



ZING!

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Boulder Mennonite Church Mural

By Carole Suderman, active member of Boulder Mennonite Church



How can a church proclaim to the wider community our beliefs in peace, anti-racism, care for the environment, and inclusion of all people? That was a question that arose out of our Christian Education series last fall on anti-racism, led by Cindy Firnhaber and Terry Mast. Cindy and her husband Kurt adopted six children of African descent who have experienced much discrimination, from being stopped by the police without cause to being denied visas because of the color of their skin. After hearing their stories, as well as those in the media, our church felt an urgent calling to “walk our talk” and “put our money where our mouth is” to truly stand for justice, as Jesus taught.

Out of these conversations and a challenge from Pastor Randy Spaulding, the idea was born for a mural on the front of our church building. A committee was formed, adding Toni Diaz Bachus, Ivanna Johnson, and Steve Voran to the team of Terry and Cindy. They sought out local artists from marginalized groups, conducted interviews, and ultimately chose Julio Mendoza.

Julio was initially reluctant to respond to the request of a church, but upon meeting the committee, he gladly designed the mural, based on the values we wished to have represented. He was astounded that a

religious group would hold these beliefs about justice so strongly that we would want to spend money on a bold statement to the community. [Click here](#) to learn more.

On October 31, at the close of our worship service, we went outside and, along with Julio, dedicated the mural. Here is an excerpt from the litany we shared:

*May this mural speak:
Peace to every living thing
Justice among God's children of all colors
Care and respect for the earth
A circle of joy that includes all people.*

*May this mural remind us that:
Black lives matter
This living planet is sacred
God is Love and lives among us!*



*Pictured (Above) Mural artist Julio Mendoza;
(Left) Mural Dedication at BMC Worship Service*

Conference Minister's Corner

No Cure for Being Human (And Other Truths I Need to Hear)

by Kate Bowler

Reviewed by Rev. Amy S. Zimbelman



"Someday we won't need hope. Someday we don't need courage. Time itself will be wrapped up with a bow, and God will draw us all into the eternal moment where there will be no suffering, no disease, no email.

"In the meantime, we are stuck with our beautiful, terrible finitude" (191).

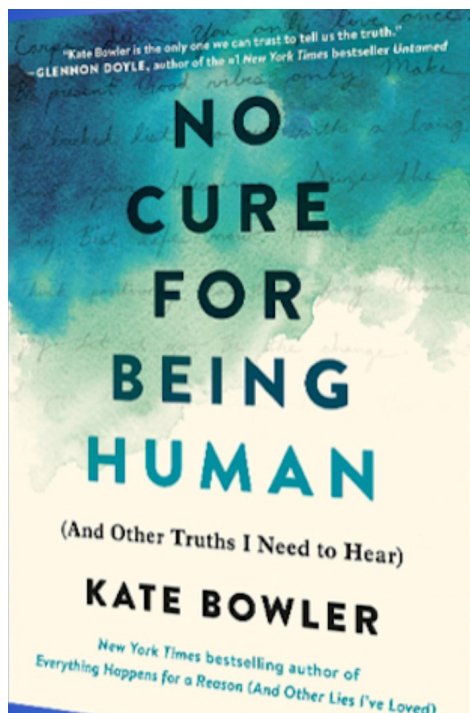
When history of Christianity professor Kate Bowler received her stage IV colon cancer diagnosis at age 35, it rocked both her world and the Duke Divinity community. Many of us looked up to her, and saw ourselves in her, and prayed fervently for her. I had just taken her *Women and Power in the Church* class, so it was quite the shock: *You mean the glowing, brilliant, hilarious, young associate professor who challenged and inspired us had cancer growing in her body that whole semester and none of us knew it? They're only giving her a year or two to live?* It almost felt like a betrayal.

But of course, it wasn't betrayal, because promises of perfect health were never made to her—or to any of us—in the first place.

So what now?

