

## Welcome from Women in Leadership

Welcome to the third Women Doing Theology (WDT) conference organized by MC USA's Women in Leadership. We build upon a tradition of Anabaptist theologians, ministers, teachers, activists, creatives and many others gathering to do theological work born out of women's experiences. As Anabaptists, we understand that our theology is most fully realized together — sharing and learning from our unique lived experiences with God, community and self.

Our theme is *Talkin' bout a Revolution: Dialogue, Practice and the Work of Liberation*. The ideas we'll explore at this year's conference are possible because of the work we've already done as a WDT community — grounding ourselves in love (All You Need Is Love, WDT 2014) and asking hard questions about power (I've Got the Power!, WDT 2016). Now, we must go deeper.

### Revolution is a radical change...

And as a community of Anabaptist Christians living in the United States in the year 2018, we're seeing the need — the urgency — for revolution. We can no longer afford to tacitly contribute toward the status quo. We must begin to release the constraints that limit us, listening to the Spirit and thinking creatively about what following Jesus and liberation mean for us — individually and as a community in this day and time.

We realize that to really live into this revolution, we still have a lot to learn. What does it mean to widen the circle and make space for whole people to come as they are? Who gets seen? Whose stories get told? What are the practices and ways of being together that create space for people and stories and ideas that aren't typically heard? We want to explore that.

We want to do the hard work, within ourselves, within the context of our learning and faith communities, of figuring out new ways of being that lead to freedom. Freedom, not just for a select few, but a freedom that empowers each of us to do our part in widening the circle, creating opportunities for others to access liberation. Let's do this work together.

Chantelle, Melissa and Jenny  
November 2018

## Creating Safe(r) Space Together

We hope we all can spend this time together learning, reflecting and relaxing as well as building and strengthening relationships and having a good time. We will also be sharing and receiving stories that might be difficult to hold. As listeners and speakers, we may find ourselves nudged into positions of vulnerability, which means that it is important that the space we create together is one of safety and respect.

We recognize that we cannot guarantee safe space. But we can commit to crafting a safer space. As planners and facilitators, we commit ourselves to not doing violence by our words or deeds. If and when we make mistakes, we ask that you bring them to our attention. We will do our best to make it right.

As participants, we ask that you do the same: to commit yourselves to not doing violence by word or deed.

We have thought about things like inclusive language and space for all people. We recognize that all of us are on a journey and we are at different places on that journey. We recognize that we come from many spaces and places and have varied lived experiences. We recognize that as we gather together for this conference, we come from a spectrum of theological, political and economic commitments. We invite your grace and compassion as we encounter one another on the road towards mutual flourishing.

We may disagree on many points. But let this space hold all of who we are and what we bring as we unite together in a community of mutual discernment and caring for one another.

Please join us in the commitment to each do our part to make this space as safe as it can be for all gathered.

## Commitments

We seek to ground the conference in a set of community expectations and commitments. We ask that you read these commitments below and meditate on them. We will come back to these throughout the conference:

**Centering the margins.** We will create and hold space at the center of our shared experience, discussion, worship and action for those whose voices have been historically on the margins in our country, in our denomination and in conference settings.

**Comfort with discomfort.** We will come to this shared space expecting to be challenged and uncomfortable, pushed out of our comfort zones, letting go of business as usual or what feels normal to us in conference and/or church gatherings.

**Bringing our whole selves.** We will create a place together where we each can feel safe enough to be authentic, sharing the gift of ourselves with one another.

**Naming hard things.** We will not always get it right. We will make mistakes. We enter this space expecting to encounter difficult situations. We commit to naming and engaging with one another when things get hard. We commit to speaking truth with love.

**Practicing grace and space.** We will extend grace to each other. And we'll set boundaries recognizing that sometimes the most loving thing we can do is create healthy space between us.

## Chaplains

As planners, we understand that coming into a space and committing to engage the work of widening the circle together, requires emotional energy and effort. We also recognize that sometimes, while engaging this hard work, we need spiritual support. And so we've invited 10 women to provide spiritual accompaniment during the conference. These women are wearing a marker. They are willing to listen, pray and hold space with you. If you're looking for spiritual accompaniment, we invite you to seek one of these women out and ask.

## Large Group Sessions

We're imagining new ways of being so that all people access liberation. Over the course of the conference we'll hear from three women who are actively doing the work of expanding the circle in their respective disciplines. On the last day of the conference they'll enter into a conversation together and take questions from participants.

**Thursday, Nov. 8, 7:00 p.m.**

### The World is about to Turn



**Dr. Malinda Elizabeth Berry**

Malinda Elizabeth Berry lives with her family in south central Elkhart, Indiana. She and her husband John Stoltzfus are parents to Jeremiah and Chloe. With their cat, their hen, and rain-barrel-dwelling goldfish, they are a household of radical homemakers trying to live more with less. They are part of Fellowship of Hope Mennonite Church where

Malinda chairs the Worship Group. Malinda also spends time at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) where she is assistant professor of theology and ethics. Prior to teaching at AMBS, Malinda was assistant professor of theological studies and director of the Master of Arts program at Bethany Theological Seminary as well as a visiting scholar in religion and women's studies at Goshen College. She holds a Ph.D. in systematic theology from Union Theological Seminary, a master of arts in Peace Studies from AMBS, and a bachelor's degree from Goshen College. In recent years, Malinda has become a student of nonviolent communication and practitioner of the Circle Way, which shape her approach to Mennonite peace theology she calls Shalom Political Theology.

**Friday, Nov. 9, 9:00 a.m.**

### Shout from the Margins



**Rev. Yvette R. Blair**

Yvette R. Blair was seven, sitting in the pew at Lee Chapel AME Church in Dallas, when she sensed God calling her to preach. Now a licensed pastor, Yvette serves in ministry, teaching and preaching at numerous churches and faith-based organizations. A womanist preacher who understands what it's like to navigate liminal spaces and to use her

prophetic voice as a form of resistance to liberate women from marginalized and oppressive spaces, she is excited about her new season of ministry. Last year she cofounded a new worshipping community in Dallas called The Gathering — A Womanist Church and serves as copastor with two other clergywomen. Yvette empowers women to lift their voices with a resounding cry in Holy Spirit-led, radical ways that dismantle the walls of patriarchy, misogyny and sexism. Yvette is a 2017 academic fellow of Princeton Theological Seminary's Black Theology and Leadership Institute and a graduate of Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University with a master's degree in theological studies. She authored *Being Ruth: Pressing through Life's Struggles with Fearless Faith* (2017).

