



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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New MC USA curriculum celebrates diversity

ELKHART, Indiana (Mennonite Church USA) — “**Diversity: God’s Design,**” a new, multimedia, study from Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) calls young adults to celebrate their unique gifts and the intentional diversity of God’s creation. The four-week curriculum uses biblical reflections to introduce the importance of intercultural competency as part of Christian growth and formation.

“This curriculum will become increasingly relevant in our denomination as we seek to be more diverse and inclusive in sharing the Good News,” said Glen Guyton, executive director of MC USA and speaker, author and advocate for cultural competency. “So often we overlook the capability of our young people in discipling others. The curriculum provides an opportunity for today’s young adults to reflect on how they will shape the future of our denomination,” he added.

“Diversity: God’s Design” features voices from across the Mennonite church who share biblical narratives and personal experiences that invite participants to explore how and why they should join the journey of celebrating diversity. The study is recommended for young adult and intergenerational audiences in faith-based settings, such as churches, Mennonite and other Christian schools, small groups and self-study.

Each 45-60-minute lesson includes:

- A featured sermonette video and biblical passage
- A video sharing a young adult’s perspective
- A spoken word poetry video
- Reflection and engagement questions
- Weekly action steps
- Supplemental resources

Sermonettes and videos are presented by individuals of different racial, ethnic and gender groups.

Curriculum topics are:

- “**The gift of difference,**” with sermonette by Rev. Michelle Armster, executive director, [Mennonite Central Committee, Central States Region](#)

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- **“We are God’s family,”** with sermonette by Jason Storbakken, pastor at [Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship](#), and co-founder and president of the Board of Directors of the [Brooklyn Peace Center](#) in Brooklyn, New York
- **“Do I belong here?”** with sermonette by Hyacinth Stevens, executive director for [Mennonite Central Committee East Coast](#)
- **“Us vs. them”** with sermonette by Sue Park-Hur, MC USA denominational minister for Transformative Peacemaking

“Being intercultural is part of biblical discipleship,” said Sue Park-Hur, MC USA denominational minister for Transformative Peacemaking. “Without this lens, it’s hard to welcome people. We need to see God’s intentional plan for diversity, and to ask ourselves, ‘How do we come together as a church and still celebrate our differences?’”

“Diversity: God’s Design” curriculum was developed in response to a request from an MC USA-affiliated college seeking to address students’ questions about the intersection of faith and diversity, according to Park-Hur.

Young adult participants in the curriculum are:

- Felix Perez Diener, undergraduate student at Harvard University
- Abby Ednashaw, young adult program coordinator at Mennonite Central Committee - Central States
- Erick Martinez, undergraduate student at [Goshen College](#), Goshen, Indiana
- Laura Pauls-Thomas, communications and donor relations associate at Mennonite Central Committee

In addition, Tiara Downer, worship coordinator at King of Glory Tabernacle, New York, provided spoken word poetry and Lynn Hur provided the artwork for the curriculum.

“‘Diversity: God’s Design’ is a steppingstone opportunity for young adults and intergenerational communities to listen, explore, discover and ponder what it means to be ingrafted into a globalized faith community that mirrors difference and diversity,” said Stevens. “I hope that curriculum participants will catch a spark that ignites a commitment to keep learning and building relational bridges across the outliers of difference!” she added.

The curriculum is available free of charge, but donations are appreciated. To support Mennonite Church USA’s peacebuilding work, donate to #BringThePeace initiatives at <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/give/>.

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[Mennonite Church USA](https://www.mennoniteUSA.org) (MC USA), is the largest Mennonite denomination in the United States with 16 conferences, approximately 530 congregations and 62,000 members. An Anabaptist Christian denomination, MC USA is part of Mennonite World Conference, a global faith family that includes churches in 58 countries. It has offices in Elkhart, Indiana and Newton, Kansas. [mennoniteUSA.org](https://www.mennoniteUSA.org)

For more information

- [Renewed Commitments](#) of Mennonite Church USA
- [“Undoing Racism,”](#) an online anti-racism resource portal
- The [Justice Fund](#), a mutual fund that supports MC USA conferences and congregations actively working to combat poverty, dismantle racism, seek immigration justice or address police brutality/reimage policing.