



Young Center

The Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College

Fall 2011

News

Forgiveness conference to be held September 22

The conference will use the Nickel Mines tragedy as a springboard to explore Christian forgiveness in a wider context.

October 2, 2011, marks the fifth anniversary of the school shooting at Nickel Mines. Using that event as a springboard to explore the meaning of Christian forgiveness in a wider context, the Young Center will present a one-day conference on forgiveness on September 22. Broadly oriented to anyone interested in the process and potential of forgiveness, the conference includes speakers from a variety of disciplines speaking on a range of aspects and understandings of forgiveness.

Young Center Senior Fellow Donald B. Kraybill will open the conference with a brief summary of the Nickel Mines story, including some of the unique aspects of the forgiveness that occurred there. He will also address the motivation for the Amish response and raise questions about the definition and meaning of forgiveness.

In his keynote address, “Habits of Forgiveness:

Shaping Contexts for the Hard Questions,” L. Gregory Jones of Duke University and Duke Divinity School will discuss the value of habits of forgiveness and the difficult questions that still must be confronted despite a commitment to forgiveness. Jones is a scholar and church leader on forgiveness and reconciliation. He is the author or editor of fourteen books, including the coauthored *Forgiving as We’ve Been Forgiven: Community Practices for Making Peace* (with Celestin Musekura, in 2010) and the widely acclaimed *Embodying Forgiveness: A Theological Analysis* (1995).



Keynote speaker L. Gregory Jones

David Weaver-Zercher of Messiah College will respond to Jones’s address, and a question-and-answer time with Jones will conclude the morning.

Five seminars, which will run concurrently, comprise the afternoon agenda. Session speakers include Frank Stalfa of Lancaster Theological Seminary and the Samaritan Counseling Center, Linda Crockett of the Samaritan Counseling Center, the authors of *Amish Grace*, Terri Roberts, and Maria Erling of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

Stalfa’s presentation, “Forgiveness without Reconciliation,” will focus on forgiveness and reconciliation as separate decisions, each with its own integrity and power to heal.

Crockett’s session, on the abuse of power manifested in sexual and domestic violence, will address the ways that quick forgiveness can harm both victim and abuser, the long-term impact of abuse on victims, and the distinction between an offender’s expressed remorse and actual repentance.

In “Writing the Story of a Tragedy,” Donald B. Kraybill, Steve Nolt, and David Weaver-Zercher will discuss the ethical and practical complications and dilemmas they faced in writing *Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy*.

Terri Roberts will relate her personal experiences with the Nickel Mines story and how being forgiven can offer spiritual power for reconciling and building new relationships with those who have been harmed.

“Forgiveness 500 Years Later” focuses on the reconciliation between Lutherans and Anabaptists that took place in Stuttgart, Germany, in 2010. Maria Erling, who participated in that service, will describe the event and lead a discussion on how such acts of repentance can help build new relationships.

After the conference wrap-up and break for dinner, an evening program continuing the theme of the

(continued on page 2)



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Jeff Bach

Summer often brings an “in between” time of reflecting on the academic year that passed, enjoying visitors to the Young Center, and looking ahead to the new year.

In May, Ryan Long graduated from Elizabethtown College with a major in religious studies and a minor in Anabaptist and Pietist studies, as well as a minor in sociology. Ryan’s senior thesis about the Hutterite men imprisoned at Fort Leavenworth as conscientious objectors during WWI showed his academic skills and his interest in the Anabaptist tradition and peace.

At commencement, President Theodore Long also “graduated” from Elizabethtown College after fifteen years on campus. He and his wife, Betty, received honorary doctoral degrees in recognition of their service to the college and have now entered retirement. They supported the Young Center enthusiastically during

their years at Elizabethtown. We treasure their friendship.

A new beginning took place over the summer as James E. Miller began a relationship with the Young Center as an occasional volunteer research assistant. Jim recently retired as district executive for the Shenandoah District of the Church of the Brethren. He has taken doctoral course work and has extensive international experience in Kenya and Brazil with Mennonite Central Committee and Quakers. He also speaks German. Jim will assist the Young Center a few days each month, working with our rare materials and research.

