



Anabaptist Network News

Mike and Cheryl Nimz have now been with the Anabaptist Network for over a year. Working up and down the UK and Ireland, supporting existing Anabaptist groups, discovering new ones, inspiring individuals and communities with an Anabaptist-flavoured faith and taking Anabaptist ideas to new audiences – they have already achieved a lot.

We are very grateful to Mennonite Church Canada who are supporting the work that Mike is undertaking here.

As you'll be aware from previous newsletters we are responsible for raising the funds to cover any expenses incurred by Mike and Cheryl in undertaking this work. Groups that Mike and Cheryl have visited, where possible, have made a financial contribution towards these expenses. We have also asked for support through the newsletter.

Sadly this support has not been sufficient to meet the need and has left the Anabaptist Network in a vulnerable financial position. The first year has left a shortfall of a little over £2500.

As a network we have very limited financial needs and are grateful that finance is seldom a big agenda item for us. We rarely have had to ask for support from those who are on this mailing list.

But to see Mike and Cheryl's excellent work continue for at least the next two years that we anticipate they will be serving here we must ask for your financial support to enable this to happen.

We would be particularly grateful if you would consider giving on a monthly basis and we have included a standing order form on the last page of the newsletter to set this up.

If you would like to make a one-off contribution, please contact Lloyd Pietersen, our treasurer through the contact details opposite.

If you are a tax-payer and would like to gift-aid your donation, a form is also enclosed in this newsletter.

Upcoming Events

Anabaptist Network of Communities Day

7 March, 2015. Bristol

Anabaptist Network of Organisations Day with Christian Peacemaker Teams

16 May, 2015. London

See inside for more details about these upcoming events.

Anabaptist Network Trust
(registered charity 1021760)
www.anabaptistnetwork.com
admin@anabaptistnetwork.com
PO Box 68073,
London, N22 9HS

An Update from Mike and Cheryl

Kreider House has been quite full over the last few months. Tom and Rebecca Yoder-Neufeld have been staying with us on and off since early September. They have spoken at our October Anabaptist Study Group here in Birmingham and also at our Shard End gathering. They were also kind enough to speak at Chelmsley Wood Baptist church, one of the churches that we attend regularly. They have been travelling and have been in and out of Kreider House as they have spent time in the UK and in Europe.

Michael Hardin spent a good deal of time with us on his speaking tour here in the UK and Ireland. He has been fun to spend time with, to talk with and learn more about his understanding of the Bible and his take on non-violent atonement. His connections through Facebook and the growing popularity of his writings have allowed us to make new friends and contacts in the UK and Ireland as we have travelled with him. Travelling with Michael has brought us into contact with more people with differing theologies and approaches to the faith and they want to hear more about Anabaptist theology. He has also allowed us to grow in our relationship with Ichthus.

We have also had a friend from North Yorkshire stay with us for a few days. He and his wife will be with us again in November. A couple of people who were part of the Inhabit Conference were with us and also trustees of Urban Expression. Gary and Diane Janzen from Mennonite Church British Columbia were able to stay with us for a couple of nights. It is always good to share our work with people from Canada.

November will be a time with a good number of people coming to stay at Kreider House. We will have guests from Europe, Canada and more from the U.K. There will be times when we will be a full house, which will include some very young people as well.

Events over the last couple of months have included the Inhabit Conference in Birmingham which was enjoyable. It allowed for connecting with people from the Fellowship of Churches of Christ and others who are looking at new ways of being the church in a changing world. We had the opportunity to connect with some fellow Canadians who were here finding our more about Urban Expression. This allowed us to connect with some people in the Urban Expression community we hadn't seen in a while. We wish we had more time to spend them.

There are also a number of other things happening for November. Please look at the Anabaptist Network UK Facebook page to see some of these. If you have anything that you think will be of interest to Anabaptists all over the country, including Anabaptist Network of Communities meetings or gatherings or other events that people would be interested in, please let Cheryl or Mike know and we will add it on the page. If you have 'liked' the page, please add comments about what you are doing.

