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The ADC Disciple

Anabaptist Disciples of Christ is an affiliation of Conservative Anabaptist churches seeking likeminded fellowship, instruction, and accountability in church administration and congregational life in the Biblical pattern of the Apostolic church.

Anabaptist Vision For Today

by Val & Barb Yoder

Historically, Anabaptists have been given two labels. During the Reformation our spiritual ancestors were called "the radicals." They were a pro-active group on the cutting edge of a determined effort to bring the church back to her biblical foundation in Acts. They initiated discussion, evangelism, and took Christ's command to "Go ye therefore and teach all nations" literally. The ambition and intensity of this time not only earned them the title "radical" but also ignited the fires of persecution and wrathful animosity against their simple faith.

Years later, some of the heat of religious hatred toward them dissipated. As the next generation reflected on the cruelty and brutality upon their forefathers and found places of political refuge, they developed a maintenance mode of church life. There was a concerted effort to preserve that which forefathers had died for. "Hold fast to the faith" became the theme. In their places of refuge from the intolerant magistrates of Europe they became known as the "quiet in the land."

"As important as maintenance is, it must actively cooperate with passionate action."

Both titles (the "radicals" and the "quiet in the land") are essential and represent two callings of church life. The church is called to be pro-active while maintaining the faith. We are to go teach all nations while holding fast to the faith. As a contemporary Anabaptist, I am grateful for a heritage that has done well in maintaining biblical application while most other denominations have compromised to the point of invisibility. I recall going to Sunday School as a child in a mission church where Lutheran ladies would not come to church unless they were veiled, usually with a stylish hat. Walter Beachy reports that in his grandmother's day the Amish and Methodist ladies looked nearly the same from across the street. It was only with a closer look that you would see the frills and extra lace not worn by the Amish. "Holding fast" in our churches has visibly preserved a biblical obedience that has been lost in most other denominations.

As important as maintenance is, it must actively cooperate with passionate action. If our "holding fast" is not coupled with "Go ye therefore," Anabaptism will become extinct except as a spectacle for tourism. We will be little more than a quaint reminder of western culture's past.

Honest questioning forces us to ask, "Where are we at in these "holding" and "going" endeavors? A couple years ago a teacher at Sharon Mennonite Bible Institute's Minister's Week asked a group of forty to fifty pastors, "How many of your churches have five or more members from non-Mennonite backgrounds?" Only one pastor raised his hand. Would this indicate which side of the continuum we are on? When churches grow only due to church hopping and childbirth, we are in a maintenance mode. When churches divide due to dissension instead of evangelism, we are in a maintenance mode. If marriage and

material things primarily characterize the future vision of our people, we are in a maintenance mode.

These factors do not suggest pro-activity! Marriage and material things are the tools to something far bigger! We are in warfare. No truce has been called between the kingdoms of man and the Kingdom of God. Some question, "Is it safe to send young people to Iraq?" No, it may not be safe! But we are not here to be safe. We are here to be dangerous!!! Even the gates of hell are not supposed to be able to withstand us! If we are concerned primarily about safety, we are stuck in maintenance mode. Was it safe for Felix Mantz to face the city council? Is it safe for the underground Chinese church to take the gospel back to Jerusalem? Was it safe for the ten Booms to hide Jews? Was it safe for Stephen to preach to the high priests? Was it safe to visit the orphanage in Haiti?

"No truce has been called between the kingdoms of man and the Kingdom of God."

As important as the maintenance mode is, it will never be compelling by itself! Where there is no "Go ye therefore," there will be no significant or biblical "Holding fast." Oh, that we would once again be worthy of the title "Radical!" God calls us to maintenance, but He also calls us to trail blazing, to adventure, to battle, to escapades, to risk for the sake of building the Kingdom of God! The greatest challenge facing the contemporary conservative Anabaptist church is providing the "Go ye therefore" examples for young Anabaptists today to model their lives after and to guide them in the conquests of the Kingdom.

The conservative Mennonite church must continue to raise up men and women like Irwin and Susan Schantz who left home and family to travel to the frigid northern regions to plant churches where no Anabaptist had ever traveled. Their bread was spread with lard in their primitive home while they labored to plant churches in northern Minnesota and northwestern Ontario.

