



February 11, 2025

Dear sisters and brothers in the global Anabaptist Christian family,

The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus be with you. As many of you are aware, we in the United States are living through a time of political and social change. I invite your prayers that, even during this time, we would experience the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guarding our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:7).

Recently, the current presidential administration announced changes to immigration policy that could result in houses of worship being more easily targeted by government forces conducting immigration raids. Many people within and beyond Mennonite Church USA have expressed concern for the harmful impact this will have on our ability to gather for worship, prayer, Bible study, and fellowship, as well as to reach out to our communities through tangible acts of service such as food and clothing distribution.

In response to these concerns, Mennonite Church USA has joined with over 20 other Christian and Jewish communities in taking [legal action](#) that seeks to restore the rights of people of faith to gather, worship, and serve without government interference. By taking this action as a denomination, we can help local congregations bear witness to the challenges they face while allowing them to remain anonymous, thereby minimizing the threat of reprisal. The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board strongly endorsed this action.

I recognize that Anabaptist engagement with secular authorities is a complicated subject. Jesus and Paul warn us about courtroom disputes (Matt 5:25-26, 1 Cor. 6:1-6), and many New Testament authors encourage submission to the governing authorities. Even so, Anabaptists have, at various points in history, used legal means to prevent the state from encroaching on religious practice and to protect the free exercise of our faith (such as the creation of a legally recognized conscientious objector status in the United States in opposition to military conscription and in various protections for Amish and other similar Anabaptist groups).

We believe that because of Christ's call to care for those who are hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick, or imprisoned (Matt. 25:31-36), we must join with Jesus' early followers in choosing to obey God rather than any human authority (Acts 5:29). In preparing for this action, we drew from the wisdom of Menno Simons, who reminds us that "true evangelical faith is of such a nature that it cannot lay dormant; but manifests itself in all righteousness and works of love; it dies unto flesh and blood; ... clothes the naked; feeds the hungry; consoles the afflicted; shelters the miserable; aids and consoles all the oppressed; returns good for evil ... seeks that which is lost; binds up that which is wounded; heals that which is diseased and saves that which is sound." We pray that our congregations will remain free to live out this true faith in word and deed without fear.

We know that many of our siblings throughout the world have endured much harsher persecution and governmental intrusion into their communities. We pray that in this moment, we can truly be a global communion, bearing one another's burdens and fulfilling the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2). We also welcome you to share your wisdom and insight into how we remain faithful in the face of governmental pressure. Please continue to hold followers of Jesus in the United State in your prayers, as we hold you in our prayers as well.

In Christ,

Jon Carlson. Moderator, Mennonite Church USA

3145 Benham Avenue, Suite 1
Elkhart, IN 46517

718 N. Main Street
Newton, KS 67114-1703

Toll-free (English/Español):
1-866-866-2872
E: info@MennoniteUSA.org
www.MennoniteUSA.org