

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025



MENNONITE HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND THE
INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY
OF GLOBAL ANABAPTISM

INTRODUCTION

The 2024-2025 academic year at the Mennonite Historical Library (MHL) and Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism (ISGA) was a decidedly historic one. First, it marked a change in leadership at the MHL. Following the retirement of Joe Springer, after 38 years as curator of the MHL, Eric Bradley began as head librarian in September 2024. The MHL has been blessed by the legacy of Springer's dedication, as well as Bradley's enthusiasm and expertise. In the midst of these changes, we are grateful for Goshen College's faithful and sustained investment in the MHL and to Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) for their long-standing contributions and collaboration in developing the MHL's collection.

The commemoration of 500 years of Anabaptism led to an increase in invitations and public engagements for the MHL and ISGA this year, which made for an invigorating schedule! We also noted an increase in new researchers to the library. MHL and ISGA staff were pleased to be able to share Anabaptist stories and resources in various local, regional, and international settings. Local congregations have used the 500 anniversary to reflect on Anabaptism with their community, and many reached out to the ISGA with requests to share Anabaptist stories from Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

MISSION AND VISION

VISION

To enrich Anabaptist scholarship and communities through global connection and storytelling.

MISSION

To connect all interested users—from local community members to international scholars—with the resources of Goshen College and the Mennonite Historical Library in the pursuit of equitable and accessible source preservation, research, and publication that engages global Anabaptism.

STAFF



Elizabeth Miller,
Director of the ISGA
and MHL

Elizabeth Miller (1.0 FTE) joined Goshen College as the director of the ISGA and MHL in 2022. She connects the mission and vision of the MHL/ISGA with the GC and AMBS communities, church constituency, and academic networks around the globe. She also teaches and advises students within the History Department and the global education curriculum. Elizabeth serves as general editor of the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (GAMEO) and represents the ISGA and the Biblioteca Digital Anabautista in the Comunidad de Instituciones Teológicas Anabautistas (CITA). She also serves Goshen College as a trained Search Advocate and member of the Faculty Development Committee.



Eric Bradley, Head
Librarian of the MHL

Eric Bradley (1.0 FTE) began as head librarian of the MHL in September 2024. Eric is responsible for collection development and preservation, organization and description of collection materials, providing research assistance to patrons, and promotion and outreach that deepens engagement and access. He also serves the Goshen College community as the Core 104 course coordinator and is leading a course redesign for the 2025-2026 academic year. Eric is a member of the Career Advisory Group, Core Curriculum Committee, Safety Committee, and the Conduct Review Board. Eric has served Private Academic Library Network of Indiana (PALNI) as a Reference, Instruction, and Outreach Coordinator since 2014 and is a member of the PALNI Hall of Fame.

STAFF



Tillie Yoder, Associate Librarian of the MHL

Tillie Yoder (.44 FTE) serves as associate librarian of the MHL and is responsible for cataloging new acquisitions. She divides her time with the Good Library at Goshen College, where she is the Instruction, Research, and Acquisitions Librarian. This year Tillie took a course on rare book cataloging, trained a student worker in copy cataloging, and was a search committee member for the new Head of Reference and Instruction at Good Library. She also serves on the Title IX Response Team at Goshen College and the PALNI Cataloging and Metadata Task Force. Tillie co-hosts *Just Plain Wrong*, a podcast surveying Mennonite and Amish topics that makes frequent use of MHL resources; highlights from this year's seasons included interviews with Naomi Clark, Rebecca Coblentz, and Eric Bradley.



Beth Bontrager,
MHL Administrative Assistant

Beth Bontrager (.67 FTE) oversees and manages the MHL's serials collection and provides service to library patrons, including circulation and interlibrary loan. This year, as part of the MHL's transition, she implemented new tracking systems for services and facilitated reorganization of storage spaces. She continued to support the creation of accurate and detailed records for digital files of the Harold S. Bender collection and the Goshen College *Record*. In addition to her work at the MHL, Beth serves as the circulation manager for *Mennonite Quarterly Review* and is an active supporter of music and theater at Goshen College.

STUDENT WORKER-SCHOLARS & VOLUNTEERS

We depend on a fantastic group of Goshen College student worker-scholars and volunteers to keep operations flowing and increase the accessibility of our collection. Thank you!



Aina Lopez, student worker

Aina is a valued part of our team and has recently taken on some copy cataloging of new acquisitions.

Emma Campbell, Maple Scholar

Emma created an interactive map of Goshen College using historical photos from the MHL's collection.



