

Memorial Service

Edgar J. Metzler

November 12, 1929 - May 12, 2021

June 12, 2021 1:00 ET

Hosted by Assembly Mennonite Church,
Goshen, Indiana US
(Zoom)



Slideshow with Vivaldi's Four Seasons

Welcome Anna Yoder Schlabach, Pastor

Great is thy faithfulness VT 419

Remembrances Jay Metzler - brother, speaking for siblings Carl, Alice and Joyce
John Lapp - friend and colleague

In Christ there is no East or West

Remembrance Ed Martin - friend and colleague

For Edgar Barbara and Stanley Yake, Myrtis and Byron Yake - in-laws

Wild Geese by Mary Oliver Peter Metzler - son, and Kathryn Rowedder

Nothing is lost on the breath of God VT 653

Romans 8:38-39 Phil Metzler - son

Christ We do all Adore Thee VT 138

Meditation Mary Lehman Yoder, Pastor Emerita

Now thank we all our God VT 114

Benediction Anna Yoder Schlabach, Pastor

Oh, When the Saints Go Marching In

Sharing Time

Thank you to all the people who helped with this service, those named above and others: Zoom tech host Pastor Scott Coulter, Song Leader Jeff Martin, and singers: Leon Bauman, Char Yutzy, Wilma Harder, Barb Swartley, Mary Amstutz Gilbert, Glenn Gilbert, Anna Yoder Schlabach, Kathy Meyer Reimer, Lois Kaufmann, Jim Kaufmann, Barb Hassan, Ruth Ann Gardner, Patricia Roth Nuyken, Rebecca Dengler Kaufman.

OBITUARY

Read online and SIGN GUESTBOOK at:

<https://www.yoderculpfuneralhome.com/obituary/edgar-metzler>

Edgar James Metzler November 12, 1929 - May 12, 2021

For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38-39

Edgar James Metzler, a peacemaker who championed justice and non-violence throughout his life of ecumenical service and international development work, died on May 12, 2021 at Goshen Hospital, Indiana, at age 91. He was a resident of Greencroft Healthcare.

Ed was born November 12, 1929, in Masontown, Pennsylvania, to Alta Mae and A.J. (Abram Jacob) Metzler, the second of six children. His father was a Bishop in the Mennonite Church and manager of the Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale, PA. Numerous guests from churches throughout the world were welcomed to their dinner table for fellowship and stimulating conversations.

During his high school years at Eastern Mennonite High School (VA), at age 16, Ed joined the "Seagoing Cowboys" on a UN Relief and Rehabilitation ship carrying horses to war-torn Poland, an adventure that fueled his love of world travel and learning. He graduated in 1948, and joined a voluntary service unit at a hospital in Kansas City for the summer before going to Goshen College (IN) where he was active in the Peace Society, and attended the Conference on the Church and War (Detroit, 1950), where he was inspired to learn about Gandhi's demonstration of nonviolent action and reconciliation.

In 1951, he married Ethel Yake, whose five siblings became a dearly loved second family. Michael was born in 1952, and in 1953 Ed received his BA in Psychology.

In 1954, Ed and Ethel moved to Washington, DC, where Mary was born. Ed's ecumenical horizons broadened in his work as Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) representative at the National Service Board for Religious Objectors assisting conscientious objectors from 40 faith groups and monitoring government actions affecting freedom of conscience.

Ed was invited to become the pastor of the First Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. He received his Bachelor of Divinity from Goshen College Biblical Seminary, and was ordained in 1957. Peter was born in 1958, followed by Philip in 1959, the same year the *Gospel Herald* published Ed's article advocating civil disobedience by non-registration for the draft.

In 1962, the family moved to Akron, PA. In his capacity as Executive Secretary of the MCC Peace Section, Ed was an active witness to the federal government on issues of

peacemaking and non-violence, and traveled to India and Russia on short-term assignments. He became a participant in the civil rights movement, sharing his beliefs with his young children by taking them to protest marches in Lancaster, PA, and Washington, DC.

Ed's pamphlet, *Let's Talk About Extremism*, (published by Herald Press in 1968) was recently recognized as relevant to the current societal polarization and republished at <https://anabaptisthistorians.org/2021/01/07/edgar-metzlers-lets-talk-about-extremism-1968/>

After a year of graduate studies in International Service at American University in Washington, DC, Ed accepted an invitation to join the Peace Corps as a program director in Nepal, and in 1967, moved the family to Kathmandu to begin a whole new life of cross-cultural immersion. In addition to working with the Nepali government and PC volunteers to implement educational and agricultural programs, Ed found his expertise in conscientious objection in high demand by the volunteers.

