

July 6-10, 2021
Cincinnati, OH

MARCH 2021

#MENNO
CON21

Virtual programming will provide an in-person vibe

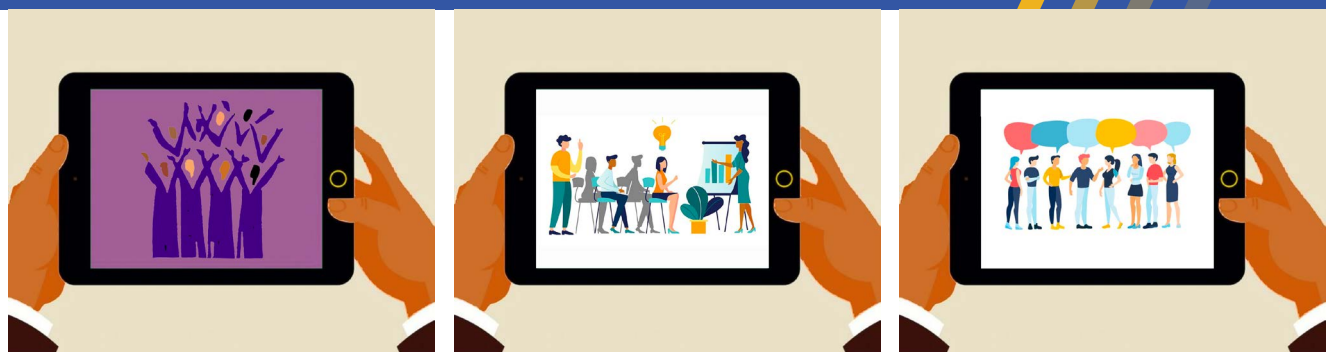
By Sarah Chase and Scott Hartman,
Convention planning team for Mennonite Church USA

With the announcement that [MennoCon21](#) will be a [hybrid event](#), we've received a lot of questions about the virtual portion. What will it look like? What is the schedule of virtual events? How will seminars work? Why would my youth group want to participate when they are already tired of Zoom? Can we show the evening worship services in our church sanctuary? Read on to see the answers to these questions and more!

The schedule for the virtual programming will closely follow the schedule of the in-person programming in Cincinnati, Ohio. Worship services will be held in the mornings. Seminars will be held in the afternoons. And worship services will be held again in the evenings. The block schedule graphic is available [here](#). Virtual content will be a combination of live and pre-recorded items. All sessions that are presented live also will be recorded to allow participants to watch each session at their own leisure.

All components of the virtual experience will be housed by a virtual event platform named Pheedloop. Unlike Zoom, this platform is specially designed for conferences, so the experience will be different than being on Zoom. MennoCon21 will have a customized space on Pheedloop dedicated to our programming. Registration is required to access the programming. [Registration](#) can be completed through our regular registration system, CVENT, beginning April 6. Registrants will have the option to choose either In-Person or Virtual Registration. Registration for the virtual programming is \$99 per person. We are asking each person to register for the virtual programming through the same process as those registering to attend in person. Virtual registration gives access to all our virtual programming and includes a convention T-shirt.

After registering, participants will receive information on how to access Pheedloop. Pheedloop will be accessible beginning July 6. At that time, participants can log in and begin to enjoy all aspects of the virtual experience. Within the Pheedloop account, each individual can add a short bio, add social media links, and even upload a profile picture that will be visible to other participants. The account also will allow participants to peruse exhibits and other pre-loaded content.



Before each worship service, virtual hosts will greet participants and help set the stage for the upcoming service. As worship starts in Cincinnati, a live feed will be shown on Pheedloop. Virtual participants will see what participants in Cincinnati are seeing on the screens in the worship hall. Following the worship service, the virtual hosts will rejoin the virtual participants to wrap up the worship service. Worship services will be recorded and posted to Pheedloop after their livestream. These recordings will remain available for viewing until the end of July.