Sue Groff, volunteer

Sue has taken the lead on processing the Atlee and Winifred Beechy collection.

Ervin Beck, volunteer coordinator of the MHL museum collection

Eleanor Kreider, volunteer

Leon Stutzman, volunteer

Sarah Mast, volunteer

Kevin Cota, student worker

RESEARCH SERVICES AND CIRCULATION

586

INDIVIDUAL PATRON VISITS TO THE MHL

654

ITEMS CONSULTED ON-SITE AT THE MHL (OCT-JUNE)

234

ITEMS CHECKED OUT FROM THE MHL

39

INQUIRIES FROM GC OR AMBS STUDENTS

222

REFERENCE REQUESTS (OCT-JUNE)

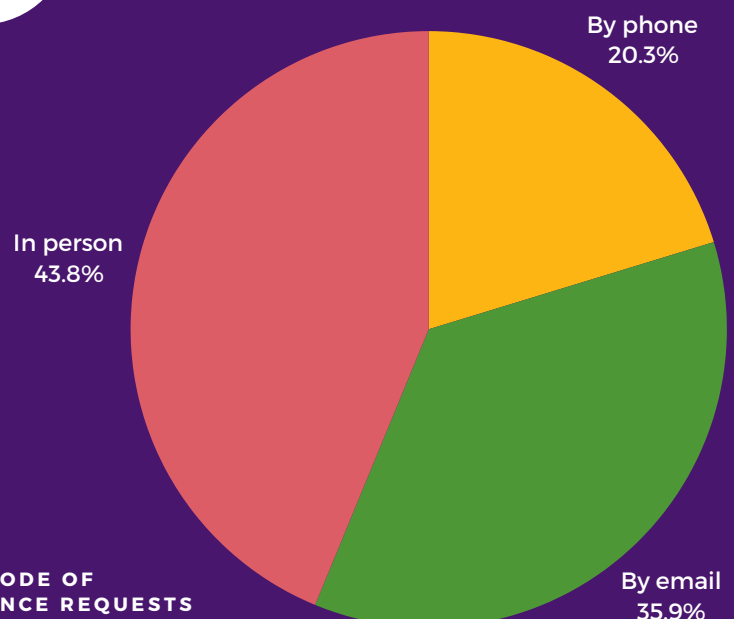


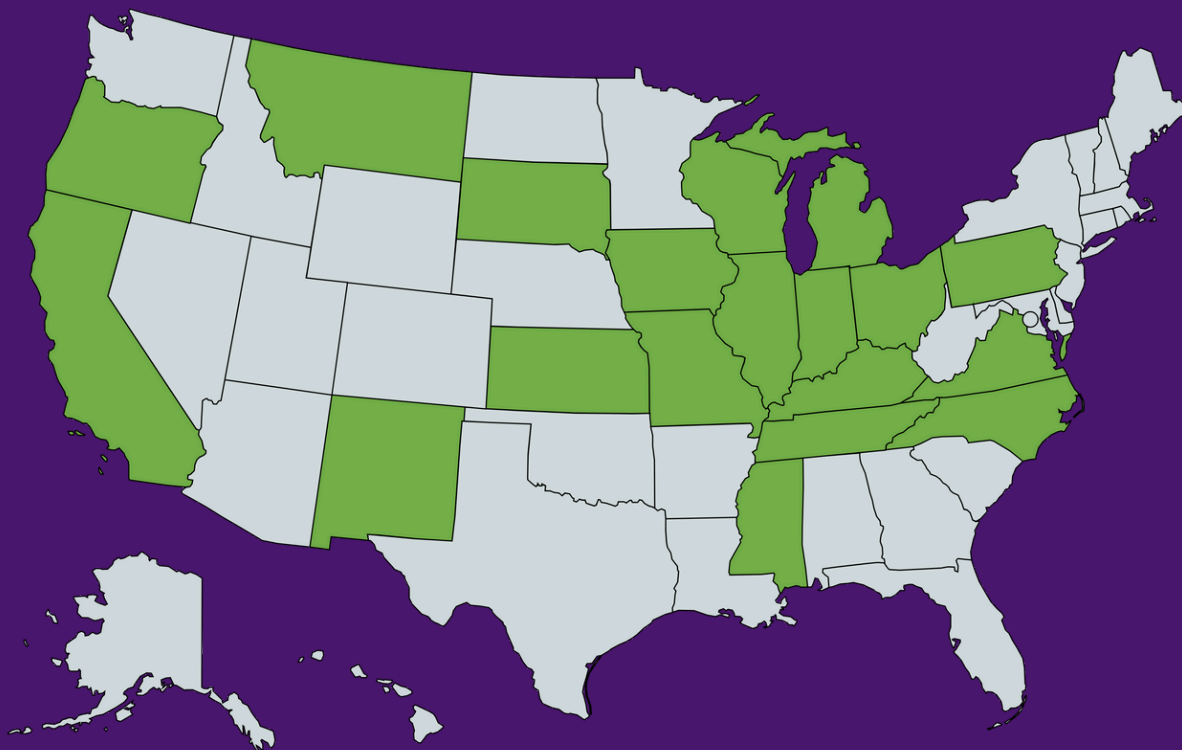
FIG. 1 MODE OF REFERENCE REQUESTS

RESEARCH SERVICES AND CIRCULATION

Below is a small sampling of research topics from graduate researchers and GC students who visited the MHL this year:

- Changes in uniform dress standards in the early 20th-century Mennonite Church
- Economic development of Mennonite colonies in Paraguay, 1940-1980
- 'The Rule of Christ' in the Anabaptist tradition
- Mennonites in Puerto Rico in the mid 20th-century
- Mennonite attitudes toward Dungeons and Dragons
- History of PAX Club at Goshen College
- Daily lives of Amish women
- Family genealogies

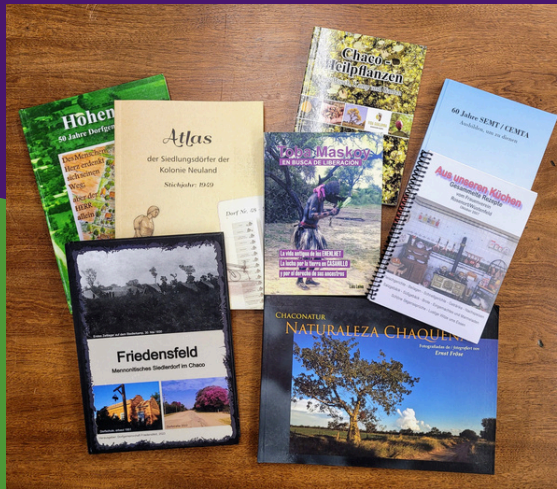
FIG. 2 STATE ORIGIN OF U.S. RESEARCHERS AT THE MHL IN FY 2024-2025



In FY 2024-2025 the MHL received research inquiries from 22 international researchers. Researchers visiting the MHL hailed from 19 different U.S. states, with the largest concentration from the state of Indiana.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

The MHL remains committed to sustaining and growing a comprehensive, research-level collection focused on Anabaptist, Mennonite, Amish, Hutterite, and related groups. As of June 2025, the MHL's collection includes 91,337 items, including books, periodicals, and other materials. We are currently developing clearer workflows for student workers to assist with copy cataloging, which involves using existing records and making necessary modifications.