The *what now* is one question Kate asks in both of the New York Times bestselling memoirs she's published since that fateful diagnosis, as well as in her [TED talk](#) and the popular [podcast](#) she hosts. No matter the mode of communication, Kate has proven herself to be a master storyteller specializing in vacillating between the heartwarming (yes, she will make you laugh out loud) and heart-wrenching (soon thereafter you'll be crying). She acknowledges that "so often the experiences that define us are the ones we didn't pick" (183) as she wrestles with how to be a better human when those unthinkable experiences happen.

[Click here](#) to read Amy's entire book review.



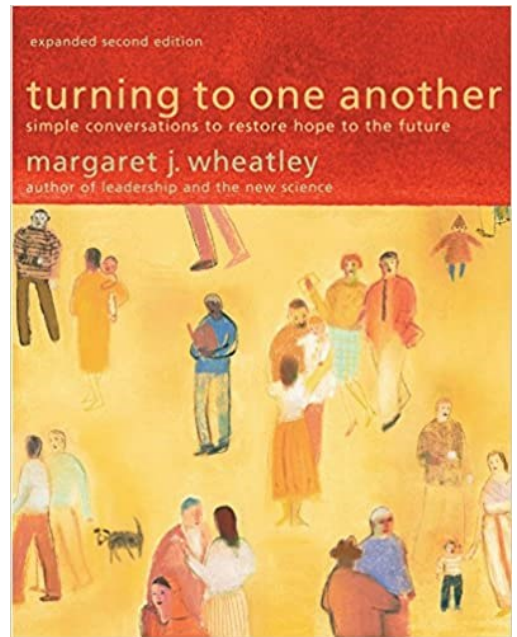
“With Care...”

Alice M. Price, member of the conference [Dialogue Resource Team](#), member of the Anabaptist Fellowship of Alamosa and coordinator for the MVS unit hosted by her congregation



Perhaps some of you have seen – and may have used personally or as a congregation – some of the resources MennoMedia has published in recent months. Their purpose is to support reconnection and renewal for our congregations as we move through various and continuing impacts of the past two years. I’ve been intrigued by the simplicity and directness of this series’ name, “*What Now?*” A good question indeed! It brought to mind another favorite resource of mine, filled with questions that feel equally timely although published two decades ago.

In “[Turning to one another: Simple conversations to restore hope to the future](#),” Margaret Wheatley draws from her years of engaging communities in conversations that support well-being even amidst difficult or chaotic times. At its core is her belief that “there is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.” Along with offering stimulating prompts for deepening conversations, Wheatley shares poetry and other short readings that have been meaningful to her life journey and vocation and that further enliven the tools she offers. While designed as a resource for group engagement, the format of this fairly slim book is well-suited to self-reflection and perhaps journaling too.



As I revisit this resource, its simply-stated wisdom has again captured my imagination about the “what now?” for the future of our families, congregations, local and global communities, and the earth. I recommend adding it to your toolbox. Most convicting to me at this moment– as I face my own reluctance and even fear to find ways into and through the polarization and reactivity that surrounds us - is Wheatley’s reminder of a truth she has witnessed through her work: “Remember, you don’t fear people whose story you know.” May we all discover new opportunities, new ways and new courage to turn to one another to hear the stories and start the “what now?” conversations that matter right where we are.

About the Dialogue Resource Team

The Dialogue Resource Team consists of Mennonite professionals within Mountain States Conference called to the ministry of reconciliation as it relates to conference and congregational life. Currently three members have been affirmed by conference leadership as part of the team. *The DRT is currently seeking one more team member. If you or someone you know has background and skills to contribute to our Conference in this way, please email Conference Minister Amy Zimbelman, AmyZ@MountainStatesMC.org.*

The goal of the Dialogue Resource Team is to provide resources and encouragement to congregations challenged by difficult internal conflict or change; or desiring education on conflict resolution.