**Friday, Nov. 9, 1:30 p.m.**

### A Theo(poetic) Revolution: The Language of Liberation



**Carolina Hinojosa-Cisneros**

Carolina Hinojosa-Cisneros is a Tejana poet, freelance writer and speaker. Her work deals with faith and Latinidad and has appeared at *On Being*, *The Rumpus*, *The Acentos Review*, *SheLoves Magazine* and others. She is a regular contributor at *The Mudroom* and has forthcoming work in *Latina Outsiders: Remaking Latina Identity*, *The Windward Review*,

*Bird's Thumb* and *Christianity Today*.

Carolina holds a bachelor of arts degree in English from the University of Texas at San Antonio. She is currently pitching a book which deals with the in-betweenness of our faith y lo cotidiano. She lives with her family on the southside of San Antonio, Texas, where she was born and raised after her family established roots when the border crossed them, separating what is now northern Mexico and the Rio Grande Valley.

## Breakout Sessions

Breakout session options:

### WORKSHOPS

Interactive spaces to engage learning through writing, conversation, movement and more. Workshops are participatory and participants can expect to be active learners.

### PAPERS

30-minute presentations on research, reflection, study, insight, or expertise related to the conference theme. Presenters are grouped together with a time for questions and answers at the end.

### AUTONOMOUS SPACE/ ACCOUNTABILITY SPACE

Provide safe(r) space to process your experiences at the conference and provide support to one another. We're offering Women of Color space, *Espacio para latin@s hispanohablantes*, Queer Space, Space for those with disabilities, Whiteness accountability space, Men's accountability space. These spaces are offered 1-2 times during breakout sessions. We encourage all participants to participate in all the spaces that apply to them.



**Friday, Nov. 9, 10:30 a.m. – noon**

### WORKSHOPS

#### **Embody Liberation: An Experience of Sound, Song and Movement**

(For women only)

*Rachel Allen*

#### **CHAPEL BASEMENT**

This experience supports freeing the creative self-expression of individuals while exploring the collective. We always have with us our breath, our voice and our bodies. We will be led through practices of tenderness, empowerment, grounding and affirmation through facilitated breath work, sound, music and movement with both non-choreographed movement and circle dance. No musical or movement experience necessary.

#### **Mennonite and Feminist: The Revolutionary Work of Theologian Lydia Neufeld Harder**

(For women only)

*Lydia Neufeld Harder, Kim Penner, Michele Rizoli, Carol Penner, Susanne Guenther Loewen*

#### **CHAPEL OF THE WORD**

Each panelist, including Lydia, will spend five minutes speaking on Lydia's work in her recent book, *The Challenge Is in the Naming: A Theological Journey*, on the topic of revolutionary theology. This book is a collection of Lydia's published articles over the course of her career with new and contextual introductions. Each person will conclude by posing either a question to Lydia or to the audience for conversation. Kim and Susanne will reiterate some of the reflections they made in the foreword to Lydia's book, citing the revolutionary nature of her feminist Mennonite method for doing theology/ethics. These identities of feminist and Mennonite and the different theological methods associated with them were and still are considered contradictory by some people/communities. Lydia considered them compatible and in fact mutually informing. One question for audience conversation is, "How do American and Canadian contexts compare with regard to the articulation and practice of feminist Mennonite theology/ethics?"

## All Generations Will Call Her Blessed

*Leslie Hawthorne Klingler, Regina Trespalacios*

### ROOM 116

This workshop encourages Christians to reconsider the empowering theological place of Mary, Mother of Jesus. By introducing a Roman Catholic perspective on what the Bible says about Mary from Eden to the Apocalypse and then sharing the story of the Virgin of Guadalupe and her vital role in Mexican society, the presenters hope participants will gain appreciation for God's favor on the least of these and God's desire to share glory with the people of God. The presentation is accompanied by interactive activities as well as visual images of Mary in art.

## Women and Generosity

*Lana Miller, Evelin Gonzalez, Rhoda Blough*

### ROOM 214

Generally women navigate life, family and money challenges while also striving for generosity, financial integrity and thoughtfulness in how decisions are made around resources. In this workshop, we will engage stories of generous women in the Bible. We will also learn from one another as we explore how women save, invest and give money, often differently than men. We will investigate how our faith, beliefs and values impact our generosity.

## Writing 'bout a Revolution: Resistance through Narrative

*Joanne Gallardo*

### LIBRARY EAST STUDY ROOM

*Space allows only 10 participants in this workshop.*

*"Everything in life is writable about if you have the outgoing guts to do it, and the imagination to improvise." —Sylvia Plath*

This is a workshop for writers, including those who wish they were writers and those who've ever thought about writing. One of the most revolutionary things we can do is to speak our truth. In this workshop, via a series of prompts, we will be writing aspects of our narrative in monologue-style, sermon-style, or in whatever style we wish. We will practice telling one another our stories anonymously so we can take this revolutionary truth-writing into our churches and communities.

## Emancipatory Hope in Action: Strategies for Awareness, Assessment and Social Justice Advocacy

*Melody M. Pannell and Aura Espinosa*

### LAMBRIGHT H

*Emancipatory hope is expectation that the forms of hegemonic relations — race, class and gender dominance — will be toppled and to have emancipatory hope is to acknowledge one's personal agency in God's vision for human equality. —Evelyn L. Parker*

Learn how to utilize Womanist Practical Theology to uncover internalized oppression, seek liberating frameworks and develop strategies for awareness, assessment and social justice advocacy.

## From Tamar to Tabitha: Turning to Women of the Bible as We Craft the Revolution

(For women only)

*Rachel Taylor*

### LAMBRIGHT C/D

How can we practice the spiritual discipline listening to the lives of named and unnamed women of the Bible? How might that change the ways we do this work — whether preaching, teaching, advocating or creating? In this experiential workshop, participants will have the opportunity to engage with old stories in new ways. We will sit with stories and characters we had forgotten. We will draw inspiration from visual artists and from conversations with each other. We will connect the lives of these women with our call in this world — to cultivate safe spaces where all can flourish. We will leave with energy to find and create meaning in our own work.

