

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

March 21, 2011  
Volume 15 Number 6

## Meet me at the Grand!

Mennonite History Tour begins on pg. 4



### inside

'Better than the honeymoon' 17

Conrad Grebel appoints its seventh president 21

Standing on the shoulders of J.M 27

## EDITORIAL

# Death as life with the saints

DICK BENNER  
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

At age 65, he was too young to die. For Stan Benner, my brother whom we just remembered this past weekend, it was especially incongruous. Living life at full throttle, he had big plans for the last leg of his journey. A deadly disease—non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, a blood cancer that invades the lymph system—weakened his otherwise healthy body in less than a year, interrupting dreams for a stimulating retirement he and his spouse Marg were anticipating.

The devastating turn of events caught us all off-guard. For we all as family, friends and fellow church members knew him as having a zest for living, an enthusiasm for everything artful, soulful and enduring. Life for him was like doing a painting, engaging all the senses of sight (sunsets, mountain views, gurgling streams, wild flowers), sounds (the music of the spheres), smells of the seasons (the fragrance of flowers and ripening fruit), and taste (the culinary delights of favourite dishes).

What was it that gave his portrait such rich texture, such subtle hues of light and shadows, such an invitational touch that drew people to him for inspiration, for hope and light on their own journeys?

Through the mist of my and others' grief, I saw a light shining, a kind of

revelation that only comes through, I think, when a life lived to the fullest comes out in bold relief.



While his, of course, was his own unique personality formed by family genes, I can't help but think that his development was primarily shaped in the community of a particular faith: Anabaptist Mennonite. While Stan and I both spent considerable time critiquing the theological fine points and living out of that brand, it was the primal force of that enduring ethos that gave his soul succour, that probably motivated his career choice (professional family counselling), that gave him guiding lights in his many relationships.

What took my thoughts in this direction was a comment by an aging uncle at a visitation service, who, comparing how we conduct ourselves to other faith traditions, remarked that "Mennonites know how to do death." Taken aback, I had never thought of just how we deal with death, and certainly didn't think we, as Mennonites, did it any better; in fact, I was a little repulsed that the declaration was just a little alarmingly haughty.

Since it stuck in my consciousness, I pursued the thought further. Certainly, Stan was not pietistic, trying, in fact, to develop a suitable language for his faith tenets that could give him handles in

dealing with families in conflict. And while he didn't often find that language in church—but in innovative counselling approaches and, more recently, in Celtic spirituality—his grounding, I will speculate, came from his Anabaptist roots.

Always a part of a congregation, he knew this was his relational base, his spiritual home, the persons who will stick by you through thick and thin, who are not only your sojourners in life, but will surround you in death. It's called "priesthood protocol," for lack of a better term. We are members one of another. How often have we heard that!

This is not written down; it's not part of our confession. It's a tacit agreement. How does it express itself? In the bringing in of meals for the family; in providing lodging and hospitality for those coming from a distance; in sharing stories that form a narrative for celebrating a life; in singing through our grief; in taking comfort in dearly held Scripture passages; in the pastor, though giving voice to our lament, assuring us that God is not absent from our suffering.

We are a people of hope. And what is the basis of that hope? It's our belief that death is not the end of the journey, but a continuation of life—taking on a different form (this mortal puts on immortality)—that we can endure the pain of separation and loss.

We do not engage in the visions of "pearly gates and streets of gold," but rather that a person's spirit, though absent from the body, lives on as inspiration, example and instruction for those left behind, and that whatever form its habitat takes in the hereafter, it is present with God and the saints who have gone before—a continuation of "community."

## ABOUT THE COVER:

A 1797 Conestoga wagon, refitted with rubber tires, travels from Lancaster, Pa., to Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont., in 1952, to mark the centennial of Waterloo County. See page 4 for an invitation to 'meet me at the Grand' and go on a Mennonite History Tour during this year's Mennonite Church Canada assembly in Waterloo, from July 4 to 8.

PHOTO: DAVID HUNSBERGER, MENNONITE ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

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**Mission statement:** *Canadian Mennonite (CM)* is a bi-weekly Anabaptist/Mennonite-oriented periodical which seeks to promote covenantal relationships within the church (Hebrews 10:23-25). It provides channels for sharing accurate and fair information, faith profiles, inspirational/educational materials, and news and analyses of issues facing the church. In fulfilling its mission, the primary constituency of *CM* is the people and churches of Mennonite Church Canada and its five related area churches. *CM* also welcomes readers from the broader inter-Mennonite and inter-church scene. Editorial freedom is expressed through seeking and speaking the truth in love and by providing a balance of perspectives in news and commentary. *CM* will be a vehicle through which mutual accountability can be exercised within the community of believers; the paper also encourages its readers to have open hearts and minds in the process of discerning God's will.

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# contents



## Meet me at the Grand! 4

This summer, the congregations of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada will welcome visitors from across the country as they host the MC Canada assembly in Waterloo, Ont. Like most Mennonites of European ancestry, those who settle along the Grand River arrived with a history of purposeful migration and a deep desire to be faithful. This is their story.

## Before the watching world 16

At its 2011 annual delegate session, Mennonite Church Manitoba commissions its new executive director, **KEN WARKENTIN**, and hears from two *Canadian Mennonite* columnists, **PHIL WAGLER** and **AIDEN ENNS**, on how the church should conduct itself 'before the watching world.'

## 'Can we trust the government?' 22

Hillcrest Mennonite Church of New Hamburg, Ont., goes ahead with a solar-energy project despite provincial government waffling on the issue.



## In gratitude of J.S. Bach 26

The now-retired **HOWARD DYCK** recalls a long career as a classical radio show host and choir conductor, finding along the way a 'depth of meaning and a breadth in Bach's theological vision.'

## Doing worship and mission after Christendom 30

Authors Alan and Eleanor Kreider reflect on how Christians today can worship God and reach out to others in a world where religion is marginalized and many people are unfamiliar with the Christian story.

## Regular features:

For discussion **7** Readers write **8**

Milestones **13** Pontius' Puddle **13**

Schools Directory **33** Calendar **37** Classifieds **39**

## Death as life with the saints 2

**DICK BENNER**

## Deliverance from somewhere else 9

**PHIL WAGLER**

## Solomon's splendour revisited 10

**AIDEN ENNS**

## 'And yet ...' 11

**KEN WARKENTIN**

## New blog postings

[at canadianmennonite.org/blog/](http://canadianmennonite.org/blog/)

Stories and worldviews: **PAUL LOEWEN**

Debating the existence of my caring about the debate

over the existence of God: **DAVID DRIEDGER**

First-name last-name (injury): **WILL LOEWEN**

ASSEMBLY 2011 FEATURE

# Meet me at the Grand!

*This summer, the congregations of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada will welcome visitors from across the country as they host the MC Canada assembly in Waterloo, Ont.*

*Like most Mennonites of European ancestry, those who settled along the Grand River arrived with a history of purposeful migration and a deep desire to be faithful. This is their story.*

BY MAURICE MARTIN

MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA

GAMEO.ORG PHOTO



*A cairn erected at The First Mennonite Church in Vineland in 1986 marks the bicentennial celebrations of the Mennonites' arrival in Canada.*

**I**t is 1786. The first Swiss Mennonites have just arrived in Ontario, having travelled from Pennsylvania in Conestoga wagons. They crossed the mighty Niagara River by taking the wheels off their wagons, sealing the wagon boxes to make boats, and then floating across. Cattle and horses swam.

These immigrants initially settled along the north shore of Lake Erie and around Vineland in what today is called the Niagara Region. Within 20 years, other Mennonite immigrants settled further north on land that flanks the Grand River.

Around 1800—about the same time as the Dutch Mennonites were heading to Russia from northern Germany—more Swiss Mennonites came from Pennsylvania to what is now Waterloo Region. They came in search of land. They also came to get away from the aftermath of the American Revolutionary War of 1776. It may be overstating the case to say that they were United Empire Loyalists, but it certainly could be said that they trusted the British Crown more than they trusted the revolutionary state.

Richard Beasley, a land agent, had been asked by Joseph Brant, aboriginal leader of the Six Nations of the Grand River, to sell a portion of their treaty lands. Beasley helped the Mennonites negotiate this purchase, which later became known as the German Land Tract, an area surrounding present-day Kitchener-Waterloo that was first opened for settlement around 1800. By 1820, Woolwich Township to the north (Elmira and surrounding area) was also opened to Mennonite settlement.

Wilmot Township to the West (New Hamburg and vicinity) was opening up at this time as well. In the 1820s, Amish Mennonites led by Christian Nafziger came directly from Alsace-Lorraine, a region in France that is today bordered by Germany,

MENNONITE ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO PHOTO



*The homestead of Daniel and Veronica (Schneider) Martin (married April 8, 1823) at Wagner's Corners (on the west side of Weber St.) in what is now the north end of Waterloo, Ont.*

Belgium and Switzerland. The Amish settled on 22 farms in Wilmot Township. Part of the group remained Amish (Old Order Amish), and today they continue to worship in their homes and live a plain and simple life. They use horse and buggies for transportation and eschew tractors on their farms.

At the end of the 19th century, the majority of them decided to build meeting houses. They made changes in lifestyle and in expressions of worship. Around 1920, they became the Ontario Amish Mennonite Conference (later Western Ontario Mennonite Conference), which integrated into Mennonite Church Eastern Canada in 1988.

### **Worry in Woolwich**

Over a century ago, in 1889, some Mennonites in Woolwich Township became concerned about certain trends in the Mennonite church. They were suspicious of a strengthening Methodist-style revivalism, the introduction of prayer meetings, evening worship and Sunday school, and the use of the English language in worship.

Led by preacher Abraham Martin, Woolwich Mennonites separated from

the Mennonite Conference of Ontario. The dividing line seemed to follow the township boundary, which passed near to St. Jacobs. Churches on one side of the boundary remained with the Mennonite Conference of Ontario, joined selectively by some on the other side from St. Jacobs, Elmira and Floradale.

From the parking lot of Elmira Mennonite Church today, you can see an Old Order meeting house on the adjacent property. On one Sunday this parking lot will be filled with horses and buggies. On alternate Sundays, it is used by the Markham-Waterloo Mennonites, who also rejected revivalism and Sunday school, but drive black cars only, instead of buggies.

In the 1960s, another division occurred when people again felt that we Mennonites were becoming too "worldly." In this new Conservative Mennonite Church, men wore plain coats and women wore prayer veils. They rejected television, radio and wedding bands, and retained the use of the King James Version of the Bible.

Today there are at least 27 distinct Mennonite groups in Ontario. Their diversity is based mostly upon lifestyle and

varying degrees of acculturation among a people whose original "habit of the heart" has made them "a people apart."

### **From Russia . . . with love**

In 1924, the first major wave of Dutch Mennonites came from Russia to Ontario. Local Swiss Mennonite families met them at the train station in Waterloo and hosted them, but significant differences between the two groups soon became apparent. The Russian Mennonites did not wear prayer veils, but they did wear wedding rings. Their worship style also differed and permitted the use of musical instruments.

Many of these new arrivals settled in other parts of Ontario, such as Essex County in the Leamington area, or migrated further west to Manitoba. Those who remained in Waterloo Region formed their own congregations, including Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church and Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church. Initially, they also had small congregations in New Hamburg and what is now Cambridge.

In 1988, after decades of living and working alongside each other in southern Ontario, it seemed good to

*Over a century ago, in 1889, some Mennonites in Woolwich Township became concerned about certain trends in the Mennonite church. They were suspicious of a strengthening Methodist style revivalism, the introduction of prayer meetings, evening worship and Sunday school, and the use of the English language in worship.*

the Holy Spirit and to all of us that the three major Mennonite groups—the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference, the Conference of United Mennonite Churches in Ontario, and the Mennonite Conference of Ontario and Quebec—should integrate into MC Eastern Canada. After all, it was these three bodies, plus Kitchener’s Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church (affiliated at the time with the General Conference), that had cooperated in 1963 to form what today is Conrad Grebel University College. They also worked together in Mennonite Central Committee relief work and other projects.

Surface expressions of faith and culture seemed less significant now.

#### **Even newer Mennonites**

Some of the newest Mennonites in Ontario share similar stories of migration. An influx of new immigrants began with the “boat people” of the 1970s, who were assisted by local Mennonites. This refugee and immigrant resettlement work formed some important relationships. Along the way, many of the new arrivals were introduced to Anabaptism. Some of these Latin American and Asian groups formed new Mennonite congregations within MC Eastern Canada.

We now worship each week in 17 different languages, including English, German, Spanish, Hmong, Korean, Laotian, Chinese and Chin.

#### **Not the first**

Any account of our life in this region needs to note our links to Canada’s Aboriginal Peoples, then to others who settled alongside us almost from the beginning, and in increasing numbers in subsequent decades.

Much of the land on which Mennonites originally settled was part of land grants by the British Crown to local aboriginals, which was to include six miles (9.6 kilometres) on each side of the Grand River. This was eventually reduced to the lands on the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford, which was named after Joseph Brant, who worked diligently on behalf of his people in the midst of changing times and supported the British in the American Revolutionary War.

Benjamin Eby, a key Mennonite leader and an entrepreneur, came to the area—which was sometimes referred to as Sand Hills by early settlers, because

## **When you come . . .**

In addition to the usual assembly activities, local organizers have planned a number of tours of Waterloo Region, including:

- **Historic Ebytown.** Engage the historical Mennonite presence in downtown Kitchener over the past two centuries. Tour the Joseph Schneider Haus Museum, whose theme for the week of July 4 to 8 is “Mennonite foodways” (food that really “schmecks!”); the Woodside National Historic Site, the childhood home of William Lyon McKenzie King; and First Mennonite Church, Kitchener.
- **The trail of the Conestoga.** Family-friendly tour of Doon Heritage Village and the Waterloo Region Museum. Step back in time to 1914. Newly restored buildings, artefacts, farm animals and more.
- **Up the Conestoga.** An exploration of history and culture of the Old Order Mennonites beginning at the Visitor Centre in St. Jacobs, plus a visit to an Old Order Mennonite parochial school, and a discussion with a teacher exploring the retention of a horse-and-buggy

tradition while living in a modern world.

- **Up the Nith.** Explore the Nith River Valley; learn about the original 1825 Amish Mennonite settlement; encounter various Amish Mennonite groups; and visit an Amish home, quilt store and buggy shop.
- **MEDA Waterloo Chapter.** Tour two businesses owned by local Mennonites: Leis Pet Distributing, a full-line distributor of pet food and accessories; and Erb Group, a transportation company with 1,200 employees servicing Canada and the U.S.
- **Six Nations of the Grand River.** Visit aboriginal neighbours who offered the land to our Mennonite forebears. Enjoy the picturesque waters of the Grand River; visit the Woodland Cultural Centre, depicting the life and work of the Anishnabe and Onkwehon peoples; take a guided tour of a residential school; and see a reclamation site on the western edge of the Town of Caledonia.

More tours and details can be found at [mennonitechurch.ca/events/waterloo2011/](http://mennonitechurch.ca/events/waterloo2011/).

—Mennonite Church Canada



*Russian Mennonite immigrants walk up Erb St. in Waterloo, Ont., from the railway siding in downtown Waterloo toward Erb St. Mennonite Church, in 1924.*

of the dunes—to run a sawmill and a farm. He taught school and was also the pastor. Eventually, he became bishop of the Mennonite church in Kitchener, now First Mennonite Church. Because of his influence, Sand Hills was renamed Eby Town.

