

CANADIAN MENNONITE

March 18, 2013
Volume 17 Number 6

Counting his chickens

Focus on Farming
& Gardening
pg. 31



PM40063104 R09613

inside

Storytelling and the people of God 4
No business trying to be 'balanced' 13
Violent verses explained 24

EDITORIAL

What about this Bible?

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Not in recent history have we paid so much attention to the Bible in our faith community.

As I peruse the last year's issues of *Canadian Mennonite*, I note several features such as John D. Rempel's "The Bible and Holy Spirit in tension," an investigation by Bruno Dyck into the Zacchaeus story in Luke in "Salvation comes to a rich house," and a new look at discernment by Dave Rogalsky in reviewing the stories of contention as told in the gospels by the Apostle Paul in letters to the new Christians' developing congregational life.

Our columnist Troy Watson has written a seven-part series on new discoveries in the Scripture and with this issue we have completed a three-part series, "On the Use of Scripture," by Bruce Hiebert. Last July, three distinguished and articulate scholars helped us "dust off the Bible" at Mennonite Church Canada's assembly in Vancouver.

Which begs the question: Why this new interest in taking a new and more imaginative view of Scripture in our time and place? Haven't we always, as a faith community, given high priority and place to Holy Scripture as the source of our salvation, our spiritual wisdom, our guide for living?

Well, yes, while the words, though spoken and recorded in a different time and place, still hold ultimate authority in our lives as 21st-century Christians, they need fresh interpretation, new

imagination, new inspiration and new application, as the world around us becomes post-Christian and more secular. As Anabaptist Christians—a people of the Book—we can lose our identity in a society and political establishment driven by a popular culture of entertainment, nationalism and militarism. So it is perfectly appropriate and necessary to focus new attention on that life-giving source for no other reason than to acknowledge that the ground is literally shifting under our feet. As other life forces close in on us, a refurbishing of our understanding and application of Scripture should become a high priority.

The process will not be easy. Old understandings and assumptions will be brought into question. As Bruce Hiebert reminds us on pages 6 and 7, this will require hard work and imagination: "We need the right focus and the right framework, and it needs to be done in the shadow of the Scriptures we venerate and before the God we worship. It is a pastoral, priestly and prophetic process."

Walter Brueggemann, a biblical scholar, echoes the same sentiment: "How we read the Bible, each of us, is partly a plot of family, neighbours and friends [a socialization process], and partly the God-given accident of long-term development in faith. The real issues of biblical authority and interpretation are not likely to be settled by erudite cognitive formulation or appeal to classic settlement, but live beneath such contention in often

unrecognized and uncriticized ways that are deeply powerful, especially if rooted [as they may be for most of us] amidst hurt, anger or anxiety."

And what about our children and young people, a generation growing up in a culture saturated with images and values foreign to the biblical images to which Hiebert refers?

Well, this, too, will not be easy. In *Christian Century*, Sarah Hinlicky Wilson, a research professor at the Institute for Ecumenical Research, in addressing the issue of how to read the Bible with children, writes: "There's no way around it: the Bible is a problematic book. It does not sit neatly within anyone's worldview or religious preferences, no matter where on the many theological spectrums one falls.

"We can try to present them [our children] an unproblematic Bible, excised and trimmed and amplified to fit our own adult needs. . . . We can bowdlerize, sanitize and pretend all is well and right and easy with a canon that is assuredly not all well and easy. Or we can embrace the problematic Bible and abandon our efforts to control it. We can recognize that faith comes as a gift of the Holy Spirit, not through the problem-solving of anxious adherents to the Christian religion."

So our work is cut out for us. And we cannot subcontract it out to church institutions or biblical scholars who, at best, can give us frameworks and processes for expanded and innovative thinking. The heavy lifting will have to be done by what Richard Rohr calls "soulful people" in each congregation, those persons providing the "salt, yeast and light" Jesus refers to in Matthew 5:13-16.



ABOUT THE COVER:

Young chicken farmer Colin Brown of Carstairs, Alta., holds a Light Brahma chick in his hand. Note the feathered feet common to the type. See our inaugural Focus on Farming and Gardening section that also features a story on urban gardener Kenton Lobe, beginning on page 31.

PHOTO: DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD, CANADIAN MENNONITE

Circulation: Please contact Lisa Jacky toll-free at 1-800-378-2524 ext. 221 or by e-mail at office@canadianmennonite.org for subscriptions and address changes. Subscriptions can also be ordered at our web site. We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund for our publishing activities. ISSN 1480-042X

Canada

CANADIAN MENNONITE

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40063104 REGISTRATION NO. 09613

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE ITEMS TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

490 DUTTON DRIVE, UNIT C5

WATERLOO ON N2L 6H7

Phone: 519-884-3810 Toll-free: 1-800-378-2524 Fax: 519-884-3331

Web site: canadianmennonite.org

Please send all material to be considered for publication to:

General submission address: submit@canadianmennonite.org

Readers Write: letters@canadianmennonite.org

Milestones announcements: milestones@canadianmennonite.org

Obituaries: obituaries@canadianmennonite.org

Calendar announcements: calendar@canadianmennonite.org

Material can also be sent "Attn: Submissions/Readers Write/Milestones/Obituaries/Calendar" by postal mail or fax to our head office.

Reprint requests: reprints@canadianmennonite.org

Mission statement: *To educate, inspire, inform, and foster dialogue on issues facing Mennonite Church Canada as it shares the good news of Jesus Christ from an Anabaptist perspective. We do this through a regular publication and other media, working with our church partners.*

Guiding values:

Hebrews 10:23-25 • Accuracy, fairness, balance • Editorial freedom • Seeking and speaking the truth in love • Open hearts and minds in discerning God's will • Covenantal relationships and mutual accountability

Area churches and MC Canada financially support 44 percent of Canadian Mennonite's annual budget.

Board of Directors (by appointing body):

MC Canada: **Ed Janzen, Les Klassen Hamm, Doreen Martens;**

MC B.C.: **Linda Matties;** MC Alberta: **James Moyer;**

MC Saskatchewan: **Marianne Harder;** MC Manitoba: **Al Friesen;**

MC Eastern Canada: **Tim Reimer;**

CMPS: **Carl DeGurse, Roger Epp, Tobj Thiessen**

Board Chair: **Tobj Thiessen,** tobj.thiessen@sympatico.ca, 416-622-7850

Head Office Staff:

Dick Benner, Editor/Publisher, editor@canadianmennonite.org

Ross W. Muir, Managing Editor, managinged@canadianmennonite.org

Barb Draper, Editorial Assistant, edassist@canadianmennonite.org

Dan Johnson, Graphic Designer, designer@canadianmennonite.org

Lisa Jacky, Circulation/Finance, office@canadianmennonite.org

Emily Loewen, Young Voices Co-Editor, eloewen@canadianmennonite.org

Rachel Bergen, Young Voices Co-Editor, ca@canadianmennonite.org

Advertising Manager: **Graeme Stemp-Morlock,** advert@canadianmennonite.org, toll-free voice mail: 1-800-378-2524 ext. 224

Correspondents:

Will Braun, Senior Writer, seniorwriter@canadianmennonite.org

Amy Dueckman, B.C. Correspondent, bc@canadianmennonite.org, 604-854-3735;

Donita Wiebe-Neufeld, Alberta Correspondent, ab@canadianmennonite.org,

780-436-3431; **Karin Fehderau,** Saskatchewan Correspondent, sk@canadianmennonite.org,

306-933-4209; **Evelyn Rempel Petkau,** Manitoba Correspondent,

mb@canadianmennonite.org, 204-745-2208; **Dave Rogalsky,** Eastern Canada

Correspondent, ec@canadianmennonite.org, 519-579-7258.



Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



contents



Storytelling and the people of God 4

'Storytelling is not quick and easy, but as a people of Scripture—a body of laws, poems and teachings, and, above all else, stories—we should see that God's way into our world is through stories,' writes **BRUCE HIEBERT** in the final part of his 'On the Use of Scripture' series.

Pastor concerned about financial health of wider church 16

GORDON ALLABY, pastor of Osler (Sask.) Mennonite Church, expresses surprise and sadness to learn that MC Canada is facing a \$237,000 shortfall in donation income for the fiscal year just ended on Jan. 31.

Study guide explores 'white privilege' and racism 27

Publication from the Canadian Council of Churches, with support from MCC Canada, helps congregations to explore how 'white privilege' can be an expression of racism against Canada's Indigenous Peoples.

From computers to cash 29

NOLAN ANDRES leaves PeaceWorks Technology Service that he founded 17 years ago for position with Mennonite Savings and Credit Union.



Clocks a symbol of Mennonite heritage 30

Kroeger Clocks by **ARTHUR KROEGER** tells the story of the more-than-two-century heritage of creating, cleaning and repairing these unique timepieces.

Young Voices 33-36

Read about the 'Life in Egypt' of **ISAAC FRIESEN** and **WANDA WALL BERGEN**, Young Voices' newest bloggers, plus stories about Winnipeg musicians **JESSE** and **THOMAS KRAUSE** ('Telling an old story through new music') and Toronto film maker **PAUL PLETT** ('Bringing biblical themes to the big screen').

Regular features:

For discussion **7** Readers write **8** Pontius' Puddle **12**

Milestones **15** Schools Directory **37**

Calendar **37** Classifieds **39**

What about this Bible? 2

DICK BENNER

'Interesting time to be the church' 8

KEN WARKENTIN

My troubled affinity with radicals 9

AIDEN ENNS

The labels we wear 10

PHIL WAGLER

Online NOW!

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

Stories of salvation: **CHERYL WOELK**

Life in Bethlehem—An interview: **SUSIE GUENTHER LOEWEN**

ON THE USE OF SCRIPTURE: PART III OF III

Storytelling and the people of God

BY BRUCE HIEBERT

SPECIAL TO *CANADIAN MENNONITE*



Storytelling is not quick and easy, but as a people of Scripture—a body of laws, poems and teachings, and, above all else, stories—we should see that God's way into our world is through stories.

