



**Mennonite  
Mission  
Network**

The mission agency of  
Mennonite Church USA

JUNE 2013

# Beyond OURSELVES



## Walking together in mission

Following God's call  
to reconciliation



# God's *shalom* holds it together

By James R. Krabill

What do church growth in Burkina Faso and peace-building in Korea have in common? How about a Bible study group in Ecuador and youth ministry in Paris? Or service opportunities in Chicago and witness to the casino industry in the Asian "Las Vegas" of Macau? The answer is God's *shalom*.

The noun *shalom* occurs some 235 times in the Old Testament and more than 100 times in its Greek translation, *eirene*, in the New Testament. There is no single word in English that captures its full meaning. Perry Yoder highlights the term's complexity in the very title he chose for his 1987 book, *Shalom: The Bible's Word for Salvation, Justice and Peace*.

Salvation, justice and peace. That is already about as much as we can handle. But there is more. In other biblical passages, *shalom* is translated as health, righteousness, well-being, security, wholeness, integrity, abundance, intactness, honesty, prosperity, right relationships, protection, life-giving-ness, harmony, straightforwardness, reconciliation, blamelessness, rightness, and good accord.

What the biblical witness does make abundantly clear is that God has a cosmic *shalom* project to reconcile all things to himself in Jesus Christ, and that the church is being invited to participate in this initiative as a model and messenger of the project.

In a new Mennonite Mission Network resource featured in the following pages, we reaffirm our commitment to "hold together evangelism, witness and personal transformation with peace, justice and social transformation—believing that each of these values has an important place with the kingdom of God." Will you join us in accepting God's invitation to be ambassadors of God's *shalom* in our broken world?



James R. Krabill, senior executive of Global Ministries for Mennonite Mission Network



Photo by Amy Schmidt

## Same message, different mission

Why does the Mennonite Church engage in mission work, both abroad and in the United States? What beliefs and values shape our work? Where does the inspiration and the impetus for mission come from?

In 2001, upon the merging of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, a new mission agency—Mennonite Mission Network—was born. In 2006, Mission Network published a *Missio Dei*, called *Together in Mission: Core Beliefs, Values and Commitments of Mennonite Mission Network*, laying out the core beliefs that guided its work.

Now, seven years later, Mission Network has updated the piece in *Walking Together in Mission: Following God's Call to Reconciliation*.

The PDF is available at the Mennonite Mission Network website (see below), and paper copies can be ordered through MennoMedia at <http://store.mennomedia.org/>.



### Feedback

Let us know what you think of this issue. What inspires you? Engages you? Infuriates you? [www.BeyondOurselves@MennoniteMission.net](mailto:www.BeyondOurselves@MennoniteMission.net)



### Download this resource

Find this *Missio Dei* and the archive of others in the series at [www.MennoniteMission.net/Resources/MissioDei](http://www.MennoniteMission.net/Resources/MissioDei).



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COVER: Gabe Ramirez, Rosembert Ipuz Quintero, and David Shenk walk together to breakfast during a church building project in Arajuno, Ecuador. Photo by Craig Welscott.



# The nature of mission

By Stanley W. Green

There is a pivotal story that is told in Mark 8:27–35. In the story, Jesus addresses the question of his identity and, by extension, the nature of his mission. After almost three years of intimate encounter and close observation, the disciples were preoccupied with trying to determine who Jesus really was. How they answered the question about Jesus’ real identity would determine their understanding about the nature of his mission. Mark’s account tells us that some saw Jesus in the mold of John the Baptist with whom he shared a passion for the truth. Others saw in Jesus the strength and power of Elijah. No doubt, some others must have imagined him as a new Moses who would lead the Jews to

freedom from Roman oppression.

Peter, however, makes a greater claim for Jesus. He is the Messiah!

Interestingly, Jesus neither welcomes nor rejects Peter’s assertion. Instead, Jesus invests the expectation of the Messiah with new meaning. Jesus clarifies his true identity and speaks for the first time of the suffering, death

and resurrection that awaited him. In doing so, he challenges Peter’s expectations about the Messiah. As Messiah, Jesus will not claim power for himself; he will not dominate others. On the contrary, others will have power over him; he will be dominated.

In shedding light on the nature of his identity, Jesus clarifies the nature of his mission. He points to a new way, a new vision—a vision of serving and self-giving love. In the remaining days of his earthly ministry, Jesus introduces the disciples to the mystery of the cross. Jesus uncovers the mystery of God’s love revealed in the human life of the Son of God. We believe that Jesus’ understanding of his mission illuminates and defines the nature and character of our mission.

After the merger that brought together three mission agencies in 2001 (Commission on Home Ministries, Commission on Overseas Mission, and Mennonite

Board of Missions), we felt it would be helpful to explain the transformed identity of the new agency. In *Missio Dei #10, Together in Mission*, we sought to highlight key features of the new agency. Now, it feels important to update our identity and to clarify the nature of our mission and the commitments we make. In this fresh clarification of our identity, we intend to make clear how we understand our mission and to explain how we plan to work with others in fulfilling our calling and mandate.