## Selah Circle

*Shannon Dycus*

### LAMBRIGHT ROOM I

Consider this an introduction, experience and reflection of group spiritual direction using contemporary tools of revolution (art, music, poetry). Together we'll make space to pause in the continuous work of God. We'll listen to the voice of God in us and the holy echo that lives in art. We'll take away a framework to use along the journey as we keep listening toward liberation.

## WADSWORTH ROOM

### Can You Hear the Blood Crying Out?

*Grace Spencer*

In recent years, the efforts to reform America's justice system have created another crisis within our country — prison reentry. Inmates face innumerable challenges when they are released from prison, including employment and housing, substance abuse and mental health treatment, forming and restoring relationships along with stigmatization, all of which are worse than we can imagine. In this paper, I examine the meaning of the Hebrew word *awon* (often translated as iniquity, punishment, or guilt) in the Pentateuch, specifically in Genesis 4, concluding that standard English translations have inadequately defined the meaning of *awon*. A more thorough understanding of *awon* offers a vision of God's justice that is restorative, not retributive and empowers the church to respond to the current reentry crisis. The question is: will we? Will the church embrace the vision presented in Genesis 4, taking responsibility for the healing role it can play in the nation's prison crisis and finally accept that we are our brother's and sister's keeper?

### Welcome to Scriptural Revolution: Starting with Genesis 1–3

*Dorothy Yoder Nyce*

One of the most influential texts regarding human relations opens the biblical story. To faithfully interpret scripture, fully claim that all people are equally created in God's image, avoid sex stereotypes and counter human abuse calls us to radical change from traditional views. This paper will convey the why and how of needed revolution. It will address specifics of honest interpreting and build on feminist insight of the past four decades. Content will commend Wisdom for re-imagining ourselves, proclaiming truth from mentors like Tribble, Gaffney, Johnson and Mast.

### To Whom Much Is Given: "Nice" White Ladies and the Work of Liberation

*Amy Bowers*

The Christian scriptures repeatedly call the followers of Jesus to do nothing out of selfish ambition and choose the lowest place at the table. Many white Christian women like me have learned these lessons too well, consistently deferring to others and seeking the lowest seat at the table. However, we live in a world where our places are largely assigned, determined by our identities and the circumstances into which we were born. By fleeing from places of influence that we might occupy, we abdicate responsibility to challenge the unjust systems from which we benefit. Joining in the working of liberation will mean repenting of the ways in which we have allowed ourselves to be silenced and learning to translate our privilege into the agency to work alongside our sisters of color to ensure that all of our neighbors have a place at the table.



**Friday, Nov. 9, 2:45–3:45 p.m.**

WORKSHOPS

### Talkin' about Freedom: Imagining Liberatory and Radical Futures

*Brittany T. Paschall, Ariana Wagoner*

#### AMBS CHAPEL

Liberation is the talk everywhere from conferences to activism and even in seminary classrooms. Talkin' about Freedom: Imagining Liberatory and Radical Futures will be a hands-on workshop where participants will serve as cocreators in imagining liberatory and radical futures together. Our time will be grounded in the question: What does liberation look like? We will explore barriers and challenges to liberation on the individual and collective levels. Most importantly, we will engage methods of organizing, theology and spiritual practices in a multimodal learning environment.

*\*In an effort to create shared power dynamics and voice, participants are invited to offer resources and spiritual practices during the workshop. Please email [bpaschall@ymail.com](mailto:bpaschall@ymail.com) if you would like to contribute in this way.*

## **Raise Your Voice: Why We Stay Silent and How to Speak Up**

(For women only)

*Kathy Khang*

### **CHAPEL BASEMENT**

Women, and particularly women of color, pay a price the moment they find and use their voice. What does it look like to be whole and healing while also raising our voices? What are some lessons we have learned and failures we can warn others about? What does embodying our theology look like over the long haul? Join author and activist in a one-hour interactive workshop that also will include guided meditation and breath work.

## **Singing Revolution**

*Crystal Sellers Battle, Janeen Bertsche Johnson*

### **CHAPEL OF THE WORD**

What are the songs of the church which have supported change movements? We will look at and sing songs of resistance from several time periods and places.

## **Hard but Good: Widening the Circle with Generation Z**

*Anita Hooley Yoder, Sarah Tolson, Ciera Stewart, Jill Rafferty*

### **WADSWORTH ROOM**

Anita Hooley Yoder will facilitate a panel discussion of current college students, members of “Generation Z,” from various backgrounds and political perspectives. Students attend Notre Dame College near Cleveland, Ohio, where Anita is a campus minister. Students will reflect on the “hard but good” process of exploring different theological, cultural and political perspectives during their college experience. Anita will share about her personal learning from working to engage a diverse student body. This workshop will not be a how-to of effective practices, but a conversation about the challenges of creating revolutionary space that truly includes everyone.

## **How Flexible Is Our Faith? Negotiating Theological Difference in a Divided Church**

*Bonnie Kristian*

### **ROOM 119**

In a time of divisive and downright nasty public discourse, Christians, of all people, ought to be able to disagree without hate. Some of Jesus’ harshest words were for religious people who got nitpicky over doctrinal issues while neglecting the really big stuff — “justice, mercy and faithfulness.” Still, constructively negotiating theological difference is difficult. What does it look like after 2,000 years of church splits? When should we learn to coexist — and when should we discuss, debate or even go our separate ways? What arguments don’t warrant division in the body of Christ, and what issues demand we take a stand? How should our engagement differ when dealing with topics, like roles of women, that are core

to our identities? This workshop will help participants explore these questions and more in a roundtable discussion guided by Bonnie Kristian, author of *A Flexible Faith: Rethinking What It Means to Follow Jesus Today*.

## **Beyond Inclusive Language for Humanity and Expansive Language for God: Exploring Questions of Worship and Gender in Voices Together**

*Sarah Johnson*

### **ROOM 121**

Discussions about worship and gender often focus on singing and speaking words that employ language for humanity that is inclusive of women and images that expand our vision of a gendered divinity. This workshop aims to expand the questions we ask about worship and gender and to expand our conception of worship beyond the words we sing and speak. Participants will be invited to test and reflect on worship resources — including visual art, scripture, prayers, ritual practices, songs and more — that are being considered for inclusion in *Voices Together*, a new Mennonite hymnal and worship book that will be published in 2020 ([voicestogetherhymnal.org](http://voicestogetherhymnal.org)). Participants may also develop skills and frameworks for engaging questions associated with gender and worship in their local contexts with the hope of a revolution in worship practices that empowers more voices to join together in worship of the Liberating One.

