

CANADIAN MENNONITE

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EDITORIAL

My vision for *Canadian Mennonite*

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

“I have never heard the editor’s vision for the magazine,” said a reader when asked what she thought of *Canadian Mennonite*.

The observation caught me up short. Assuming my vision was implicit in the biweekly conversation I engender, being explicit with my goals and aspirations didn’t seem necessary.

To do so might even be redundant, I reasoned. Apparently, I am wrong. With each change of editors, some readers would like to know what roadmap or blueprint they are following. Here goes:

Canadian Mennonite should, first and foremost, serve the interests of its readers—members of, and those attending, the 220 congregations making up Mennonite Church Canada, totaling, at this point, some 32,000. These persons, by definition, have made a faith commitment to follow Jesus Christ and find themselves, in large part, historically linked to an Anabaptist-Mennonite expression of that faith in word and deed.

That expression is not fixed in time, however, but is dynamic and a primal force as the culture changes. This not to say that we are “tossed about with every wind of doctrine,” but rather that the gospel—or the unchanging Word (good news)—adapts itself to its surroundings, finding new ways to express itself, applying itself anew in the prevailing culture.

To that end, *Canadian Mennonite* will carry stories and features that help us apply our faith in an increasingly consumer-driven, nationalistic, multicultural and, yes, secular, society. Our faith, though grounded in the biblical narrative, needs to be relevant to our time and place, adaptive to changing societal norms and life-giving to persons at all stages of the life cycle—from the young in their formative stage, to parents and middle-agers as they implant spiritual values in the next generation, and to the seniors in their wisdom and generosity.

To do this, we will draw on all of the resources, all of the abundant gifts of our body politic. We have been gifted by God with the prophetic voices and clear thinking of our academic communities, the compassion and inspiration of our many pastors, the expertise of many dedicated persons in the varied professions and business, the down-to-earth but often unnoticed contributions of special lay persons, the vision of our young persons seeking faith applications in a very different environment than that in which their parents and grandparents grew up.

And speaking of young persons, we are quite aware, through our own studies, that we have an aging readership, one that is appreciative and loyal and generous to a fault. For that, we are most grateful. Many of you are enthusiastic with



your comments, dollars and constructive suggestions.

Since our young, aged 18 to 35 let’s say, live largely in a technologically driven world, the printed word has less appeal than the electronic venue. *Canadian Mennonite*, perceived by them as one of the church’s institutions, does not command their loyalty or inspire them to the same degree as their elders.

In a discussion by our board, we are making specific plans to address the young audience. A student intern, to be hired this summer, will develop a youth section of the magazine, which will reference a special youth-oriented space on our website—an interactive place where young persons will be free to discuss their issues and hopefully discover a fellowship of the like-minded as they openly and honestly ask their questions. We will use the tools of social networking to draw readers to this site.

Part of my vision, too, is to have readers take more ownership and responsibility for what appears on our pages and on our website. From preliminary returns of our readership survey (the deadline for which just ended), there is still too much regionalism among us. Such complaints as “too much news/views from the west,” or vice-versa, “too much from the east,” or “too much from the Russian Mennonites,” or, “too much from Swiss Mennonites,” are parochial and can be divisive.

While ethnic self-identities die hard, let’s make a special effort to look at MC Canada as a faith community united, as a national church with a mission to strengthen “all” of the saints, and to spread the good news regardless of local preferences. What happens in a small congregation in British Columbia should be of vital interest to congregants in Waterloo, Ont. We are one body in Christ.

ABOUT THE COVER:

After using their palm branches in Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church’s triumphal entry celebration, children then brought them along on the 2010 Palm Sunday Peace Walk through downtown Kitchener, Ont. For Easter reflections by Terry Hiebert and Elsie Rempel, see pages 14 and 15.

PHOTO: RICHARD ALBRECHT

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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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Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



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Mennonites and 'illegal' refugees: Pt. II: **BY EDMUND PRIES**
From Honduras: A fish story: **BY BRYAN BUTLER, CPI**

SPIRITUAL FORMATION FEATURE

Encountering the living God

Forming individuals and congregations through tending the soul

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent

“God is a living God who encounters us in our daily lives.” So said Arnold Snyder, professor of history at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., during a Reformation Sunday sermon last fall at Wilmot Mennonite Church, New Hamburg. Then in his lunch-hour lectures at Grebel earlier this year, he acknowledged that he was going to repeat this idea of Anabaptist spirituality being grounded in an encounter with the living God until the participants were sick of it. (See story on page 9.)

While author David Augsburg wrote in *Dissident Discipleship* that spirituality “has become comfortingly vague and is usefully vacant, allowing people to insert and then extract meanings virtually at will,” I am using the term “Mennonite-Christian spirituality” to mean “a life of ongoing encounter with the God we experience in Jesus Christ.”

Dawn Ruth Nelson’s thesis in *A Mennonite Woman* is that such a spirituality was implicit in the community life of Mennonites until about two generations ago. Since then, the spirituality itself has been eroded in tandem with the erosion of the community. Mennonites living in urban settings, or away from their communities on mission and service assignments, have found that they had little to support them in living a life of encounter with God.

Scott Brubaker-Zehr, pastor at Rockway Mennonite Church, Kitchener, concurs with Ruth Nelson. When he and his wife Mary were on a mission assignment in Colombia from 1990-94, he found his spirituality severely tested, “feeling overwhelmed by social issues and the struggles there, and as a young seminary grad feeling like I didn’t have a deep well to draw from. I came home realizing that if I’m going to continue in ministry,

I am using the term ‘Mennonite-Christian spirituality’ to mean ‘a life of ongoing encounter with the God we experience in Jesus Christ.’



'Kingdom spirituality' is well suited to Mennonites. This is the 'give me something to do for God' spirituality that goes on peace marches, works with Mennonite Disaster Service, sits at the quilting frame or helps with building projects like the one at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp, Ont., pictured.

I need a deeper well."

Pastor Steve Drudge of Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, scoffs at the idea that this only applies to urbanites. He believes that Ruth Nelson's thesis applies to rural congregants as well, saying that his members are also no longer immersed in a tight-knit community.

Frank Tillapaugh wrote in *Unleashing the Church* in the 1980s that the United States was made up of urban and "rurban" people. Rural people try to do all the things that urban people do, they just have to drive further.

Similar stories abound

Miriam Frey, a Mennonite spiritual director and educator in Waterloo, tells the story of growing up in the Markham-Waterloo Mennonite group where she "caught" theology, Bible and spiritual practice in the church. When she left there to pursue education, employment and service opportunities, she found that she was not being supported enough by what she received in congregations. She found the people in the more "liberal" congregations did not have the same grounding in Bible, theology and community practice that she had.

Gord Alton, a member of the

pastoral team at Erb St. Mennonite Church, Waterloo, and a spiritual director, wants people "to experience God's transforming love." When a course in spiritual devotions taught by Arthur Boers was offered by Mennonite Church Eastern Canada in the 1990s he found support for his burgeoning ministry. Exposed to spiritual disciplines such as centring prayer, and to writers like Gerald May, who combines spirituality and psychology, he found support to pastor, guide others and to work with people with AIDS as a community chaplain.

In that work his very first client, a woman, asked him, "Teach me how to pray."

"That was something I hadn't been taught in seminary," he admitted. "She was really looking for a way to connect with God and for me to lead the way. That visit really triggered that I needed to get some training in spiritual direction."

Sue Steiner, a spiritual director, retired pastor and consultant with Associates Resourcing the Church, who works at "tending the soul" of congregations, tells of being a young pastor and that when the senior minister left she "lost my cover or protection as a woman pastor and realized that the next step for me was to

go deeper and pay attention to my core spirituality."

Through a friend, she found a retired female Anglican priest to be her spiritual director. This helped her to "go deeper for myself, deeper for the congregation." She found contemplative spirituality was right for her personality, a spirituality unknown in the Mennonite church.

What 'spiritual type' are you?

Each of these church leaders has found food for their souls in the contemplative traditions that have come down through the Catholic and Anglican traditions. Arnold Snyder contends that much of this was practised by 16th-century Anabaptists and connects well with what is seen as appropriate spirituality in an Anabaptist Christian church. He gives the example of centring prayer as an act of *gelassenheit* or yieldedness to God, a key component of both 16th- and 21st-century Anabaptism.

But Corinne Ware, in her book *Discover Your Spiritual Type*, notes that contemplative practice is only one of the four main ways of being spiritual in a Christian way. The others—head, heart and kingdom spiritualities—are also represented in congregations:

- **HEAD SPIRITUALITY** appreciates well-crafted sermons, theological discussion and clear ways of thinking about God and the church.

- **HEART SPIRITUALITY**, often represented in evangelical churches, focuses on clear images of God, but appropriates them through emotional means, and appreciates music and prayers that move the heart.

- **KINGDOM SPIRITUALITY** is well suited to Mennonites. This is the "give me something to do for God" spirituality that goes on peace marches, works with Mennonite Disaster Service or sits at the quilting frame. Images of God may be a bit more vague, but doing something is the outcome.

Tri-polar spirituality

Contemplative or mystical spirituality cares about listening to God in silence, and drawing near to God in nature, solitude, Scripture and music, such as

that from the Taizé or Iona communities in France and Scotland. It is a reflective spirituality without clear images of God.

Jan Steckley, pastor of Hillcrest Mennonite Church, New Hamburg, is aware of these varying needs and expressions of spirituality, and works to provide opportunities in worship and Christian practice for all of them.

But, says Steiner, the other three spiritual types would benefit from reflection in

the contemplative type.

Alton notes that to be healthy followers of God, it is essential for Christians to spend time reflecting on what is going on in their bodies and emotions, no matter which spirituality they favour.

Augsburger critiques what he calls the mono- and bi-polar spiritualities favoured in the contemplative tradition. Mono-polar spiritualities focus on self-realization—learning about the self, and

growing into the best a person can be, where “best” is measured personally and not with outside measurements. Bi-polar spiritualities focus on the individual and God. This is the common situation in spiritual direction, during which individuals come with their experiences with God and are helped by the director to sort out what is of themselves, and what might be of God.

At MC Eastern Canada’s annual

My journey into prayer

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Growing up in a family with an Evangelical Mennonite bent meant that I early on learned about going to church. While we had prayers at meals, bedtime and on special occasions—like going on a trip or during sickness—we did not have a regular devotional life at home. In Sunday school, youth group and a charismatic Bible study I joined after being baptized, I learned that regular prayer and Bible reading would be good and practised them sporadically. When I married, we tried to do the same and, again, managed sporadically.



From reading about God’s people in the Bible and in other literature, and speaking to people, I knew that there was more. People spoke of being guided by God, of sensing God’s presence. I wanted more, but didn’t know where to look. Everywhere in the church, prayer seemed to be primarily focussed on intercession, although adoration, confession and thanksgiving were mentioned.

Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg, Man., put me in contact with fellow strugglers—both students and faculty—who were trying to grow deeper. The annual January Deeper Life meetings were helpful, but it wasn’t until 1981, my final year, that a path opened up.

Richard Foster had recently written *Celebration of Discipline* and was working on *Freedom of Simplicity*. His description of the classic spiritual disciplines caught my wife’s and my imagination. My wife and I bought both books and began to read. We practised fasting, contemplation, study, celebration, journalling and the other disciplines he described, being aware of the knife edge between legalism and indolence. Prayer became more than giving God a list of requests.

Our arrival at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., in 1988, after five years of pastoral work, found us ready for more. The spiritual life disciplines course, group retreats, spiritual direction and

friendships deepened our lives of prayer. I sensed God present, listening to me, wanting me to listen to God, leading, caring, counselling, and correcting more and more.

Years of individual unguided monthly retreats eventually gave over to one-, three- and eight-day directed silent retreats at Loyola House, near Guelph, Ont. Although I didn’t know it, I was being trained in Ignatian spirituality, specifically gospel contemplation.

Other Mennonite leaders were on the same journey, finding the classic disciplines to be growing us deeper in a sense of having God present in our everyday lives. Eventually Loyola House helped me find a spiritual director who guided me towards the Ignatian exercises: nine to 12 months of an hour a day of specific contemplations on the life of Jesus together with an hour a week with a spiritual director.

These were life-changing. Spending an hour a day in imaginatively engaging Scripture stories, asking myself questions, sitting with God, and waiting for answers or peace, continues to be a steady space in the chaotic world. I have continued the prayer life for the last seven years, guided by a monthly visit with my director. I also partake in the retreats offered by Mennonite Spiritual Directors of Eastern Canada and spiritual friendships.

Although I have not taken extended training as a director, pastoring is a task of guiding individuals, groups within the congregation, and everyone as a whole to experience God in day-to-day living and in the life of the congregation. Using guided prayer or contemplative reading in worship or formation hour, or in visioning and transformational work, has helped us to stay grounded in our identity as God’s people.

It is my hope that I and my fellow believers can move to the place where life is a prayer, an ongoing, growing relationship with the One who loves us more than we love ourselves. Hearing that Pope John-Paul II was praying as he died in April 2005 gave me great hope for my life.

I am excited by the spiritual awakening I see happening in the church.

Pastors, Chaplains and Congregational Leaders seminar, Arnold Neufeld-Fast focused on Augsburg's tri-polar spirituality, encompassing the individual, God and the community of humanity. In Augsburg's opening chapter, he repeatedly negates any usefulness in the mono- and bi-polar spiritualities he sees in general society and other denominations, and trumpets the Anabaptist focus on being individuals, in relationship to God, in the community.

Frey responds to him, noting that many of her directees have not found the church to be a place that supports or nurtures them spiritually, and so they

have sought support elsewhere. And the point could be made that seeing a spiritual director already brings a community component into the equation.

There are great strengths in a spirituality that is not only about "me" or "me and God." Don S. Browning, in *The Moral Context of Pastoral Care*, writes that psychologies that focus on the health of the individual often fail to consider what happens when the health needs of two individuals conflict, failing to see the individual in the context of family, society and culture. This is what Augsburg is after: seeing spiritual health as the individual, in a relationship with God, in

relationship with humanity, in particular the faith community.

This is what many leaders who are practising contemplative spirituality, and giving spiritual direction, are doing. Steiner calls what she learned to do tending the soul of a congregation, caring not only for the congregation as individuals, but seeing them together as an entity that needs spiritual direction.

