

OHIO MENNONITE EVANGEL

News & Views of Ohio Conference

MAR/APR 2021



ohiomennoniteconference.org

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Conference holds first virtual Assembly

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ohio Conference held its 2021 Annual Conference Assembly (ACA) virtually rather than in person. On March 6 delegates from all around the Conference met on Zoom for business sessions and worship.

One hundred thirty-three people registered for ACA, including 122 delegates from 32 congregations.

DAY INCLUDES WORSHIP

In addition to business sessions, the online annual meeting included a time of worship, focusing on the theme "Come and See: The Mission



Vikki Pruitte-Sorrells, pastor of Lee Heights Community Church in Cleveland, served as worship leader for the online worship service during ACA.

of the Church in God's Country," based on John 1:35-51 and 1 Peter 3:15-16a. The featured speaker was Brad Roth, pastor and author of *God's Country: Faith, Hope,*

and the Future of the Rural Church. Brad Roth also was the speaker for the 2021 missional conference which was

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Conference explores mission in the rural church

Speaker Brad Roth helped participants focus on God's mission in the rural church during the evenings of March 4 and 5 during Ohio Conference's missional conference.

One hundred nineteen people participated in this event, which was held on the Zoom videoconferencing platform.

A pastor of a rural church in Kansas, Roth is also the author of the book *God's Country: Faith, Hope, and the Future of the Rural Church*. He told conference participants that authentic ministry begins in the love of place and said that the good of the church is bound

up with the good of the community.

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VOL. LXXV, NO. 2

MAR/APR 2021

Editor: Ann H. Leaman

Ohio Mennonite Evangel is published six times per year by the Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA, Box 210, Kidron OH 44636, telephone (330) 857-5421.

All material for publication should be submitted to the editor at 5854 Sunland St. NE, Louisville OH 44641, or via telephone: 330-453-0150, or e-mail: ohioevangel@gmail.com, one month prior to desired publication date.

Ohio Mennonite Evangel is distributed to all households of Ohio Conference congregations, other interested individuals and church agencies.

Send subscription information and email address changes to the editor at ohioevangel@gmail.com.

EDITORIAL

What should remain?

As I was preparing to report about this year's Annual Conference Assembly (ACA), I looked back at the report of the 2020 ACA, which took place at Sharon Mennonite Church in Plain City on March 7, 2020, shortly before much of our state shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reading again the report of the 2020 ACA, I was particularly struck by some of the questions that Conference Minister Dick Barrett asked delegates to consider:

- What are you doing in your community that is missional?
- If your church wasn't there, would it be

missed by your community?

- What is your congregation doing to raise up leaders?
- How can we as Ohio Conference help you do that?

To me, these questions seem just as pertinent as they were a year ago. My guess is that after a year of challenges and changes, our answers may not be quite the same as they were 12 months ago.

During this year's ACA and the 2021 missional conference, our speaker, Brad Roth, encouraged participants to seek the good of the community in which

they find themselves. I wonder: What does it mean for your congregation to seek the good of your community? Has this pandemic changed your approach to building community?

It occurs to me that COVID-19 has pushed the "pause button" on a lot of the things we have normally done in our congregations. Maybe this time of pausing is an opportunity to re-evaluate what is really central to our congregations. What programs and traditions are best left in the past? What practices are really foundational and need to be preserved? Where is the Holy Spirit leading us now?