In the second quarter of the 1800s, many German people came to the area in search of new land and to escape the wars in Europe. German Lutherans and Catholics settled alongside the Mennonites. They spoke a dialect similar to the Pennsylvania German of the Mennonites.

Because of this strong German influence, Eby Town was renamed Berlin in the 1830s. Much later, when World War I broke out, the German place name fell into disrepute, and the city was renamed Kitchener, after a British general in the Boer War. There have been several attempts to revert to the name Berlin, but without success. The local German culture is celebrated annually over the Thanksgiving weekend with Oktoberfest activities.

In many ways, Waterloo Region is a microcosm of the wider Mennonite church represented by MC Canada, with

all of its diversity yet united as a people of God.

I invite you to southern Ontario for the

MC Canada assembly in Waterloo from July 4 to 8. Come and meet me at the Grand! ☘

### ☘ For discussion

1. Generations of Mennonites have moved in search of land where they could live out their beliefs in communities of peace. How aware are you of your family roots where you live? How important is this to your sense of identity as an individual, a family and a church?
2. Maurice Martin notes that a Mennonite “habit of the heart” from our beginnings is to be “a people apart.” He describes how various Mennonite groups in Waterloo Region “draw the line in the sand” at different places when it comes to nonconformity to the world. Does it matter to you how we express our nonconformity to the world? Where do you draw the line?
3. There are now more than 20 identifiable Mennonite groups in Ontario. Is this splintering of Mennonites a sign of vigour (they believed strongly enough about matters to debate them and even divide over them), or is it a sign of decay (people sticking to tradition which is faith “gone to seed”)?
4. The story of Mennonite immigration to Waterloo Region has many parallels for Mennonites. How might this history help us better understand newer immigrant groups that have more recently joined Mennonite Church Canada from Asia, Latin America, Africa and other places?
5. When we meet in assembly in July, we will be on the German Land Tract, which was originally the land of the Six Nations people. How aware are you that we in Canada truly live in “our home and native land”? When we arrived, our aboriginal neighbours were our “hosts,” and we came as “guests.” Have we been good guests?

## VIEWPOINTS

## /// Readers write

*We welcome your comments and publish most letters sent by subscribers intended for publication. This section is largely an open forum for the sharing of views. Letters are the opinion of the writer only—publication does not mean endorsement by the magazine or the church. Keep letters to 400 words or less and address issues rather than individuals. We do not countenance rancour or animosity. Personal attacks are inappropriate and will not see the light of print. Please send letters to be considered for publication to letters@canadianmennonite.org or by postal mail or fax, marked “Attn: Readers Write” (our address is on page 3). Letters should include the author’s contact information and mailing address. Letters are edited for length, style and adherence to editorial guidelines.*

## ✉ Story, photo stir up personal memories

I READ THE Henry Dueck obituary (Nov. 15, 2010, page 25) with personal interest. Henry and Helga served the Eben-Ezer congregation and we had fine fellowship as fellow pastors. The “last *altester*” reference made me smile; I am not in that category but I knew all those mentioned in the Jan. 10 correction.

My response to the Jan. 10 “Soup in a jar” cover photo was emotional. My mother spent umpteen hours cooking borscht and blessing us with her love and labour. Henry’s mother also came to mind, who, like my mother, was also a member of Eden Mennonite, Chilliwack, B.C. Both mothers thought their sons couldn’t do anything wrong!

Henry’s mother tried, with all sincerity, to remind, correct and admonish me to take to heart her son’s model life as a pastor. I wonder if acquaintances on earth become friends in heaven.

—DIETRICH REMPEL, ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

## ✉ Egyptian revolution mirrors Radical Reformation

WATCHING EVENTS IN Egypt unfold on Feb. 12, I am struck by the extent to which the natural human soul desperately yearns, and even needs, the elements of honest expression and freedom to survive and grow with respect and self-esteem. The revolution is a secular uprising from the bottom up, and includes all levels and segments of Egyptian society. It has a spontaneity and power that one of the best-equipped and -trained militaries in the Middle East did not dare

to challenge—in fact, could not challenge.

As a privileged inheritor of Anabaptist DNA with deep pacifistic beliefs, I sit in awe and deep gratitude to be able to witness this event. It validates the passion and conviction that started our ancestors back in the Radical Reformation on the road to a posture and belief system that is more powerful than any man-made institution can contain. We should wear this badge with great pride and responsibility, and appreciate how really natural this impulse is to the evolved human condition.

RICHARD PENNER, CALGARY, ALTA.

## ✉ The church needs an ‘integrated calling’ of spiritual and secular

THANK YOU TO Joe Neufeld for writing “Building up God’s kingdom together,” Jan. 24, page 4.

Neufeld tackles a subject I believe we have talked about much too little in our churches and in our schools. The relationship of the social and behavioural sciences to our theological discussions needs much more attention. As he says, most people are not preoccupied by beliefs as much as by their everyday predicaments in their family, job or leisure.

We have too easily separated life into so-called “secular” and “spiritual.” And in that way we have often failed to provide social and behavioural resources to our congregations. We readily send them to “secular” professionals if the need becomes too great.

I like Neufeld’s concept of an “integrated calling.” It seems clear to me that this is what the Christian faith is all about. That is what I understand Menno Simons to call for in his famous “true evangelical faith” statement.

In building up a church for the future, I hope we can have much more dialogue about our faith and our relationship to the socio-psychological matters we all relate to somehow.

BERNIE WIEBE, WINNIPEG, MAN.

## ✉ Assembly 2011 addresses psycho/social/spiritual topics

THANK YOU SO much for the “Building up God’s kingdom together feature,” Jan. 24, page 4.

The church at all levels needs help to better address and respond to issues of mental health. I loudly echo Joe Neufeld’s call to erase the lines between secular and social gifts, and integrate the gifts of all in the mission of “engaging the world with the reconciling gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Neufeld recognizes that Mennonite Church Canada

assembly themes tend to be more theological than psycho/social/spiritual, and challenges the church not to “theologize” serious behavioural problems without critical diagnosis.” This is an important word, and well worth reflecting on deeply. While this year’s assembly theme, “It’s epic: Remembering God’s future,” is again fairly theological, it has a holistic scope.

The extensive list of seminars being prepared for this assembly includes many topics the youth assembly

planning team said mattered to it, and youths are not bound by the categories of “sacred” and “secular” that Neufeld challenges. Some of the seminars that respond to the psycho/social/spiritual aspects of our lives include: “Life flows on: Church, families and mental illness,” “Challenging gender stereotypes,” “Forgiveness: A long road,” and “Sex and the sanctuary.”

The topics Neufeld addresses are important for the

## OUTSIDE THE BOX

# Deliverance from somewhere else

PHIL WAGLER

The story of Esther is stunning in its providential beauty and hope. Despite God never being named, the book bearing a Jewish Persian Queen’s Gentile name—a wonderful twist of biblical irony—is received as Scripture, as God’s very speech. Esther is God doing sign language. God writes himself out of the story, but not out of history. The I AM receives no cameo. No token *merci, gracias, danke* or thanks is given the Almighty. God is silently active.

Uncle Mordecai’s poignant challenge (Esther 4:14b) to his queen-niece is oft

recited: “*And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*” That’s a moving question. That dog will hunt.

Them there words will move you to the core.

There is, however, a subtle danger in hinging the praiseworthy courage of Esther on these words. It can leave deliverance in human hands. Somehow we will do it. The story without God risks becoming a “Yes we can!” fairy tale. Were that the case, it would never have been received by Jewish or Christian tradition as Scripture. Hence, the story’s power, although revealing Esther’s courage, must find its source elsewhere.

Back up a few lines before Mordecai’s question and hear this: “*For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish*” (Esther 4:14a).

We could say fear of impending doom was the key motivator in Esther’s risky breach of Persian protocol. But, again, that misses the point and makes the story a human yarn. Look more closely. Mordecai confidently articulates the sure hope of deliverance. Salvation will come for the Jews. It does not depend on



*The story without God risks becoming a ‘Yes we can!’ fairy tale.*

Esther; she simply has the providential responsibility and privilege of right place and time. Deliverance depends on the unseen hand. Esther can either be swept along or be swept away. Rooted in her trust in the Lord as the “one who delivers,” who acts and is acting even when it seems he is conspicuously absent, Esther steps into the gap.

Many are bemoaning the demise of the church. We get all overcome with emotion over what we can do to deliver ourselves from extermination, sure that

salvation rests in human ability rather than God’s action. We risk writing a story that is not worthy of being called tradition in the long run.

God is a deliverer. He is always acting and stirring. He is always providential even when his silence screams. He is acting now. He is presently transforming lives, neighbourhoods and congregations. He is birthing new movements of the Spirit. He is on the move. Jesus said the gates of hell will never prevail against his church.

The question is whether or not we, as one strain of the Christian tradition, will stand on this confidence and join God in another wave of his gracious acts, or will he need to use someone else who will join him even at the risk of perishing. Have we become so confident in our own ways, comforts, religious systems and supposed

wisdom that we will simply drift into the archives rather than be present participants with the providential deliverer?

Will we, as church planter and pastor Ed Stetzer, author of the LifeWay Research Blog, asks, “be the groups that reach postmodern culture, or will God have to bypass us and use others?”

*Phil Wagler (phil\_wagler@yahoo.ca) is praying for the gift of understanding God’s sign language and the courage to step into the fray come what may.*

health of the church. We need the wisdom and active engagement of all to partner with God as agents of reconciliation in our world.

ELSIE REMPEL, WINNIPEG, MAN.

*Elsie Rempel is director of Christian nurture and assembly seminar coordinator for Mennonite Church Canada.*

## NEW ORDER VOICE

# Solomon's splendour revisited

AIDEN ENNS

When I think back to my early experience of Bible stories, I recall that King Solomon was “good,” he enjoyed God’s favour. Sure, Solomon had riches and power, but he had immense wisdom, which put him in the good books . . . or so I thought.

Looking back to my church roots, it makes sense that I would inherit such a view of so-called benevolent dictators.

I was a child born into a post-war Mennonite immigrant community in Vancouver, B.C. In the late 1940s, my dad and his family came from Russia via Germany to the Fraser Valley. They were displaced pacifists with capitalist—and deep anti-communist—values. Stalin’s troops had killed or abducted many of our people, including my uncle and grandfather.

We came to a new country of freedom and opportunity, where we amassed wealth and relative power. Just as God smiled upon the wisdom and power of King Solomon, we trusted that our new wealth and power was a blessing from God.

While I cherish the Christian atmosphere and entrepreneurial optimism of my early experiences in church, I have come to doubt the teachings that bless the power and wealth of us so-called “good” people.

But the great King Solomon, the king of wealth, power and wisdom,

had it wrong. So says Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann in his new book, *Journey to the Common Good* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2010). Solomon’s reign was similar to the reign of Pharaoh, based on exploitation and suppression of freedom.

The king dominates with a bureaucracy, a system of taxes and a standing army. The “royal consciousness,” as Brueggemann calls it, thrives in a culture of affluence and requires an oppressive social policy. “The draw back into the fearful, anxious world of Pharaoh is enormously compelling for almost all of us. Our memory fades, and we imagine the security that Pharaoh’s system offered and yearn for an imagined well-being back there,” he writes.

The Prophet Jeremiah promoted an alternative to a royal consciousness. He says the Lord delights in an alternative



*Solomon's reign was similar to the reign of Pharaoh, based on exploitation and suppression of freedom.*

triad of “steadfast love, justice and righteousness” (Jeremiah 9:24).

To have steadfast love, writes Brueggemann, is to stand in solidarity, to be reliable to all the partners. Justice “concerns distribution in order to make sure that all members of the community have access to resources. . . . The particular

subject of [God’s] justice is the triad ‘widow, orphan, immigrant,’ those without leverage or muscle to sustain their own legitimate place in society,” he writes.

Righteousness is “taking an initiative to intervene effectively in order to rehabilitate society, to respond to social grievance and to correct every humanity-diminishing activity,” writes Brueggemann.

In the New Testament, Jesus stands in the historical stream of the prophets, challenging the royal consciousness and the assumption that God loves the emperor’s ways.

The opposite way is life-giving; the way of weakness, ironically, brings freedom. Look at the birds by the feeder: You don’t see one giant bird coming in and robbing all the food, setting up storehouses for itself.

Look at the flowers: You don’t see them putting on a new outfit every day. “Yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these” (Matthew 6:29).

This is a prophetic word against the way of Solomon, the way that is normally held in high esteem. This gives energy to those who are oppressed and is threaten-

ing to those who are comfortable. As one who is comfortable, I still feel numb, but it’s losing its grip.

*Aiden Enns is a member of Hope Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man., and the editor of Geez magazine. He can be reached at [aiden@geezmagazine.org](mailto:aiden@geezmagazine.org).*

## ✉ Christians are 'commissioned' to convert others

RE: "DON'T JUST hand out the Bible," Feb. 21, page 27.

It's very disturbing to read that a former pastor (Mennonite or not) finds it offensive to try to "sway" people to become Christians. Jesus' own words in John 14:6—"I am the way and the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father except through me"—make it plain that unless people recognize Jesus as their personal Saviour, they have no hope of spending eternity in heaven. Jesus also gave us the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20a: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." It is hard to understand how the community in which we live could change the meaning of these words of the Lord.

Surely, we need to respect people of different faiths and treat them like we would like to be treated; however, we still need to stand on what the Bible

proclaims. Ezekiel 3:17-18 gives us this warning: "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. When I say to a wicked man, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to dissuade him from his evil ways in order to save his life, that wicked man will die for his sin and I will hold you accountable for his blood."

As Christians, we have a great responsibility to spread the good news of God's love that he lavished on us, in that "he gave us his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

We are living in a world where truth has become something that is up to each individual, but this is a very dangerous way to live in light of our access to God's Word. It seems that if we disagree with someone, then we must "fear" them and what they believe. This is not so. God is asking us to stand and proclaim his good news to everyone; in fact, he demands it.

MURRAY GERBER, BRUNNER, ONT.

### FROM OUR LEADERS

## 'And yet . . .'

KEN WARKENTIN

I can best write about my hopes and dreams for the future of the church by reflecting on the past. During the last 29 years of pastoral ministry I have experienced growth, turmoil, grace, struggle, surprise, conflict and peace in the church. To each one of those words I can attach stories of God breaking into my life, and into the corporate life of the body of Christ. These experiences of Emmanuel inspire my vision for the future of the conference.

I have known the profound paradox of the words "and yet." These words help me understand my faith. We live in faith that God is not finished with us yet. While we may experience fear, yet we believe that God is love and perfect love casts out fear. We may live with guilt and yet we believe in the profound forgiveness found at the foot of the cross. We may live with brokenness and yet we are invited to eat

the bread and drink the cup of the hope of restoration.

I am profoundly aware that as a Mennonite area church in Canada we face a future full of opportunities and



*The challenge and the opportunity before us is simply to be the body of Christ where we live.*

challenges that will stretch our faith, increase our understanding of the will of God, and cause us to ponder the "and yet" responses from God.

The challenge and the opportunity before us is simply to be the body of Christ where we live. To do this we will love the people around us, bring hope and healing to those who are hurting and broken, read the Word of God boldly and in community; nurture the wonder and mystery of God in worship and meditation; and walk with each other in solidarity when

we are challenged, in peace when faced with conflict, and with grace when there is distrust and disunity.

My vision for the church includes service that begins with an understanding of Christian justice, moves to an awareness of the felt needs of others, and results in discernment that demands action.