Steckley also works in tending her congregation's soul, helping it to ask together questions that sound missional: "Where is God at work already? How do we join God in that work? Where are we experiencing God in our gatherings and

BOOK REVIEW

A way of life

A Mennonite Woman: Exploring Spiritual Life and Identity.
By Ruth Dawn Nelson. Telford, Pa.: Cascadia Publishing House, 2010.

REVIEWED BY DAVE ROGALSKY

However difficult this book is to read, Dawn Ruth Nelson has done the church a significant service in her study. Her effort to both diagnose the malaise in North American Mennonite spirituality and propose remedial measures suffers from a poor choice of title and could have benefited from tighter editing.

The Mennonite woman of the title is Ruth Nelson's grandmother, Susan Ruth, born and raised in Mennonite country in Pennsylvania. When Ruth Nelson's own spirituality failed her while she was on assignment in Northern Ireland, she began seeking for spiritual support in other Christian traditions, most particularly monastic contemplative spirituality.

On her return to North America, she discovered that others—Marcus Smucker, Marlene Kropf and others at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), Elkhart, Ind.—were dipping into the same wells. They, like Ruth Nelson, had discovered that the community-based spirituality of rural Mennonites could not support them in urban and mission settings.

The community that had nurtured, cared for, modelled and taught generations of Mennonites was absent, a community that her grandmother had had throughout

her whole life and which Ruth Nelson had had as a child and young adult.

She suggests that this is the issue facing late 20th- and early 21st-century Mennonites as they more and more live in isolation from their fellow believers, except for an hour on Sunday morning. The first such generation flourished. The following generations have been formed spiritually very little by the community.

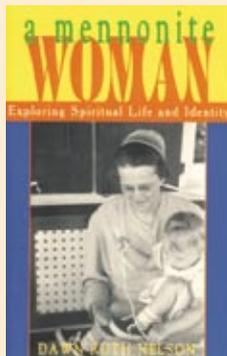
Ruth Nelson's solutions arise from the program of personal spirituality taught at both AMBS and Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., spiritual friendships, retreats and direction. These tools arise out of Catholic and Anglican spirituality, and are rooted in the same medieval spirituality that formed the early Anabaptists. They provide new avenues for both formation and mutual accountability in spirituality.

She emphasizes that her grandmother's spirituality was implicit in the community, while today Mennonites need to become explicit, moving from a "caught" spirituality to a "taught" or formed spirituality.

In her last chapter, "Becoming Like Christ Inwardly and Outwardly," she describes "six key elements" of a Mennonite spirituality: "an everyday, embodied sacramentality; nonconformity; community; service; *gelassenheit* or meekness; and the person of Jesus and the Bible."

She concludes with these words: "Spirituality is necessarily a way of life, a life that is a life of prayer and following Jesus. That is the genius of Mennonite spirituality—it is a way of life."

It remains for Mennonite congregations and communities to explicitly form that spirituality in all generations present.



work?” She says that people have noticed that congregational meetings at Hillcrest have a different feel to them, that such questions are becoming natural to them as they worship, work and serve together.

Steckley, with others from MC Eastern Canada, attended three summers at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., under Wendy Miller, professor of spiritual formation, learning about personal spirituality, spiritual direction and tending a congregation’s soul. She is now one of the leaders in MC Eastern Canada’s two-year Tending the Soul program, whose goal is “cultivating awareness of the presence and activity of God in our daily lives and in our congregations.” Participants are asked to commit to the regular practice of spiritual disciplines and in return receive spiritual direction, do assigned readings, and work in small and large groups to gain competence in the field.

Soul-tending is not about dealing with problems, but about growing a language and practice of thinking about life as individuals and as a congregation as an organic whole, rooted in God.

Steckley says that her hope is for her congregation, and others, to be “formed as God’s people for the salvation of the world.” To do this, they try to see what God is blessing and do that, rather than ask God to bless what they are doing. This is a move from intercessory type prayer to the practice of the presence of God, like that of Brother Lawrence, the mediaeval mystic.

Other ways of renewing spirituality

There are also other ways of approaching the need for a renewed spirituality to support the individual and fuel a congregation’s life.

Community Mennonite Church in Drayton, north of Waterloo, used Henry and Richard Blackaby’s *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God*. From a more evangelical spirituality, this book is connected to curriculum for the whole congregation. All Sunday school classes studied the material while worship and preaching focused on the same material last fall.

Pastor Dave Tiessen has found great

excitement in the congregation, as people renew their commitment to follow God and seek God’s desires for the congregation. Congregational leaders like Paul and Darlene Wideman note that the material calls for both an individual and a corporate spirituality rooted in desires to be obedient to God. They sense hope in the congregation as they realize that they are working together with God on God’s goals.

Common to the contemplative approach and this more heartfelt spirituality approach are the mix of individual and corporate, and submission to God and what God is already doing in the world.

Back to the future

It would seem that Ruth Nelson’s thesis holds true for many individuals and congregations among Mennonites. As the close-knit communities that formed Mennonites implicitly to be God’s people fade into history, explicit efforts to connect individuals and whole communities to God are flourishing.

Congregations where such explicit work is taking place are often vibrant, busy, multi-generational communities that are impacting themselves, their area church and the communities around them.

They are led by pastors who are paying attention to their own relationships with God and are calling on all the members of their congregations to do the same.

Much like the 16th-century Anabaptists who were critical of spirituality reserved for religious

leaders alone, this is a spirituality and spiritual formation that believes God can be encountered by all, trusts that God will encounter, and calls on people to make room for God to encounter them. ✺

Spiritual formation resources

Books

- A Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster
- A Mennonite Woman* by Dawn Ruth Nelson
- Discover Your Spiritual Type* by Corinne Ware
- Dissident Discipleship* by David Augsburg
- Experiencing God* by Henry and Richard Blackaby
- Jesus, Our Spiritual Director: A Pilgrimage Through the Gospels* by Wendy Miller
- Praying the Psalms* by Nan C. Merrill
- Prayers For People Who Can’t Sit Still* by William Tenny-Brittian
- A Praying Congregation: The Art of Teaching Spiritual Practice* by Jane E Vennard
- Praying With the Anabaptists: The Secret of Bearing Fruit* by Marlene Kropf and Eddy Hall
- Take Our Moments and Our Days* Volumes 1 and 2

Events/Programs

- Attend a guided retreat at places like Five Oaks (Paris, Ont.), Loyola House (Guelph, Ont.), Sisters of St. John the Divine (Toronto, Ont.), St. Benedict’s Retreat & Conference Centre (Winnipeg, Man.), Queens’ House of Retreat (Saskatoon, Sask.), St. Michael’s Retreat (Lumsden, Sask.), St. Peters Abbey (Muenster, Sask.), The Faithful Companions of Jesus (Calgary, Alta.), Providence Renewal Centre (Edmonton, Alta.), Kingsfold (Cochrane, Alta.), Camp Hope (Hope, B.C.), Westminster Abbey (Misson, B.C.), St. John’s House (Victoria, B.C.), Queenswood (Victoria, B.C.).

Web-based material

- mcec.ca/content/mcec-event-resources: Arnold Snyder’s podcasts on Anabaptist spiritual formation and Arnold Neufeld-Fast’s video, “Growing Up Into Christ: Forming Mature Christians in the 21st Century.”
- Lists of spiritual directors are available from Mennonite Spiritual Directors of Eastern Canada (mennospiritdir@gmail.com) or on the Spiritual Directors International website (sdiworld.org).

—COMPILED BY DAVE ROGALSKY

We don't need to be more Anabaptist

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Over thirty pastors and lay people gathered earlier this year to hear Arnold Snyder, retiring Conrad Grebel University College professor of history, give two two-hour long lectures on Anabaptist-Mennonite spiritual formation in a historical perspective.

He drew attention to the spirit-filled beginnings of Anabaptism in the 1530s, which were part of a movement through the late Medieval period away from an external faith to an internalized experience with God. But spiritual freedom quickly turned to legalism, Snyder said.

One of Menno Simons' first writings as an Anabaptist was "The Spiritual Resurrection" (1536), in which he was thrilled with the freedom in the Spirit he experienced as a follower of Jesus Christ. But he ended with writings like "Instruction on Excommunication" (1558), in which he gave detailed instructions on how to behave towards those who have been excommunicated by the church, including instructions for how husbands and wives were to avoid their excommunicated spouses.

Under the influence of the Enlightenment, this legalism moved towards intellectualism, a position that has been held until the present. Many who have wanted more emotional expression in worship and devotion have moved to other denominations, as have those who want more mystery through the use of symbol and actions.

"The heart of the matter, where we encounter the living God, it does not seem to matter much if one is a Mennonite or a Roman Catholic, a Lutheran or a charismatic, or a non-denominational congregational church believer, because we love a living God and not a denominational fossil," Snyder said, adding, "We don't need to be more Anabaptist. We need to be more present to God. The good news is, our tradition is not only open to it,

but is built on this experience of being present to God. We should fully expect to be led places where our faith parents were not led. Obviously, it's 500 years later . . . and we've learned some things."

That said, though, Snyder pointed out that early Anabaptist-Mennonites have left those today with great resources on a path to follow from an experience with

God to a life lived in continued experiences with God. Although they threw out much Roman Catholic theology and church practices, today's Mennonites, who live in a different context, can add some things back, and can reclaim or add spiritual disciplines from the Medieval period.

As an example, he used centring prayer, which he called "a meditative prayer practice that is eminently in harmony with our spiritual tradition. It aims to maintain a non-defensive mindfulness, openness and attentiveness before God. Centring prayer fosters a spirit of *gelassenheit* . . . the practice of yielding our will before God's will." ❧



Ray Martin, left, pastor at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock, Ont., and Scott Brubacher-Zehr, centre, pastor at Rockway Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont., listen to a presentation by Arnold Snyder, retiring Conrad Grebel University College history of theology professor, on the history of Anabaptist-Mennonite spiritual formation beliefs and practices.

/// For discussion

1. How was your spirituality formed as you grew up? In what ways has Mennonite spirituality been changing?
2. Do you feel that you encounter God through your current spiritual practice? How important is it for our congregations to work at renewing spirituality? Is this best done individually or as communities? How can we best work at renewal?
3. Which of the four spiritualities that Corinne Ware articulates fits you best? Do the descriptions help you to see others around you as "spiritual" persons, although different from yourself?
4. What experiences have you had with guided spiritual retreats, seeing a spiritual director, or purposefully taking up classic spiritual disciplines like fasting, contemplative prayer, journaling, celebration or confession? How did you begin? Who taught you? What influence have you seen in your life as a result of practising them?

VIEWPOINTS

/// Readers write

✉ Healing and rebuilding happening under Isaaks' leadership

RE: "FROM A closed community to an open heart," March 7, page 4.

First Mennonite Church, Burns Lake, is fortunate to have the leadership of Eve Isaak and her husband Helmut, an Anabaptist-Mennonite history professor,

to take our core group of believers to new levels of spiritual growth after a decade of division that saw our membership decrease by some 70 percent. As a first priority, healing and rebuilding needs to happen and we are confident that the Isaaks' leadership will bring this about in a positive manner.

Despite the division, our 56-year-old congregation has been blessed over this time, encouraging and developing more than 25 current and former pastors and missionaries. Its participation in Ootsa Lake Bible Camp, the Church of the Way in Granisle, B.C., the Burns Lake Christian Supportive Care Society, the

FAMILY TIES

Keeping vigil

MELISSA MILLER

Our recent journey began in darkness, continued through a day and into more darkness—a winter drive of 28 hours on roads that were at first snowy, then drenched with rain. We had received the call the day before: "Fluid on her lungs . . . palliative care . . . keep her comfortable . . . morphine . . . just a few days left." My husband's mother was dying. We wanted to be with her and other family members as she made her final passage. And so we drove.

When we reached our destination—the nursing home where she lived—we found Mother to be still alive and conscious, waiting for us and able to greet us. All of her children were with her, holding her hands, and exchanging words of comfort and care. Throughout the next day and night we took turns keeping vigil until she drew her last, quiet breaths, a peaceful end to a long life.

I had some alone time with her at her bedside, some of it holding her hand or helping her sip water, some of it singing to her, some of it silently recalling our shared histories as mother- and daughter-in-law. Memories floated through my mind: yummy meals served at her generous table; trips we had taken together; the warm, brightly-coloured

afghans crocheted for her grandchildren; her finely sewn quilts that adorn our beds. I pondered her 91 years of living, the struggles she had endured and the pleasures she had tasted.

Sharp-edged memories came as well. In-laws are later additions to a family, and they may never fully understand or completely feel a part of the group they have joined. As an in-law, I sometimes felt puzzled or even wounded by mysterious communication patterns or by my inability to decode the subtexts. By her bedside, I was given another opportunity



Kairos time is ripe and rich and fulfilling. In a kairos moment, time seems to stand still.

to release any lingering hurts.

Mostly during our vigil, I was grateful for the timeless space we entered. There was nothing else I needed to do, no list I needed to chip away at, no task I needed to complete other than to be with Mother and the other family members—to sit and to wait and to pray.

Such timeless space is called *kairos* time, a term which comes to us from the ancient Greeks, who designated another kind of time as chronological (from *chronos*). *Kairos* moments are described

as occurring in between chronological moments, and they offer special or potent opportunities. In Christian thought, *kairos* time marks an appointed time in the purpose of God. Some churches understand *kairos* time to be in effect when the prayers and songs of human worship intersect with the eternal worship of heavenly angels. *Kairos* time is ripe and rich and fulfilling. In a *kairos* moment, time seems to stand still.

Of course, not all of life can be conducted in *kairos* time. There are lists to be tended, bills to be paid, responsibilities to be fulfilled, mundane and weighty matters to be addressed. In our society, most of our lives take place within the structure of chronological time. Even so,

our *kairos* moments can be cultivated, welcomed and savoured. Keeping vigil at a deathbed, rocking an infant to sleep, stroking the hand of a loved one, lingering in God's presence during private prayers or in congregational worship—all these offer timeless space where God's grace can act in and through us.

Melissa Miller (familyties@mts.net) lives in Winnipeg, Man., where she ponders family relationships as a pastor, counselor and author.

youth drop-in-centre and evening Bible studies, all attest to a strong commitment to evangelism and community ministry. We are in covenant with Mennonite Church B.C. and will remain so.

The path to new growth will not be easy. Pastoral leaders who left this congregation, taking whole families with them, continue to be active in our small community. Not sympathetic to an Anabaptist theology and practice, they have based their differences on what they perceive are erroneous models of the emergent church, such as contemplative prayer and prayer labyrinths. Their reasons for leaving centred on such misunderstood issues as thinking MC Canada and MC B.C. did not take a strong enough stand on

homosexuality a few years ago when that issue was aired in articles in *Canadian Mennonite*.

