

## CATCHING UP FROM LOST YEARS

Recently, my wife and I had some good friends to our home. We had many lovely discussions about church, what it means to follow Jesus, and how the Anabaptist worldview looks in today's world. Each of us had a different home church, but one theme kept coming up: many people have questions and are looking for answers. Confusion and misunderstanding is a major challenge of our time. I don't believe Anabaptist Perspectives has all the answers; clearly the local church is where people should plug in and find their place. But Anabaptist Perspectives has a key part to play by bringing together a variety of speakers and topics into one place and making them easily accessible and discoverable to anyone desiring to learn more.

That day, one of our friends told about someone from their church who had left Christianity and lived an ungodly life. This person came back to the faith, but he had missed years of opportunity to attend Bible schools, read good books, and learn deeply from church leaders. Now that he is back in the faith, he feels like he is "catching up" for all those lost years of teaching. Material from Anabaptist Perspectives has had a huge impact on his life as he processes what sacrificial allegiance to Jesus and his Kingdom looks like.

This story describes so well our vision. We hear from listeners all around the world that have been encouraged by the content, and often they have follow-up questions and a desire to learn more. All of this is because of supporters like you; thank you for making this work possible.

**Reagan Schrock** *Executive Director*



### VISION

Using digital media to encourage allegiance to Jesus' sacrificial kingdom.



**Reagan Schrock**  
*Executive Director*



**Marlin Sommers**  
*Executive Committee*



**Jaran Miller**  
*Executive Committee*



**Geryll Zehr**  
*Chairman*



**Kevin Shenk**  
*Secretary*



**Vinson Miller**  
*Treasurer*



**Luke Helmuth**  
*Board Member*



**Duane Wadel**  
*Board Member*



**Chester Weaver**  
*Board Member*



**Byron Miller**  
*Board Member*

## ANABAPTIST ON THE INTERNET:

### *Reflecting on Conversations About My Faith*

**Note:** This essay by our co-founder Jaran Miller was released on our Essays for King Jesus blog in March 2023. Text and audio recording is available at [link.anabaptist.media/reflecting](https://link.anabaptist.media/reflecting). Find this and other narrated essays in podcast apps as "Essays for King Jesus."

Having religious conversations with those of other persuasions is nothing new to me. I was born into a family in a new Mennonite church in rural America. Distinctive, modest dress was not familiar to most of our new neighbors in small town Tennessee, so my childhood ears became familiar with comments about nuns and questions like, "Why do you wear that thing on your head?" My mother would graciously talk to strangers about the aspects of her faith that led to her atypical choices for fashion, parenting, and general mode of life.

As I spread my own wings and started working beside Evangelicals, Pentecostals, Catholics, and irreligious people, I learned to also talk with those who wanted to know more about my approach to faith.

At the workplace: "So you're a Mennonite! Do you have a garden?"

Another workplace: "Why do the women wear bonnets?"

Also at work: "If I decide to join your church, could I keep drinking beer?"

## MOST VIEWED VIDEOS IN 2022 (YOUTUBE)

1.	<b>My Journey to the Mennonites</b>	Samantha Trankamp	6/28/18
2.	<b>The Essence of Anabaptism</b>	Dean Taylor	1/4/18
3.	<b>Mennonite Nazis</b>	Chester Weaver	10/15/20
4.	<b>An Anabaptist View of Salvation</b>	David Bercot	1/2/20
5.	<b>Our Experience Among the Homeless</b>	Multiple	5/5/22
6.	<b>History of the Apocrypha in the Biblical Canon</b>	Stephen Russell	10/31/19
7.	<b>Why Do Some Mennonites Use Only Half the Internet?</b>	Myron Eby & Verlon Miller	9/8/22
8.	<b>How I Came to Radical Kingdom Economics</b>	John D. Martin	4/28/22
9.	<b>I Was Once a Jehovah's Witness</b>	David Bercot	8/22/19
10.	<b>Without a Complicated Interpretation?</b>	Dean Taylor (Q&A)	8/11/22

After my then girlfriend, now wife, appeared at the university with me: "You brought your girlfriend to class. Are you a conservative Christian of some sort?"

Face to face conversations like these resulted from letting those around me see a picture of one particular way that Jesus-centered discipleship can look. By existing in the mainstream of North America's culture while making lifestyle choices that differ from said culture, many in my faith tradition regularly have similar experiences.

A similar phenomenon can happen online. Unlike the situations mentioned above, displaying ourselves with all our cultural distinctiveness on the Internet is purely optional. However, this is an option that I and the others on the Anabaptist Perspectives' team have chosen. Rather than

primarily our neighbors, this choice makes us observable to and open to questions from the broader English-speaking world. I have the opportunity to dialog with people who send messages via email and social media comments. This work has brought both joys and discomforts. I'll start with the discomforts.