— ahl

Recordings of ACA are online

Recordings of Annual Conference Assembly are available on the Ohio Conference website. Recordings

include all three business sessions and the worship service. To view any of

these recordings, go to <https://bit.ly/AboutACA>. ■

Personnel of the Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA

Moderator: Terry Shue — terrywshue@gmail.com
Assistant Moderator: Paula Snyder Belousek — pastor@salemmennonite.com
Credentialing Ministry Chair: Vickie Yoder — rev.vickieyoder@gmail.com
Gifts Discernment Ministry Chair: Alvis Pettker — pastor.alvis.pettker@gmail.com
Stewardship Ministry Chair: Andrew Blount — blountandrew@hotmail.com
Conference Minister: Dick Barrett — ohioconferenceminister@gmail.com
Regional Pastor: Ralph Reinford — ralphreinford@gmail.com
Regional Pastor: Tony Doehrmann — ocrpwest@gmail.com
Administrative Secretary: Judy King — ohmc@zoominternet.net
Finance Coordinator: Stan Helmuth — cboh1@zoominternet.net
Conference Editor: Ann Leaman — ohioevangel@gmail.com
Coordinator of Volunteers: Alys Short — alysashort@gmail.com

Virtual Assembly

Continued from page 1

held during the evenings of March 4 and 5.

During in-person annual meetings, delegates are seated in table groups so that they can discuss topics raised during presentations. For this assembly, delegates also had several times for small group discussion using Zoom's breakout room feature.

MC USA MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES

During the business sessions, Conference Minister Dick Barrett reported to delegates about the Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) membership guidelines. He noted that MC USA membership guidelines deal with membership of a conference in MC USA, and they do not relate to a congregation's membership in MC USA.

In January the Executive Board of MC USA made the recommendation to retire the MC USA membership guidelines. However, because the denominational delegate assembly planned for this summer will be held virtually, there will be no action on the recommendation about the membership guidelines this summer.

Reviewing some history, Dick Barrett noted that in 2016, Ohio Conference delegates passed a resolution stating that a congregation does not have to be a member of Mennonite Church USA to be a member of the Ohio Conference. In 2017 Ohio Conference delegates voted to continue affiliation with MC USA with several possible triggers for review of this decision. One of those triggers

for review was a substantive change to the denominational membership guidelines.

He said the Leadership Team of Ohio Conference believes that the actual retirement of the membership guidelines would be a substantive change that would trigger a review of Ohio Conference's affiliation with MC USA. "As the Leadership Team of Ohio Conference, we see our affiliation with MC USA as more than one issue," he said.

In anticipation of MC USA's Membership Guidelines being retired sometime in 2022, and in keeping with the resolution passed by the Conference's delegate body in 2017, the Ohio Conference Leadership Team is suggesting a two-step path to begin discerning what future affiliation with a denomination might look like:

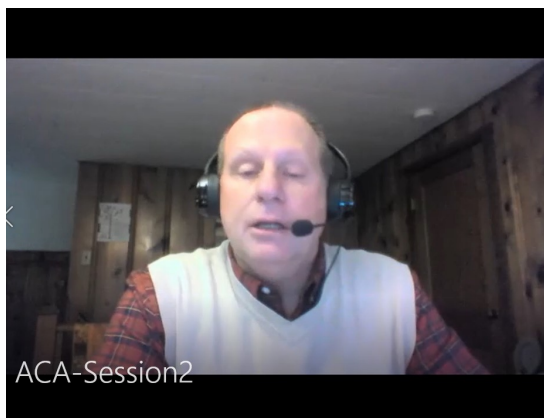
- In the upcoming months Ohio Conference Leadership Team, with input from our pastors and delegates, will continue to clarify our own identity, purpose, mission and God's vision for us in the future.

- We will discern together what it means for Ohio Conference to affiliate with a denomination today and what we want that relationship to look like in the future.

"We want to make clear that these action steps are in no way indicative of what we might decide as a Conference regarding future affiliation with MC USA if a resolution to retire its membership guidelines were to pass in 2022," he said. (A copy of Dick Barrett's statement about the membership guidelines and a timeline of events related to the membership guidelines are online at <http://bit.ly/ACADocuments>.)

SPENDING PLAN

Delegates approved a spending plan for the 2021-22 fiscal year. The plan calls for spending totaling \$383,500, an increase of \$2,300 from the current fiscal year. A copy of the 2020-21 spending plan is posted on the "Assembly Documents" page of the Ohio Conference website: <http://bit.ly/ACADocuments>.