All this has led to much confusion, but God is faithful and has given us leaders with a clear vision and compassionate hearts. We have covenanted together as a church family “to reach, influence, teach, nurture and integrate all people into fellowship with Jesus Christ and each other through personal relationships, group fellowships, service and corporate worship.”

WILF DUECK, BURNS LAKE, B.C.

Wilf Dueck is the congregational chair of First Mennonite Church, Burns Lake.

GOD, MONEY AND ME

Joyful generosity

DARREN PRIES-KLASSEN

In his book *Will Our Children Have Faith?*, John Westerhoff argues that for future generations of young people and adults to develop Christian faith they will need more than Sunday school. They'll need a host of opportunities where faith is not only taught but experienced.

In the same way, the making of a joyful giver requires more than just words. Ask people why they share generously from what God has entrusted to them and inevitably you will hear stories and experiences that shaped them into who they are. Simply hearing about generosity is not enough. We have to engage with it and live it out.

Mennonite Foundation of Canada's theme this year is “joyful generosity.” In I Timothy 6:17-19, Paul writes to a less-experienced church leader and gives him these words of encouragement for his work with the church in Ephesus: “As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works,

generous and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.”

To really live the life that God wants for us, we need to move beyond a faith that only engages the head. In her book *The Wisdom Way of Knowing*, Cynthia Bourgeault writes that trying to find faith with the intellectual centre is something like trying to play a violin with a saw. It's the wrong tool for the job. We need to



Consciously work at ensuring that your investments aren't in conflict with your values.

be engaged at the heart level, where we live, move and have our being. We must also experience the selfless act of giving generously and express our faith through the use of our finances.

Some practical expressions of joyful generosity:

- **TEACH YOUR CHILDREN** at an early age that money is for sharing and saving, not just spending, and use an allowance as part of the teaching.
- **TALK ABOUT YOUR GIVING HABITS** with family around the dinner table.

Involve your children and teens in decisions about giving.

- **CONSCIOUSLY WORK** at ensuring that your investments aren't in conflict with your values.
- **PLAN YOUR GIVING** as part of your regular weekly and monthly spending, not just as end-of-year, last-minute leftovers. The biblical concept of first fruits, giving from our first and best, is still relevant.
- **MAKE END-OF-LIFE GIFTS TO CHARITY**—through a will, life insurance policy, retirement fund or tax-free savings account—as a final testimony to your values.

When your head, heart and wallet are aligned, you will be helping to build the good foundation which Paul spoke of in his letter to Timothy. It is my hope and prayer that joyful generosity grips you so that you live “the life that really is life.”

Darren Pries-Klassen is the executive director of Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For stewardship education and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit MennoFoundation.ca.

✉ Bible teaches against women in ministry

RE: "WOMEN IN ministry" feature, March 7, pages 4 to 10. In the second "For discussion" question on page 10, you ask if women's works are different than men's.

I would like each one to read I Timothy 2:9-15 and also I Corinthians 14:34-37, where women are told not

to teach, nor to usurp authority over men in church. In I Corinthians 14:37, Paul says this is the Lord's commandment.

The women who are pastors have gone through Bible school. I wish they would write to *Canadian Mennonite* and tell us how they get around these verses.

PETER REMPEL, ROSTHERN, SASK.

FROM OUR LEADERS

Being a faithful church

ANDREW REESOR-MCDOWELL

In deciding how to live as Christians, the church is called to rely on the Holy Spirit and use Scripture, prayer and the family of faith, as it determines responses to the circumstances of its unique family. One purpose of Mennonite Church Canada is to discern issues of faithful living for our times. To facilitate this purpose, MC Canada has initiated Being a Faithful Church (BFC), a process to build capacity for healthy, faithful discernment.

When telling of God's purposes in a particular matter, Scripture often speaks more than once. Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy, but I say to you, love your enemies. . . ." The church carries a similar responsibility as it discerns God's will for our time. When the church "speaks again," it does one of three things: It says the same thing it has said before (loving the enemy means pacifism); it makes incremental changes (moves from no resistance to non-violent resistance); or it says something new (possibility for a changed understanding).

Five focus issues have been identified for the process:

- **UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE CHURCH;**
- **BEING A PEACE CHURCH;**
- **WITNESS IN THE CONTEXT OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM;**

- **SEXUALITY IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH;** and
- **PERSPECTIVES ON ECOLOGICAL CONCERNS.**

The BFC process has six components:

- **WIDE PARTICIPATION.** Individuals, congregations, area conferences and special interest groups will be invited to contribute.
- **AFFIRMATION.** While working through issues, the church affirms past discernment, such as the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*, as having authority until the church speaks again.
- **A MISSIONAL CALLING.** The church is called to be attentive to the transforming initiatives of God in creation and to extend Christ's love to all people.
- **DISCERNING TOGETHER.** MC Canada speaks to issues only after discussions and approval by delegates from the 225 congregations and five area churches at a

delegate assembly.

- **UNITY.** Our unity is given to us by Jesus. It is our prayer that the discernment process will energize the church. Discernment is part of our life together as MC Canada.
- **UNDERSTANDING.** A commitment to be the kind of church that makes a place

for those who have an alternative understanding to the majority.

Proposed next steps for the BFC process:

- **JULY 2011 ASSEMBLY:** Discussion and decisions of parameters for the next four to five years as outlined in the BFC Paper No. 3.
- **SEPTEMBER 2011 TO MARCH 2012:** Discussions of criteria to guide interpretation of Scripture.
- **JULY 2012 ASSEMBLY:** Approval of criteria for interpretation. The study theme for BFC will focus on scriptural interpretation.
- **SEPTEMBER 2012 TO MARCH 2013:** Begin discussions on sexuality in the life of the church, with reference to specific questions such as common-law marriage, same-sex relationships, extra-marital sex, pornography or other issues.
- **JULY 2013 ASSEMBLY:** The church will begin to speak on specific issues of sexuality when it is ready.
- **SEPTEMBER 2013 TO MARCH 2014:** All parties are invited to reflect on preliminary discussions/decisions made at assembly.

- **JULY 2014 ASSEMBLY:** MC Canada will speak again on some of the issues.

A background document of the BFC process will be available at the MC Canada website by May.

Andrew Reesor-McDowell is the moderator of MC Canada.



MC Canada has initiated Being a Faithful Church (BFC), a process to build capacity for healthy, faithful discernment.

LIFE IN THE POSTMODERN SHIFT

Blessed are the iconoclasts

BY TROY WATSON

In my last two articles—“The future of faith in Canada,” Feb. 7, page 11, and “Upside-down wisdom,” March 7, page 17—I’ve suggested the future of the church and Christianity in Canada will be markedly different than the conventional forms to which we have become accustomed. Unfortunately, I can’t tell you what the future of faith will look like, as I have misplaced my urim and thummim, and my crystal ball has turned out not to be dishwasher safe. The obvious truth is, only God knows what the future holds.

What I can tell you with confidence is that the iconoclasts and innovators will lead and shape the next wave of Christian faith in the emerging paradigm. Courageous, non-conformist, entrepreneurial pioneers, inspired by God and inspiring the disenchanted and disenfranchised spiritually hungry around them, will be the radical reformers of our day. Why? Because they always have been.

The current faith crisis we are experiencing will require 21st-century Peters and Pauls, Karlstadts and Mennos, Wesleys and Luther Kings, leaders who are in tune with the hearts and minds of the common people and of God. Radical, risk-taking lovers of God and humanity will again be the ones to mobilize and empower faith communities with fresh teaching, new perspectives, reckless openness to God’s Spirit and love for all.

Today’s reformers, like yesterday’s, will be daring iconoclasts.

The first major iconoclast movement in Christendom was initiated by Byzantine Emperor Leo in the eighth century. The second one occurred in the 16th century

during the Reformation, in which Anabaptists took part. Both of these movements were primarily focused on physical iconoclasm, the deliberate destruction or riddance of religious icons and other symbols, usually for religious or political motives.

I am referring to spiritual iconoclasm. Spiritual iconoclasm is eradicating or letting go of mental concepts that limit God. Meister Eckhart, the 13th-century German theologian and priest, succinctly articulated this type of iconoclasm in his curious statement, “I pray God to rid me of God,” meaning, “I open myself up to the God who is as I let go of the God I have constructed in my mind with human ideas and doctrines.”

He believed it is only as we empty our minds of finite preconceptions about God and how God works, that we are able to perceive and participate in the eternally new thing God is doing. New wine requires new wineskins. God’s wisdom that is higher than ours requires perpetually renewable minds.

Revolutions always frighten the majority—from the original Jesus movement to the Radical Reformation to the postmodern faith renewal happening today. At the same time, the questions I hear cautious Christians asking contemporary iconoclast revolutionaries are very important: “What are we letting go? The Bible? Jesus? Everything?” “What are we still holding on to?”

What the iconoclasts are letting go of

is the illusory assumption that we were ever holding on to the Bible, Jesus or truth in the first place. Iconoclasts realize we are always holding on to our own versions of Jesus, God and the Bible, and that notions such as our interpretation of the truth is the truth, and our thoughts and assumptions about God is who God

really is, are wrong. Dangerous. Idolatrous even.

Meister Eckhart said the physical iconoclasts missed the point when they destroyed physical art, symbols and images of God. (Art is usually not the problem. Good

art often opens us up to the mystery and inconceivable glory of God.)

What we need to smash are our mental images of God. We need to rid ourselves of our theological pictures of God painted with finite words and dogmatic concepts. If we don’t, we become idolaters, substituting the infinite God, who is bigger and beyond our loftiest mortal comprehension, with a God we have created in, and constrained to, our human minds.

All of our ideas and images of God are at best incomplete and provisional, and we are wise to hold them loosely, constantly humbling ourselves beneath the transcendent mystery of the great “I Will Be Who I Will Be.” It is only as we let go of the “God we know” that we are able to be led by the “God who is,” who frequently appears and moves outside the boundaries our beliefs have limited God to. (See Acts 10.)

Questions for our churches:

- Are we making room for, and giving voice to, the iconoclasts in our midst, or are we forcing our postmodern Grebels, Blaurocks and Sattlers to be quiet or to take their “boat-rocking,” “status quo-shaking” views elsewhere?
- Are we blessing our iconoclasts? ☘



Troy Watson is a Mennonite minister, resident theologian, spiritual director and a founding leader of The Quest, “a different kind of ‘church’ for life in the postmodern shift” in St. Catharines, Ont.

I open myself up to the God who is as I let go of the God I have constructed in my mind with human ideas and doctrines.

EASTER REFLECTIONS

What could he mean?

BY TERRY HIEBERT

“Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid” (Mark 16:8).

Fleeing death

Forty years ago this June, I fled from death. The day before the annual Sunday school picnic, my grandfather died of a heart attack. I was almost 10 years old.

We drove to the funeral home to see the body. I walked down the long hallway in fear and turned the corner to enter the room where my grandfather lay. The family was standing around, filled with grief. I took one brief look at Grandpa, turned and fled the building. Instead of attending the funeral, I went to my friend's farm and played all afternoon. I still regret running away.

The New International Version's shorter Easter story ends abruptly at Mark 16:8. What could this surprise ending possibly mean?

At the heart of the Gospel of Mark, Jesus says, *“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me”* (Mark 8:34).

But what is the Easter message for those followers who fail? Is there hope? The examples of failure are certainly easy to find.



‘Resurrection of the Christ and the Women at the Tomb’ by Fra Angelico, circa mid-15th century.

The failure of the three women

Three women—Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome—watch the cross at a distance. Their distance from Jesus means they are always one step behind. They are too late for the anointing; coming to Jesus' tomb, they find the body gone. Then they are too late for the Son rise; when they arrive at the tomb, the stone is already rolled away. Jesus is gone and they are left behind.

They are too afraid to witness. The women are called to tell the disciples and they say nothing. For them, the Easter message brings fear, not joy. Have the women failed because they did not tell anyone? What will happen to the good

news of Easter if fear causes silence?

But the Easter messenger says that Jesus is going ahead of the women into Galilee. What could he mean?

The failure of the disciples

The disciples have followed Jesus closely since the beginning of his ministry. They follow him until the Garden of Gethsemane. As Jesus prays, the disciples sleep. Apparently their sleep did not prepare them for the danger ahead. When Judas arrives with the soldiers, everyone flees. Jesus had called them to stay, but when opposition came, they fled.

Will the disciples have the strength to handle the same baptism or sacrifice as Jesus? Will they report the resurrection? Will they stand firm until the end? What happens to the disciples after they flee?

The Easter messenger says that Jesus is going ahead of the disciples into Galilee. What could he mean?

The failure of Peter

Peter follows Jesus further into the courtyard, but denies him when questioned. He then follows Jesus as far as the courtyard during the trial, where the high priest's servant girl recognizes that he is a disciple of Jesus by his Galilean accent. Peter denies knowing Jesus and flees.

Galilee has no reputation in Jerusalem. Galilee is for outsiders. Galilee is the land of pretenders, not of the real Messiah. But the Easter messenger says that Jesus is going ahead of Peter into Galilee. What could he mean?

The failure of the young man

After everyone deserts Jesus in Gethsemane, a young man stays behind. The mob seizes him and he flees in shame, leaving behind his linen garment that represented the priesthood, power,

Galilee has no reputation in Jerusalem. Galilee is for outsiders. Galilee is the land of pretenders, not of the real Messiah. But the Easter messenger says that Jesus is going ahead of Peter into Galilee.

riches and success.

Now at the tomb “a young man” (the same phrase as was used in the Gethsemane scene) is announcing the good news of the resurrection. The young man is now clothed in a white robe like the one that was lost.

Did Mark, the gospel writer, insert himself at the tomb to announce the resurrection? Possibly. Perhaps Mark had the same reason as Mel Gibson, director of the film *The Passion of the Christ*, who filmed his own hands nailing Jesus on the cross. In effect he was saying, “I nailed Jesus to the cross.” Easter is my story.

What can Easter mean to someone running away from Jesus in shame? Mark says that Jesus is going ahead of such an embarrassed young man to Galilee. What could he mean?

EASTER REFLECTIONS

What does Easter have to do with Galilee?

