

## Christ at the Coffee Shop: Discussion

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### Introduction

In the spring of 2015, Pastor Kassa Lemma of Rehoboth Evangelical Church in Toronto invited Mennonite Church Canada Executive Director Willard Metzger to speak at an Ethiopian Evangelistic conference. Metzger admits that his first response was hesitant. “We don’t do that anymore as Mennonites.” But he says the more he thought about it, the more he realized that we do engage in evangelism—we just go about it in different ways.

Evangelism—what historic Mennonite congregations might refer to as Christian witness—is at the heart of church ministry. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus defines our call to mission clearly: we are to make disciples around the world and teach others the Jesus way.

In a society where different expressions of culture, life and religion grow increasingly apparent, questions arise about how to approach our central mission respectfully and meaningfully. It’s interesting to note that although Jesus calls us to make disciples of all nations, he doesn’t offer specifics about how to go about it. That leaves plenty of room for flexibility.

Just as people around the globe relate to one another through a wide range of languages, cultures and religious

practices, the way they share religious perspectives and faith will also vary. There is no one right way to share our faith, just as there no single kind of recipient for the message.

Mennonite Church Canada continues to welcome new Canadians whose ideas about Christian witness and evangelism differ from those of historic Mennonite congregations. Let’s talk about those differences and explore the advantages and disadvantages of each. The following questions are designed to initiate a conversation about our call to mission and the variety of ways we approach it..

### Questions

1. ***What ideas or images do the terms “evangelism” and “Christian witness” spark for you?***
  - a. *Are there some ideas that you find more acceptable than others?*
  - b. *If so, why?*
2. ***Sometimes people who live in a North American context shy away from a more charismatic or outspoken approach to evangelism. Why do you think that might be so?***
3. ***Mark 15: 15-16 invites us to “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned.” How does that inform your sense of urgency about sharing the gospel?***
4. ***Has anyone ever approached you with an invitation to salvation and the importance of having a relationship with God? If so:***
  - a. *What kind of approach did they take?*
  - b. *How did that make you feel?*
  - c. *How did you react?*
5. ***How might you describe different approaches to sharing the good news of the gospel, and the advantages and disadvantages of each?***
6. ***What would be the most comfortable way for you share your faith with someone else?***