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# Elder Exchange

## “Thriving: How Growing Churches are Reaching Young Adults”

Aaron Kauffman, Virginia Mennonite Missions

Responders: Steve Byler, Pastor at Calvary  
Mennonite Church

Debbi DiGennaro, Adjunct Professor  
Applied Social Sciences, EMU

Thursday, January 9, 2020 / 6:30-8:00 p.m. / Detwiler Auditorium, VMRC

**The Format:** A thoughtful presentation will be shared, followed by two invited responders and then open group dialogue, to discern its resonance with vibrant Christian faith.

**Presentation Synopsis:** Despite the prevailing narrative of young adult departure from the church in North America, many churches are seeing increased levels of both overall attendance and young adult involvement. This research identified five characteristics shared by such churches in the context of Harrisonburg, Virginia. Data was gathered from the survey responses of 43 Virginia Mennonite Conference pastors, as well as interviews with six pastors and 31 young adults (ages 18-37) from churches with thriving young adult ministries.



**Speaker Biography:** Aaron Kauffman has served as President of Virginia Mennonite Missions since 2014. He is married to Laura and they have four children. Prior to working at VMM, Aaron served in cross-cultural mission assignments in Colombia and Ethiopia. He enjoys time with his family, reading, outdoor activities and good coffee. He is an ordained minister in Virginia Mennonite Conference.

**Moderators:** Roman Miller (romanjaymiller@gmail.com)  
Richard Bowman (rebowmanmail@gmail.com)



A Monthly Academic Assembly Deliberating Over Issues of Christian Faith & Life  
Free. No registration required. Residents, friends, family, community neighbors welcome.

*Elder Exchange is an initiative of VMRC residents. Co-sponsored by Anabaptist Center for Religion and Society.*

Audio recordings of some of the recent Elder Exchange presentations downloaded at <https://RichardLBowman.com/elderexchange>