

# CONFRONTING CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM IN OUR CHURCHES

NOVEMBER 4, 2022

A conference for Brethren in Christ pastors and lay people

Sponsored by the E. Morris and Leone Sider Institute for Anabaptist, Pietist and Wesleyan Studies at Messiah University

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER



**Dr. Drew Strait** teaches the New Testament at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Indiana). His writing focuses on peace and peacemaking in early Christianity, along with early Christian negotiation of political idolatry. He served as a pastor at Living Water Community Church, a Mennonite Church USA congregation in Chicago and as an elder at Peace Fellowship in Washington, D.C. before relocating to Indiana. Strait is married and has three children.

**As Brethren in Christ, we believe that “loyalty to Christ and the church, which is trans-national, takes precedence over loyalty to the state.”**

That conviction is increasingly difficult to declare and live out in today’s political and cultural context. Many Christians believe that the United States was founded as a “Christian nation” and that America’s ongoing prosperity requires preservation of this covenantal relationship. For pastors and church leaders, this kind of Christian nationalism constitutes idolatry, creates barriers to meaningful discipleship and threatens the integrity of the church’s witness in the world.

This study conference seeks to address the challenges of ministering effectively in the midst of Christian nationalism. It will address such questions as:

- What is Christian nationalism, and why is it a problem for U.S. churches today?
- What biblical and theological resources exist for pastors and other church leaders who want to resist the influence of Christian nationalism in their congregations?
- What are pastors and other church leaders already doing to address this issue? What more can be done?

## CONFERENCE DETAILS

The conference “Confronting Christian Nationalism in Our Churches” is sponsored by the E. Morris and Leone Sider Institute for Anabaptist, Pietist and Wesleyan Studies at Messiah University. It will provide Brethren in Christ pastors, lay people and friends from related denominations with the opportunity to reflect on important issues in theologically informed ways.

The conference will be held on **Nov. 4, 2022**, at Hostetter Chapel.

The in-person conference requires a registration fee of \$30, which covers a catered lunch and administrative costs related to the event.

The virtual option requires a registration fee of \$10, which covers administrative costs related to the event.

*Attending this conference either in person or online is an opportunity to fulfill one Lifelong BIC Learning credit, an expectation for all Brethren in Christ U.S. ministers within each renewal period.*



For more information, contact the Sider Institute at [siderinstitute@messiah.edu](mailto:siderinstitute@messiah.edu), or visit the Sider Institute website at [messiah.edu/siderinstitute](http://messiah.edu/siderinstitute).

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## REGISTRATION CARD

This conference is open to all interested people.  
Registration deadline is **Friday, October 24, 2022**.

### REGISTER ONLINE

Visit [messiah.edu/siderinstitute](http://messiah.edu/siderinstitute) and click on the “Register” link.

### REGISTER VIA POSTAL MAIL

Send this form, along with the registration fee, to The Sider Institute, One University Avenue, Messiah University, Mechanicsburg PA 17055. Make checks payable to “Messiah University.”

Name(s) (required) \_\_\_\_\_

Address (required) \_\_\_\_\_

Email (required) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (optional) ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Church affiliation (required) \_\_\_\_\_

### For Brethren in Christ pastors:

Would you like Lifelong BIC Learning credit for attending?  Yes  No

I plan to attend:  In Person (\$30 registration fee)  Virtually (\$10 registration fee)

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## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE *(All times in Eastern Standard Time)*



NOVEMBER 4, 2022 • HOSTETTER CHAPEL

8:30 a.m. Registration

9 a.m. Words of Welcome & Opening Prayer

9:15 a.m. **Session #1: What Is Christian Nationalism and Why Is It a Problem? – Dr. Drew Strait**

*This session will provide a definition of Christian nationalism; offer background on its development and current impact or influence in American churches; and engage biblical and theological reflection to explain the political idolatry of Christian nationalism and its threat to the church's integrity and witness in the world.*

10:15 a.m. Refreshment Break

10:30 a.m. **Session #2: Perspectives on Christian Nationalism Panel Discussion**

*This session will invite several Brethren in Christ to reflect on the conference theme from particular vantage points—as a local church pastor, a missionary, an academic and a “convert” from Christian nationalism.*

11:45 a.m. Lunch

1 p.m. **Session #3: A Pastoral Approach to Resisting Christian Nationalism's Influence in the Local Congregation- Dr. Drew Strait**

*This session will offer biblically and theologically informed strategies for and approaches to resisting the influence of Christian nationalism in our congregations.*

2 p.m. **Session #4: Table Discussions**

*This session will offer a facilitated opportunity to reflect on and discuss the conference theme and sessions in both small and large groups.*

2:30 p.m. Closing Reflections

3 p.m. Dismissal



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Address Service Requested

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One University Ave  
Mechanicsburg PA 17055

