



The Conscientious Objectors, Part 1

Opening

What if our theology could get up from our armchairs and move into our world? That would be something worth paying attention to. This is The Armchair Anabaptist podcast.

<intro song> Lay your guns down, down on the floor. There ain't no good in those guns anymore. Take my hand and let me kiss your feet. Let our friendship be sweet. <end>

“Because Mennonites have usually found that the way to faithfulness is to separate from others and eventually if only I am here, then at least I'll agree with myself.”

“And I don't think that we can say we love someone and then shoot them. It doesn't make sense.”

“I always tell folks that, ‘Look at - if you're in a debate and winning the debate becomes more important than reflecting love towards the person you're debating, then do the Kingdom of God a great service and shut up.’”

“How do we encourage people to see nonviolence as something more than a position about war?”

“Because we're not just sitting around doing podcasts and theology, we're actually trying to live our lives as Christians.”

<song> This is a reckoning between you and me. The righting of all wrongs as we eat and as we drink. <end>

Introduction

Kevin Wiebe: You're listening to The Armchair Anabaptist and this is episode number five, The Conscientious Objectors, part one. I'm Kevin Wiebe.

Jesse Penner: And I'm Jesse Penner and we are your hosts. We are going to be digging into this topic, which is a fairly controversial one, actually. As I sort of looked at our list of episodes for this season this is maybe the one that got me the most tense. It is a tricky thing to work with, I think. When I think about the peace, position or living a life of non violence or enemy love lots of things feel like very personal decisions. You know you have

the classic “an armed gunman comes into your house and threatens your family. What are you going to do?” Well, that's a decision about me and my family.

But a decision like this, to be a continuous objector, to stay home from war when your country is engaging in a war in order to protect its own rights and freedoms, there's something that is deeper about this because it's not just about me anymore, it's about my country, it's about my community, it's about my neighbours who may be going off to war and my decision has personal impact on them because they're heading out to make this sacrifice. And here I am staying home. So maybe more than any other piece of this there is a level of shame or guilt or tension around how we work with this because this is something that gets levied very quickly against us as Mennonites and Anabaptists. It's one of the accusations that gets sent very quickly is “you guys stayed home while we went off and fought for your freedoms.” So how do we engage with that?

KW: Oh yeah, and that's something that before I came to embrace the peace position, that was one of the first things I would bring up if this conversation would come up is “you're not gonna go to war, you're not gonna stand up for your fellow man, you're not gonna love your neighbour by standing up for them” and those kinds of things. Yeah, it's a complicated topic for sure, and it's also a very important one to talk about. And as you know, and as we've talked about a few times already this season, I have swung around from being someone who's against the peace position to someone who has come to embrace it and my own personal journey has been one... I've not only been convinced by the theology but actually by people loving me through those disagreements and showing me that ‘enemy love’ if you will, through our theological disagreements. While we were theologically at odds, they demonstrated what that looked like in our relationship and it was something that was just lived out practically.

JP: We've got some really thoughtful answers to this question, and as we've done for the first few sets of questions, we've actually broken this into two parts. It feels like it's important to say up front that what we're going to be doing today is simply digging into the theological question of how conscientious objection fits into our understanding of Jesus teaching. And next episode we're going to be looking at the wrinkles that come out of that, the tricky lived experience of how this actually plays out and how it has played out in our history.

KW: We've got some excellent guests today. We'll be talking once again to Dr. Thomas Yoder Neufeld, we'll be talking to Dr. Layton Friesen, and we'll also be hearing from Pastor Cyndy Warkentin.

Then we'll also be hearing once again from Dr. Ronald J. Sider, who we had a chance to speak to a few months prior to his passing in 2022.

JP: We're actually going to start off with hearing from Dr. Sider. He was the founder and President Emeritus of Evangelicals for Social Action and the Distinguished Professor of Theology, Holistic Ministry and Public Policy at Palmer Theological Seminary, he was also the author of numerous books, including the *Early Church on Killing, If Jesus is Lord* and *Nonviolent Action*. Here's Dr. Sider.

The Theology of Conscientious Objection

Dr. Ronald J. Sider: Well, the anabaptists emerged in the 16th century deeply affected by Luther's Protestant Reformation and they accepted the basic concerns of that, but they wanted to follow Jesus unconditionally and completely, and as they tried to work that out, at least two things became clear.