Conference Minister Dick Barrett speaks to delegates about Mennonite Church USA's membership guidelines.

"In the upcoming months Ohio Conference Leadership Team, with input from our pastors and delegates, will continue to clarify our own identity, purpose, mission and God's vision for us in the future."

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CONFERENCE MINISTER MUSINGS

Return to our roots

By Dick Barrett
Conference Minister

I write this just a few days after we concluded our 2021 Annual Conference Assembly (ACA). Because of the continued COVID pandemic, ACA had to be held virtually, but due to the efforts of many gifted people in Conference and our many congregations, the feedback that we have received so far has been very positive. The highlights were the worship service, the missional stories that were shared, and the way people were able to interact.

The main speaker for the worship service, as well as the missional conference which was held on the Thursday and Friday evenings prior to ACA, was Brad Roth from Moundridge, Kansas. He is author of the book *God's Country: Faith, Hope and the Future of the Rural Church*. Brad emphasized the importance of God's people being missional, bringing the Good News of Jesus in whatever setting we find ourselves in. I believe that he was able to offer hope for all of us, whether we find ourselves in a rural setting, an urban setting, or someplace in between.

A big thank-you goes to Ohio Conference staff, the Missional Planning Team, ACA Planning Team, ACA Worship Planning Team, and all the volunteers that helped put the missional conference and the Annual Conference Assembly together. Even more importantly, we give thanksgiving, praise, glory and honor to the triune God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I also write this with springtime in the air. Perhaps it is more welcomed and appreciated this year after what has been a long dark season which actually began just after our 2020 Annual Conference Assembly and the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. With vaccines finally being administered to large numbers of people and the numbers contracting the virus decreasing, there also seems to be hope that we are approaching the other side of the pandemic when people and congregations can safely gather again and life can start returning to some sense of normalcy.

However, as I shared at Annual Conference Assembly, there are some things that this past year revealed that will not be going away anytime soon. Those things include racial discrimination, violence in many of our cities, and polarizations of people that is just as prevalent in our churches as it is outside of them. How do we as a conference of churches work with the many challenges that face



us? How do we as a conference of churches offer a hope and future that is different than the world outside our churches is offering?

My suggestion is that we return to two doctrines that were foundational to most of our Anabaptist and Mennonite forefathers and foremothers: 1) the need for a new birth; and 2) a two-kingdom theology. I know that those two doctrines have held different meanings over the years and they have been distorted at times and over time, but to abandon them altogether to align with mainstream denominations and our culture has been to our detriment as a denomination that has something different to offer to the world.

Jesus said to the Pharisee Nicodemus, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again" (John 3:3). Again, Jesus

"How do we as a conference of churches offer a hope and future that is different than the world outside our churches is offering?"

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Musings

Continued from page 4

said to him, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at me saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit” (John 3:5-8).

This leads us to Jesus’ thoughts on the Kingdom of God: Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place” (John 18:36), meaning Jesus’ kingdom, the Kingdom of God, does not look like the kingdom of this world.

Most of the early Anabaptists and Mennonites felt that one

needed to be born again, a rebirth by the power of the Holy Spirit, in conjunction with repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, for spiritual transformation to take place in one’s life.

Those same early Anabaptists and Mennonites did not believe it was the role of the church to change the world. Christians are supposed to represent the kingdom of God in the kingdom of this world, to offer something different, to be salt and light. A study of congregations and members of Mennonite Church USA in 2006 by Conrad Kanagy (released in a book titled *Road Signs for the Journey*) found that across the United States, members of our congregations had become more and more like our culture in just about every category — the authority of Scripture, views on sexuality, education, financial stewardship, security, political

divisions, etc. As Mennonite Church USA prepares to begin a new study on beliefs across its congregations and members, my prediction is that this study will find that the trend has continued exponentially.