In light of our understanding of Jesus’ mission, our objective in this *Missio Dei* is to clarify what we believe about our calling, the values that shape our mission engagement, and the commitments that we make. We also hope to update how our owners and partners perceive the way we are engaged in mission. With many, we are linked with a kind of mission engagement that was/is seen as colonialistic, imperialistic and impositional. We believe that Jesus’ example calls us to an engagement in mission that:

- Hails the humanity of those with whom we engage.
- Respects the cultures of those with whom we work.
- Advances the dignity and freedom of those with whom we are engaged.

Mission, we believe, is about God’s purposes in the restoration and healing of our world, and specifically about the good news that comes to us in the demonstration of God’s reconciling love and salvation that has come to us in Jesus Christ. I commend to you the updating of our identity, convictions, values and commitment in our new *Missio Dei*, which is shaped by our understanding of God’s purposes and our calling. I would love to receive your feedback, even as I appreciate your ongoing prayers and support in our response to God’s call in mission.

*Stanley W. Green*

Stanley W. Green  
Executive Director

How they answered the question about Jesus’ real identity would determine their understanding about the nature of his mission.



# Walking together in mission



## What is our context?

**W**e live in a fragmented world. Some of us suffer from economic and political oppression. Others find themselves enslaved to sin, materialism, and other false gods of our day.

As followers of Jesus Christ who long for God's new creation, we acknowledge our own brokenness and our dependence upon God. But we also find hope in the promise that in Jesus "all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things" (Colossians 1:19-20, NRSV).

## What is our calling?

We believe that the purpose of the church is derived from the calling and sending activity of God:

- God sent the Son, Jesus, into the world.
- Together, they sent the Spirit.
- And now, in turn, God sends forth the church, to bear witness to the reconciliation God is making possible through Jesus Christ.

Although local communities of faith represent God's primary means for carrying out the mission of the church, Mennonite Mission Network has been commissioned to "lead, mobilize and equip the church in its mission."



**These stories are a sampling of the ways Mission Network seeks to carry out its mission of channeling God's healing and hope to the world.**

Photo by James R. Krabill





Left to right: Gabe Ramirez from Central Plains Mennonite Conference, Rosebert Ipuz Quintero from Cali, Colombia, and Mission Network worker David Shenk walk together to breakfast during a church building project in Arajuno, Ecuador. Photo by Craig Welscott.

## Nine beliefs that inform and guide our approach to ministry

*Mennonite Mission Network is as old as Mennonite Church USA. Since forming 11 years ago, the church has undergone growing pains, as two denominations were merged into one. But through it all, mission work has moved forward. Now, looking back over more than a decade of mission work, it is helpful to provide a framework for how we do mission.*

### The mission and glory belong to God.

- ① **God's redemptive reign sets the agenda for our mission.** By participating in God's mission, the church becomes a living sign of God's intended future for the world.
- ② **Mission is rooted in God's love, focused on Jesus, and empowered by the Holy Spirit.** The mission is God's. We are involved in mission because we are recipients of God's grace and have been invited by God to share the same love for the world that God demonstrated in sending Jesus.
- ③ **Our mission overflows in joyful response to God's abundant grace.** When we experience the immeasurable height, depth and breadth of God's love, we are compelled to share with others the grace, joy and peace that overflow our lives.

### The church is the primary model and messenger of God's love.

- ④ **The church is a sign of God's redemptive reign.** The church is called and sent into the world to invite all people into that reign.
- ⑤ **Faithful congregations extend and reproduce themselves.** Every congregation is called to initiate activities from which new congregations and ministries are born.

- ⑥ **The church expects opposition and is willing to suffer.** Members of the church risk their lives to represent the love and presence of Jesus, regardless of the consequences. The church stands in solidarity with poor and oppressed people, trusts in God for its defense, and places its hope in God's faithful promises.

### Reconciliation and transformation are possible.

- ⑦ **The gospel reconciles and transforms creation.** By word and deed, the church announces to the world the good news that people and communities can be reconciled to God and to one another.
- ⑧ **The model of Jesus' earthly ministry requires that the gospel be adapted to cultural context.** This means that our approach must be one of seeking to discover how God is already at work in a culture, and then engaging in serious reflection about how best to participate in this divine activity in ways that are culturally sensitive, relevant, life-giving and transforming.
- ⑨ **The final victory already belongs to God through Christ.** The future of God's plan to "bring all things together in Christ" is not in question. It will be as John described it in the book of Revelation—a great multitude of people from every language, tribe and nation, standing before the throne of the Lamb, praising God!





Groups from Central Plains Mennonite Conference, Ecuador Mennonite Church, and Colombia Mennonite Church partnered together with the Arajuno community and Mennonite Mission Network to build a church in Arajuno, Ecuador. Photo by Craig Welscott.



# How initiatives are born

Ministry initiatives are born of the Holy Spirit, but God calls people to carry out God's work. Mennonite Mission Network tries to tap into Holy Spirit callings as initiated through agency priorities, constituency initiative, partner vision, and individual calling. Few stories better illustrate the intersection of these sources than the Ecuador Partnership.

## Agency priorities

Our desire at Mission Network is to see people of all cultures transformed by Jesus Christ, and to encourage the emergence of new faith communities equipped to be about God's mission in the world.