A variety of seminars will be available on Pheedloop, as well. Even though these seminars will be pre-recorded, the plan is to host an airing of each seminar. While the seminar is airing, the presenter will be available to interact with participants in the chat function of Pheedloop. New seminars will be available to watch throughout convention week. This content also will remain available in Pheedloop until the end of July.

Pheedloop also provides a virtual exhibit hall. Organizations and ministries can customize their exhibit pages with content, such as videos and promotional brochures, for participants to peruse. Participants can chat directly with a representative from each organization or ministry.

We are still developing additional pieces of virtual programming. More information is to come about several concerts, some networking opportunities and late-night fun for our virtual participants.

We realize many people are tired of online meetings and school. By using an online platform, we are creating a different experience than a work meeting or school lesson. We hope that the ability to engage with other virtual participants adds that feeling of experiencing convention together. We also know there are certain people that you look forward to seeing at convention, whether that is a specific exhibitor or another participant. The virtual platform will still allow you to have that opportunity to connect with them. The live-streamed worship services will provide that convention feel, from the comfort of your living room or home office. The amazing content provided in seminars during convention will be available from the options in the virtual programming.

We encourage participants to be creative in how they personalize their virtual convention experience. We know some youth are tired of virtual school. But there are endless ways to make this a unique experience. For example, a youth group could register together and then gather each evening to watch worship together. Set up an outdoor screen and have everyone bring their lawn chairs to watch. Host a themed dinner for the youth group and watch the service on the big screen in the sanctuary. Divide the youth group into small groups to watch the same seminar. Then follow it up with a Zoom meeting to talk about what everyone learned. Or better yet, have each small group report back to the larger group what they learned in the seminar they watched.

Meet the MennoCon21 worship team

Worship band leader



Seth Thomas Crissman is an educator, musician and pastor in Mennonite Church USA, who has lived in Harrisonburg, Virginia, for 16 years, though he still says, “Western Pennsylvania,” when people ask where he’s from. He is a follower of Jesus who has spent the past 10 years helping churches work together to better give and receive God’s love in their neighborhoods and local communities. He is also a songwriter and musician for the folk group, [The Walking Roots Band](#). Crissman and his wife, Theresa, have three small children and another on the way, coming in April. He says he loves and appreciates Theresa’s sense of adventuring and commitment to following Jesus. Crissman has served at convention for many years and is excited to help again this year.

Worship leaders



Chris Cox was born in Texas, raised in Alabama, previously served in ministry in Georgia, and is now serving as youth and young adults pastor at [C3 Hampton](#) (Virginia). He has devoted his life to mentoring, molding and maintaining relationships with youth and young adults. Cox has traveled the nation for over a decade, speaking to students and student leaders. He is the creator of “The Collective,” a leadership development community for youth pastors and leaders. Cox has a heart for discipleship and spends most of his time developing and creating discipleship strategies for leaders and their teams. You also may remember Chris Cox from MennoCon19, where he served as a worship leader and the host of squads for youth groups. For more information or to connect with Cox, visit his website at chriscoxsspeakz.com.



Hendy Matahelemual was born in and grew up in the city of Bandung, Indonesia. He graduated from Parahyangan Catholic University in Bandung, with a bachelor’s degree in Law. He worked in the music entertainment industry and at a law office before being called to full-time ministry. Matahelemual served as a pastor in Elshaddai Creative Community in Bandung before coming to the United States. Matahelemual received a Master of Arts in Christian Leadership from [Eastern Mennonite Seminary](#) in 2019. He serves with the [Mosaic Mennonite Conference](#) as associate pastor for community engagement.



Kay Schroeder was born into a family of six and lived in the country, not far from the small town of Goessel, Kansas. Schroeder has a Master of Arts in Christian Formation, with an emphasis in Worship, from [Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary](#) in Elkhart, Indiana, and a Bachelor of Arts in Speech and Drama, Communication Arts, and Music from [Bethel College](#) in North Newton, Kansas. She has served and led in the local church setting since 2001. She has loved planning and being involved in worship as far back as she can remember and has served in many settings. Schroeder currently serves as pastor of congregational life at [Hesston \(Kansas\) Mennonite Church](#). Kay Schroeder and her husband, Joel, have two sons.