565

TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS CATALOGED

36%

PERCENTAGE OF TITLES REPRESENTING
ORIGINAL CATALOGING*

*not previously represented in the OCLC database

228

CORRECTIONS OR ENHANCEMENTS TO RECORDS
CREATED BY OTHER LIBRARIES

500 YEARS OF ANABAPTISM

This year we were honored to participate in many spaces that commemorated and reflected on 500 years of Anabaptism.



Sermon and Sunday School class on global Anabaptism, Emmaus Road Mennonite Fellowship, Berne, IN (Oct 6, 2024)

"Anabaptism at 500: A Global Faith," event for junior high and high school youth, Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, Goshen, IN (Oct 27, 2024)

Sunday School class on global Anabaptism, Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, IN (Nov 10, 2024)

Display of historic Anabaptist Bibles, "Anabaptism at 500" Worship Service, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN (Jan 21, 2025)

Sermon and workshop on global Anabaptism, Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, OH (Jan 26, 2025)

Sermon on global Anabaptism, Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN (May 18, 2025)

"Anabaptism and Goshen College: Past, Present and Future", Heritage Circle Gathering, Goshen College (June 18, 2025)

Sermon on global Anabaptism, Hopedale Mennonite Church, Hopedale, IL (June 22, 2025)

PRESENTATIONS, WORKSHOPS & INSTRUCTION

Our resources and storytelling serve Goshen College and Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, as well as communities locally and internationally.



