“Mennonite Studies 101”  
*(Victor Kliwer, SAMC, March 2015)*

**Review: Mennonite World Conference**  
*(www.mwc-cmm.org)*

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**Mennonite, Brethren in Christ and Related Churches**  
*Iglesias Menonitas, de los Hermanos en Cristo y afines*  
*Églises Mennonites, Frères en Christ et Apparentées*
Global Mennonite Population in Review:


Total Mennonites, in 83 countries: 1,774,720

**North America** — 29.8%
- USA 391,900; Canada 137,208

**Latin America** — 10.5%
- Par. 33,251; Mex. 32,036; Bol. 24,988

**Africa** — 38.3%
- Congo 235,202; Ethiopia 224,407

**Asia** — 17.8%
- India 149,849; Indonesia 108,528

**Europe** — 3.6%
- Ger. 46,757; NL 8,030; Switz. 2,500

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Mennonites have been divided into 2 categories:

(Donald Kraybill, *Concise Encyclopedia*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>“Traditional”</th>
<th>“Assimilated”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>In community</td>
<td>Individualistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen. customs</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulations</td>
<td>Strict</td>
<td>Freer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious ritual</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>More freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship music</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>No/Limited</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/Urban</td>
<td>Mostly rural</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministers</td>
<td>Lay/Unpaid</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Subservient</td>
<td>Equal to men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV/Computers</td>
<td>No/Limited</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Questions facing Mennonites in North America:

- How to understand the Bible?
- How to deal with the topic of homosexuality?
- How should we deal with wealth? And disparities?
- How to live in a technological, global, secular society?
- How to interact justly with Indigenous people?
- How to interact with other religious groups?
- Is the traditional Mennonite peace witness still valid?
- Others?
Questions facing Mennonites in Latin America:

- How to understand the Bible?
- Do the Mennonites still have a “mission” in Paraguay?
- How to deal with economic success and wealth?
- How to live in a capitalistic, technological, global society?
- How to relate to other social groups (Paraguayans, Brazilians)?
- How to interact justly with Aboriginal people (e.g., ASCIM)?
- How to interact with other religious groups?
- What holds the Mennonite community together (e.g., family, community, congregation, religious faith)?
- Is the traditional Mennonite peace witness still valid?
Looking ahead: Issues facing the European Mennonites
(From Testing Faith and Tradition: Global Mennonite History Series: Europe, 2006, “Epilogue”)

- **Diversity**—languages, national boundaries and conflicts, culture and lifestyles, governments, theologies
- **Political barriers**—notably the communist regime in Eastern Europe and the consequences of World War II
- **Cooperation**—in missions, relief, peace (MCC, EMEK)
- **Identity and unity**—traditional Mennonite groups are decreasing—relationship to the *Aussiedler* is complex
- **Old and new congregations**—some churches closing, new churches being started in Eng., Spain, Port., Italy, Ukraine—much enthusiasm and energy in most cases

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issues facing mennonites in asia:

- dealing with colonial past—and christian church’s role (conflict between biblical shalom and imperialistic conquests)
- after WW II (relations between former “enemies”)
- relationship between christians and other religions and worldviews (e.g., Islam, Hinduism, animism)
- what is the “mission” of the Mennonite church?
- how to relate to other ethnic and social groups
- relationship of church and state/government
- the Mennonite peace witness—teaching and living it out
Mennonites in Africa (000s)

- DR Congo: 224
- Ethiopia: 65
- Tanzania: 42
- Zimbabwe: 35
- Kenya: 19
- Angola: 19
- Nigeria: 18
- Zambia: 12
- Mozambique: 1.7
- S. Africa: 7.5
- Others: 1.7

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“To be an African is to sing and dance”

“Singing and dancing encapsulate the essence of African life, values and worldview. . . . Singing and dancing take place in community . . . They are sometimes related to events, but they are usually in relationship to people . . . In song and dance we express our joys and sorrows, our dreams, our longings and belonging, our frustration, pain, and our hope . . . In our songs and dances we welcome strangers and aliens to celebrate with us.”

Issues facing Mennonites in Africa (similar to Asia and possibly even North America):

- Dealing with colonial past—and Christian church’s role (conflict between biblical *shalom* and imperialistic conquests)
- Past wars, conflict resolution with former “enemies”
- Relationship between Christians and other religions and worldviews (especially Islam, which is growing rapidly)
- Knowing own Mennonite history—lacking at present
- Developing an indigenous Mennonite theology and identity
- Missiology, how to relate to other ethnic and social groups
- Relationship of church and state/government
- Fostering a culture of peace—desperately needed!

(Source: *Global Mennonite History: Africa*, 300-305)
MS 101, 6-12  Components of being “Mennonite”

- Worship
- Peace
- Community
- Love/Nonviolence
- MCC
- Discipleship
- Piece of Canadian cultural mosaic
- Divisions
- Migrations

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Don’t forget the Mennonite Cookbooks!

- *More With Less Cookbook* (pub. 1976) (500 recipes, challenging readers to eat simpler; 47 printings—by far the most popular bestseller of Herald Press)
- *Extending the Table* (1991)
- *Canadian Mennonite Cookbook* (1994)
- Mennonite Cookbook (Friesen’s, Altona, 2003)
- *Simply in Season* (2009)
- Amazon.ca lists 134 Amish & Mennonite cookbooks
Welcome to Mennonite World Conference!
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, July 21-26, 2015

Click here for PA 2015!