## **You Do You**

*Brenda Yoder*

### **ROOM 116**

Women are created as unique individuals in the image of her Creator. However, women receive messages telling us there’s something wrong with ourselves in order to be accepted in various contexts, even among other women. In this hands-on workshop, counselor, author and speaker Brenda L. Yoder, LMHC, will empower women to not only embrace their uniqueness but challenge us as women to accept and honor others who are different from us, not only in race or sexual orientation, but also in theology, politics, socio-economic status, culture, or faith practices.

## Talkin' bout a Textual Revolution: Inhabiting Canonical Boundaries with Susanna and Friends

Jackie Wyse-Rhodes

### ROOM 214

The stories we tell shape our communities and the canon of Scripture shapes the stories we tell in our churches. Some women's stories are present and vital in the Bible, but others are missing. In this workshop, we will consider Susanna's story. The book of Susanna is excluded in contemporary Protestant canons of Scripture but included in Catholic, Orthodox and Amish canons. Susanna's story is sadly timeless: she is sexually threatened by religious leaders and then, as a victim, is blamed for their wrongdoing. Ultimately, Susanna is a survivor. In this workshop, we will read Susanna's story in dialogue with stories of other biblical women and with the stories of our own lives. Ultimately, we will consider what a "textual revolution" in the Mennonite church might look like. What are the gifts and the limits of the biblical canon for our churches today? Are we, as women readers, called to inhabit canonical boundaries?

## A Course in Flourishing

(For women only)

Melody M. Pannell, Kiesha Tillman

### LAMBRIGHT H

This workshop is designed for young women as well as those who work with them. We will engage in exercises to empower young women to FLOURISH through finding their calling and exploring vocation as an act of personal agency and righteous resistance.

## Traditions in Translation: A Writing Workshop

Becca J.R. Lachman

### LAMBRIGHT C/D

What would it take to start writing yourself into the living story of a faith inspired by an intersectional feminist Jesus? What would it take to imagine the Bible if a roomful of women had decided what made the final cut? Using prompts, we'll play with the ideas of translating and transformation. Here's your chance to rewrite a hymn with words you've always wanted to sing in church, revise a martyr story, come up with Mennonite emojis or write your own version of a psalm. What to bring: writing utensils, paper and any text that you'd especially like to explore (recipes, family stories and mantras count!).

## Migración, Liberación y Sentido de Vida

Rebeca González

### LAMBRIGHT ROOM I

Fuimos cread@s en libertad, sin embargo la propuesta de los nuevos sistemas nacionalistas que limitan la movilidad humana hacia diferentes contextos, necesitamos encontrar en el modelo de Jesús esa libertad a la que tod@s tenemos derecho y que da sentido de vida.

**Autonomous Space/  
Accountability Space**

**Whiteness Accountability Space**  
LIBRARY AV ROOM

**Queer Space**  
LIBRARY CENTRAL STUDY ROOM

**Women of Color Space**  
LAMBRIGHT ROOM B



**Friday, Nov. 9, 4:15–5:45 p.m.**

**WORKSHOPS**

## Supporting Each Other/ Lifting Each Other Up (literally)

(For women only)

Carmen Kingsley

### CHAPEL BASEMENT

This workshop will encourage participants to reflect on their physicality, the strength that their bodies possess as well as the physical strength present and available in groups. Recognizing the power of our physical presence can revolutionize how we, as women, feel about our role in society. The facilitator will draw upon her acrobatic and dance background in order to create a space where participants can support and lift each other up. This workshop is available to people of all physical abilities.



## Uncovering Meanings of the Head Covering

(For women only)

*Sarah Bixler, Melody Pannell*

### WADSWORTH ROOM

From Lancaster to South Texas, from Puerto Rico to Harlem, many Mennonite women in the 20th century covered their heads. This practice meant different things in each community. As a quiet but revolutionary act, women entered church services with heads uncovered until the practice almost disappeared. But that does not mean that we forget — or that we should forget — the head covering and all it symbolizes. In this workshop, we will create space to share head covering stories carried by diverse Mennonite women. Grounding our conversation in women's experiences, we will discover whom the head covering has impacted, what it symbolizes and how it lives on. In uncovering these meanings, we will envision how we can move forward with greater awareness toward our liberation.

## A More Touchable Jesus: Exploring the Humanity of Jesus as Revealed by the Women in His World

*Chris Hoover Seidel*

### ROOM 119

This workshop is a space in which participants can explore stories of women whose encounters with Jesus helped reveal the revolutionary nature of his life in community. Together with these women, we can touch Jesus' humanity and further the work of exposing and subverting unjust systems that silence, shame and marginalize. Participants will work collaboratively to respond to the text in revolutionary ways (i.e., naming women who are unnamed, identifying the limits of Jesus' social location, exploring the way power is leveraged and making connections to non-biblical stories), ultimately making Jesus more touchable. Participants will also be invited to depict the stories visually through the embodied art of tableau.

## Needed for Revelation: An Interpretive Revolution

*Reta Halteman Finger*

### ROOM 121

Many Christians avoid the book of Revelation because they can't understand it. Others are Christian Zionists who get it wrong. This workshop will explain what apocalyptic writing is and why it arose. We will do an overview of the book, pay attention to the women (and other symbols) in Revelation and reflect on its current relevance.

## Ya Llego la Revolución — The Revolution Has Arrived

*Margie Mejía-Caraballo*

### LIBRARY EAST STUDY ROOM

*Space allows only 10 participants in this workshop.*

Through spoken word poetry/rants, stories and discussion, this workshop will educate participants in the historical journey of Hispanic Mennonites within the Anglo Mennonite Church. Presentation will allow participants to understand and join in the new revolution being created by their Hispanic Mennonite brothers and sisters. The presenter has over 50 years of experience in the Mennonite Church.