Reading the Bible for ethics calls for a new approach to community. Above all else, it calls for the centrality of storytelling: storytelling at the centre of the community, between community members and between communities.

Reading Scripture is about being transformed by Scripture, and interpreting Scripture is about accumulating power. But living in peace means finding a way to not only be transformed by Scripture, but to share power. We do that through storytelling, telling our stories about what we experienced and what it meant to us.

This is not obvious. We are all looking for simple and straightforward solutions to problems that will minimize our time and energy, processes that will be fast and efficient ways of putting difficult issues behind us. But in our effort to solve problems in simple ways we ignore the complex and transformative power found in telling and listening to each other's stories.

In our self-centred world we look for the lazy way out, not the one that will bring us into confrontation with ourselves, teach us about true community, or lay us bare before God and each other. Storytelling is not quick and easy, but as a people of Scripture—a body of laws, poems and teachings, and, above all

ISTOCK IMAGES



As God's people under Scripture, we have a lot of good stories to tell. There are stories of bravery, tragedy, healing and hope.

else, stories—we should see that God's way into our world is through stories. This is not accidental. We don't know the stories of Scripture and tell the stories of Scripture because they get us to some-place else. The truth is in the stories.

Why this should be so becomes evident when we look at the way storytelling functions in communities. As storytellers, storytelling does many things to us, things inherent in the act of telling stories, things that transform our very humanity in some very direct ways. We cannot help it; telling and listening to stories tie us one to another. It is the way our brains work. If we tell our stories to each other, we produce community, and it does not matter what divides us. Storytelling changes our brains, individually and collectively, and we become a people.

As storytellers, there are three impacts:

• **FIRST, TELLING** a story transforms the

memory of the storyteller.

When we tell stories we take the time to organize our memories, dragging them through a set of filters that try to strip out the meaningless and socially define the meaningful. I tell my story by trying to think about my memories of my experience in terms you might want to hear.

But that helps me to hear them for the first time through what I believe to be an external point of view. I have my own feelings about my experience, but when I organize them to tell them to you I have to change, shape and reframe those feelings, and make sense of them in new ways that reflect communal values and understandings.

Quite literally, when I tell you my story, my memories of my experience change to match how I think you need to hear me. I apply a moral filter to my memories, and they become new memories now shaped by my sense of justice, mercy, peace and social harmony.

• **SECOND, TELLING** my story forces me to become vulnerable to your hearing of my story.

When I tell you my story, I place before you a narrative of human existence and you cannot help but judge it. That is what our association-engine brains do: they judge. Judging is what making associations is all about. And then your judgment shows in your body language, your stance, your gaze, the expression on your face.

It is a terrible opening of existence between people, the creation of a chasm of possibility that breaks our traditions, stereotypes, masks and personas. Everything about us becomes a possibility for unscripted hurt, love or anything else. Our public face is broken by the act of storytelling. In telling my story I am forced open to your judgment.

• **BUT THAT** brings us to the third part of storytelling for the narrators: the

outcome remakes us as social beings.

Experiencing your response to my story, the evidence of your judgment tells me who I am in new ways. We never really know who we are until we obtain a response from others. We think we know. We have feelings about who we are. But until we look into the eyes of others and see their response to us, we never really know. If your gaze in response to my story is one of acceptance, then I know that deep inside I am acceptable. But if in your gaze I find condemnation or critique, then I know that there is something about me that needs to change.

Storytelling impacts listeners, too

Those three aspects of storytelling change the storyteller profoundly. To a lesser degree, but no less significantly, the act of storytelling changes the listeners. While listening is a voluntary response to a story, and thus something we can shut off, genuinely engaging a story as a listener, especially as part of a listening community, has five powerful impacts:

• **FIRST, WE** cannot help but test our own humanity against the humanity that emerges from the story.

Are we the same as, or different from, the character in the story? How would we have behaved in those situations? What about us is similar to, or different from, the humanity of the story? These questions emerge naturally as our brains seek associations to the story. They call our humanity into question and open us to the possibility that our humanity might be greater or lesser than we believe.

• **SECOND, AT** the same time the story expands our understanding of what it means to be human.

We have the opportunity to reach through the story and into the experience itself, trying on with our imagination a world that is not our own. Every story takes us into the universe of human experience in ways that we could not achieve on our own. It is the gift of knowledge.

• **THIRD, WHEN** we hear a story we take into ourselves something of the identity

of the person who told the story.

Their narrative becomes part of our memory, and thus part of our being. Every encounter with storytellers now takes place in the context of what we experienced of their lives through the stories they told. They can never be “other” to us again because part of them is inside of us.

• **FOURTH, WHEN** we listen to a story in the context of a listening community, we test our response against all the other folk in the listening environment.

Their responses become part of our responses. We assess our response and modify it based on what the other people are doing. Are they bored? Then the story must be mundane. Did they gasp? Then there was something vital in that part of the story. And we take our cues to our humanity and that of the storyteller through the way we all respond together to the story.

• **FIFTH, WE** create a collective memory that leads to a new sense of identity.

When a community hears a story, how it responds becomes a collective marker regarding the identity of the group. It is a collective experience that leads to a response, and if the story is strong enough the response can reshape the community forever. It becomes a permanent marker that is not only remembered by those at the time, but which is transformed into a social memory that is passed through the generations.

A new kind of people, together

The result is that in storytelling we all, tellers and listeners, enter into a world of mutual risk and vulnerability. When we start to tell stories to each other we enter a special domain where we will become a new kind of people, one where we have reached into each other in understanding, judgment and permanent

engagement.

We begin to construct a common humanity that is based not on boundaries and institutions, but on our emerging common humanity. The boundaries between us diminish and the ties strengthen. It does not mean it will be a happy or harmonious new community, but it will be one where we feel bound to work together across our boundaries.

This is why, when we baptize or welcome new members, we have them tell their stories. We are having them expose themselves to us in vulnerability, but at the same time we are broadening our own identities to become one with their new voices. With a story told, they are no longer strangers, they are part of us and we cannot easily remove them.

But making this work on a regular basis is no easy task. Once upon a time, we lived in villages, and villages lived by storytelling. Now we live in cities and, while more communication happens than ever before, and more knowledge flits about than our great-grandparents could imagine, we rarely tell our stories. We are cut off from one another, seeking to wrest out of knowledge the community we long for, and not even knowing that community is as simple and natural as telling each other our stories.

In the shadow of Scripture

So, like so many other things, we have to set up

systems and design processes so we can return to the best of a very old practice.

We all have stories to tell. What we need are the appropriate venues in which to tell those stories. What we need are frameworks of critical sensitivity where we know we will be heard, and where we will be held accountable for what we say, and how we, in turn, listen.

The wrong stories may be told, and the right stories may be told wrongly. We need the right focus and the right framework, and it needs to be done in



the shadow of the Scriptures we venerate and before the God we worship. It is a pastoral process. It is a priestly process. It is a prophetic process. Rightly done, we are slowly and bravely opened to each other and to our reality as a community of faith.

It starts in small groups. Establish groups of 12 or less, probably people who are a gentle mix of points of view and positions in life. They shouldn't be so different that their stories are from different

Now we live in cities and, while more communication happens than ever before, and more knowledge flits about than our great-grandparents could imagine, we rarely tell our stories.

planets, but they shouldn't be so much alike that they have only variations on one story. Then give them a topic around which to talk, and a guide to walk them through it, someone to hold the hands of the nervous and restrain the excessively enthusiastic.

All get a turn to tell their stories while all the others listen. It may take days, weeks or months. Gentleness must be the rule. At the end of it, we begin to know each other as fellow struggling believers, not merely masks of gracious goodness. We will have felt pain together, celebrated together and found wisdom together. The world will become brighter and we will have companions on the way.

We can do it as congregations if we are prepared to take the time to do it right. When a difficult topic becomes a congregational reality it is time for major processes of storytelling and listening, and these will take months or perhaps years. It means finding small venues, aggregating stories, being merciless about transparency in the process, and patiently waiting out the belligerent or fearful, who are often the same person.

We can do it as area and national churches. This becomes more difficult and requires the work of sociologists, church historians and the church press, as well as church staff people. It takes area and national events, and significant budgets. The process will take place over

years or perhaps decades, until all voices can hear their story reflected in the area or national story. It is a process that technical apparatus like surveys can assist, if carefully and rightly done.

Any process can be misused, even storytelling. Every process must have gatekeepers, the folks who decide who gets to tell a story and who does not. Often these are folks who are frightened by possibilities. It is why they want to be gatekeepers. But that isn't how a com-

munity works. In a community every voice must be present or it isn't a community storytelling. Without every story, it is a strong-arming, an abuse of process by the more powerful against minority experiences, existences and humanities. We, the listeners, know when voices are silenced, and at that very moment we

know that we are not a community in action, but a power struggle seeking a resolution.

But ultimately it is very simple. We all want to be recognized for our humanity, and telling our stories is the best way to do that. Plus, as God's people under Scripture, we have a lot of good stories to tell. There are stories of bravery, tragedy, healing and hope. We have a lot of good stories, and in listening to them we hear the very Word of God reflected back to us, pulling us onward into a new humanity. We are doing the work of God's people, and it is through our stories, in telling and in listening, that we come to know that truth. ☸

Bruce Hiebert, M.Div., Ph.D., is a faculty member in business ethics at University Canada West, as well as a lecturer in Mennonite history at the University of the Fraser Valley, and adjunct faculty in ethics at the Vancouver School of Theology. He is a former Mennonite minister and long-time member at Langley Mennonite Fellowship, to whose members this document was addressed.

