From 'die Stillen im Lande' to 'Getting in the Way': A Theology for Conscientious Objection and Engagement

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On October 2, 2006, the Amish community of Nickel Mines, PA, experienced the horror of having five girls murdered in their school by a milk tank truck driver, Charles Carl Roberts. The world was shocked by the horrific crime, but perhaps even more by the response of the Amish. They presented a picture of a community responding with baffling discipline, grace, and forgiveness. Perhaps much sharper and clearer, they have provided a glimpse of how our fathers and grandfathers and their communities met the challenge of conscription. What kind of a theology informs such behaviour?

Maybe "theology" is not the best way to characterize the reasons for Mennonite refusal to bear arms. Perhaps, as the Amish response suggests, it should be called a reflex, rooted in an ethos of separation and obedience, buttressed by ethnic homogeneity, and by what can fairly be called an unsophisticated use of Scripture to which obedience is owed. We might thus think of it as a culturally and communally embedded and nurtured theology. This kind of "reflex" is revealed in the testimonies of those brought before tribunals or judges during World War II. Young Mennonite men articulated their reasons for not wishing to become combatants, when they were able to do so[1], by typically citing *Matthew* 5:38-48, Jesus' command not to retaliate, but rather to love enemies. The commandment from the Decalogue not to kill was largely interpreted in relationship to that central command of Jesus.[2] As "*die Stillen im Lande*"[3] (the "quiet in the land") Mennonites typically offered little if any critique of government policy,[4] nor did they wish to be disrespectful of authority.[5] Mennonites, they nevertheless insisted, are bound to follow the example and teachings of Jesus. Where the demands of the state and the commands of God come into conflict, obedience is owed to God (Acts 5:29; Matthew 22:21). Conservative, evangelical, and sometimes even fundamentalistic, what marked this ethos at its core was a culturally and communally

nurtured conviction, often socially enforced via congregational discipline, that belief without discipleship, faith without obedience, was bogus, and that faith in Jesus demands refusal to bear arms and thus participation in warfare.

The terminology for this response was not "pacifism" but "nonresistance," a term derived from Matthew 5:39. The German *Wehrlosigkeit*, better rendered as "defencelessness" than nonresistance, connoted not only obedience to the teaching of Jesus, but the imitation of Jesus in face of his own suffering. Rather than dependent on a political, social, or ethical analysis, let alone on strategic thinking, this stance was based on obedience, trust, and hope beyond the conflicts and suffering of the moment. Indeed, it often went hand in hand with a very bleak view of the world, to the point where optimism for a fallen world apart from the working of God's Spirit was deemed unfaithful to the witness of Scripture.[6]

Both reflecting and reinforcing this ethos was separation from the world, and, for the most part, from other church communities which did not support a refusal to bear arms. Separateness was often reinforced by language (German), conformity of behaviour, sometimes also suspicion of education, and with it of sophisticated theology. No doubt there were dark sides to such a communal existence, but it did enable a significant number of young men to say no.[7]

That was then. And now? Unlike our recent forebears, Mennonites are today ethnically and racially heterogeneous. Not only is that true globally, but Canadian Mennonites arguably are no longer an ethnic community, even if ethnicity remains a complex reality.[8] Mennonites are often urban, educated, professional, theologically diverse and ecumenically connected, and, importantly, engaged in the systems and structures of power. We walk the halls and sit on the benches of power. When not making decisions, we offer policy advice. Others of us inject ourselves, as does Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), into situations of conflict, whether on the side of Canada's aboriginal communities, or in places of intense conflict, such as Iraq, Palestine, and Colombia.

Military conscription is a dim memory. Nonresistance has been replaced by activist peacemaking and peace theology to support it. The shift from non-participation in "the world," particularly when it is at war, to engagement in and for the sake of the world, is raising important theological and ethical challenges. The presence of terms like "public order" and "security" in the title of the recent publication of Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) Peace Theology Project papers is illustrative of the shift I am sketching in the broadest strokes, a shift, I would argue, that is nothing less than a sea change – in location, theology, and ethical disposition.[9] We may not (yet?) be comfortable with "just war" but we do speak of "just peacemaking," even of "just policing."[10]