For one thing, they thought that a state church where everybody who simply was baptized as a baby was quote "the Christian" was not what Jesus and the apostles were talking about. They felt that coming to faith must be a decision of someone who is mature enough to make that decision in a thoughtful way, and so they rejected more than 1500 years of state church unity and said that the church must be separate from the state.

That was radical enough, but they also said as they read the New Testament, "hey, Jesus tells us the love our enemies not to kill them" and they were committed to following what they believe Jesus said, even if it was costly.

And so those two things - their refusal to kill and their rejection of the state church were really the things that got the Mennonites into huge trouble. They were killed by the Lutherans, and the Calvinists and the Anglicans and the Catholics in the 16th century, but amazingly they survived. They withdrew up in the hills or here and there, or a favorable ruler was willing to allow them to be in this territory because they were good farmers and by moving when they were persecuted, they survived. And as a matter of fact, today their fundamental insistence on the separation of church and state has been accepted theoretically by every country in the world except for Muslim countries, so they finally won on that one. It's not the case that the majority of Christians have come to agree with them in terms of their refusal to kill, but we must be careful with that.

There have been a number of and especially in the last 50 years, real changes in the church. I mean, as late as the - I forget the exact date, but 1950 or so, the Catholic Pope was saying that pacifism is wrong. Since that time, Catholics have rethought that and the official position of the Catholic Church now is that there are two approaches to the issue of war. One is pacifism, love your enemies and not kill, the other is a very careful just war tradition. Both of those are official positions of the Catholic Church, so I would say that it's not just limited numbers of people - Mennonites here and there, and Quakers here and there, but pacifism is more present in mainline Protestant churches and in the Catholic church then it would have been 100 or 200 years ago.

KW: Cyndy Warkentin is the pastor of Saturday Night Church in Landmark, Manitoba. We had a chance to sit down with Cyndy and talk about this very topic about what the teachings of Jesus have to do with staying back from war and being a conscientious objector. This is what she had to say.

Cyndy Warkentin: I think because loving everyone, including our enemies and being good to those who hurt us is biblical and it's foundational to our understanding of who Jesus calls us to be. And I don't think that we can say we love someone and then shoot them. That doesn't make sense.

In my mind, we can't justify taking up arms against someone who Jesus also loves and died for, in order to make sense of that it seems to me you'd have to have some very convoluted mental gymnastics to be able to justify that. And Jesus came as the Prince of Peace in his riding on a donkey, not on a War Horse. And everything he did was - the way that he lived and the way that he taught - was contrary to the power of his day, and he never tried to control or subjugate the people he came to save and to serve.

And we can see that in the beatitudes, in the way that he teaches humility, mercy, peacemaking. We see it in his instruction to turn the other cheek, if someone asks for your tunic, give them your shirt as well and if someone asks you to carry their gear one mile, carry it two. And so all of that points toward this willingness to serve, this willingness to even be put down and yet still to love and to be a peacemaker. Even in the garden of Gethsemane, where Peter slashes off the ear of the high priest's servant and Jesus says, "put that away," and he heals the ear and he cares for this person and so he's hours away from death and yet he's still loving and serving and caring for people. And if that's indeed who we're supposed to emulate, then we're not hurting people then.

And Jesus was always stooping to serve and he told us to do the same, and that's what this Kingdom of God is supposed to look like - serving each other in humble love, not hating and killing and trying to grab power.

JP: I appreciated both those responses. They came at it from very different angles and looked at different pieces of it, but I think they complemented each other beautifully.

Dr. Sider, of course, taking a look at the historical context and where has the Anabaptist movement come from and what was it in response to, and how has it grown over the years and how now are other denominations and other groups beginning to look at some of those Anabaptist distinctives and go, "actually, they may have something right here, there may be a piece of this that does ring true to what the Gospel says." And then you have Pastor Cyndy Warkentin, who just sort of simply, beautifully spells it out. If you love Jesus, you're not going to shoot people, maybe it's as simple as that and we can tend to over complicate these things, but in the end, I think she looks at the teachings of Jesus and goes, "you simply can't square those things up. They don't fit together."

KW: Yeah, the greatest commandment isn't "love the Lord your God with your heart, soul and mind, and the second is like it shoot your neighbour if he slights you." It's not like that. No, we remember what it actually is, "love your neighbour as yourself" and Jesus says love your enemies not shoot your enemies and Cyndy just spells it out as plain as that. And I love that kind of simplicity even though it's remarkably difficult but that we needn't make it too complicated. We needn't muddy the waters too much on this, that we actually should just believe Jesus at face value sometimes.

