

'Hearing God's Call' VBS materials

Message Received: Hearing God's Call is the MennoMedia VBS material for 2015. It features five Bible stories that highlight characters who heard God call them—Samuel, Esther, Mary, Jesus' disciples, and Lydia.



MennoMedia VBS is designed for children and teachers to first meet in a large group session for a time of worship and music, including a Bible story drama. The resources fit each age level. Items can be ordered in an all-in-one boxed set or separately. Information is at www.MennoMedia.org/vbs.

Baptism and Membership

Baptism is an act of membership. If membership reveals identity, service, and accountability with Christ and his Church, can baptism be any less? Who would officiate at a wedding where a couple did not expect to live together? The rich meaning of baptism, as a covenantal act of membership, belongs to basic Christian education.

Licensing Questions

Q: Does my local EMC church need to purchase its own music license?

A: Yes, the conference license through CCLI only covers music use at regional and national events, not your local church.

Q: Does my local EMC church need to purchase its own video license?

A: It depends. If the specific film title is covered by Audio Cine Films (check its website), your local church is covered by a conference-wide license and the answer is no. But if the film is not covered, the church would either not use the film or would have to purchase a license from another supplier.

Q: Does my local EMC church need to purchase its own CCVL?

A: If it wants one, yes. ACF's license and CCVL are not the same.

Q: My local church livestreams our services, including music, beyond our building. Do we need a live streaming music license?

A: Yes, according to our information. The conference has purchased one for its regional and national use, but this does not cover local churches.

Revised Common Lectionary

The Revised Common Lectionary provides weekly OT, Gospel, and NT selections to guide weekly worship and instruction. It is free at various websites, including at Vanderbilt Divinity School (the RCL is being supported, not necessarily Vanderbilt). Why not learn from the lectionary's discipline? Here's a suggestion: base the service and sermon on at least three publicly read passages (OT, Gospels, later NT) that show how Scripture leads to Christ, tells of his life, and reflects on him.

Key Links

- ◆ www.acf-film.com (Audio Cine Films video licensing)
- ◆ www.mennomedia.org (Christian Education materials)
 - www.faithandliferesources.org/periodicals/rejoice
 - www.faithandliferesources.org/supplies/closetohome
 - www.mpn.net/worship
- ◆ www.emconference.ca
 - www.emconference.ca/ce-resources
 - www.emconference.ca/theodidaktos
 - www.emconference.ca/catalogue
 - www.emconference.ca/worship-resources
- ◆ resources.mcc.org/content/understanding-sexual-abuse-church-leader-or-caregiver
- ◆ www.mennonitechurch.ca (*What is an Anabaptist Christian?* booklet)
- ◆ www.themeetinghouse.ca (*Inglorious Pastors* series)
- ◆ re-worship.blogspot.com (Dr. Christine Longhurst's worship blog) and faithmatters.ca
- ◆ www.cmu.ca/portable.html (CMU short courses)

Blessings on the teaching ministries within your churches!

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Christian Education Update

Resources for Pastors and Sunday School Teachers

March 2015



Two Myths About Early Anabaptists

Beware of two myths that weaken our use of Scripture, teaching (doctrine), and discipling:

1. *Early Anabaptists cared more about right practice than right theology.* They were concerned about both. They saw theology flowing out of Scripture and to be reflected within a lifestyle reliant upon the Spirit. For instance, they affirmed The Apostles' Creed while bringing in ethics. They sought to bring balance and, sadly, an imbalance is ascribed to them.

2. *Early Anabaptists did not write systematic theology.* Menno Simons and Balthasar Hubmaier wrote much about theology. Peter Rideman's *Confession of Faith* (1545) and Dirk Philip's *Handbook of the Christian Doctrine and Religion* (1564) are systematic treatments of doctrine. Anabaptist leaders did not compose their thoughts with the freedom and safety of Calvin and Luther, but they were not by choice unsystematic.

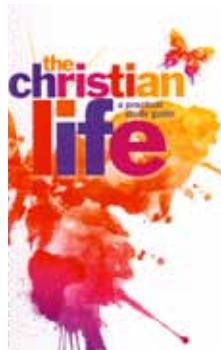
BFL Pamphlet Series

The Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches (CCMBC) has a series of pamphlets on Christian beliefs and issues within Church and society. Copies are 40 cents each (plus mailing) from CCMBC. They can be viewed free online at <http://www.mennonitebrethren.ca/resource/faith-and-life-pamphlet-series/>

Topics include Anabaptism, baptism and membership, children and communion, war, Christian witness, the Bible, marriage, weddings, when marriages fail, living together, death and dying, euthanasia, retirement, homosexuality, lotteries, viewing choices, materialism, suicide, AIDS, and gambling.