## Narratives that Liberate

*Amy Yoder McGloughlin*

### LAMBRIGHT H

Cultures and people groups experience the biblical texts in different ways. Texts that some experience as liberating are troublesome to others. Amy Yoder McGloughlin will explore liberation theologies from various contexts — womanist, black, Palestinian, queer — and the complex ways that the biblical texts can be both liberating and troublesome. This workshop is designed specifically for white women to do their work of understanding the complexities of the readings and the ways that our vantage point has colonized the gospel, but all are welcome. Bring a Bible.

## From the Window to the Mirror

*Sandy Short*

### LAMBRIGHT C/D

See yourself in God's image. Move from focusing on a flawed view of yourself to seeing the person God created you to be. The workshop will include presentation time, followed by artistic time to create transformational image figures. It's about the process — not the final product! We'll conclude with a short time of sharing if the group is comfortable and time allows.

## Listening: A Revolution

*Jean Kilheffer Hess*

### LAMBRIGHT ROOM I

The skills of listening well and asking nonjudgmental, open-ended questions transform the revolutionary journey. This workshop is highly participatory and focused on building skills to conduct oral history interviews.

## AMBS CHAPEL

### **Justice for Tamar: How Can Delayed Justice Be Justice? The Church's Role in the #MeToo Era**

*Bekah York*

The Mennonite church is in the midst of a crisis. We have remained silent in cases of sexual misconduct and do not know how to talk about sexual violence in the church. It is time to put an end to the silence! With the rise of the #MeToo movement and the subsequent #ChurchToo response, it is pertinent for the Mennonite church to begin making active steps towards not only preventing such situations from happening but also knowing best how to respond when instances occur. As society is pressured to deal with accounts of sexual misconduct, we can provide an alternative to silence by reading the biblical story of Tamar in a way that sheds light on how to respond in instances of sexual injustice. I propose that Tamar stands in as a beautiful example of ways the church can speak out, rather than turn a blind eye.

### **Not One Should Be Lost: Hope for Victims and Perpetrators in the Era of #MeToo and #ChurchToo**

*Megan Westra*

Matthew 18 is one of the guideposts for many Christians when conflicts arise, but can this passage help guide our conversations in this time of great unveiling as thousands of women around the globe rally around a common, devastating denominator: #MeToo? Pastor and seminarian Megan Westra thinks so. In "Not One Should Be Lost" she brings together in-depth study of Greek manuscripts and commentary from the Patristics. She places these ancient voices in conversation with current feminist and womanist scholarship to craft a response which demands both justice for the victims and opens a pathway for restoration for the perpetrators of gender-based and sexual violence in the church.

## CHAPEL OF THE WORD

### **Queering Covenant: Embodying a Theology of Resilience and Liberation Through Right Relationship**

*Annabeth Roeschley*

This paper is an exercise in doing liberation theology with and for queerly-oriented communities, namely those seeking to trouble the waters of binaried oppressions. The paper draws on Patrisse Khan-Cullors's Black Lives Matter memoir as a contemporary example, focusing on how the vital web of relationship in her context might be interpreted as a theological and spiritual site with transformative and liberative potential. Relating this to her own context, Annabeth Roeschley makes connections between a Judeo-Christian understanding of covenant and alternative embodiments of right relationship in queer community outside of religious realms. Listeners are invited to witness how queer resilience and generative relationship are a liberating force for queerly-oriented communities and beyond. She is interested in what wisdom these alternative embodiments of covenant offer all people in movements seeking to disrupt and to queer oppressive powers and systems.

### **Queer Theology and Revolutionizing Our Images of God**

*Steph Chandler Burns*

This paper will explore the ways in which queer theology can help us to revolutionize our images of God. While historically theology has binarized God into primarily male or female images, by applying premises of queer theology, we can break with traditional imagery to describe God and revolutionize who can see themselves in God's image. In particular, by applying a bisexual lens and exploring Marcella Althaus-Reid's idea of the "bisexual God," we will explore how queer theology breaks down the boxes in which we confine God and allow for the revolutionizing of theological talk about God. This paper will delve into the benefits of bisexual political theory more generally, examine how these are applied through Althaus-Reid's work and suggest further implications in the polarized political climate in which we now find ourselves. It will center the experiences of queer, bisexual and nonbinary individuals within the Mennonite church.

## ROOM 116

### **Expanding Intersectionality: Thinking Species for Creaturely Co-liberation**

*Nekeisha Alexis*

Since Kimberlé Crenshaw published her work, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," the framework known as intersectionality has reshaped the way scholars of various disciplines have analyzed systems of oppression and conceived ways to resist them. However, in recent years, another wave of thinkers and practitioners have challenged the anthropocentrism of intersectionality and advocated for an expansion of the analysis to include an often overlooked dynamic of racial, gender and other forms of oppression: that of animality and species. Building on the work of critical race and critical animal scholars like Aph and Syl Ko and Claire Jean Kim, this talk will demonstrate why liberation for "every body" demands re-conceiving and relating to other animals beyond Enlightenment and colonial schemas. It will also demonstrate how Christ's reconciling work in the world already supports this realignment toward new futures with one another and our creaturely kin.

### **Risking Our Theology: The Un-covering of the Anabaptist Vision**

*Emily Ralph Servant*

This paper proposes that the 20th century quest for the Anabaptist vision was not so much a dis-covery or a re-covery but simply a cover-ing—an intellectual or cultural establishment seeking ways to protect and elevate Mennonite/Anabaptist identity over and against that of the "Other." As such, both our theology and sense of identity need to be revolutionized. In conversation with Mennonite theologian Lydia Neufeld Harder, Emily Ralph Servant will propose a theological methodology constructed by balancing obedience, suspicion and imagination. This theological exploration will necessarily be done in relationship with others and communities outside of the Mennonite center. By entering into these conversations with those on the margins of the church, we risk surrendering some aspects of our theology that we hold most valuable as we find ourselves transformed by the Good News. Only then will we uncover the Anabaptist Vision as a gift we can give to — and receive from — the world.