We anticipate a stimulating conference in September as we host “The Power of Forgiveness: Lessons from Nickel Mines” in September. The speakers from various disciplines will reflect on the grace that came from tragedy.

The coming academic year brings other new developments on campus. Carl Strikwerda has begun his work as the new president of Elizabethtown College. In recognition of his inauguration, which will take place on October 1, I will present a lecture on September 27 on the influence of religious toleration in the Netherlands on the early Dutch Anabaptists. The topic was chosen because of the importance of tolerance as a part of the Anabaptist and Brethren heritage of Elizabethtown College. It is also a friendly recognition of the Frisian heritage of President Strikwerda and his wife, Gail Bossenga.

The coming year promises a varied schedule of programs and events at the Young Center. More details about the fall events are available in this newsletter. I hope that you can join us to enjoy some of the fruits of leading research on Anabaptism and Pietism. ■

Conference *(continued)*

conference will be held in Leffler Chapel. “The Enduring Power of Forgiveness” will include presentations by Steve Nolt and Terri Roberts on what they have learned about forgiveness in the five years since the Nickel Mines tragedy. Ken Sensenig will follow with stories illustrating the worldwide witness of the Amish response to the tragedy, and the evening will conclude with a question-and-answer session.

Both the conference and the evening program are open to the public. The conference requires advance registration. Visit [www. etown.edu/forgiveness2011](http://www.etown.edu/forgiveness2011) or call 717-361-1470 for details. ■

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On June 21, Donald B. Kraybill traveled to the Netherlands to attend the doctoral dissertation defense of Martine Vonk at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Kraybill, one of seven members of Vonk’s thesis committee, was invited to participate in the formal defense process and the awarding of her degree. Vonk was a doctoral fellow at the Young Center in Spring 2004 and completed local field research on the Amish for one portion of her dissertation, “Sustainability and Quality of Life: A Study on the Religious Worldviews, Values and Environmental Impact of Amish, Hutterite, Franciscan and Benedictine Communities.” Pictured after the degree was conferred are, left to right, Donald B. Kraybill; Martine Vonk; dissertation committee co-chair Peter Ester, a Dutch sociologist who served as a Young Center fellow in 1995; and dissertation committee chair Jan Boersema, professor of environmental science, culture, and religion at Vrije.

Valerie Weaver-Zercher named 2011 Snowden Fellow

Writer and editor Valerie Weaver-Zercher has been named the Snowden Fellow for 2011. Weaver-Zercher's work has been published in the *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Christian Century*, *Christianity Today*, and other venues. She is also a contributing editor to *Sojourners* and a book reviewer for the *Christian Century*. Her writing has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and receives special mention in the 2009 Pushcart anthology.

Weaver-Zercher is writing a manuscript about Amish romance novels, a sub-genre of inspirational Christian fiction that has gained a wide and loyal readership in recent years. "I am taking a cultural stud-

ies approach to the phenomenon," she says, "with attention to the production of the novels, the cultural and religious work that they perform in the lives of their mostly evangelical women readers, and representations of the Amish in the novels. During my time at the Young Center, I hope to finish drafting several chapters of this project and revise several more that I have already drafted."

"I look forward to taking advantage of library and staff resources at the Young Center and the college, especially with regard to the history of Amish romance novels and to questions of 'accuracy' and 'authenticity' within the fiction," she continues. "The fellowship also helps me to preserve time and space to work on this

book when, as a freelance writer and editor, it's easy to fill my time with other projects that come my way."

Weaver-Zercher will present a talk on the history of Amish romance novels on November 18 at the Young Center.

