



MOSAIC
mennonite
conference

REFLECT

SPRING 2022



Mary Nitzsche, Associate Executive Minister for Mosaic Conference, retired from her executive role on January 31. Marta Castillo stepped into the Associate Executive Minister role on February 1.

Out of the Clear Blue

BY SUE CONRAD HOWES

Mary Nitzsche retired from her executive role as Associate Executive Minister for Mosaic Conference on January 31; she will remain working as a Leadership Minister for three Mosaic churches.


Nitzsche's journey to Mosaic Conference leadership has been full of unexpected calls, adjustments, joy, and fulfillment, including teaching in a one-room schoolhouse, motherhood, and seminary.

Mary served as Regional Minister for Ohio Conference and then joined the pastoral team at Blooming Glen (PA) Mennonite Church for ten years, assuming she would retire there.

But Steve Kriss, Executive Minister of Franconia Conference, called with an invitation to Mary to consider the role of Associate Executive Minister, starting in July 2017. "Mary's pastoral gifts, deep wisdom, attention both to healthy relationships and to process are gifts that have strengthened our Conference communities in these last five years," Kriss reflected on that call.

Mary shared, "I've always been surprised with the calls that come to me out of the clear blue. It seemed like others noticed my gifts and had confidence in my skills before I did."

During her years as Associate Executive Minister, Nitzsche has worked often with Conference policies. "Policies are really important, but they have to be flexible and backed up with relationship," Nitzsche noted. As her relationships grew, she realized the importance of understanding other cultures. What is normative and appropriate for one group of people may not translate to another. As a result, Nitzsche invested a lot of energy into being more culturally sensitive. "I've learned to pay attention to those things and depend on people from other cultures to help shape those processes and policies. It is very rewarding and has enriched my life."

 [Read full article here.](#)

Marta Castillo Becomes Associate Executive Minister



Marta Castillo began as Associate Executive Minister for Mosaic Conference on February 1, following Mary Nitzsche's retirement. "Marta has a great awareness of cultural diversity and speaks three Mosaic languages," Nitzsche explained. "She'll be wonderful in this role."

Prior to February 1, Marta served as a Leadership Minister for Mosaic Conference and gave leadership to the Conference's Intercultural Team. Marta is a member of Nueva Vida Norristown (PA) New Life.

 [Read full article here.](#)

Nitzsche will continue to relate closely to the Board and will continue to serve as a Leadership Minister for three Mosaic churches.



After their “lab” at Philadelphia Praise Center in November, students in the Mosaic Institute Preaching and Teaching mini-course on cultural context were invited to the unveiling of a new mural celebrating Indonesian immigrants in South Philadelphia. Pictured: (L-R) Laura Alderfer (Salford), Dan Blount (Ripple), Charlene Smalls (Ripple), Brooke Martin (Salford), Emily Ralph Servant (Mosaic Institute Director).



Preaching and Teaching Mini-Classes

Mosaic Institute launched its first set of mini-courses this fall. Classes were offered from November through May and focused on building skills in preaching and teaching. On each of the four weekends, guest instructors led workshops on that month’s topic, followed by a Sunday morning “lab” at a southeast Pennsylvania church. Participants listened to the morning’s sermon and/or attended Sunday school and met with the pastor to learn about their process for preparation and study. The classes were attended by pastors and lay leaders and covered topics including adapting for context, Bible study, boundaries in sermon illustrations, and biblical storytelling. Stay tuned for details about the next set of mini-courses focused on pastoral care for this fall!

 [Mosaic Institute](https://mosaicinstitute.org)



Mosaic Leadership Minister Josh Meyer leads a workshop on guidelines for interpreting the Bible at January’s Preaching and Teaching mini-course.

Mosaic’s Florida Pastors Gather Together



On January 15, 2021, Mosaic’s Florida Pastors’ gathering was held in Sarasota, FL, at Seguidores de Cristo Church. The quarterly pastors’ meeting was led by Leadership Minister Marco Güete (far right in photo). Participants also had the opportunity to attend the “Healthy Boundaries” training, required of all Mosaic credentialed leaders, led by Marisa Smucker (far right, 2nd to the end) of Mennonite Mission Network.

Nations and Generations



The Mosaic Intercultural Team hosted annual Nations & Generations gatherings for Spanish-speaking, English-speaking, and Indonesian-speaking persons of the global majority within Mosaic Conference. The gatherings, held virtually in April, invited participants to discuss the ongoing work of mutual transformation, especially focusing on how Mosaic Conference can continue to build honest relationships with all its members.

2 Celebrating years as Mosaic!

Mosaic Mennonite Conference celebrated its 2nd anniversary as a Conference on February 1, 2022. While the new name, "Mosaic Mennonite Conference," wasn't announced until Pentecost 2020, the reconciliation and re-joining of Eastern District Mennonite Conference and Franconia Mennonite Conference became official on February 1, 2022. We celebrate the opportunities that our new Conference has given us as we continue to do the work of God's Kingdom now and in the years to come.

Each credentialed leader in Mosaic Conference received a journal (from Ten Thousand Villages, pictured left) and a pen, as a gift from the Conference to commemorate this anniversary.

SAVE THE DATE!

Pentecost Worship Service



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2022, 7:30PM ET / 4:30 PM PT

Plan now to join the annual Mosaic Pentecost Worship service virtually with a watch party at your congregation or in your home. Participants from Mosaic congregations across the country will join in our time of worship. More details will be coming, but please plan now to join in this Conference-wide worship event on Wednesday, June 15.

Women of Remarkable Faith Gather

BY DOROTHY BEIDLER

We were excited and grateful to meet in person for this first gathering of Mosaic Mennonite Women on September 25, 2021, at Souderton (PA) Mennonite Church. We met around tables, singing, praying, talking, doing a craft, sharing a meal, and listening to an inspiring message by Pastor Charlene Smalls of Ripple (Allentown, PA) congregation.

Pastor Charlene spoke on the Conference's theme, "Women of Remarkable Faith and the Issues they Face." A Zoom option was offered with Indonesian and Spanish interpretations available.

Women from across Mosaic Conference gathered for a women's conference at Souderton (PA) Mennonite Church in September 2021.



Pastor Charlene shared a smorgasbord of insights, affirmations, and challenges. She read Proverbs 31 and highlighted the stories of Ruth and Deborah who were not perfect, but faithful followers and leaders. Pastor Charlene looked over the true mosaic of women present and affirmed our oneness and our uniqueness. What do we all have in common? We are all created in the image of God and fundamentally connected with God and each other. It's about relationship.



[Read the full reflection here.](#)



REFLECT is the triannual newsletter of Mosaic Mennonite Conference. For more information, contact us at:
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