### Example

- People of multiple cultures—People of Colombian, Ecuadorian, and U.S. Latino and indigenous cultures, and of Anglo cultures of the United States.
- Transformed by Jesus Christ—New faith commitments, leadership development, transformation experiences that lead to more ministry.
- New faith communities—Quito, Riobamba and Calderón in Ecuador, plus encouraging others in Colombia and Central Plains.

## U.S. constituency

We serve nearly 1,000 congregations scattered across the 21 regional conferences that make up Mennonite Church USA. This diverse body brings additional passions and ideas for ministry that we seek to encourage.

### Example

- Central Plains Mennonite Conference showed interest in being a partner from the beginning, and has an Ecuador Partners group that leads the effort within their conference.
- Their initiatives have led to many learning tours and fellowship/work teams that have served in a wide variety of ways in Ecuador. Their fundraising has made it possible to expand ministry in times when the budget is tight.

## International partner

With over a century of mission effort around the world, we have worked to foster ministry relationships that align our priorities with the aspirations of more than 100 partner organizations in 57 countries worldwide.

### Example

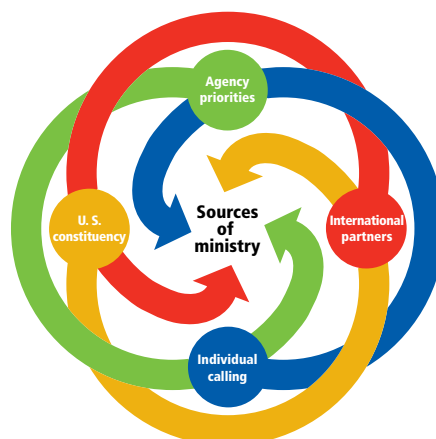
- The Colombia Mennonite Church sees ministry in Ecuador as a way to replicate themselves in helping to develop a new Ecuadorian Mennonite Church that shares their passion for holistic witness, and reaches out to refugees, indigenous churches and others.
- The new faith communities are under the spiritual umbrella of the Colombia Mennonite Church.

## Individual calling

In many instances, God places in the hearts and minds of individuals the desire to serve. We encourage such applicants to test their callings with friends, family and their faith community, and seek counsel and confirmation on what the Holy Spirit may be saying to them.

### Example

- Workers from a partner, like the Colombian church or Central Plains Mennonite Conference, have been nurtured toward this particular call.
- Workers from other parts of Mennonite Church USA have also felt an individual call to serve, and found their place in the context of the Ecuador Partnership.



During a recent partnership trip, Mission Network Latin America Director Linda Shelly had the opportunity to participate in a Bible study with Colombian refugees led by Tatiana Jhayya, a member of Quito Mennonite Church since 2012. This group forms the

base for the new church fellowship in Calderon. The Bible study she led included reflective questions. The group read the question, "In what areas of my life do I need forgiveness?"

Various people gave common responses, and then one of the refugee women, in tears, said, "I need forgiveness when I feel that God isn't with me anymore." Tatiana closed her book and looked lovingly at her sister. Several others began sharing times when they couldn't feel God's presence, but later God became more real to them again. One brother concluded, "Now I pray every morning. The Lord is doing a lot for me in a foreign land." Tatiana affirmed, "God does not abandon us."



Photo by Linda Shelly

**More background:** For the history and more information on the Ecuador Partnership, see [www.MennoniteMission.net/Ecuador](http://www.MennoniteMission.net/Ecuador) and [www.centralplainsmc.org/story-of-the-ecuador-partnership.html](http://www.centralplainsmc.org/story-of-the-ecuador-partnership.html).

A Colombian refugee family stays at the refugee house in Quito, Ecuador.



Photo by Linda Shelly

Josúe Moina, Brigthe Moina, Lizeth Moina, Alba Silva, Mission Network worker Alyssa Rodriguez and Karla Sanchez give leadership to Quito Mennonite Church's program to help prevent pregnancy among 10- to 14-year-olds in the Jardines del Inca neighborhood.





Photo provided

Dancers gather at a citywide praise dance in Macau.

# Fostering shalom

Nurturing a culture of peace in Macau, China

By Mission Network worker George Veith

Perhaps historically Christians do not associate mission with peacemaking, or vice versa. Yet as we have lived and ministered in Hong Kong and Macau for more than 20 years, my wife, Tobia, and I are convinced that sharing Jesus' message of love and salvation is about sharing the good news of God's kingdom of peace and reconciliation—reconciliation through Jesus to God, to each other, in the world, and to God's creation.

The message of peace (shalom) and reconciliation in Christ intersects with the Chinese value of harmony where healthy interpersonal relationships are emphasized and sought after. Chinese culture places a high emphasis on harmony—in nature, in the human body, in society, and in interpersonal relationships. Communication is indirect, since being direct would be too confrontational. Every effort is made not to cause someone to “lose face.” When harmony in a

relationship has been disrupted, it is considered very serious. Dealing with conflict is most often avoided, believing that time will deal with the situation.