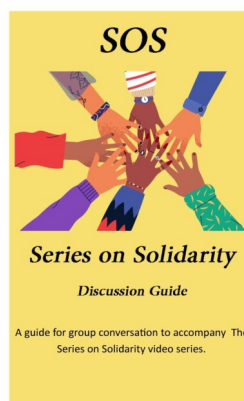
What if we were to return to our roots as Mennonites and Anabaptist Christians as radical (derived from the Latin word *radix* – root) disciples of Jesus Christ who are called not to change the world but to live out the kingdom of God in this world, inviting others to join the kingdom and to follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? That would cause us to examine all the different ways we have given in to the kingdom of the world. Real transformation and change have to start with us, Christians who are on the journey of continual conversion through the work and power of the Holy Spirit. May it all be for the glory of Jesus’ name! ■

“Christians are supposed to represent the kingdom of God in the kingdom of this world, to offer something different, to be salt and light.”

Video series promotes discussion

A group of Ohio Conference congregations from Wayne County has joined together to create a video series focused on intercultural ministry and racial reconciliation. *Series on Solidarity* is a six-part series of videos and accompanying questions for small group discussions.

The goal of this series is to facilitate understanding and to promote the equality of all people. The Ohio Conference supported this project with a ministry grant in 2020. For links to these videos and the discussion guide, see <http://bit.ly/SeriesonSolidarity>. ■



Virtual Assembly

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LIFEBRIDGE RELEASED

At ACA Ohio Conference formally recognized the departure of a congregation, LifeBridge Community Church in Dover, from the Conference. Dick Barrett read a letter from the LifeBridge leadership team acknowledging the leadership of interim pastor Dan Hooley during the congregation's transition time after the departure of LifeBridge's founding pastor. LifeBridge had previously been affiliated both with Ohio Conference and Evana, but has chosen to affiliate only with Evana. Dick Barrett led in a prayer of blessing for LifeBridge.

In other business, the delegates:

- Approved the minutes of the 2020 ACA;
- Were introduced to pastors with new assignments in the Ohio Conference;
- Affirmed the personnel slate presented by the Gifts

Discernment Ministry (see pages 7-10 for information about these individuals);

- Heard a report about the Conference visioning process from Conference Minister Dick Barrett;
- Heard from Dick Barrett that the Conference staff, Leadership Team and Ministry Development Team are participating in anti-racism training through Widerstand Consulting;
- Recognized the achievement of Jeremy Clevenger of Wooster Mennonite Church, one of five graduates of the Journey leadership development program at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary this year;
- Heard a report from Alex Dye of the Missional Planning Team, about the Missional Discipleship Initiative and the Missional Festival

scheduled for June 2022 at Bluffton University;

- Heard from David Elkins, a member of the pastoral team at Central Mennonite, who reflected on what the congregation has learned from the process of doing church services online during the pandemic;
- Heard from a group of pastors from Wayne County about a video series that they have developed, *Series on Solidarity*, which deals with racial reconciliation;
- Learned about the upcoming pastor-spouse retreat from Coordinator of Volunteers Alysa Short;
- Heard reports from Glen Guyton, executive director of Mennonite Church USA and Karla Minter of Mennonite Mission Network;
- Celebrated communion. ■

Missional conference

Continued from page 1

Roth also reminded participants that the Gospel is a *relationship*, not just a good idea.

Roth discussed a variety of topics over the two evenings: evangelism in a rural context, the importance of prayer, and discerning when it's time to do more or time to do less.

Participants were able to discuss key concepts in smaller

groups using Zoom's breakout room feature.

Both sessions of the missional conference were recorded. If you missed the conference, you can watch the recordings on the Conference website:

<https://bit.ly/2021MissionalConferenceInfo>. ■



Brad Roth

Volunteers accept Conference positions

Members of Ohio Conference congregations who volunteer their time play a vital role in Conference life. Without the help of numerous volunteers, many of the programs and functions of the Ohio Conference could not take place.

