

YABs Fellowship Week Materials & Resources: 19–26 June 2016



As young Anabaptists, we have designated the third week of June for an annual celebration of our common faith and roots in our different cultural contexts by studying a passage from Scripture, sharing songs and prayer requests, hearing each other's stories and praying for each other. We've compiled some materials below to incorporate into your own local context, no matter what time you meet during the week. Our prayer is that they will help draw you into greater community (*koinonia*), not only in your local congregations, but with your international Anabaptist family.

We also encourage you to take the time during that week to reach out to other Anabaptists, Mennonite youth or young adult groups in your area or to reconnect with friends you met during GYS to spend time in fellowship or serve in your community together. Maybe you even want talk about the discussion questions together and spend time praying for each other! We'd love to see how you celebrate YABs Fellowship Week in your community. Please share pictures and videos with us if you can, or even a recap of your discussion.

1. Theme and text: A Cloud of Witnesses: [Hebrews 12:1–2](#)

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honour beside God's throne." (NLT)

2. Discussion Questions

- a. *What are some things that make you feel connected to a global faith family? To a historical faith family? Do you ever feel disconnected? If so, why?*
- b. *What are some weights or obstacles (not necessarily sins) that slow you down or keep you from walking in the footsteps of Jesus?*
- c. *Sin is an ever-present struggle in all of our lives. What are the sins that so easily entangle you as an individual? What about the sins of your church? Of your people? Of your country?*
 - *Use this time to confess your sins to each other. Consider confessing national/corporate sins to others in your community or other groups/peoples you've wronged as a nation or people group. ([1 John 1:9](#), [James 5:16](#))*
- d. *Do you sometimes feel that the notion of sin is holding you back, that it makes you afraid to reach out and talk to others about their lives and the things they should/could do better? How can we create an environment where people can be vulnerable and feel like they can share their struggles without being judged? What does it look like to challenge each other and keep each other accountable in our sin struggles?*
 - *Find someone this week who can hold you accountable with regards to a certain temptation or area of spiritual discipline.*

- e. *In order to throw off sin, we need to stay focused on our Saviour, Jesus, who became sin for us so that we might live in freedom. What are some practices or ways to cultivate a single-minded focus on Jesus?*
 - *Share what helps you draw near to him, what grows and challenges you spiritually.*
- f. *Who are your mentors in the faith (historical, in your local community, and global)? What is it about their faith that encourages and inspires you? What will it take for you to imitate their faith?*
 - *Take a moment this week to either encourage and thank them in person or through a written note for how they've impacted your walk with Jesus.*
- g. *All around the world, there are brothers and sisters in faith who are suffering, like Jesus did. Are you willing to go through difficulties and challenges because of your faith in Jesus Christ?*
 - *Take time to pray for the persecuted church around the world. Refer to the prayer requests below to know how to pray specifically for believers within our global Anabaptist family. Also check out the Anabaptist website www.martyrstories.org, or other Christian websites like www.opendoorsusa.org or www.persecution.com to find resources and ways to pray for the persecuted church.*

3. Songs: These can be sung together or simply listened to and reflected upon. Find recordings and chord/lyric sheets attached below.

- a. [Song of Confession](#) - /Chords/
- b. [Perfume a Tus Pies](#) - /Chords/
- c. [Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus](#)
- d. [Faith of Our Fathers](#)
- e. [Sizohamba Naye](#) - MWC International Songbook #11
- f. [Bless the Lord My Soul \(Taizé\)](#)

4. GYS Testimonies: Read stories and testimonies of how Global Youth Summit (GYS) has impacted young Anabaptists around the world. (Page 3)

5. Prayer Requests: One of the most important things we can do for each other is to pray for our brothers and sisters around the world as they experience trials, temptations, persecution and discouragement ([James 5:16](#)). Provided is a list of specific ways you can pray for the local and national churches in other countries. (Page 4-6)