We need homes like that of Count Zinzendorf whose house became a training facility for missionaries. The prayer closet of their home was filled twenty-four hours a day with prayer warriors for two hundred years! That community of people sent out more missionaries in twenty years than all the rest of European Christianity did in 200 years.

The conservative Anabaptist Church has the resources and willingness in its young people. In the early eighties, young people left SMBI on weekends and term breaks for the cellars of New York City to encourage and assist the church planters that labored there. They slept on tables and the floor while rats walked on the pipes above them. Today young men are cautiously taking food and clothing through jungles in Myanmar to people marked for genocide by the government. Others are demining areas mined during wars. Still others are utilizing micro-financing programs to minister to the impoverished. There are a whole army of Kingdom soldiers in our churches who are willing to go into battle with weapons not made with hands. They need to be called forth by the church and sent into action.

What is the challenge facing Anabaptism in 2024?

1. We must get our eyesight off retirement! If middle-aged Anabaptists primarily dream of retiring in some vacationland city of the south, they will live out a lifestyle that will not reflect a compelling vision to the next generation! We will lose that generation to the worldly value system that has already captured us.

2. We must embrace the commitment of the persecuted church. Martyr's Mirror should be a regular part of our educational history requirements. The underground church in China should become our mentor. Our love for Jesus must mean that what we live for is also worth dying for. The Chinese church is committed to sending their best workers, the most experienced, the best equipped. Ten years of experience in leadership is desired for those that are sent out. A pastor is hardly deemed worthy in some Chinese circles if he has not spent time in prison.

While we question if it is safe to go into closed access countries, they expect persecution. Of the first thirty-nine missionaries sent out in the "Back to Jerusalem" mission effort, thirty-six were arrested and sent back home. The Chinese church rejoiced that three made it through, the others tried again as soon as they were released from jail. They train their workers to cross cultural barriers, to target specific groups, and to witness in all situations (trains, buses, police cars, even on their way to execution).

These workers are spiritual suicide bombers. They know they need to go, but they don't know if they will come back. They are trained in how to get out of their handcuffs in thirty seconds and how to jump from second floor window without getting hurt.

3. We must rekindle the fire of conquest in young men. The God-given drive for conquest in young men has been sedated into sports endeavors, shooting the biggest buck or hitting the most home runs. When our teaching of non-resistance is not coupled with conquest for the Kingdom, we will raise a generation of wimps, yellow soldiers who prefer coffee time to war time. Assuredly, our weapons are not carnal, but neither are they non-existent. They are MIGHTY, to the pulling down of strong holds!!!

Middle-aged American Anabaptists must capture a vision of Kingdom building that calls forth the wisdom of the aged and the daring of the young. This vision must include both the maintenance of faith and the pro-active aggression of works. Our challenge involves "Holding Fast" while we "Go therefore."

We are Val & Barb Yoder residing in Blackduck, MN, involved in itinerant ministry, and teaching at the Institute for Global Opportunities(IGo).

Mission: *Update*

iMPACT INTERNATIONAL

I'm excited to provide an update from ADC Impact International. The effort to get Impact International off the ground is significant and we definitely cannot do this work without the continued support of the ADC churches. That being said, your incredible interest and support at the ADC Annual Assembly has allowed us to move our mission forward significantly.

Reflecting on my journey, I'm continually amazed by God's abundant mercies and provisions. I transitioned to full-time work with Impact International in July and am thoroughly enjoying it. My role involves establishing organizational structures and systems to support our growing mission and send workers effectively. Another important part of my work is making sure we prioritize soul care, so our field workers are well-supported spiritually and emotionally. It's been an exciting time as God presents new ministry opportunities and vision for the future.

Impact International is also delighted to welcome Virginia Beachy as administrative assistant. Her organizational skills, procedural expertise, attention to detail, and graphic design experience are invaluable assets to the team.