☸ For discussion

1. What powerful stories have you heard in your congregation? Who did the telling? What was the setting? What made the story powerful? How did it influence the teller or the listeners? Was it important that the teller was physically present and not recorded on a video clip?
2. How vulnerable do you feel when you tell a personal story? What makes it easy or difficult to tell a story about your experience? How do you decide which details to include? When does it take patience to listen to other people's stories? What makes a good listener? Under what circumstances do other people's stories change your life?
3. Bruce Hiebert writes, "If we tell our stories to each other, we produce community." Do you find his arguments convincing? Can you think of a community response to a story that reshaped the community? Who determines how a community responds to a story? When a story becomes part of the social memory of the congregation, how accurate do the details of the story remain?
4. When we tell the stories of the Bible extemporaneously, or through film or drama, we often edit them. Under what conditions can that be helpful or harmful? Do Bible-inspired stories such as VeggieTales increase or decrease our knowledge of the Bible? What role does the broader denomination play in keeping us engaged with the stories of Scripture?

—BY BARB DRAPER

VIEWPOINTS

/// Readers write

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

✉ Indigenous believers must be equals in the church

THE DEATH OF Richard Twiss, a Lakota from South Dakota who began the indigenous outreach program, Wiconi International, leaves a large gap among those who work to bring indigenous Christians around the world fully into the larger church.

One of those who works at this is Mennonite Church B.C.'s indigenous relations coordinator, Brander McDonald. In his latest blog posting, he challenged our churches that our pastors, chairs and elders are not getting on board with this, let alone enough of the membership. As he said, we need to move beyond our conversations about first nations to conversations with them.

I think part of the problem is that first nations people are too invisible to many of our Mennonite church members. They don't see them and the need. What they need to learn is that we, as a wider church

FROM OUR LEADERS

'Interesting time to be the church'

KEN WARKENTIN

When people ask me how my work is going, I often begin my response with the phrase, "This is an interesting time to be the church!"

This is a time of seismic shifts within our Canadian and global cultures. These shifts include not only technological advancements, but also changes in societal values and expectations of life. These shifts impact the church locally and denominationally.

Stuart Murray Williams addressed our annual Mennonite Church Manitoba gathering and helpfully considered with us the impact of being in a "post-Christendom" age. He described a movement that is taking the church from the centre of society to the margins. The effect of this change is that we in the church feel sidelined, dismissed and disrespected.

It is difficult to talk about these

changes from within the institution without some sadness. As leaders within congregations and within the denomination, we must consider and honour all the



We are called to make sense of God's Word in the shifting sands of our world

forces that have brought us to this place. We are here because of the faithfulness of many generations. These faithful sisters and brothers have built up our institutions because of their desire to nurture Christian communities and share the gospel of Christ with our neighbours.

Now, it seems that our institutional structures need to adapt to the changes in our society in order to remain faithful. The good news is that the Mennonite church in Canada has a history of adapting to new social realities.

Our communities have experienced shifts, from transitions in language and changing patterns of leadership, to worship style preferences. Now, it seems that we are being called to move willingly from "majority to minority, from maintenance to mission, from institution to movement."

We in the church follow an unchanging God, but we do so in incredibly volatile times. When I describe what I see as the challenges to the church, I often come across as gloomy and despairing. One can feel like a failure when dismissed to

the sidelines.

However, this is not how I feel. I am filled with hope at the possibilities that lie before us. We are called to make sense of God's Word in the shifting sands of our world, but we must remember that we do not do this alone. God continues to go before us, with us and all around us, to show what is already being accomplished in God's world.

Ken Warkentin is executive director of Mennonite Church Manitoba.

and nation, cannot receive the blessings God would like to pour out on us if we do not move to grasp the importance of the inclusion of indigenous believers as equals in the church, as opposed to continually seeing them only as objects of mission. I do not believe God

can fully bless us as long as we continue in our parallel but separate pathways.

We sometimes have talked historically and in literary circles about the two solitudes in Canada, referring to French and English. I would maintain, along with

NEW ORDER VOICE

My troubled affinity with radicals

AIDEN ENNS

I watched shaky video footage on the Internet. A person in a forest in Texas walked out in front of a dinosaur-like machine that was biting large trees and ripping them out of the soil. With giant jaws, the tractor operator held a tree near the activist and dropped it at his side, brushing the activist and causing the camera operator to yelp. This was the site of a protest against the construction of another pipeline for oil.

Whether the action was crazy or courageous depends on your views of industrial civilization, your notion of progress, your confidence in corporate-influenced democratic procedures and the effectiveness of kind-hearted editorials to save us from our own destruction.

Back during the era of the Vietnam War, U.S. citizen James W. Douglass, along with others, sat on a road in



Hawaii, blocked a convoy of troops and went to jail for his actions. Later, in his book *Resistance and Contemplation: The Way of Liberation* (Dell, 1972), he wrote about our need to stand up against perpetrators of violence.

“In the age of the global ghetto, a sustained resistance to mass exploitation and killing is the outward expression, the validating fruit, of a genuine inner liberation,” wrote Douglass. “To translate Jesus into the moment: By their resistance you shall know them.”

Pushing resistance even further, some have called for activists to engage in strategic acts of violence. This is the main focus of the thick book, *Deep Green Resistance* by Aric McBay, Lierre Keith and Derrick Jensen (Seven Stories Press, 2011).

Speaking at an environmental conference in Oregon in 2011, Keith appealed for supporters to take action. She cited the Irish Republican Army and the armed resistance against oil companies in Nigeria as examples of small groups of people using violence to successfully defend territory. She wishes to defend the land and its creatures from the destructive ways of humans and their—our—civilization.

I am sympathetic with the radicals. And because they condone violence, it's a troubled affinity.

The conflict over global “resources” is already upon us. At best, it’s called the geopolitics of war; at worst, I fear it is Armageddon or the onset of a global winter. Those of us in the extracting nations are largely shielded from the magnitude and urgency of the destruction. Even as we watch reports of irreversible pollution and the death of species, we deny the desperation of the situation.

Authors of *Deep Green Resistance* say that “liberal” approaches to social change are ineffective. Consciousness-raising,

lifestyle politics, nonviolent demonstrations, even permaculture environmentalism: each of these does not—cannot—halt the progress of industrial civilization.

My gut tells me their diagnosis is accurate. I’m deeply impressed by the commitment and courage of radicals to defend the land and sea and all their inhabitants. Am I convinced that violence against the property of corporations engaged in the industrial agenda of “resource extraction” is justified? I do not have a quick response.

An act of self-defence seems just as, or even more, justified than the violence inflicted on the earth by those with huge machines, laws, guns, prisons, big advertising budgets and giant media conglomerates. While this view may seem naïve, it has a certain poetry that rings true.

But my spirit tells me that agents of violence, even counter-violence, succumb to the forces of destruction. I am still moved, to the point of passion, by the story of Jesus who resisted the temptation of the Zealot option, as John Howard Yoder calls it in *The Politics of Jesus*.

I am sympathetic with the radicals.

And because they condone violence, it’s a troubled affinity. But I have a troubled affinity with police officers and other representatives of the state as well.

At this point, I let the life of Christ be my guide. Well, in theory anyway. He rankled authorities, was taken into custody and was executed. Me? So far, I just write articles.

Aiden Enns is co-editor of Geez magazine. He can be reached at aiden@geezmagazine.org.

writer John Ralston Saul in his book *Canada, A Fair Country*, although he may not use the words there, that there are three solitudes: English, French and first nations. As he described it, we owe a lot more to our first nations neighbours than we realize and have ever shown appreciation for.

We need to continue to pray and work at how we can bridge the gap, achieve reconciliation and then arrive at a place where we are really one church. I know there are those who really believe in this thrust, but I have a feeling that for many in our church it's truthfully something like McDonald alluded to: "We have this token first nations guy on our staff. Great, he's

doing his job. So we, as a conference, are doing our job. End of story." As we would say translated from our Plautdietsch: "Not!"

But we do need to have patience, too. Reversing 450 years of alienation does not happen overnight.

LORNE BRANDT, RICHMOND, B.C.

✉ Mennonites work hard so they can be generous

RE: "#IDLENO MORE CONCERNS Mennonites too," Jan. 21, page 34.

OUTSIDE THE BOX

The labels we wear

PHIL WAGLER

What are you wearing right now? What does the label say? Chances are, it boxes you somehow—possibly in your own eyes, but definitely in the eyes of others. The labels can be a measure of your status, or betray what you wish others believe about it. The label might reveal what you care about, who you cheer for, or what makes you laugh, like the T-shirt I saw that said, "Procrastinators of the world unite . . . tomorrow." Even a lack of labels can become your label; just ask the Amish.

Consider further the labels we attach to people and what that means for the way we approach them. It is not simply that we look at the logo and leave people as billboards of curiosity. No, we take it further, and constrict and define people and our response to them based upon our assumptions of what the label says about the substance.

We may even decide to avoid them without a conversation based, ironically, on "informed" opinion.

Recently, Stuart Murray Williams of the UK Anabaptist Network talked about the labels we apply to people. In particular, his concern was for the way our description of others dehumanizes

those made in the image of God. We call people many things that are either way too narrow or beneath their dignity: "consumers," "clients," "human resources," "liberals," "conservatives," "Anabaptists," "Evangelicals," "non-believers," "customers," "easterners," "westerners," "activists." The laundry list is literally endless. Labelling, of course, is inevitable and we all do it, but we are, as a wise soul points out, becoming a culture that is increasingly about the "objectification of people and the personification of things."

What does all this mean? Well, to begin, Christians must realize that they, too, are labelled and objectified. The label "Christian" is not particularly a badge of honour these days. If you've ever had



The label 'Christian' is not particularly a badge of honour these days.

to identify yourself by the term you've probably caught yourself thinking immediately about how you can quantify it in order not to be read as "one of those Christians." And what "those" means in the negative, of course, depends on how you label yourself. Ah, 'tis a circuitous mess we find ourselves in, no?

Which leads to this: We who are called Christians must discover again why that label has stuck for so long, what it declares—both positively and negatively—and whether it still matters.

It was in Antioch that the followers of the Way of Jesus were first labelled "Christians" (Acts 11:26). For close to two millennia this word has been a burden the disciples of Jesus have borne. Yes, a burden, for it has often been opposed, needing to be restored from neglect or abuse, or thoughtlessly used as a stick.