INSTRUCTION

HIST 212: Thinking about the Dead (Fall 2024)
HIST 410: History Senior Seminar (Fall 2024)
BIBL 300: Jesus & the Gospels (Fall 2024)
GLST 251: Cultural Perspectives Chicago to Amish Country (May 2025)

PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

History of the Goshen College Record, Goshen College Homecoming (Oct 5, 2024)

Introduction to the Biblioteca Digital Anabautista, Celebrando 500 años del anabautism: Cusco 2025, Cusco, Peru (Jan 21, 2025)

Church archives webinar with Rubí Barocio Castells (Jan 28, 2025)

History of Goshen College, New Employee Orientation (Feb 4, 2025)

German Immigration to Goshen, Goshen Historical Society quarterly meeting (Mar 20, 2025)

"Telling Library Stories," webinar with Karl Stutzman, AMBS "Third Thursdays" (Mar 20, 2025)

"Sabbath School Panel: Anabaptist Key Scripture Readings," Living the Christian Life: Anabaptist Conference 2025, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI (April 5, 2025)

History and genealogy of Early Elkhart County Anabaptists, Swiss Anabaptist Genealogical Association Annual Meeting (Apr 25-26, 2025)

Anabaptist music history for children, Faith Mennonite Church (May 4, 2025)



GIFTS AND DONATIONS

We are grateful for generous gifts from publishers, authors, and other donors that deepen the MHL's collection. Thank you!

54

**ITEMS RECEIVED FROM
9 PUBLISHERS**

32

**ITEMS RECEIVED FROM
29 AUTHORS**

218

**ITEMS RECEIVED FROM
63 OTHER DONORS**

340

TOTAL ITEMS RECEIVED

MENNONITE-AMISH MUSEUM COMMITTEE

The Amish-Mennonite Museum Committee is a group of community members, GC staff, and students who volunteer their time to bring exhibits interpreting the MHL's museum collection to the public.



Exhibits and Workshops

God's Eye Exhibit: Paintings by Chad Friesen (Sept 8-Nov 17, 2024)

Midwest Fabric Study Group interactive quilt workshop (Nov 23, 2024)

Hutterite Life from 1528: Communal Anabaptists (Mar 9-Nov 16, 2025)



Museum Committee Members for 2024-2025

Ervin Beck
Merv Helmuth
Mary Liechty
Abby Nafziger
Elizabeth Miller
Naomi Klassen
Mireya Alemán

DIGITIZATION PROJECTS

The MHL and ISGA maintain a number of digitized collections, often in partnership with peer institutions. These collections are rooted in the MHL's physical holding, but available in digital form to users on a global scale.



A sampling of new resources added to the Biblioteca Digital Anabautista this year!

PROJECTS

Biblioteca Digital Anabautista: Spanish-language publications in Anabaptist theology, history, and mission

Bibliothèque numérique anabaptiste: French-language publication in Anabaptist theology and history

Digital Mennonite Periodicals: Created and sustained in collaboration with Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Goshen College Record Collection: Digitized catalogue of Goshen College's independent student newspaper

DIGITIZATION PROJECT STATISTICS

12,456: Number of times John Paul Lederach's *Enredos, pleitos y problemas* has been viewed in the Biblioteca Digital Anabautista.

908: Individual issues of Goshen College's Record accessible online.

25: Periodicals available in the Digital Mennonite Periodicals library guide, with the addition of Festival Quarterly last year.

11,868: Number of times Daniel Schipani's *Manual de Psicología Pastoral* has been viewed in the Biblioteca Digital Anabautista.



PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENTS

The MHL and ISGA participate in a number of collaborative efforts to improve access and documentation of Anabaptist-Mennonite sources. We are grateful to count on these long-standing partnerships and for the steadfast commitment of other institutions, archivists, and funding agencies.



Archival collection descriptions from the Goshen College Archives are created by the MHL and stored in the Mennonite Archival Information Database (MAID). The MHL, representing Goshen College, is one of fifteen official members of MAID.

The ISGA, representing the Biblioteca Digital Anabautista, is a member of the Comunidad de Instituciones Teológicas Anabautistas, which seeks to expand online opportunities in theological education from an Anabaptist perspective in Spanish.



GLOBAL
ANABAPTIST
MENNONITE
ENCYCLOPEDIA ONLINE

The ISGA is a member of the Management Board of the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (GAMEO), with Elizabeth Miller serving as the General Editor. GAMEO provides reliable open-source information on Anabaptist topics, individuals, institutions and churches.