JP: Right, it is a complicated issue in some ways and there are lots of things that we need to figure out about how we respond, but let's never lose sight of the fact that the core is incredibly simple.

KW: We spoke to Dr. Layton Friesen, the Academic Dean from Steinbach Bible College, about how Jesus is teaching about loving our enemies connects to being a conscientious objector in times of war.

Dr. Layton Friesen: Well, I think the first thing I would say is that conscientious objection is something that all Christians in any sense of the word do from time to time. This is not just a Mennonite thing. Whenever you as a Christian look at the world and see what the world is asking you to do, and then you look at what teacher at what Scripture teaches and you say in this area I cannot do what my society or my parents or my school or my workplace is asking me to do, you are a conscientious objector.

And so it's not just Mennonites and their stand against war that creates conscientious objection. Everybody who takes some kind of a stand against what the world is telling them to do is in that way a conscientious objector.

But specifically for Mennonites, our conviction that Jesus taught us to love our enemies, and that this very, very plain teaching needs to find expression in our lives, this has created a real fierce tension in times of war, because, just on the face of it, how do you love your enemies and kill them at the same time? Or how do you love your enemies and destroy their crops and burn their homes and rape their wives and daughters at the same time. How can you reconcile the activity of war with the command of Jesus to love your enemies?

That's just been an insurmountable tension and contradiction for Mennonites to understand, and that is why they have worked very hard to excuse themselves or to refuse participation in war.

Now, the interesting thing though about Mennonite views of war has been that Mennonites have not been exactly antiwar or anti-military in a particular sense. Mennonites have generally recognized that in a sinful world there will need to be somebody who uses violence in order to stop violence. In fact, according to passages like

Romans 13 it's even God who has given the state the sword as a way of kind of keeping a lid on the evil in this world.

But what Mennonites have seen here is that there are some aspects where there is a difference between the sword that God has permitted the state and the mission that God has given the church. The church's mission is not to just sort of put a lid on evil, to kind of barely contain the evil of the world, to keep it from falling into anarchy and chaos, which is my understanding at least of what Paul is talking about in terms of the state sword in Romans 13.

The mission of the church is rather to point to the final healing, the final restoration of the Kingdom of God, when all of this evil is going to be wiped away for good, and how does that healing come about? How does that final restoration, how does that final reconciliation come about? Well, it comes about through the cross of Jesus Christ. Where Christ loved his enemies and he prayed that his father would forgive those who were crucifying him, and that is the mission of Christ, the mission of Christ is finally to heal the world of all violence so that all wars are finally ended. And that is what Christians proclaim.

This is what Christians seek to live out while the world still has to use its kind of bloody violence to restrain its bloody violence. But in this way, the church, at least according to the Mennonite view, is always going to be living out of step with the world. We just have been given a different mission. We've been given a different job to do. Our job is to point to the final reconciliation, to the final healing and to show the world that that's coming, that there is actually something in the air initiated by Jesus Christ on the cross and his love for his enemies that is going to finally do away with all of this bloody mess that we have to put up with in this world.

Somebody has to bear witness to that fact. Somebody has to be a testimony to the possibility that the world will finally be healed and that is the mission of the church and that is why at least the Mennonites have chosen not to participate in war, it's because it's just not our job. It's not our mission. We've been called to something else and so we can't excuse ourselves from our mission and go and carry out a mission that actually doesn't help the mission that Jesus gave to the church. So that, I think is kind of why Mennonites have chosen and have worked very hard over the years to get a conscientious objection status or whatever, from various governments that they have worked to, and they've put a lot of work into it. If you look across Mennonite history there are literally hundreds of formal agreements that Mennonite groups have come to with different kings and princes and governments and so on across the world that have allowed them to live out their very particular understanding of the Christian gospel.

JP: As the conversation went on, I was a little bit surprised to hear Layton speaking about our role as anabaptists in peace, not as one that is calling the entire world to conform to what it is that we believe, but maybe possibly as a prophetic voice in the wilderness that was reminding people of a tension that must exist when thinking about war. I asked him to clarify this a little bit.

LF: Yeah, I get a little nervous when it seems like whenever any nation goes off to war, immediately the Mennonites stand up and say “we're against this war, it should never happen, bring your armies home, this is wrong.”