Much of the work of Ohio Conference is done by the Leadership Team, the Ministry Development Team, the Credentialing Ministry, the Stewardship Ministry and the Gifts Discernment Ministry. Delegates at Annual Conference Assembly affirmed the following individuals for service:

Moderator

Name: Terry Shue
Home congregation: Salem Mennonite (Kidron)

Occupation: Director of development at Central Christian School

Previous service: Pastor to congregations in Ohio conference, director of leadership development for Mennonite Church USA

Family information: Terry and Kay live in Kidron, and Kay is a music teacher in the Orrville school system. Terry and Kay have three grown daughters and five grandchildren.



Goals: To walk with the staff and other leaders and pastors of Ohio Conference through a challenging time to clarify and embrace the vision that God has for us as a people.

Hobbies/special interests: I enjoy making functional pottery, wood-fired pizza, hiking and talking about the Camino, gardening, and hanging out with our grandchildren!

Assistant Moderator

Name: Paula Snyder Belousek
Home congregation: Salem Mennonite (Elida)

Occupation: Pastor

Previous

service:

(Ohio Conference) Assistant moderator, chaired conference pastor search committee, Missional Planning Team, helped plan pastor-spouse and women in leadership retreats

Family information: Married to Darrin; mother to Liam

Goals: In collaboration with Ministry Development Team to develop resources and relevant programming to assist congregations, pastors and members to better love God and neighbor, to develop and support women leaders, and to assist the Conference in navigating the challenges of this present moment, while keeping Jesus at our center.

Hobbies/special interests: Learning about different cultures and people, international cooking/foods, walking, traveling, reading



Stewardship Ministry — Chair

Name: Andrew Blount

Home congregation:

Bethel Mennonite (West Liberty)

Occupation: Non-profit administrator



Stewardship Ministry — Finance Focus

Name: Lyle Troyer

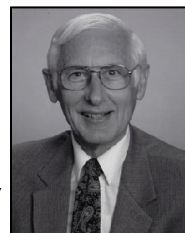
Home congregation: Peace Mennonite (Elyria)

Occupation: Retired treasurer

Previous service: Secretary for Mennonite Men, member

of Stewardship Ministry
Family information: Married to Edna Troyer

Goals: Good stewardship of Conference contributions
Hobbies/special interests: Reading through the entire Bible each year



Stewardship Ministry — Stewardship Focus

Name: Roger Crossgrove

Home congregation:

Zion Mennonite (Archbold)

Occupation: Retired farmer

Previous service: Member of Stewardship Ministry



Volunteers

Continued from page 7

Credentialing Ministry

Name: Doug King

Home congregation: Tedrow Mennonite (Wauseon)

Occupation: Pastor

Previous service: Member of

Credentialing Ministry, mentor for several pastors during their licensing period

Family information: Wife, Paula; children — Danielle, Megan and Trevor

Goals: I look forward to meeting credentialed leaders from across the Ohio Conference. I hope to continue finding ways to encourage pastors and leaders to be healthy in all areas of ministry and life.

Hobbies/special interests: I enjoy hiking, biking, gardening, and backyard meteorology.



Credentialing Ministry

Name: Myron Weaver

Home congregation: Maple Grove Mennonite (Hartville)

Occupation: Executive director, Orr-Villa Retirement Community

Previous service: Pastor, member of Credentialing Ministry

Family information: Married to Sheryl Weaver; we have two married sons and four grandchildren.

Goals: To support and empower current pastors, and to encourage others to consider



the call to the ministry.