Mennonites from across our conference were recently featured on the front page of Colorado Springs' newspaper, The Gazette!

Military experts discuss the future of warfare after Afghanistan

By David Bitton, The Colorado Springs Gazette, 29 Oct 2021

Now that America's longest war has come to an end, what does the future of warfare look like?

That was the focus of many questions put to a panel of former and current military officers Thursday night at the Southeast Armed Services YMCA during a community conversation hosted by The Gazette and KKTU.

But as many of the roughly 50 in attendance arrived at the facility, a group of about two dozen stood on the sidewalk singing and holding signs.

Amy Zimbelman, a conference minister — something like a bishop — with Mountain States Mennonite Conference, which represents 17 churches in Colorado and New Mexico, stood next to fellow church members, peace and justice activists and Colorado College students.

The Colorado Springs resident had issue with the forum's title: "After Afghanistan: The Future of Warfare."

"The way the conversation is framed makes it sound as though warfare is just a foregone conclusion," she said. "We need to look at other alternatives. We need to take seriously, active, nonviolent resistance in our world."

Colorado College freshman Wiley Holbrooke, 19, of Telluride and four friends recently completed a class titled: "The Foundations of Radical Nonviolence."

"We learned about how to prioritize people," and "we believe war leads to more suffering," he said.

The students and some of those holding signs outside sat through the 90-minute discussion and talked with panelists afterwards.



[Read the full article online.](#)



Amy Zimbelman, a conference minister with Mountain States Mennonite conference, stands with a few dozen others outside the Southeast Armed Services YMCA before a community conversation with a panel of military experts discussing the future of warfare that was presented by The Gazette and KKTU on Thursday. "We need to take seriously, active, nonviolent resistance in our world," she said.



Announcements



Beth-El Mennonite Church is hosting the Fair Trade Market again this year, Saturday November 13th.

bmccs.org/fairtrademarket

Friends-Giving is back at Beth-El Mennonite, Thursday November 25th. More details to follow.

Connecting Our Churches through Prayer

The following prayers have been shared throughout MSMC churches and passion ministries for October:

Carlsbad Mennonite—We have been dealing with a lot of sickness in our aging group, but fortunately no Covid yet. And for our small group, losing Miriam Stolfus, who is 90 and a founding member moving to ABQ to be with her daughter, will be a major blow. We are also in the heart of the Permian Basin which is one of the largest oil producing regions in the world- how do we faithfully support our community while dealing with the reality of climate change at the same time?

Beloved Community—May this small, newish church of quiet and thoughtful readers and musicians discover together what is next, after a history of work with homelessness, intercultural relations, and care for asylum seekers

Frontier Village—Give thanks to God for our 40 years of financially supporting ministries and churches across the Rocky Mountain region. We have been blessed immensely by being a part of the energy and passions all of you have in being the people of Christ in your communities.

SEED—Give thanks for the many ways that the SEED Committee gave attention to new ideas “bubbling up” in the conference. It served us well for a season and may be reborn in the form of supporting future Anabaptist leaders.

Leadership Board—Pray for wisdom for the Leadership Board as we explore ways of supporting and growing the Future Anabaptist Leaders Fund. Please also pray for the Leadership Board as we prepare to welcome three new members onto the board at the beginning of next year.

News from:

ROCKY MOUNTAIN MENNONITE CAMP



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QUILTOBER AT RMMC

When a program retreat covers 18 days out of a month, you get to amend the name of the month. Between three sessions of UFO (Unfinished Objects) Quilt Retreat and Fall Mennonite Quilters Retreat that is exactly what was accomplished in October. In response to the coronavirus pandemic, the number of quilters at each retreat was reduced to facilitate more separation between participants. To accommodate all who wanted to come, camp simply added more retreats.



