

After graduating from BMS in 2013, I decided to continue my education at Hesston College in Kansas. Through a first semester class called Faith & Discipleship, I decided to lock in both Bible & Ministry and Disaster Management as my paths of study. While there, I had the opportunity to put both areas of study into practice while being a Ministry Assistant and participating in and leading trips within Mennonite Disaster Service and the local community. I was blessed to attend a college that emphasized service to others in Christ's name.

After graduating from Hesston College in 2015, I had the opportunity to be a counselor (or a Chief as they call it) at Gator Wilderness Camp School for 7 months in rural, southwest Florida. As a chief, I learned not only the ins and outs of camp life and leading a group of boys, but also was made increasingly aware of the pain and trauma that unfortunately many kids endure and must learn to deal with in our society today. Gator Camp placed a deeper impression on my heart of the need for "Christian servants" in our world and the responsibility/opportunity we have as Christians to join in with God's mission of hope and restoration.

In the winter of 2016, I returned to Mifflin County and began working at a family business, Big Valley Feed & Grain, and have continued that work to this present time. After several years working intensely with those affected by disaster, crisis, and trauma, working with my hands was a welcome change. In the past seven years, I have grown to rediscover my passion for agriculture and the people that have chosen its path for their life's work. In that rediscovery, I have also found meaning and excitement in investing in our family's work of breeding, raising, and finishing Charolais and Charolais cross cattle. Though I certainly enjoy the animal husbandry side of raising cattle, I've come to realize it is a people business, built on service and relationships.

I currently attend and am involved at Locust Grove Mennonite Church. There, I've enjoyed growing in relationships with those my age in our young adult ministry. I also have enjoyed learning to teach Sunday school and being involved as a youth sponsor in our oldest high school group called Radiate - the best memories to be made and lessons learned usually can be found on our summer trips!

Assisting with leading worship through singing and guitar has also been a gift in this time of my life. I'm thankful for the emphasis BMS placed on worship and the growth I was able to experience because of that. Weekly worship chapels gave me the opportunity to expand upon my gifts and learn to lead in a team setting, with the Holy Spirit's guidance. What a gift!

Locust Grove's DivorceCare4Kids ministry – a ministry designed to help kids work through their feelings and draw closer to God – has also been near and dear to my heart over the past five years. When Ann Kanagy asked if I'd be willing to step into this ministry working

directly with young kids, I was rather hesitant. However, I've had the opportunity to experience growth and breakthrough with both the kids and personally and couldn't be more thankful.

From early on in my experience at BMS, I had the opportunity to see service in action. As a young student I remember being amazed at the amount of folks that dedicated their time, gifts, and assets to put on successful auction year after year. Then having the opportunity to participate in the setup as a middle and high school student, I even more so appreciated and saw the value of a community coming together to ensure another generation of kids could experience a quality, Christ-centered education.

I was also made aware of the value of service at BMS through various outreach opportunities. Through activities like picking up trash along Jack's Mountain Road, cleaning out houses with MDS in Long Island after flooding, or painting playground benches in Mount Union, I learned the value of humbling myself and recognizing the needs around me. It was truly a blessing to be a student at a school where the administration, faculty and staff not only encouraged Christian service, but also were willing to serve right alongside you and draw out your natural gifts in the process.

I'm continually thankful for the ways in which BMS impacted my Christian worldview. I witnessed and have come to value the necessity of a Christian community and support system. BMS placed in me the value of discipleship; allowing yourself to be mentored while also being a mentor to others. Through the example of many faculty, staff, and coaches, I learned the value of servant leadership and how to be a team player.

I'm thankful to look for – also something BMS instilled in me - and see God's handiwork daily. I have the opportunity in working at the mill to interact with those in our community, hear about God's faithfulness in their lives, encourage them and be encouraged. I get to be a part of a body of believers at Locust Grove where I'm encouraged to participate and grow alongside other folks who are seeking God. It's been a blessing to find ways to give back to the community that invested so greatly in me as a young person and still does today. I'm thankful for BMS and the ways it pushed me and encouraged me to be a part of the Body of Christ.