- **GALILEE IS A PLACE OF REMEMBRANCE.** In Galilee, Jesus came from Nazareth for baptism by John. Here, Jesus began preaching repentance and the good news of the kingdom. In Galilee, Jesus called Peter and Andrew to follow him. It's where he cast out evil spirits, healed great crowds and fed others.
- **GALILEE BECOMES THE PLACE OF NEW BEGINNINGS.** Like Peter and Thomas, those who meet the risen Jesus here are restored.
- **GALILEE IS A PLACE OF CALLING.**

Here, Jesus commissions his followers to make disciples of all nations.

- **GALILEE IS A PLACE OF HOPE.** Here, faltering and failing disciples like Mark follow the lead of the risen Christ.

And what of the women? Well, if they had never told the disciples, how would Mark know the story? ☞

Terry Hiebert is the academic dean of Steinbach Bible College, Man. Originally published in the March 2008 issue of the Evangelical Mennonite Missionary Church Recorder.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ELSIE REMPEL



Elsie Rempel ponders the small opening to a first-century tomb that may be similar to the one Jesus was buried in.

On the road to Emmaus

BY ELSIE REMPEL

In Luke 24, the disciples on the road to Emmaus were confused and discouraged. They had trouble recognizing Jesus.

In March of last year, I was a disciple on the road to Emmaus as part of a learning tour in the Holy Land. I was also confused and discouraged by the complexities of the deep fear, pain and suffering that is the story of this land and its peoples.

Near the ancient yet modern town of Emmaus is Canada Park, a heritage site that has been built with money that has been donated for the welfare of Israel by Canadians on the site of an Arab/

still cry out and share the story with those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. Cacti form fences between properties, and they sprout up again and again.

This sign of Palestinian village life was interpreted for us by Eitan Bronstein, director of Zochrot ("remember" in Hebrew). Zochrot has been organized to help Israelis and other visitors learn and remember this chapter of their history, which Palestinians refer to as the *nakba*, ("catastrophe" in Arabic). While the story was heart-rending, the fact that a secular Jew was committed to teaching this story to us and his fellow citizens was a sign of hope and reconciliation.

I sensed Jesus beside me, encouraging me to enjoy the dwarf irises of his earthly homeland, and I did so as I meandered on.

Palestinian village that was razed in the 1967 war. This heritage site officially recognizes everything except for the last, sad chapter of its history when Israeli soldiers occupied this village, expelled its residents and bulldozed the stone houses. But piles of stone and resilient cacti

Was this a sighting of Jesus still walking the road to Emmaus?

Experiences such as the tour of Canada Park weighed heavily as we entered the gates of a sixth-century monastery. A friendly and humble monk appeared and offered us a tour. As tempted as I was

to hear his explanations of this place, an inner voice nudged me to explore the grounds on my own.

As I did so I was greeted, as in many places on this journey, by an old mosaic of a meal Jesus hosted. I welcomed this sign and wandered on, following more signs that directed me to a first-century tomb. Along the path, I enjoyed the spring flowers that were thriving thanks to welcome rains a few days earlier. I sensed Jesus beside me, encouraging me to enjoy the dwarf irises of his earthly homeland, and I did so as I meandered on.

Yet another surprise awaited me. The tomb was not what I had expected. Separated by only a boundary marking rope, I sat down to think.

The entrance to this tomb was no bigger than the entrance to a child's snow fort. Is this what Jesus' tomb had been like? If so, the women with their ointment, and Peter, coming to check out their report, would have had to crawl in on hands and knees to seek their loving Lord. Humility, as well as determination, would have been required of them as they sought to be near Jesus.

As I sat and pondered this sign, Jesus gently reminded me that the way to seek him has not changed: "*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they shall see God*" (Matthew 5:3). ☞

Elsie Rempel is the director of Christian education and nurture for Mennonite Church Canada.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Anjo—Finley Rodrigues (b. March 5, 2011), to Hilary Janzen and Barret Anjo, First Mennonite, Edmonton, Alta.
Enns—Theodore Abram (b. March 7, 2011), to Rebecca and Michael Enns, Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Ewert—Micah Sugi Brown (b. March 4, 2011), adopted by Jon and Tracey Brown-Ewert, Bergthal Mennonite, Didsbury, Alta.
Funk—Ryan Benjamin (b. Jan. 7, 2011), to Douglas and Lisa Funk, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.
Gerling—Rachel Megan (b. Feb. 18, 2011), to Jason and Kathryn Gerling, First Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.
Hines—Jeremiah Jonathan (b. Dec. 31, 2010), to Kristen and Jonathan Hines, Hawkesville Mennonite, Ont.
Thiessen—Emmett John (b. Feb. 12, 2011), to Chris and Jessica Thiessen, Emmanuel Mennonite, Abbotsford, B.C.
Vanderlee—Joshua Paul (b. March 16, 2011), to Scott and Yvonne Vanderlee, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.
Wiens—Julia Belle (b. Jan. 20, 2011), to Joe and Amanda Wiens, Bergthaler Mennonite, Altona, Man.

Marriages

Dyck/Kauenhowen—Elma Dyck and Albert Kauenhowen, at North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Dec. 31, 2010.
Fehr/Westera—Matthew Fehr and Alissa Westera, Hague Mennonite, Sask., Feb. 26, 2011, in the Dominican Republic.

Deaths

Driechel—Eva Neufeld (nee Braun), 85 (b. June 9, 1925; d. Dec. 8, 2010), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Driediger—Margarete, 99 (d. Feb. 24, 2011), First Mennonite, Edmonton, Alta., in Abbotsford, B.C.
Dyck—Margarete (nee Bergmann), 99 (b. Oct. 1, 1911; d. March 11, 2011), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Ens—Gerhard, 88 (b. Aug. 4, 1922; d. Feb. 13, 2011), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Fehr—Isaac, 78 (d. Oct. 19, 2010), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Friesen—Abe, 73 (b. June 20, 1937; d. March 2, 2011), Elim Mennonite, Grunthal, Man.
Friesen—Cornelius N., 88 (b. March 26, 1922; d. Dec. 26, 2010), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Friesen—Margaret (nee Reimer), 85 (b. April 3, 1925; d. Oct. 9, 2010), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Froese—Isaac, 83 (d. Sept. 8, 2010), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Funk—Anna (nee Elias), 96 (b. March 30, 1914; d. March 13, 2011), Hague Mennonite, Sask.
Gerbrandt—Henry J., 95 (b. Dec. 6, 1915; d. Dec. 23, 2010), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Heyde—Ronald John, 80 (b. July 15, 1930; d. March 16, 2011), First Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.
Hildebrandt—Heinrich (Henry), 95 (b. Nov. 25, 1915; d. Jan. 8, 2011), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Klassen—Renetta, 91 (b. Aug. 12, 1919; d. Jan. 21, 2011), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Loewen—Alfred, 96 (b. Oct. 12, 1914; d. March 7, 2011), Bergthaler Mennonite, Altona, Man.
Nadler—Margaret (nee Fast), (d. Oct. 24, 2010), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Pankratz—Sara, 101 (b. Jan. 7, 1910; d. Feb. 3, 2011), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.
Poettcker—Abraham, 83 (d. Nov. 9, 2010), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

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

Poncius' Puddle



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

MC ALBERTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

'The end belongs to God'

STORY AND PHOTO BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent
EDMONTON, ALTA.

Willard Metzger, Mennonite Church Canada general secretary, inspired MC Alberta delegates with the reminder that no matter how difficult things are for the church, "this is not the end; the end belongs to God." Basing his keynote presentations to the 82nd annual assembly of MC Alberta, held last month at Holyrood Mennonite Church, Edmonton, on Revelation 21, Metzger noted that trends across denominations indicate decreases in membership and giving, but increases in local projects.

Missions and Service projects

Projects and personalities made for an exciting year, with four Missions and Service initiatives reporting progress:

- Donna Entz, hired last November, and her husband Loren, are an outreach presence among immigrants in North Edmonton. The Entzes, with 30 years of experience serving MC Canada/U.S.A. in Burkina Faso, are uniquely suited to relate to African newcomers in the area. Recently, Donna participated in discussions between Edmonton's mayor, Stephen Mandel, and members of the Somali community regarding violence in the city. Delegates voted to extend her part-time contract for three years.
- An intentional student community investigation has received strong verbal support for setting up a home in Calgary. The committee, represented by Becky Slack, is now investigating possibilities.
- An Anabaptist peace project called the Edmonton Ecumenical Peace Network has formed with a vision to proclaim the gospel of peace through Jesus to the church and broader society. The project committee has members from Edmonton Mennonite and Anglican churches.
- Ana Loewen of Trinity Mennonite Church, DeWinton, was hired part-time in November to oversee development

of the Calgary Young Adult Christian Community. The project reaches out to 18- to 35-year-olds not currently relating to the church. "I hope to get some young adults to develop new interest in the church, or at least make some contacts with a [faith] community," Loewen told the assembly. She has established a website (cyacc.ca) that explains the concept and lists events. Delegates extended her contract for 11 months.

Church building ownership change approved

An ongoing issue is ownership of the Edmonton Worship Centre, home to the Vietnamese and Chinese Mennonite congregations. Currently, both rent the building from MC Alberta; however, the Vietnamese congregation has offered to purchase it. A resolution authorizing the area church

'I hope to get some young adults to develop new interest in the church, or at least make some contacts with a [faith] community.'

(Ana Loewen)

general council to negotiate and complete transactions relating to the centre by July 31 was passed by 92 percent.

"We want both congregations that are affected by the resolution to feel the support of all [MC Alberta]," said Hugo Neufeld, a Trinity Mennonite Church delegate. "It is the understanding that our prayers are with both congregations and with the executive in the coming months as we pray for a good resolution to this." The comment was affirmed by applause.

Budget issues

During the budget presentation, a passionate discussion was held about the place

and need for youth ministry within MC Alberta.

Ruth Friesen of Edmonton First Mennonite articulated the problem: "There's no clear link for our Youth Leadership Team in the overall structure of [MC Alberta]. . . . We need to find a clearer path for it to be spoken to within the context of General Council and ultimately on this floor"

Delegate Abe Fehr of Lethbridge Mennonite Church introduced himself as a grandfather. "It bothers me that we had the same problem last year," he told delegates. "Let's wake up and look after our young people, the youth."

Delegates voted unanimously to include a budget line of \$1,000 to indicate support for youth ministry.

"Congregational Leadership [Committee] would be willing to work with the structures to examine the whole question, . . . then to talk with executive and General Council about how we as a whole [MC Alberta] work with this," said incoming chair Tim Wiebe-Neufeld.

MC Alberta has planned for a slight increase in the 2011 budget, expected to be covered by congregational giving. The budget includes a three-quarter-time salary for a conference minister and a \$10,000 cut in Camp Valaqua's subsidy. ❧



Jim Shantz, pictured with his wife Lorraine, received a Bateman print from Mennonite Church Alberta as a token of appreciation for eight and a half years as conference minister. Shantz completes his term on June 30.

'The signs are clear'

MC Canada leadership discerns a smaller church system

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAN DYCK

Mennonite Church Canada
WINNIPEG, MAN.

Mennonite Church Canada leaders spent much of their spring leadership assembly last month preparing for a smaller national church structure in the near future.

"We have done all the tweaking we can do to provide sustainable programming within our current income level," says general secretary Willard Metzger. "The signs are clear."

He was referring to a seven-year downward trend in donation revenue that shows "no clear signs of positive change in the near future," citing economic realities of the last three years as one contributor to the downward trend.

The discussions focused on program and staffing reductions for the fiscal year 2012-13, with an eye to focusing on the essential work of a national church. Specific programs or personnel have not yet been identified for reduction, he says.

"What we do know is that to remain viable, we have to reduce our budget by

The impact of MC Canada

'Without goats to sell or wells to dig, it's hard to explain what we do'

BY DAN DYCK

A Mennonite Church Canada staffer recently commented, "Without goats to sell or wells to dig, it's hard to explain what we do."

Willard Metzger, MC Canada general secretary and past director of church relations at World Vision Canada, says much good has come from organizations that provide goats and dig wells. "That is good work," he acknowledges. "But it is important to say that the people committed to compassionate aid ministries have grown out of a strong church, one that shapes and forms and disciples lives for service to God's work in the world," he says.

What impact does MC Canada have?

Beatriz Barrios, a pastor and participant in International Pastors Coming Together, enthusiastically exclaimed, "This is such a wonderful event! I had no idea our struggles were so similar to churches in other countries!"

Bock Ki Kim, pastor at Vision Mennonite Church, London, Ont., refers MC Canada's online Resource Centre website to pastors and friends in Korea who want to know more about Anabaptists and Mennonites.

And MC Canada, its area churches and congregations are strong partners of Mennonite World Conference, exceeding their fair share of target contributions.

"Our role," says Metzger, "is to change lives for a lifetime. That work is not confined to geographical boundaries. We do it in Canada and beyond. In exceptional circumstances, that can include facilitating relief aid if none of our partners have an on-the-ground presence

where our workers are.

"It takes time, patience and persistence in ministry to plant a new church abroad or at home; to translate Mennonite resources into languages for the over 15 language groups in Mennonite congregations here in Canada; to realize a growing, self-sustaining congregation; or to build up a highly specialized Resource Centre and promote its value as an international ministry to the grass roots," he adds.

There are also things the national church does that are largely hidden from view.

"We maintain a Ministry Leadership Information database that helps congregations find pastors, and oversee a national pension plan for over 200 congregations and other

church bodies that include people like our own pastors and area church staff," Metzger notes.

He reiterates that the national church's focus is on forming a people of God, becoming a global church and growing leaders for the church, all activities that change lives for a lifetime. The national church seeks to invite people to test and exercise their gifts, develop pathways for national churches to relate to one another and benefit from shared inspiration and information, and engage in international ministry because that is part of its vocation.

"The church development ministry we do is not work that is quickly measurable in numbers or annual reports," Metzger says. "The impact sometimes takes a long time to be realized. Our work is valuable, but does not provide the same quick turn-around on impact or immediately measurable goals."

According to him, the church is the soil that sprouts and nurtures many outgrowth ministries that do offer goats to impoverished farmers and dig wells. "We are mandated to fertilize the soil, to multiply the roots and to nurture the seedlings," he concludes.



Metzger

approximately \$500,000 from present levels for 2012-13," Metzger says. This means that reductions and the associated costs of severance will occur within the current fiscal year with the goal of beginning Feb. 1, 2012, with the smaller system, he explains.

Leadership and executive staff have scheduled several meetings in the coming weeks to strategically discern what a new future might look like. The General Board will review a draft plan for reductions at its mid-April meeting.