The Snowden fellowship and lecture are named for Lucille and Armon Snowden, whose generous gift endowed them. The Young Center invites applications for its fellows program. For details, visit www.etown.edu/youngctr. ■



Valerie Weaver-Zercher

Doctoral students pursue varied research interests

The Young Center recently hosted two graduate students doing research in the area. Nao Nomura, a doctoral student at the University of Tokyo and a Fulbright Graduate Research Fellow for 2010-2011, spent the past ten months conduct-

ing ethnographic fieldwork in the Lancaster Amish settlement. Her dissertation topic involves Amish material and consumer culture, and she was able to spend much of her time living with local Amish families. Nomura appreciated having access to the various resources at the Young Center and considers it "an invaluable experience to work with Professor Donald Kraybill and Stephen Scott, who offered invaluable advice for a novice ethnographer/researcher like myself." She will return to Japan in early September to take an adjunct teaching position at a private college next semester.

Lydia Garver, a native of Lancaster County and a candidate in archaeology and social context at Indiana University, Bloomington, spent a month at the Young Center this summer. Garver's dissertation research on German American use of imported goods during the eighteenth century brought her back to the area to study a farm occupied by married members of the Ephrata community.

"German Americans are portrayed in many historical accounts as disinterested in fashion and household comforts, but recent architectural and material culture research is challenging this stereotype," Garver says. Her research suggests that



Nao Nomura




Lydia Garver

German American consumption is best understood in the context of the German transatlantic experience rather than British models of fashion and emulation. During her Young Center fellowship, Garver collected nearly 300 German American probate inventories, which she will use to compare with a collection of inventories from the Ephrata congregation and previous research on British American probate collections.

She notes that she benefited from both Jeff Bach's knowledge of the Ephrata community and from the fellowship itself, which provided "the justification that I could take a month off of work and only do research, a rare luxury."

The Young Center invites graduate students to apply for its doctoral fellowships. Visit the Center's website for more information. ■



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Young Center News is published twice each year for those interested in the work and events of the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies. Comments and suggestions are welcome. Please direct correspondence to the address below.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Civil War-Era Anabaptists and the Modern Nation-State

STEVE LONGENECKER

Thursday, September 8 ■ 7:30 pm

Longenecker will discuss the growth of national government during the conflict and the consequences of this for Anabaptists. Newly empowered by a popular cause, conscription, civil religion, and sheer size, the worldly kingdom became much more threatening to traditional Anabaptism nonconformity.

Steve Longenecker is professor of history at Bridgewater College (Va.), and the author of *Shenandoah Religion: Outsiders and the Mainstream, 1716-1865* and *The Brethren During the Age of World War: The Church of the Brethren Encounter with Modernization, 1914-1950*. His current research project is the religious history of antebellum and Civil War-era Gettysburg, Pa.

The Power of Forgiveness: Lessons from Nickel Mines

Thursday, Sept. 22 ■ 8 am to 4:30 pm

This one-day conference will explore the moral dilemmas arising from violence and the potential power of forgiveness for personal healing and restoration of relationships.

Registration closes on September 8. Visit www.etown.edu/forgiveness2011 or call 717-361-1470 for details.

The Enduring Power of Forgiveness

Thursday, September 22 ■ 7:30 pm

Historian Steve Nolt and mother and grandmother Terri Roberts will address "What I've Learned about Forgiveness," and Kenneth Sensenig of Mennonite Central Committee will discuss "The Worldwide Witness of Nickel Mines." The evening will conclude with a question-and-answer session.

■ Thursday, September 8, 7:30 pm

LECTURE

Civil War-Era Anabaptists and the Modern Nation-State

Steve Longenecker

■ Thursday, Sept. 22, 8 am to 4:30 pm

CONFERENCE

The Power of Forgiveness: Lessons from Nickel Mines

■ Thursday, September 22, 7:30 pm

PROGRAM

The Enduring Power of Forgiveness

■ Tuesday, September 27, 7:30 pm

LECTURE

Anabaptism and the Netherlands: A Model of Toleration

Jeff Bach

■ Tuesday, October 18, 7:30 pm

LECTURE

An Amish Paradox: Diversity and Change in the Holmes County, Ohio, Amish Settlement

David McConnell and Charles Hurst

■ Thursday, November 17, 7:30 pm

SNOWDEN LECTURE

Thrill of the Chaste: Tracing the Ancestry of the Amish Romance Novel

Valerie Weaver-Zercher

Anabaptism and the Netherlands: A Model of Toleration

JEFF BACH

Tuesday, September 27 ■ 7:30 pm

Bach will explore the ways that growing religious tolerance for the Anabaptists in the Netherlands transformed them over time, moving them from feared religious sect to respectable citizens to advocates for tolerance for persecuted Anabaptists in other parts of Europe.

