



Anabaptist Network News

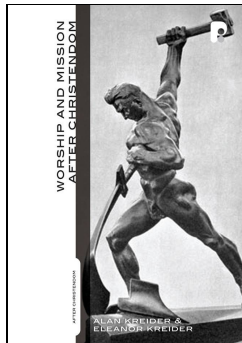
The Legacy of Alan and Eleanor Kreider

Readers who have been involved in the Anabaptist Network for some time will know of (if you have not met personally) Alan and Eleanor Kreider – Mennonite missionaries in Britain for 30 years, co-founders of the Network, an inspiration to many of us. Now back in Elkhart, Indiana, Alan officially retired this summer but will continue to teach and write – especially a major work on mission in the early church. Eleanor is already officially retired but is very active in their local church and further afield, especially with the emerging Anabaptist prayer book.

To mark this new stage in their lives, we have invited various people in Britain and elsewhere to contribute to a book in their honour. Provisionally called ***It All Fits Together: Forming Christian Habits for Post-Christendom***, this will be an opportunity for several friends and colleagues to engage with their writings, investigate themes on which they have taught, and put together a collection of resources that will represent their legacy. We anticipate that this will be out by the end of 2010. We hope to include some photographs, so if you have any of Alan and/or Eleanor (especially in earlier years), please let us know.

While waiting for this book to appear, you might want to investigate three other new resources from Alan and Eleanor.

* ***Worship and Mission after Christendom*** is due to be published this month – the fifth book in the ‘After Christendom’ series.



Christopher Wright, International Director of the Langham Partnership International, writes: ‘Rooted in the Bible, rich in history, relevant through an abundance of examples drawn from all cultures, this exciting, eye-opening, challenging and helpfully practical book should be read by all Christian leaders, from home-group to mega church, who are willing to see that worship and mission are as inseparable as breathing in and breathing out.’ The book is on sale at £12.99 or it can be ordered from Metanoia Book (www.metanoiabooks.org.uk). A sample chapter of can be found at www.anabaptistnetwork.com/node/523.

* ***Resident but Alien: How the Early Church Grew*** – a DVD featuring Alan Kreider in conversation with students, reading early Christian texts, reflecting on early Christian art, discussing the surprising growth of the early church. Six half-hour presentations and a study guide. Available from www.wordinspired.co.uk or 01582 829000 at £48.95 in Britain or from www.ywampublishing.com in North America.

* ***Take Our Moments and Our Days: Advent through Pentecost*** – a second volume of the Anabaptist prayer book, which Eleanor Kreider co-edits, is now available for testing out. You can download a .pdf version of this material from www.ams.edu/news-and-publications/prayerbook/content, or you can buy a hard copy from www.metanoiabooks.org.uk for £15.95.

Events

2-3 December 2009

Anabaptist theology forum at Offa House

5-6 December 2009

Salvation Landscape: the Hebrew story: Workshop weekend in Birmingham

9 January 2010

After Christendom day and book launch in Leeds

30 January 2010

After Christendom day and book launch in London

7-12 February 2010

Transforming Church Conflict, London (Bridge Builders)

13-14 February 2010

Second weekend of the *Crucible* course in Birmingham

27-28 February 2010

Salvation Landscape: Jesus to 1600: Workshop weekend in Birmingham

14-19 April 2010

Transforming Church Conflict: for Senior Leaders, Sheffield (Bridge Builders)

18-23 April 2010

Transforming Church Conflict, Durham (Bridge Builders)

21-23 May 2010

‘Shalom Activists’ at Woodbrooke College, Birmingham

After Christendom

Worship and Mission after Christendom will be officially launched at two day conferences – in Leeds on 9 January and London on 30 January 2010. More details accompany this newsletter. Do join us if you can at one of these events.

As well as celebrating the publication of this book, we can also report on progress towards further volumes:

- Lloyd Pietersen has completed *Reading the Bible after Christendom*. We look forward to this being available next year.
- Glen Marshall is continuing to write *Preaching after Christendom*.
- Several of us met in August to explore the feasibility of writing *Women and Men after Christendom*.

Anabaptists and Quakers

Sadly, and unexpectedly, the ‘Shalom Activists’ event planned for 10 October did not take place after all. We have been trying for over a decade to bring Anabaptists and Quakers together, and we thought we had finally achieved this. But the low numbers registering made this non-viable. We would be interested in learning why. Was it the impact of the recession? Lack of interest in the topic? Lack of interest in a joint event? Let us know if you have any thoughts on this.