6. Share on Facebook and Instagram! #YABs

YABs Fellowship Week 2016: GYS Testimonies



Africa

- "I am so grateful to share the GYS story that took place in at PA 2015. It was a good opportunity to meet and share ideas with people from parts of the world on the theme Called to Share: My Gifts, Our Gifts. I would wish that for the next Assembly African countries could send more young Anabaptists, as this time we experienced that delegates from many countries did not get visas." **Wycliff Ochieng Otieno from Kenya**
- "Hello every one of the Anabaptist family! :) *Shalom!* As I am sharing prayer requests with you, I will say few things about being part of this family; Firstly, I am so thankful to God for his goodness and love in my life. He has done so much for me and for other people in various ways. Secondly, I am very much thankful to God for giving me the opportunity of being part of this family (Anabaptist) through Global Youth Summit 2015. I actually had so good time and felt the love of God seeing brothers and sisters of mine from all around the world coming together for HIS GLORY. This was the best time in my life for making many friends from all around the world at once together with worshipping the Lord (One God) with people from different traditions and cultures. I became so rich and stronger in faith through many workshops that we had. I would never want to miss the coming GYS and MWC events. PA 2015 occurred at the end of my IVEP year in USA, so, that was another miraculous thing to me." **Elisante Daniel Lulu from Tanzania**

Asia

- "GYS 2015 showed me about diversity as part of God's creations, it made me realize that I live amidst the nations that including me as part of global family, and it opened my mind about some local and global issues that are happen in other continents so that I learn to encourage and support them through prayer and thought. What an awesome week when we could share our gifts to others, doing Communion with people we never met before. I experienced God's presence through every different style of worship every day." **Taning Andari Anita Pudwidaringsih from Indonesia**

North America

- "GYS showed me that unity, fellowship and commitment within our church family are possible despite a wide range of theological differences and traditions. GYS was challenging because of the interactions with individuals from very different beliefs and church backgrounds. At times, some of us clashed because of these differences; still, I never felt threatened or disrespected, and my hope for the church is that we may continue to discuss and learn from each other despite the difficulty of the conversations, and that we may become better at them." **Andrea de Avila from USA**
- Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches [MB Herald article](#) by **Rianna Isaak from Canada**
- Conservative Mennonite Conference [Brotherhood Beacon article](#) by **Larissa Swartz from USA**

YABs Fellowship Week 2016: Prayer Requests

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

James 5:16



Africa

- **Zimbabwe (submitted by Makadunyiswe Ngulube)**
 - Pray for eradication of corrupt practices within the government.
 - Pray for the leaders of Brethren in Christ Church as they lead their congregations.
 - Pray for an increase in job opportunities for the young people; may they trust God and not lean on their own understanding.
 - Pray for the economic situation in Zimbabwe.
 - Pray that the young people may develop a deeper relationship with God and that they will bear fruit in their church, community and nation.
 - Pray for boldness to live and die for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.
- **Kenya (submitted by Wycliff Ochieng Otieno)**
 - Pray for an enriching time together at our national youth conference scheduled from 5-12 December 2016, and for good facilitators and enough funds in good time. We pray that the youth will get necessary requirements in good time and be able to participate fully.
 - Pray that projects to empower youth to support their own livelihoods would be successful.
 - Pray for a more united youth a continued good relationship with the larger KMC.
 - Pray for more peace in Kenya.
- **Botswana (submitted by Ontiretse Bonnye)**
 - Pray for unity among the young people. There is a lot of disunity and different visions are causing misdirection.
 - Pray that young people may continue to grow spiritually and know God at a better level.
 - Pray for economic stability and provision of finances as most of them are unemployed.
 - Pray that they may live pure lives as a young people. There are a lot of temptations and many have given up on their faith.
 - Pray for commitment in serving God as YABs.
 - There will be a conference for the young people in October. Pray for provision of funds and a positive outcome as they develop themselves and as they witness to others.
 - Pray for growth and expansion of the churches in different parts of Botswana so that it can acquire conference status (at the moment it is under the Zimbabwe Conference).
- **Democratic Republic of Congo (submitted by Felo Gracia)**
 - Pray for DRC and the political situation in the country. The government has refused to organize elections and there are constant disagreements among the different parties.
 - Pray for peace in the nation.
- **Tanzania (submitted by Elisante Daniel Lulu)**
 - Every three years, Tanzania Mennonite Church (Kanisa la Mennonite Tanzania - KMT) does an election process of which this year has started from branches (small churches) then congregations (May and June), diocese level (July and August) and lastly the national leadership (September and October). Election process usually is for all leaders for different groups (example: youths, women, planning and financial, evangelism, relief and support, education and health committees). This is a very important process for our church this year. Please pray for good leaders for KMT who will serve God well.
 - KMT has a prayer conference 12–18 September 2016, of which all church members will gather at Arusha Mennonite Church. Please pray that the preparation process to host 600 people for one week will be good and God's glory be seen during the week.
- **Burkina Faso (submitted by Samuel Jonathan Philippe Traore)**
 - Pray for guidance from God concerning the church.
 - Some churches have no pastors and we pray that God will raise up leaders that are willing to serve him and to lead his people.