Sometimes it is actually wrong and it's appropriate for Mennonites or anybody to stand up against a government that is going to war for the wrong reasons or that has kind of idolatrous pretensions, and so forth. I mean, there's history is littered with that kind of arrogance, and that kind of idolatry, and so it's very appropriate for Christians to stand up and say “that's wrong,” but I don't think we should just sort of instinctively say war is wrong. You know, reduce your military, bring them home, whatever. I don't think that's, at least the Mennonite understanding of nonresistance doesn't demand that.

I think the Mennonite understanding, the way I understand it, has been that God in his Providence is using the state with its bloody violence to accomplish some kind of good in the world. It's a very limited good and it's an awful, awful way to live, but it does actually create a semblance of order in the world that is actually better than if chaos and anarchy reigned. And God in his Providence is using that and that needs to be understood, I think, but I would say though that there is a critique of war within the Mennonite tradition as well. It's not that we're just dividing up the labour, so to speak, you know, “you guys fight the war and we'll proclaim the gospel.” There is actually within Mennonite refusal to fight in war there is actually a critique against the world's means of solving its problems. And I think that needs to be heard as well, even though we don't necessarily resist all war or say all war needs to end or that all militaries are bad, so to speak.

There is a certain kind of scandal in the Mennonite belief that that the world is finally going to be healed by the sacrificial forgiving love of Jesus. That this enterprise that we pour trillions of dollars into every year is actually not going to solve the world's problems. There will never be a war to end all wars. The violence just creates more violence. Yes, it is part of the way in which God is keeping the lid on things, but it just gets bloodier and bloodier and eventually it's going to end.

So there's a critique of war even in the Mennonite view, but it's not necessarily that instinctive kick that says, you know, bring your military home or stop the war or reduce your military spending or whatever. That's the way I understand it at least.

JP: The way that Layton characterized this really challenged me. It went against a lot of the simple answers that I had as a child. The way I thought about it growing up as being

either all one way or the other way with no room for in between, he had a much more sort of nuanced approach to this that recognized that war, although it's a broken tool, might still be valuable in terms of accomplishing God's will on the earth, and that there was more complexity to this issue than I would have understood in my early days growing up in the Mennonite church.

As we continued talking, he brought up the analogy of Babylon to sort of explore a little bit further how God can use broken systems and tools in order to accomplish his providential will.

LF: Yeah, and the analogy or the example that is sometimes used for this is the way in which God used the powers of Babylon and Assyria, and some of these other nations in the Old Testament to accomplish his purposes. There is no blessing on Babylon for its work in chastising Israel, even though it's pretty clear that God was using Babylon in some ways in some mysterious way, but that didn't mean that God was saying "oh, Babylon is such a beautiful, good, holy country; I just love what they're doing in the world."

I mean, as soon as Babylon was done with what God needed it for, it was completely judged by God as well, as was Assyria and then all these other nations. And I think there's a certain analogy there, for how God uses something that can be actually pretty evil and demonic. I mean many people recognize that war is demonic. It's not just Christians who recognize that. It's just an awful, awful thing.

The other thing that's happened which is really interesting to me and I'm still trying to think through all of this, is that Mennonites, Quakers, other groups and even further back in the church's history the witness of monks and nuns and priests who have pointed to this nonresistant love of Jesus in the way that Jesus overcomes evil. In many ways that has looked kind of useless in terms of actually solving the world's problems, in terms of helping the world get on, but I think you can actually make the case that the world has learned from these groups about the evil of war, about the evil of violence and the uselessness of it and the way in which it just destroys human good.

And so, what you have found now in the last 500 years is increasingly more and more a critique of war that you won't find in any other parts of history or in other cultures as much. But within the Western tradition, because the church has kept on pointing back to Jesus, even in very feeble and fumbling ways, the world has caught on about something regarding nonviolence, that is actually quite important, and so today you do see a lot less war, a lot less violence than you have in the past, and there's just a growing awareness.

Even when we see wars like what we're seeing today in Ukraine and Russia, or when we see the wars in the Middle East. There's a growing awareness that this is kind of stupid. Why are we still doing this? Like you hear this from all kinds of different voices, and

when you think back to the Vietnam War and the lots and lots of very secular people protesting this war in Vietnam that people recognize was just ludicrous. It wasn't going to accomplish anything.