Be prepared to get emails from Cheryl and myself. We want to set up dates to meet all the existing Anabaptist Network of Communities groups and put people that we have met in touch with your groups. Our email is nimzcycles@gmail.com and the Facebook page is Anabaptist Network UK.

Network of Communities

We're already looking forward to the next annual gathering of the Anabaptist Network of Communities on Saturday 7 March 2015 which will be hosted by the Bristol Anabaptist Study Group. The day will run from 10:00 to 16:00 in St Mark's Baptist Church, St Marks Road, Easton, Bristol, BS5 6HX. The church is very close to Stapleton Road station which is a five-minute train journey from Bristol Temple

Meads. There is free on-street parking nearby.

The theme of the day is the Feast of Fools – more about this on the attached flyer and further details will be posted on the website by the end of November

The Anabaptist Network of Communities Day is a great opportunity to gather people from all the member communities and others who are already part of the Anabaptist Network or just want to know more about Anabaptism. As part of the day we'll be offering a session aimed particularly at those who are want to find out about Anabaptism.

The day will be free with the opportunity for those who can afford it to contribute on the day towards costs. We'll let people know the approximate cost per head for those who want guidance on donation level. Tea, coffee, biscuits and a vegetarian lunch will be provided.

Children are welcome to join in the day's activities. So far we have not planned separate activities for them but if you'd like to bring children please contact us – see below – as soon as possible so that we can bear this in mind in planning – it may be possible to organise something if we have enough notice.

To book email sue.haslehurst@gmail.com by 28 February 2015 specifying how many people you are booking for and any dietary requirements (apart from vegetarian – food will be vegetarian).

For further information please see the website <http://www.anabaptistnetwork.com/> from the end of November, phone 0117 330 7826 or email sue.haslehurst@gmail.com

New Anabaptist Group in the North East

For the first time, there is an Anabaptist study group in the north-east of England. Paul Wilson hosts a group called 'Logos' on Teesside and assures us that this is happy to be known as an Anabaptist group and

would welcome new members. If you are interested, contact him at: ptswilson@yahoo.co.uk

Network of Organisations

The 2015 Anabaptist Network of Organisations Day is an exciting partnership between the Anabaptist Network and Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT).

The day will be part of the larger CPT European Convergence, taking place at Union Chapel from Tuesday 12 to Sunday 17 May.

The provisional structure of the CPT European Convergence will be:

- 12 – 13 May CPT team business (closed meetings)
- 14 – 15 May planning and presenting an Action Witness (open meetings)
- 16 May Anabaptist Network of Organisations Day on the theme of 'Faith Activism' (open to all)
- 17 May Shared worship with Union Chapel

More details about all the different aspects of this event will appear on the Network's website and hopefully we will be able to tell you more in the spring newsletter.

Bridge Builders

Bridge Builders has appointed Colin Moulds as its new Executive Director, to start on 1 February 2015. He will take over from Alastair McKay, Bridge Builders' founding director, who steps down in April to be ordained into the Anglican Church. This is a huge change for Bridge Builders, as Alastair has been at the helm since 1996, but the organisation is in good shape and ready for the changes to come.

Colin, a self-employed trainer and mediator, is no stranger to Bridge Builders – he has

done most of our training courses and will slot smoothly into the delivery of excellent training that still lies at the core of what we do. He is also an experienced manager and leader, and we are looking forward to working with him, sharing his vision and ours, and together leading Bridge Builders into the next stage of its life.

Further details about Bridge Builders, as always, from our website bbministries.org.uk

Urban Expression

In our previous report for this newsletter, we mentioned areas of expansion and development. These have continued in the past few months and we anticipate deploying new teams shortly in Nottingham, Wolverhampton and Brighton, with interest also in other cities, and additional teams in Birmingham, London and Bristol. We have recruited a number of new team leaders, but we are still in need of more to join these teams. We have also hosted a group from Mennonite Church Eastern Canada who are exploring the possibility of launching Urban Expression there.