Worship planning coordinator



Shannon W. Dycus is an educator and pastor. She currently serves as the dean of students at [Eastern Mennonite University](#) in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Before this role, she was co-pastor at [First Mennonite Church](#) in Indianapolis, Indiana, for seven years. Dycus has written columns for *The Mennonite* and *Leader* magazines and has loved supporting MC USA Convention worship planning since 2016. With [Mennonite Women USA](#), Dycus published the 2019 Women's Bible Study, entitled "[Every Time I Feel the Spirit](#)." (Herald Press).

Before congregational ministry, she taught middle and high school students and directed afterschool programs. Dycus holds an undergraduate degree in Secondary Education from Butler University (2003), Indianapolis, and received her Master of Divinity from Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, in 2010. With a love for journeying with people, Dycus is completing her certification as a Spiritual Director at San Francisco (California) Theological Seminary. With her husband, Gregory, the Dycus family includes two energetic elementary-age boys.

Technical director



Tim Blaum serves as Technical Director for MennoCon21. He, his wife, Michelle, and their daughter live in Goshen, Indiana, where he works in the IT department at [Everence Financial](#). Blaum has been involved in Mennonite convention planning since San Jose, 2007. He has a passion for using his technical skills and spiritual gifts to nurture creative worship experiences, so that others might grow in their own faith journeys.

MennoCon21 registration opens April 6 Here's what you need to know

Registration Pricing

As we look forward to convention, here is some information that will help you prepare for the online registration process, which will begin on Tuesday, April 6.

Consider downloading the [registration worksheet](#) to make sure that you have the information you need for registration ready to enter. If you are registering others, ask them to fill out a worksheet so that you can enter their information correctly. However, if you need to make changes after you've registered, don't panic! You will be able to log back in and make changes, as needed.



The link to the registration form will be available on the [Mennonite Church USA Convention website](#), beginning Tuesday, April 6 at 10 a.m. EST. As with some previous conventions, you will notice that we are again using CVENT for online registration. The online registration form is divided into sections that will gather your personal information, registration options and payment. Once you submit your registration, you will receive a notice of completion and a confirmation email. *(continued)*

MennoCon21 registration opens April 6 Here's what you need to know

Here are some things to consider when registering:

Hybrid options

You can register for the in-person or virtual convention on the same form. Whether joining in person or virtually, you will have meaningful material to enjoy. If you do choose to register for the in-person portion, you have the option to add access to view and explore the virtual platform for an additional \$10. This will give you access to the virtual worship services, seminars and more until the end of July!

Lunches

For those who choose the in-person option, lunches will be included with your registration.

Servant projects

We will not be hosting servant projects this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. We plan to resume servant projects at MennoCon23!

Scholarships

Mutual aid scholarships are available for anyone interested in participating in convention, whether virtually or in person. Applicants may request a scholarship to cover all or a portion of their registration fees (excludes travel and hotel). Please apply for a registration scholarship [here](#) by April 13. We hope to make opportunities available for those who otherwise wouldn't have the chance to enjoy convention. If you are interested in attending, but need additional assistance to cover travel and hotel, contact your area conference to see if additional funds are available. If you would like to help others experience MennoCon21, please consider [contributing to the scholarship fund](#).

Hotel information

We have contracted with two hotels – Hyatt Regency Cincinnati and Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza. Information on reserving hotel rooms will be included in your convention registration confirmation email. For more information on the hotels, click [here](#).

If you have any additional questions or need any help, please feel free to contact Sarah Chase at sarahc@mennoniteusa.org.



MennoCon is Mennonite Church USA's biennial gathering for community, worship and faith formation.