## A culture of peace within the church

As the church, Christ's body, we are to have healthy and mutually edifying relationships with one another. Scripture calls us to love, bless, encourage, help and pray for one another as well as bear one another's burdens. Jesus says that the world will know that we are his disciples by the way in which we love one another. Scripture tells us to exhibit humility, patience, kindness, and all of the other fruits of the Spirit. As well, Scripture instructs believers how to deal with conflict in the church. As each person is reconciled to God, and the Holy Spirit empowers them to follow Christ, the challenge is also to grow together in community.



Building community involves establishing and nurturing healthy interpersonal relationships.

This is one aspect of peacemaking that we are focusing on in our ministry in Macau. As a doctoral student at Fuller Theological Seminary, the focus of my research has been on how to create a culture of peace (as described in Alan and Eleanor Kreider and Paulus

Widjaja's book, *A Culture of Peace*) in the Chinese church. How can the church be mindful of the Chinese culture's sensitivity to maintaining relationships and indirect ways of dealing with situations, but yet adhere to Scripture's teaching of "going to the brother who has sinned against you" (Matthew 18) or "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15)? How does one create and maintain a culture of peace in the church in which there is safety, openness, grace, and acceptance of one another? How do the

various elements of worship, teaching and outreach reflect the message of peace with God, with others, and with our world/creation through Jesus?

Long-term relationships with church pastors from the various different denominational churches in Macau have given me a unique opportunity to respectfully conduct research into building cultures of peace in the Chinese congregation. Engaging in this is raising awareness about this peace theology that is so at the heart of the gospel. In my interviewing of Chinese Protestant church pastors in Macau, there was overwhelming consensus that there is a need for this. Also, as a part of my doctoral research, I conducted a survey of Protestants in Macau and found that many church members wanted to receive basic training in how to deal with everyday conflict. Our hope is also to equip church leaders as mediators in dealing with conflicts that arise in the church.

### Peace and justice go together

Peacemaking also extends to dealing with justice issues. Peace and justice cannot be separated. Macau, being the Asian "Las Vegas," has been inundated with new casinos. Along with this have come other unwanted elements associated with casinos, such as an increase in gambling

addictions, Chinese mafia, prostitution, and human trafficking. The church in Macau is very small (less than 1 percent of the population) and often feels intimidated when thinking about what it can do to affect the culture. Peacemaking is, therefore, also about reminding the church that it is God's transformative agent in the world, called to be "salt" and "light." As mission workers involved in peacemaking, we are called to stand alongside the church and encourage it to "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God" (Micah 6:8).

In Macau, there are small efforts being made at ministering to and helping prostitutes come out of their trade, helping gamblers come free of their addictions, and sharing about hope in Jesus with the many factory workers in Macau who are often exploited by their employers. As peacemakers, we hope to encourage the church to see with God's eyes where other injustices are occurring, and to work so that God's kingdom might come to those situations.

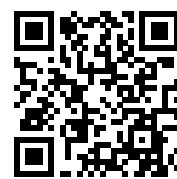
As the former Chinese principal of the interdenominational Bible school in Macau has said, "The Chinese churches of Macau need what the Anabaptists have to share regarding peacemaking, but they (these churches) don't know it yet." What we have to share as Anabaptists is not something unique, but simply what scripture teaches. Mission is peacemaking.

Sharing Jesus' message of love and salvation is about sharing the good news of God's kingdom of peace and reconciliation—reconciliation through Jesus to God, to each other, in the world, and to God's creation.



Mission Network workers Tobia and George Veith

Photo provided



### Web extra

DOOR Discern is raising up a diverse group of local leaders. Read the article by scanning the QR code at left or visit the website at [www.MennoniteMission.net/Stories/BeyondOurselves/WalkingTogether](http://www.MennoniteMission.net/Stories/BeyondOurselves/WalkingTogether).



# Building peace in South Korea



Photo by Luke Gascho

Jae Young Lee leads a class restorative circle at an elementary school in Seoul, South Korea.

## KOPI expands restorative justice and discipline mission to Namyangju school system

The Korea Peacebuilding Institute, a Mennonite Mission Network partner, has become the go-to organization for teaching conflict mediation in Seoul, South Korea. And it recently began taking its methods to the public schools.

It all started when Ji-yeon Jeong, director of the Namyangju Youth Counseling Center, read about restorative justice and discipline on the Korea Anabaptist Center website. When she realized the Peacebuilding Institute was just a two-minute walk from her home, “she saw this as a sign from God,” wrote Karen

Spicher, a lead teacher at Connexus, whose husband, Jae Young Lee, is the Institute’s director. Both are mission associates with Mission Network.

Jeong would not only enroll her 10-year-old son in Connexus, but would eventually meet with Lee and the KOPI staff about broader possibilities. They discussed how KOPI could help Jeong’s center do restorative discipline throughout the community. The meeting led to Lee doing lectures and workshops at Jeong’s center for teachers, students and parents. Soon, about 100 people had been trained. The plan is for them

to get advanced training to become mediators who will spread the word of peace, justice and discipline, and disciple others.