Appendix: MHL Quantitative Report 2025-2026

A. EXPENDITURES FOR BOOKS AND NON-BOOK MATERIALS

This year we cataloged 565 titles. We created original records for 203 of these titles and corrected 228 existing records.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Books	\$18,378.07	\$18,920.07	\$14,431.25	\$13,845.32
Digitization*	\$1,381.86	\$183.90	\$3,015.90	\$0
Binding (HFG)	\$1,509.98	\$0.00	\$1,366.73	\$982.85
Binding (inhouse)	\$1,935.55	\$1,654.26	\$1,357.23	\$713.16
Periodicals	\$2,943.44	\$2,913.79	\$2,652.88	\$3,920.35
<i>Total</i>	\$26,148.90	\$23,672.02	\$22,823.99	\$19,461.68

*We recently retitled this category from “microforms” to “digitization.” We very rarely purchase microforms now, and in recent years have used this category for digitization costs. Due to the leadership transition this year, we did not focus on digitization.

B. PERIODICALS RECEIVED

Most electronic serials are received on a complimentary basis, but we count them only under electronic serials. Hard copy serials continue to decline as part of a worldwide trend to digital publications.

Type of Subscription	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Complimentary	356	351	331	332	306
Paid	109	99	113	104	112
Electronic PDF	10	8	8	8	8
Electronic Web-link based	206	219	237	243	248
MQR Exchange	44	35	42	42	47
<i>Total</i>	725	712	731	729	721

C. GIFTS AND DONATIONS

Type of Donor	Number of donors by type	Items donated by type
Publishers	9	54
Authors	29	32
Individual Donors	63	218
	<i>Total number of individual items donated</i>	320

D. GROWTH OF THE COLLECTION

Counts are generated by the number of barcoded items in our online catalog, except for an estimated number of periodical volumes (only a small percentage of our periodicals have barcodes).

	Tally June 2024	Tally June 2025	Change
Books & Pamphlets	67,091	68,281	1,190
Papers/Articles	5,652	5,679	27
Periodicals (est. vols.)	13,991	14,146	155
Microforms	1823	1822	-1
Audiovisual	1,329	1329	0
Other*	87	80	-7
<i>Total</i>	89,973	91,337	1,364

*Indicates miscellaneous, non-book items (e.g. maps) not shelved with books. This does not include artifacts in the museum collection.

E. COMPARATIVE TABLES OF HOLDINGS

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Books/Pamphlets	64,880	65,546	66,340	67,091	68,281
Papers/Articles	5,638	5,638	5,639	5,652	5,679
Periodicals	13,490	13670	13,670	13,991	14,146
<i>Total</i>	84,008	84,854	85,649	86,734	88,106

F. CIRCULATION AND REFERENCE SERVICES

Beginning in October 2024, we piloted a new system for gathering usage and service statistics. New categories for service statistics will show “not available” for previous years and only reflect data gathered since October, rather than our usual time frame of July through June.

Circulated Items

	Book Check Outs	Books Used Internally	Non-book items*
2020/21	354	n/a	286
2021/22	347	n/a	788
2022/23	322	n/a	131
2023/24	262	n/a	623
2024/25	264	453	1069

*Non-book items include serials, AV materials, microfilms, maps, museum items, vertical file and papers/articles.

Reference Services

Reference Inquiries	Time Spent	Archive Boxes*	Digital Scans
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	40	n/a
261	153 hours	31	4,816

*Archive boxes refers to the number of boxes retrieved from the Goshen College Archives in the fulfillment of reference inquiries. The MHL responds to reference inquiries for the GC Archives.

Circulating Loans by User Type

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Goshen College Student	57	55	72	55	58
Goshen College Employee	139	146	112	99	85
AMBS Student	6	2	4	9	9
AMBS Employee	8	3	14	16	4
Interlibrary Loans	115	70	63	50	77*
Other Patrons	29	71	57	33	38
<i>Total</i>	354	347	322	262	264

*The MHL declined an additional 489 requests for interlibrary loans due to MHL policies on the loan of the items requested or because the items were in use.

G. NEW RESEARCHERS REGISTERED BY STATE OR PROVINCE

New researchers are those who registered a new research project with the MHL. These numbers do not include researchers of ongoing projects or patrons seeking to answer non-project-related research questions. Numbers are exclusive of persons associated with Goshen College and AMBS.

Indiana	16	Iowa	1
Michigan	1	California	1
Illinois	2	Missouri	1
Montana	1	Switzerland	1
Maryland	1	Ecuador	1
		British Columbia	1
Total New Researchers Registered:		27	(17 previous year)