Jeff Bach is director of the Young Center and associate professor of religious studies at Elizabethtown College. He is the author of *Voices of the Turtledoves: The Sacred World of Ephrata* and co-author with Michael Birkel of *Genius of the Transcendent: Mystical Writings of Jakob Boehme*.

An Amish Paradox: Diversity and Change in the Holmes County, Ohio, Amish Settlement

DAVID MCCONNELL AND CHARLES HURST

Tuesday, October 18 ■ 7:30 pm

The authors of the 2011 Brown Book Award winner, *An Amish Paradox*, will discuss their methods and experiences studying the Holmes County settlement. They will focus on the dialectic and dilemmas that characterize Amish attempts to adapt and yet stay true to their cultural and religious heritage in the areas of family, education, economics, and health care.

David McConnell is professor of anthropology at The College of Wooster (Ohio). His research interests include social and cultural change, the indigenization of modernity, and the anthropology of education. Charles Hurst is emeritus professor of sociology at The College of Wooster, where he taught for 38 years.

Thrill of the Chaste: Tracing the Ancestry of the Amish Romance Novel

VALERIE WEAVER-ZERCHER

Thursday, November 17 ■ 7:30 pm

Beverly Lewis's *The Shunning*, published in 1997, is often considered the first Amish romance novel. But an Amish romance novel had appeared almost a century earlier, and Amish-themed novels continued to appear in ensuing years, refracting many of the social, religious, and literary movements of the twentieth century. Weaver-Zercher will discuss the connections between recent Amish-themed novels and much older novels of the same genre.

Valerie Weaver-Zercher, the Snowden Fellow for Fall 2011, is a writer and editor whose work has appeared in a variety of publications. She is a contributing editor to *Sojourners* and a book reviewer for the *Christian Century*.

Young Center hosts summer visitors

Summer travel often brings visitors to the Young Center. Benjamin Neuberger and his wife, Belina, came from Israel for a few days in June. They were in the country for several weeks at Brandeis University and will return to the Young Center next spring when Benjamin will serve as the 2012 Snowden Fellow.

Musa Mambula, Young Center fellow in Spring 2007, and his wife, Sarah, came to the United States from Nigeria

this summer to represent the Nigerian Brethren at the Brethren Annual Conference. During their time in the U.S., the Mambulas are staying in Elizabethtown with Jobie Riley and enjoying time with their daughter, Beatrice, who lives in nearby Columbia, Pa. Musa and Sarah will attend the Brethren National Older Adult Conference in September in North Carolina. On September 18 Musa will preach at the Germantown Church of the

Brethren, one of a number of speaking engagements he has while in the country.

In May, three sisters who are nieces of Anna Crumpacker, one of the first Brethren missionaries to China, came to the Young Center. Verla Peter, Marge Spillman, and Maxine Elfering came to help Elizabethtown professor David Kenley and Young Cen-

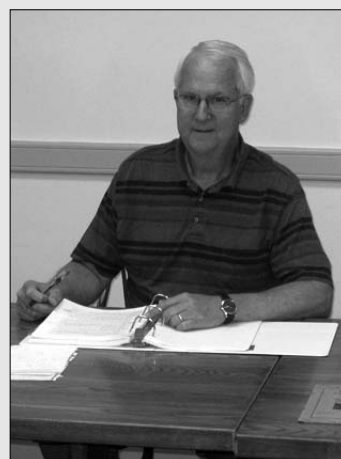
ter director Jeff Bach with gathering data on the Brethren in China. These sisters, who grew up in Idaho, also enjoyed seeing some Pennsylvania Dutch country.

Frederique Green, an undergraduate student at Oxford Brookes University in Oxford, England, came to the Young Center for research in late July and early August. She is preparing for an honors thesis on the Amish community and their theology. She will also study their social context in the U.S.