Let me identify just two markers of this shift from separation and nonresistance to engagement and activism since World War II. One is John Howard Yoder's *The Christian Witness to the State*,[11] emerging out of the post war conversations with mainline Protestants in the 1950s. Yoder called for the church's engagement in the world, pushing the state to live up to its own putative values (justice, just war, human rights).[12] Crucially, Yoder called on the church not to forget that the state is not the church, and even more importantly, to remember that it *is* the church, with a particular calling and mission to live out and witness to the reign of Christ over a still rebellious world in full view of the world.[13] For "main-line" participants in this dialogue, who were used to being in the world, this constituted a call to be not of it. For Mennonites, used to seeing themselves, rightly or wrongly, as separate from the world, Yoder's call was heard as a summons to get into the world while being not of it. The importance for Mennonites of this way of construing the relationship between the church and the state, both in the United States and in Canada, is difficult to overstate. While retaining a bracing view of the church as the body of Christ in a fallen world, Yoder provided a theological framework with which to live out faithfulness publicly within and for the "world." Instead of only refusing to bear arms when asked, war itself needs to be witnessed against, cajoling governments in the direction of peaceableness.[14]

Another significant marker came a few decades later at the Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg in 1984, where Ron Sider called on Mennonites to emulate the resolve and readiness of soldiers to die "by the thousands" in their commitment to peacemaking.[15] Pushing Yoder's "conscientious participation" in a direction quite novel for Mennonites, Sider urged costly, self-sacrificial, conscientious engagement for peace and against oppression, violence, and war rather than only conscientious objection to participation in war. Christian Peacemaker Teams was born as a response to Sider's dramatic call.[16] True, there were not the thousands Sider envisaged, but even the few who make up CPT have had an impact well beyond their numbers. Illustrating the shift from separatist nonresistance to engaged activism is CPT's suggestive play on words, "Getting in the way," simultaneously alluding to "the Way"[17] of Jesus and to being obstructionist vis-à-vis war, violence, and oppression (see Lisa Martens' piece in this issue).

Further manifestations of this active peacemaking range from the many peace oriented efforts of MCC around the globe to the myriad restorative justice initiatives, from Project Ploughshares, an ecumenical agency affiliated with Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ontario, directed first by Ernie Regehr and now John Siebert, to the growing number and growth of peace study programs at Mennonite colleges and universities.

With change comes challenge. Old verities need to be reevaluated, discarded, recast, and sometimes, I would urge, recovered. Let me identify just a few of the challenges that have a significant theological component.

First, I would propose that the loss of an ethos rooted in a community of faith represents a major challenge. We cannot, nor should we wish to, go back to the days of separation and to a nonresistance unhitched from resistance and advocacy for change in our world.[18] But, as separation has given way to increasingly being "at home" in society, the issue of who "we" are is becoming more critically important. For example, with respect to Afghanistan or potential involvement in Darfur one regularly hears the question in Mennonite circles: "What are *we* doing there?" Or, "Should *we* go in there?" The "we" of course means not "Mennonites," nor "Christians," but "Canadians." I know that today Mennonites live with overlapping and sometimes even antagonistic identities. But if "we" means first "Canadians," then conscientious objection or, more broadly, pacifism, becomes in effect a political stance, even a policy stance, and not first and last a necessary consequence of being Christian, of being the church, the body of Christ in the world. Arguments about whether pacifism is realistic as a way of ensuring peace and justice are sure to follow. And that, I suggest, is but one not very large step away from just war thinking, and the end to consistent conscientious objection.[19] "We" might, for example, urge the Canadian government to commit troops to Darfur on the grounds of the "responsibility to protect" those falling victim to their own failed states. Unless there is clarity of who "we" are as Christians committed to follow Christ and thus to say no to the exercise of lethal force, what possible moral and theological justification is there for "us" not to be at the head of the recruitment line? On what grounds would Menno Simons College in Winnipeg and Conrad Grebel University College *not* prepare students precisely for what we might call "conscientious enlistment"?[20] To add to the urgency of this issue of identity, I fear that the challenge to work at the question of who "we" are is compounded by the speedy evaporation, not least among those committed to peacemaking, of a sense of church as the first circle of identity.

