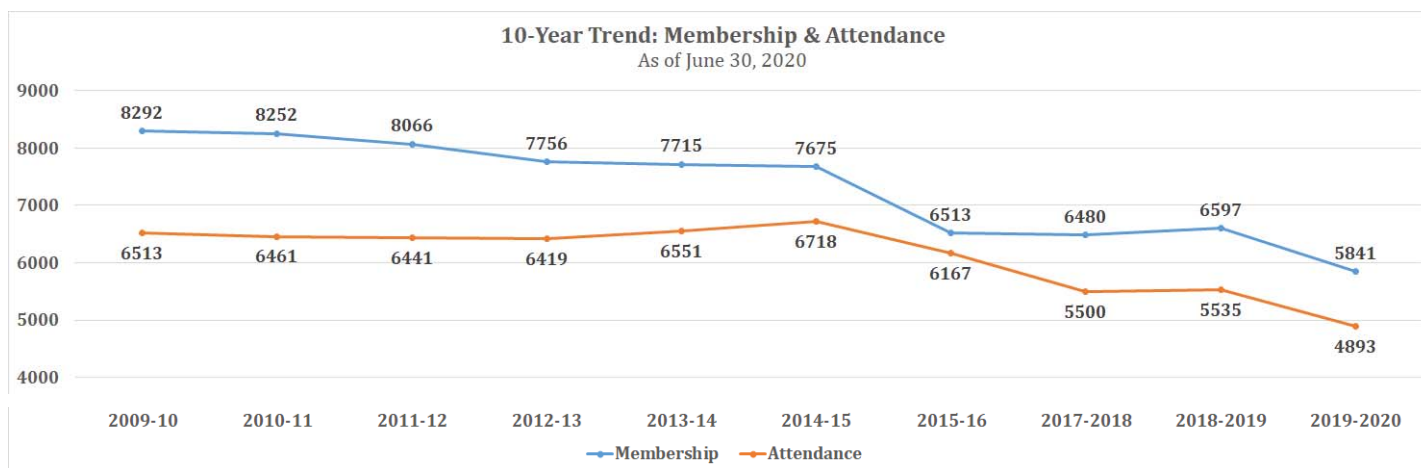
### Membership by District 2019-2020

As of June 30, 2020



Total Membership: 5,563

### Membership and Attendance Ten Year Trend



## Conference Financial Summary (September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019)

<b>Virginia Mennonite Conference</b>			
<b>Statement of Income and Expense - Unrestricted Operations</b>			
<b>Year Ended August 31, 2019</b>			
		Current Yr	Current Yr
		2019	Budget
	Income		
1	Contributions - individuals	\$ 61,271	\$ 65,000
2	Contributions - congregations	102,866	119,000
3	Contributions - associated ministries	6,825	7,000
4	Congregation membership fees	20,217	20,000
5	Investment income (loss)	907	-
6	Fees for services	9,586	8,750
7	Grants	4,302	-
8	Other	2,857	3,600
9	Transfer from Conference Assembly	3,862	3,000
10	Transfer from MCUSA Endowment	7,200	8,000
11	Transfer from VMC Operations endowment	23,100	23,500
12	Total income	242,993	257,850
13			
14	Expense		
15	Leadership development	114,431	111,650
16	Administrative support	60,503	61,900
17	Communication	27,979	28,300
18	Facility costs	14,760	15,000
19	MCUSA-related expenses	11,839	11,500
20	Other	11,771	11,900
21	Office expense	10,593	6,750
22	Archival services	4,701	4,750
23	Consulting and legal fees	930	5,000
24	Total expense	257,507	256,750
25			
26	Net income (loss)	\$ (14,514)	\$ 1,100
<b>Expense Category Definitions:</b>			
<b>Leadership development</b> - wages, benefits, and related costs for conference minister.			
<b>Administrative support</b> - wages and benefits for VMC support staff.			
<b>Communication</b> - expenses related to VMC publications and communications.			
<b>Archival services</b> - expenses related to maintaining VMC and congregational archives.			
<b>Facility costs</b> - rent.			
<b>MCUSA-related expenses</b> - travel and related costs for MCUSA meetings and events.			

## Conference Financial Summary (September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019)

<b>Virginia Mennonite Conference</b>				
<b>Statement of Income and Expense - Restricted Funds</b>				
<b>Year Ended August 31, 2019</b>				
		<b>Special Projects</b>	<b>Endowments</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Income</b>			
1	Contributions - individuals	\$ 3,525	\$ -	\$ 3,525
2	Contributions - congregations	350	-	350
3	Contributions - associated ministries		-	-
4	Investment income (loss)	15	36,520	36,535
5	Registrations	9,480	-	9,480
6	Other	34,021	-	34,021
7	Grants	46,567	-	46,567
8	Transfer to operations	(3,862)	(30,300)	(34,162)
9	Other transfers	4,644	(4,644)	-
10	Total income	94,740	1,576	96,316
11				
12	<b>Expense</b>			
13	Consulting fees	500	-	500
14	Facility fees	564	-	564
15	Honorarium	6,750	-	6,750
16	Other	4,193	-	4,193
17	Scholarships and grants	1,194	17,862	19,056
18	Supplies	36,703	-	36,703
19	Travel	8,790	-	8,790
20	Total expense	58,694	17,862	76,556
21				
22	Net income (loss)	36,046	(16,286)	19,760
<b>Special Projects</b> - includes Conference Assembly, various retreats, and other projects as necessary to carry out the work of VMC.				
<b>Endowments</b> - includes restricted funds for leadership development, retired church worker aid, congregational resource center, and MCUSA.				

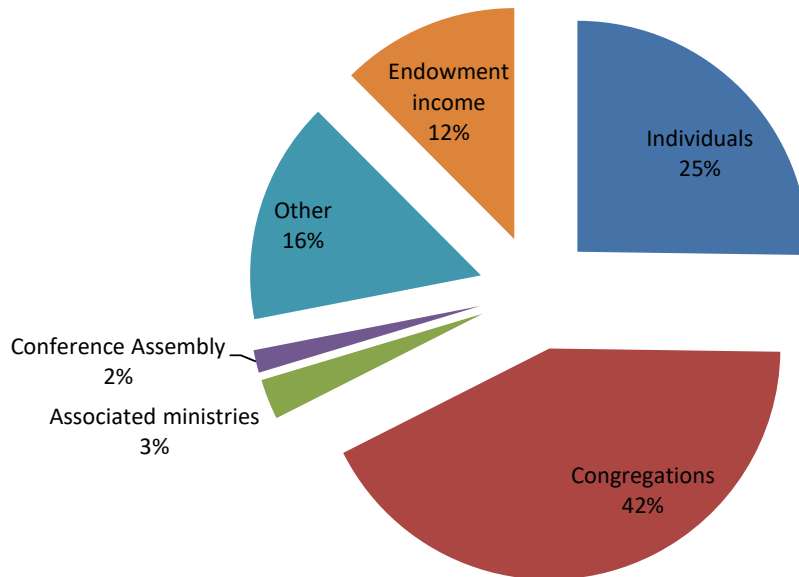
These statements have not been subjected to an audit, review, or compilation engagement.  
No assurance is provided on them. Substantially all disclosures are omitted.



# Virginia Mennonite Conference Income/Expenses

## Virginia Mennonite Conference Financial Summary - Operations Year Ended August 31, 2019

**Total Income - \$242,993**



**Total Expense - \$257,507**