In this edition of 'The ADC Disciple,' we are pleased to introduce our first team: The Jesus Bhaktas. Tim and Gina Kuepfer have been serving in Delhi, India, for the past year and have felt the need for additional support and structure. This led them to join Impact International, and they also found a sending church in Crosspointe (Baltic, OH; Lead Pastor Mark Miller). We are grateful for this partnership and are excited to see how God will use this team. Team Bhaktas is currently recruiting additional members. If you are interested in joining the work in India, see the team profile for more information.

We deeply value your prayers as we embrace new opportunities and Impact International continues to grow. Your financial support is also crucial. Impact International now has a checking account, so you can make contributions directly to us. For those interested in partnering with us or discussing ministry visions, please contact me directly.

Pray With Us:

- For teammates for the 'Jesus Bhaktas' team
- For God to raise up many workers
- For God to bring more opportunities to Impact International

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iMPACT INTERNATIONAL

the JESUS BHAKTAS team profile

DELHI, INDIA

ABOUT US

Our team began work in Delhi in August 2023, fulfilling a call to work in an unreached part of the world. Our first priorities were to start a profitable business and begin ministry alongside locals. Prosynergy Bookkeeping is successful, we have partnered with locals in various ministries, and witnessed baptisms and fervent worship in Indian form.

Our priority now is to find other families who can join us to embody Jesus's church and co-labor in this land of many opportunities.

Due to the pollution in Delhi, we are exploring a cleaner city to settle long term.

Team name: *In Hindu culture, a Bhakta is a disciple, devotee, or worshipper; practicing bhakti means mutual attachment or devotion.*

VISION // MISSION // PURPOSE

We long to see Christ's kingdom come through local churches–people transformed by the gospel in all realms: family, education, economics, festivals, media, etc.

We embody Christ's kingdom as a faithful home-church fellowship learning to live by the Spirit. We build ministry-focused businesses and seek to alleviate human suffering through collaborative community development. We train and send local workers to share the gospel and start home fellowships among the unreached.

We identify as business professionals and followers of Jesus who love the people of India and are committed to bring blessing, abundance, and dignity to everyone.

CORE VALUES

- Honest, authentic living
- Generosity
- Living by the Spirit and Prayer
- Cultural Respect
- Family and Community
- Obedience-based Discipleship
- Anabaptist Hermeneutic
- Local Church

Sign up here for Tim & Gina's WhatsApp and email updates

Tim & Gina Kuepfer

Ezekiel, Annabella, Avonlea, Madeline

Sending Church: *Crosspointe Mennonite Church*

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Cafe with working space
- ESL/Computer/Career skills center
- Indoor kids' play space
- Medical tourism
- Vacation rentals
- Expand Prosynergy professional services

and more…

currently recruiting

- Middle-aged couple
- Young families
- Singles

If you are interested in joining this team, or want more information about Impact, scan to send an email

ADC Church Profile —

Door of Hope (DOH), located in Wilmington, Ohio, was founded in 2006.

The current pastoral team consists of Matt Weaver and Calvin Stoltzfus, Pastors; and Daniel Stoltzfus, Elder.

Membership currently is at 27.

DOH started out of as a Bible study that was being held in Wilmington. This Bible study evolved into a house church and from there members moved into a store front. Later, members bought an older apartment building which was gutted and remodeled to provide a place to hold services. In 2018 the members bought a church building in Wilmington which serves them presently.

Wilmington has a population of around 12,600 people, with rolling farmland, a beautiful lake, and many camping areas.

DOH has had a missions outreach in Myanmar since 2012. This missions outreach includes operating two orphanage/safe houses along with a drug rehabilitation center in the northern part of the country. DOH also assists with Agape International Ministries to fight sex trafficking. DOH also is in the process of doing a monthly outreach meal in the neighborhood where the church is located. There is a fairly large homeless population in Wilmington.

Two DOH families are foster families.

Also, there are 29 children ages 12 and under!

Thank you Pastors for giving us a glimpse of your church!

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE
Lonnie Beachy – *Chairman*
Mark Miller – *Vice-Chairman*
Dave Nisly – *Secretary-Treasurer*

Nate Yoder – *Editor*
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