



ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

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

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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.

INTRODUCTION

This year the MHL and ISGA hosted a number of events that gathered people together to celebrate, reflect, and collaborate for new futures in Anabaptist scholarship. Particularly memorable were the closing celebration for the Mennonite Historical Society in March and a symposium in May focused on integrating Mennonite special collections in undergraduate and graduate curriculums. The Amish-Mennonite Exhibit Committee hosted another excellent and well-attended exhibit that was widely covered in the local press.

Although staff from the MHL and ISGA continued to contribute to commemorations of the 500th year of Anabaptism through the end of 2025, the second half of the fiscal year was focused on new initiatives and projects. Some of these can now be accessed online, like the fully digitized collection of the [*Goshen College Bulletin*](#) and an [interactive map](#) of the Guatemala and Brazil interviews in the Jaime Prieto Interview Collection. Other projects were focused on operations within the library for more efficient and effective operations, including an [updated collection development policy](#) that reflects current practices and strengths within the MHL's collection. Under the direction of MHL and ISGA staff, student workers and volunteers have made significant contributions to digital research tools, cataloging workflow, and archival inventory.

At the close of another fiscal year, we remain grateful for Goshen College's sustained investment in the MHL and the ISGA and to Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) for their long-standing contributions and collaboration in developing the MHL's collection.



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. In this role, she 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 is also assistant professor of history at Goshen College. On campus, she coordinates campus convocations and serves on the Faculty Development Committee and Core Revision Committee.



Eric Bradley,
Head Librarian
of the MHL

Eric Bradley (1.0 FTE) began as head librarian of the MHL in 2024. Eric is responsible for daily operations of the MHL including collection development and preservation; organization and description of collection materials; providing research assistance to patrons; and promotion and outreach that deepens engagement and access. In 2026 he was awarded a Wabash Center grant which brought Mennonite Special Collections staff across North America together for a two day symposium. He serves the GC community as the Core 104 course coordinator, a Title VI/IX decision-maker, and as a member of the Career Advisory Group, Core Curriculum Committee, Safety Committee, and Conduct Review Board.

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 continued work on PALNI's Cataloging and Metadata Task Force, which has been kept busy by the extended systems migration. She has also taken on the volunteer role of Title IX Deputy Coordinator and served as a hearing officer for a Title VI case. Tillie and her co-hosts have wrapped up an eighth season of Just Plain Wrong, a podcast surveying Mennonite and Amish topics that makes frequent use of MHL resources. A highlight of the summer was participating in the Mennonite Special Collections Symposium, which allowed for brainstorming and socializing with colleagues across North America. She looks forward to working with returning student workers to streamline cataloging.



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 migration from one library platform to another, she has tracked new processes for the next platform. 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. She has also spent many hours on the Goshen College photo digitization and documentation project for MAID. In addition to her work at the MHL, Beth has served as the circulation manager for Mennonite Quarterly Review (MQR). During the transition and closure of MQR, she provided crucial procedural, logistical, and historical support. She is an active supporter of music, lecture and theater events 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!

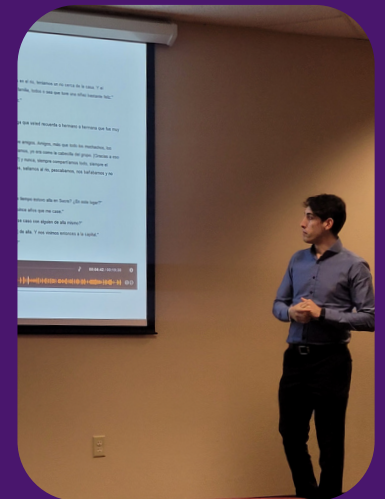


Josh Chupp, student worker

Josh joined the MHL at the beginning of the 2025-2026 academic year and has been an enthusiastic and dedicated team member.

Adrian Candia Ayllon, Maple Scholar

Adrian used a variety of digital tools to further document the metadata of interviews in the Jaime Prieto Interview Collection.



Don Kempf, volunteer

Don has helped to clean up the physical catalog records of the MHL, so that there is better systematization across digital and physical records.

