
DENOMINATIONAL GROUP REPORTS

Anabaptist/Mennonite

Karl Stutzman, Anabaptist Mennonite Seminary, Convener

MEMBERS PRESENT

- Kevin Enns-Rempel, Fresno Pacific University
- Jennifer Ulrich, Eastern Mennonite University
- Karl Stutzman, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary
- Vic Froese, Canadian Mennonite University
- Eileen Saner, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (retired)
- Tim Erdel, Bethel University-Indiana

AGENDA

Discussion of each school's highlights

ROUND ROBIN REPORTS

Karl Stutzman, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Karl has been collaborating with others to form a “hub” for Anabaptist-Mennonite scholarly publications. There is a Zoom meeting planned for Monday, June 24 at 11 am Eastern, then a consultation in the fall. Part of the vision is hopefully open access. There will also hopefully be streamlining and economies of scale. Goshen College's Mennonite Historical Library is undergoing a change with the pending retirement of Joe Springer, curator. Joe has agreed to

stay around until his position is filled; the first search failed. AMBS growth is international and has recently added a D.Min. program and numerous non-degree offerings. It has been an interesting challenge for the library to support new programs and students in global locations with varying levels of technology and access to textbooks.

Eileen Saner, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, retired

Eileen has been meeting remotely with an advisory committee of the library at the International Baptist Theological Study Center in Amsterdam at the invitation of librarian Katharina Penner. The school has a PhD program in association with the Free University. She also raised financial support for an initiative of the Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary in Kyiv, Ukraine. Librarian Roman Shvets is coordinating the publication of two journal issues on the topic “Church and War”. The first issue is Ukrainian translations of key English language articles. Ukrainian authors address the topic in the second issue. Over seventy books that Roman selected for the UETS library were donated or purchased with the remaining funds.

Kevin Enns-Rempel, Fresno Pacific University

Kevin is retiring at the end of 2024; 40 years is enough! Institutionally a time of transition. Raises question about organizations and programs at FPU. Reshaping to survive. Seminary is basically MA in Church Ministry or Marriage and Family Therapy. Moving towards professional programs. Changes at Mennonite Library and Archives - relationship with history in MB denomination. Many of the scholars who used these collections are gone. Working with a lot of digitization projects in Mennonite Library and Archives. Photos, audio, video, university publications

Vic Froese, Canadian Mennonite University

Vic shared that there are changes at Canadian Mennonite University. Tough decisions have been made regarding the Bible and theology (BTS) department. The number of students choosing to major in BTS is shrinking. The same is happening to the number of students majoring in music. A social work program will be launched in the fall. Perhaps, further down the road, also an education program. There is optimism that enrollment will increase. A significant chunk of the book budget was Bible/theology. This will also shrink with the addition of new programs requiring library resources.

CMU still has a substantial Anabaptist-Mennonite collection, and the hope is that it will continue to grow. But it must face the reality that fewer Anabaptist-Mennonite scholars are coming up through the ranks and interest in Anabaptist-Mennonite history is waning in younger generations.

Jennifer Ulrich, Eastern Mennonite University

Jennifer shared that EMU is in a similar place to Fresno and other institutions. Enrollment has been down. This has made things interesting. Budgets staying flat or decreasing, seeing smaller enrollments in Bible/religion in undergrad. Seminary is also small. More international students, more online (all classes have online/in person options). That is hard on faculty and the library to support students internationally. Seminary started a MATS program, and is starting a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) in Peacemaking and Social Change. The library is switching to Library of Congress classification (from Dewey, all new books are classed in LC and the staff is working to reclass older material). Thoughts and prayers for Marci Frederick who has cancer. Simone Horst is busy in the historical library. Jennifer is ending her term of serving on the Atla DEI committee in June.

Tim Erdel, Bethel University, Indiana

Tim shared that they keep acquiring materials in the Missionary Church Archives. Received eleven car/van loads from the former Fort Wayne Bible College that Taylor U was going to dump. Amazing finds keep turning up--original handwritten record of baptisms at Bethel Missionary Church near Goshen includes early leaders of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ. Bethel faces financial challenges and is shrinking, especially the Adult programs. Traditional library use has dropped dramatically; struggles with students coming totally unprepared for college. Tim formally retired from Bethel in May 2022 to free up salary and benefits but kept teaching. Now will focus on archives. Kevin Blowers does a lot of work in library and archives. Have gone from staff of seven in early 90s to about two. Adult/graduate studies almost entirely online. First female president at Bethel, Barbara K. Bellefeuille, very popular, but faces numerous challenges. Tremendous demographic change to students of color, especially Latino, adding sports teams that attract overseas students (over 60 countries).