It's a composite, complex situation to communicate, acknowledges moderator Andrew Reesor-McDowell. MC Canada staff has always done its budgeting and spending carefully, and even more so in recent years, cautiously under-expending near year-end in preparation for potential income shortfalls, he notes.

"Staff have delayed filling vacant positions; they are increasingly working with part-time support staff; and have kept a close watch on hard costs," says Reesor-McDowell. "But we have reached a point where further tweaking will not support all our current ministries well. We have reached a threshold, a critical point, in our economies of scale."

A General Board decision, recommended by the Finance Policy and Audit Committee in 2003, dictates that budgets must be designed using the actual donation income from the previous year. This cautious measure has been prudent in light of the long pattern of declining giving, says Reesor-McDowell, but a tipping point has been reached. Unaudited figures show a \$193,000 income shortfall for the fiscal year ending Jan. 31 of this year. The shortfall will be covered by a draw on reserves, as has been past practice, but this is an unsustainable pattern for the future, he says.

Matters became further complicated when a General Board staff salary scale review revealed that MC Canada salaries are dropping considerably behind salaries of comparable organizations, making it increasingly difficult to fill vacant positions. This led to a board decision in the fall of 2009 to develop a plan that would gradually bring salaries up to an equitable



Church leaders got out of the meeting rooms and onto the streets of Winnipeg's West End neighbourhood during last month's spring leadership assembly meetings of Mennonite Church Canada. Led by Jamie Arpin-Ricci, pastor of Little Flowers Community and ministry worker with Youth With A Mission, front row left, and Norm Voth, director of evangelism and service ministries of MC Manitoba, back row fourth from right, the group learned that this high-density population is home to approximately 18 language groups, in addition to high numbers of aboriginals, and that housing stability is the most pressing issue in the neighbourhood.

range—a \$340,000 cost over three years—beginning in 2010.

This salary decision has been thoroughly critiqued and discussed, says Reesor-McDowell, adding, though, "It's not easy to decide to improve salary scales when income continues to decline year over year. There is never a good time to make this correction to compensation, but it needs to be done. The General Board is responsible for looking after the overall long-term health of the national church. Continually underpaying staff over the long-term gradually undervalues the important contribution staff make to the overall life of the church, leads to increased staff turnover, and contributes to the ongoing instability and declining confidence and trust in the national church. We can't go there. Comparable salary scales are necessary to fill vacancies promptly, and reflects healthy stewardship on behalf of those who serve the church."

"I deeply believe Mennonite Church Canada is a generous church," he continues.

"We celebrate increased giving to the congregations and church-related ministries. At this time, it looks as though we must create a smaller national structure."

Is the situation reversible? Yes, says Metzger: "For example, if a thousand people would pledge \$1,000 per year for 10 years in additional giving to Mennonite Church Canada, starting this year, we could shortcut this process, begin replenishing reserves, and even begin to imagine growth."

Metzger also notes that there are things to celebrate. "About 10 years ago, Mennonite Church Canada was one of the first national churches to intentionally restructure itself around a missional paradigm. Area churches and congregations embraced this missional pilgrimage and have grown a stronger capacity for mission in the pews. But I hope that we can also return Mennonite Church Canada to a position of missional strength, so that the church at all levels can be empowered and strengthened." ❧

'A work-in-progress'

Translated church resources being made available to Mennonites in Canada and abroad

STORY AND PHOTO BY RACHEL BERGEN

National Correspondent
WINNIPEG, MAN.

English- and German-speaking Mennonites have not had a problem finding Mennonite Church Canada resources in their primary language. But this is not the case for the nearly 50 Mennonite congregations in Canada where 18 different languages other than English and German are spoken.

Immigrants who come to Canada and attend Mennonite congregations are the fastest growing part of the Mennonite church, according to Dave Bergen, executive secretary of Christian Formation. "This is the future of the Mennonite church," he says.

Recognizing this demographic change

within the church, MC Canada has been working on meeting the needs of these new members for the past 10 years, a task that has not been easy or inexpensive. Translating the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* into a new language can take many hours and cost upwards of \$3,000, not including the time people will spend proofreading the document.

But Bergen believes this is an important endeavour because "many hunger to learn more. . . . They all see the national church as the appropriate place to find meaningful resources to help them understand and grow in their faith," he says, adding, "It's important to have resources in their own language."

Immigrants to Canada are not the only recipients of these translated resources. Some churches in Canada, Asian ones especially, are sending these translated resources to their home countries on their own, Bergen says. And MC Canada also sends translated documents to Witness

workers for use in international ministry projects in more than 25 countries around the world

MC Canada hopes to translate other documents, including its Statement of Identity and Purpose, John Howard Yoder's *The Politics of Jesus*, and the "What makes a Mennonite?" brochure.

Some of these documents and other resources are already translated into French, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chin, Chinese, Laotian, Korean and German. But there are 14 more resources on a list to translate into more languages, including Ojibwe, Cree, Cantonese, Mandarin, Karen and others.

On March 4, a fundraising concert at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, featuring the music of singer/songwriter Bryan Moyer Suderman, raised \$1,800 towards the cause. For Moyer Suderman, the fundraiser was like "participating in the mission of the church. This project of translation is how I see my role [as a singer-songwriter]: communicating [biblical and theological themes] in different ways," he says. "It is appropriate for me to be involved on a bunch of levels."

MC Canada doesn't have a projected completion date for its translation project because, according to Bergen, "there has been an explosion of new language groups, it's hard to keep up." The project will remain a work-in-progress for the foreseeable future, he says. ☸

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Some of the materials translated thus far by Mennonite Church Canada into languages such as French, Chinese, Chin, Spanish and Vietnamese. The work continues.

MC Canada Snapshots



Church leaders took time away from the meeting table at this year's Mennonite Church Canada spring leadership assembly last month to share supper prepared by Lao Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, Man. When asked why they included "Mennonite" in their church name, Pastor Onong replied, "Laotians are gentle, peaceful, loving people, like Mennonites." Onong cited several challenges of being a small Laotian congregation, including keeping second-generation young people involved in the church, leadership development, a lack of resources in their first language, and staying connected with the wider Lao Mennonite Conference in Canada. Lao Mennonite Church shares space with Home Street Mennonite Church, located on the edge of Winnipeg's downtown core.

MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA PHOTOS BY DAN DYCK



Dave Funk, left, of Steinbach Mennonite Church, Man., has made it a personal project to take fellow church members on a monthly tour to the Mennonite Church Canada and MC Manitoba offices in Winnipeg. He has pledged to do this for one year or until the sign-up sheet is empty. "We need to strengthen our connections," said Funk during his second visit on Feb. 17. The tour groups meet staff and "see the faces of the people we get those e-mails from," said Daniela Hildebrand, the church's office administrator. In addition to learning about ministry programs, groups visit the Resource Centre and the Mennonite Heritage Centre and Art Gallery. Over morning coffee, the guests heard from staff that such visits are humbling, encouraging and inspiring. Also pictured from left to right: Lena Funk, Katie Giesbrecht, Hildebrand and Dave Giesbrecht.

Building bridges with First Nations

STORY AND PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG, MAN.

Building bridges between the Mennonite church community and First Nations is hard work, according to Harley Eagle, co-coordinator of indigenous work for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada, during the fifth annual Bridge Building event of Mennonite

Church Canada and MC Manitoba last month. “It gets harder as there are more and more layers to deal with, but it also gets richer,” he said.

Terry LeBlanc, executive director of My People International and director/chief executive officer of the North American

Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies, spoke about building bridges, not just across cultures but also across generations. “Will our faith have children?” was the theme he addressed.

“Faith will look different in future generations and in different cultures,” he said.

Look back to move forward

STORY AND PHOTO BY DEBORAH FROESE

Mennonite Church Canada
WINNIPEG, MAN.

T rue to his Mi'kmaq-Acadian heritage, Terry LeBlanc uses stories to put his message across. It's culturally appropriate and it's biblical.

“Do you remember when?” he said when addressing last month's annual Spring Partnership Circle, a gathering of aboriginal and non-aboriginal Mennonite congregations in Manitoba, sponsored by Mennonite Church Canada Native Ministry and MC Manitoba, referring to the many times God encouraged the Hebrews to examine their history and how God has been with them throughout it.

With a story from his childhood about a hunting trip with his father and grandfather, LeBlanc illustrated one of the concepts that shape aboriginal perspectives: the importance of knowing where they have come from. As father, son and grandfather ventured deeper into the woods—territory unfamiliar to the young boy—LeBlanc repeatedly stopped his grandfather to share his concerns about becoming lost.

His grandfather encouraged him to continue to look back over his shoulder, to remember how the forest looks from that perspective, which will be different than it appeared as they were passing by. “Look over your shoulder twice as much as where you are going, and then you'll be able to find your way back home,” his grandfather advised.

“It's a teaching that has never led me wrong,” LeBlanc said. “[Looking back] is not simply nostalgia. . . . It's a learning tool. . . . We get where we are because of our history.”

LeBlanc, who has spent more than 30 years helping

aboriginals embrace the “person, work, teaching, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,” recited the litany of attributes as he counted them off on his fingers.

“When I came to faith it was be Christian or be Indian. I couldn't be both,” he said. At that time in the 1970s, he felt there was no place for him to serve in the wider church unless he wore a suit and cut his hair short, so that's what he did. Although his early ministry with aboriginal youths was modelled on the western youth subculture of the day, he wondered why he couldn't draw from his Mi'kmaq roots.

Since that time, LeBlanc has sought ways to draw from traditional aboriginal culture in a meaningful way, and he is sharing what he has discovered with others. He serves as the executive director of My People International, a holistic ministry program with and for North Americans natives.

He is also a founding director of the North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies, which offers a new approach to the Bible and theology for aboriginals, and he teaches as an adjunct faculty member at Tyndale Seminary in Toronto, Ont., and Asbury Seminary in Kentucky, among other related pursuits.



Terry LeBlanc closes the Partnership Circle gathering on March 11 with a traditional Mi'kmaq drum song praising God the Creator.

“Cultural diversity is an expression of the Holy Spirit’s work. In the past this wasn’t recognized and we had to choose between being a Christian or being an Indian.”

Acts 15 illustrates, he said, that “there is no singularly unique culture to which we are to be called. Variation occurs and we should expect cultural differences in people that walk with Jesus Christ.”

Faith is first and foremost an inward reality, according to LeBlanc. It is through internal transformation that faith takes root, not an outward experience. “Unless it is owned by the people, it won’t work,” he said. “Faith is not an external set of rules or behaviours, but a transformation of the soul.”

LeBlanc described how his own journey of faith eventually led him to discard the suit and tie, and put on traditional jewelry instead. “Young people today are looking for anchors and moorings,” he said. “They want to experience the authenticity of faith, but not a prescriptive faith that is someone else’s experience.”

“You may find that the church of the aboriginals doesn’t look like the church you are familiar with, but it will have the love of Jesus,” said LeBlanc.

Norman Meade, director of the MCC Manitoba Aboriginal Neighbours program, reported on MCC’s recent visit to northern reserve communities that lack clean and safe drinking water. He said the group was moved by “the things we found. They had no piped water into their homes, but they had lots of faith, hope and love. I hope we don’t have to threaten their faith and hope in getting them water.” He stressed the need that any form of help needs to be in the context of their community.

“In every place the Creator was present,” Meade said. “They are very attached to Jesus.”

He said he was discouraged that so often it is the negative stories that are told and the strengths of the aboriginal communities are overlooked. “Come with an open mind and spirit,” he said. “There is no need to change us. Walk with us. Share with us. Learn with us. Come to our churches in Riverton, Manigotagan and the Native Church in Winnipeg. We are on a good spiritual journey. Walk with us.”



Edith and Neill von Gunten, co-directors of Mennonite Church Canada Native Ministry, left, chat with keynote speaker Terry LeBlanc and Norm Voth of MC Manitoba during the annual Bridge Building event put on by MC Canada and MC Manitoba in Winnipeg, Man., last month.

The hidden legacy

‘Reconciliation has two faces. You hold one of them’: Murray Sinclair

STORY AND PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG, MAN.

Last summer at the 2010 Mennonite Church Canada assembly, delegates resolved to “seek renewed opportunities to walk with aboriginal people, opening our

hearts, minds and ears to engage the pain resulting from the legacy of the residential schools.”

With this in mind, Neill and Edith von



Peter and Christine Parisian from Peguis, Man., prepare for a ceremonial dance to open the Hidden Legacy conference.

Gunten, co-directors of MC Canada Native Ministry, along with representatives from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba, MCC Saskatchewan and MC Manitoba, attended a national conference in Winnipeg organized by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs in late February. They joined 2,500 mostly aboriginal participants from across Canada to gain a better understanding of the impact of the 130 years of Indian Residential Schools on the children of survivors.

The von Gunten, who have been involved in aboriginal ministries for more than 40 years, believe the Mennonite church needs to be part of the truth and reconciliation process. "Over the next three to four years of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, what will we as Anabaptists do?" Neill asked. "Will we sit on the sidelines or get involved? We need to find out the facts and become involved in the reconciliation."

At this gathering, the first and largest of its kind, First Nations people gathered to find ways to bring an end to the painful and damaging legacy of residential schools that continues to afflict successive generations.

Elmer Courchene, an elder from Sagkeeng First Nation, said, "It's we, the survivors, that have to make the change. None of us have ever forgotten the Creator in our hard times. We are the people that will change with our voice, our love, our kindness. We offer it to the world if they choose to listen."

Leonard Doell of MCC Saskatchewan said he was there "to listen, learn and become more informed about the whole subject and what our responsibility is in this." For him, this was an important event to "engage the pain."



After several years without a lead pastor, Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Sask., installed Garth Ewert Fisher, kneeling, as lead pastor on March 6. Mennonite Church Saskatchewan conference minister Jerry Buhler conducted the service while a circle of members laid on their hands. On Nov. 21, 2010, the Fiske-Herschel congregations said farewell to Ewert Fisher, and his wife Claire, with a joint service of thanksgiving for the couple's ministry.

One of the keynote speakers, Dr. Gabor Mate, a physician in Vancouver's beleaguered Downtown Eastside, said, "What happens early in our life has effects decades later and in successive generations. Biology of loss is transmitted from one generation to the next. When you grow up learning that your language, culture and spiritual ways are inferior and invalid, you don't have a tradition, a compass to navigate the

world, only the rage and pain which will be inflicted on the next generation. Survivors do not treat themselves very well. They carry a lot of shame."