Ervin Beck, volunteer coordinator of the MHL museum collection

Eleanor Kreider, volunteer

Leon Stutzman, volunteer

Sue Groff, volunteer

Bethlehem Getahun, student worker

Aina Lopez Mas, student worker

RESEARCH SERVICES AND CIRCULATION

332

INDIVIDUAL PATRON VISITS TO THE MHL

1,762

ITEMS CONSULTED ON-SITE AT THE MHL

271

ITEMS CHECKED OUT FROM THE MHL

38

INQUIRIES FROM GC OR AMBS STUDENTS

260

REFERENCE REQUESTS

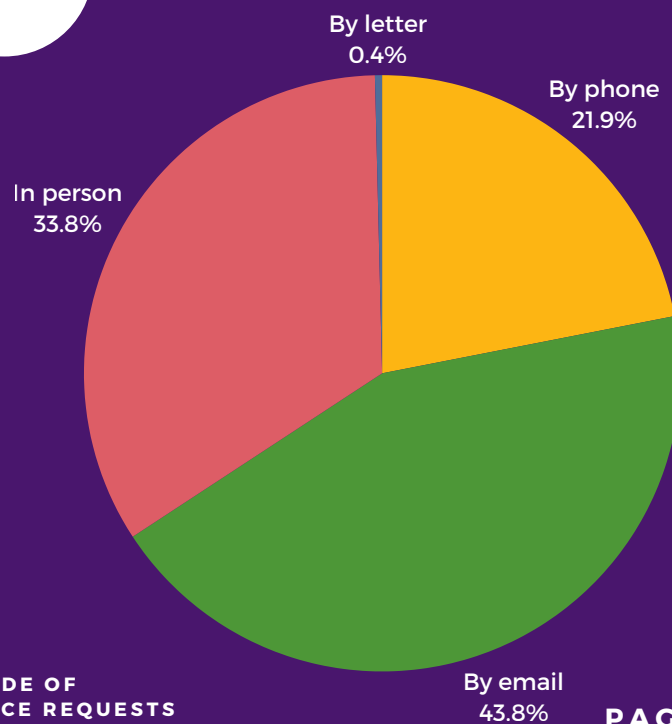


FIG. 1 MODE OF REFERENCE REQUESTS

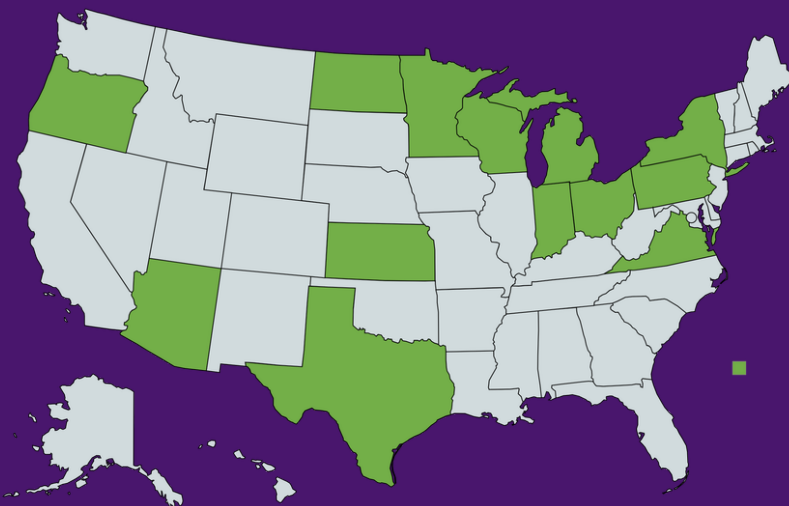
RESEARCH SERVICES AND CIRCULATION

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

- Amish education, healthcare practices, and gender roles
- Mennonite peace stance efforts throughout the 20th century
- Genealogical inquiries
- Guy F. Hershberger papers from the GC Archives
- History of Goshen College yearbooks
- Contemporary Canadian Mennonite authors



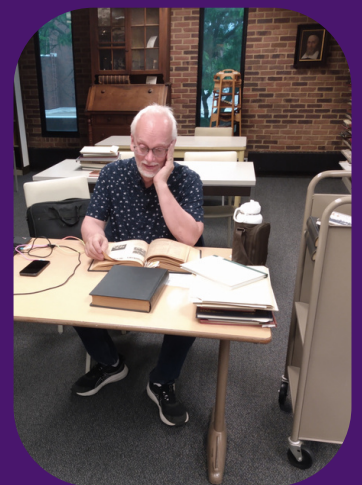
FIG. 2 STATE ORIGIN OF U.S. RESEARCHERS AT THE MHL IN FY 2025-2026



Researchers visiting the MHL hailed from 13 different U.S. states and 2 Canadian provinces, with the largest concentration from the state of Indiana. In addition, the MHL received 16 international research requests.