### **Reconciling with the Cross; Reclaiming our Souls and Symbols for the Movement**

*Addie Liechty*

This integrative paper positions itself at the intersections of psychology, theology and social justice. It takes an honest look at the history of the cross and the use of the cross by empire. The paper looks at the psychology of the cross and recognizes that context matters, in terms of who is displaying or using the cross and for what purpose or meaning. It explores how the psychological defense of projection has been used by Christian-patriarchal empire and how the use of the cross has supported projection and continues to do so today. The paper ends with reconstructing the cross as a symbol of reconciliation with "the other" within one's self as well as the external world. It speaks to reconciliation as a process that can only be done when white, Christian, hetero-patriarchy allows a psychological "death." This gives way and makes room for a resurrection of all those who have been persecuted in the name of white, patriarchal Christianity.

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Accountability Space**

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LIBRARY AV ROOM**

**Space for those with Disabilities  
LIBRARY STUDY ROOM 2**

**Queer Space  
LAMBRIGHT ROOM B**



**Saturday, Nov. 10, 10:30 a.m.–noon**

**WORKSHOPS**

### **Revolutionary Play**

*Carmen Kingsley*

#### **CHAPEL BASEMENT**

Constructing spaces where we can abandon societal expectations and pressures allows us to change perspective. Play spaces encourage us to shed some of our adherence to social constructs in order to experiment with how we perceive ourselves and how we interact with others. In this workshop the facilitator will draw on tools from clowning and cooperative games to create a safe space for play.

### **Calling You Out — Mentoring**

*Hyacinth Stevens*

#### **CHAPEL OF THE WORD**

This is an interactive workshop exploring best practices, the value of intergenerational mentoring, storytelling and how to make room and share space with our daughters, sisters and friends. We are calling you out. Won't you come and explore ways of walking alongside other women who are living their truth, speaking their truth and finding their way.

### **What Language Will You Borrow?**

*Malinda Elizabeth Berry*

#### **WADSWORTH ROOM**

Earlier in the women's movement "inclusive language" was a vital part of anti-oppression and antisexism work. Come learn about the background of this movement to liberate our language (including how it's been received in our communities), and we'll play a few language games to celebrate God's many names.

### **The Carnival de Resistance: Re-wild your Christianity**

*Sarah Thompson Nahar, Charletta Erb*

#### **ROOM 119**

Topsy-turvy Carnival de Resistance clowns around with some serious ideas. For the last five years, we've produced a carnival midway, theater, music and dance performance. Through the arts, the Carnival explores grief and hope for ecological, economical, gender/queer and racial justice. We reread Scriptural stories captured by empire, re-wilding them as resistance literature. Intrigued? Get a taste of your own power and juice through the Carnival modality in this interactive workshop.

*The carnival de resistance is a traveling carnival, village and school for social change. It bridges the worlds of art, activism and faith. [carnivalderesistance.com](http://carnivalderesistance.com)*

### **Hope for Post-Mennonite Lesbian Pastors**

*Marilyn Zehr, Svinda Heinrichs*

#### **ROOM 121**

Svinda and Marilyn both left the Mennonite church, after coming out, to answer God's call to live their ministry fully and creatively. Together, they respond to Spirit's call to participate in God's work of honoring the sacred in all people and in the natural world. Here's what ministry looks like for them. Since they are not yet fully welcome in the Mennonite church as ordained ministers, they consider themselves Mennonite refugees in the United Church of Canada, and like political refugees, they maintain as part of their identity their Mennonite formation and origins. This workshop is for anyone who wants to hear a story of how God remains faithful to the gifts and callings of persons who have not found themselves fully welcome in the Mennonite church.

### **Moving in Our Midst: An Intergenerational Antiracism Curriculum for White Mennonite Churches**

*Jennifer Arnold, Amanda Gross*

#### **ROOM 116**

Presenters will share a curriculum created for predominately white, progressive Mennonite churches to learn about and address various manifestations of racism and white supremacy. Drawing on Mennonite history, research about white identity formation and the organizing principles from The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, this curriculum is designed to be intergenerational, creative and intentionally antiracist. Participants in the workshop will learn about the need for such a curriculum in our churches, try out lessons and brainstorm ideas for practical implementation.

## **Revolutionary Worship: Women, Experience and the Power of Prayer**

*Carol Penner, Stephanie Chandler Burns*

### **LAMBRIGHT ROOM I**

Our rituals of public worship have the power to change us and shake the world, but they don't always live up to their potential. Sometimes we pray the same things in the same ways, in words that reflect a very narrow slice of life. Sometimes we worry what others might think of our prayers if we say what we really mean. What would worship look like if it reflected the parts of our lives that are the most important to us, particularly our gender and sexuality? As people who pray for and with congregations, how do we work with the challenges of diversity and inclusion? How is God calling to us through our prayers and how do we discern this in community? In this hands-on workshop we will write prayers together that

**PAPERS**

## **AMBS CHAPEL**

### **Jesus Christ Is Intersex, Gender-Queer, Trans: A Cisgender Plea for a Trans-inclusive Theology**

*Ariana Wagoner*

In this paper, Ariana Wagoner constructs an accessible trans-inclusive theology from her cis-gendered perspective. She argues that by adopting images of trans-Christ, trans-God, and a transgender or trans-inclusive theology that recognizes transgender persons as made in the image of God, cisgender theologians and Christians can accept and be open to the transgender community as beloved neighbors and image-bearers of a trans-God. She includes transgender theology, queer theology, black liberation theology, womanist theology and liberation theology (Gutierrez) to construct her argument from diverse, marginalized perspectives.

### **"We Want Our Stories Told!": LGBTQ+ Theologians and Pastors Speak Out**

*Rachel Goossen*

Historian Rachel Waltner Goossen examines the lives and professional work of people who identify as LGBTQ+ and are Anabaptist/Mennonite faith leaders (pastors, theologians, chaplains, church administrators), across the U.S. and Canada. Based on an oral history project begun two years ago, this study draws from interviews with 27 theologically-trained individuals who identify as LGBTQ+. Approximately two-thirds of these individuals currently work in Mennonite contexts, and the other third have left Mennonite/Anabaptist settings for

denominations that are more hospitable to queer faith leaders. Goossen highlights the ways in which many of these individuals have been silenced historically or have "disappeared" from Mennonite settings, as well as how many are asserting their voices and leadership and navigating places of welcome within and beyond Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada.

## **ROOM 214**

### **Right to Heal/Write to Heal**

*Lisa Crayton*

Inner healing is possible through Jesus Christ. Writing offers a pathway to healing while also providing a means to help others (children or adults) recover from brokenness. The workshop offers a challenge to use writing as a forum for healing for writers and readers.