Through the efforts of this one well-connected parent, the Institute is now providing peace education for students and teachers in nearly 50 elementary, middle, and high schools in the Namyangju educational system. Four schools have committed to becoming restorative justice model schools. One of the courts outside of Seoul has asked KOPI to consult on how to set up a restorative justice program in the criminal justice system.

Beyond  
NEWS

## Expanding witness

### Mennonites in Burkina Faso celebrate Easter in new building

On Easter Sunday, with light streaming into a spacious, freshly painted room, the Mennonite Church of Ouagadougou choir sang, “I am following you, Jesus, through the torn curtain.” For seven years, worship had taken place in a cramped, dark corner of a rental property, but on March 31, this congregation met for the first time in their own building.

“We were celebrating, first, the resurrection of Jesus, and second, our new church home,” said Nancy Frey of Mennonite Mission Network, who has served with her family in Burkina Faso since August 2012. Prior to this, they ministered in Benin, Burkina Faso’s neighbor to the south.

The Ouagadougou congregation formed around a nucleus of Mennonite university students who came to the capital city to continue their education. Until recently, Mennonite congregations were mostly found in rural settings, as churches sprang up in villages where Mennonite missionaries began to work at biblical translation in the 1970s, and Burkinabe evangelists continued to spread the

good news of Jesus’ love.

“With no Mennonite congregation in Ouagadougou, we were losing our educated young people to other denominations,” said Siaka Traoré, national president of *Eglise Evangelique Mennonite du Burkina Faso*. “That is why we started the home for Mennonite university students in 2006. As they worshiped together, others joined them and the Mennonite Church of Ouagadougou started growing.”

On Easter Sunday, some first-time attenders increased the group of worshipers that usually numbers about 55. The mason and his family and some of the other builders joined the Mennonites in praising God.



## Effects of war

Videos explore legacy of war in Serbia

For Serbian young adults, the conflict of the 1990s is a vague memory, but the effects of that war still linger all around them.

Lane Stopher and his coworkers at the War Trauma Center in Serbia wanted to explore the aftermath of war on society. They enlisted the help of young adults by creating a video contest around the subject of “psychological effects of violence,” and asked the youth to submit videos for a chance to both educate the public and win prize money.

The grand-prize-winning film, *Stolen Freedom*, featured the story of Serbian refugees who were fleeing the conflict that was encroaching on their homes in parts of Bosnia and Croatia. The refugees thought they reached safety, but they were immediately turned around and forced into the army.

Stopher, from Central Mennonite Church in Archbold,

Ohio, works at the War Trauma Center through a partnership facilitated by Mennonite Mission Network. The film project was part of the “Looking Ahead by Facing the Past” project, funded by Mennonite Central Committee.

Other entries included a silent movie called *Trauma*, about a soldier who lives with the memory of his field nurse being

gunned down. Another film, *Temporarily Displaced*, is about a dissident who waits in fear as what appear to be government agents enter his house. Another video, called *20 Years Later*, documents the history of the war from the battles on the ground to Croatia’s admission into the European Union.



Lane Stopher, Mission Network worker in Serbia

MIMN file photo



Photo by Tim Lund

Congolese Mennonites gather at the Ngaba Mennonite Church for a service on March 30 thanking God for James Bertsche’s life and ministry.

## Legacy of mission

James Bertsche responded to God’s grace

James Edwin Bertsche, 91, left a 65-year legacy of mission leadership when he died February 27 at Greencroft Health Care in Goshen, Ind., after a three-month illness.

“Jim has left an indelible imprint, both on the Mennonite Church of Congo and on Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission,” said Rod Hollinger-Janzen, current executive coordinator of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, a position that Bertsche held from 1974-1986. “His unassuming spirit and ability to treat all persons with dignity have earned him deep respect and the listening ear of many, both on the African continent and in the larger Mennonite family in North America.”

Adolphe Komuesa Kalunga, president of *Communauté Mennonite au Congo* (Mennonite Church of Congo), said, “Jim Bertsche worked both during and after colonialism to defend the church in Congo. A val-

iant warrior for the gospel, he risked his life and that of his family. He sowed seeds that will last forever.”

Bertsche was born June 20, 1921, in Bluffton, Ohio, to Emma (Steiner) and Harry Bertsche. He attended Taylor University in Upland, Ind., where he met Genevieve “Jenny” Shuppert. They were married in 1946. In 1948, the Bertsches joined Congo Inland Mission, now known as Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

For the next 25 years, James’s ministry included village itineration, teaching, preaching, mentoring mission personnel and Congolese church leaders, translating biblical materials, and legal representation for the mission and the Congolese Mennonite Church. Bertsche continued to be an active advocate for mission, traveling widely and sharing stories of faith and God’s goodness, until a few months before his death.