I want to be a part of a church that embraces the Anabaptist heritage of radical commitment to following the teachings of Jesus. I want to live out the examples

of Jesus to transform injustice in all its forms and to be an advocate for those at the edges of society.

As a body we are diverse and resourceful. We will do well to embrace the hope that is found in a God who declares grace into our relationships, ministries and dreams. We live before a watching world that is longing to experience a people who know the God of "and yet."

*Ken Warkentin is the new executive director of Mennonite Church Manitoba.*

## ✉ Visit to Sam's place leaves customer 'surprised'

YOUR "A NEW direction for Sam's Place" report, Feb. 7, page 19, was very timely. The issue arrived the Monday after we had been to Sam's Place on Feb. 19.

What was our experience there? We arrived, a party of six, at about 11 a.m. We asked for coffee and were served promptly. We were a bit surprised to find that coffee is \$2.50 per cup. We had planned to stay for lunch, but were informed that the person responsible for lunch was not expected to come in that day.

I browsed the bookshelves and was surprised to find that Bibles were priced at \$3 and up. At the thrift store where I volunteer, the policy is to make Bibles and Christian literature generally available free of charge.

I was surprised again when I found a book by Evelyn Jacks, a tax advisor, priced at \$3, as this book of tax advice was based on the 2001 federal budget.

One paperback romance novel I checked out was priced at \$2; at the thrift store they are sold for 50 cents.

Finally, I note that Brad Reimer, coordinator of Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba's resource generation team, is quoted as saying that it costs MCC up to \$1,500 per month—\$18,000 per year—to keep Sam's Place open.

JIM SUDERMAN, WINNIPEG, MAN.

## ✉ MCC 'divorce' a cause for confession, remorse

I CONTINUE TO be troubled of spirit about the decision of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to a Canadian-U.S. divorce—amicable separation?—after 90 years of marriage. I am troubled because I hear no voices of repentance over this severing of Mennonite programs into Canadian and U.S. parts. No voices of confession, remorse, sorrow.

My memories of MCC are rooted in my boyhood in

the 1920s, when MCC's transnational identity inspired in me a deep sense of satisfaction in being Mennonite.

I now feel silenced by my born-and-bred U.S. Mennonite identity in speaking in protest against severing the bonds of what for me has been a cherished binational union. Despite my stance of being critical of American imperial arrogance and control, I sense I cannot divest myself of the taint of my American-ness. South of the 49th parallel, I yearn for a Mennonite confessional event in which we voice our sorrow over the impending dismembering, and stand open to instruction and correction where we have offended and have been insensitive in working with our Canadian brothers and sisters.

In the meantime, I am heartened by the decision of representatives of Mennonite World Conference (MWC), who chose to not join hands with MCC in managing a revised MCC global structure. MWC has nurturing and caring relationships that should not be compromised by issues of control, representation, budgets and power.

There must be those who concur with me on the above thoughts. MCC has just celebrated its 90th year. Are there others who would wish to join now in an event of gratitude for an MCC past, contrition for an MCC divided, and hope for an MCC renewed?

ROBERT KREIDER, NORTH NEWTON, KAN.

## ✉ God asks for 'our whole selves,' including our money

RE: "WHY GIVE?", Feb. 7, page 9.

Dori Zerbe Cornelsen made some very good points in her "God, Money and Me" column, especially the part where she said, "God asks for our whole selves." Shouldn't the column then be called "God, Me and Money"? Has money become a "pretty/ugly altar" (a reference to the page 4 feature about beauty and ugliness, "Breaking down the pretty/ugly altars")?

MARLENE HIEBERT, BLUMENORT, MAN.



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## /// Correction

Gerald Good pastored Hillcrest Mennonite Church, New Hamburg, Ont. Incorrect information appeared in the "I don't have to prove anything" article about his wife, Martha Smith Good, on page 10 of the March 7 issue. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the error.

## /// Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

- Bartlett**—Camden Joel (b. Jan. 29, 2011), to Jeremy and Donna Bartlett, Cassel Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.
- Bauman**—Braden Alexander (b. Feb. 12, 2011), to Phil and Kate Bauman, Waterloo North Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.
- Brown**—Margot Rebecca Emily (b. Jan. 10, 2011), to Woodie Brown and Leanne Martin, Hanover Mennonite, Ont.
- Erb**—Sophia Elysse (b. Feb. 27, 2011), to Kyle and Vanesse Erb, Crosshill Mennonite, Ont.
- Janzen**—Annalise Valerie (b. Feb. 18, 2011), to Derek and Darcie Janzen, Trinity Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.
- Jones**—Mia Hansen (b. Jan. 15, 2011), to Ryan and Amy Jones, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont.
- Kroeker**—Joshua Braden (b. Dec. 27, 2010), to Jamie and Paula Kroeker, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont.
- Leis**—Noah Brendan Ray (b. Jan. 28, 2011), to Sheryl and Brendan Leis, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.
- Martin**—Braiden Avery (b. Feb. 24, 2011), to Lance and Andrea Martin, St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.
- Martin**—Isaac Ryan (b. Feb. 26, 2011), to Ryan and Lori Martin, St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.
- Sararus**—Myrna Laverty (b. Jan. 13, 2011), to Dave Sararus and Juanita Laverty, Hanover Mennonite, Ont.
- Sauder**—Caleb James (b. Feb. 27, 2011), to Will and Janelle Sauder, Carrot River Mennonite, Sask.
- Schultz**—Cole Kenneth (b. Feb. 21, 2011), to Tim and Kaitlin Shulz, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., in Toronto, Ont.
- Wiebe**—Anna Katharina (b. Jan. 7, 2011), to Sigmar and Karin Wiebe, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

### Marriages

- Enns/Thiessen**—Amanda Enns and Mat Thiessen, at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Jan. 22, 2011.
- Wiebe/Wright**—Edward Wiebe (First Mennonite, Edmonton, Alta.) and Mary Wright, in Toronto, Ont., Jan. 22, 2011.

### Deaths

- Benner**—Stanley Longacre, 65 (b. May 30, 1945; d. March 7, 2011), Rockway Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.
- Buehler**—Vincent, 65 (b. Feb. 12, 1946; d. Feb. 24, 2011), St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.
- Derksen**—Henry, 85 (b. May 25, 1925; d. Feb. 24, 2011), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.
- Huebert**—Marie, 87 (b. Sept. 2, 1923; d. March 1, 2011), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.
- Lebold**—Audrey, 77 (b. July 12, 1933; d. Feb. 24, 2011), Avon Mennonite, Stratford, Ont.
- Neudorf**—Victor, 81 (b. March 17, 1929; d. February 21, 2011), Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
- Rempel**—Arthur, 82 (b. Jan. 3, 1929; Feb. 12, 2011), Harrow Mennonite, Ont.
- Sawatzky**—Mary, 64 (b. June 14, 1946; d. Feb. 1, 2011), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.
- Schultz**—Ruth Aveon (nee Oesch), 78 (b. Sept. 23, 1932; d. Jan. 23, 2011), Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont.
- Seibert**—Gordon, 81 (b. Oct. 5, 1929; d. Feb. 14, 2011), Tofield Mennonite, Alta.

**Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones announcements within four months of the event. Please send Milestones announcements by e-mail to [milestones@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:milestones@canadianmennonite.org), including the congregation name and location. When sending death notices, please include birth date and last name at birth if available.**

## Pontius' Puddle



## MENNONITE WOMEN CANADA

—A place to belong—

WOMEN WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH

### As God's field

BY RUBY HARDER AND  
NAOMI UNGER

*"For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building" (I Corinthians 3:9).*

Although things got off to a slippery start in 2011, seven Saskatchewan Women in Mission executive and program committee members successfully navigated the icy residential streets of Saskatoon on a cold January morning to get to their first planning meeting of the year. Hosted by Myrna Sawatzky, president-elect, business was conducted in a warm atmosphere of sharing praise, prayer requests, ideas, questions and food—including relevant recipes!



PHOTO BY AUDREY HARDER



*Members of the Saskatchewan Women in Mission leadership include, from left to right: Marlies Patkau, Barb Wolfe, Myrna Sawatzky, Ruby Harder, Naomi Unger, Marian Hooge Jones and Tina Siemens.*

The upcoming April 30 Enrichment Day will highlight the theme of "God's gift through health issues," with several women sharing stories of how they have experienced God through personal or family disability or debilitating illness.

Changes to the constitution were discussed. It is being proposed that all women in the 33 member churches of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan be welcomed to participate in Women in Mission activities whether or not they are involved in one of 28 church women's groups. This is in line with a Mennonite Women Canada recommendation.

Further reflection on how to inform women not currently involved in these groups about Women in Mission

in open, inviting and faith-building ways is required. At present, mainly older women attend the annual retreat, Enrichment Day and the local monthly meetings, where they work on projects and raise money for missions as important expressions of their faith.

Saskatchewan Women in Mission will continue to plan events that speak to, and spiritually nurture, that generation, while also looking for new ways to engage younger women, welcoming their energy and new perspectives as we listen to each other's stories, and together celebrate our diverse sisterhood and our unique contributions to the church.

These are important goals which our organization seeks to encourage, and which, indeed, are already happening in local congregations, as various groups work in formal and informal ways to foster community across the generations and share their experiences with other groups.

For example, women of all ages participate in prayer-sister networks, Bible studies and parent/tot groups in various settings. In one congregation, women organized an intergenerational evening that drew a full house. Women were asked to submit a garment/outfit that held a special place in their hearts and write a few words as to why. These outfits were modelled by female youths and younger women from the congregation while the commentaries were read. It was a wonderfully celebrative occasion, mixing the generations in a fun way while fostering community.

Other Saskatchewan Women in Mission highlights this past year included:

- Receiving a monetary gift from the estate of Helena Lesser, of Rosthern Mennonite Church, which is continuing to make a difference in "God's field" now. It resulted in a one-time donation of \$5,000 for a seminary student in China, as well as funds to assist with the production of the most recent Mennonite Central Committee Christmas CD.

- Creating a new logo based on the above Scripture text, which is the Saskatchewan Women in Mission



theme verse. Designed by Lavonne Dyck, previously an art instructor at the Freeman Academy in South Dakota, who now lives in Glenbush, Sask., the logo begins with the cross of Christ which intersects with the "S" for Saskatchewan, followed by the "W" for women, which sweeps up into a stalk of grain, indicating that we are from the Prairies and are "God's field," and ends with the "M" for mission, symbolizing our desire to reach out to others.

Our prayer is that we may "be and do" what our motto and logo say. ☸

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## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

## MC MANITOBA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

# 'Before the watching world'

STORY AND PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent  
GRETNA, MAN.

The annual Mennonite Church Manitoba gathering did not bring forth momentous decisions, but it did cause the 147 delegates—representing 37 of the area church's 50 congregations—to occasionally squirm uncomfortably, express exasperation at times, and grapple with several challenges.

The 64th annual gathering of the area church was held at Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, on Feb. 25 and 26. Two

keynote speakers gave their perspectives on how the Mennonite church should conduct itself "before the watching world," the theme of the two-day event.

Citing Jeremiah 29, Phil Wagler, *Canadian Mennonite* columnist of "Outside the Box" and pastor of Gracepoint Community Church in Surrey, B.C., compared the Mennonite church in today's world to the exiled Israelites in Babylon. God had no intention of rescuing them quickly, said Wagler: "The message they needed to hear was God's call to embrace their exile and to work for the benefit of the community to which they had been exiled." Not an easy mandate in a society that puts so much emphasis on individualism, he said, adding, though, that it is the only way the church will secure its own welfare.

Aiden Enns, *Canadian Mennonite* co-columnist of "New Order Voice" and founder/editor of *Geez Magazine*, said, "I don't think we are exiles. I think we are in the belly of the empire . . . If we enjoy the spoils of the empire, I'm saying that is a bad thing. If we stand idly by, we are complicit. Jesus, like Jeremiah, had a bias for those who are suffering and for the disenfranchised. To have a more vital connection with God, I don't want to wait around in comfort, but I want to share the same bias as Christ." Enns urged the delegates and MC Manitoba as a body to "struggle with what to do with our wealth and privilege."

As delegates discussed the passions and activities in their churches, it was apparent that many are either involved in outreach in their communities or looking for ways to be more engaged. Community pastors, neighbourhood clubs, and projects for the homeless and destitute were a few examples of how churches are trying to be an active presence in their communities.

"If your congregation was no longer here, who would notice? It is also a good question for MC Manitoba," said Norm Voth, director of evangelism and service ministries.

"As Mennonite churches in Manitoba, we work very much alone, though," said one delegate. "We don't know much about each other. Could MC Manitoba be more of a clearinghouse? Could it provide places of connection?"

Board and staff also wanted to hear from the delegates about the governance structure for the camping ministry.

Delegates were reassured that "MC Manitoba will continue to own the camps," said board chair Hans Werner.

Delegates expressed some exasperation with the process to change camp governance:

- "My fear is that nothing is going to happen and we'll go through this in a few years again."
- "This consumes too much energy and air space at our conferences."

A camp task force has been appointed and will continue the process of determining a new governance model.

Werner updated delegates on other aspects of the New Directions document presented at the February 2010 annual meeting. "Phasing out reference groups and working towards project teams has not begun yet," he said, adding that the board is continuing its work on improving ways of communicating, including a re-working of the website. "We want to place more emphasis on the executive director being the 'face' of MC Manitoba," said Werner.

Ken Warkentin, the new "face" of MC Manitoba, was as comfortable with the guitar as with the pulpit. He shared his testimony and vision for MC Manitoba. A service of commissioning was held for



*Henry Kliewer, standing, the director of Mennonite Church Manitoba Leadership Ministries, offers a prayer of blessing during the commissioning service for Ken Warkentin, the new executive director for MC Manitoba. "I am looking forward to the significant challenges that lie ahead," said Warkentin, who has been involved in church work for 29 years.*

Warkentin, the new executive director of the Manitoba area church, with MC Canada general secretary Willard Metzger, MC Manitoba director of Leadership Ministries Henry Kliewer and Werner presiding.

MC Manitoba treasurer Tom Seals presented the \$1.8 million budget for 2011,

which was approved by the board last November after the fall delegate session failed to reach a quorum. The church giving part of the budget remains the same as 2010—\$691,779—which represents an actual 3 percent increase in giving from the churches because of a \$32,366 shortfall last year. ❧

to their congregations and report on what they had experienced.

The Gingriches attended the 1981 weekend and a year later were leaders. They describe Marriage Encounter as a “defined program with a goal.” Leaders share their own experiences with the ups and downs of marriage. The weekend is three-quarters sharing and one-quarter teaching. Couples write out their feelings and then read them to each other in privacy, learning to feel their feelings, express them to themselves and then to their partner, and finally to process them together.

Marriage Encounter’s basic premise is that marriages don’t break down because of sex, money, disease or death, but through a failure to communicate about these and other things. The hope is that couples will continue to share feelings and thoughts after the weekend, “talking about feelings . . . without judgement.”

Jim Martin says the organization’s motto is, “Making good marriages better.” However, many couples come “in trouble,” he says, sometimes sent by pastors as a last-ditch effort to save their marriage.

Marriage Encounter has a clear Christian component. Couples are prayed for by others throughout the weekend. Laverne stresses that this is a Christ-centred effort, in that marriage needs to be built on the foundation of the Trinity.

