

Feedback on: Mennonite World Conference  
World Fellowship Sunday, January 27, 2013  
From: Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota USA

“Thank you for the worship and prayer resources that are provided by MWC for World Fellowship Sunday each year,” wrote pastor Joetta Schlabach. She attached a copy of a sermon given at her congregation as it observed World Fellowship Sunday in January 2013. The sermon was by Aryn Baxter a graduate student doing research on higher education development initiatives.

Baxter’s sermon followed a children’s time story based on the children’s book *14 Cows for America*. The book tells how Kimeli, a Masai student in the U.S., brought news of the September 11, 2001 twin tower tragedy in New York to his village in Kenya and inspired a gift to America of 14 cows. In Kimeli’s tradition, a cow is precious property and it is believed to bring comfort to its owner.

In her sermon, Baxter cited Kimeli’s comments about the gift of cows: “A connection between the two cultures had been made. We felt we had taken some of America’s pain into our hearts.”

“To me,” added Baxter, “this story captures what we remember on World Fellowship Sunday – a celebration of worldwide community and the gifts we receive as we take each others’ pain into our hearts and learn to better understand ourselves and God’s vision of justice through our interactions across differences and distances.”

Baxter went on to describe her research on a U.S. scholarship program for students from Rwanda. “Upon completing their studies, they are expected to return to Rwanda and contribute to the future of their country,” she commented. “In contrast to most of their American classmates, these students from Rwanda have a heavy sense of responsibility on their shoulders.”

Baxter concluded: “I’m grateful for World Fellowship Sunday because I think our hope is renewed by reminders that we work for justice as a global community, and that there are many examples of how individuals and communities around the world are working toward justice and being transformed in the process.... We need to hear stories of courage, of creativity, of change – no matter how small or slow – to remind us that God is indeed working through the church and other communities around the world to bring justice and teach us the way of humility in the process.”