For further information, see www.urbanexpression.org.uk

Crucible

This is the tenth year of the Crucible course, the strapline of which is 'training that equips Christians to follow Jesus on the margins'. It is run by our partners, Urban Expression. The first weekend has already taken place, with good numbers participating, but the course is designed in such a way that people can start at any point. The next weekend is on 7 – 8 February 2015 and consists of two modules: 'The Challenge of Urban Mission' and 'Becoming Human'. This second module explores issues of discipleship – a central feature of Anabaptist spirituality.

For further information, see www.cruciblecourse.org.uk

Anabaptist Theology Forum

After some date difficulties, the Anabaptist Theology Forum (ATF) had a joyful two-day residential meeting in October 2014, when much of the teaching was led by Tom and Rebecca Yoder Neufeld. The next gathering will be from coffee-time on Wednesday 22 April until lunchtime on Thursday 23 April 2015; fuller details will be available in January 2015. A provisional date for a subsequent autumn ATF gathering is similarly timed for Wednesday 14 and Thursday 15 October 2015. Day visitors are welcome, too.

The Forum is open to everyone who has a working interest in Anabaptist-oriented theological issues, and contents vary from seminars and discussions to occasional lecture-style presentations. Our new regular home is the comfortable (and inexpensive) International Mission Centre in Selly Oak, Birmingham. Please let us know if you would like to be on our e-mailing list.

At the 2014 ATF gathering, the coordination of the Forum was passed on from Simon Barrow (Edinburgh) and Linda Wilson (Bristol) – who have given six years' great service, thank you – to Trisha Dale (Birmingham) and Andrew Francis (Wiltshire). Please join or confirm your inclusion in the e-mailing list by contacting atf@menno.org.uk preferably titling your e-mail as 'ATF contact'.

News and Events

Anabaptist Network Steering Group update

There have recently been some changes in members of the network's steering group. Juliet Kilpin, Ros Parkes and long-standing member Ali Phelps have all recently stood down.

We are pleased to welcome Alex Elish to the steering group who has taken on a role with the Mennonite Trust, helping them and the Anabaptist Network engage with younger people. Alex was very involved in hosting the most recent Network of Communities Day in East London.

Tom and Rebecca Yoder Neufeld

Tom and Rebecca Yoder Neufeld will have completed their two months in the UK as guests of the Anabaptist Network and the Mennonite Trust by the time you read this newsletter. They have travelled widely and have spoken in churches, at day conferences, at universities, at study groups and at training institutions. A highlight towards the end of their trip was a debate in London on the subject 'Who would Jesus shoot?' They have enjoyed hospitality in the homes of various people across the UK. They also managed to fit in a week in Sweden and Norway at the invitation of the Scandinavian Anabaptist Network.

Feedback from those who hosted them and organised events has been enthusiastic. Numbers at these events varied – we have never organised so many events in so many places in such a short period of time – but Tom and Rebecca's input was greatly appreciated. They brought a combination of learning, experience, passion and humour, and were able to offer fresh insights on the New Testament, on peace and justice, on the practice of footwashing, and on Anabaptist convictions. We are very grateful to them for all they have given of

themselves during this period. We wish them well as they travel on to Switzerland before returning home to Canada.

Although there are no definite plans yet, we are in conversation with other North American Mennonites who might be interested in a similar trip in the next couple of years. Visa restrictions mean we are unlikely to have long-term North American resource people in future, but these short-term trips offer opportunities to continue to learn from the Mennonite experience of embodying Anabaptist convictions.

Centre for Anabaptist Studies

The new Centre was launched on 9 October with an inaugural lecture given by Tom Yoder Neufeld on 'Anabaptists, the Bible and Violence'. A packed room responded enthusiastically and we have had further good feedback since. This lecture was recorded and copies can be obtained on request from anabaptist@bristol-baptist.ac.uk.