Murray Sinclair, chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, challenged listeners to get past the anger regarding what has been done to them, "because only then will our survivors find peace. . . . You hold the key. Reconciliation has two faces. You hold one of them."

"It was an exciting and encouraging conference," Edith said. "A spirit of hope and enthusiasm was evident. I hope the people in the pews can put aside some of their myths and be open-minded enough to see the realities of what is taking place."

"There has been a shift in our ministry as a church," she continued. "We are continuing to learn to adapt our vision to one of partnering, working together, walking together." ❧

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GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

2010 peace bus campaign successful on many counts

BY KARIN FEHDERAU
Saskatchewan Correspondent
SASKATOON, SASK.

During the Mennonite Church Canada assembly in Saskatoon in 2009, the discussion about taking a public stand for peace received a sound workout and the challenge to live out a thousand acts of peace was put to the delegates to consider.

As is the case with some Mennonite churches, it takes times to work new ideas through the ranks, but in the summer of 2010 MC Saskatchewan was preparing to launch a large-scale blitz of bus board signs proclaiming that peace is worth a look.

Stephanie Epp, chair of the MC Saskatchewan Peace and Justice Committee, reports that each of the churches involved was encouraged to contribute whatever it could. More than \$4,000 came in, enough to pay for a large ad across one side of five Saskatoon city buses.

The committee found the local transit company easy to work with, but when the ads first appeared last fall Epp noticed something troubling. "There was an installation error on one of the buses," she says, explaining that the committee had been told that its peace ad would be the only one

on the side of the bus. However, there was a second ad above it.

The competing ad did not negate the peace message, but it was a distraction. In response, the bus company offered to continue the campaign beyond the originally agreed-upon timeline.

Of the seven churches that pledged support, two were outside the city.

Although considered a rural church, Pleasant Point Mennonite chose to take part in the bus ad campaign for two reasons, says Pastor Harry Harder. "We're part of the greater Saskatoon area," says Harder, who owns a sheep farm a half-hour drive from the city.

And since many members of their congregation regularly do business in the city, the small church decided it was right to sacrifice part of its annual church budget for the city bus ads.

Pauline Steinmann, pastor of Wildwood Mennonite in Saskatoon, noticed renewed curiosity in her congregants as a result of their involvement. "It certainly created some interest in terms of our whole peace

stance," she affirms. "We're hearing conversations around the topic of, 'What do we really believe in terms of a public stance?'"

Wildwood also chose to put an ad in its community newsletter to notify the neighbourhood of the church's ownership in the campaign, using the same logo in the ad as the bus boards to create a connecting point.

Nutana Park Mennonite, a larger urban church, also chose to be involved. An e-mail from co-pastor Anita Retzlaff reflects a positive experience through all of it: "The process of discernment for our board of deacons was a valuable exercise to go through as we contemplated this project."

Will MC Saskatchewan run the ads again, perhaps on an annual basis?

"There is no firm decision," says Epp, noting that the ads are in storage, so if it is done again there will be no need to pay for production costs, only the advertising costs.

At any rate, it appears the public was watching, at least by those who take the bus. MC Canada reports that the number of visitors to its liveforpeace.org website, which was printed on the bus ads, rose significantly during the campaign. "There was a 45 percent increase in site activity originating in Saskatoon over the course of the ad campaign," notes Dan Dyck, director of communications.

And it appears that Saskatchewan Mennonites were thinking. "Within the churches, there were more conversations around peace and peace issues. . . . That made it a very successful campaign," says Epp. ☸



Dreaming of a world without war

Complex emergencies and R2P doctrine discussed at global peace forum

STORY AND PHOTO
BY RACHEL BERGEN
National Correspondent
WINNIPEG, MAN.

While citizens of nations like Libya are dealing with brutal dictatorships, mass murders, missile strikes and general civil unrest, the international community struggles to understand their part in the responsibility to protect them.

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine asserts that states have the responsibility to protect their own citizens. However, when they are unable or unwilling to do so, the responsibility—which incorporates prevention, reacting appropriately and rebuilding—must be borne by outside states.

The complexity and controversy of the R2P doctrine was discussed by a



Panelists Ruth Taronno, left, Kabiru Kinyanjui, Esther Epp-Tiessen, John Siebert and Lisa Schirch take part in a panel discussion on the Responsibility to Protect doctrine at the Partnering for Change (P4C) Conference that took place at the University of Winnipeg's Global College on March 17.

panel at the Partnering for Change (P4C) Conference that took place at the University of Winnipeg's Global College on March 17. P4C was a joint collaboration of Canadian Mennonite University and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC); over three days (March 17 to 19)

it explored current challenges and shifts in humanitarian relief, community development and peacebuilding.

Ruth Taronno, the assistant vice-president of Menno Simons College, moderated the discussion on "Complex emergencies and the responsibility to

Suffering people don't have time to wait for justice

BY RACHEL BERGEN

"Does justice have an expiry date?" Dean Peachey, vice-president of the University of Winnipeg's Global College, asked this question at a panel discussion on transformative justice and indigenous practice at the Partnering for Change Conference on March 18, likening the international perspective on justice to a jug of milk. "No," he answered his own question, "but it certainly has a best-before date and that nearly always is delayed."

Panel speakers—who addressed the tension between community-based reconciliation and domestic and international criminal law—shared perspectives from their areas of study or home countries. They included David Otim, program director of Mennonite Central Committee Uganda; Catherine Morris, a professor, lawyer and researcher; and Zoughbi Zoughbi, founder and director of the Palestinian Conflict Resolution Centre in the West Bank, Israel/Palestine.

To Zoughbi, justice in the West Bank would look like

a process and a struggle. He believes that restorative justice would work best in the West Bank because neither Palestinians nor Israelis are going away, so they must be accountable to one another.

Otim believes that, especially in Northern Uganda—where a civil war involving kidnapped children who are turned into child soldiers—justice must include truth-telling.

According to Morris, who has extensive experience working in Cambodia, justice can prevail if all the participants commit to acting justly and trustworthily for the long term.

The speakers also believe that powerful third parties tend to think that they have to wait for the right time to get involved in justice issues.

"Powerful parties have all the money and time in the world," said Morris. In reality, though, he said that "those who are suffering don't have that kind of time."

protect,” while other experts from the field answered questions based on their own experiences.

The panelists included John Siebert, executive director of Project Ploughshares; Esther Epp-Tiessen, a long-time MCC worker; Kabiru Kinyanjui, the founding member of K-Rep Groups in Africa and a peace advocate; and Lisa Schirch, who established the 3D Security initiative.

A common element that is lacking in the R2P doctrine, the speakers agreed, is that the current model is set up to not enter into discourse with international communities.

According to Schirch, “In Libya, we don’t have any mechanisms to know what their perspectives are. All we know is there is a no-fly zone.”

Thus, the R2P doctrine becomes imperialistic and neo-colonial, Taronno said.

“There are a whole range of perspectives in Libya” that are not being taken into account, Siebert said.

“Though military force looks benevolent, it may look very different to those on the

receiving end. It may look like imperialist intervention to them,” Epp-Tiessen said.

In situations such as these, knowing who to protect from whom, and to what extent, is a complex area to navigate, but this is not something that the Pentagon is aware of, Schirch said, noting, “We live in a state-centric world.”

This, along with the scepticism surrounding the international agenda, values and interests, leads to a lack of cooperation in international peace efforts.

“We have a political agenda that serves the elite,” Schirch said. “We have to always be clear that we stand for freedom and democracy.”

While there are many areas that MCC can support, what’s most troubling to Epp-Tiessen about the R2P doctrine is the way

it opens the door for military intervention, most recently in Libya’s case. “We at MCC have seen that the use of military force to quell violence usually leads to more violence,” she said. “It does nothing to address the root causes of injustice and violence. We must dream of a world without war.”

When UN countries send military armies to intervene, “we’re killers,” Siebert said. “We’re killers rather than fighters.”

It’s not merely the responsibility of western nations going into southern nations and protecting them, Taronno said.

Kinyanjui agreed, expressing hope that one day the African countries will be able to protect one another. But “it’s going to take some time before they will be able to take that step and have that capability,” he said. ❧

Narratives of violence and healing

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

/// Briefly Noted

Out with the ‘Relief Sale,’ in with the ‘Summerfest’

EDMONTON, ALTA.—A new name for the 2011 Alberta Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Relief Sale has been chosen, in an attempt to appeal to a wider demographic—non-Mennonites in particular—in the Edmonton area. The sale, scheduled for July 8 and 9 in Sherwood Park, will now be called the “MCC Summerfest and Auction . . . helping the world together.” Fifty-one people responded to the e-mail vote. The new name will appear on promotional materials in advance of the sale. “There are two reasons for doing this,” says Gordon Baergen, treasurer for the Sherwood Park event. “One is to make more money for MCC. The other is to let people know what MCC is doing around the world.”

—BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

It was movie night in Iraq. The “hero” on screen was freeing a hostage from terrorists in the movie *Transporter 2*.

What was surreal was that James Loney, a Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) worker kidnapped in Iraq in 2005, was sitting with his captors, who were cheering the hero on screen while sitting with their own victims. The abductors had shown Loney and the other three CPT members photos of the evil done in Iraq by Americans, saying this was why they had taken the four captive.

The idea of who was good and bad was blurred, Loney told a crowd gathered at Wilfrid Laurier University in early March for a conference on violence and healing.

He then showed an advertisement to encourage enlistment in the Canadian military, in which soldiers were rounding up Middle Eastern people, describing how violence affects both victims and perpetrators who find themselves in a relationship that hurts all of them.

His presentation was followed by

Martha Kuwee Kumsa, a former journalist in Ethiopia, who was tortured by her own government before international pressure freed her and brought her to Canada. She told of later seeing video footage of her torturer being tortured, which devastated her, knowing that hate would destroy her and only forgiveness would bring healing. ❧



Martha Kuwee Kumsa, left, and Jim Loney were presenters at a conference on violence and healing held at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ont., in early March.

GOD AT WORK IN US

ACROSS THE GENERATIONS

Connecting through God

STORY AND PHOTO BY ANDREA EPP

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
VIRGIL, ONT.

Across Generations

Marty and Chelsea Misener run church youth groups at either end of the Niagara Peninsula, and have seen the impact of youths on the elderly, and vice versa.

As Bethany Mennonite Church's associate pastor since March 2009, Marty oversees the church's young people's group in Virgil, where they annually go carolling at Heritage Place, the local nursing home.

Corinna Visser, the facility's therapeutic recreational supervisor, explains the event's impact on the members of this 41-bed home, where the majority of people suffer from Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia. "It's wonderful. It's an important part of their life here, the inter-generational interaction," she says, adding, "Intergenerational programs are critical to support a sense of normalcy."

"I hope that the kids get out of this experience a sense of bringing God's presence to people that are unable to physically attend their local church," Marty says. "They're serving and being God's loving presence. Residents would sing along and ask us to keep singing. Joy was evident on their faces. Through the simple act of singing a song, we brought joy and happiness to that place during the Christmas season, a time that can often be lonely for residents. Our carolling brings a special moment to their day. It will definitely be an event that we will do next year, as a way to connect with the broader community and be God's presence at that time of the year."

Bethany's youths also have arranged several games nights at Pleasant Manor retirement home.

"They are great events for our youth to serve people that are isolated and often times quite lonely," Marty says. "One elderly woman remarked how much this games night meant to her, and she continually repeated that throughout the night."

The event also provides teaching moments. "When one of the seniors forgot how to play a certain game, I would use that moment to teach the youth about patience and understanding. Oftentimes it's just as much a learning event as it is a fun event for the youths."

Holly Goertz, a Grade 11 student and longtime member of the Bethany youth group, shares her feelings about events with residents at the nursing and retirement homes. "I loved going to the homes," she says. "I actually had a lot of fun playing Scrabble or Monopoly with them and I think they had a great time, too. I learned a lot about them. They opened up to us and shared amazing stories about their past. I really look forward to going back and playing games again, because they don't get to do it and it's a nice change for them that makes them happy."

Taylor Nesbitt, also in Grade 11, says, "I enjoy going to see them and being able to play games with them, and I think they enjoy it as well. Maybe they don't have family members, or their relatives aren't

able to come visit them. I think that interacting with them benefits all of us in a good way. It's just nice to see them happy and having a good time. I am looking forward to our next event with the elderly."

That next event will be an intergenerational games night held at the church. Marty acknowledges the importance of establishing relationships with people in their community for his youth group members. "They get to know people that attend our church, but that they wouldn't have an immediate familial connection with," he says. "Several of our youth do not attend our church, and this event will allow people in our church to get to know these youth."

He hopes that the youths can "build connections where wisdom and insight about their relationship with Christ can be passed on." He also hopes that the event will bring about for the older generations a "deeper sense of community and connection with the younger generation of our church."

Marty's wife Chelsea, the youth group leader at Vineland United Mennonite Church since July 2008, arranged a large crokinole tournament for about 70 people. Her youths and the Bethany youths mixed with seniors to raise money for relief kits for Haiti. She says simply of the night, "It was great! Not only did it end up being a great fundraiser, it was a great inter-generational event."

The Vineland group also has games nights at the nearby seniors residence. In addition, her team annually bakes and delivers cookies to these seniors just before Christmas. ❧



Zachary Janzen, Jordan Moffatt and Olivia Siebert play a friendly game of crokinole with senior Corny Classen at Vineland United Mennonite Church, Ont.

Seeking God a long way from home

Congolese Baptist pastor and musician now living among Mennonites in Canada

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent

NEW HAMBURG, ONT.

Maurice Mondengo probably never thought he'd see John and Lorraine Peters again after showing them their son's grave at Upoto in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1987. When Dean Peters died while travelling on the Congo River, Mondengo's grandfather requested that the "missionary's" body be brought to him, rather than being buried in an unmarked grave on the river shore, as was the custom. Two weeks later, Mondengo was showing the grave to the Peters, of Waterloo, Ont.

Fast forward 21 years, and Mondengo was calling the Peters from Hamilton, Ont., where he now lives. Although they had been in contact over the years, they had never again met face to face.

In the years between their meetings, Mondengo had studied science and then, heeding a powerful sense of call, Christian ministry. Trained in theology and worship, he was being groomed for a leadership position in worship renewal in the Baptist denomination in which he had grown up.