The Martins currently help lead the two annual sessions in Ontario and serve on the North American council. ❧

## ‘Better than the honeymoon’

*Mennonite Marriage Encounter celebrates 30 years*

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent

In its 30th year as a Mennonite institution, and nearing 60 years internationally, Marriage Encounter is wondering about its future.

Some groups in the United States have disbanded. Using technology like Facebook and Twitter is one way of trying to reach younger couples. The last few years have seen as few as four couples attend the weekend sessions, making Ontario co-leaders Jim and Ruth Martin wonder how to be relevant. But some younger couples report that seeing older couples continue to struggle and learn has been a good example.

As a voluntary organization, dependant upon donations of time and money, the Martins feel the pressure, but from their own experience they believe strongly in the process. Ruth reports that her first

Marriage Encounter weekend as a participant “was better than the honeymoon.”

Marriage Encounter began as a local parochial Roman Catholic marriage renewal program in Barcelona, Spain, nearly 60 years ago. It came to North America in 1966 and is now held in 87 countries around the world.

Laverne and Joyce Gingrich first attended Marriage Encounter in Chatham, Ont., in 1976. By 1979, the Family Life Commission of the then General Conference Mennonite Church under Fred Unrau’s leadership was looking to form a Mennonite Marriage Encounter.

The first weekend was held at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., on the 1980 Mother’s Day Weekend, attended by couples and observers sent by various congregations. The observers were to go back



*Laverne and Joyce Gingrich, left, together with Ruth and Jim Martin, have led the Mennonite Marriage Encounter weekends over the years.*

MC B.C. ANNUAL MEETING

# Expanding ministries in MC B.C.

*Delegates hear of church plant, native ministries*

STORY AND PHOTO BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent  
SURREY, B.C.

Reports on a new church plant model and passion for native ministries highlighted the annual delegate sessions of Mennonite Church B.C., held at Living Hope Christian Fellowship, Surrey, on Feb. 26. Delegates followed “Being a Peace Church” as a theme, carried out through both business and workshop sessions.

Steve Heinrichs, who has been doing a research project on urban aboriginal assessment in conjunction with MC Canada and Mennonite Central Committee B.C., gave an impassioned speech on how Mennonites can connect with First Nations people in creative ways.

“What can I as a white person do to help indigenous persons?” he challenged the delegates to consider. “We must recognize that problems exist not only within

the Indian community ‘over there,’ but within the white community as well. The main goal of this project is to connect these two communities in creative ways. . . . It is my conviction that to live faithful lives as peacemakers in this place, then we’ve got to know the natives. It’s a calling we need to make time for,” he said.

The Service, Peace and Justice Committee

presented a proposal that MC B.C. financially and structurally support a half-time staff person to continue the Aboriginal and Mennonite Ministry Project from April 2011 to April 2012. A motion to support the idea in principle was passed; the leadership board is to pursue this proposal in a positive way in the coming year and then communicate back to the congregations to

*‘It was a serious attempt to make the budget presentation missional, as well as more meaningful. It was also the first time for me, someone who is really not a financial thinker, to present and field questions on a budget.’*

*(Garry Janzen, MC B.C. executive minister)*

## Peace Church identity explored at LEAD conference

BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent  
SURREY, B.C.

With the theme of “Being a Peace Church,” 88 church leaders and others interested in the topic met at Living Hope Christian Fellowship, Surrey, for the annual Mennonite Church B.C. Leaders, Elders and Deacons (LEAD) conference on Feb. 25.

Keynote speaker Lois Barrett, director/associate professor of the Great Plains Seminary, Newton, Kan., entitled her talk, “Why are we a Peace Church?” She began by giving a short history of the Anabaptist movement, placing its beginning in 1525 in context with the Peasants’ Revolt in Europe.

Barrett noted that the words for “faith” and “faithfulness” come from the same root in both Hebrew and Greek, so for the early Anabaptists, Christian faith and living out a nonviolent faith went hand in hand. They

also understood that becoming Christlike meant imitating Christ, as in the words of I Peter 2:21-25.

On the question of violence in the Old Testament, Barrett acknowledged some troublesome Old Testament passages. “God’s wrath is the boomerang effect of violence,” she said. “People reap the consequences of the violence. One difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament is that, in the Old Testament, people attribute everything to God.”

She talked about covenant language being used in reference to God’s relationship with God’s people: “*If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation*” (II Corinthians 6:16-21). “It is covenant language, legal language, to say, ‘*I will be your God and you will be my people.*’ The language of covenant includes [the words] just, righteous,



*At the annual delegate sessions of Mennonite Church B.C., Camp Squeah staff members Tim Larson, Geoff Gould and Rob Tiessen present a skit about camp ministries.*

see how it can be supported.

Living Hope, the host church, gave an informative presentation on a new church expansion model it is developing in the Sullivan area of East Surrey. Living Hope is starting a new branch of the same congregation in that area, differing from a traditional church plant in that it is still considered part of Living Hope.

"This is taking part of who we are and planting it in another area," said Pastor Lorin Bergen. "We are going to them, as opposed to having them come to us."

The Sullivan group, which currently numbers 26, will soon meet weekly, and

in September there are plans to branch out into the community as a whole.

Camp Squeah staff gave updates on the current camp programs, including a new family camp and the launch of a new mentoring and discipleship program, both beginning this summer. It was announced that the camp plans to celebrate its 50th anniversary in two years.

Delegates tackled a potentially difficult topic in considering how to deal with the property of Olivet Church in Abbotsford, which withdrew from MC B.C. three years ago. Discussion as to what to do with the church property, to which MC B.C. holds

title, has been ongoing between Olivet's leadership and the MC B.C. leadership board, and as yet has not been resolved. A diversity of opinions was expressed as to how to proceed, with the general opinion that the leadership board should continue to be in dialogue with Olivet as to the property's future.

Presentation of the budget took a new turn, when executive minister Garry Janzen tried something different in giving a "narrative presentation" of MC B.C. finances. In the absence of a treasurer, Janzen informed delegates in anecdotal form where the area church money was going, rather than just having figures presented.

"It was a serious attempt to make the budget presentation missional, as well as more meaningful. It was also the first time for me, someone who is really not a financial thinker, to present and field questions on a budget," he commented later.

Next year's sessions in Abbotsford will celebrate the 75th anniversary of MC B.C. Guest speaker will be Stuart Murray, author of *The Naked Anabaptist*. A committee has been formed to update the history of MC B.C. in the next year and make it accessible to all. ❧

justice, righteousness, judgments."

Between morning and afternoon sessions, participants could attend a choice of four different workshops on the themes of peace for youths, peace in the workplace, peace in the family, and peace in the church.

In the afternoon, Barrett focused on forgiveness and reconciliation. "What is the church's missional vocation in a culture of fear and revenge?" she asked. "Forgiveness is not part of our culture. Our culture says fight fire with fire, not overcome evil with good. We live in a culture that has the myth of redemptive violence."

Forgiveness can be unilateral, provides release, leaves vengeance to God if relationship cannot be repaired, and opens the door to reconciliation. Practical suggestions from Barrett for Christians today to cultivate the practices of reconciliation included, "Model the practices yourself, and carry the vision; listen, discern and communicate."

Barrett said those in the church must teach, share and hold each other accountable. "The church is called to be a witness in the world," she stressed. "The church is not

the perfect example of Christ in the world, but it's all the world has."



*Linda Enns, left, of Peace Mennonite Church and a member of the MC B.C. Church Health Committee, greets LEAD conference speaker Lois Barret*

# A solid spiritual and educational foundation

*New Early Learning Christian Centre opens in Winnipeg*

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU  
Manitoba Correspondent

After many years of planning, Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary and Middle Schools opened its Early Learning Christian Centre in January. On March 3, an official event, with political and childcare dignitaries in attendance, celebrated this new Christian daycare program.

In 2010, the schools' 30-year-old St. James campus, which offers Kindergarten through Grade 8 instruction, was able to purchase the building it has been renting from the school. The Early Learning Christian Centre is located in this facility.

"The daycare students are able to use the school facilities, such as the computer lab and the gym, as well as attending school chapels every Friday," says Nancy

Stefaniuk, the schools' public relations director. "The children are part of the community, which makes for an easy transition to Kindergarten."

The daycare centre opened with 24 children, but now all 32 spots are filled and there is a growing waiting list.

"It is a Christian daycare that has government financial support," explains Stefaniuk. "The staff is Christian and the program includes Christian aspects, such as prayers before meals and snacks, as well as weekly chapel attendance."

"The songs, music, books, and even the equipment and toys reflect a Christian approach," says program supervisor Marja Masotti. "The way we approach the

questions the children ask will hopefully provide a solid spiritual and educational foundation"

"It is very much a play-based learning centre, but has an emerging curriculum," Masotti adds, noting that the children are helped to reach certain benchmarks to show readiness for starting school.

Crestview Park Day Nursery, which has 35 years of successful experience, has been brought on board to assist with the administration and operation of the program.

The Early Learning Christian Centre is geared for children from two to five years of age, and runs year-round.

"First priority is given to current families who already have children in the school, but beyond that it is open to anyone who accepts the school's statement of faith," says Stefaniuk.

The schools' Fort Garry campus opened in 1994 and offers Kindergarten to Grade 6 classes. "Next on the list is to start an Early Learning Christian Centre there," says Stefaniuk, who hopes that goal can be reached in the next two years. ☸

WINNIPEG MENNONITE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS PHOTO



Guests at the official opening of the new Early Learning Christian Centre at the St. James campus of Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary and Middle Schools on March 3 include Gord Mackintosh, Manitoba minister of family services and consumer affairs, seated left; Kirkfield Park MLA Sharon Blady, seated centre; and Grant Nordman, city councillor for St. Charles, kneeling right.

# Conrad Grebel appoints its seventh president

By JENNIFER KONKLE

Conrad Grebel University College  
WATERLOO, ONT.

Susan Schultz Huxman, Ph.D., has been appointed the seventh president of Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo. She will assume her duties on July 1 following the completion of Henry Paetkau's term as the sixth president at the end of June.

Huxman is completing her seventh year as the director of the Elliott School of Communication at Wichita State University (WSU) in Kansas. She has held various administrative roles at WSU since 1990, balancing these responsibilities with her passion for teaching.

She continues to teach and mentor students in writing, speaking and research-intensive courses. As an active scholar in the field of rhetoric, media literacy and corporate communication, Huxman



Huxman

has published two dozen scholarly articles and book chapters. Her dissertation, "In the world but not of it: Mennonite rhetoric in World War I as an enactment of paradox," has inspired several publications, including a book-in-progress entitled *Landmark Speeches in U.S. Pacifism*.

"I am delighted to serve Conrad Grebel, where there is a clear connection between a world-class public university and Mennonite education," says Huxman. "The Grebel academic model is forward-thinking and attractive. Opportunities for specialization, combined with an Anabaptist faith overlay, is 'the best of both worlds' that students today are seeking."

"In getting to know Conrad Grebel," Huxman continues, "I have been most impressed with the authentic expression of its mission to seek wisdom, nurture faith and pursue peace."

"Mennonite education has been a significant part of my life," Huxman notes. "From my formative years of growing up at Bethel College, Kan., as the president's daughter and attending as an undergrad, to serving today in my congregation and on the executive board of Western District Conference."

Huxman earned a B.A. in English from Bethel College in 1982, and an M. A. and Ph.D. in communication studies from the University of Kansas in 1987. She joined the Speech Communication faculty at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C., for three years before transitioning to the Elliott School of Communication.

A move to Ontario represents a homecoming of sorts for Huxman, as her father, Harold Schultz, was one of the first graduates of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate in Kitchener. Her grandfather, A. J. Schultz, was involved in the establishment of Chesley Lake Camp, near Allenford, Ont. ❧

# Mennonite Historical Society launches new projects

By SAM STEINER

Mennonite Historical Society of Canada  
SASKATOON, SASK.

At its 2011 annual meeting in January, the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada approved two new multi-year initiatives:

- Esther Epp-Tiessen of Winnipeg, Man., has been contracted to write a history of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada, which will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2013. MCC Canada's work in international relief and in a wide variety of Canadian projects is well known within and outside the Mennonite community. However, the ability of widely disparate Mennonite groups to work together in 1963 was not a foregone conclusion. Funding for the project will be shared by MCC Canada and the national historical society. Ken Reddig chairs the project steering committee on behalf of the historical society, and will take leadership in fundraising for it.



Epp-Tiessen

- The creation of a genealogical website will give particular attention to digitizing primary source documents for display,

with transliteration and translation as required. The site will provide one standardized online source for Mennonite-related genealogical data in Canada. Most of the provincial Mennonite historical societies have already endorsed the venture. The first step will be fundraising for creation of the necessary software.

Two awards of excellence were presented at the annual meeting to recognize significant contributions to the advancement of Canadian Mennonite history through research and writing:

- The late Dick Epp (1927-2009) was a longtime leader of the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan, and edited its *Historian* newsletter for 11 years. He wrote extensively on Mennonite life in Saskatchewan.

- Esther Patkau has written family histories, as well as histories of Rosthern Junior College and First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon. She has led workshops on memoir-writing and has helped to translate and transliterate many older German-language documents. ❧

## GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

# 'Can we trust the government?'

*Hillcrest Mennonite produces photovoltaic electricity*

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent  
NEW HAMBURG, ONT.

Nearly a year after receiving an award from the Waterloo Region's Greening Sacred Spaces organization, Hillcrest Mennonite Church in New Hamburg was the site for a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario solar open house on Feb. 26.

Hillcrest has installed a ground-based, one kilowatt-per-hour (kWh) photovoltaic array. Originally the brainchild of Rob Yost of Hillcrest, it was part of the congregation's dream to use less energy both in regard to saving money and as a way of caring for creation by reducing its carbon footprint. Although Pastor Jan Steckley feels like the whole process moved rather quickly—the congregation only voted last January to do this—the road was not without bumps and potholes.

Part-way through the process, the Ontario government changed the rules for who could install such systems and the rate paid to producers for their electricity, leading the congregation to wonder, "Can we trust the government?"

While the system had a significant start-up costs, the 80.2 cents per kWh paid out by the government for the electricity produced means that the array can pay for itself in as little as 10 years, long before the system's life expectancy will run out.

The provincial program has been very popular—there are similarly sized units within sight of Hillcrest—so the church's installation was delayed until early February of this year. But within days it was connected to the grid and producing electricity.

On the day of the open house, which was cloudy and snowy, the unit was still producing about 20 percent of its peak potential.

The congregation was able to borrow

all of the costs of the project and expects to begin earning an income that will be used both for the congregation and potential projects to help others. Hillcrest has also installed more energy-efficient lights and hot water tanks, programmable thermostats and insulation, and has educated custodial staff on how to save energy.

More than a hundred people attended the open house, where they saw the unit in action, considered energy poverty, and talked with representatives of Greening Sacred Spaces (a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping churches and other religious groups improve their use of energy by upgrading



*Rob Yost of Hillcrest Mennonite Church stands at the base of the congregation's one-kWh photovoltaic solar-energy system.*

their buildings) and the Residential Energy Efficiency Program. They were also able to talk with a number of vendors of solar, wind and water energy technology about their products. ❧

## /// Briefly noted

### **EFC decries Pakistani minister's assassination for defending religious freedom**

On March 1, Shahbaz Bhatti, the Pakistan minister for minority affairs, was assassinated in a hail of bullets because of his defence of minority rights in Pakistan. Within hours, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC), to which Mennonite Church Canada belongs, along with Christians around the world, was calling on governments in Pakistan, Canada and around the world to honour his memory by continuing to defend the rights of religious minorities. Bhatti was an outspoken critic of Pakistan's blasphemy law and was urging its abolition at the time of his death. Bhatti's opposition to the blasphemy law in the Muslim-dominated country—and charges he was an "infidel Christian"—were cited in pamphlets left by his assassins as the reason for his assassination. Bhatti's assassination underscores the peril religious minorities face in Pakistan, both from the blasphemy law and the culture that it creates within the country. The EFC urges the Government of Pakistan to honour Bhatti's work and memory by abolishing the country's blasphemy law and by ensuring that another strong advocate for minorities will be quickly appointed to carry on his work.

—Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

MCC ONTARIO PHOTO

*When the auctioneer yelled “sold,” buyers and spectators at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Heifer Sale at Carson’s Sale Barn in Listowel, Ont., erupted into applause.*

*John Walker’s closing bid of \$1,700 signified that the sale, now in its 30th year, had passed the \$4-million mark. All proceeds from the annual sale go towards MCC’s work in Ontario and around the world. Pictured in front of the auctioneer’s booth are Wayne Kuepfer of Atwood, Ont., who donated the heifer; his son Drew; Dave Carson of Carson’s Sale Barn; and buyer John Walker.*



# God at work in the World snapshots

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES PHOTO



*Willard Metzger, general secretary of Mennonite Church Canada, second from left, met with other Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) leaders earlier this year. Karen Hamilton, CCC general secretary, right, has written to Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon on behalf of the CCC to “express our deep concern” regarding Musa Sayed, an Afghani Muslim who converted to Christianity and who is now awaiting execution for apostasy. “It is fundamental to Canadian values that the Government of Canada condemn such religious persecution and prevail on the Government of Afghanistan to commute . . . Sayed’s sentence and, indeed, free him from prison,” Hamilton wrote.*

# Loving relationships . . . with no strings attached

*MCC Manitoba creates independent  
Initiatives for Just Communities agency*

BY RACHEL BERGEN

National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG, MAN.

**W**hat happens to sex offenders and other convicted felons when they are released from prison? What happens to people with intellectual disabilities when institutionalization doesn't work? What happens to people with Fetal Alcohol

Spectrum Disorder (FASD) when people don't take the time to understand them?

These are the questions that Initiatives for Just Communities (IJC) aims to answer through its programming. IJC has been operational since last fall, but many of the programs it now operates—Circles of Support and Accountability, Open Circle and others—have been operational under Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba for much longer. Although IJC

is a separate entity from MCC Manitoba, they continue to work together.

According to Gaelene Askeland, who began as IJC's executive director in February, IJC has been set up for success. "They [MCC Manitoba] start something new and grow it to the point where it can be viable on its own," she says.



Askeland

## /// Briefly noted

### Japanese Anabaptist churches safe but communications cut

The 70 Anabaptist-related church communities of Japan are largely safe, according to Takanori Sasaki, chair of the Japan Mennonite Fellowship (JMF), following the enormous earthquake and tsunami that hit the country on March 11. The church communities are scattered across Japan, most of them away from the quake's epicentre. Originally, communication with a house church in Hitachi City, located in the Ibrak prefecture in northern Japan, was cut off. However, a church leader in Tokyo has now been in contact with the house church and confirmed that members are safe. While no Mennonite church members live in the Fukushima prefecture, where the tsunami struck most violently and where nuclear reactors have been damaged, several relatives who work there have not been heard from. Mennonite Church Canada currently has no Christian Witness workers in Japan. To donate to relief efforts, visit [mcc.org](http://mcc.org).

—Mennonite World Conference

(With files from MC Canada/MCC.)

PHOTO BY RACHEL BERGEN



*On Feb. 27, Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA), a program of Initiatives for Just Communities (formerly Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba) held a fundraising event that raised nearly \$1,000 for camping trips and gardening projects to help high-risk offenders to become functioning members of society. The event also celebrated the many core members who have gone months and years without re-offending. Pictured, left to right: CoSA program assistant Daniel Epp, program director Joan Carolyn and program associate Richard Carrier. Inset: A cake acknowledging the nine months that a core member has been involved in healthy relationships and has gone without re-offending.*

*'We feel that our programs are aimed at providing a really healthy alternative.'*

*(Gaelene Askeland, IJC executive director)*

According to Peter Rempel, executive director of MCC Manitoba, IJC was established "as a separate agency so that the restorative justice programs can invite and draw upon a broader base of supporters and staff while maintaining their Christian faith base. . . . We also hope that as its capacity increases, IJC will pioneer other restorative approaches to crime, especially in supporting victims of crime."

One such restorative approach to crime and misunderstanding is El'Dad Ranch, a residential care facility outside of Winnipeg for people with intellectual disabilities who may or may not have had problems with the law. "It's a very safe place with a dynamic community," Askeland says.

Circles of Support and Accountability provides sex offenders—known as "core members"—with a group of volunteers who help them integrate back into society. "This helps them engage in their community and change negative ways of thinking and negative patterns of behaviour into positive patterns," Askeland explains.

Prison visitation is the primary focus of Open Circle, another restorative justice initiative. Volunteers from all over Winnipeg and southern Manitoba visit incarcerated males.

Finally, the FASD Program helps adults with FASD navigate their daily lives.

According to Askeland, these programs are important because many of the clients haven't had healthy relationships, so they resort to negative behaviours and ways of thinking. "Many people have not had constructive, positive, healthy relationships with people who didn't want something from them," she says.

"What do you learn from people 'inside'?" she muses. "Chances are it isn't about being respectful and how to live faithfully in community. These aren't things you learn in prison. We feel that our programs are aimed at providing a really healthy alternative," she says.

IJC aims to provide these loving relationships with no strings attached.

MCC Manitoba continues to be involved

with IJC and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future as a primary member on IJC's board, through staff interaction and with funding. Although the process of transition is challenging—especially when funding depends partially on a government

that has a contrary political stance on dealing with criminals—IJC is confident its programs will prove successful. "We're focused on continuing to provide really good services to our client groups," says Askeland, who hopes to procure solid funding to keep the programs running strong from year to year, form a cohesive team to support its programs' clients, and to find new and creative avenues for programming. ❧

## **New church website promotes mature debate on hydro issues**

BY WILL BRAUN

Interfaith Task Force on Northern Hydro Development  
WINNIPEG, MAN.

**"T**his site could easily succumb to the temptation of polarized debate," reads a new website about hydro issues in Manitoba. "We hope it doesn't."

With this, the Interfaith Task Force on Northern Hydro Development and Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba (MCC)—the groups behind the site (EnergyJustice.mcc.org)—have set themselves the challenge of promoting thoughtful, mature debate on hydro issues.

"With Manitoba Hydro wanting to spend over \$17 billion on new projects in the next 15 years, robust public debate is important," says Hugo Unruh, a pastor and co-chair of the task force. "Healthy public debate means avoiding a simplistic slant that considers only the pros or only the cons of an issue," Unruh says. "We want to create a forum that encourages people to think carefully and deeply about various views."

The groups' views are stated clearly on the site—particularly concern about ongoing harm caused by dams, and the categorical labelling of hydro as "clean"

power—but visitors are also pointed to websites of Manitoba Hydro and First Nations that have been critical of church involvement.

The site aims to inform electricity consumers about what is happening at the "other end of the transmission line" where a hydro-electric complex dominates waterways in northern Manitoba. The site includes fact sheets, interviews, photo galleries and commentary on hot-button issues.

The site's "Faith Page" explores the "spiritual dimension" of hydro power, again seeking to avoid a predictable and polarized approach. "What does faith have to offer," the site asks, "other than just backing for arguments about who is right and wrong?"

The interfaith task force consists of official representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran, Roman Catholic and United churches, as well as MCC Manitoba. Members of the Anglican Church also participate. The task force is a mix of aboriginal and non-aboriginal people. ❧

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GOD AT WORK IN US

# In gratitude of J.S. Bach

CBC Radio host/choral conductor  
'retires' to other creative pursuits

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent  
WATERLOO, ONT.



Mennos at work

The response to my request for an interview last September said it all: "Maggie and I are in Tuscany. . . . We've rented a small villa very near Cortona [Italy] and will be here until the end of October. I'm afraid the interview will have to wait until early November. Ciao."

Howard Dyck—well known as a long-time host for both CBC Radio's *Choral Concert* (1980-2008) and *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera* (1987-2007), and as the conductor of the Grand Philharmonic Choir in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont. (1972-2010)—and his wife Maggie had retired.

Born in Winkler, Man., Dyck was educated at Mennonite Brethren Bible College (now part of Canadian Mennonite University), where he met his future wife; he completed his bachelor of arts degree at Goshen College, Ind. Later, he studied conducting in Germany at the Hochschule für Musik and the Internationale Bachakademie.

The Dycks moved to Waterloo Region in 1971, where he taught at Waterloo Lutheran University (now Wilfrid Laurier) and began leading the Grand Philharmonic Choir.

During his years as a student in Winnipeg he had worked at CFAM, an AM radio station in rural southern Manitoba, as a classical music programmer and announcer. In 1976, Harold Redekopp invited him to audition as host of CBC Radio's *Mostly Music*, a weekday live-to-air classical music program broadcast from Toronto, Ont. When *Mostly Music* was moved from Toronto to Ottawa, he resigned, deciding not to uproot his family.

Soon after that, *Choral Concert* was moved from Vancouver, B.C., to Toronto, and he was offered the position of host. Seven years later, he began hosting *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera*, and was again fully employed by CBC Radio. When



Now no longer hosting classical radio shows or conducting the Grand Philharmonic Choir, Howard Dyck enjoys his leisure time at his Waterloo Region home.

CBC moved away from classical music in the middle of this century's first decade, he felt led to retire from broadcasting, which he did in 2008.

His conducting continued, however, with the Grand Philharmonic, the Bach Elgar Choir in Hamilton, Ont., and Consort Caritatis.

With the Grand Philharmonic, Dyck created traditions for Christmas and Easter, leading Handel's *Messiah* during most Decembers and rotating Bach's *St. John Passion* and *St. Matthew Passion* and his *Mass in B Minor* each spring.

He once wrote, "If there is one reality that has seared itself into my consciousness during my musical career, it is the primacy of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach."

In 1994, wanting to create a new recording of the *Messiah*, something that had not been done in Canada since the 1950s, Dyck put together Consort Caritatis, an ad hoc auditioned group of singers from across Canada. The resulting CD, *The Gift of Messiah*, was an unqualified success, both artistically and financially.

In 1999, Dyck was invited to the

International Festival of the Arts in Kunming in southwestern China, where he was to conduct the *Messiah*. While there, he learned of a minority group that lived on the margins of Chinese society near Kunming that had been evangelized by Jesuit missionaries in the 19th century; the missionaries had taught them Gregorian chant and numerous excerpts from the *Messiah*. Although the concert itself was sold out, many from the group made it

to the dress rehearsal. When the rehearsal got to the "Hallelujah Chorus," Dyck invited the group to join Consort Caritatis on stage. This unique collaboration made the national television news across China.

Tuscany in the fall of 2010 constituted a "mini-sabbatical" for Dyck while his successor led the Grand Philharmonic into the 2010-11 season. But Dyck has many projects on the go. Consort Caritatis con-

tinues, and he is thinking of organizing a Bach festival "sometime, somewhere."

When queried about his theology and how it pertains to his work, Dyck turns back to Bach. He notes that in his *St. Matthew Passion* 11 of the 12 disciples ask if it is they who will betray Jesus, each sensing his own weakness. Instead of focusing on the Jews in an anti-Semitic manner, as was the norm in his day, Bach's reply is a personal one, with the chorus representing the church: "It is me, I should repent." For Dyck, this speaks to the equality—and indeed culpability—of all people before God. Throughout the years, he says he has found "depth of meaning and a breadth in Bach's theological vision; everything is so in balance. . . . I can't begin to think what life would be for me without the music of Bach; it's been a very comforting presence for me for a very long time."

Dyck also speaks of his gratitude to God and a large community of family and friends, including Rockway Mennonite Church, Kitchener, which the couple has attended for many years. ❧

## OBITUARY

# Standing on the shoulders of J.M.

Jacob 'J.M.' Klassen

Feb. 12, 1929 – Dec. 23, 2010

Mennonite Central Committee Canada Story and Photo

J.M. Klassen, whose commitment and firm leadership helped shape Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada for more than two decades, died in Winnipeg, Man., on Dec. 23, 2010, at the age of 81.

Born Jacob Klassen in Zagra-dowka in what is now Ukraine, his family fled to Canada via Germany in 1930, eventually settling in southern Manitoba along with tens of thousands of other Mennonite immigrants. Raised on a farm, he grew up to become a teacher, a hospital administrator in Steinbach, Man., an MCC volunteer and, eventually, the executive director of MCC Canada.

J.M., as he was simply known, began his years with MCC in 1958 when he was appointed director of programs in South Korea. He served there for three years with his wife Katherine and their two young daughters.

In the years following he served in a number of positions with MCC:

- Assistant director of foreign relief services in Akron, Pa., for two years.
- Executive secretary of the Canadian Mennonite Relief and Immigration Council in Winnipeg for a year. During his brief tenure the councils merged with a number of other Mennonite agencies to become MCC Canada.
- Executive secretary of MCC Canada in Winnipeg for seven years.
- Member of the MCC Canada board's executive committee for three years.
- Executive director of MCC Canada for eight years.
- MCC Canada executive director emeritus for life (10 years of part-time voluntary service).

MCC Canada came into being in 1964 and Klassen was appointed its first executive secretary. The formation of MCC's provincial chapters followed within a few months.

MCC in Canada grew in the decades that



Klassen

followed. Responsibility for MCC's Newfoundland and Labrador programs shifted from MCC's Akron office to MCC Canada. An overseas program department was added, with responsibilities for the Kanadier Program (now Low German Program), refugee and immigration issues, and MCC's ongoing relationship with

the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Canadian programs grew to include Native Concerns, Voluntary Service, Peace and Social Concerns, Handicap Concerns, Women's Concerns and Mental Health. Some of these programs have since ended or have been reconfigured. Personnel and

administrative services were also added to meet the growing needs of the organization. MCC opened its Ottawa office in 1975.

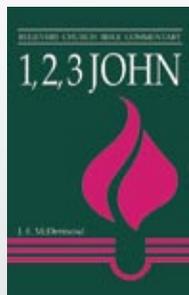
In 1979, MCC Canada negotiated a private sponsorship agreement with the Canadian government to sponsor refugees from Southeast Asia. It was the first volunteer agency to do so, and other denominations quickly followed suit. More than 30 years later, Canada remains the only country in the world that has a private sponsorship program to assist the government in resettlement of refugees and displaced people. Mennonite churches in Canada, through MCC, have helped more than 50,000 refugees resettle in Canada under this private sponsorship program.

And in 1983, after intense discussions, MCC Canada became the founder of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, which is now owned by 15 Christian partners.

"J.M.'s determination, love for the church, vision and skills enabled a fledgling organization to grow and do what few people at the time would have dreamed possible," says Don Peters, the current executive director of MCC Canada. "MCC in Canada stands on the shoulders of people like J.M. Klassen." ❧



Herald Press



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## OBITUARY

# A visionary in the Mennonite community remembered

Henry Gerbrandt

Dec. 6, 1915 – Dec. 23, 2010

BY RACHEL BERGEN / DEBORAH FROESE

National Correspondent / Mennonite Church Canada

Relatives of important and influential people are often unaware of how much their loved ones are appreciated by others until they have passed away. This is certainly true for the family of Henry Gerbrandt, a man with incredible commitment to the Mennonite community who died peacefully on Dec. 23, 2010, at the age of 95.