Second, military conscription is a dim memory in an age of volunteer, professional armies. Conscripted today are our political as well as our monetary support via tax dollars. Interestingly, our forebears read the call to be subordinate to the authorities (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:11-17) and Jesus' demand to render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God's what is God's (Mark 12:13-17 and parallels) to require the payment of military taxes nonresistantly. They were not rebels. But what happens when warfare is increasingly technologized, as it is in our day, when the most lethal weapons do not require our bodies, but

only our compliance and our money? Does that, or should that, shift the lines of when conscientious objection kicks in? Conscientious objection to such monetary conscription is neither easy nor easily implemented.[21] But it does constitute a challenge in a time when the withholding of the use of our bodies is less and less relevant for warfare (at least as waged by wealthy technologically advanced nations).[22]

CPT represents a form of conscientious engagement, one which presents us with challenges that the old nonresistance did not. One set of challenges has to do with "taking sides." Soldiers – and Sider explicitly invited Mennonites to emulate them – typically fight to win; they represent a "side" in a struggle. On whose behalf do peacemakers take sides? To what ends? What would constitute success? How does the love of enemies, of the oppressors of those on whose "side" we are to stand, find expression? How is the mission of the church to be distinguished from political struggle? These questions do not imply a criticism of CPT, only that its response to the call to peacemaking brings these questions to the fore with urgency.

Another challenge, as the CPT hostage taking experience in Iraq in 2005 and 2006 showed dramatically[23], is to come to terms with the need for readiness to suffer. Suffering has been a part of the conscientious objector story all along, most particularly at times and in places where conscientious objection has not been enshrined in law and alternative service has not been granted.[24] But CPT has raised that issue more sharply by deliberately "getting in the way" of oppressors with equally deliberate vulnerability. Is such vulnerability morally and spiritually responsible? Or is it foolish grandstanding? Is such chosen suffering a faithful witness? After all, "martyr" means, literally, "witness." Is this the "foolishness of the cross"? Far removed from the refusal to bear arms in times of war, this challenge does not come from without, but from within, from a sense of calling to become engaged in witness, accompaniment, advocacy, even confrontation with the "powers."

Embracing all of these challenges is the fundamental one not to forget *who* Mennonites are as members of the "body of Christ", *whose* we are as followers of a "crucified and risen Lord", and *how* we create, nurture, and sustain a *culture* that will enable us to know when to say yes and when to say no. I say "culture" because that is how theology becomes reflex.

Necessary ingredients exist for a theology of both conscientious objection and conscientious engagement. First, a theology is required that informs and nurtures a stance simple and sturdy enough not to fall victim to the always urgent demands of justification and effectiveness. We need a 'plain theology' of peace. Such a theology will be anchored not in ideology or tradition, however Mennonite or Anabaptist it might be, but in a religious experience, both individual and communal. In

other words, to "love the enemy" (Matthew 5:43-48) is to imitate the God who in and through Christ loved the world "while we were still enemies" (Romans 5:10). Such a theology takes as its starting point "the truth that is in Jesus," (Ephesians 4:20) and address the issues of becoming engaged in the injustices and violence of the world from there, aware at the same time that the "the way of Jesus" is the road to the cross, a path no less foolish today than it was in the time of Jesus (1 Cor 1:18-31). We dare not make the cross into a system, let alone into short hand for the practice of nonviolence. The cross is the moment when God's love transforms human violence into God's own means of making peace with humanity. In this thinking, the symbol of the cross is at the center of a 'plain theology', but never emptied of its primary referent, the tenacious love of God for all enemies. The cross also symbolizes resurrection and life. Such a theology invites people into costly and creative peacemaking, motivated by the belief that suffering and death could not put a hold on Christ, and that believers are members of the risen Christ, alive in the newness of life, and hoping for their own resurrection. Nothing could be more radically relevant to costly, self-sacrificial, conscientious objection and engagement.[25]

Second, we need a theology which will kindle a strong sense of community, in particular a strong sense of being church together. The Amish of Nickel Mines exhibited for all the world the power and force of a community whose corporate and individual reflex to threats and violence is that of courage, love, grace, and forgiveness.[26] The reflexive nature of their response is explicable only by a faith that is nurtured in and by a shared ethos of belief and practice. To stress the importance of community is not, however, a call for nostalgia for the past, least of all for the tribal identities of the past. Ethnicity is largely gone as the glue of community, as I believe it should be. Further, to stress the importance of community is not to wish for an unreflective conformism that leaves individual consciences stunted and weak in the face of testing.[27] But the community of the "body of Christ" must be a conscience and courage-forging communal culture. We need each other for accountability and counsel.[28] We need each other no less to give our witness strength. The importance of the followers of Jesus being known as a people with behaviours and reflexes that can be counted on as predictable is at the core of the church's corporate witness.[29] So, we need urgently to attend to our understanding of and commitment to the church, to "building each other up" as members of the body of the one who is our peace, to use Paul's favourite vocabulary.[30]

