

2026 WORKSHOPS

FRIDAY, June 26

Joining in the Big (and Small) Work of God's Reconciliation – Eric Frey Martin

Wondering how your congregation can join in God's grand dream of reconciling all things? Or when you hear something like that- does it feel too daunting? Or you don't know where to start? In a world and universe where all things are connected, we can only know and impact the universal through the particular. So, come and hear how your congregation can join with the work of Mennonite Mission Network to know and understand how God is at work within particular settings that are impacting the reconciliation of all things. We will also gather around the ideas of what your church's are doing in your particular areas to bring about God's dream in this world. Eric Frey Martin is Director for Learning and Engagement at Mennonite Mission Network.

Peaceful Practices: the Work of Reconciliation in Interpersonal Conflict – Becky Teiwes

Building on last year's Peaceful Practices workshop (*not* required), this 2.0 workshop will deepen our understanding of practical resources for having peaceful, loving, productive conflict in our communities. Since we are called to be ministers of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18), how do we answer the call in a way that reflects Jesus? Using Mennonite Central Committee's Peaceful Practices curriculum as a resource for this conversation in our churches and communities provides a starting point and practical tools to build skills for the important work of reconciliation. Becky Teiwes is the Peace and Justice Practice Coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee in the Central States region.

Native Land Return – John Stoesz

Reparations – By whom? To whom? For what reason? How can it work? Come hear a personal story, learn about a restorative justice model along with ten reasons for Native land restoration and find out what has been happening in Mountain Lake.

John Stoesz spent 30+ years working in leadership roles for faith-based justice and peace organizations, including Mennonite Central Committee Central States. He now devotes his time to two passions: riding his recumbent tricycle and Indigenous justice. He spends significant time on awareness raising, fundraising and organizing among white people in Minnesota for Native land return.

Ecuador Partnership Update – Joel Beachy & Nathan Luitgens

Come find out more about the 2026 Learning/Service Trip to Quito, Papallacta, Cotopaxi, and Riobamba, Ecuador. Learn more about the life and mission of folks from the Quito Mennonite Church and the ongoing partnership between Central Plains Mennonite Conference, Colombian Mennonite Church, Mennonite Mission Network, and Ecuador Mennonite Churches. Participants will share pictures, stories, and their reflections on the trip. Joel and Nathan will give updates regarding the partnership. Joel Beachy chairs CPMC's Ecuador Partnership Task Group and Nathan Luitgens, Executive Conference Minister, provides staff support.

Voices of Hope: Stories from Southeast Asia – Jonah & Memee Yang

“Sharing hope, compassion, and leadership across borders.” Come and hear how God is at work through the ministry of Voice of Hope! Jonah and Memee Yang will share about their recent trip to Southeast Asia, where they led Sister Care, Compassionate Care, and Leadership Development Seminars. Through powerful stories and testimonies, you will hear how these gatherings have encouraged, strengthened, and impacted the lives of many participants. We warmly invite you to attend and discover how servants from the Central Plains Mennonite Conference are reaching out to support and encourage our overseas Christian brothers and sisters. Be inspired by what God is doing across cultures and communities. Jonah is a credentialed leader in CPMC, offering leadership training and teaching for AMBS's “Journey” program in Asia. Memee leads Sister Care, a program of Mennonite Women.

Nurturing an Everywhere Faith - Mitch Stutzman

The local church has long served as the venue for spiritual formation, a community gathering space, and place of belonging. As our culture has grown and shifted, individuals and families have found other spaces that provide meaningful connection and community. But how do we continue to serve the spiritual needs of our communities? How do we nurture an everywhere faith? Join Mitch Stutzman, Director of Development and Partner Engagement at MennoMedia, to explore ideas around how you may meet your community in your context.

BOTH FRIDAY, June 26 AND SATURDAY, June 27

Mobility Worldwide Shop Tour and Presentation – Bill Janzen and volunteers

What is a mobility cart? What do over 80 million people worldwide have to do with it? How are they made? Who builds them? Where do they go? How much do they cost? Why is there a production shop in Mountain Lake? When did this start? Come visit Mobility Worldwide Southwest Minnesota and learn all about it. Just five blocks west of Bethel on 3rd Avenue.