The Centre for Anabaptist Studies is a partnership between the Anabaptist Network, Mennonite Trust and Bristol Baptist College.

A brochure about the Centre accompanies this newsletter.

Webinars

The first in a series of six webinars on 'The Opportunities and Challenges of Post-Christendom', organised by the Centre for Anabaptist Studies and partners, took place in October. Five more are scheduled for the coming months, featuring authors of published or forthcoming books in the 'After Christendom' series. To register for these, or to watch a recording of the first webinar, contact Stuart Murray Williams at: stuart@murraywilliams.co.uk A brochure about the webinars accompanies this newsletter.

Books and Resources

Anabaptist Witness

Anabaptist Witness is a new six-monthly journal, focusing on Anabaptist and Mennonite dialogue on key issues facing the church in mission. It is published from the Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Indiana, USA, Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Mission Network. The first issue, dated October 2014, contains an article in French by Neil Blough (English translation available), among many others, and the website has an article by Stuart Murray Williams. All content is available freely on <http://anabaptistwitness.org/>, and print copies are obtainable through Amazon at <http://amzn.com/1502840375/>.

Other Books

Anthony Siegrist: *Participating Witness: An Anabaptist Theology of Baptism and the Sacramental Character of the Church* (Pickwick, 2013): from within the tradition of the Radical Reformation explores the implications of ecumenism for believers' baptism.

Peter Hoover: *The Secret of the Strength: What Would the Anabaptists Tell This Generation?* (CreateSpace, 2013): more than an Anabaptist history, a challenge to all Christ-followers to put the teachings of Jesus into practice.

John Paul Lederach: *Reconcile: Conflict Transformation for Ordinary Christians* (Herald Press, 2014): a guidebook for Christians seeking a scriptural view of reconciliation and practical steps for transforming conflict.

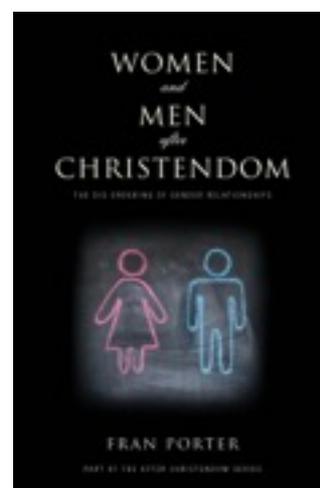
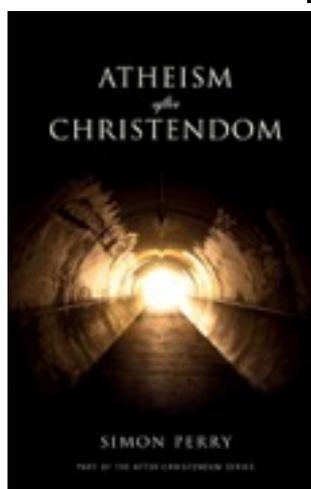
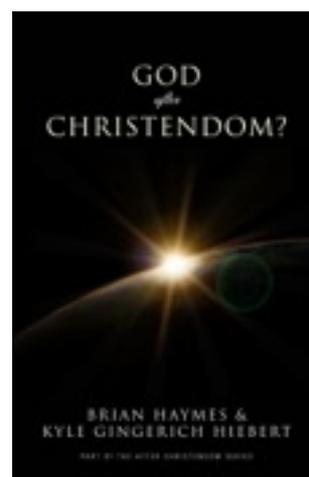
Terrence Rynne: *Jesus Christ Peacemaker* (Orbis, 2014): a new theology of peace that renders the just war theory near mute by making Jesus and his teachings the cornerstone of both theory and practice.

Jim Forest: *Loving our Enemies* (Orbis, 2014): a peacemaker reflects on the most difficult of the 'hard sayings' of Jesus.

Johann Christoph Arnold: *Seeking Peace: Notes and Conversations along the Way* (Plough Publishing, 2014)

After Christendom series

Three further books in this series are scheduled for publication in 2015. To whet your appetite, here are the front covers:



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