Just as it is our counter-culture task as Christians to get beyond the labels applied to people around us that objectify and dehumanize, because we know they are made in the image of God and need him, so, too, it is our task to get beyond apologizing for a label applied to us, and, instead, live up to the name in our manner of life, our method of being, and our memory of our confession, and embrace our rights and responsibilities that come

with being labelled "friends" by Jesus himself (John 15:13-15).

Phil Wagler and his family live in Surrey, B.C., where they serve the mission of God through the most amazing entity ever labelled: the church. You can reach him at phil_wagler@yahoo.ca.

Janna and Terrell Wiebe (who are quoted in the story as being sympathetic to Attawapiskat First Nation chief Theresa Spence) have great concern with her obscene salary of over \$200,000.

The government of Canada has given Indian Affairs millions. It's the chiefs and councillors who are responsible for their reserves. The conditions inside their homes are up to the parents.

My father fled Russia, came to Canada and worked, bought a house, raised four children. We all worked to achieve what we have.

Yes, Mennonites contribute care, money and help to many disasters around the world. Don't get me wrong. I do have compassion and support, and volunteer once a week at Siloam Mission.

KATE KEHLER, WINNIPEG

The writer is a former member of Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

✉ More than politics involved in faith issues

RE: "DODGING THE liberal-conservative trap," Feb. 4, page 27.

The issue for Anabaptists is not one of liberal-conservative polarity, but of faithfulness to our *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* and to the creeds. If I confess my faith on Sunday—and mean it—then on Monday support lying as a valid Cabinet ministerial tactic, militarism and glorification of wars present and past, punitive non-shalom approaches to prisons, and lack of hospitality to the alien among us, that's not a political difference. That's a Christian confessional disjunction.

VERN RATZLAFF, SASKATOON

✉ Kudos for speaking out about sexuality

RE: "LET'S TALK about it," Feb. 4, page 34.

Thank you for having the courage and insight to write about youth sexuality. I am a youth sponsor at my church, and am aware that we need guiding voices like yours and those you highlight.

I encourage you to go further and suggest specific resources—people, books, processes, retreats—for congregations to work with. You might go further still, and explore what healthy and faithful sexuality looks like in other contexts beyond early life stages.

Even within heterosexual marriage, couples live with a spectrum of experiences:

• **HOW MANY** find their sexual lives fulfilling?

- **WHAT IS** healthy and faithful in that context?
- **WHAT CAN** be done when it's not working, especially during the years of raising young children?
- **AND OUR** congregations include many single adults, both unmarried and previously married. Can we talk about that, too?

Yes, youth sexuality is a hot topic, but if we can't talk openly about what healthy sex and sexuality mean for adults, it will be hard to have credibility with our youth.

In any case, I applaud your willingness to write about a topic that, in your words, does cause many to squirm.

ALAN ARMSTRONG, TORONTO

✉ Salvation requires the shedding of blood

RE: "A HIJACKED faith?" Feb. 18, page 2.

I just want to make a couple of comments regarding your editorial.

First off, you said that the scientists of Menno Simons' time had "next to no awareness of climate change . . ." I think it'd be safe to say that such an issue was not on anybody's radar in the 16th, 17th, 18th or even 19th century! And some people still fail to see it in the 21st!

You also state, "Even some of our theological concepts are changing. Our view of atonement, say our leading theologians, for instance, should be based more on God being 'nonviolent' during the history of his people . . ." Well, that might be their view, but it's not the one held by God.

To use a quote by such a respected theologian as Tom Yoder Neufeld certainly gives that opinion some extra weight. He said, "His enemies' murder of Jesus became God's love offering." But has Neufeld ever said why Jesus needed to become such an offering? I can tell you why. God has made it very clear that without the shedding of blood, there can be no remission of sins.

Things like Noah's flood, or the killing of every first-born who lived in a house without blood smeared around the front door, were not only extremely violent acts, but they were acts of violence carried out by God himself, personally. It's not pretty, and it's not what respectable people like to talk about, but we can't go trying to "sanitize" something a holy God has ordained.

George Macleod, the founder of the Iona Community, once wrote: "I am recovering the claim that Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles, but on a cross between two thieves; on the town garbage heap; at a crossroads so cosmopolitan that they had to write his title in Hebrew and in Latin and in Greek . . . at the kind of place where cynics talk smut and thieves curse, and soldiers gamble. Because

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 12)

that is where he died. And that is what he died about.”

I have no hope of eternal life without Jesus the Messiah having died in my place. And neither do you.
PAT MURPHY, AYR, ONT.

✉ Guard against arrogance and blindness

RE: “IMAGINATION, HOPE and peace,” Feb. 18, page 4.

As a Christian who left a mainline church 25 years ago to join the more conservative Mennonite church, I now find myself at the same place again. Twenty-five years have changed my place in the bewildering world of scriptural interpretation. I am reading a book entitled *Man and his Gods* by Homer W. Smith and I realize the immense complexity of interpreting the Scriptures.

It feels comfortable to associate with people of the same beliefs; it is especially true of religious and political beliefs. Articles like “Imagination, hope and peace” have the tendency to ignite a firestorm, with brothers and sisters shouting at each other, and making plans to exit and join others of the same position.

The truth of the matter is, young people are educated, influenced by the Internet and media, and the understanding of our faith is different now. We must guard ourselves against being so arrogant as to assume that the past has no value, nor so blind that the present has all the answers. We must be humble enough to admit that we—including myself—don’t have all the answers, but we have to learn the truth and the truth will set us free.

I would like to conclude with a Tom Yoder Neufeld quote from his Feb. 4 interview with *Canadian Mennonite* on page 4: “Resurrection as a ‘symbol’ of hope is not enough. We have hope because of the resurrection. If you take the resurrection out of the equation, there is no math left.”

FRANK HIEMSTRA, STRATFORD, ONT.

(Spiritually)
EXHAUSTED?
S | A | C | R | E | D
P | A | U | S | E | S
Spiritual Practices for Personal Renewal
by
A P R I L Y A M A S A K I
\$16.99
800-245-7894 • www.MennoMedia.org/Pause



 Herald Press

Poncius' Puddle



VIEWPOINT

No business trying to be 'balanced'

BY RAY FRIESEN

SWIFT CURRENT, SASK.

Browsing through the Nov. 26, 2012, issue of *Canadian Mennonite*, Dick Benner's review of *Red Quarter Moon* on page 30, and Kholoud Al Ajarma's "Banana trees and justice" piece in *Young Voices* on page 43, piqued my interest, helping me recall two previous events and their connection to each other, to me and to us as Canadian Mennonites.

Reading Benner's review, I recalled reading the novel *Favoured Among Women* about a year-and-a-half ago. I heard again the heart-rending cry of wives, children and community as Mennonite men were ripped from home and family, never to be seen again. Husbands and fathers gone, taken by a regime that cared neither for God nor human rights, not for peace nor for justice, not for the reality of Jesus nor for the welfare of people.

In April 2012, Sylvia and I visited Bethlehem, where we spent a day with Al Ajarma. We spent many an afternoon and suppertime listening to the stories of the people, Christians and Muslims alike, some living in refugee camps, some in their own homes in Bethlehem. In those stories we heard a profound echo of the cry of Mennonite women in Stalinist Russia: "Mahmoud, taken. Mohammed, taken. Izza, taken. Ibrahim, taken."

Ninety years after the Mennonite experience in Russia, another regime, equally uncaring of God and human rights, peace and justice, the reality of Jesus and the welfare of people, was taking people in the dead of night to be swallowed, without charge and without due process, into a prison system set up to bring a people into subjugation.

As I heard the Palestinian stories, I felt the connection to the stories of my own

people. It occurred to me that surely we, as Mennonites and Palestinians, share a spiritual, emotional and psychological kinship as powerful as any I could conceive. Our experience was now their experience.

Our need for someone to say no to the oppressor in the early 20th century is

Our refusal to stand with our Palestinian brothers and sisters, and their Muslim neighbours, is a betrayal of every man taken from his home and farm, every woman left to raise a family without her husband, and children growing up without knowing their father in the Mennonite colonies of Russia.

now their need in the early 21st century. In the 1920s we were the powerless without a voice. Now we have power and we have a voice. What an opportunity for us to give others what we so desperately needed when our husbands and fathers disappeared!

And then I also realized that we have been invited to be a voice for the Palestinians, whose voices are being ignored, and we have been silent. Our Palestinian Christian brothers and sisters have invited us, begged us, pleaded with us, to stand with them and sign our names to the World Council of Churches' Kairos Palestine Document. The document calls on the West, in particular, to use the same tools that moved South Africa from apartheid to democracy—boycott, divestment and sanctions—in the Israel/Palestine situation. Time and again when we were in Palestine, our brothers and sisters and their Muslim neighbours asked us to speak for them in the West.

And although they have encourag-

ed congregations to discuss it, both Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada have not signed the document themselves. In my opinion, MC Canada and MCC have not spoken boldly for the Palestinian people to our government and to our own neighbours who continue to support unconditionally a country that tramples on the rights of human beings, denies the common heritage in God of all people, and targets civilians with its soldiers and bombs.

To MC Canada and MCC, I say we can no longer play politics with what is happening in Israel and Palestine. In a previous generation we, with our silence, supported domestic violence by men in the name of a warped view of headship

and being sensitive to all male voices in our churches. In 18th-century America, churches supported slavery in the name of a distorted reading of Scripture and a desire to be sensitive to white voices in the congregation.

As long as Israel terrorizes Palestinians, denies their human rights, steals their land, ignores most UN resolutions and violates international law, we have no business trying to be "balanced." Our refusal to stand with our Palestinian brothers and sisters, and their Muslim neighbours, is a betrayal of every man taken from his home and farm, every woman left to raise a family without her husband, and children growing up without knowing their father in the Mennonite colonies of Russia.