He travelled widely in Africa, Europe and Asia, and was at a worship symposium in the United States when word came to him that he shouldn't return to Congo because his life was in danger. A friend and fellow leader had been murdered.

Mondengo had been speaking out that the gospel was not only about preparation for heaven, but had repercussions here on earth. He preached about the need for justice and peace in the work of the church, and that everywhere it should claim the humanity of those living in the darkness of all human rights abuses. But with many church leaders also in political leadership in Congo, such preaching—and songwriting—may have made him unacceptable to some.

Congo has been in a civil war since 1996.



Maurice Mondengo prepares to take part in worship at Wilmot Mennonite Church, where the Congolese refugee spoke and sang earlier this year.

According to Mondengo, the keys in this war are the use of child soldiers, violence, and rape as a method of terror. Instead of such war-making, Mondengo's songs call for governments to build good schools and let children study, play, enjoy life and have daily food, instead of putting them "on the shooting range."

In "It's Time: A Song for Lasting Peace," he proclaims, "Let's sow seeds of peace in

the hearts of the children / So that tomorrow when our children grow up / With or without us / They will live peacefully"

But the stakes are high. In the Goma region, where violence is ongoing, there are rich mines of coltan, used in making electronic devices like cell phones, DVD players, video game systems and computers. It's clear that Congolese people are dying every day because of coltan, he says.

There are many internal refugees in Congo, and Mondengo believes it is part of the church's mission to be caring for both the refugees and the causes of their plight. Being himself "in the skin of a refugee" he says, "when you are a refugee, you lose everything you have. It's easy to get depressed. You were someone, somewhere. Now you are nothing. No one can see what you have, who you are, what your qualifications are."

From his home in Hamilton, he attends Hamilton Mennonite Church, where he assists in worship and in musical fundraising with groups like Hope Rising.

Although he grew up Baptist, among the Mennonites here in Canada he is eager to learn how they pursue the blessings of Christ's words, "blessed are the peacemakers," and work in this broken world of conflicts.

Mondengo hopes for unity among Christians in the world. "Why are there three kinds of Mennonites and four kinds of Baptists in Congo?" he muses. As a songwriter, music would be his method to bring them all together.

While he knows North Americans sing African songs, he would love to teach them how to sing them in African ways. ❧

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Learning the 'Sabbath lifestyle'

STORY AND PHOTO BY ANDREA EPP
Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
VIRGIL, ONT.

Rudy Dirks has been the pastor at Niagara United Mennonite Church in Virgil for seven years. At his side has been his wife Sharon, the church's minister of visitation. This fall, the couple will embark on what they call "a pilgrimage of Sabbath practices."

"We will be visiting several Christian communities to experience and learn from them how they practise Sabbath in their daily lives," Rudy says.

Their journey begins not far from home with a three-day guided silent retreat at the Guelph Centre of Spirituality, an Ignatian community, in early November.

They will then be spending a weekend with a Jewish messianic group in

New York. In what may be something of a culture shock, Rudy says this group has "designed their Christian life in the Jewish fashion and retain many of the Old Testament practices," including celebrating Sabbath on Saturday.

They will then spend a weekend in an Old Order Mennonite community in the Waterloo Region.

From there, the Dirks will spend two weeks at the Benedictine community of Christ in the Desert, just north of Santa Fe, N.M. Sharon predicts that this portion will "be very challenging and maybe appear



Niagara United Mennonite Church pastors Sharon and Rudy Dirks are taking a four-month sabbatical beginning later this year, during which time they hope to learn about a 'Sabbath lifestyle' from a variety of intentional Christian communities in Canada and the U.S.

almost grueling at times, but there is rest in surrendering to those disciplines and to that community." Among the challenges are 3:30 a.m. prayers and designated periods of silence. "We will join with their prayers and their meals and their work," Rudy says.

Camping in the Arizona desert over Christmas will be a time of reflection before the Dirks embark on the longest segment of their journey. For four weeks they will take on the roles of "monastic volunteers" at the Little Portion Hermitage, a Franciscan community in Arkansas. They are prepared for hard work and hope to be involved in various aspects of the hermitage's work as an agricultural community and in ministry in nearby towns.

"We've been thinking about this for a long time, the idea of what the Sabbath rest of God is really all about," Rudy says. "This journey is a culmination of many years of looking at it. We purposely chose communities whose priorities are the Christian community. They capture what we were looking for. . . . It's a 'Sabbath lifestyle.' We will learn about resting in God. . . . These people have organized their lives around prayer, worship and God. Work, sleeping and eating fit into those plans. It's the complete opposite of what we do."

Sharon says she hopes to see "that this kind of radical idea can be practised, that Christ can be made the centre of things and not have life get in the way." ❧

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FOCUS ON SUMMER EVENTS

New Hamburg Relief Sale turns 45

By JANICE HARDER

New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale Committee
NEW HAMBURG, ONT.

The 45th anniversary New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale will take place on May 27 and 28 in the historic arena, grandstand and fairgrounds. Join the more than 15,000 people of all ages who attend annually; there is so much to do, buy and eat!

New this year will be a furniture auction on May 27 at 7 p.m. in the arena. Local furniture craftsmen have donated wood, construction and finishing expertise to provide the sale with a bedroom suite and dining room suite, along with other items.

An antique tractor auction of a show-condition 1952 McCormick takes place at

noon on May 28.

Patrons can bid at one of Canada's largest handmade quilt auctions, with more than 200 works of art for sale.

Children can enjoy the inflatable castles, mini auction and entertainment.

All can explore the delights of scrumptious food of Mennonite traditions: *fleisch piroshki* (meat buns), *vereneki* (Mennonite perogies), *rollkuchen* (fritters), teaballs, apple fritters, *pupusas* (filled pancakes), spring rolls, barbecue pork, homemade ice-cream and our famous strawberry pies.

Visitors can run or walk in a five-kilometre Run for Relief, purchase heritage perennials and bedding flowers, and build toonie towers!

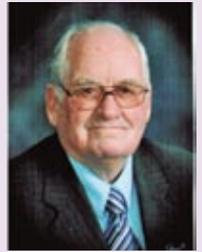
All proceeds go to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) for distribution among people around the world suffering from poverty, conflict, oppression and natural disasters. A dollar spent at the Relief Sale is a dollar sent to MCC—and there is no tax on any of the items! The 2010 sale raised more than \$330,000. Nearly \$15 million has been raised for MCC since 1967.

For more information, visit nhmrs.com online or call 519-745-8458. The event is wheelchair accessible and buses are welcome. ☼

/// Briefly noted

New Hamburg volunteer honoured with award

NEW HAMBURG, ONT.—Ron Zehr of New Hamburg has been named “Volunteer of the Year” by Festivals and Events Ontario at its hall of fame dinner on March 4. The award was in



Zehr

recognition of his 45 years of service on the board of directors of the New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale, eight of those as chair. Zehr has been a volunteer with the organization since its inception in 1967, when it was one of many Canadian centennial projects that year. Because of the dedication of Zehr and thousands of other volunteers over the years, the event—which includes the popular quilt auction—expanded and thrived. Of his years of service, he acknowledges, “My parents taught me never to be too busy to help someone else.”

—New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale Committee



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Spring 2011
Volume 21 Issue 3

w i n d o w

Seeing with the eyes of faith

Ted Koontz, Ph.D., Professor of Ethics and Peace Studies

Because I'm a product of the 60s and 70s and the son of a Mennonite pastor, it was perhaps unavoidable that my Christian faith and its relationship to peace, justice, conflict and war have been my most pressing and enduring concerns. It was not too difficult to be a Christian pacifist then, for my understanding of the theological and ethical "rightness" of nonviolence fit together nicely with my understanding of the wrong-headedness of the Vietnam War and the effectiveness of nonviolent social transformation. It seemed clear to me that the most important thing I could do was to show that war was stupid—not only wrong on Christian grounds.

So, after college and seminary, I studied international relations, particularly war, and more particularly, nuclear strategy and war. If I could solve this hardest problem, everything else would fall into place! But I did not solve the problem; instead I came to see the powerful logic of war, and

even of threatening nuclear war. A crisis of faith resulted as I realized that the wise of the world thought the wisdom of the cross was foolishness. My comfortable assumption that Christian faith and "good sense" were in harmony was shattered. I was faced with the necessity to choose. And, considering the fact that I teach at AMBS, you might not think it strange that I chose Christian faith.

My early seminary research and teaching focused most on how to follow the ethical teachings of Jesus. How do we think Christianly about war, peace, and injustice—and how do we speak from Christian commitments and values to people who do not share those commitments?

I have not abandoned exploration of these issues or studying and teaching about them. But I have come to believe that the Gospel is far more than the mandate to follow Jesus' teachings and applying them to macro issues of war, peace, and injustice. As I have

learned to know myself better, I have come to see that the problems are not only "out there." Increasingly I have come to believe that saving the world (and saving me!) is God's work. When we notice that basic truth we respond with gratitude and following Jesus, however timidly it flows from that gratitude.

So in recent years a favorite course has been "Christian Spirituality and Peacemaking." Being transformed by the renewing of our minds, by coming to see with the eyes of faith, seems crucial to me. This being transformed (slightly) has led me to relish talking personally with students about faith and to fixing up houses that I rent to lower income folks in Elkhart. More modest than saving the world from nuclear annihilation, but perhaps more suited to me, since I am not God. ●

Top: Ted Koontz meets with Dianna Graham, a student from Elkhart, Ind., in the Master of Arts in Christian Formation program.

Being formed and transformed



Top: Janeen Bertsche Johnson, as campus pastor, helps to coordinate the spiritual life resources available to students, including coordinating chapel services.

Bottom: Loren L. Johns, in addition to teaching Bible courses, directs the Master of Divinity program and helps to teach its senior capstone course, *Growth in Ministry*.

Loren L. Johns, Ph.D.
Professor of New Testament
Excerpted from "Faith and Historical-Critical Pursuits in Teaching," Conrad Grebel Review, Spring 2010

In the first Bible class I took at Goshen College, I recognized that Stanley C. Shenk, the professor, was not threatened by the "hard" questions of biblical studies. He considered critical thinking about life, about God and about the Bible as a way of loving God with all one's mind. As a teacher of the Bible, I have tried to emulate him in his open-eyed embrace of difficult questions in the context of faith and I have grown in my conviction that it is possible to be both honest and Christian at the same time.

At AMBS I teach "Canon and Community" ... [and] an introductory course called "Reading the Bible." For many students, these courses are a stretch because they had never been encouraged to think critically about the Bible in their churches. Some were educated to think critically in university, but not to take their faith seriously or to think of critical scholarship as a tool in God's reign.

Students in "Reading the Bible" who are most profoundly affected by it are not those who have learned "new facts." Rather, they are those who were disoriented by and reoriented in their learning. They struggled with the critical approach to biblical studies because they felt that a world to which they had long clung was passing out of existence before their very eyes.

But they eventually embraced a new world—a new way of making sense of the Bible through the eyes of faith. ●

Janeen Bertsche Johnson, M.Div.
Campus pastor and an instructor of the first-year Formation in Ministry course and several ministry colloquia

I often hear students reflecting on the ways their faith has grown at AMBS. There are many "aha" moments, when faith commitments are expanded or renewed. For example, first-year students learn how their personality type impacts their spiritual life, what kinds of faith practices will be most comfortable for their personality, and what practices might pull them toward a more holistic experience of God. This awareness is very valuable to many students, sometimes freeing them from their frustration that certain types of prayer haven't "worked" for them.

Students often discover new and meaningful spiritual disciplines through course assignments, spiritual direction, spiritual friendships or prayer groups. And of course, times of community worship such as our twice-weekly chapel services are foundational both to the nurture of individual faith and of our faith community.

It is a privilege and joy to walk with students as they explore both the intellectual and emotional aspects of their faith, as they are being formed and transformed as followers of Christ. ●

Spiritual growth is integral to learning

Each of the four masters degrees that AMBS offers has clear educational goals, and each set of goals includes at least one—out of six or seven—that identifies spiritual growth as an integral part of the learning. Educational goals include the following for the designated degree programs.

Graduates with a ...

- **Master of Divinity** are formed by a continuing encounter with God.

- **Master of Arts in Christian Formation** assess their own growth toward spiritual and personal maturity
- **Master of Arts: Peace Studies** demonstrate a commitment to spiritual growth that sustains peace- and justice-making
- **Master of Arts: Theological Studies** articulate how they are integrating their intellectual and spiritual life—how they are understanding and loving God more truly.

Overall educational objectives at AMBS include "growth toward personal and spiritual maturity as well as development of theological depth and wise practice in ministry," according to AMBS's curricular design.

For more information, visit www.ambs.edu/about/theological-education and www.ambs.edu/academics/catalog ●

Combining spirituality and academics



Malinda Berry
Instructor in
Theological Studies,
Bethany Theological
Seminary, Richmond,
Ind.

AMBS helped me discover my inner-banner-maker. That may sound silly, but it's true! Before arriving at AMBS, I never really thought of myself as someone with much to contribute to congregational life beyond song leading or teaching Sunday school. While I was a Master of Arts student with clear intentions to go on to further graduate study, I found myself beginning to dabble in the worship arts. My dabbling became something more serious as I began to create banners and worship visuals for my home congregation. Advent, Pentecost, Peace Sunday—I was on fire, experimenting with ways to convey theological messages using texture, pattern and color. Those banners were a powerful tool for me to channel my experience of God, and some are still in use, ten years later! Had it not been for the rich air I breathed at AMBS, I do not think I would be nearly so committed to incorporating the visual arts into my life and teaching as I am today. ●



Gary Yamasaki
Member of Biblical
Studies Faculty,
Columbia Bible College,
Abbotsford, British
Columbia

It has been nearly a quarter of a century since I graduated from AMBS, and I truly appreciate the ways in which the seminary prepared me to go on to pursue doctoral studies. However, some of my most vivid memories of my AMBS experience relate to how my spiritual life was impacted by my time there. For example, one course I took—"Spiritual Life Disciplines"—had as one of its requirements a "silent retreat." This was a retreat involving prayer and journaling and reading of Scripture ... but all in the context of no conversing among the retreat participants, a seemingly odd stipulation, but one that contributed to an experience of God deeper than any I had ever had. And besides this retreat, the classes throughout the semester introduced me to numerous spiritual practices, some of which I still use to nurture my spiritual life even now, 25 years later. ●



Laura L. Brenneman
Associate Professor
of Religion, Bluffton
University, Bluffton,
Ohio

Prior to being a student at AMBS (1999-2001) I had decided never to read the Bible again. My difficulty was that when I read the Bible on my own, I could not "hear" past the subtle and overt teaching from childhood that women are not reliable interpreters of scripture nor legitimate church leaders.