### **Teaching Peace: Collaborating on a Book for Students and Activists**

*Regina Shands Stoltzfus*

This presentation will describe the collaborative process of creating an introductory text on nonviolence and activism.

## **LAMBRIGHT H**

*(For women only)*

### **Love Letter to Survivors**

*Rachel Allen*

Love Letter to Survivors is an exploration of tenderness and an invitation to occupy one's body when boundaries have been violated. Rachel Allen, a survivor of sexual assault and domestic violence, uses trauma-sensitive yoga with women who are incarcerated, who deal with substance abuse and mental health challenges, and who lack housing and supports. She also partners with a rape crisis center and a domestic violence shelter to provide free trauma-sensitive classes to survivors. This content will be a love letter and an invitation to connect with our inherent worth, value and dignity as human beings. Each of us is a part of creation and a reflector of our Creator.

## Transforming the Trajectory of Trauma through the Restoration of Personal Identity and Resilience of African-American Girls

Melody Pannell

Many women and girls of color are feeling even more marginalized than ever. They feel the threat of racism and sexism that has been normalized and perceived as acceptable within our society once again. This is also an area of re-traumatization and for African-Americans, the triggering of post-traumatic slave syndrome. Melody Pannell asks, "So where do I go with my goal to transform the trajectory of trauma through the restoration of personal identity and resilience of African-American Girls? What tangible skills can we plan to incorporate as we develop theological programs for young women of color?" Her findings in *The Little Book of Strategic Peacebuilding* by Lisa Schirch are helpful.

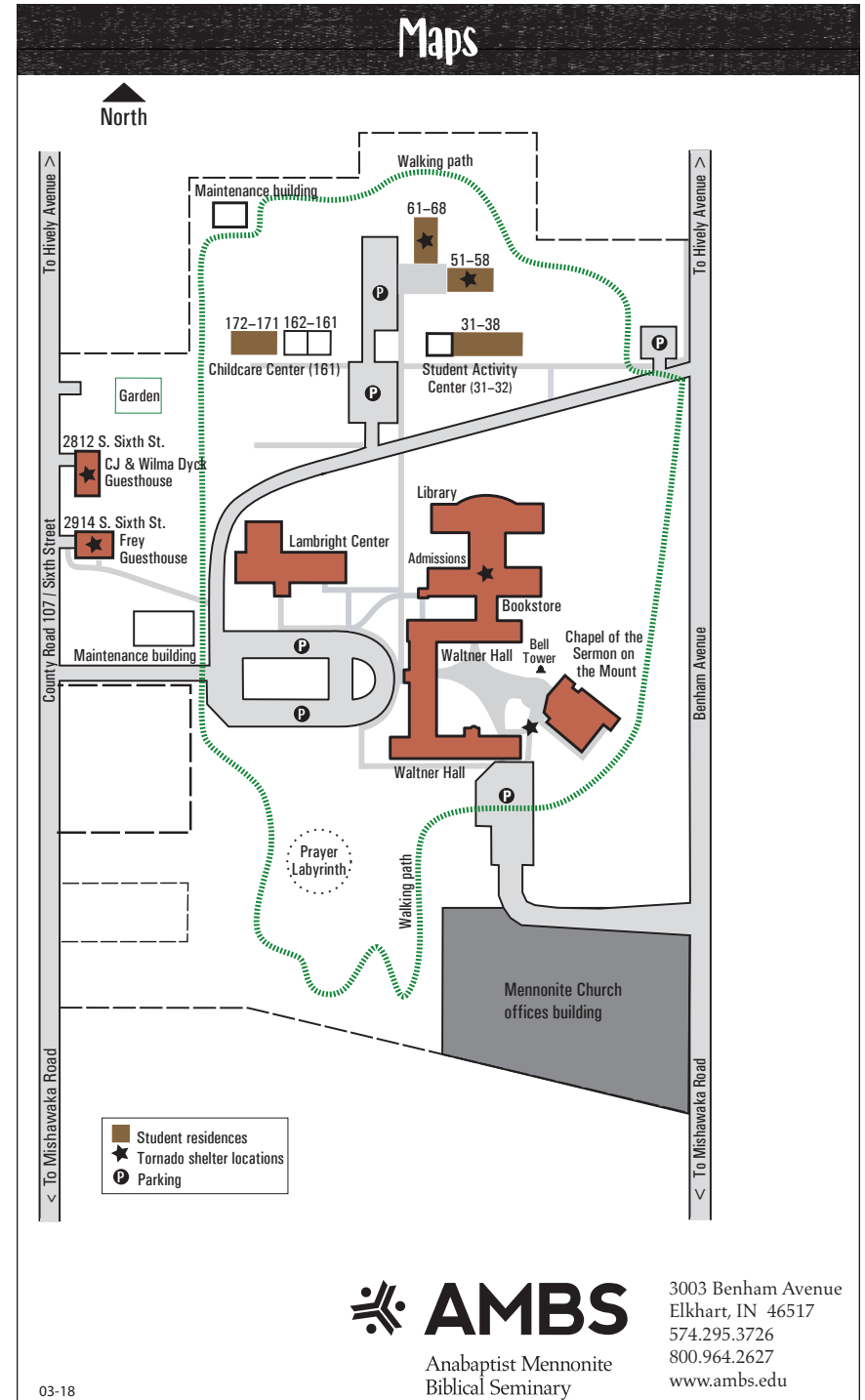
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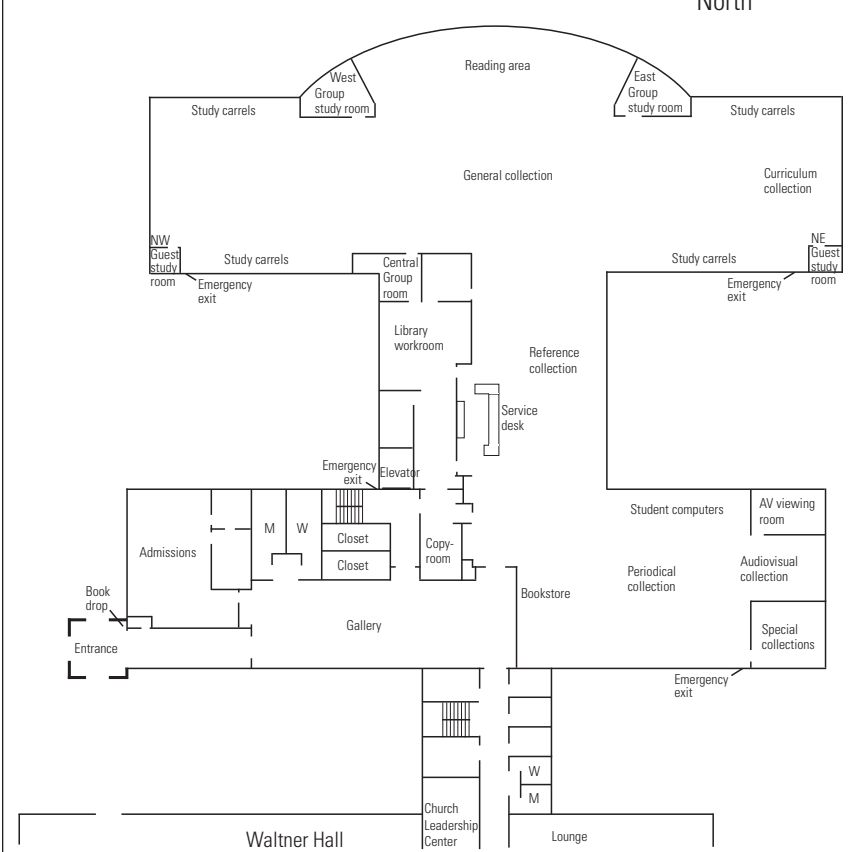
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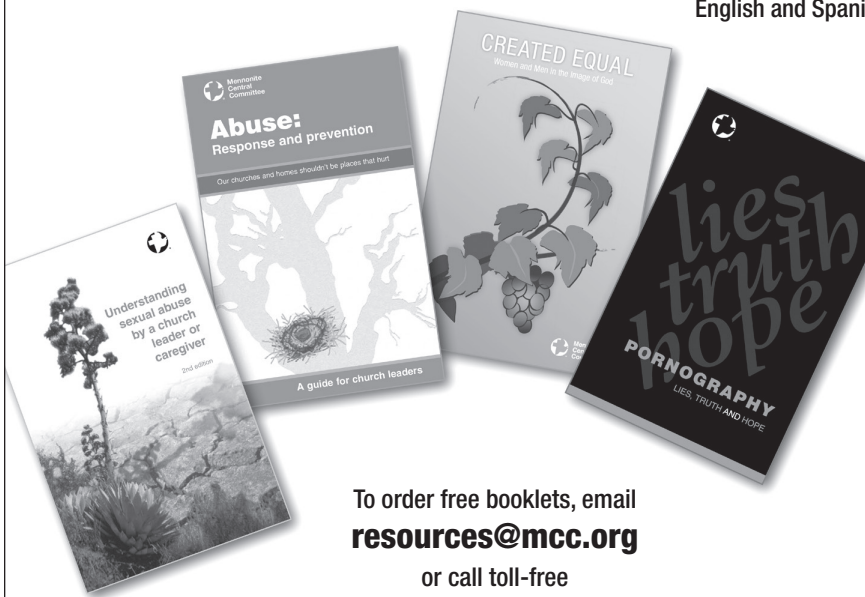
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*Global missional leaders to learn from*