It is time to be clear that we are on somebody's side in the Middle East: on the side of our Christian brothers and sisters, on the side of justice, on the side of human rights and human dignity, on the side of God. ❧

WOMEN WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH

Gardening delights over generations

BY LIZ KOOP

With spring just around the corner, most of us are looking forward to seeing the last of the snow disappear as we savour warmer temperatures, longer days and shorter nights, and search for those first green shoots of crocuses, daffodils and tulips to emerge from wintry gardens.

As a child I was always interested in nature and science, and loved the experiments that involved putting



The author's grandparents' Peace River, Alta., homestead (circa 1940s) featuring a garden full of poppy flowers.



bean seeds in a glass jar with a wet paper towel and charting how they germinated and sprouted. Also, sowing vegetable seeds in the family garden and helping to keep them weed-free were jobs that I enjoyed, and the rewards were delicious.

Gardening is still one of my favourite pastimes. During the winter months I spend hours dreaming about what I'll do differently this year, what new plants I'll try to grow, which ones I'll transplant or get rid of, what I can do to produce the best foliage and fruit given the soil I've got. And one thing I've found out over the years while living on a grape farm in the Niagara Region is that the clay loam that is ideal for growing grapes is not conducive to growing flowers or vegetables. But after almost 30 years of hauling in triple-mix top soil and adding compost, mulch and fertilizer, the soil in my flower beds and vegetable garden has become a joy to work in.

I often imagine that God looks upon us as his garden. We are as varied and unique as the flowers and plants of this world and, like them, have all been created with our unique characteristics, talents and abilities for a purpose. As the Master Gardener, God cares for us. He tends and nourishes us, waters and feeds us, so that we can produce lovely flowers and sweet fruit out of the various soils of our lives to the best of our ability. I wonder, what is the fruit that God desires us to produce personally or collectively within Mennonite Women Canada this summer and fall?

A verse that comes to mind is Galatians 5:22: *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."*

That sounds like a delightful harvest to me!

A family history of gardening

Growing up I remember my maternal grandmother, Oma Regier, having wonderful wide flowerbeds around all sides of her house, which she tended with love and care. In her younger years, she and my grandfather pioneered in Alberta's Peace River area after emigrating from Ukraine in 1924.

I know that most of the food they ate during their almost 20 years on the homestead was produced by the labour of their hands. When I got married, Oma graciously let me dig up some flowers to start my own flowerbed, albeit they didn't thrive as well in the soil I had as they had at her house. Perhaps that is why the Parable of the Sower in Mark 4: 1-20 has always resonated with me in a special way.

My mother, having raised 10 children, was a gardener out of necessity. I don't remember a lot of flowers, but do remember rows of carrots, peas, beans, corn, swiss chard, lettuce, tomatoes and cucumbers. At one point she was well known in the neighbourhood for her bushel baskets of pickling cucumbers that she sold to customers. We children helped out a lot and learned how to plant, fertilize, weed, hoe and pick the various vegetables. It was a family endeavour and, even though we griped and groaned, we all learned many valuable gardening lessons from her, which I'm sure she learned from her mother.

I feel honoured that some of those gardener's delights have been passed down to me.

So this spring, as part of the Vineland Women's Ministry project, I look forward to planning a perennial plant exchange/giveaway on our church parking lot in May or June. And as I collect whatever plants people have dug out of their gardens to share with others in the church and in the community, I hope to pass on some of this love of gardening as we share each other's stories. ☘

Liz Koop is the president of Mennonite Women Canada.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Braun—Maia (b. Feb. 7, 2013), to Dave and Gena Braun, Waterloo North Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Burkholder—Drew Nathaniel (b. Jan. 2, 2013), to Richard and Amy Burkholder, Wideman Mennonite, Markham, Ont.

Carter—Lauren Faith (b. Feb. 13, 2013), to Jacqueline and Rob Carter, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

Christie—Ashlin Lee Rose (b. Jan. 25, 2013), to Jennie Lee and Ian Christie, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Golding—Levi Thomas (b. Feb. 4, 2013), to Luke and Denielle Golding, The Gathering, Saskatoon.

Kuepfer—Madelynn Ruthann (b. Feb. 14, 2013), to Jeff and Sandra Kuepfer, Listowel Mennonite, Ont.

Martin—Hayden Emerson (b. Dec. 26, 2012), to Richard and Amanda Martin, Avon Mennonite, Stratford, Ont.

McClutcheon—Olivia May (b. Jan. 31, 2013), to Carlee (Smythe) and John McClutcheon, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.

Penfold—Ruth Anne (b. Feb. 26, 2013), to Joshua and Rebecca (Holst) Penfold, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

Reddekopp—Alexis Ava Rayne (b. Feb. 15, 2013), to Randy and Rachel (Guigon) Reddekopp, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Steingart—Rowan Burkhardt (b. Feb. 26, 2013), to Chris Steingart and Jillian Burkhardt, Breslau Mennonite, Ont.

Toews—Natalie Joy (b. Feb. 18, 2013), to Heidi and Lyndon Toews, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Wilson—Hannah Rose (b. Feb. 20, 2013), to Ben and Chantel (Dyck) Wilson, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Zehr—Kenadie Mercy Raine (b. Jan. 28, 2013), to Jodie and Scott Zehr, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Baptisms

Erik Wiegand, Alyssa Zuhlsdorf—East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., Jan. 20, 1913.

Marriages

Derksen/Penner—Brian Derksen and Rachel Penner, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Feb. 23, 2013.

Deaths

Bartel—Katherine (Katie), 86 (b. June 28, 1926; d. Feb. 17, 2013), North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

Bergen—Walter, 90 (b. May 17, 1922; d. Feb. 22, 2013), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Braun—Clara, 84 (b. July 1, 1928; d. Jan. 15, 2013), Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Cooper—Bruce, 73 (b. Aug. 11, 1939; d. Jan. 6, 2013), Wideman Mennonite, Markham, Ont.

Cornies—Henry, 78 (b. July 12, 1934; d. Feb. 7, 2013), Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

Cowan—Morris Clifford, 85 (b. Oct. 5, 1927; d. Feb. 6, 2013), Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

Kehler—Margaret, 87 (b. Dec. 1, 1925; d. Feb. 9, 2013), Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Krall—Muriel, 82 (b. April 18, 1930; d. Jan. 20, 2013), Listowel Mennonite, Ont.

Krueger—Carol Jacqueline, 67 (b. July 19, 1945; d. Feb. 13, 2013), Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Leis—Mahlon, 90 (b. Feb. 15, 1923; d. Feb. 15, 2013), Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.

Nagel—Walli, 89 (d. Feb. 3, 2013), Preston Mennonite, Cambridge, Ont.

Penner—Tena, 93 (b. Oct. 22, 1919; d. Feb. 12, 2013), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Ratzlaff—Anne (nee Hildebrand), 103 (b. May 5, 1909; d. Feb. 6, 2013), Zoar Mennonite, Waldheim, Sask.

Regehr—Aaron, 95 (b. Nov. 14, 1917; d. Feb. 11, 2013), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Rempel—Helene (nee Froese), 95 (b. March 11, 1917; d. Feb. 17, 2013), Morden Mennonite, Man.

Rempel—Henry, 84 (b. Dec. 20, 1928; d. Feb. 4, 2013), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Rich—Stephen James, 51 (b. Sept. 13, 1961; d. Feb. 7, 2013), Sterling Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Sawatzky—Elmer, 50 (b. July 27, 1962; d. Feb. 1, 2013), Hague Mennonite, Sask.

Schulz—Bernard (Ben), 88 (b. May 31, 1924; d. Feb. 7, 2013), Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

VanRiesen—Romy Sabrina, 40 (b. May 6, 1971; d. Jan. 30, 2012), Erie View United Mennonite, Port Rowan, Ont.

Voth—Agatha, 81 (b. July 1, 1931; d. Jan. 19, 2013), Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Wallman—Mary (nee Rempel), 80 (b. April 2, 1932; d. Feb. 7, 2013), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Weber—Audrey Lorraine (nee Bauman), 87 (b. March 28, 1925; d. Jan. 24, 2013), Floradale Mennonite, Ont.

Zacharias—Jacob (Jake), 85 (b. Aug. 7, 1927; d. Feb. 1, 2013), Morden Mennonite, 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.

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

Pastor concerned about financial health of wider church

By DAN DYCK

Mennonite Church Canada
WINNIPEG

Gordon Allaby is grateful for the services his wider church provides. But he is deeply concerned about how charitable giving is changing.

"The church is not just another charity. We're doing the work of God here," he says, noting that Mennonite Church Saskatchewan also has its financial challenges.

As pastor of Osler (Sask.) Mennonite Church, Allaby's congregation is geographically distant from his wider church offices, so he frequently uses resources provided by Mennonite Church Canada that are freely available by phone and via the Internet. He notes that his congregants have a high degree of trust in these resources. "They know that important issues of the day have received disciplined discernment in a wider community," he says. "This sharing of wisdom is a great gift."

In his church's monthly newsletter, readers are often referred to links on MC Canada's website where congregants can get the wider church's voice on the interplay of current events and what they mean for Mennonites seeking to be faithful.

But Allaby expresses surprise and sadness to learn that MC Canada is facing a \$237,000 shortfall in donation income for the fiscal year just ended on Jan. 31.

"I agree with Paul, who said the church is the body of Christ," he says, elaborating, "I want to be in this body. I want to give to this body, and be a part of where God is leading us. No doubt, God's work happens in other charitable organizations, yet the church is unique. We are Christ in the world, and my church is Osler Mennonite Church, a part of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan, Mennonite Church Canada and the Mennonite World Conference. All my churches speak the language of



Allaby

Anabaptist theology, and Christ speaks many languages. We need each other more than we realize, and my community, province, nation and the world need the vibrant strong witness of Christ, which includes the Anabaptist message."

In addition to educational resources, MC Canada also provides less visible but equally practical resources to congregations, such as pension plan oversight for pastors and church staff, and works as a facilitator with congregations whose passions lie with international ministry.

However, the numbers are challenging. Financial support of MC Canada's national

It's not fully clear yet what impact the 2012 shortfall will have on staff and ministry—but it will have an impact.

church ministries continued its eight-year declining trend in 2012. Preliminary figures indicate that the combined giving of congregations and individual/corporate donors was down a total of \$237,000—6.75 percent off of budgeted income in 2012—says chief administrative officer Vic Thiessen.