So there's more and more of a sense of the stupidity of war, and I think I would say you can point back to the churches witness. That the weeds were sown and those have borne fruit and eventually maybe the world will have much less war than it does today. We don't know that, we can't guarantee that it may have it. It may get worse again, but it does point to the fact that a nonviolent, conscientious objection like we've had in the Mennonite church and in other groups, I mean, that can make a difference in the long run.

KW: Dr. Tom Yoder Neufeld is Professor Emeritus of Religious and Theological Studies at Conrad Grebel University College. He is also the author of the book *Killing Enmity*, and he is the chair of the Faith and Life Commission of the Mennonite World Conference.

We talked to Dr. Yoder Neufeld about this question, about how historically, Jesus's teachings about loving our enemies has been a foundational part of the Mennonite position as conscientious objectors in times of war, although in my questions that I sent to him there was an autocorrect feature that when I misspelled the word conscientious, it autocorrected to contentious objectors, which is a rather ironic and fitting auto correct blooper to send in that Dr. Yoder Neufeld found quite amusing. So I asked him to explain this to us, this connection between Jesus's teaching about loving our enemies and being conscientious objectors in times of war.

Dr. Thomas Yoder Neufeld: Yeah, well actually I'm wondering whether Mennonites have actually historically connected their refusal to go to war with loving enemies so much as with the verses that just precede the passage you read, which is "you've heard it said, 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for tooth.' But I say to you 'do not resist the one who is doing you harm but rather turn the cheek. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the left. If someone demands you go mile, go two. If someone asks for your coat, give them your shirt too.'" Now we could spend a long time unpacking what the mini drama of nonresistance actually means.

I've tried this out many times with students. If you're a hockey player and there usually are some in the class, and somebody takes you into the boards with a really bad move and you get up and you say, "excuse me could you do that from this side this time," how would that be experienced? As passivity? Or could it even be kind of goading? Or if somebody demands you go for one mile and you say I'll take this for two and this is the situation of hostility, are you going to be comforted by this, or are you going to say what's he up to?

Or if somebody demands your coat and you give them the last bit of clothing you have, who's being shamed here, you or the one who's demanding your clothes?

So a lot of people have said, “wait a minute. Maybe there's something more going on here than passivity.” But Mennonites have typically heard ‘do not resist’ as a way of saying ‘it's not ours to retaliate,’ and I clearly think that that's part of what's going on here. It's not ours to retaliate, so in situations where somebody asked you to take up arms you refuse to do so.

In fact, it's very interesting that it used to be not so much *pacifism*, but in German the term already all the way back to the Anabaptist beginnings in Switzerland was *wehrlosigkeit* - defenselessness. And there are still some conservative Mennonite groups who call themselves defenseless Mennonites. That's a very telling take on this. That means when harm is done to us, we will not defend ourselves.

Now talk about logic. This makes no sense in the broader culture, and it's premised, of course, on trust in God, its premised on the fact that this act of deliberate vulnerability can carry within itself the seed of reconciliation. It can also, by the way, be a form of goading and even a form of superiority and judgmentalism and arrogance. “When they go low, we go high.” Remember that phrase from the Obama years? It's so like we're not going to stoop to your level. And that can easily be a form of disdain and even hatred, but in terms of the question you've asked about arms bearing, Mennonites could not put together, and that was true already in the very early decades of the movement, couldn't put together raising the sword in defence with Jesus's teachings about not resisting or resisting in this very, very different way. We might say, maybe contentious objectors is not such a bad typo after all, in this case. So, I think it's very important to see where those roots lie.

Now of course, this defenselessness meant that when harm gets big, what's the solution? Well, in our history as Mennonites often the solution was to leave, to go somewhere else, to try to make arrangements with whatever government is in place to give us exemption from the military, and when that exemption is withdrawn then we move again. So you can see that happening again and again when the world encroaches, including the world of militarism, let's go be somewhere where we can be good.

Now in recent years, just one more point on this. In recent years - and I think it speaks very much to your question about loving the enemies, there's been a shift in Mennonite thinking - in fact, you almost never hear in many Mennonite circles anymore the language of nonresistance. That is identified with passivity and we want pacifism, not passivism. Which means following Jesus in discipleship has less to do with what you don't do than what you do, do.