VOLUNTEER REUNION IN LANCASTER PA

The phrase "One thing leads to another" was fulfilled with a special gathering of fellowship over dinner with 35 young adult volunteers from Lancaster PA at the local Shady Maple Smorgasbord. At the final meal before saying farewell to a volunteer group this past summer at camp, Corbin shared that he would be coming to Lancaster City in October for meetings and that it would be fun to stop by and visit them where they live and enjoy a meal together. Well word got out (as it does) and what was a good idea for a few became a great idea for many! Only a few of those who traveled to Colorado were unable to join in. Our records indicate that a total of 45 people (some returnees) have come and volunteered 145 days of help.

The volunteer group have come over the past 5 years and are from the Groffdale Mennonite Conference in Lancaster, PA. They have offered significant help with all the things that make camp possible including help with foodservice, housekeeping, maintenance and significant building projects (i.e. new roofing and insulation of the A-Frame and Edelweiss facilities).

Coming for one week at a time, groups have made the trek by hired van or mini-bus to camp. Some groups that have come were co-ed and some are only men or only women. James Reiff who has coordinated the efforts, offered that the groups enjoy the shared experience and value of working on a mission project together with others and having fun in the process. These trips also provides an opportunity to "get away" and for new experiences that are approved by their Bishop. He shared that the groups were comprised of 7 different congregations within the conference all within Lancaster County.

We hope the good friendships that have been created will continue for years to come!



MENNONITE DISASTER SERVICE

Fourteen MDS volunteers came from near and far October 4-9 to help with the ongoing efforts of removing beetle infested Engelmann Spruce trees from camp. Also part of the week was reducing the fuels in the camp forest between the chapel and southern boundary with Pike National Forest. Volunteers helped with felling trees, removing and chipping all the branches, and even peeling some of the logs for future use as utility poles. A 250 foot zip line helped move the material off the steep slope behind the chapel, sending down a load every 5 minutes, and saving thousands of steps and the impact on the forest floor.

Three of the volunteers (Merle & Karen Schlabaugh and Esther Krieder Eash) were tremendously helpful with foodservice and housekeeping needs of fellow MDS volunteers and participants of UFO Quilters Retreat 1 (Sun-Wed) & UFO Quilters Retreat 2 (Wed-Sun.).

Thanks to everyone for their valuable help!

> Click [here](#) to read the full November 2021 Newsletter.

MSMC Communication Updates

Zing! Dec – Release Date: Dec 10; *submission deadline: Nov 30*

Zing! 2022 deadlines and schedule	
• Jan —Release Date: Jan 10; <i>submission deadline: Dec 31</i>	• July/Assembly Edition – Release Date: July 10; <i>submission deadline: Jun 30</i>
• Feb —Release Date: Feb 10; <i>submission deadline: Jan 31</i>	• Aug/Sept – Release Date: Aug 31; <i>submission deadline: Aug 15</i>
• Mar —Release Date: Mar 10; <i>submission deadline: Feb 28</i>	• Oct – Release Date: Oct 10; <i>submission deadline: Sept 30</i>
• Apr – Release Date: Apr 10; <i>submission deadline: Mar 31</i>	• Nov – Release Date: Nov 10; <i>submission deadline: Oct 31</i>
• May - Release Date: May 10; <i>submission deadline: Apr 30</i>	• Dec – Release Date: Dec 10; <i>submission deadline: Nov 30</i>
• Jun – Release Date: Jun 10; <i>submission deadline: May 31</i>	

Bulletin Announcements – We email MSMC congregations every Wednesday with bulletin announcements. If you have something to share out to our community, please email Jen, [MSMC Administrator](#), by 9am Wednesday morning.

Conference Calendar

Nov 12-14	Pastors Retreat
Spring 2022	Faith & Life Forum
July 29-31, 2022	Annual Assembly

ZING!

is published for the congregations of Mountain States Mennonite Conference and can be [viewed on the website](#).

Conference Website: MountainStatesMC.org

Email contributions as Word files to Jen Dudenhefer at administrator@MountainStatesMC.org
Articles should be 300 words or less in length.

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