A dip in individual and corporate giving was already evident in September, says Thiessen. In response, staff conducted a phone campaign and a direct-mail campaign, and increased personal visits during the fall of 2012. By mid-December, contacts with individual and corporate donors made it clear that a giving shortfall of \$159,000 was unlikely to be reversed before the year-end.

An unanticipated additional shortfall of \$78,000 from congregations became evident in January as congregations closed their books for the year.

"The fiscal year-end is always so critical, and can make or break a year," says Thiessen, noting that approximately 40 percent of annual income arrives in the final quarter. For congregations that budget their giving to wider-church ministry, shortfalls or surpluses are directly linked to the generosity of individuals in congregations, he says, adding that some congregations also experienced shortfalls in 2012.

"There's no blame being laid here," adds Thiessen. "Prosperity varies across the country. When congregations feel it, we do, too."

The shortfall is expected to be tempered by some under-expenditure, but all the expense numbers are not in yet, says Thiessen.

Willard Metzger, executive director of MC Canada, points out that, "we're constantly on the edge of our budget. We are a faith-based, small Mennonite family. We can only appeal to our family. That giving base is limited. We must have faith that congregations and individuals will support the wider church."

It's not fully clear yet what impact the

2012 shortfall will have on staff and ministry—but it will have an impact. It seems clear that a future for wider-church ministries as people now know them is not sustainable with the declining trend in revenues.

Since 2004, revenue has dropped an average of 1.3 percent per year. In recent years the national church has had to close its multicultural ministries office and reduce its support of youth ministry. Youth assemblies became biennial, and adult assemblies became biennial in 2012. International ministry has been incrementally reduced since 2004.

Staff have tried to pick up some of the pieces, partly out of passion for their work, and partly because there remains an expectation and a hope that ministry can and will somehow continue uninterrupted, in spite of reduced donation income, says Metzger. "But the year-after-year trend is

demoralizing for staff and leadership. In addition to the national church, there are three area churches, as well as a number of other denominations, facing uncertain, unsustainable futures. We're all in this together."

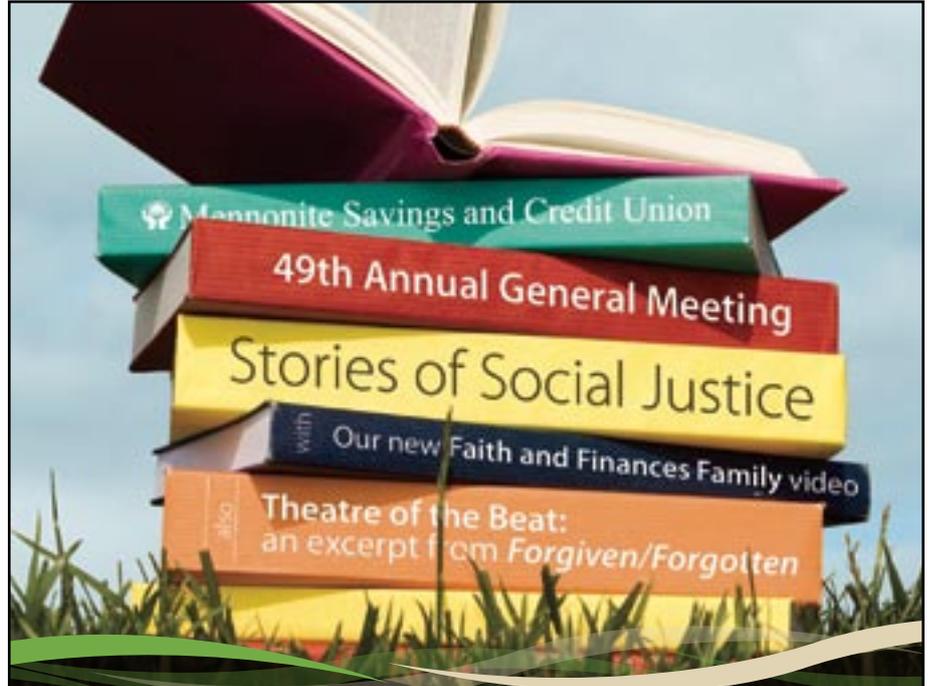
Leadership is addressing the challenge. The General Board has struck an eight-member Future Directions Task Force with the goal of discerning whether the wider church in its current form can be sustainable into the future, and how current programs, structures and strategies may need to change to best serve the church moving forward. Seven members have been appointed so far. The task force arose after consultations with area church moderators and young adults, and conversations with pastors and members from across Canada.

Meanwhile, in its "Charitable Giving by Canadians" report, Statistics Canada notes a 6 percent drop in giving to religious organizations in 2010, compared to 2007. The report cites that the fundraising method that raised the most money was collection at a place of worship. In 2010, 30 percent of people aged 15 and over made such a donation and, overall, \$3.9 billion was given through collection at a place of worship, "a much higher figure than for all other methods," states the report.

There are numerous challenges for the wider church, says Metzger:

- **A LARGE** portion of the giving demographic is retiring and transitioning to fixed incomes.
- **IT HAS** become exponentially more difficult to break through information overload in recent years.
- **WIDER-CHURCH MINISTRIES** are one or two degrees removed from the needs and passions of the local congregation.

"I do know that our wider-church family is incredibly generous in their congregational giving," says Metzger. "My hope is that the findings of the Future Directions Task Force and some improved strategies will deepen the engagement of the people in our pews in the things that we can and should do together as a wider church." ❧



Join us Tuesday, April 9th, 2013
at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden

Registration: 6:30pm | Meeting: 7:00pm | Fellowship and dessert: 8:30pm



PROVIDENCE
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE




CHRIST-CENTRED UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Bring your faith to class and experience the difference of a Providence education. With 20 majors to choose from, you can earn a Bachelor of Arts Degree that fits your career plans.



ACADEMIC ENTRANCE SCHOLARSHIPS

Apply now for September 2013 and you may be eligible to receive a \$2,000 academic entrance scholarship.

MENNONITE CHURCH MANITOBA ANNUAL DELEGATE SESSION

Church being pushed and pulled in many directions

Camping, sexuality among top four issues facing Manitoba delegates

STORY AND PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
WINKLER, MAN.

Mennonite Church Manitoba is at a critical juncture as it faces issues that reflect changing times.

“We are in a time of significant shift,” said Stuart Murray Williams, guest speaker at the 66th annual delegate session of MC Manitoba on Feb. 23. Just as the Holy Spirit pushed the New Testament church to new boundaries in its understanding of mission work, “God continues to go ahead of us, always pushing at the edges, and we have to catch up,” said the author of *The Naked Anabaptist* and *Church After Christendom* (who writes as Stuart Murray).

As far as churches or denominations go, “the Mennonite church community is

quite healthy,” said Murray Williams. “It seems to be where some churches were 20 years ago and are now responding desperately, although for some of them it may be too late. My hope is that the Mennonite church will seize the opportunity while it still has the resources and the energy to do that.”

That is what the MC Manitoba board and staff are also hoping. Prior to the gathering, the board and staff met for a retreat to identify the key issues that need discernment and outline a process by which this discernment could take place. Moderator Peter Rempel instructed the delegates on the process and principles of discernment,

stressing that “we shed aside egos, prejudices, biases and predetermined conclusions, and ask what preconceptions in our hearts and minds hinder our openness to finding God’s will.”

The issues were presented to delegates in the form of questions in four simultaneous workshops led by board members and staff:

- **A QUESTION of identity:** What holds MC Manitoba together?
- **A QUESTION of mission:** Engaging evangelism and service ministry?
- **A QUESTION of resources:** A camping ministry for future generations?
- **A QUESTION of community:** Is respectful conversation about human sexuality possible?

Ken Warkentin, executive director of MC Manitoba, said, “Stuart Murray Williams adds a really important voice to the discussion, but the impetus behind the urgency comes from within our own context. We can identify trends in our giving patterns that indicate that our denominational identity is no longer as vibrant or important as it has been. Members are telling us this with their dollars, and telling us by the directions they are being pulled in, to become more evangelical, more peace-loving, more socially active or more liturgical. We are at a place where we want to position ourselves so that we can deal more effectively with some of the pushes and pulls within our constituency.”

“Where is God leading your church next?” Murray Williams asked. Citing the story in Acts of Peter and Cornelius, who was a “gentile, a Roman centurion, an infidel, the enemy,” Murray Williams asked not only, “Who is your Cornelius?” but also, “Who is your Peter?”

Peter was a pioneer and a risk-taker, according to Murray Williams, who said, “I am convinced denominations need pioneers, need to recognize them, value them, learn from them, find ways of integrating them, so that they are not out there by themselves, but are actually seen as part of the wider community.”

He spoke about the changing views toward denominationalism and the need to transition from an institution to a missional



Stuart Murray Williams, keynote speaker at last month’s Mennonite Church Manitoba annual delegate session, chats with Byron Rempel-Burkholder about what the future may hold for the area church.

'[T]he Mennonite church community is quite healthy.'
(Stuart Murray Williams)

movement, stressing, "Anabaptism represented a pioneering movement." Denominations face many pressures from society, he said, among them being "suspicion of organizations and a preference for the organic, a growing distrust of hierarchy and preference for a flat structure, wariness of institutions, disaffection for connection from a distance and preference for the local, and the struggle for financial support."

The meeting at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Winkler, did not call for decisions or votes on any matters from the 154 delegates who represented 37 of the 48 member congregations, "but we did set out some trajectories," said Warkentin. "We framed some important questions that we will continue to refine. We will ask the board, staff and member churches to participate in the further development of

these themes and we will continue to feed information out to the churches."

At the fall delegate session, Rempel said, "we will tackle two of these issues," including the future of Camps with Meaning. "The camping ministry question will be one of the first issues because that needs to be resolved so that we can make adequate plans for 2014."