According to Gerbrandt's son Gerald, the president of Canadian Mennonite University, "My dad had a tremendously strong commitment to the Mennonite people. He always worked to further that." This commitment started before World War II when he filed to become a conscientious objector and

took it very seriously.

After Gerbrandt married Susan Heinrichs in 1944, the couple became medical missionaries in Mexico. When they were unable to continue, due to visa complications, the burgeoning Gerbrandt family moved to Altona, Man., where he became a pastor at Altona Bergthaler Church from 1950-71, a teacher at Elim Bible School for some of those years, and a secretary at Mennonite Pioneer Mission, now known as Mennonite Church Canada Native Ministry.



Gerbrandt

According to his son, it was in Altona where Gerbrandt, a very relational person, began to thrive and impact the Mennonite community in Canada and beyond. Even Gerald's friends valued the relationships they had with Henry when he was their pastor.

In 1971, Gerbrandt assumed the leadership role of executive secretary for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (now MC Canada). He held that position until 1981. As executive secretary, Henry visited nearly every Mennonite church in Canada, using the opportunity to build strong relationships with anybody he could.

Gerbrandt's commitment to the Mennonite community was steadfast during his time working with the conference. His arrival marked a period when it stood on shaky financial ground and Canadian Mennonite Bible College, the conference school, was under heavy critique for its response to the social and cultural revolution unfolding around it. In his 10 years working for the conference, he was able to eliminate the debt as well as improve constituency relations.

Gerbrandt embraced growing ministries with refugees from Southeast Asia following the Vietnam War at a time when Chinese congregations were taking root in Toronto, Ont.; Winnipeg, Man.; Saskatoon, Sask.; Calgary, Alta.; and Vancouver, B.C.

According to his successor and long-time friend, Larry Kehler, "I inherited an office where quite a few issues were resolved. I still had to make connections, resolve differences, but on the whole I thought the conference moved well."

After his retirement in 1981, the Gerbrandts moved to Germany in order to serve as pastors for two years. They worked with the Umseidler, Russian Mennonites who had emigrated to Germany. They devoted a lot of their time to the youths, many of whom became church leaders.

"I will remember my father as a church man and a family man," Gerald said. "He loved his children and grandchildren, and he loved the church. He was a church man open to change."

Gerald has received countless e-mails, phone calls and letters expressing how much his father meant to people. "I'm amazed at the responses to his passing from people who had him as a pastor, from my friends, people all over Canada," he concluded. ☯



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## OBITUARY

# Teacher, editor, minister leaves committed legacy

Gerhard Ens

Aug. 4, 1922 – Feb. 13, 2011

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU  
Manitoba Correspondent

Gerhard Ens passed away at the age of 88 on Feb. 13 in Winnipeg, Man. Ens was born in the village of Gnadenthal in present-day Ukraine in 1922, and migrated with his family to Canada less than a year later, settling in the village of Reinland, Man.



Ens

in Winnipeg, where he served as lay minister.

Edwin Epp, retired pastor at Sargent Ave. Mennonite, said of Ens, "Gerhard led a well-attended and well-appreciated German Bible study for over 25 years. He helped shape theology for the seniors in our congregation." Epp

appreciated his sense of humour, passion for history and significant contribution to the seniors in the church.

Ens was asked to produce a Low-German radio broadcast in 1972 to promote the centennial of the Manitoba Mennonite settlement. Very quickly this 15-minute program was lengthened to a half-hour.

"Ens was never paid for his broadcasts, which continued for 34 years and over 1,400 programs," said Conrad Stoesz, archivist at the Mennonite Heritage Centre.

Deeply committed to the Mennonite community, faith and heritage, Ens received the Award of Excellence from the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada for his life-long advancement of Mennonite history as a minister, teacher, editor, historical society/museum promoter, and German and Low-German broadcaster, in 2008.

Ens is survived by his wife, five children and 10 grandchildren. ❧

Following his graduation from Mennonite Collegiate Institute (MCI) in Gretna, Man., Ens went on to become a teacher, beginning his career near Gretna under principal P.J. Schaefer. His career was interrupted and his certificate revoked during World War II, when he was called up for military service. As a committed conscientious objector, he was assigned to work as an orderly in a mental hospital.

Following the war Ens returned to teaching, serving at MCI for a total of 30 years. During the last nine years of his teaching career he served as MCI's principal. He considered his teaching career a calling from God and his dedication to the school and his students continues to be appreciated by many.

Ens was ordained in 1958 as a lay minister in Blumenort Mennonite Church near Gretna, where he was involved until he and his wife Anni moved to Winnipeg in 1977 following his retirement from teaching. The same year he was ordained he also became a founding member of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, which established the Mennonite Heritage Village Museum; he was a board member for 50 years, serving as its president until 1997. When Ens retired from teaching and moved to Winnipeg, he became editor of *Der Bote*, a Canadian-based German language newspaper, until 1992. The Ensens joined Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church

*'Gerhard led a well-attended and well-appreciated German Bible study for over 25 years.'*

*(Edwin Epp)*

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## ARTBEAT

# Doing worship and mission after Christendom

An interview with Alan and Eleanor Kreider

Herald Press

*As Christendom weakens in Europe and North America, worship and mission are poised to reunite after centuries of separation. But this requires the church to rethink both "mission" and "worship." In post-Christendom mission, God is the main actor and God calls all Christians to participate. In post-Christendom worship, the church tells and celebrates the story of God, enabling members to live in hope and attract outsiders to its many tables of hospitality. How this is actually done is the subject of *Worship and Mission After Christendom*, a new book from Herald Press by Alan and Eleanor Kreider, who reflect on how Christians today can worship God and reach out to others in a world where religion is marginalized and many people are unfamiliar with the Christian story.*

**Q: What does it mean to be living in Christendom?**

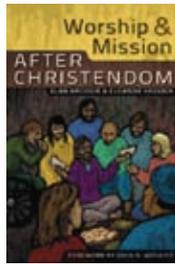
**Eleanor:** In the Christendom world, governments support Christianity through public holidays like Christmas and Good Friday, Bibles are used in courts, or laws are enacted against shopping or selling of certain items on Sundays.

**Alan:** In Christendom, you learn that if you're a Christian you get ahead in business and academics. Everyone assumes that they and other people know the Christian story, what the cross is and who the infant in the manger is.

**Q: What does it mean to be post-Christendom?**

**Eleanor:** In the post-Christendom world, many people have never heard the story of Jesus. They are unfamiliar with the Bible. They don't know a world where you can't shop on Sunday. Holidays celebrating religious events are empty of religious meaning.

**Alan:** In post-Christendom, Christians no longer run things and Christianity isn't favoured. Belonging to a church confers no advantages. Above all, people don't know the great story of the Bible. People may have heard about Jesus, but they don't know what he did or said.



**Q: Some people regret this change to a post-Christian world. Is it a bad thing?**

**Eleanor:** It is good, in that we have to think about the choices we make as Christians. We choose to follow Christ and live a certain way not because it's easy, expected or approved by government or society.

**Alan:** Post-Christendom is a hard time because a lot of things Christians have assumed about our "Christian" culture have to change, and that's uncomfortable.

**Q: What does this weakening of Christendom mean for the church?**

**Eleanor:** Post-Christendom requires the church to see itself as more than a social club, or just another Sunday morning option. It forces us to define who we are and articulate [the church's] values, both to nurture believers and to draw others in.

**Alan:** Christians need to constantly ask how, in our new situation, are we to express the life of Jesus? And it means doing more to live and tell the story of God, because people don't know it. Churches that aren't asking these questions will die.

**Q: How does post-Christendom differ between the U.S. and Canada?**

**Alan:** We are Americans, so we speak as outsiders to the Canadian situation, but it

appears to us that the situation in Canada seems much closer to that in England and Europe than in the U.S. It is much more secularized and post-Christendom than in the U.S.

**Eleanor:** A special characteristic of life in the U.S. is "civil religion," a melding of God and nationalism that is distinctively American. But despite that, the tendencies toward post-Christendom are strong in the U.S. Church attendance is declining, and the highest worth, or worship, is being ascribed to economic security—not to God.

**Q: What does mission look like in a post-Christendom world?**

**Eleanor:** It looks like neighbours and strangers gazing in the windows of the Christian community, longing for the invitation to join the bounteous meal spread on the generous table. Christians look out those same windows, looking for ways to serve and listening for the heartbeat of the world.

**Alan:** In Christendom, mission was what missionaries did; in post-Christendom, mission is what God is doing. Christians need to be alert to what God is doing and to enter in. Whatever that mission will be, it will look like Jesus Christ, who embodied the mission of God like nobody else.

**Q: What will worship look like in a post-Christendom world?**

**Alan:** Christians will rediscover the communion table; the Eucharist will become more important.

Worship will both be at home in that culture, using its styles and expressions, but also raise questions that critique its false securities and values.

**Eleanor:** In worship, we offer praise and ascribe worth to God. When we encounter God by retelling the story of God's gracious acts and by attuning ourselves to God's character and purpose, we are changed into the image of Christ, whom we worship and follow. And that can lead outsiders to ask why we have hope, why we do the things we do. And then we will invite them to worship God with us, so they can find out. ☞

# New book examines pacifism and nationalism in Prussia

Bethel College  
NORTH NEWTON, KAN.

The University of Notre Dame Press has released a book by Bethel College history professor Mark Jantzen.

*Mennonite German Soldiers: Nation, Religion and Family in the Prussian East, 1772-1880* traces the efforts of a small, pacifist, Christian religious minority in eastern Prussia—the Mennonite communities of the Vistula River basin—to preserve their exemption from military service based on their religious confession of faith. Conscription was mandatory for nearly all male Prussian citizens, and being willing to fight and die for your country was essential to the ideals of a developing national German identity.

In this historical narrative, Jantzen describes the policies of the Prussian federal and regional governments towards the Mennonites over a hundred-year period, and the legal, economic and social pressures on the Mennonites to conform. Mennonite leaders defended exemption for their communities' sons through a long

history of petitions and legal pleas, and sought alternate ways, such as charitable donations, to support the state and prove their loyalty.

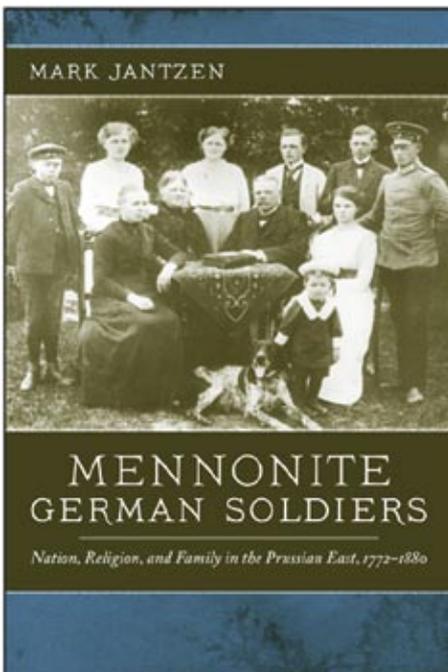
Faced with increasingly punitive legal and financial restrictions, as well as widespread social disapproval, many Mennonites ultimately emigrated. Many others chose to join the German nation at the cost of their religious tradition.

Jantzen tells the history of the Mennonite experience in Prussian territories against the backdrop of larger themes of Prussian state-building and the growth of German nationalism. The Mennonites, who lived on the margins of German society, were also active agents in the long struggle of the state to integrate them. The public debates over their place in Prussian society shed light on a multi-confessional German past and on the dissemination of nationalist values.

In *Mennonite German Soldiers*, “Jantzen shows in intricate detail how Mennonite attitudes toward the military draft changed over time, and how these changing attitudes reshaped the fundamental fabric of the Mennonite community,” writes Helmut Walser Smith of Vanderbilt University. “Through this prism, Jantzen also illuminates fundamental questions of modern nationalism and the implications of nationalism, religion and everyday life.”

Jantzen is associate professor of history at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., where he has taught since 2001. He has degrees from Bethel College and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and earned his Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame. Jantzen is co-editor, with John D. Thiesen, of *The Danzig Mennonite Church: Its Origin and History, 1569-1919*. ❧

*Faced with increasingly punitive legal and financial restrictions, as well as widespread social disapproval, many Mennonites ultimately emigrated.*



/// Briefly noted

## Radical Followers of Jesus DVD released

WINKLER, MAN.—The Evangelical Anabaptist Fellowship of Canada—with membership from six different Mennonite conferences—has released *Radical Followers of Jesus*, a DVD that uses a newscast format to highlight the lives and witness of nine men and women over the centuries (beginning with John Huss in 1415, up to the present) who could well be labelled as “a different kind of radical.” The 54-minute DVD—whose focus is on radical forgiveness, radical love and radical peace—can be viewed as a single event, with intermissions for congregational singing. It can also be viewed one segment at a time, with an average of six minutes per segment. Some churches are planning to use one segment per Sunday as a part of their worship services. *Radical Followers of Jesus* can also be used in Sunday school classes or small groups, and is suitable for family viewing. Organized as a registered charity in Canada, the fellowship is committed to proclaiming the gospel, including a call to New Testament discipleship. To order, the DVD, e-mail bloeppky@mts.net.

—Evangelical Anabaptist Fellowship of Canada

# On being 'Burkholderian'

*New book offers reflections by J.R. Burkholder on faithful living for peacemakers*

Herald Press

In 1985, J.R. Burkholder, then a professor at Goshen College, Ind., spent a night in jail. He hadn't committed any crime, at least not in the usual sense of the word. After an all-day sit in, Burkholder and 29 others were arrested and charged for refusing to leave the office of a congressman who voted to give aid to U.S.-supported Contra rebels in Nicaragua.

"I've been asked many times, 'Why did you do it?'" Burkholder wrote in the August 1986 issue of the *Dallas Peace Times*. His reason: After 30 years of reading, observing, teaching and supporting nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience, it was time to move from spectator to actor.

"There are times when one simply has to act in faith, to be willing to risk arrest, fines and imprisonment in an expression of solidarity with suffering brothers and sisters," he wrote. "After all, we spent just one night in jail. The price they are paying is much higher."

That experience—complete with a photo

of a handcuffed Burkholder being put in a police car—is recounted in *Prophetic Peacemaking: Selected Writings of J. R. Burkholder* from Herald Press.

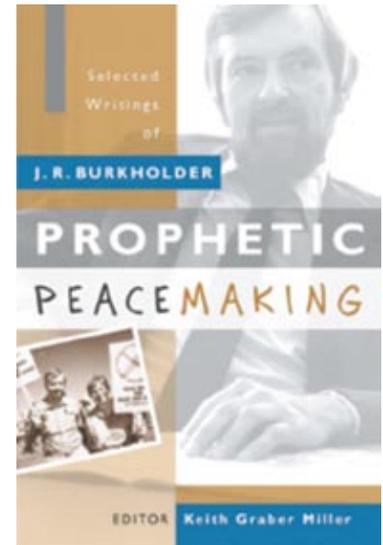
The new book, edited by Keith Graber Miller, professor of Bible, religion and philosophy at Goshen College, and co-published with the Institute of Mennonite Studies, is a collection of Burkholder's most prescient essays on pacifism, patriotism, public witness, Mennonite ethics, health-care, stewardship, vocation and service.

