



Mennonite World Conference

A Community of Anabaptist
related Churches

Congreso Mundial Menonita

Una Comunidad de
Iglesias Anabautistas

Conférence Mennonite Mondiale

Une Communauté
d'Eglises Anabaptistes

*We invite church leaders to share this letter and resources widely,
translating into local vernacular as necessary.*

Letter from the Global Anabaptist Health Network: Caring for our brothers and sisters

To the Anabaptist Mennonites and Brethren in Christ around the globe

Peace and grace from your brothers and sisters gathered around Global Anabaptist Health Network,
The COVID-19 pandemic has brought significant disruption, pain, and loss.

We mourn with those who have lost loved ones and grieve the loss of livelihood for others.

We long to gather freely again, to share a meal, and worship without constraints because this is who we are; a beloved community.

In the midst of this, we remember our faith in a God who comforts the suffering and walks with us through all things. In the words of Christ who has already conquered, “Do not be afraid” (Matthew 28:10).

Resist sensational stories

As members of the health care community and as Christians, we recognize the fear and uncertainty. It is tempting to fuel these feelings with falsehood and sensational narratives of conspiracy. False stories gain our attention and grab our hearts like the words of false prophets. We should be careful not to bear false witness (Exodus 20:16).

The world gravitates to fear. But being motivated by fear is not the sign of following the way of Christ. We should reflect the faith to which we hold. The church should be known for love (John 13:35).

Care for the ill

As members of the health care community and as Christians, we care for the ill and protect the vulnerable (Matthew 25:44-45). We honour those who dedicate their lives and efforts to combat this virus, a common foe.

By the grace of God, we have been given tools that lessen the transmission and mortality of COVID-19. We are grateful to our brothers and sisters’ insights and hard work in science and in public health to provide choices that can meaningfully reduce sickness and death. We should accept their carefully considered advice.

We also honour those who care for the sick, bringing solace and healing into difficult moments. Many of our brothers and sisters provide safety and care.

Follow health recommendations

As members of the health care community and as Christians, we support the recommendation to wear masks and social distance. Once we scrambled for masks to protect ourselves. Now we wear masks to love our neighbors, keeping our breath from infecting others if we are unknowingly harboring the virus.

Maintaining physical distance for a time protects our communities. There is strong and consistent evidence that when we limit face-to-face interactions and avoid crowding, outbreaks settle and overwhelmed systems stabilize.

By following sound advice, our churches can counter the epidemic with truth and love and reduce the fear we feel while doing our part to move past these difficult times (Proverbs 19:20). Let us work together to persevere in love and embrace the truth.

Accept vaccination when offered

As members of the health care community and as Christians, we recognize that vaccines offer great hope for ending this pandemic. They offer personal protection and build resilience into our community and health systems.

Many of our brothers and sisters in Christ have been working to bring about these interventions. They vigorously advocate for vaccination and accept it for themselves. Honour their work and example. Vaccination is a benefit that comes to us most powerfully if it is accepted broadly. We should also expose falsehoods about the harm vaccination could bring.

Though the world may seek self-protection out of selfishness, we embrace vaccination as a way forward in love, accepting in our own bodies the chance to protect our neighbours, brothers and sisters (Philippians 2:3).

Hope in God's grace

This is a time of much uncertainty; our faith and hope will help us get through. When the dominant motivation is self-protection, let us be known by the opposite: love for the other.

There is hope in God's grace; the path forward is together (Isaiah 40:31).

By caring for our brothers and sisters, our neighbours, and even our adversaries, the world will know we are Christians by our love.

By honouring those who have dedicated their lives to caring for the sick, and those finding the answers to the pandemic's complex problems, the church is acting, believing and demonstrating the way of Christ in all things.

This time of disruption is an opportunity for us, as followers of Christ, to let our faith, hope and love be known to everyone.

Keep the faith!

—a Mennonite World Conference education resource prepared by the Steering Committee of the Global Anabaptist Health Network. See below for names of endorsers.

The Global Anabaptist Health Network (GAHN) strives to be a global community of Anabaptist health organizations and professionals who strengthen the witness of the Anabaptist community of faith through mutual encouragement, peer learning, collaboration, and partnerships. We look forward to communicating with you and welcome your feedback.



Connect with us at www.globalanabaptisthealthnetwork.org, on Facebook or send us an email globalanabaptisthealthnetwork@gmail.com.

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