Hobbies/special interests: Travel, reading, bike riding and walking

Credentialing Ministry

Name: Deanna (Dee) Custar

Home congregation: Salem (Waldron, Michigan)

Occupation: Williams County CASA coordinator, retired pastor

Previous service: In past — Credentialing Ministry, Ministry Development Team; currently — contact person for sexual misconduct complaints

Family information: Married to (recently-retired-busy-with-projects) Dan; mother to two sons (and daughters-in-law); grandmother to two granddaughters and three grandsons; great-grandmother to two great-granddaughters and three great-grandsons

Goals: To learn the responsibilities of the Credentialing Ministry and support the Ministry in any way I can.

Hobbies/special interests: playing dulcimer, interacting with people from different cultures, throwing pottery and hanging out with our grandkids



Ministry Development Team

Name: Dan King

Occupation: Retired pastor/teacher

Previous service: Pastor at Dover Christian Fellowship for three years, pastor at



Beech Mennonite Church in Louisville for nine and a half years, member of Ministry Development Team for four years, member of Immigration Resource Team for two and a half years

Family information: Married to Jeanette Neuenschwander King; two adult sons — Matthew (Renata) and Philip (Amanda)

Goals: To be part of a team (Ministry Development Team) that helps congregations become healthier as they pursue their God-given mission

Hobbies/special interests: Gardening, beekeeping, kayaking, hiking, reading

Ministry Development Team — Witness Focus Leader

Name: Joel Shenk

Home congregation: Toledo Mennonite

Occupation: Pastor of Toledo Mennonite Church since 2010

Previous service: I served on the Missional Church Task Force of Ohio Conference, and I am currently on the Leadership Development Task Force of Ohio Conference. Prior to coming to Ohio Conference, I worked at the Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference as the director of learning and service ministries. I graduated from Fuller Theological Seminary with an M.Div.

Family information: I am married to Emiley and have two daughters, Roslyn (10) and Lizette (7)

Goals: My goal is to link the good work that was begun (and is ongoing) with the Missional



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Volunteers

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Church Task force to the work of the Ministry Development Team. Hopefully, we will continue to help Ohio Conference churches embrace God's missionary calling.

Hobbies/special interests: I enjoy fly fishing, reading, and running.

Ministry Development Team

— Prayer Coordinator

Name: Dan Hooley

Home congregation: First Mennonite (Canton)

Occupation: Interim pastor

Previous service:

Member of Ministry Development Team, member and interim chair of Credentialing Ministry, former pastor of First Mennonite and interim pastor at Friendship Mennonite (Bedford Heights) and Life-Bridge Community Church (Dover)



Ministry Development Team

Name: Shawn Hilliard

Home congregation: Martins Mennonite (Orrville)

Occupation: Pastor

Previous service:

Member of Ministry Development Team, member of Leadership Development Resource Team



Ministry Development Team

Name: Judy York

Home congregation:

Tedrow Mennonite (Wauseon)

Occupation:

Family readiness program manager (quality of life programs), accredited financial counselor, and certified federal resume and job search coach

Family information: Four grown and married children, six grandchildren

Goals: To learn more about the work of Ohio Conference and share my expertise and creativity to help advance the goals and vision of the Conference

Hobbies/special interests: I enjoy crafting; making decor for my home and as gifts for friends and family. I am currently building my skillset in photo and video editing and enjoy using that to create fun, informational and inspirational graphics for social media sites, flyers and more! I love music and am an active member of our church music team. Besides singing and playing piano, I am currently expanding my musical capabilities by working with a keyboard/synthesizer and learning to play bass guitar. I want to enhance the worship experience of our congregation through the talents that God has given to me.



Gifts Discernment Ministry

Name: Erin Dye

Home congregation: Oak

Grove Mennonite (West Liberty)

Occupation:

Social worker/behavioral health therapist

Previous service:

Licensed chaplain with Adriel, Inc.