Asia

- **India (submitted by Preshit Rao)**
 - Pray for those facing persecution to preach God's Word.
 - Pray for our spiritual growth as there are many worldly attractions around us. There is lack of participation in church activities due to jobs and study schedule.
 - According to 2011 census, there are approximately 2.3% Christians in our country, so may God help us to be strong in our faith when we stay with our non-Christian friends.
 - Pray for those facing the problem of unemployment.
 - Pray that God would prepare God-fearing youth leaders for churches. From 22 congregations of Mennonite Churches in India (Mennonite Church Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh) only 2 or 3 youths are taking seminary training to serve as pastors.
- **Indonesia (submitted by Taning Andari Anita Pudwidingih)**
 - Please pray for the unity of YABs in Indonesia so that we can work together to share and spread God's love and doing his project for our country (Indonesia) and for the world.

Europe

- **Germany (submitted by Benjamin Krauß and Timo Doetsch)**
 - Pray for the churches to boldly proclaim God's hospitality for all in word and deed.
 - Pray for political leaders to have wisdom.
 - Pray for the Holy Spirit to speak: "Do not be afraid" to those who march in the streets against refugees. Pray that people may be free of fear and hatred and can open their arms to those who come.
 - Pray for all who work tirelessly to welcome refugees and challenge the spiritual fortress of racism and xenophobia. Pray for churches making a home for refugees, being friends with them and sharing Jesus in word and deed. Pray for the Muslim man from Libya who was impressed by the love of the Christians he encountered in Dresden and wants to rebuild the church in his home city.
 - Praise God for the deep friendships in youth groups. Pray for the meeting of youth groups from the German MB churches in October during the celebrations of German unity. Pray for the preparations and that it will be a blessed time.
- **Spain (submitted by Judit Chipirón)**
 - Spain had an election campaign in December, but the political parties couldn't get a common agreement, so there is another election campaign this June. May God lead this result and all the politics in general.
 - Christians in Spain are trying to see what we can do with all the refugees and the injustices that are happening. We need his wisdom and love to act.
 - In my church, we are looking for a generational replacement in many of the ministries. The leaders want it to happen. So we, as a church, are praying for God's will in this area.
 - Pray for the students coming to study linguistics this year at PROEL in Madrid with the desire to serve and bring the Word of God to those who have not yet heard.

Latin America

- **Mexico (submitted by Ivonne Gorospe)**
 - Pray for our youth group, because we have tried to have meetings and activities but that has not been possible due to the following reasons: we are a small church and there is a wide age gap amongst the young people in the group and our interests are different. Most of the young adults work and we have several things to do, and I believe that it is because of this and the lack of interest that nobody is very committed to do something.
 - This coming week we will be choosing a substitute for one of the leaders, we pray that the Lord may guide us.
 - As young people at the conference to which our congregation belongs (there is one located in Toluca and one in which Rodrigo is the pastor) we are starting a youth ministry by designing discipleship workshops and weekly devotionals to be sent to the young people of our conference. May the Lord guide this project, may he give us wisdom and inspiration for

the development of this activity and that we may also encourage other young people to get involved and to grow in God's word.

- Prayer requests for my country: The situation seems more complicated every day due to the problems of violence and corruption. May God have mercy and may we, as a church, be an arm of support that shares the hope we have in Jesus.
- **Paraguay (submitted by Dominik Bergen)**
 - Pray for pastors, youth leaders and people with responsibilities in our churches.
 - Pray for the church planting activities all around Paraguay.

North America

- **United States of America (submitted by Andrea de Avila)**
 - Pray that the congregations and conferences of Mennonite Church USA may show each other active signs of love as seen in the life of Jesus.
 - For the unity of the Mennonite church in the USA and across the world.
 - Pray that funding will come in for the new thrift shop being built by White River Mennonite Church in Busby, Montana.
- **Canada (submitted by Rianna Isaak)**
 - Pray for wisdom and peace as Mennonites in Canada begin to work to repair the relationship between settler peoples and First Nations peoples.
 - Pray for hearts of compassion and for discernment in how to love and serve the Syrian refugees and other refugees coming to Canada.