## Rebecca Osiro

The first woman ordained to ministry in the Kenya Mennonite Church and the Mennonite World Conference vice president.



## Sandra Campos

Coordinates the Costa Rica Bible Institute and serves as the president of the Conference of Mennonite Churches in Costa Rica.



## Dora Yu

Considered the foremost Chinese evangelist in the early 20th century. The beginnings of the Chinese house-church movement can be traced to her revival ministry.

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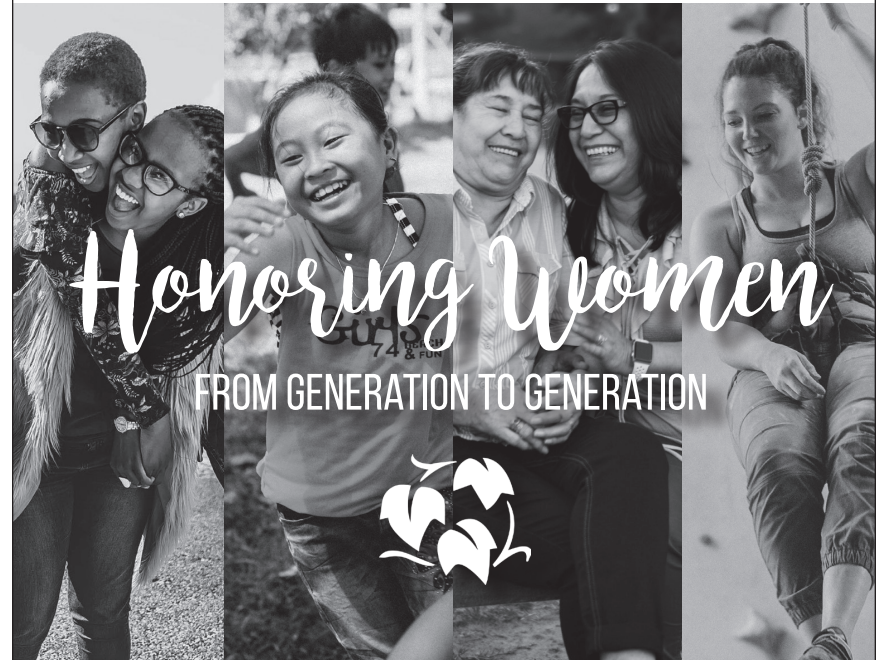
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Our new executive director, Cyneatha Millsaps, invites all women to join Mennonite Women USA as we seek to support, empower and provide spaces for healing and renewal for all.

It's a new chapter for MW USA. We hope you'll walk with us as writers, activists and followers of Christ.

## Contact us

718 N Main St. Newton KS, 67114  
316.281.4396 | [mwusa.org](http://mwusa.org)



Janna Hunter-Bowman,  
Ph.D., Assistant Professor  
of Peace Studies and  
Christian Social Ethics



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