

## ANNUAL REPORT

### WESTERN DISTRICT CONFERENCE HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

June 2026

The Western District Conference Historical Committee remains firmly convinced that understanding the Western District's unique history, as well as the distinctive history of the Mennonite denomination, is essential for moving confidently and appropriately into WDC's future. Among the year's activities are the following:

- Upon hearing that the Kansas Repair Communities (a new organization committed to working with Indigenous groups to heighten awareness of the problem of missing and murdered Indigenous persons) was planning a training on "Moving Toward Right Relations" conducted by the Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery, the committee made a formal request to the Western District to serve as a co-sponsor of the event. WDC concurred with the request and handled registration as well as financial receipts and expenses for the event. Held April 24-25 at the Bethel College Mennonite Church, around fifty persons were in attendance, representing a dozen different WDC congregations.
- As indicated in last year's annual report, the Historical Committee is still very much interested in seeing the manuscript of "The Cheyenne Way of Peace" published and distributed more widely. For that to happen, other interested, Indigenous parties will need to agree to such publication and distribution. This fact contributed to the committee's interest in the training described above. While those parties have clearly expressed interest in the project, final approval has not yet been secured.
- 2025 was the quincentennial of the first rebaptism in Zurich, Switzerland, on January 21, 1525. Presentations by Historical Committee members celebrating that event were conducted in multiple WDC churches during that year. Several of those took place since the last WDC Assembly. The final presentation in October actually was given at a Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference congregation, Trinity Mennonite Church in Glendale, Arizona.
- The committee has recommended that WDC conduct a seminar at the annual assembly consisting of a circle process with attendees sharing immigrant stories. That recommendation has been approved and is currently being planned.
- Brett Klingenberg has just submitted his resignation from the committee, so a replacement will need to be secured.

Committee members are Roger Juhnke, Dale Schrag (chair), Renae Stucky, and John Thiesen, ex officio.

Submitted by Dale Schrag, chair