The first discomfort comes when it feels like we're a carrot on a stick. We present one picture of the church, more specifically, a picture of one segment of the Anabaptist tradition, by emphasizing aspects that we deem praiseworthy. This leads to a necessarily curated perspective of the parts we're excited about. This ends up with a perspective that dwells on things other than the recesses where there's badness and benign "down-sides." Where our communities live out

*Continued on pg. 4*

## MISSION

1. Engage with questions important for faithful living in ways that are biblically, historically, and theologically informed.
2. Share stories and history (especially from the Anabaptist movement) as a source of understanding and inspiration for serving the King.
3. Publish content regularly on major platforms, interact with audience responses, and build an expanding resource library.







Dale Eby and Marlin Sommers recording an episode.

*Continued from pg. 3*

the faith well, I'm pleased by the inspiration this gives onlookers. On the other hand, some have used the benefits they see in our communities as an excuse for discontentment with their own setting. This comes from within the Anabaptist world, especially among people whose churches are more structured than the ones we typically represent. We also hear this discontentment coming from people in other traditions. We don't intentionally dangle our perspective in the face of others, but some set our churches up as an

impossible ideal. I ask myself, how can I present what our churches have to offer as something for inspiration while also encouraging our listeners to be content with where God has them, unless they really must leave their church for the sake of faithfulness?

When we publicly value something that differs from most Christian churches, others may wish that they have what we do instead of what they have. If we pull people from communities where they could be living faithfully, our pearl-flashing

may lead to divisiveness rather than bolstering unity around central things. When I see comments with sharp remarks left on our episodes about peripheral issues, I wonder if the episode has misdirected focus away from things that should be unifying to things that don't matter. Don't get me wrong, in certain contexts, I'll happily banter with others about matters that aren't central to Christianity. However, the context must be right.

While engaging with Anabaptist Perspectives' audience brings some discomfort and questions, it also brings joy. Near the top is hearing when our work has encouraged others. Those who have studied the Bible and church history on their own sometimes stumble across us and realize that others think like them. They find new camaraderie and learn they're not alone. For example, John wrote to us in response to an episode:

"You just made me feel so much better for feeling the way I have since I grew up in an Extremely politically involved religious... family... I've been on a long hard road trying to not feel so alone in my beliefs. This white haired man here just eased my mind and given me the courage to lovingly move forward in my path of radically loving God's creation until the day I die."

Some don't want to join us, but they learn a perspective from us that can strengthen their own church that's in a different tradition. For example, we received this comment from an appreciative

audience member:

"I wanted to let you know that I have been really blessed by the media ministries of the Mennonites that I have encountered, including this channel. You seem to be one of the very few Christian groups I have found who base their views of money, stewardship, and economics forms the principles outlined in the Bible and not for the wisdom of the world. Keep up the great work. You have an appreciative view in the Adventist church."

When we hear from people like this, we are reminded that we have a platform that can help nudge Christians from a wide variety of denominational backgrounds toward faithful discipleship.

We also find joy when we hear from members of our audience who are from our own circles about ways that they have been strengthened or encouraged by the words of our guests. A brother who subscribes to our Cloudveil channels wrote this to us:

"Thanks so much for your work. Some of your videos have gone "viral" among our group... Chester Weaver is a favorite of mine. His talk on Mennonite Nazi's was of special interest... It's not easy to find discussions like yours that are as informed, informative, and respectful of conservative Mennonite viewpoints."

Jesus came to Earth to initiate His church, not a podcast, not a publishing company, and not

*Continued on back page.*

## QUOTE FROM A LISTENER

"Hi! Just wanted to express gratitude for the content that you are producing. I'm coming from a non-Mennonite, non-Christian even, background. I could say a lot more, but my story really doesn't matter. My family and I recently found my way to a local conservative Mennonite church and have really been inspired by it. This channel has helped answer many questions and curiosities as well as just demonstrate the effect of holding the anabaptist worldview which pervades those interviewing and being interviewed."

**Contact us if  
you would like a  
presentation in  
your community.**



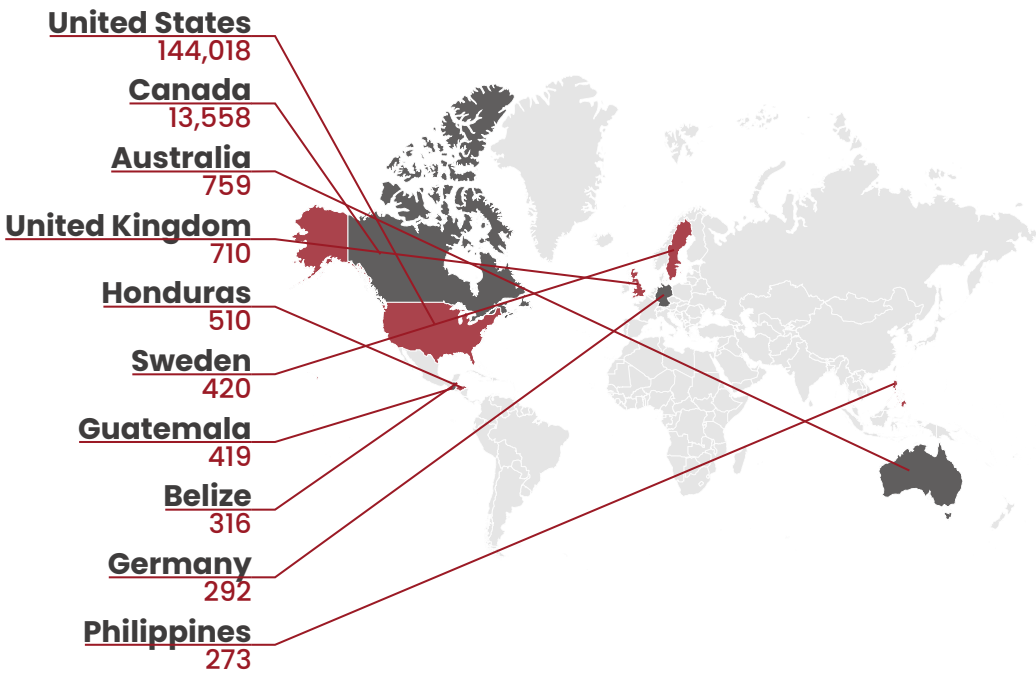
A ministry presentation at Sharon Mennonite Bible Institute