# New workers enter service

Mission workers beginning assignments between January and April 2013

## DOOR Discern

### Miami unit

**Matt Weaver**, Hesston, Kan., Whitestone Mennonite Church (Hesston), served one month in Miami.

## DOOR Discover

### Atlanta unit

**Barre (Vt.)**

**Congregational Church**

**College of Central Florida**, Ocala, Fla.

**First Congregational Church**, Winchester, Mass.

**First Presbyterian Church**, Raleigh, N.C.

**Presbyterian Campus Ministry**, Greenville, N.C.

**Presbyterian Campus Ministry at Virginia Tech**, Blacksburg, Va.

**St. Matthew's United Methodist Church**, Madison, Miss.

**Wartburg College**, Waverly, Iowa

### Chicago unit

**Bay View Lutheran Church**, Sturgeon Bay, Wis.

**Central United Methodist Church**, Traverse City, Mich.

**Chelsea (Mich.) First United Methodist Church**

**First Presbyterian Church**, Cedar Falls, Iowa

**First Presbyterian Church**, Iowa City, Iowa

**Union Congregational United Church of Christ**, Green Bay, Wis.

**Valley Church**, Allendale, Mich.

### Denver unit

**Central Christian School**, Hutchinson, Kan.

**Trinity Christian School**, Cedar Hill, Texas

### Hollywood unit

**Brookside Congregational Church**, Manchester, N.H.

**Copper Canyon Academy**, Rimrock, Ariz.

**Eastside Catholic School**, Sammamish, Wash.

**Presbyterian Campus Ministry**, Raleigh, N.C.

**University of Montana Office for Civic Engagement**, Missoula, Mont.

### Miami unit

**Fairfield (Conn.) University**

**First Baptist Church**, Wilmington, N.C.

**Harvest United Methodist Church**, Bradenton, Fla.

**Hope College**, Holland, Mich.

**Peace Presbyterian Church**, Bradenton, Fla.

**Pepperdine University**, Malibu, Calif.

**University of Arizona Presbyterian Campus Ministry**, Tucson, Ariz.

**Widener University**, Chester, Pa.

### San Antonio unit

**Brenham (Texas) Presbyterian Church**

**North Central College**, Naperville, Ill.

**Schreiner University Campus Ministry**, Kerrville, Texas

## International

**Delmar and Tamara Yoder** completed a three-week special assignment working

with PROMINOA in Argentina, the mission entity of the Buenos Aires church, in partnership with North Central Conference and Mennonite Mission Network. They are members of Strawberry Lake Mennonite Church in Ogema, Minn.

**Jae Young Lee** began a two-year term as a Mission Associate serving in South Korea as president of Connexus, director of Korea Peacebuilding Institute, and director of NARPI, together with his wife, Karen Spicher, and daughter, Lomie. He is a member of Grace and Peace Mennonite Church (South Korea).

**Brad Graber and Brenna Steury Graber** began a two-year term serving as youth workers among Mennonite congregations in Paris. He is a member of Bahia Vista Mennonite Church in Sarasota, Fla., and she is a member of North Goshen (Ind.) Mennonite Church.

**Genessa and Tyler Hartford**, along with their five children, completed a pastoral sabbatical visiting communities and Mennonite congregations in Germany. They attend Pleasant View Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., where Tyler serves as pastor.

**Marilyn Peters** began a three-year term serving with Christian Associates International in Uruguay. She is a member of Neffsville Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa.

**Alyssa Rodríguez** began a two-year term serving the Quito Mennonite Church in



Photo by Brenna Steury Graber

Brad (third from left) and Brenna Steury Graber serve as youth workers in three Mennonite congregations in Paris. The retreat they participated in provided a way to get to know the youth who come from many different countries and cultures. Pictured above are Manon, Rudy, Brad, Romain, Timothée and Valentin involved in a team-building activity.

Ecuador, supporting its congregational and local ministries with an emphasis on peace education and other children's programs. She is a member of First Mennonite Church of Iowa City.

**Justin Shank and Valerie Showalter** began a two-year term serving as community hosts with Clapton Park United Reformed Church, a creative urban congregation known locally as Round Chapel, in the East End of London. They are members of Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

**Paulus and Sumatha Thalathoti** began a two-year term serving as Mission Associates with Peace Proclamation Ministries International, a network of pastors that leads small worship

groups in tribal villages in India. This assignment is in partnership with Plains Mennonite Church (Hatfield, Pa.) of Franconia Mennonite Conference.

## SOOP

**Jane and Marion E. Beyeler**, Orrville, Ohio, Orrville Mennonite Church, served three weeks in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

**Leroy and Joyce Bontrager**, Goshen, Ind., Pleasant View Mennonite Church, served 27 days in Glendale, Ariz.

**Rebecca Born and Carlos Velasquez**, Abbotsford, British Columbia, served one month in Tucson, Ariz.

**James and Kay Burkett**, West Liberty, Ohio, Bethel Mennonite

Church, served one month in Austin, Texas.

**Linda and Roger Clemmons**, Normal, Ill., Mennonite Church of Normal, served three months in Gotha, Fla.

**Alfred Driedger**, Kingsville, Ontario, Leamington (Ontario) United Mennonite Church, served one month in El Dorado, Ark.

**Roger and Sharon Duarte**, Plano, Texas, Fellowship Bible Church (Richardson, Texas), served two weeks in Tucson, Ariz.