For the next 7 years, Ed worked as a Peace Corps director and trainer in Nepal, India (Kolkata), Thailand, and Iran, meeting complex situations with optimism and aplomb, and embracing the challenges and rewards of diversity. As family members dispersed to boarding schools and travel, he kept them all in touch through densely typed air mail forms with numbered paragraphs. In their extensive travels, Ethel and Ed developed friendships everywhere, and enjoyed finding places where Ethel could swim and Ed play tennis, golf, or read the newspaper, or take photographs that revealed his aesthetic sensibility.

Returning stateside in 1974, Ed and Ethel bought a house in Goshen, IN, where Ed taught Ethics and Political Science as a visiting professor at Goshen College, Ethel started graduate studies in counseling, and they became early members of Assembly Mennonite Church, hosting small groups and mentoring young adults.

Over the next years, Ed applied his administrative skills in numerous Mennonite Church contexts, serving as Director of Addictions Services for Oaklawn Psychiatric Center, then as Director of Peace and Justice Concerns for the Mennonite Church, Director of Menn. Board of Congregational Ministries, and Coordinator of New Call to Peacemaking (a cooperative effort of historic Peace Churches). He was the chair of the first steering committee of Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT). Ed traveled to Asia on short term assignments with MCC, and served briefly as interim director of the Washington office. Ed learned to sail a 24 foot O'Day and enjoyed trips with Ethel to Lake Michigan to sail, swim and walk the beach. He played tennis and often commuted to work in Elkhart on his bicycle.

A prolific writer, during this time Ed wrote over 50 book reviews. His 1985 article for the **Gospel Herald**, *Men Need Liberation, Too!*, is a call to men to become more responsible in undoing sexism and to support and embrace the gifts of women in all church positions. It was reprinted in 2013, (<https://www.mennoniteusa.org/women-in-leadership/men-need-liberation-too-2/>)

In 1989, Ed and Ethel were thrilled to return to Kathmandu as joint appointees of Mennonite Board of Missions and MCC to United Mission to Nepal (UMN), an agency whose diverse development projects included community health, non-formal education for women, hospitals and hydropower. As executive director, Ed provided leadership to

a staff of more than 2,000 Nepalis, and 400 expatriates from 30+ church-related agencies from more than 18 countries. Ed was a bridge builder; his diplomatic skills and good humor enabled him to bring people together to work toward common goals. His ability to relate constructively allowed him to collaborate with high government officials during a time of dramatic social change.

Ed and Ethel's warm hospitality welcomed hundreds of guests into their home to share food and friendship. Ed loved traveling to remote parts of the country to visit projects, and trekking in the Himalayas with visiting family.

Leaving Nepal in 1998, Ed and Ethel returned to Akron, where Ed rejoined MCC as Director of International Programs, assisting their peacemaking and conflict transformation work in 50 countries. In 2003 they settled into retirement in Goshen, revitalizing relationships with family, friends, and church, and traveling across the country.

Although Ed experienced debilitating limitations in his last years, he lived with passionate self-determination, expressing with his indomitable spirit, "I may have Parkinson's, but it doesn't have me!" He remained actively engaged with his community and the world, clipping articles to share, and never losing his desire to take a ride on his 3-wheel bike.

In an autobiographical essay published in *Re-Envisioning Service: The Geography of Our Faith* (2016), Ed wrote, "We live in a society where the dominant culture relies on the use of force and violence. The challenge is to live non-conformed to that ethos and to demonstrate the Jesus-ideal of how we relate to others in the midst of our differences and conflicts."

(https://www.academia.edu/31726884/AN_AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL_STROLL_THROUGH_SIXTY_YEARS_OF_MENNONITE_PEACEMAKING)

Ed relished living out that challenge of faith, with Ethel, his beloved partner and adventurer for 68 years. He gratefully enjoyed, in his own words, "a good life."

Ed is preceded in death by his wife, Ethel Yake (d. July 27, 2019), and sister, Dorothy (Lawrence, d.) Brunk. Ed is survived by children Michael (Maaret Koskenalho, d.); Mary Martha (Gordon Prieb) and their son, Eli Metzler-Prieb; Peter (Kathryn Rowedder); and Philip (Sandra Anstaett), and their children Noah, Christopher, and Rachel; and his siblings, Carl (Doris Gunden), Jay (Jill Lalko), Joyce (Jep) Hostetler, and Alice (Willard) Roth. Ed's body was donated to Indiana University Medical School.

Memorial contributions may be made to United Mission to Nepal's Covid Response Appeal at <https://www.umn.org/np/give>

A memorial service will be held on Zoom on Saturday, June 12, at 1:00 ET (beginning with a slide show), hosted by the Assembly Mennonite Church of Goshen, IN. Join at: <https://zoom.us/j/9995275153>