Family information: Husband, Alex Dye; children, Rivers (3 years old) and Eben (1 year old)

Goals: To show support for Ohio Conference and its ministries

Hobbies/special interests:

Running, walks with friends, yoga, baking



Gifts Discernment Ministry

Name: Marilyn Rossiter

Home congregation: Friendship Mennonite

(Bedford Heights) and Columbus Mennonite

Occupation:

Vocal coach, musician, pastor

Previous service: Pastor, Summit Mennonite (Barberton); member of Gifts Discernment Ministry

Family information: Married 47 years to Hank Rossiter, mother to two daughters, Sarah Nussbaum and Becca JR Lachman, companion to rescue dogs — currently Bruno, lab mix of 11 years

Hobbies/special interests:

Lover of nature, books, justice and new recipes, hobby — hammered dulcimer/recorder at Christmas



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Volunteers

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Gifts Discernment Ministry

Name: Jared Chase

Home congregation: Sharon Mennonite (Plain City)

Occupation:

Pastor

Previous

service:

Served

Sharon as

youth pastor

for nine years before being affirmed into the lead pastor role in 2019. This is my first official Conference service.

Family information: My wife, Sarah, and I have been married



for 15 years. She serves on the Mennonite Church USA convention planning team. We have three children, Emma (12), Noah (9) and Julia (3).

Goals: My personal goal is to make connections across the Conference and learn more about how Conference works. In terms of the work that I will be doing, I hope to help others see the great value we each bring to Conference through serving in new ways. I pray that this is an enriching experience for myself and others as they seek to hear God's voice and leading.

Hobbies/special interests:

Our family really enjoys playing games and finding ways to serve. I also enjoy helping coach my son's baseball team.

Gifts Discernment Ministry

Name: Hardaye Ramjit

Home congregation: Lee

Heights Com-

munity

Church

(Cleveland)

Occupation:

Pastor

Previous

service:

Member of

Gifs Discernment Ministry ■



The Ohio Conference Cast returns with new hosts

After a hiatus of several months, the Ohio Conference Cast podcast is back with two new hosts, Corben Weaver Boshart and Ramon Lianez. These two friends from Northwest Ohio are both pastors of Ohio Conference congregations, but they aren't carbon copies of each other. Listen to their [first episode](#) to learn more about Corben and



Ramon. You'll even find out what Corben **really** thought when Ramon ran into his car in the church parking lot.

In Corben and Ramon's [second podcast](#), they interview [Brad Roth](#), the speaker for the 2021 missional conference.

You can listen to this podcast on [iTunes](#) (search for "Ohio Conference Cast") or find it on the Ohio Conference website: <http://bit.ly/OhioConferenceCast>. ■

RESOURCE CORNER

Invite MMN to your worship service

Mennonite Mission Network (MMN) is offering resources for congregational worship services. MMN staff members are available to join congregations in worship to

preach, teach, and share stories of God at work around the world.

MMN staff members can join congregations through video

chat or with a prerecorded message. To request a virtual visit from an MMN staffer, go to <http://bit.ly/MMNinChurches>.

■

ABOUT PEOPLE

Pastoral notes

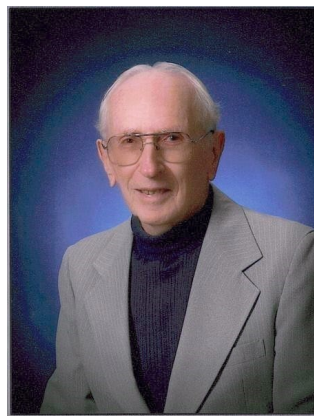
Retired Pastor Ernest D. Martin passed away on Friday evening, Feb. 19, 2021, at the age of 96.

Ernest served as a pastor of his home congregation, Midway Mennonite Church in Columbiana, Ohio, from 1951 until his retirement in 1989. He also served on several commissions and committees of the Ohio Conference of the Mennonite Church, including terms as vice-president and president.

Ernest was the author of the Believers Church Bible Commentary on Colossians and Philimon, as well as many other books and periodicals throughout the years.