**David and Milly Dyck**, Winnipeg, Manitoba, served two weeks in Glendale, Ariz.

**Madelaine and Phillip Friesen**, Martensville, Saskatchewan, served one month in Reedley, Calif.

**Gene and Judy Gascho**, Aurora, Ore., served two weeks in Glendale, Ariz.

**Jim and Lila Gascho**, Goshen, Ind., Waterford Mennonite Church, served more than one month in Glendale, Ariz.

**David and Fern Gerber**, Goshen, Ind., Eighth Street Mennonite Church and Whitestone Mennonite Church (Hesston, Kan.), served three weeks in Brooksville, Fla.

**Gloria Graber**, Stryker, Ohio, Lockport Mennonite Church, served two months in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

**Linda and Warren Grasse**, Telford, Pa., Indian Valley Faith Fellowship (Harleysville, Pa.), served one month in Glendale, Ariz.

(Continued on page 14)

## Creative peacemaking

Congregations across Mennonite Church USA find innovative ways to share love in their communities

By Jason Boone



**P**eachmaking across our church is as diverse as the conferences, congregations and people who make up our larger body. When I travel in my role as coordinating minister of the Peace and Justice

Support Network, I get to see peacemaking manifest itself in many different forms across our church.

Peacemaking isn't a rigid ideology, but the creative application of Christ's love to all situations and relationships we encounter. Here are just a few snapshots of that creative love in action.

Immigration is an important issue in our church and our nation. I've been a part of two immigration seminars over the past few months—one with Southeast Conference in Florida and one with Western District Conference in Kansas. While we often think of immigration issues as being important in areas along the U.S./Mexico border, the effects of our nation's immigration policies affect people, families and communities everywhere. Truly, the border is everywhere, and as a church we are educating ourselves and learning how to take action.

Last year in Philadelphia, I met with area pastors at Oxford Circle Mennonite Church to talk about the problem of the "economic draft"—a term that refers to when young men and women join the armed forces

because they seemingly have no other options that would provide economic opportunity. Churches, conferences and peace committees are thinking creatively about how to provide opportunities for youth who may not be bound for college and have limited employment opportunities. Enlarging voluntary service and creating jobs are just two of the channels they are developing to address this issue.

In California, I got to spend time with Hyun and Sue Hur. They have a passion for bringing peace and conflict transformation skills to Korean Americans. After spending time as church planters, now Hyun and Sue embark on ReconciliAsian, a peace center aimed at emerging leaders in local Korean immigrant churches.

At Trinity Mennonite Church in Phoenix, Pastor Hal Schrader and the community are committed to being bearers of peace and reconciliation to their community. Coming this summer, they will offer a workshop on dealing with trauma. Learning those skills prepares them to offer healing to many folks who deal with the aftermath of trauma and traumatic events.

There are several churches with a heart for helping returning veterans find healing. Metro Mennonite in Oklahoma City and Watertown Mennonite in New York State are examples. As we understand more the effects of war on the souls of soldiers, we see that the

*(Continued from page 13)*

**LeAnne and Norman Gross**, Oneida, Ill., Faith Lutheran Church (Wataga, Ill.), served two months in Glendale, Ariz.

**Ernest and Lois Hess**, Lancaster, Pa., East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church, served almost two weeks in Americus, Ga.

**Glen and Ruby Hochstedler**, Wakarusa, Ind., Waterford Mennonite Church (Goshen, Ind.), served one month in Glendale, Ariz.

**Cynthia Hoff**, Emmaus, Pa., First Mennonite Church (Wadsworth, Ohio), served two weeks in Akron, Pa.

**Mary Jane Hooper**, Shipshewana, Ind., Belmont Mennonite Church (Elkhart, Ind.), served two weeks in Whitesburg, Ky.

**Louetta Hurst**, Lancaster, Pa., Forest Hills Mennonite Church (Leola, Pa.), served two weeks in Whitesburg, Ky.

**Barbara and Byron Kauffman**, West Liberty, Ohio, Bethel Mennonite Church,

served more than one month in Atlanta.

**Gene and Virginia Kaufman**, Parker, S.D., Salem Mennonite Church (Freeman, S.D.), served one month in Glendale, Ariz.

**Jon Kennell**, Eureka, Ill., Roanoke Mennonite Church, served one month in Waco, Texas.

**Ed and Rhoda Longenecker**, Lancaster, Pa., Lititz (Pa.) Mennonite Church, served three weeks in Waco, Texas.

**James and Rachel Metzler**, Remlap, Ala., Choctaw Christian

Church (Louisville, Miss.), served four days in Meridian Miss., and seven days in Akron, Pa.

**Kathleen Miller**, Marion, S.D., served two weeks in Tucson, Ariz.

**Leslie and Patricia Miller**, La Junta, Colo., Emmanuel Mennonite Church, served one week in Tucson, Ariz.

**Phyllis and Bill Miller**, Goshen, Ind., College Mennonite Church, served more than three weeks in Brooksville, Fla.

**Elena Nussbaum**, Apple Creek, Ohio, Sonnenberg Mennonite Church (Kidron, Ohio),

served two months in Burlington, Wash.

**Ruth and Sig Polle**, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Bethel Mennonite Church, served three weeks in Tucson, Ariz.