"These essays are not so much period pieces as reflections on faithful living relevant for future generations of peacemakers," says Graber Miller, who sketches the historical context for each chapter and provides an introduction about what it means to "be Burkholderian." Of Burkholder's activism, he writes that his success in "facilitating transformations in the Mennonite world" was "grounded in his engaged reflection."

These experiences, Graber Miller adds,

*'There are times when one simply has to act in faith, to be willing to risk arrest, fines and imprisonment in an expression of solidarity with suffering brothers and sisters.'*

*(J.R. Burkholder)*



shaped the direction of Burkholder's life and work as an academic, church leader and social activist. "In his modelling and teaching, J.R. inspired scores of students and colleagues toward peacemaking vocations, and his voice still resonates for 21st-century followers of the one Christians call the Prince of Peace."

Graber Miller says he hopes the book will "help younger and older readers alike reflect more carefully on their calling in the world, and embed themselves more deeply in faithful communities, so that together we can make life-giving, integrity-filled choices, ones that make for peace."

Burkholder, who served as a missionary, pastor, activist and professor at Goshen College and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., is humbled and flattered to be the subject of a book. He's also quick to point out that he doesn't want readers to get the wrong impression. "It's not about me, but about my role in a bigger picture of how the Mennonite church in the U.S. engaged the world in the last half of the 20th century," he says.

All he was trying to do, he says, "was to put my faith into action," and let those experiences inform and influence "my teaching, preaching and writing."

He hopes readers come away from it thinking about "the importance of Christian faith, and of being a faithful church from an Anabaptist-Mennonite point of view. . . . [W]e need to always be asking what it means to be faithful to Jesus in every situation." ❧

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GOSHEN COLLEGE PHOTO



**Jenna Grubaugh, a Goshen College theatre major from Vancouver, B.C., placed in the top 10 percent of the almost 400 actors nominated in the American College Theater Festival held at Michigan State University earlier this year. Grubaugh and her stage partner, Kelly Frey, made it to the semi-final round of the Irene Ryan Acting Competition, being among the top 36 students in the Great Lakes Region to advance up to that point. This is only the third time in the past 10 years that a Goshen College student competitor reached this level. The Goshen College student nominees competed against students from the theatre programs of such schools as Purdue, Michigan State and Illinois State. The festival "has given me confidence in my abilities as a participant in the theatre world," Grubaugh said afterwards. "It has also exposed me to theatre of all kinds, ingraining in me the assurance that 'good' theatre can take many forms and serve many different purposes."**

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## PROMOTIONAL SUPPLEMENT

# Memoir of a conscientious objector

BY MARY GROH

Conscience Canada

I was born and raised in a Canadian city surrounded by first- and second-generation immigrants from the British Isles. When Canada declared war on Nazi Germany it soon became clear that, although war might be an evil, it was such a necessary one that all right-minded people would buy into it.

At school, war savings certificates were promoted to raise money for the war effort. It sounded like a good investment to me, but my parents were not for it. That was probably my introduction to the idea that, if it is bad to fight and kill people, we should not provide money so that other people will do it.

My finances could be controlled at that age, but my emotions not so easily. One day my Grade 8 teacher appeared at school in a splendid naval officer's uniform and told us he would be leaving us in the care of another teacher for a few months. The war was becoming very real. War fever was rampant, and it was simply not cool to be a Mennonite.

Back at my Mennonite church, I was in the instruction class for baptism. Conscientious objection to war was more than just a subsection in a text to be studied and consented to. It was a live issue. The armed conflict against the Nazi threat was a challenge to the traditional doctrine of nonresistance.

But I was luckier than many young people. My father spent time in northern Ontario in a work camp for conscientious objectors, so I was learning that there were alternatives to the military. And we heard stories of young men who found it costly to refuse to be a part of the military, but stood their ground courageously. I felt that if I were in their position I would want to be able to do the same.

By the time the Cold War peace marches invaded the streets, I was keen to participate in anti-nuclear demonstrations. War had to be outlawed, yet Canada still kept building up its military capacity because of the communist threat.

At a speech in Toronto in the 1980s, Edith Adamson, a Quaker from Victoria, B.C., made



CONSCIENCE CANADA PHOTO

*With the help of Murray Lumley, a Conscience Canada board member, Linda DeHaan signs the electronic Peace Tax return from a laptop computer at Danforth Mennonite Church, Toronto.*

it quite clear that the preparations for war and the maintenance of Canada's military forces were dependent upon the taxes raised from the citizenry, including from us conscientious objectors (COs) to war. "It took only 12 men to drop the bomb on Hiroshima, but it took millions, perhaps billions, of taxpayers' dollars to develop that bomb," she said.

The B.C. group had set up a Peace Tax Trust Fund and invited COs to redirect to it the percentage of income tax that the Department of Defence would get in the annual budget of Canada. These funds would be held in trust until such time as the government would legislate that they be used for peaceful purposes.

This pitch of the new Conscience Canada felt like a perfect fit for me. It gave me a personal way of protesting to the government, and provided a fresh importance to my own convictions that being in a hyped-up crowd of marchers did not provide.

It also seemed obvious that if thousands of individual Canadians withheld the military portion of their taxes, Parliament would have to take notice and re-think its readiness to wage war. The amount of taxes I was paying was insignificant, but I decided to take up the

opportunity. As I was partly self-employed, it was easy enough for me to do.

The action made no sense to the accountant helping me with my tax filing. I remember the amused smile on her face. No doubt, I was her first client to challenge the Revenue Agency of the Dominion of Canada so frivolously.

She gave grudging agreement, however, when I said the government might take notice if I and all other COs would keep our income below the taxable level. This was the only alternative I could think of, and was not hard to do after reaching retirement age.

And it was easy enough for the government to claw back my accumulated debt by not remitting to me the GST refunds to which I was entitled. So now, instead of paying income tax, I make my contribution to our social structure in other ways. And I give our government credit for not holding a grudge but sending me tax refunds now! ❧

*Mary Groh has been a member of the Conscience Canada board since 2009 and became its president in 2010.*

## ❧ An alternative shopping list

If you had \$16 billion Canadian tax dollars to spend, would you purchase 65 fighter jets, as our government is prepared to do, or would you purchase the following items on the list of the Alternative Budget Coalition, whose costs add up to \$16 billion?

- Affordable housing.
- Poverty reduction (transfers to provinces).
- Affordable day care (transfers to provinces).
- Renewable energy.
- Green manufacturing.
- Guaranteed farm income program.
- Grants to post-secondary students.
- Improvement to employment insurance and single pensioners' benefits.
- International aid.
- The "creative economy."

Consider the lost opportunities if the government proceeds with the purchase of the F-35 jets. Consider participating in the Global Day of Action on Military Spending, April 12.

—Conscience Canada

## PROMOTIONAL SUPPLEMENT

***I am a conscientious objector, but . . .***

BY DON WOODSIDE

Conscience Canada

**1. Even if we redirect our taxes, it won't reduce the military budget.**

This is true. It is Parliament's prerogative to set the national budget. That is a cornerstone of our democracy. Nonetheless, our taxes are being conscripted to pay for war, and we have the capacity individually to signal our refusal to cooperate.

**2. If I redirect 9 percent of my taxes, they will take the military portion from the other 91 percent.**

While the money is in our hands, and we know that 9 percent is heading to the military, then it is our responsibility to resist, even if we can't control what happens to the rest. Mennonite Church Canada expressed concern about this point. As a result, the most recent private member's bill introduced in June 2007 was altered to state that all of a CO's taxes would go into a special peace fund—not just 9 percent—and that this fund could be spent on any non-military function of government.

**3. The money I put in the Peace Tax Trust Fund isn't doing anything.**

Peace trusters can ask Conscience Canada to transfer their deposits to the operating budget and use it, or they may withdraw it and donate it to any charity or peace organization of their choice. Its function in the fund is to demonstrate that tax has been paid, and it can be recovered by the depositor after the government seizes the taxes owed.

Conscience Canada has been a supporter of the Department of Peace initiative since 2005. Such a department would offer an ideal repository for our redirected military taxes.

**4. If we can do this, anyone can refuse anything on grounds of conscience.**

This "floodgates" argument scares politicians, who don't see how they would identify legitimate conscience. However, conscientious objection has centuries of

historical precedent in Canada. It is clear that it is now our taxes that are being conscripted in lieu of our bodies.

**5. There is no precedent in any country for redirection of military taxes.**

The clearest precedent was set in Ontario, then Upper Canada, in 1841, when, after decades of lobbying, the government agreed to allow Quakers, Mennonites and others to redirect their militia taxes to building roads and bridges.

**6. Canada's armed forces are used for peacekeeping.**

This has been a major sticking point for most of the life of Conscience Canada, but it is now clear that this is not the case.

**7. We have the "responsibility to protect" and may need military force to intervene.**

Just as Canadian Quakers are divided over R2P, so is Conscience Canada. The board has agreed it is possible, in some situations, that a policing type of peacekeeper, requiring accountability for every use of force, and having civilian oversight, would be acceptable. A police force could do the job. ☘

**☘ Public lecture planned**

WATERLOO, ONT.—A public lecture and discussion—"Pacifist-friendly legislation in Canada: Can C-390, C-440, C-447 contribute to a more peaceful society?"—will take place on April 2, at 3 p.m., at the Great Hall of Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, with speaker Paul Heidebrecht, the director of Mennonite Central Committee Ottawa. Heidebrecht will discuss the status, merits and limitations of three private member's bills that concern U.S. Iraq War Resisters (C-440); the establishment of a federal Department of Peace (C-447); and a legal means for COs to divert the military portion of their income tax towards peaceful purposes (C-390). The event is sponsored by the Centre for the Study of Religion and Peace, the department of Peace and Conflict Studies, and Conscience Canada.

—Conscience Canada



TAXES FOR PEACE, NOT WAR



Conscience Canada

Use our PEACE TAX RETURN (paper or web)  
to re-direct military taxes to non-violent security  
OR to support legislation for this action

More info, including a free DVD available at:  
**www.consciencecanada.ca**  
phone (416) 203-1402  
**consciencecanada@consciencecanada.ca**

# it's **epic** remembering God's future



## Mennonite Church Canada

ASSEMBLY 2011 • Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario  
July 4-July 8 • Revelation 21:1-4, 22-26 and 22:1-5

*five events in one!*

### Youth Assembly

Speakers, worship games,  
Late Night activities

### Children's & Jr. Youth Assembly

Day program of worship,  
response, play and discovery

### Adult Assembly

Seminars, Tours, worship, community

### Ministers' Conference

Theme: Reframing Anabaptism

### Special Concert

Sarah Harmer - free to all  
registered Young Adults

#### *speakers*

**Nelson Kraybill**, Pastor of Prairie Street  
Mennonite Church in Elkhart, IN  
and former president of AMBS

**Loren Johns**, Professor  
of New Testament at AMBS.

**Jeremy Bergen**, Assistant Professor  
of Religious Studies and Theology at  
Conrad Grebel University College.

#### *personalize your experience*

### Seminars

Choose from up to 20 seminars per day with diverse titles such as Does Sunday School have a future?, Challenging Gender Stereotypes, Original People – Original Art, Forgiveness: A Long Road, In the Spirit of Humanity, and many more.

### Tours

Choose your own tour experience - a self-guided site-seeing with recommended highlights, or an organized Group Tour. Some options for both include: The Trail of the Conestoga, Up the Nith, African Lion Safari, You can take the boy from the farm..., From Duddy Haus to Continuum of Care, and Six Nations of the Grand River.

### Service Opportunities

Sign up for one of 8 Service Opportunities where you can model and use your servant leadership skills at places like House of Friendship Men's Hostel, Ray of Hope teen addiction centre, Thrift Shops, the Cambridge Self Help Food Bank, a Peace walk, and more.

#### *fellowship*

Special Meals for affinity groups:  
AMBS, Mennonite Women Canada,  
Mennonite Men/JoinHands, CMU

Newcomers Lunch for those attending  
Assembly for the first time

BBQ Supper in Waterloo Park

#### *registration deadlines*

Register by May 15 and save \$25

Registration cut off: June 15

THE FINE PRINT: Most importantly, we're meeting to conduct the work of the church, to discuss, discern, decide, and act on pressing issues facing every part of Mennonite Church Canada. For many of you, we know that this will be the highlight of the entire event, which is why we hope this fine print will attract your special attention. Once you register, you'll get an exciting Report Book to read, where you'll learn all about our national church in action over the past year. When you attend, you'll get to meet new people and get re-acquainted with old friends. Plan to attend. Let's set an Assembly attendance record. Your church needs you. OUR PROMISE TO YOU: Mennonite Church Canada will do everything it can to give you the best experience possible. DISCLAIMER: This message contains no confidential information. Please disclose, copy, distribute, or otherwise take action to ensure as many people as possible are warmly invited and encouraged to attend this event.

Assembly details available at [www.mennonitechurch.ca/events/waterloo2011](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/events/waterloo2011)

Youth Assembly details available at [itsepic.ca](http://itsepic.ca)

## /// UpComing

### CMU School of Writing announces 2011 instructors

WINNIPEG, MAN.—Presenting this year's writing workshops at the School of Writing at Canadian Mennonite University, to be held from May 9 to 13, are Marina Endicott, teaching a course on fiction writing; Allan Rudy-Froese, leading a new course on writing sermons; Myrna Kostash, instructing a course on creative non-fiction writing; and Joanne Klassen, again leading her popular life writing course. Endicott, a writer from Edmonton, Alta., is a winner of the Commonwealth Writers Prize and a finalist for the Giller Prize. Rudy-Froese, a pastor from Kitchener, Ont., wrote the "This Preacher has 22 Minutes" column for *Canadian Mennonite* last year. Kostash is one of Canada's most acclaimed writers, receiving the 2010 Matt Cohen Award: In Celebration of the Writing Life from the Writers' Trust of Canada. Klassen is the founder and director of Winnipeg's Heartspace Writing School; her course is already full with a waiting list started.

—Canadian Mennonite University

### Harder to address ecumenical event

SASKATOON, SASK.—Helmut Harder, Canadian Mennonite University professor emeritus and former general secretary of Mennonite Church Canada, will be a keynote speaker at the 20th Summer Ecumenical Institute at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon, from July 6 to 9. Harder is noted particularly for his initiative and years of experience in fostering a Roman Catholic-Mennonite dialogue, addressing both commonalities and differences. Menno Simons, after whom Mennonites are named, was a priest who broke away from the Roman Catholic Church during the 1500s, challenging the practice of infant baptism. "It is no simple thing to address the future shape of the ecumenical movement in Canada," he says. "Thankfully, the biblical vision of Christian unity is clear and compelling. The Apostle Paul reminds the church to '*pursue every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*' One important task of the Christian church is to ponder, together, what it means to envision 'one body and one Spirit' and to ask, 'How shall we act in faithfulness to this vision?'" he adds, citing Ephesians 4:3-4. Harder will speak on the topic of the "Future of Canadian Ecumenism" on July 7, at 7 p.m.; the event is open to the public.

—Mennonite Church Canada



Harder

## /// Calendar

### British Columbia

**April 16-17:** Camp Squeah paddle-athon fundraiser.

**April 16,17:** Lenten Vespers with Abendmusik Choir, 8 p.m. each evening; (16) Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford; (17) Knox United Church, Vancouver. Free-will offering to Menno Simons Centre.