SATURDAY, June 27

Workshop Q&A with Guest Speaker – Betty Pries

Betty will be sharing and working with us in both our worship times and also in delegate sessions. This is an opportunity to engage with her around any questions our time together at Annual meeting has raised. Betty is the CEO of Credence & Co. and is highly regarded as a Conflict, Change, and Leadership Specialist. Betty has a PhD from the Free University Amsterdam on the topic of conflict transformation. In her book, *The Space Between Us*, Betty suggests rather than approaching conflicts as threats or problems to be solved, what if we could see our disagreements as opportunities for personal growth, pushing us toward developing healthier relationships and communities. Or opportunities for positive change and a way to build resilience. Rooted in the conviction that conflict can strengthen our relationships and deepen our self-knowledge, Pries

offers practical skills for engaging conflict and casts a vision for a more joy-filled future.

Orienting With the Word – Joel Beachy

Believing that our lives of faith depend on the regular practice of reading the Bible, the Faith Formation Collaborative at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary offers congregations a journey called “Orienting With the Word” (OWW). Come hear firsthand accounts of how this program can work in your congregation! Joel Beachy will share about circle process, artful response, and confessional Bible study, a life-giving way to engage scripture in your context. Joel is pastor of East Union MC.

Family Loss and the Ministry of Hope – Royce Vogt

Family loss manifests in many forms—death, illness, estrangement, divorce, trauma, and leaving the family farm, to name a few. During times of loss, individuals and families often struggle to identify their pain, while congregations search for meaningful ways to respond with compassion, presence, and hope. This workshop shares a personal story of multiple losses—family, family farm, health, and first grandchild—and explores opportunities within such situations to convey Christ-centered hope and faith without minimizing grief. How do you worship when you are wounded? The workshop discusses the advantages and disadvantages of using social media to share struggles and the journey through tragedy. Drawing from personal and pastoral experience, Scripture, and song, participants will reflect on how loss influences faith and how vulnerability fosters healing and blesses others. Pastor Royce Vogt currently pastors Pleasant Valley Mennonite Church in Harper, Kansas, and Attica Christian Church in Attica, Kansas. He also works as a substitute teacher and coach for the local school district.

No Pastor? – What about Lay Leadership? – Susan Janzen and Congregational Panel

Congregations choosing lay leadership is a rising trend across our conference. In 2026, eleven CPMC congregations have a mix of lay and credentialed leaders; of these, six do not have anyone designated as “pastor.” Come hear a panel of representatives from these churches discuss what is working well, some unique challenges they face, and how Central Plains can support them in ministry. Susan Janzen is Central Plains Conference Minister for Ministerial Leadership.

Immigration - Our Reality, The Needs, The Resources, and The Advocacy – Abraham Diaz Alonso w/ Duane Franz

This workshop will equip participants with an understanding of the current realities facing immigrants in the U.S., including people in our congregations. This workshop will highlight recent policy decisions and the challenges that come with it. Together, participants will explore practical ways that we as individuals, or as congregations and communities, can serve, support and be vocal advocates for immigrants in ways that reflect Christ's call to love the stranger (Matthew 25:35). Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions, learn about advocacy opportunities, and consider how their congregations can use their voices to promote compassion, justice, and hospitality in the local context. Abraham Diaz Alonso is Immigration Program Coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee - Central States Region, supporting Anabaptist congregations and grassroots community organizations serving migrants and displaced people.

Originally from Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico, he now lives in the Rio Grande Valley of South Texas. He draws on his lived experience growing up undocumented, navigating the U.S. immigration system to become a citizen and his work with regional and national immigrantserving organizations. Duane Franz, an MCC-Bolivia alumnus, is a retired Mountain Lake farmer who supports immigrants with advocacy, transportation and accompaniment to their hearings in Minneapolis, MN, and Sioux Falls, SD. Four of his five adult children were adopted from Guatemala.

Navigating Disagreement to Discovering Relationship II: Review, Practices, and Concrete Examples – Shuji Moriichi & Andrew Langbehn

This will be an extension ("Part II") of last year's presentation, "From Common Ground to Sacred Ground" which will be briefly reviewed, highlighting basic approaches, sharing a few questions and feedback from last year's participants, while recognizing that human efforts alone would not bring solutions to highly conflicted situations (and this is a spiritual exercise). We will then explore how to patiently search commonality for mutual welfare/benefit and introduce and practice some mindsets and exercises. Finally, we will illustrate particular conflicted situations in the life of the church and share ideas of how to navigate them constructively without either "flaming the fire" or compromising gospel mandates. Shuji Moriichi, M.A., M.Div., BCC, works as the manager of pastoral care at Mercy Medical Center in Cedar Rapids. Shuji is a member at First Mennonite Church, Iowa City. Andrew Langbehn is a father of three children, and is currently the pastor of Branchline Church in Hastings, MN. He loves to play strategy board games, have coffee with new attenders at his church, and (occasionally) will play a game of adult kickball. Currently pursuing a D.Min. degree at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, he hopes to one day graduate.