**Alethea Putnam**, Seattle, Wash., University Baptist Church, served three weeks in Glendale, Ariz.

**Donna and Randy Ratzlaff**, Henderson, Neb., Bethesda Mennonite Church, served more than one week in Glendale, Ariz.

**Kay and John Reimer**, Normal, Ill., Mennonite Church of Normal,

served four months in Gotha, Fla.

**Sue and Wesley Richard**, Goshen, Ind., West Goshen Church of the Brethren, served one month in Harrisburg, Pa.

**Bonnie and Dwayne Rufenacht**, La Junta, Colo., Emmanuel Mennonite Church, served almost two months in Tucson, Ariz.

**Karen and Lynn Rupp**, Toledo, Ohio, Toledo Mennonite Church, served more than one week in Atlanta.

**Anna Belle and Arden Schmucker**,



## Courageous peacemaking

Indonesian pastor creates unlikely alliance

By Ervin Stutzman



Paul the Apostle once described the Christian's spiritual armor, encouraging his readers to have their "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15). It takes good shoes to traverse the rocky ground that we sometimes encounter in our efforts to share the good news.

Especially where the fabric of communities is torn apart by violence, the good news of Jesus Christ can shine its brightest light in the darkest of circumstances. In that vein, I am often moved by the stories of brothers and sisters in Indonesia who reach out to their neighbors with the good news of the gospel in extremely difficult circumstances. Because there is such strong religious tension in some communities, this good news often takes the form of Christian peacemaking.

Consider the example of Paulus Hartono, a Mennonite pastor in Surakarta, Indonesia. Several years ago, Pastor Paulus heard rumors that a radical wing of Muslim activists had announced their intention to blow up a local radio station, which was operated by a moderate Islamic group. The one who bore the news urged him to do something to prevent such violence.

After seeking God's direction and protection, Pastor Paulus took the courageous step of going to visit the head of the radical group, a telecommunications specialist. By God's grace, he was able to persuade the leader to forsake his violent plans, thus earning him the reputation of a peacemaker.

Not long afterward, a destructive tsunami hit the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia, wreaking some of the worst flood damage they had ever known. In response, Pastor Paulus joined Christian work crews to bring relief to the coast of northern Sumatra, where the predominately Muslim population was severely impacted by the tsunami. To assist this Christian relief effort, Paulus recruited the head of the radical group to set up vital radio transceivers. Because of their earlier encounter, the commando accepted the assignment, leading to such an unprecedented level of cooperation between Christians and Muslims that many took special notice. A further outcome was that this radical Muslim leader sent some of his commando trainees to a Christian university to study peacebuilding.

What began as a courageous act of peacebuilding on the part of a local pastor has resulted in a witness for Christ that has touched hundreds of people's lives.

Ervin Stutzman is executive director of Mennonite Church USA.

church has a unique role in helping veterans find peace.

Election-day communion offered us a chance to celebrate unity and allegiance to Jesus in a divisive election season. When I was in Goshen, Ind., I spent time with Mark Schloneger of North Goshen Mennonite Church, one of the initiators of election-day communion, along with Kevin Gasser of Staunton Mennonite Church in Virginia. Participating in communion didn't solve our nation's problems, but it did allow us to remain hopeful that they can be solved.

Most recently, I was in Apple Creek, Ohio, at Salem Mennonite Church. The community there has a long history of service and support through Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Central Committee, and other agencies. They continue that work and develop creative ways to be agents of reconciliation in their own community. We often think of peacemaking as being needed in very urban areas or developing nations. It's exciting to talk with communities like Salem Mennonite about where peace might be needed in a rural setting.

There's much more, of course! Peace takes many shapes in Mennonite Church USA. What does peace look like in your community?

Jason Boone is coordinating minister for peace and justice for Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Mission Network.

Alliance, Ohio, Beech Mennonite Church (Louisville, Ohio), served more than one month in Hesston, Kan.

**Marlene and Stanley Smucker**, North Newton, Kan., Shalom Mennonite Church (Newton, Kan.), served two weeks in Tucson, Ariz.

**Bryan and Judi Stauffer**, Yakima, Wash., Salem Mennonite Church (Keizer, Ore.), served more than one week in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

**Loren and Miriam Stauffer**, Goshen, Ind., Waterford Mennonite

Church, served two weeks in Glendale, Ariz.

**Gary and Sharon Stoltzfus**, Elverson, Pa., Conestoga Mennonite Church (Morgantown, Pa.), served one week in Reedley, Calif.

**Patricia and William Strunk**, Alden, N.Y., Alden Mennonite Church, served one month in Toano, Va.

**Robert Walson**, Indianapolis, Ind., First Mennonite Church, served two weeks in Tucson, Ariz.

**Curtis and Sherry Wenger**, Goshen, Ind., Berkey Avenue Mennonite Church,

served one week in Atlanta.

**Faith and James Wenger**, Hesston, Kan., Whitestone Mennonite Church, served two weeks in Glendale, Ariz.

**John and Virginia Wenger**, Goshen, Ind., Waterford Mennonite Church, served three weeks in Glendale, Ariz.

**Darren and Jodi Yeager**, Archbold, Ohio, Tedrow Mennonite Church (Wauseon, Ohio), served two months in Akron, Pa.



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