However, for those who were disappointed that this event was cancelled or who were unable to be there anyway, there is a second chance. We have been invited to participate in a weekend event (21-23 May) at Woodbrooke, the Quaker college in Birmingham. This will be entitled ‘The Meaning of Shalom’ and will explore the Quaker and Anabaptist traditions, especially in relation to peace. For details, contact 0121 472 5171 or have a look at the information on our website.

Network of Communities

Twenty or so representatives of congregations, interested in the possibility of forming a network to learn from one other and from the Anabaptist tradition, met in Birmingham in September.

The congregations represented ranged in size, age, location and extent of Anabaptist influence. We listened to each other’s stories and thought

about ways in which a network might operate and how the communities (we decided this term was better than ‘congregations’) might access this network and be resources to each other.

We agreed that a network would be helpful and timely, but we also felt this needed to emerge organically and gradually. So we will continue to consult about this over the next few months as the participating communities begin to develop links and share resources. We will have further news in the Spring newsletter. Meanwhile, if you want to join this emerging network, please contact Ali Phelps at ali.phelps@ntlworld.com.

The Naked Anabaptist

The manuscript of *The Naked Anabaptist* is now with the publisher. The book will be available by the middle of next year. We are planning to hold a number of day conferences in different parts of the country to launch the book and introduce new people to the Anabaptist tradition. If you’d like to organise an event in your area, please let us know. The book will probably sell at £9.99.

Peace-making in Colombia

Ros Parkes writes about a recent trip that she and her husband Martin made with Christian Peacemaker Teams:

‘We have both been members of the Anabaptist Network for several years. We were attracted to Anabaptism for various reasons, including its historic commitment to peace and nonviolent witness. Subsequent exploration of nonviolence and peacemaking led us, just last month, to Colombia.

‘We went with Christian Peacemaker Teams to meet a community of 123 families who on 14 July 2009 were forcibly and violently displaced from the land (known as Las Pavas) they have farmed and tended for several years, so that the land could instead be used for the production of oil palm for agro-fuels (‘agro-fuels’ is the term Colombian environmentalists prefer to ‘biofuels’ as these may not be good for the environment). We saw land torn up, trees uprooted, vast areas of wetland drained, and places where homes once stood torn down by oil palm companies. And we heard how, on the day of the eviction, many families were threatened by violence and unsuccessful attempts were made to goad them into violent responses.

'We went to Colombia to discover what peace-making looks like in messy, complicated, real-life, here-and-now situations, rather than in the pages of autobiographies and textbooks. We found that it is messy and complicated; but also hard work and time-consuming. Our journey of exploration into peace-making continues, but now with a sense of grit and determination.'

The Wave

Given the limited space in this newsletter, we don't normally publicise events organised by others, but we feel this should be an exception:

Ben Niblett (of Tearfund) writes: 'I thought you'd be interested in **The Wave**, which is going to be the UK's biggest climate change demonstration.'

'In December, world leaders must seal a strong and fair deal at the crucial UN climate talks in Copenhagen. Join us on *Saturday 5 December* in central London for an action-packed church service, at Westminster Central Hall at 11.00, organised by Tearfund, Christian Aid, CAFOD and others with the Archbishops of Canterbury and Westminster, followed by a family-friendly march to call on the UK Government to give leadership to deliver a strong and fair global deal that puts the needs of the poorest people first. Tens of thousands of people will be there from a huge range of civil society, all faiths and none, from the WI to Greenpeace. There is also a Glasgow Wave on the same day for those in Scotland.'

'Please visit www.tearfund.org/wave for travel and other information, including coaches and trains being booked from around the country – even some bike rides, and rumours of a giant blue dragon coming from South Wales.'

Funding the Network

Sometimes we are asked how the Network is funded. The answer is 'through donations'. We have low overheads – no staff or premises. Our conferences roughly break even. The main cost is this newsletter – and email has reduced this cost in recent years. Anyone wanting to inspect our accounts can contact our treasurer, Lloyd Pietersen, via the website.

So we do what we do with limited but adequate resources. If we had more resources we could no doubt do more, but our policy has been to

live within our means and use any spare funds for particular initiatives rather than constantly fundraising. We have only once in the past 18 years asked for financial support.

So, if you want to support the Network, either regularly or with a one-off gift, perhaps to help defray the cost of this newsletter, please do – sending a cheque to the address on page 4. But we do not plan to appeal for funds any time soon.