Up until the beginning of the pandemic last year Ernest was an active participant in the northeast pastor peer group, often leading the Bible study portion.

Ernest was the son of Daniel C. and Mamie (Yoder) Martin. He married Rosetta M. Blosser on August 28, 1949. He leaves three children Susan (Alan) Beuscher, Timothy (Nancy) Martin and Nathan (Barb) Martin, and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. A private graveside service was held for immediate family members. A churchwide memorial service is being planned for



Ernest Martin

later this spring. Memorial donations may be sent to the Midway Mennonite Church, 13376 Columbiana-Canfield Road, Columbiana OH 44408. ■

Everence

KIDRON, Ohio — Everence has announced the addition of a financial consultant in northeast Ohio, as well as a staff promotion.

Roger L. Fout has been hired as a financial consultant, working out of the Everence office in Hartville, Ohio, where he serves the investment, retirement planning and insurance needs of area families and businesses. Fout attended Kent State University and has been in the financial services industry since 1997. He attends The Chapel in North Canton.

Bruce Breckbill has been promoted to managing director

of the Everence offices in northeast Ohio in 2020. He retains his role as stewardship consultant, serving area ana-

baptist churches. Breckbill attended Goshen College and earned his bachelor's degree in Religious Studies from University of Waterloo. He also earned a teaching degree from University of Windsor (Ontario).



Roger Fout



Bruce Breckbill

Before joining Everence in 2018, Breckbill taught at Central Christian School and worked at Lehman's Hardware, both in Kidron. He is a member of Salem Mennonite Church in Kidron and serves on the Ohio Conference Stewardship Ministry Team. ■

Conference Calendar

MAR

- 25 Transforming Conflict: Tools for the Toolbox, online workshop
- 25 Leadership Team Meeting, online via Zoom

APR

- 8 Creating a Culture of Ordinary Goodness, online workshop
- 15 Rooted and Grounded: Faith, Land, and Creation, online workshop
- 22 Ministry Development Team Meeting, online via Zoom

JUL

- 6-10 MennoCon21, Duke Energy Convention Center, Cincinnati, as well as online
- 10 Mennonite Church USA Delegate Assembly, online meeting

AUG

- 15-16 New Pastor Orientation, details TBA

OCT

- 15-17 Youth Worker Retreat, Camp Luz, Kidron

NOV

- 12-14 Pastor-Spouse Retreat, Mills Park Hotel, Yellow Springs

JUL 2022

- 24-26 Engaging Mission 2022 Missional Festival, Bluffton University

online Parents Meeting on March 23 at 7 p.m. for those who would like to learn more about plans for this summer. To sign up for the parents meeting, email Emily@campluz.com or call the camp office.

Online Anabaptist Short Course: Transforming Congregational Conflict and Communication: April 14 – May 25. Join Betty Pries, Ph.D., to explore the possibilities and pitfalls of courageously engaging differences within congregational life in this six-week online noncredit course from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. No grades, no papers! CEUs available. See ambbs.edu/shortcourses.

MennoCon21: Due to uncertainty around COVID-19 gathering restrictions, the 2021 Mennonite Church USA Delegate Assembly will meet virtually this year on July 10 with a limited agenda, following the conclusion of MennoCon21. Decisions about church statement resolutions will be postponed until a future in-person session. Read more here: <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/21-da>. ■

Back page briefings...

Save the date for Sent Conference 2021. Join us on Thursday, April 22, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. and Friday, April 23, from 2:30 to 4 p.m. ET for two webinars from peace church planters. They will share stories of hope and resilience in birthing new communities

of faith. Go to <http://bit.ly/SentConference2021> for registration information.

Camp Luz is planning on hosting Summer Camp in 2021! Registration is open at www.campluz.com. The Camp will be hosting an

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News & Views of Ohio Conference

For more Ohio Conference news, visit the Ohio Conference website: ohiomennoniteconference.org