Third, while such a theology – or should we say ethos? – is not one of separation, whether physical, racial, or ethnic, it most definitely is one of difference, a difference generated by the gospel. We are to be "in the world," striving always not to be "of it." Such difference

is never a matter of turning away from the world; it is difference born of hunger for justice and peace and lived out for the sake of the world, participating in God's love for the world. We are thus not only to be "in the world," but "*for* the world." John 3:16-17 needs to be memorized all over again within a frame of reference which has the whole world, its conflicts and its wars, in view: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but *in order that the world might be saved through him*." As conscientious objectors and engagers we participate in this self-giving love for the world. Thus a theology of engaged peacemaking must not be allowed to spin free from such primary theological concerns as identity (ecclesiology), mission (missiology), and the breadth and depth of salvation (soteriology).[31] It will see peacemaking, including conscientious objection, as part and parcel of its larger ministry of reconciliation with God and with each other within the human community.

Fourth, precisely because Mennonites are now often fully engaged in society, often at the very center of power and social responsibility, we urgently require a theology that will remind us of times when deference to authority must not be given. Perhaps we should make biblical figures like Daniel and Joseph, both high ranking national figures, part of the Mennonite fund of biblical role models. Both present pictures of courage and caution for those living "away from home," serving the empire.

Fifth, neither callous in the face of suffering and injustice, nor smug in its righteousness, this theology will nurture a stance of grief and lament, sharing the anguish of the victims of injustice. But it will also share in the flagrant, foolish, maddeningly patient divine love for the perpetrators of injustice and violence, making sure the door remains open to them for repentance and change. Such a theology thus has no room for demonization, even as it recognizes the reality of the "powers" and the depth of their fallenness. It is able to make a distinction between the powers of darkness that are to be struggled against and the blood and flesh that serve their ends (Ephesians 6:12). So, as much as we dare not conflate the church with society generally, we act and think with respect, humility, and hopeful love toward those who see things differently, even as we speak "truth" as we see it.

Lastly, this theology does not forget that the state is not the church, and that what *must* be required of the church (an ethic of taking up the cross, of deliberate vulnerability in the exercise of enemy love) cannot be *demanded* of the state. The way of the cross can be witnessed to as the better way, but it cannot be proffered as policy, precisely because it is inherently a call to suffering, to giving up one's life for the enemy.

A pacifist monism that has lost a sense of the calling of the church and a world not yet conformed to Christ too quickly becomes an optimistic Constantinianism. And an optimistic Constantinianism too easily gives way to Constantinian realism where church and state become indistinguishable.

To conclude, we require a theology that reminds us, instill in us, and nurtures in us a desire to participate in the patient yet intensely expectant love of God for this broken world. It needs to form a conscience rendered restless in the face of suffering, injustice, and war, shaped by the teaching and model of Jesus, and rendered resilient and courageous by the Holy Spirit. The future may again require of Mennonites a strong "no", but it will be much the stronger if it emerges out of a larger and stronger "yes".

Notes

1 The difficulty many young Mennonite men had in giving reasons for their refusal to bear arms is a matter of record. See, e.g., David Warren Fransen, "Canadian Mennonites and Conscientious Objection in World War II," M.A. Thesis, University of Waterloo, 1977; Kenneth Wayne Reddig, "Manitoba Mennonites and the Winnipeg Mobilization Board in World War II," M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1989. For a comparative study of Mennonites vis-à-vis other conscientious objectors, see William Janzen, *Limits on Liberty: The Experience of Mennonite, Hutterite, and Doukhobor Communities in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); see esp. Part Four: Military Exemptions, 163-244.

2 The command not to kill was read through the filter of Jesus' teaching, where "murder" was interpreted as "kill" more generally.

3 "*Die Stillen im Lande*," a phrase rich in association, is used widely in Mennonite circles to capture a stance of quiet withdrawal from the public arena. The phrase is not a Mennonite invention, deriving likely from the Bible, in particular from Psalm 35:20, where it reflects the peaceableness, humility, and vulnerability of those who trust in God for their security. It is used widely in German scholarship with reference to the Pietism of the 18th and 19th centuries.