**April 23:** Columbia Bible College commencement.

**April 30:** MC B.C. women's inspirational day, Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver.

**May 12-15:** Fifth annual international conference of Peace and Safety in the Christian Home, at Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford. Participants include MCC B.C.'s Abuse Response and Prevention Program. For more information, visit [fromtheshadows.ca](http://fromtheshadows.ca).

### Alberta

**May 14:** Camp Valaqua spring work day. Chop wood, clear trails, ready the facilities for campers. For more information, call 780-637-2510.

### Saskatchewan

**April 5:** Pastors gathering at Zoar Mennonite Church, Langham.

**April 16:** Buncha Guys spring concert, at Mayfair United Church, Saskatoon, at 7:30 p.m.

**April 19:** RJC/CMU joint banquet and concert at Osler Mennonite Church.

**May 7:** RJC fundraising golf tournament at Valley Regional Park, Rosthern. For more information, e-mail [rjcgolf@rjcsk.ca](mailto:rjcgolf@rjcsk.ca)

**May 15:** RJC spring concert.

### Manitoba

**Until April 30:** Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery presents "Prairie Horizons" by Vancouver photographer Alfred Siemens and "Mennonite Women Evolving" by Altona area painters Bev Friesen and Gail Sawatzky.

**April 2:** MDS annual fundraising and awareness banquet, at Rhineland Pioneer Centre, Altona, at 6 p.m. The event will include project reporting and music, as well as the meal. For complimentary tickets, call 1-866-261-1274 or contact your local MDS

representative.

**April 4:** Jazz at CMU, in the Great Hall, at 7:30 p.m.

**April 16:** CMU spring concert, at the Loewen Athletic Centre.

**April 22:** First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, presents Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*, at 7 p.m.

**May 9-13:** 2011 School of Writing at CMU.

**May 12-14:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate senior high musical.

**May 18:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate work day.

### Ontario

**March 26:** Menno Singers present "Choral Mystics," at Waterloo North Mennonite Church, Waterloo, at 8 p.m.

**March 26:** MEDA Waterloo chapter convention and annual spring banquet, "Leading in a connected world," at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden. Convention events begin at noon; banquet begins at 6:30 p.m. Lunch speaker: Mike Morrice, executive director of Sustainable Waterloo; dinner speaker: Tim Jackson, CEO of the Accelerator Centre.

**April 1:** Celebrate Refugee Rights Day by seeing the play *Open? A Story of Refugee Claimants in Canada*, at the Conrad Centre for the Performing Arts, Kitchener, at 7:30 p.m. The event is a fundraiser for the Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support.

**April 1,3:** Benefit concerts for MCC work in Haiti with soloist Elaine Pearce; (1) Knox Presbyterian Church, Walkerton, at 7:30 p.m.; (3) Gale Presbyterian Church, Elmira, at 7 p.m.

**April 2:** Silver Lake Mennonite Camp special 50th anniversary editor "smorg" at Niagara United Mennonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake. For more information, visit [slmc.ca](http://slmc.ca).

**April 2:** Paul Heidebrecht, director of MCC Ottawa Office will speak on the topic, "Pacifist-friendly legislation in Canada: Can Bills C-390, C-440 and C-447 contribute to a more peaceful society?" at Conrad Grebel University College's Great Hall, at 3 p.m.

**April 7:** AMBS presents a public presentation, "Leading the church into God's future," by new president Sara Wenger Shenk, at Faith Mennonite Church, Leamington, at 7 p.m. For more information, call Sherri Martin-

Carman at 519-669-1005.

**April 9:** Pax Christi Chorale presents Verdi's "Requiem" at P.C. Ho Theatre, Scarborough, with guest conductor Norman Reintamm, the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony and the Peterborough Singers.

**April 10:** AMBS presents a public presentation, "Opportunities and challenges of theological education for the 21st century," by new president Sara Wenger Shenk, at Floradale Mennonite Church, at 3 p.m. For more information, call Sherri Martin-Carman at 519-669-1005.

**April 10:** Menno Singers joins with five other choirs to perform Ernest Bloch's "Sacred Service" in its original Hebrew, at Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto.

**April 11:** New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale annual promotion dinner, at Bingemans, Kitchener, at 6:30 p.m. Guest speaker from MCC. Ticket available from the MCC Ontario office by phone at 519-745-8458.

**April 12:** MSCU 47th annual general meeting, "Your values, your credit union," at Rockway Mennonite

Collegiate, Kitchener. Registration begins at 6:30 p.m.; meeting starts at 7 p.m. Speaker: Gary Hawton, president of OceanRock Investments, an industry leader in socially responsible investments.

**April 15:** Hamilton Mennonite Church 10th annual ham dinner fundraiser for the MCC meat canner; includes a concert by Hope Rising, 5 to 7 p.m. For more information, call 904-387-3952 or e-mail hmc@cogeco.net.

**April 15-17:** Danforth Mennonite Church, Toronto, 100th anniversary celebrations. For more information, visit DanforthMennoniteChurch.ca.

**April 16:** Women of MC Eastern Canada Spring Enrichment Day, at Maple View Mennonite Church, Wellesley, from 10:15 a.m. to 3 p.m. Theme: "Leaping out in faith." Speaker: Susan Allison-Jones. To register, e-mail Florence Jantzi at jantzi@golden.net or call her at 519-669-4356.

**April 17:** Pax Christi Chorale presents Prayer for Peace and CD release of Great Canadian Hymns with guest conductor Ints Teterovskis, 3 p.m. Also

featuring Pax Christi Youth Choir.

**April 17:** St. Catharines United Mennonite Church Choir presents *From Darkness to Light*, the story of Holy Week and Easter in Scripture and music, at 7 p.m.

**April 22:** Grand Philharmonic Choir presents J.S. Bach's St. John Passion, at Centre in the Square, Kitchener, 7:30 p.m. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call toll-free 1-800-265-8977.

**April 29-30:** Milverton Mennonite Fellowship hosts a communications workshop for engaged or newly married couples. For more information, contact Denise Bender at 519-656-2005 or denise\_bender@yahoo.com.

**April 29-30:** MC Eastern Canada annual church gathering, at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden.

**May 7:** Grand Philharmonic Chamber Choir presents "Springtime Choral Potpourri: Food and music cabaret," at the Delta Hotel, Kitchener, 7:30 p.m. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call toll-free 1-800-265-8977.

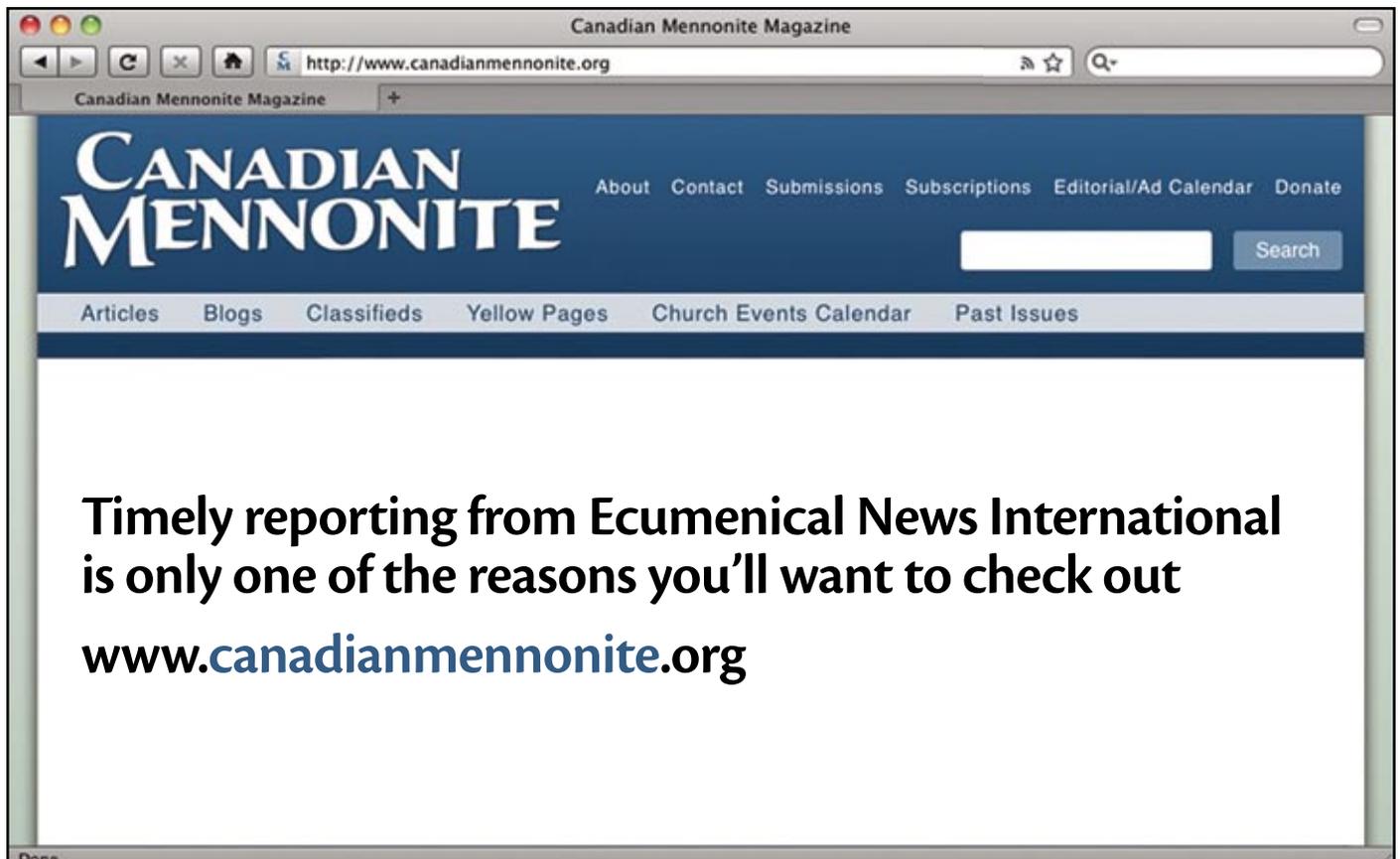
**May 7, 2001:** DaCapo Chamber

Choir presents "A World of Colour: Exploring and exploding the colour palette: tradition meets the present," at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener; 8 p.m. Includes the premiere of a new commissioned piece by Gerard Yun. For more information, or for tickets, call 519-725-7549 or visit www.dacapochoir.ca.

**May 14:** Maple View and Crosshill Literary/MYF Reunion for those born before 1951, at Maple View Mennonite Church, Wellesley. Fellowship at 4 p.m.; fundraising dinner for Maple View's building fund at 5 p.m. RSVP by April 30 to 519-656-2946 or mvmchurch@cyg.net.

**May 14:** Menno Singers present "Lift Every Voice and Sing," a fundraiser for Menno Homes, at Floradale Mennonite Church, at 7:30 p.m.

**To ensure timely publication of upcoming events, please send Calendar announcements eight weeks in advance of the event date by e-mail to calendar@canadianmennonite.org.**



## Classifieds

**Simply White Bridal** in Edmonton, Alta., offers modest elegance for today's bride. New owner Heidi Jeannotte looks forward to meeting brides and providing a beautiful dress-shopping experience. Contact 780-818-0274 or simplywhite@simplywhitebridal.ca or visit www.simplywhitebridal.ca.

### Advertising Information

Contact *Canadian Mennonite*  
Ad Representative  
Lisa Metzger  
1-800-378-2524 x.224  
519-664-2780  
advert@  
canadianmennonite.org

## Employment Opportunities

### ENGLISH MINISTER / ASSOCIATE PASTOR

**Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church**, located in Abbotsford, B.C., invites applications for a full-time salaried position as ENGLISH MINISTER / ASSOCIATE PASTOR.

Eben-Ezer is a bilingual multi-generational congregation located in the beautiful Fraser Valley. We are seeking an individual who will provide strong biblical, spiritual leadership and guidance for our English segment with a heart for C'n'Cs and young marrieds, who is not afraid to challenge these members to grow.

The successful candidate will have theological training in a Mennonite/Anabaptist perspective and be guided by the Mennonite Confession of Faith. This position is available immediately. Please submit your resume to, or if you require more information, please contact:

The Search Committee  
Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church  
2051 Windsor Street  
Abbotsford, BC V2T 6L9  
Phone: 604-850-8422  
Fax: 604-850-8455  
E-mail: eemc@telus.net

### PASTOR

**Zoar Mennonite Church** at Waldheim, a congregation of about 80 regular attendants, is currently seeking a pastor.

We are a small rural community 60 km. north of Saskatoon. Currently we are involved in supporting immigrant families from Colombia moving to our community.

We are looking for a person who:

- has a strong personal commitment to Jesus Christ.
- endorses commitment and respect to Anabaptist faith.
- has gifts of leadership in evangelism and visitation.

Please submit inquiries, resumes and references to:

Jerry Buhler, Conference Pastor  
301 10A Pakwa Place  
Saskatoon, SK S7L 6A3  
Phone: 306-249-4844  
E-mail: mcsask@mcsask.ca  
Fax: 306-349-4441



## PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

The Board of Governors of Canadian Mennonite University invites applications and/or nominations for the position of President, expected to be effective July 1, 2012.

CMU is an Anabaptist Christian university located in Winnipeg, Manitoba. It was chartered by the Province of Manitoba in 1998, and received membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada in 2008.

The President will lead CMU in accordance with its mission, vision and core commitments that are based on Biblical principles and rooted in Anabaptist-Mennonite and Evangelical perspectives, and will oversee all aspects of CMU including academic, student life, enrolment and marketing, administration and finance, development, strategic planning, and external relationships.

CMU seeks a candidate who

- will lead in articulating and implementing the mission and core values of the university;
- will be committed to faith and life as expressed in the Confessions of Faith of the Mennonite Brethren Conference & Mennonite Church Canada;
- will have an understanding of and commitment to CMU's supporting constituencies;
- will be committed to inter-Mennonite and inter-university cooperation;
- can articulate a compelling vision of Anabaptist Christian university education, and will understand its opportunities and challenges;
- has an earned doctorate, or equivalent, and a demonstrated capacity to engage in the intellectual life of the university;
- possesses skills for raising funds to enhance and ensure CMU's financial sustainability;
- displays proven leadership skills, including fiscal management, strategic thinking and planning, and building effective relationships with the bodies of the institution—its board, faculty, staff, and students;
- can present, promote, and advocate for CMU internally and in its relationships to church, other universities, to government, and to the public.

A full position profile and other details can be found at

[http://www.cmu.ca/presidential\\_search.html](http://www.cmu.ca/presidential_search.html)

Nominations or expressions of interest should be addressed to:

**Ron Loepky**

**Chair, Presidential Search Committee**

**500 Shaftesbury Blvd.**

**Winnipeg, MB R3P 2N2 CANADA**

Or sent by email to: [presidentialexsearch@cmu.ca](mailto:presidentialexsearch@cmu.ca)

# Ice follies in Alberta



*Just over 30 youths enjoyed snow fights, broomball, walks on the river ice and hanging out with each other at Camp Valaqua's annual senior high snow camp from Feb. 25 to 27. Canadian Mennonite University student Michael Harms spoke about the uses of technology and had participants write a letter to themselves; this "snail-mail" will serve as a reminder of commitments they made towards healthy choices, he said. Mennonite Church Alberta's youth leadership team is currently planning new events for May and September; comments and ideas for the team may be e-mailed to [Kathleen.Bergen@faceyleadership.org](mailto:Kathleen.Bergen@faceyleadership.org).*