Timothy Epp, Professor of Sociology at Redeemer University in Ontario, received a Schafer-Friesen Research Fellowship to conduct onsite research at the MHL in June 2026. The fellowship was made possible by a generous endowment gift from Abraham and Geraldine Schafer Friesen.

Epp's project, tentatively titled "Blackness, whiteness, and the Anabaptist imagined community in printed mission," explores how Anabaptist groups conceptualized race during a pivotal era in North American history.



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 2026, the MHL's collection includes 91,900 items, including books, periodicals, and other materials.

In April 2026, Eric Bradley visited several peer historical libraries and heritage centers in the Shenandoah Valley region while attending the Swiss Anabaptist Genealogical Association (SAGA) meeting. He used the opportunity to connect in person with peers at other institutions, as well as observe different collection policies and procedures that could be used at the MHL.

The MHL adopted a new collection development policy that underscores the MHL's continued commitment to comprehensive collecting, with greater clarity on digital collections and global materials. The new policy can be accessed via the MHL's website.



Students enrolled in the Korea-based cohort of Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary's Master of Arts: Theology and Global Anabaptism visited the Korean-language collection at the Mennonite Historical Library in May.

381

TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS CATALOGED

52%

**PERCENTAGE OF TITLES REPRESENTING
ORIGINAL CATALOGING***

*not previously represented in the OCLC database

536

**CORRECTIONS OR ENHANCEMENTS TO RECORDS
CREATED BY OTHER LIBRARIES**

MENNONITE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS SYMPOSIUM

The MHL was honored to received a grant from Wabash Center to host a symposium entitled “Integrating Special Collections into Dynamic Christian Undergraduate and Graduate Education” on Goshen College’s campus in May 2026.



Eight special collections librarians and faculty from Mennonite-affiliated schools of higher education participated in the two-day symposium. Participants shared experiences of integrating special collections into curriculum, developed plans for collaboration in the future, and discussed the role of Artificial Intelligence in special collections work.

At the Mennonite Higher Education Conference immediately following the symposium, symposium participants Simone Horst, Eric Bradley, Conrad Stoesz, and Carrie Phillips delivered a panel presentation at the focused on “Mennonite Special Collections in the Diversified Campus.”



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 2025)

HIST 410: History Senior Seminar (Fall 2025)

PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

“The Future(s) of Anabaptist History: Global Perspectives and Methods,” plenary address at Early Anabaptism in Global Perspective: Past, Present, and Future at 500 Years, Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA, July 24, 2025.

“History of Goshen College and the Mennonite Church.” Presentation to new Goshen College employees, Goshen College, Goshen, IN, August 7, 2025.

“Bearing Witness,” Mennonite Church of Normal, annual church retreat, Camp Menno Haven, Tilsuilwa, IL, Aug 10, 2025.

“Latin American Anabaptist Theological Construction in the late 20th Century,” Lecture at Anabaptism at 500: origins, encounters, and legacies, Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI, Sept 19, 2025.

“Anabaptism Goes Global,” Illinois Mennonite Genealogical Society, Metamora, IL, Oct 18, 2025.

“Mosaicos y flujos multidireccionales: la construcción teológica entre comunidades anabautistas latinoamericanas a finales del siglo 20,” online presentation at Coloquio 2025: “La Reforma Radical, pasado y presente,” hosted by the Seminario Teológico Bautista, Santiago, Chile, Oct 27, 2025.

“Mennonite Special Collections in the Diversified Campus,” Mennonite Higher Education Conference at Goshen, IN, May 28, 2026.