4 In fact, sentiments ranged from pro- to anti-Nazi on the particulars of the war, just as later the personal political opinions among Mennonites regarding the US involvement in Vietnam spanned the political spectrum.

5 The demand that one is to be subordinate to governing authorities in Romans 13:1-7 (cf. also 1 Peter 2:13-17) played a significant role in buttressing respect for government, even if Romans 12:14-21 would have set limits to compliance.

6 For a classic statement of the distinction between Mennonite nonresistance and pacifism, see Guy F. Hershberger, *War, Peace, and Nonresistance* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1944), 202-67. See also Rodney Sawatsky's 1973 M.A. thesis, Minnesota, "The Influence of Fundamentalism on Mennonite Nonresistance, 1908-1944," 125-79. The 'quietist' understanding of nonresistance is characteristic of how Mennonites have understood the term, even if they are and were not alone. Interestingly, it once had a very strong activist connotation, in particular during the emancipation movement against slavery; e.g., William Lloyd Garisson's "The New England Nonresistance Society," founded in 1838.

[7] For an excellent analysis of the experience in the United States, see Theodore Glenn (Ted) Grimsrud, "An Ethical Analysis of Conscientious Objection to World War II," Ph.D. dissertation, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, 1988.

[8] "Ethnic" communities within Canadian Mennonite reality include Native Canadian, Cambodian, Chinese, Hispanic, Hmong, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese Mennonite congregations. Increasing numbers of Canadians are drawn to Mennonite churches for reasons of faith and discipleship.

[9] Duane K. Friesen, Gerald Schlabach, eds., *At Peace and Unafraid: Public Order, Security, and the Wisdom of the Cross* (Waterloo, ON/ Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2005) . See especially the chapter by Schlabach, "Tracing the Grain of the Universe: Project Overview," 21-33. See also the various efforts at charting the shift in paradigm and providing a taxonomy of Mennonite positions on peace in John Richard Burkholder and Barbara Nelson Gingerich, eds., *Mennonite Peace Theology: A Panorama of Types* (Akron, PA: Mennonite Central Committee Peace Office, 1991); Leo Driedger and Donald B. Kraybill, *Mennonite Peacemaking: From Quietism to Activism* (Waterloo, ON/ Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1994); Ervin Stutzman, "From Nonresistance to Peace and Justice: Mennonite Peace Rhetoric, 1951-1991," Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1993. For shorter treatments, see, e.g., Dale W. Brown, "Nonresistance and Nonviolent Resistance: Tensions and Accommodations," *Brethren Life and Thought* 39 (1994), 180-89; Donald R. Fitzkee, "An Anabaptist Peace Ethic for a New Century," *Brethren Life and Thought* 39 (1994), 190-202; Beulah Stauffer Hostetler, "Nonresistance and Social Responsibility: Mennonites and Mainline Peace Emphasis, ca. 1950 to 1985," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 64/1 (1990); Glenn A. Robitaille, "The Sermon on the Mount and the Doctrine of Nonresistance," *Brethren in Christ History and Life* 20 (1997), 272-90; Tom Yoder Neufeld, "Varieties of Contemporary Mennonite Peace Witness: From Passivism to Pacifism, from Nonresistance to Resistance," *Conrad Grebel Review* 10 (1992) 243-57. For an outsider's descriptive account see Marc Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon: The Future of World Religions, Violence, and Peacemaking* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2000), 139-66.

[10] Friesen and Schlabach, *At Peace and Unafraid* especially the articles by Duane Friesen, "In Search of Security: A Theology and Ethic of Peace and Public Order," 37-82, and Gerald Schlabach, "Just Policing and the Christian Call to Nonviolence," 405-21.

[11] First prepared as a presentation for a study conference between Historic Peace Churches and main line European churches in Puidoux, Switzerland, in 1955, it was reworked and published under the auspices of the Institute of Mennonite Studies as IMS Study Series 3; Newton, KS: Faith and Life Press, 1964, and republished by Herald Press in 2002.

[12] Yoder employed the category of "middle axioms," borrowed from ecumenical discourse, to provide a way of engaging the state on how far it is willing to go in the direction of what the church knows as the will of God expressed in Christ. "Middle" carries an implicit reminder that these axioms do not reflect the full will of God to which the church is obligated. Yoder calls them ""rules of thumb to make meaningful the impact of Christian social thought" (*Christian Witness to the State*, 33), which "mediate between the norms of faith and the situation conditioned by unbelief" (*Ibid*., note 3).