When I came to AMBS, then, I was not interested in the Bible. I knew of the Bible requirements and I would put up with them; however, those classes were exciting and intriguing to me. They were helping me develop a vibrant personal hermeneutic and, over time, I reluctantly admitted that I loved them. There was a day when Dr. Perry Yoder issued me a challenge: pursuit of vocation can be like the merchant who sells all in order to purchase the pearl of greatest value (Matt 13.45-46).

I took that challenge. After graduating with a Master of Arts: Theological Studies in biblical studies, I got a Ph.D. in Bible and I have been teaching Bible at Bluffton University for seven years. The courses I took at AMBS were crucial for my spiritual formation. They helped me identify my passion for study and teaching of the Bible. ●



Your gifts at work

The Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount, the worship center for AMBS, will begin undergoing renovation this spring or summer. Project goals include:

- making the building accessible to people with disabilities;
- improving energy efficiency in the 46-year-old building;
- improving climate control for the comfort of worshippers and protection of the piano and organ.

Plans include extending the lobby for main-floor restrooms and an elevator. Electric wiring, flooring, seating, windows and roof insulation will receive needed upgrades. Current funding has reached one million dollars of the \$1.8 million goal, and the seminary is seeking contributions from individuals and foundations to complete the goal. An endowment of \$500,000 for ongoing maintenance of the building is included. ●



alumni news

Lois Siemens (Master of Divinity 2006) was ordained at Superb Mennonite Church, Kerrobert, Sask., on January 9.

Charlie Geiser (Master of Divinity 2010) is pastor of Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Leo Driedger (Bachelor of Divinity 1957) has written *At the Forks: Mennonites in Winnipeg*, published by Pandora Press.

Mark Jantzen (Master of Arts: Theological Studies 1993), professor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., published *Mennonite German Soldiers: Nation, Religion and Family in the Prussian East, 1772–1880* with the University of Notre Dame Press.

Elizabeth Soto Albrecht (former student) has been nominated to be the moderator-elect of Mennonite Church USA. She is coordinator of field education for Lancaster (Pa.) Theological Seminary.

Samuel Voth Schrag (Master of Divinity 2007) has begun serving as a member of the Mennonite Church USA executive board. He is pastor of St. Louis (Mo.) Mennonite Fellowship.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary 3003 Benham Avenue Elkhart, IN 46517-1999
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advancement@ambs.edu

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The purpose of *AMBS Window* is to invite readers to call people to leadership ministries, and to provide ways for readers to become involved with AMBS through financial support, prayer support and student recruiting.

Editor: Mary E. Klassen
Designer: Nekeisha Alexis-Baker

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to *Canadian Mennonite* and *The Mennonite*.



A seminary of
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

President's Window

Sara Wenger Shenk, President



I have never liked the stereotypical way academics and spirituality are often played off against each other—as if they are mutually disdainful and incompatible approaches to faith and learning.

One of the happiest discoveries in my new AMBS community is the depth of spiritual devotion that coexists inseparably with academic excellence. What I now know, because I see it daily demonstrated at AMBS, is that one can be prayerfully attentive to the movement of the Holy Spirit even as one demonstrates an astonishing keenness of intellect. One can be really smart in all sorts of intriguing ways, and thoroughly devoted to Jesus Christ. One can employ the sharpest intellect to mine the treasures of Scripture and playfully delight in their wisdom and beauty. One can be radically prophetic and profoundly humble. One can articulate brilliant theology and be deeply formed theologically as a peacemaker who loves the Lord.

When fear holds the upper hand, faith and learning threaten to undermine each other. When we fear that new learning will destroy faith, we put blinders in place and miss the wideness of God's multi-splendored world. When we fear that our faith in God will

inhibit new learning, we trap ourselves in a monotone empiricism that misses the broad spectrum of full-orbed spiritual knowledge.

It is abundantly evident to those of us who are deeply rooted in faith and intrepid explorers of new knowledge, that when held together, faith and learning, spirituality and academics are two intimate friends who love nothing more than to mutually enrich and empower each other.

The wise sage of Proverbs observes over and over that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." The desire for new knowledge, when untethered from reverence for the Creator, can quickly run amok in its own power mongering, self-centered pursuits. A profession of faith that isn't available for examination in light of new knowledge can quickly fly off into pompous pretense and self aggrandizing delusion.

It is with a deep desire to be reliable witnesses to the true reality of the kingdom of God among us that we at AMBS engage in educational formation that calls out the best of spirit, body and mind. ●

panorama

Summer offerings at AMBS include The Church and Race, Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations and Contemporary Theologies of Mission. See the entire roster of summer courses at www.ambs.edu/academics/courses/summer

The AMBS annual report for 2009-2010, with information about the seminary's five core values, is available online. To read it, follow links from www.ambs.edu/giving/annual-report

Walter Sawatsky, professor of church history and mission, was honored recently with a Festschrift, *History and mission in Eastern Europe: Continuing*

the conversation, edited by Mary Ramer and Peter Penner. With chapters in English, German and Russian, it reflects issues of missiology and church history that have been important in Walter's life work with churches in Eastern Europe and Russia.

Upcoming offerings from the AMBS Church Leadership Center include a webinar, "Six images of the preacher," on May 11, at 2:30 p.m. EDT; and a daylong workshop, "Making marriage the church's business," on May 11. For more information, see www.ambs.edu/churchleadershipcenter ●

Calendar

British Columbia

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.

Alberta

May 1: Calgary Young Adult Christian Community is hosting a coffee house featuring Christian musician Joal Kamps at Trinity Mennonite Church. For more information about this event or the community, visit cyacc.ca.

May 14: Camp Valaqua spring work day. Chop wood, clear trails, ready the facilities for campers. For more

information, call 403-637-2510 or e-mail valaqua@xplornet.com.

Saskatchewan

April 30: Saskatchewan Women in Mission Enrichment Day at Tiefengrund Mennonite Church, Laird. Theme: "God's gift through health issues."

May 7: RJC fundraising golf tournament at Valley Regional Park, Rosthern. For more information, e-mail rjcgolf@rjc.sk.ca.

May 15: RJC spring concert.

May 19: Women in Ministry gathering, at Wildwood Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

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 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

April 9: MCC Ontario's Restorative Justice Program presents *The Prodigal Trilogy* (three monologues based on the Luke 15 parable of Jesus), at St. Catharines United Mennonite Church, at 8 p.m. Also dessert and silent auction.

April 9: The Wayne Gilpin Singers present "How Sweet the Sound" concert of inspirational songs, hymns and spirituals at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener, at 8 p.m.

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

UpComing

Wellness theme for MC B.C. women's day

Women of Mennonite Church B.C. are invited to come taste and see the goodness of the Lord at their annual spring Inspirational Day on April 30. Sherbrooke Mennonite Church in Vancouver is hosting this year's event, with the theme, "Fasting and feasting: the Jesus diet." Speakers include Ingrid Schultz, pastor of First United Mennonite Church in Vancouver, on spiritual wellness; Dr. Helen Eng, general practitioner, on physical wellness; and dietician Katrina Goertzen on nutritional wellness. Focus for the day will be on how relying on Jesus, the living bread, can bring new life and vitality in times of life's feasting and fasting, and how believers can look to Jesus for guidance in both eating habits and lifestyle choices. By popular request, this year's meeting will again take place on Saturday, instead of Sunday. Registration begins at 10:30 a.m., with the morning session at 11. Following noon lunch, the afternoon session will continue at 1:30 p.m. Women of all ages are invited.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

Ten Thousand Villages celebrating World Fair Trade Day

Since 2002, the second Saturday of May has been circled on calendars around the globe. This year, World Fair Trade Day will be celebrated on May 14, and its message will ring loud and clear: "Fair trade makes a difference!" Ten Thousand Villages (TTV) and fair trade organizations around the world invite young and old to join in the activities. Fair trade food will be the order of the day at TTV stores across the country this year. "For the staff and volunteers in all of our 48 stores, this is their favourite day of the year," says Bev Hiebert, national sales director. The 2011 World Fair Trade Day also marks a significant milestone for TTV: its 65th anniversary. A nationwide celebration is planned for Oct. 1. For more information about TTV's World Fair Trade Day and 65th anniversary celebrations, visit TenThousandVillages.ca.

—Ten Thousand Villages

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: Shalom Counselling Services fundraising breakfast at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, from 8:30 to 11 a.m. Keynote speaker: Brice Balmer. Topic: "Addictions are among us; what can we do?" To reserve tickets, call 519-886-9690 by May 2.

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.dacapochamberchoir.ca.

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

Announcement

Parent Support Group: Announcing a bimonthly support group for Mennonite parents of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) persons in Southwestern Ontario. We provide confidential support, fellowship, resources and opportunities for dialogue in the Spirit of Christ. For more information please contact the following: rvfast@rogers.com, pmsnyderangel@rogers.com, or Roy and Mary Gascho, 519-742-1850.

For Rent

Two rooms for rent in three bedroom house in **Winnipeg**. Available May-November. One bus to CMU or UofM, two to UofW. Two bathrooms. Well furnished. Resident landlord age 25. \$400/mo/room including utilities. Contact newert@remcorealty.ca.

Employment Opportunities



CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Director of Enrolment Services

CMU invites applications for the full-time position of Director of Enrolment Services. Scope of responsibility includes:

- Lead the university in developing and implementing effective strategies for student recruitment to achieve CMU's long term enrolment goals
- Inspire, lead and supervise an Admissions Department and recruitment team
- Implement Strategic Enrolment Management strategies related to admissions, financial aid and registrarial processes
- Bring a strong commitment to the mission of CMU, along with familiarity of CMU's varied constituencies including Mennonite Church Canada & Mennonite Brethren denominations.

More information: <http://www.cmu.ca/employment.html>
Call 204.487.3300 Email hrdirector@cmu.ca



SEEKING LONG AND SHORT-TERM MINISTRY WORKERS

In response to invitations by international church partners, Mennonite Church Canada is seeking workers for long-term ministry assignments in:

- Germany
- United Kingdom
- Botswana

Short-term assignments (12 months or less) are also available in various locations.

See www.mennonitechurch.ca/serve for details.

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

The Fiske and Herschel Mennonite Churches are inviting a new Pastor to begin in the Summer of 2011.

We are congregations of 50 and 77 members, located in two quaint rural communities in rolling West Central Saskatchewan.

The pastor should:

- be committed to Anabaptist / Mennonite theology and practice within Mennonite Church Canada
- be open to working with lay leadership
- be comfortable preaching, providing pastoral care and relating to all generations

Seminary education is preferred; pastoral experience is desirable. The position will be full time and could be shared by a couple.

Please reply to:

Peter Krahn, Search Committee
cpkrahn@sasktel.net, 306-463-8228
or
Jerry Buhler, Mennonite Church Saskatchewan
jerry@mcsask.ca

FULL-TIME PASTOR

Rosthern (SK) Mennonite Church seeks a full-time Pastor for a congregation of around 185 active members. We are looking for an individual who is committed to joyfully serving God in pastoral ministry, who has strengths in preaching and visitation, and who will work collaboratively with our youth pastor in a pastoral team setting.

Please send letters of interest to Kathy Luitjens, Search Committee Chair, at k.luitjens@sasktel.net or 306-232-4360, or contact our conference pastor, Jerry Buhler, at jerry@mcsask.ca or 306-249-4844.

EMMANUEL MENNONITE CHURCH, ABBOTSFORD, BC

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Emmanuel Mennonite Church invites applications for the full-time position of Associate Pastor.

This position places major focus on youth ministry, Christian education along with a minor focus on general congregational ministry.

Applicants should have a relevant degree in Christian ministry, an understanding of contemporary Anabaptist theology and an interest and ability to relate to young people.

SENIORS MINISTRY COORDINATOR

Emmanuel Mennonite Church invites applications for a 10 h/wk position which focuses on supports to seniors including visitation, addressing care needs, encouraging senior volunteerism, and coordinating seniors events, including funerals.

Please send resumes either by mail to "The Search Committee", Emmanuel Mennonite Church, 3471 Clearbrook Rd., Abbotsford BC V2T 5C1 or by e-mail to office@emmanuelmennonite.com by April 15th, 2011 (or until a suitable candidate can be found).

Mennonite Collegiate Institute
Gretna, MB

MCI is a provincially accredited independent Anabaptist Christian high school (Gr. 9-12). MCI emphasizes a strong academic program leading toward post-secondary studies, excellent athletic & fine arts programs and a residence program for approximately half of the student body.

MCI invites applications in anticipation of September '11

Residence Staff: Full-time positions (male & female) This is a six-member team whose duties include programming, supervision of resident students, student leadership development, personal mentoring & other co-curricular involvements including athletics & fine arts. Experience and training in youth ministry is an asset.

All candidates must have an active faith & declare commitment to the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.

Please send a resume and cover letter to:

Darryl Loewen, Principal
Mennonite Collegiate Institute
Box 250 - Gretna, MB - R0G 0V0
principal@mciblues.net



CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

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

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: **presidentalsearch@cmu.ca**

Sports snapshots



Columbia Bible College's men's volleyball team proudly says, 'We're No. 1' in the country after winning the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association crown on March 12 in Sherbrooke, Que. The Bearcats made history, becoming the only CBC team to win a national championship. Seeded sixth going into the championship, CBC scored an impressive upset over No. 1 seed UBC-Okanagan of Kelowna, B.C., in the final game. The Bearcats held off the Kelowna team in straight sets (31-29, 25-15, 28-26), to take gold. 'It was a lot of fun to see this team play and perform over the week,' Rocky Olfert, head coach and CBC athletic director, tells Canadian Mennonite B.C correspondent Amy Dueckman. 'To win a national championship is something we believed we could do and we just went out and played Bearcats ball. I'm just so proud of them.'

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY



The CMU Blazers men's volleyball 'served up' a silver medal at this year's Manitoba Colleges Athletic Conference tournament, losing to the Red River Rebels in the final.



The CMU Blazers women's volleyball squad returned home with a silver medal from the 2011 Manitoba Colleges Athletic Conference tournament, losing a five-set final match (19-25, 25-23, 16-25, 25-19, 15-10) to the Providence College Freeman. Evelyn Kampen of the Blazers was named the league's Most Valuable Player.