“AI in Action: Practical Applications & Ethical Integration in Libraries,” Association of Christian Librarians Annual Conference, Grace College, Winona Lake, IN, June 9, 2026.



GIFTS AND DONATIONS

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

42

**ITEMS RECEIVED FROM
8 PUBLISHERS**

20

**ITEMS RECEIVED FROM
13 AUTHORS**

457

**ITEMS RECEIVED FROM
29 OTHER DONORS**

519

TOTAL ITEMS RECEIVED

MENNONITE-AMISH EXHIBIT COMMITTEE

The Amish-Mennonite Exhibit 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

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

Northern Indiana Amish Quilts from the Rebecca Haarer Collection

(Mar 8-Oct 8, 2026)

Gratitude to Ervin Beck



This was Ervin Beck's last year as chair of the Amish-Mennonite Exhibit Committee, after more than 40 years of faithful leadership. Since 1985 when the committee was founded, Ervin has curated nearly 60 exhibits. His love of material culture and gifts in visual storytelling have been a tremendous gift to Goshen College, to the MHL, and to the broader community.

Museum Committee Members for 2025-2026: Ervin Beck, Merv Helmuth, Mary Liechty, Abby Nafziger, Elizabeth Miller, Eric Bradley, Josh Chupp, 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 holdings, but available in digital form to users on a global scale.



This year the MHL digitized the full collection of the Goshen College Bulletin, now searchable online.

PROJECTS

[Biblioteca Digital Anabautista](#): Spanish-language publications in Anabaptist theology, history, and mission

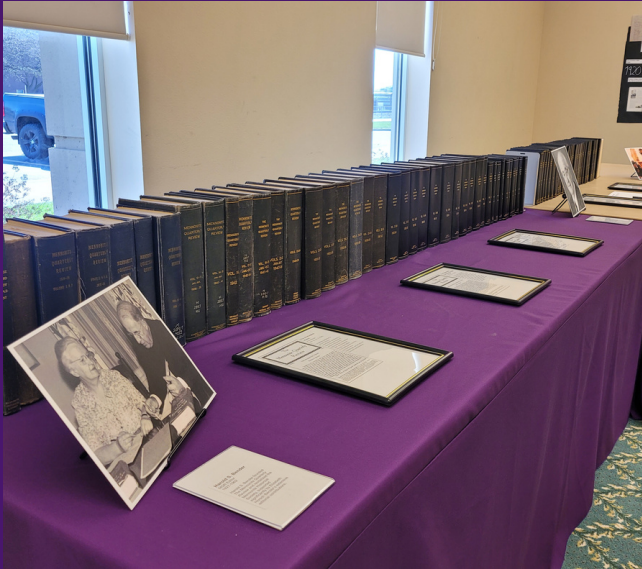
[Bibliothèque numérique anabaptiste](#): French-language publications in Anabaptist theology and history

[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

[Goshen College Bulletin](#): Digitized collection of Goshen College's Bulletin, dating back to 1896.

CLOSURE OF MENNONITE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



In March, the MHL and the ISGA hosted a celebration to mark the closure of the Mennonite Historical Society (MHS). The MHS was founded at Goshen College in 1922 and eventually grew to become an independent society with members from across North America and Europe. Due to declining engagement over the last number of years, MHS members voted in late 2025 to dissolve the society. Although the MHL supported the activities of MHS for many years, it is independent of the society and continues its normal operations.

The March event was a chance to celebrate the long legacy of the society and dream about new futures for Anabaptist scholarship. Participants enjoyed an opening lecture from Dr. John D. Roth, a panel of MHS editors and leaders, and discussions in table groups. MHL staff also prepared a display of the entire collection of *Mennonite Quarterly Review* volumes, highlighting influential articles published in the journal.

A number of institutions have stepped up to continue the MHS's publications in new formats. The ISGA will continue MHS's scholarly books series, the *Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History*, with a more global focus. *Mennonite Quarterly Review* has joined with *Conrad Grebel Review* to form a new open-access journal published at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, entitled *Anabaptist and Mennonite Studies Review*. Bluffton University (Bluffton, Oh.) will carry on publication of the C. Henry Smith Series, now called the C. Henry Smith Series in Anabaptist Culture and Thought.

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.