It has already been decided that the number of weeks of summer camp programming this year will be reduced in order to ensure a safe and sustainable camping ministry. Summer camp at Moose Lake will be shortened by two weeks, to accommodate an outside group that will be renting the facility, but the number of weeks of Adults with Disabilities Venture camps will be increased and held earlier in the season. ❧

Bill Schroeder receives national award of excellence

Mennonite Historical Society of Canada
WINNIPEG

Winnipeg's Bill Schroeder received the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada's Award of Excellence at the society's annual general meeting in mid-January at the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Winnipeg. The award is given annually to people who have made significant contributions to the advancement of Canadian Mennonite history through their research or writing.

Well-known for his historical maps, publications, volunteer work and his leadership on tours of Russia undertaken over several decades, society members were delighted to meet Schroeder and his wife Augusta at the award ceremony.

It was a fitting location, since Schroeder has been involved in historical research and volunteering at the centre since it opened in 1969. *The Mennonite Historical*

Atlas that Schroeder co-authored with Helmut Huebert has sold more than 7,000 copies and is a mainstay in most Russian Mennonite research libraries.

As the nomination emphasized, "Bill Schroeder exemplifies Mennonite historical research with his quiet tenacity, humble demeanor and collaborative approaches, all the while cognizant of relationships and striving for excellence."

At the meeting, Esther Epp-Tiessen reported on the progress of her history of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Canada that was sponsored by the society. She described both the challenges and the inspiring moments that she experienced while researching and writing the organization's history. The book's launch, scheduled for Dec. 13, will mark the 50th anniversary of MCC Canada's founding



Bill Schroeder, this year's recipient of the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada's Award of Excellence, is flanked by Lucille Marr, the society's president, left, and his wife Augusta.

meeting in 1963—to the day.

A study conference co-sponsored by the society's productive Divergent Voices of Mennonites in Canada and the University of Winnipeg's Chair for Mennonite Studies is being planned in conjunction with the book's launch.

The society sponsors a variety of other projects, including its recently revived Archives Committee. An online photo database is designed to help Mennonite archives across Canada manage their collections. This service will increase public access to the extensive accumulations of photos housed in Canadian Mennonite archives. The database project testifies to the ongoing good relationships and cooperation among Canadian Mennonite historical societies and their participants.

Established in 1968 to sponsor the *Mennonites in Canada* history series by Frank H. Epp and Ted D. Regehr, the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada comprises six provincial Mennonite historical societies, four Mennonite denominational bodies, MCC Canada and the Chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg.

The society's 2013 executive is made up of president Lucille Marr, Montreal; vice-president Royden Loewen, Winnipeg; secretary Alf Redekopp, Winnipeg; treasurer Richard Thiessen, Abbotsford, B.C.; and member Maurice Martin, New Hamburg, Ont. ❧

MENNONITE CHURCH SASKATCHEWAN ANNUAL DELEGATE SESSION

PHOTO BY LEN ANDRES

'Hear O people'

Deficit situation for area church, declining RJC enrolment, P2P cuts on the minds of delegates

BY KARIN FEHDERAU
Saskatchewan Correspondent
ROSTHERN, SASK.

At times, there seemed to be more questions than answers. But for those in attendance at the Mennonite Church Saskatchewan delegate sessions at the end of February, there was also a good feeling that people were in agreement.

"I was very pleased with how it went," said moderator George Epp.

Gathering in the gym at Rosthern Junior College (RJC), delegates were greeted by a surprise announcement that the seven-year-old house church, Breath of Life, which had joined MC Saskatchewan three years ago, was closing. A celebration of its life together will be held in May.

Bringing God into the picture, Scripture was used extensively throughout the worship times to emphasize the theme, "Hear O people."

"The hope was simply to provide occasion for participants to hear Scripture [in the context of 'dusting off your Bibles']," said Jerry Buhler, area church minister.

The focus of the Scriptures used was on hearing and listening: "*Happy is the one who reads and happy those who listen to the words of this prophecy and heed what is written in it*" (Revelation 1:3).

Jake Buhler from Osler Mennonite Church appreciated the emphasis on God's Word. "The Bible was the centre of the conference, which was interesting," he said. "There was intentional reading of the Bible throughout."

Of the biblical content, "it wasn't interpretation, it was application," explained Elmer Regier, a member of MC Saskatchewan Ministries Commission.

RJC enrolment down

When the delegates broke up into groups to hear reports, there was some concern about low enrolment at RJC. Geraldine Balzar, the school's board chair, spoke

honestly about what the situation means for the college. The reasons are numerous, she said, noting that it reflects a similar trend across Canada in other faith-based schools. With fewer parents of youth attending church, it sets the stage for youth to disengage from the church community, she said.

She also spoke about solutions that the college was considering. One plan is to hire a development officer to build relationships with funding partners. Recruitment officer Val White talked about the many options to connect with youth in the wider community and spread the good news about the benefits of RJC.

"People are finding us on social media," she said, believing that the non-churched community can discover the gem in RJC.

Erna Funk from Hague echoed those sentiments. "I want my grandchildren to come to RJC," she said. "I am so concerned about your 74 students."

Facing a 'deficit' reality

Reports from other MC Saskatchewan programs show that most are doing well. Prison ministry through the Person to Person (P2P) program, however, has suffered setbacks in the past year. Government funding was cut and supporters of P2P are concerned that the government is less interested in restorative justice as a way to help reform prisoners, said Ryan Siemens. "However, we move forward with hope," he stated in his report.

Finance discussions included some strong statements by executive director Ken Warkentin in his short overview. "We are facing the realities of a deficit," he said. "We can cover that out of the reserves, but they're shrinking quickly."

Comments from the floor seemed to minimize the importance of his report,



Craig Neufeld, as Jesus, tells the parable of the Sower and the Seed during one of the worship sessions at last month's annual delegate session. Organizers chose to use a lot of Scripture as one way of 'dusting off the Bible,' says Jerry Buhler, area church minister.

although one delegate spoke about her concerns in supporting a budget that isn't working.

"Who's going to get up and say, 'We have to cut this or that program,'" Warkentin wondered afterwards.

“Programs will have to be cut eventually,” said Epp. “We have to get to balanced budgets.”

Anabaptist perspective needed

Willard Metzger, MC Canada’s executive director, expressed his delight at the theme. He spoke excitedly about the far-reaching impact of national church programs.

“The Anabaptist perspective is needed

in the world,” he said. “It’s not effortless; it requires sacrifice.” Metzger did not shy away from the realities of struggling for resources to be that kind of witness. “A dip in individual and corporate giving became evident in September. We’re constantly on the edge of our budget,” he acknowledged.

In response, Chad Doell, pastor of the Hoffnungsfelder Mennonite Churches, brought a sobering balance to all the

talk about money. “There’s a crisis in our youth,” he said. “They’re waiting for our witness. Are we thinking more about ourselves keeping traditions and less about saving this generation?” he asked quietly.

As various issues came to the fore, it seemed important to listen to the Scripture being offered. “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches*” (Revelation 3:22). ☸

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Something to carry you until summer

BY KEVIN WIRZBA

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

There are many weekends in your lifetime that you can call awesome or amazing, but not many can compare to those weekends spending time with old friends at an awesome camp. Snow camp is where it’s at! Many people think that camps like this are boring, but, no; in fact, those camps can make you who you are.

I’ve been coming to Mennonite Church Alberta’s Camp Valaqua in Water Valley ever since I was old enough. Summers, I would attend camp as a camper, excited for that one week where I could have the fun of a lifetime. When I got older, I found out about snow camp. I thought to myself, “Hey, going to camp twice a year? I’m definitely in!” It was a decision I wouldn’t regret.

This year’s snow camp was probably my favourite experience. We had very good guest speakers, who talked about their testimonies. All of them were profound and full of interesting stories and faith adventures.

We also had very good food, as always. The food at camp is also one of the best things you could ever experience on this earth!

Coming to snow camp and seeing

many familiar faces almost feels like a big family reunion. You’ve known some of them for many years, some you’ve even grown up with. Sure, there are new faces, which is an awesome thing, and by the middle of the second day we’re all a big group and everyone is included. It’s great seeing second-year people because you know you’ve made a good impression for them to come back.

Everyone enjoys each other’s company and we all get along. As many can agree, snow camp is a safe place where you can be yourself, where you can get along peacefully, and where you can make amazing memories and friends.

Leaving snow camp is always a drag. You can feel the mood looming over you. You feel like you haven’t had enough time to catch up. You feel like you could stay there forever and be happy.

Everyone is a little reluctant to leave and get on with their normal lives. We all say our goodbyes and, since many of us have cell phones, we add each other’s numbers to keep in touch. Leaving camp, you feel a good sense of lingering joy and satisfaction; you feel like you’ve had a good weekend to carry you until summer. ☸

PHOTO BY REBECCA JANZEN



Snow camp at Valaqua includes lots of outdoor games. Pictured, Mennonite Church Alberta youths play Everyone is It Tag.

MENNONITE CHURCH B.C. ANNUAL DELEGATE SESSION

MC B.C. sees 'life in the comma'

Business and inspiration all done in a day

STORY AND PHOTO BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent
LANGLEY, B.C.

Mennonite Church B.C. managed to accomplish in one day what used to take two.

Following last year's precedent, the annual general meeting on Feb. 23 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Langley, combined both sessions for business and the LEAD conference for inspiration. Special speaker for the weekend was David Augsburg, professor of pastoral care and counseling in the School of Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary in California.

Augsburger opened the morning business sessions with a powerful devotional, citing the ancient Apostles' Creed, which says in part that Jesus was "conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried."

He noted that the creed says nothing at all about Jesus' life on earth; there is only a comma between his birth and death. "The comma is where it's at!" he proclaimed. "It's

that comma that you and I live by as disciples. It's that comma that contains all the healing. And oh what a comma!"