# NUMBERS AND STATISTICS

## TOP COUNTRIES 2022

YOUTUBE AND PODCASTS



## RECENT ESSAYS


5/7/2022	The Importance of Christ's Death and Resurrection	Milo Zehr
6/4/2022	Integrity? The Allure of Doubleness	Chester Weaver
7/2/2022	Money Modesty and Body Modesty	Marlin Sommers
8/6/2022	Cultivating Spiritual Creativity in God's Kingdom	Reagan Schrock
9/3/2022	Cremation versus Burial: Why It Matters	Samantha Bender
10/8/2022	Rebirth and the Law of Sowing and Reaping	Marlin Sommers
11/5/2022	Nationalism and Christianity	Mike Atnip
12/4/2022	Why Did the German Mennonites Become Nazis?	Chester Weaver
12/17/2022	Losing and Recovering Non-resistance in the Civil War Era	Chester Weaver
1/15/2023	Forgiveness Is not "Putting up With"	Marlin Sommers
2/4/2023	Directing God's Resources as a Homemaker	Robin Wolfer
3/4/2023	Anabaptist on the Internet: Reflecting on conversations about my faith	Jaran Miller
4/1/2023	Walk in the Unity Jesus Created	Marlin Sommers
5/6/2023	Grace and Truth vs Grace or Truth	Chester Weaver

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Anabaptist Perspectives is supported by contributions from churches and individuals. As of July 24 we have received 43% of our 2023 budget.

Contributions are tax deductible and a receipt will be sent at the end of the year.

 [anabaptistperspectives.org/donate](https://anabaptistperspectives.org/donate)

 127 County Road 616 Athens, TN 37303.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2022

<b>REVENUE</b>		
Audio Book Sales	\$	320
Interest Income	\$	109
Patreon Income	\$	7,999
Unrestricted Donations	\$	81,125
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>89,553</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Gear & Equipment	\$	473
Travel	\$	1,804
Payroll Tax	\$	1,868
Subcontractors	\$	18,544
Wages	\$	23,566
Workers' Comp. Insurance	\$	262
Admin Software & Apps	\$	1,808
Media Distribution	\$	1,180
Media Production Software	\$	1,054
Advertising & Marketing	\$	1,090
Office Supplies	\$	29
Payment Processing Fees	\$	1,439
Royalties	\$	40
Shipping & Postage	\$	9
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>53,166</b>
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>36,387</b>
<b>2022 BALANCE</b>		
Beginning	\$	18,785
Ending	\$	55,172

Accounting is cash basis. Gear and Equipment we own is not on the books as all items are below the capitalization threshold. Donated use of shared office space is not reflected on statement of activity. \$730 is donor restricted for gear and equipment.



## anabaptist perspectives

127 County Road 616,  
Athens, Tennessee 37303

---

[anabaptistperspectives.org](http://anabaptistperspectives.org)  
[info@anabaptistperspectives.org](mailto:info@anabaptistperspectives.org)



[anabaptistperspectives.org/follow](http://anabaptistperspectives.org/follow)

### OUR PLATFORMS

@AnabaptistPerspectives



*Continued from pg. 5*

a mission organization. As we continue to hear bits and pieces of the ways that we have strengthened the church, we receive motivation to carry on.

As I reflect on the work of dialoging with our audience through Internet media, I am reminded of the importance of humility. Offering ourselves as the ones who will say things subjects us to both praise and criticism. Humility must be in place when we receive praise, so we don't think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, and humility must be in place when we receive criticism, so we can learn and change when necessary.

To those who have written to us with encouraging notes, we thank you. You have helped us to focus energy more precisely. To those of you who have given criticism, we thank you too. We have occasionally made changes due to legitimate concerns that you have raised, so don't give up. Keep seeking the truth and encouraging others, including us, to do likewise.

**Jaran Miller** *Executive Committee*