Resource Houses

We have a new resource house in the north-west of England. Readers are welcome to make use of the Anabaptist resources housed with Brian Haymes at: 1 Colville Grove, Timperley, Altrincham, Cheshire WA15 6NA (0161 374 0813).

Partner Organisations

Crucible

The *Crucible* course is offering a wider range of subjects for study this year, with two streams at each weekend. Subjects for the next weekend (13-14 February) are *The Urban Challenge* and *Becoming Human*.

For further details of subjects and dates, or to book a place, see www.cruciblecourse.org.uk or contact us at crucible@urbanexpression.org.uk.

Urban Expression

The explosion of interest in inner-city church planting mentioned in the summer newsletter has resulted in the appointment of team leaders in Stoke, Birmingham, Bristol and London. All of these are now recruiting others to join them. In North America, Jeff Wright is developing Urban Expression in Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Toronto. And there is ongoing interest in setting up Urban Expression in Sweden.

If you are interested in joining one of the new teams, contact Jim Kilpin at: jimkilpin@aol.com. If you'd like to offer financial support to enable us to engage more effectively with these new opportunities, or if you would like to receive our regular newsletters, please get in touch with us at enquiries@urbanexpression.org.uk.

WorkTrek

In the second and third weeks of June 2010, Workshop/Anvil Trust will once again run their

WorkTrek journey to Palestine–Israel, entitled 'Towards Jerusalem'. We have run WorkTrek twice before with some 35 people on each of the trips, to huge acclaim. We had to cancel an over-subscribed trip just days before the second *intifada* broke and have had many requests over the last 10 years to run the trips again.

WorkTrek will have four main focal points:

1. Physical landscape: its natural beauty and astonishing contrasts, how physical landscape is central to the dream of 'the land'.
2. Historical significance: visiting important biblical, medieval and contemporary sites, connecting story and place.
3. Political struggles: hearing the many different stories and voices, meeting those working for peace and justice in the face of physical and structural violence.
4. Spiritual impact: meditations, meetings with spiritual people from across the faiths authentic spirituality embracing the whole trip.

WorkTrek is a study tour – neither a pilgrimage nor a holiday – it is very much more than both! We are still finalising the exact dates and prices, which should be available very soon. If you would like to receive the full itinerary and prices as soon as they are available then email admin@anvil.org.uk or phone 0114 288 8816.

Bridge Builders

Transforming Church Conflict: A Foundation Course for Leaders

Bridge Builders' highly acclaimed foundation course exploring conflict transformation for Christian leaders and their churches.

7-12 Feb 2009, London (early bird discount by 30 Oct 2009)

18-23 April 2010, Durham (early bird discount by 8 Jan 2010)

Transforming Church Conflict: A Foundation Course for Senior Leaders

Bridge Builders' acclaimed foundation course specifically for senior church leaders with oversight responsibilities.

14-19 April 2010, Sheffield

Church Leadership and Family Systems

Running for its sixth year, this course introduces ways for participants to reflect on their ministry in the church in light of their family background, applying a family systems model.

8-11 June 2010, London (early bird discount by 30 Oct 2009)

For brochures and application forms for all our courses see www.menno.org.uk, or email us at bb@menno.org.uk.

London Mennonite Centre

The London Mennonite Centre is continuing to reflect on its vision, priorities and staffing needs. This reflection process – the most extensive for many years – is taking time, but there are signs of progress and we hope to have much more to report in the next newsletter. Please pray for the Centre's trustees as they grapple with complex issues and chart a new course for the future.

Christian Peacemaker Teams

Christian Peacemaker Teams held their first training in Europe during October in London. The eight trainees came from the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, the United States and the United Kingdom. The modules in the full-time, month-long training programme focused on topics such as biblical themes of nonviolence, undoing racism, conflict transformation, human rights documentation and action planning (more details at www.cpt.org/resources/training).

On 7 October, the anniversary of the Iraq war, the training group held a communion service blocking the gates of Northwood HQ, a NATO military base in northwest London, for one hour. Trainees who graduated will join the Christian Peacemaker Corps as reservists, serving for between two weeks and three months on CPT projects in Colombia, Kurdistan (northern Iraq), Israel–Palestine or Canada.

Contact Us

For further information about anything you have read in this newsletter, please contact us. And if you have information or news items you would like included in the next newsletter, let us have these no later than **31 December 2009**.

Please let us know if you change your address, if you would be willing to receive newsletters by email to help us save postage costs, or if you no longer wish to receive them.

Anabaptist Network Trust (registered charity 1021760)

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