[13] While Yoder insisted on the church remembering that it is the church and that it has its own language, its calling to witness should not prevent it from communicating in life and action in a way that speaks to society. The church is called on to create "experimentally new ways of meeting social needs which, once their utility has been proved, can be institutionalized and generalized under the authority of the secular powers"(*Ibid*., 19).

[14] Yoder called this "conscientious participation" (*Christian Witness to the State*, 20), something he modeled with his analysis of just war thinking, *When War is Unjust:*

Being Honest in Just-War Thinking, published notably by the Lutheran publisher Augsburg Publishing House (Minneapolis, MN) in 1984; a 2nd revised edition, with Lutheran and Catholic responses, was published by the Roman Catholic publisher, Orbis Books (Maryknoll, NY) in 1996.

15 Ronald J. Sider, "God's People Reconciling," Mennonite World Conference 1984 Assembly, Strasbourg, France. Available on CPT website (www.cpt.org/publications/sider.php).

16 Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) came into being formally at Techny, IL, in 1986, and is presently sponsored by not only Mennonites, but also Church of the Brethren, Society of Friends, Baptist and Presbyterian peace fellowships, the Basilians, and various other peace organizations.

17 Recalling the nickname the author of Acts gives the followers of Jesus (e.g., Acts 9:2; 1:23).

18 See my "Resistance and Nonresistance: the Two Legs of a Biblical Peace Stance;" Schrag Lectures, Messiah College, Apr 9, 2002, in *Brethren in Christ History and Life* 25/2 (2002), 257-86, and in *Conrad Grebel Review* 21/1 (2003), 56-81.

19 This is not only a theoretical possibility. Gerald Schlabach is quite conscious of this danger when he asks just-war Catholics and pacifist Mennonites to meet on the common ground of "just policing" (see article cited at Note 11 above).

20 One might conceivably see this as an application of Yoder's "conscientious participation" and consistent with his "middle axioms." But the need for an individual and especially corporate identity rooted in Christ grows exponentially if these are to remain "middle" axioms and not moral and spiritual imperatives for the followers of Jesus.

21 Conscience Canada is a persistent voice for conscientious objection to the payment of military taxes, and lobbies the government of Canada on behalf of those whose conscience is violated.

22 Mennonites have been engaged more vigorously on this issue in the United States, where more than half of income taxes go to the defence budget. The sensitivities around that issue have thus been greater as well, most especially whether the church and its institutional employers should be the tax collectors for the military.

23 Four members of a CPT delegation to Iraq (Tom Fox [US] and Norman Kember [UK] and Canadians Harmeet Sooden and James Loney) were taken hostage on November 26, 2005. Tom Fox was killed, but the other three were rescued on March 23, 2006.

24 World War I represented such an instance for many Mennonites and others in the US in particular. Many went to prison. Today, Colombian Mennonites have been instrumental in getting conscientious objection recognized in law, whether they are Mennonites or not. Persecution is an ever present reality. See Alix Lozano, "A 'Weak Church' Seeks Security in a Violent land: Experiences of the Colombian Mennonite Church," in Friesen and Schlabach, *At Peace and Unafraid*, 291-309, esp. 300-1.

25 See my "Anastatic Anabaptists: Made Alive and Empowered to Preach Peace," *Vision* 1 (2000), 57-65.

26 The father of one of the murdered girls cautioned his surviving children not to "think evil of this man," referring to Charles Roberts. Within hours of the murders some Amish visitors were at the home of the Roberts family, offering forgiveness and support. Reports circulated that during the time that Roberts was in the school, several sisters offered to be shot so as to protect the younger ones.

27 See Note 2.

28 Schlabach, "Just Policing," 418-19.

29 It has been striking to see the extent to which the Amish have witnessed to their stand *as a community*. The media always reported on how the community reacted, not on individuals.

30 E.g., 1 Cor 14:26; Eph 2:11-22; 1 Thess 5:11.

[31] This has happened historically to the great detriment of the mission of the church. The global Mennonite church is having to play catch-up on matters of peace and peacemaking, but no more than the Mennonite Global north is increasingly needing to address the loss of a sense of the centrality of ecclesiology, missiology, and soteriology as essential to health and resilience of the church.