Order The Christian Life Study Guide!

An updated interim edition of *The Christian Life: a practical study guide* is available for \$5 plus shipping. By March 2016, a shortened, rewritten edition will be available, produced jointly by the EMC, EMMC, and CMC. The Christian Life guide serves inquirers, young Christians, and people transferring their membership.



Youth Worker Resource Sites

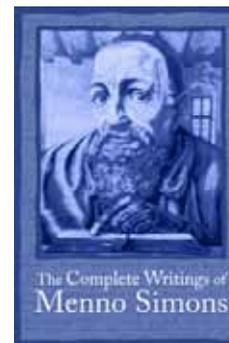
1. *Simplyyouthministry.com*—Simply Youth Ministry equips, connects, and recharges youth workers with tools, relationships, and confidence to help teenagers develop a committed relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. *Skitguys.com*—Tommy Woodard and Eddie James have been teaching God's Word using comedy, drama, and talking action figures for over 20 years.
3. *Iamsecond.com*—I am Second is a movement to inspire people to live for God and others. The authentic stories on *iamsecond.com* provide insight into dealing with struggles of everyday living.
4. *Egadideas.com*—The Internet's largest collection of free youth group games and ideas. It has tons of fundraisers, sermons, illustrations, activities, resources and ideas for those who work with youth.
5. *TheSource4ym.com*—Jonathan McKee's website has free resources for youth workers providing curriculum, activities, and ideas, as well as articles about youth culture, teenage attitudes, and trends. He has developed a resource website for parents: thesource4parents.com.

Social Justice and EMC Statements

Do you know our EMC *Constitution* contains four statements on Social Justice? They are found within *The Life of Peace* (p. 9), *Christian Stewardship* (p. 11), *Commitment to Service* (p. 12), and *The State* (p. 13). One statement sums it up: "Stewardship is demonstrated in our lifestyles, in our relations with the poor and the disadvantaged, in our view of possessions, in our concern for all of God's creation and in our response to global economic injustice."

Menno Simons, the Social Activist

Menno Simons (1496-1561) got involved in politics, protest, and lobbying. He used his writing and the printing press to defend the needy. His concerns can be found in writings such as *The New Birth* (1537), *A Pathetic Supplication to All Magistrates* (1552), and *True Christian Faith* (rev. 1556). "The poor citizen and peasant, men of the same faith, you deprive of life and possessions. You burn, rob, plunder, capture, tax, and torture even those who have never harmed you, or given you an evil word" (*The Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, Herald Press, 1984).



Resources for EMC Churches

- For Sunday School or Vacation Bible School materials, small group books, youth materials and more, check out **Menno-Media** (www.mennomedia.org) for a full product listing.
- **Follow Me: Exploring More Of Our Calling As Christians**, a 13-lesson look at social justice, is available for mailing costs only.
- A **2014 Peace and Discipleship Sermons by EMCers** booklet is available (pdf at www.emconference.ca/ce-resources).
- **Rejoice!** is an Anabaptist daily devotional guide produced by MennoMedia (www.faithandliferesources.org/periodicals/rejoice).
- **Theodidaktos: Journal for EMC Theology and Education** (editor Darryl G. Klassen) is available free on-line (www.emconference.ca/theodidaktos) and in print. The *Journal* provides an in-depth look at issues and a voice for EMCers.
- **What is an Anabaptist Christian?** is a booklet from Mennonite Church Canada that can be downloaded free (www.mennonitechurch.ca, search "Anabaptist Christian"). It focuses on "Jesus is the center of our faith. Community is the center of our lives. Reconciliation is the center of our work."
- A free **Worship Guide** is available from www.mpn.net/worship, produced by Mennonite Church USA and MC Canada.
- **Close to Home** by MennoMedia is a contemporary series of pamphlets on many issues faced by EMCers. Please check www.faithandliferesources.org/supplies/closetohome for a full listing of titles printed and others being planned.
- The **EMC Video Resource Library** catalogue is online at www.emconference.ca/catalogue. Rental fees are designed on a cost-recovery basis to help maintain and expand the library. Title suggestions are welcomed.



The Church and Maturity

If "it takes a village to raise a child," it takes the Church to make a mature Christian. Parents, pastors, church members, Sunday School teachers, youth leaders, camp workers, Bible college and seminary faculty and staff members—all have roles in shaping our Church "life together." Christian education today emphasizes inter-generational learning.