So, instead of not resisting, the emphasis has shifted to making peace, to loving enemies, which is an act, it's not simply a kind of withholding of retaliation. It's an act, so people have discovered how central the theme of making peace, pursuing peace to use the

biblical phrase is to - also Jesus' teaching, blessed are the peace makers. Not blessed are those who stay out of trouble or refuse to get in a fight. In fact, maybe this is the last point on this.

I find it very telling if I can go back to Ephesians that the last image in Ephesians is "put on the armor of God," which is about as fighting an image as you can get. What do you wield? Truth. The gospel, the promise of salvation, prayer, and then you realize once again, we've got a different logic going on here as to what constitutes powerful activity. But in order for us to understand that and to transform our nonresistance into a form of active, peaceable, loving resistance requires deep roots in the gospel.

JP: After the first half of this episode, I figured I had it figured out. It felt simple. We looked at the history, we looked at sort of the clear teachings of Jesus and I had landed at a place where it all felt like it was solved and now Dr. Friesen and Dr. Yoder Neufeld come along and they throw wrinkles into this thing. Maybe even though we are called to a peace position, it's more complicated than just understanding that the entire world was supposed to behave in this way, and maybe we need to recognize that there is a place for war in a broken world, even as we hold fast to our call to be proclaiming nonviolence and peace.

Maybe it's possible that as Dr. Neufeld said, we end up taking the teachings of Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount, these sort of teachings about how we're supposed to treat those who are antagonizing us or coming against us and with those things we can become a little bit of a bully even in the way that we respond if on the surface we're looking peaceful, there can still be this antagonism underneath that. And so we need to think carefully about the fact that there are many more ways that we can hurt people than just with outright violence and be thinking about how those things work together. So there's lots to think about here.

KW: Oh,, there certainly is and I really have appreciated the different perspectives and the different ways of looking at this. I mean, I really don't think we can ignore some of the really simple things that Jesus said. And when we think about, you know, like how could we love our enemy while also be killing them. Well, yes, that is pretty clear cut and pretty simple. But like you said, there's a lot of other ways to do violence to people than just with guns and just with killing. Maybe as we're taking the high road we're also being condescending and arrogant and rude, and actually completely missing the heart of what Jesus is teaching about, both loving our enemies or also being creative in our responses to nonviolent because we're just disengaging and being condemning of everybody else instead of actually, truly loving our enemies in the process, which is just this whole other thing.

Our feature song today is by Steve Bell. It is a song that is based on the prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi. It's a song called Peace Prayer. I really appreciate this song and that prayer as well, just some words for the times that we are in. Also, some words of prayer really that is timeless, I think, that where there are problems, where there are issues, where there is hatred or injustice or injury, may the Lord bring what we need for those times. Peace Prayer by Steve Bell.

Peace Prayer, Steve Bell

Lord, make me a means of your peace.
Where there's hatred grown, let me sow your love.
Where there's injury Lord, let forgiveness be my sword.
Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Lord, make me a means of your peace.
Where there's sadness here, let me sow your joy.
When the darkness nears, may your light dispel our fears.
Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Lord, grant me to seek and to share.
Less to be consoled than to help console.
Less be understood than to understand your good.
Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Lord, grant me to seek and to share.
To forgive in thee, you've forgiven me.
For to die in thee is eternal life to me.
Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Closing

The Armchair Anabaptist is a Theodidaktos podcast and Theodidaktos is a publication of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference.

You can check us out online at www.thearmchairanabaptist.ca and find us on iTunes, Spotify and wherever podcasts are found.

A special thanks to our guests who have joined us today, Dr. Layton Friesen, Dr. Thomas Yoder Neufeld and Pastor Cyndy Warkentin. We were also honoured to be able to interview Dr. Ronald J. Sider in April of 2022, just a few months before his passing, and what you heard of him today was from that interview.

Our intro song is First Communion by Dane Jones Hill and our feature song today was the song Peace Prayer by Steve Bell. Our executive producer is Erica Fehr, our producer and

audio engineer is Kevin Wiebe and our administrative assistant and wizard of all things web related is Ruth Block.

I'm Kevin Wiebe and I'm Jesse Penner and we have made your hosts for The Armchair Anabaptist. We certainly hope that what you have heard today will do more than stay as merely food for thought, but that it can help inspire each of us to get up out of the comfort of our armchairs and translate into living more like Jesus.

Join us next time as we continue our journey looking at the life of peace and particularly as we continue with the second half of our discussion about conscientious objectors. Join us next time on The Armchair Anabaptist.