Other guests and researchers also visited the Young Center this summer. Whether stopping in as friends or coming for research, visitors always enrich the Center's life and work. ■



Sarah and Musa Mambula chat with director Jeff Bach outside the Young Center about their itinerary during their time in the United States.



Jim Miller, retired district executive for the Shenandoah District of the Church of the Brethren, began volunteering at the Young Center this summer. Miller drives to Elizabethtown from his home in Bridgewater, Virginia, to work a few days each month with the Center's research collections. He is currently helping to establish a process for classifying collection materials as they arrive at the Young Center. His first project is the G. N. Falkenstein Collection, and his first goal is to come up with an electronic database. "I enjoy working with old German documents and the challenges of this project," Miller says, "and I really appreciate the welcome, orientation, and support of the people at the Young Center and the college." ■

New exhibit complements September conference on forgiveness

The news of the tragedy at the West Nickel Mines Amish School on October 2, 2006, rapidly gave way to the story of the extension of forgiveness and sympathy from the West Nickel Mines Amish people to the family of Charles Roberts. That forgiveness and the gestures with which it was demonstrated made news around the world and are still referenced today whenever similar tragedies occur. "The Tragedy at Nickel Mines: A Story of Forgiveness and Reconciliation," an exhibit in the lobby of the Young Center, outlines the events surrounding the schoolhouse shooting and its subsequent worldwide witness. It will be launched this fall in conjunction with the conference on forgiveness.

The exhibit briefly documents the incident and then focuses on the subsequent forgiveness story, the various ways forgiveness is defined, and the scope of the spread of the story. The challenges and decisions that were part of the process of writing *Amish Grace* are also chronicled in the exhibit.

"The Tragedy at Nickel Mines" will open on Thursday, September 8, with a reception beginning at 4:00 p.m. and continuing until the Young Center lecture that evening. Beginning on September 9, the exhibit will be open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., through December 9. Special arrangements can be made to accommodate groups during evening or weekend hours. ■



Elizabethtown College

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Hurst and McConnell receive 2011 Brown Book Award

An Amish Paradox named outstanding book in Anabaptist and Pietist Studies

An Amish Paradox: Diversity and Change in the World's Largest Amish Community by Charles E. Hurst and David L. McConnell has received the 2011 Dale W. Brown Book Award. Published by the Johns Hopkins University Press, the book is a comprehensive study of the Amish in Holmes County, Ohio. It has been hailed by one reviewer as “a richly detailed and highly readable account of one settlement of Amish....It is well-researched and free of jargon” (Jonathan Andelson in *Anthropological Quarterly*). Another reviewer, Robert Brenneman, in *American Journal of Sociology*, says, “Hurst and McConnell...are to be commended for their extensive research and their careful attention to nuance and exception.”

Now professor emeritus, Hurst taught sociology at The College of Wooster for 38 years, and McConnell has been teach-

ing anthropology there since 1992. The two spent seven years conducting systematic field research in the Holmes County Amish settlement, using interviews, surveys, observation, and documents as a basis for their analysis of the community.

The book award judges, scholars in Anabaptist and Pietist studies, selected *An Amish Paradox* from a pool of 25 books nominated for the award. Their comments about the winner include these: “The book is well written and remarkably thorough. The substantive chapters have a good balance of evidence and theory” and “[This book rated the highest] on scholarship quality and on organization and clarity of writing....In each chapter the authors define their goals, present their case, and then coherently summarize their findings. The scholarship is admirable but is presented in a style that can easily be understood by a nonacademic readership.”

The national award, which recognizes an outstanding book in Anabaptist and Pietist studies published during the previous three years, was inaugurated in 2004.

It honors the significant contribution of Brethren author and theologian Dale W. Brown, who served as a Young Center fellow in 1993.

The authors will present a lecture on their book on Tuesday, October 18, at 7:30 p.m., in the Young Center's Bucher Meetinghouse.

Nominations for the 2012 Brown Book Award will be accepted until December 10, 2011. Visit www.etown.edu/youngctr for details. ■