Mountainview Fund to meet budget shortfall

The business sessions proceeded smoothly and quickly. Video presentations from the various committee chairs (Church Health, Evangelism and Church Development, and Service, Peace and Justice) complemented written reports. Delegates approved an initiative from the Evangelism and Church Development Committee to plant a new Mandarin-speaking church in the central Surrey area, to be pastored by Jonathan and Grace Deng.

Delegates also approved the Leadership Board's recommendation that the principal from the Mountainview Fund, created from the sale of the disbanded Mountainview Mennonite Church in 1996, be used to meet MC B.C.'s budget shortfall this year.

The original intent was to spend only interest from the fund, leaving the principal intact, an arrangement that has worked until recently. However, delegates at last year's sessions approved in principle to use principal funds when needed.

It was emphasized that this is a temporary arrangement for 2013. Roundtable discussions clearly indicated that delegates preferred to find ways to increase giving, rather than cut staff or programs. The delegate body agreed to use the funding transfer this year to meet budget, and to look at ways to increase giving from the churches.

A special delegate session to discuss future funding of MC B.C. is in the planning stages for later this year.

In other business, Lee Dyck of Chilliwack was affirmed as moderator for the coming three-year term, replacing outgoing moderator Dan Rempel.

LEAD conference highlights

Following lunch, the LEAD conference took place in the afternoon. Formerly, "LEAD" stood for Leaders, Elders and Deacons, and was held for church leaders on the day preceding the MC B.C. session. Holding it now on a Saturday and opening it to anyone, allowed more people to attend.

Much of Augsburg's talk was based on his book *Dissident Discipleship*, which participants were encouraged to read beforehand. The two sessions focused on spirituality:

- **WHERE IT** comes from (within, above or below)
- **AS MYSTERY**, mastery and mutuality.

He talked of resolute nonviolence and concrete service, challenging listeners to go beyond being Christ to the neighbour, to be able to see Christ in the neighbour.

"I hear a lot of Jesus as a marvellous inspiration and a matchless ideal and as the Saviour, but can I see him in the neighbour?" Augsburg asked. "Are we willing to love our enemy? Love everyone in the way of Jesus?"

He concluded by affirming the day's experience that included being mutually nourished in many ways from the Word of God. ☸



Lee Dyck, left, the new moderator of Mennonite Church B.C., talks with Ray Cymbaluk of Crossroads Community Church, Chilliwack, at the area church's annual delegate sessions.

With fellowship to spare

Church bowling afternoon brings generations together

BY LEE DYCK

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
CHILLIWACK, B.C.

What's your shoe size? Who knew this was an important question for those who walk with Jesus? But it was crucial for Eden Mennonite Church's third annual intergenerational bowling event. The line-up at the shoe counter was deep and the sight of shoes being tied for young ones filled the Chillibowl Lanes as people prepared for the much-anticipated frames.

After a several-week sign-up period, teams of five or six bowlers filled 22 lanes for the hour-long event on Feb. 17. Each team comprised a generational mix, from old to young, with kids and adults playing together. In total, there were 120 bowlers.

It was an afternoon of good times and fun. High fives and thumbs up were in evidence, as encouragement abounded. Laughter, sharing child-minding while parents bowled, and an encouraging gallery of onlookers were all part of the scene. From babes in arms to great-grandparents, as long as you were wearing the shoes, you

PHOTO BY GERALD DYCK



Heather Corrigan shows her three-year-old daughter, Julia, the finer points of beginner bowling at the Eden Mennonite Church intergenerational event.

ACROSS Generations

were a bowler. Although automatic scoring took place, there was no mention of scores.

After the bowling shoes were returned, 140 diners met back at the church for—appropriately enough—bowls of chili.

This occasion is only one of Eden's

intergenerational events throughout the year, which include a spring golf tournament at a local course; a "fall family" party at the church around Halloween involving games, pizza and a movie; and an annual weekend at Camp Squeah. The joy of old and young being together is not restricted to these events, however, as on any Sunday morning one can witness intergenerational greetings, hugs and conversations. This is God at work!

What's your bowling style? Two hands on the ball or a fine, sleek form? Strikes or spares? Or just the joy of knocking down a pin or two? The beauty of being together trumped it all! ❧

Mother dies while inmate languishes in Greek prison

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent

Patricia Patterson of Winnipeg never got her dying wish to see her incarcerated son one last time; she died of leukemia on Nov. 25, 2012.

As reported in the Oct. 15, 2012, article, "The long journey of bring their son home," Kevin Hiebert of Winnipeg has been serving an indeterminate life sentence in a Greek prison since 1999 for drug possession. With the help of his father Dick Hiebert and advocate Madge Ferguson in Canada, he was seeking a transfer to Canada to complete his sentence and to be able to see his dying mother one last time.

Kevin was able to talk to his mother a number of times on the phone while she was in intensive care, said his father, noting, "Kevin has been stoic about his mother's illness, prognosis and ultimate death."

Up until the time of Patterson's death, Dick and Ferguson continued to urge the Greek Ministry of Justice to allow the family to be reunited, and lobbied the Canadian government, especially Vic Toews, their Member of Parliament, to put pressure on the Greek government to make a decision.

Kevin has applied to the Greek

government to have his indeterminate life sentence reduced to 20 years, of which he would serve 16 years behind bars.

As of Feb. 1, though, Ferguson said, "we understand the Ministry of Justice has signed the pardon and it has now gone to the president of the Hellenic Republic for final approval. We have no idea why the Greeks are following the avenue of the pardon, rather than the transfer to his national country, which is his right" under the Strasbourg Convention. By offering a pardon, Kevin would be eligible for parole in another three years, but would probably have to remain in Greece during the four-year period of parole, she explained.

Ferguson said that she and Kevin's father "have kept advocacy to a minimum in recent months, in order not to make any waves that could impair a decision. . . . We have very few tools with which to hold the Greeks accountable other than holding Vic Toews to his promise to monitor this case closely."

"Should things stalemate, we are prepared as our next step to take Kevin's case to the European Court of Human Rights," she said. ❧

Violent verses explained

Pastors struggle with Joshua at annual School for Ministers

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

The conquest passages in the book of Joshua follow the literary, political and religious formats of the time in which they were written. Gordon Matties, professor of biblical and theological studies at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, made this provocative statement at the 2013 Mennonite Church Eastern Canada/Conrad Grebel University College School for Ministers held last month.

He cited many texts from the Ancient Near East, especially that of Mesha, king of Moab, as found on the Mesha Stele, a memorial stone found in Jordan in 1868, which contain direct parallels to passages like the destruction of the Canaanite city of Ai in Joshua 8. Matties noted that the biblical text even uses the same word for “put to the ban” or “devoted to destruction,” since the ancient Moabite language is akin to the Hebrew used to write Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, I and II Samuel, and I and II Kings.

Matties’ goal was to find space for pastors to discern between a simple acceptance of the violent texts in Joshua, with their claim that God both commanded and performed horrific acts of genocide as the Israelites entered Canaan, or, on the other hand, a rejection of these texts as part of a “pick-and-choose” process of creating a set of acceptable texts within the larger Bible.

Matties also suggested other approaches to Joshua:

- **AN APPEAL** to archaeology, which does not offer unqualified support of the Bible’s telling of the Israelites’ entry into Canaan. According to many archaeologists, there is no general destruction throughout the land in that record.
- **VIEW THE** material as figurative and not historical.
- **PICK OUT** moralistic texts and to focus on them. For example, the Israelites’ failure at Ai on account of sin in their lives, or

Joshua’s claim that he and his house would serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15).

Matties stayed true to his opening claim that he was not going to make the study—or acceptance—of Joshua easy. In fact, he promised to make it more difficult. He did this through dense biblical study, which seemed to some of those present both during the daily sessions and the public lecture to be diving into unnecessary detail that confused his main points, and by showing that, while parts of Joshua are similar to the conquest passages of the Ancient Near East, in other ways Joshua challenges the simple “us and them” thinking of such texts.

Pointing to the inclusion of Rahab, the prostitute of Jericho, and the Gibeonites, who tricked the Israelites into thinking they were from far away, and the exclusion of the Israelite Achan for taking objects that had been “devoted to destruction,” Matties showed that the idea of “us and

them,” “who’s in and who’s out,” was, in fact, complicated.

In an informal discussion, some pastors wondered how to bring the material back home to their congregations, and how those who would expunge Joshua from the Bible would be helped by Matties’ approach. In response, Matties’ only suggestion was to use the lectionary for preaching and worship, as it helps different biblical texts to understand each other, something he did regularly in his presentations.

Derek Suderman, assistant professor of Old Testament at Grebel, wondered if texts like Joshua were better approached through group study, which leaves room for questions and deeper ponderings, rather than by a sermon.

Picking up on themes from Matties’ presentations, ministers also took part in a variety of workshops, including “To whom does this land belong?” that helped them look at the Jewish conquest of Canaan while considering that they were doing so on land that had been promised to the Six Nations, and “Erasing violence from Scripture: Faith or fantasy?” a workshop to confront the challenge of pacifism by violent biblical texts.

Next year’s School for Ministers will feature Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, a leader in the New Monasticism movement from North Carolina. ❧



Jim Brown, pastor of Riverdale Mennonite Church, Milbank, Ont., left, engages speaker Gordon Matties and his wife Lori at Mennonite Church Eastern Canada’s 37th annual School for Ministers held at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., from Feb. 20 to 22.

'We are not alone'

Chile hosts global family at 15th gathering of Southern Cone Anabaptists

BY FELIPE ELGUETA AND VIOLETA FONCECA

Mennonite World Conference
ANGOSTURA DE PAINE, CHILE

After a two-year delay caused by the massive earthquake of 2010, the traditional biannual gathering of the Mennonites of the Southern Cone took place in Chile in late January.

A hundred Anabaptists from Bolivia, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil attended, plus dozens of members of other churches from several regions of Chile. They were joined by visitors from Central and North America and by Mennonite World Conference (MWC) representatives.

Robert J. Suderman, former Mennonite Church Canada general secretary (now known as executive director), spoke on the topic, "Incarnating now glimpses of the future: Biblical foundations of shalom." Citing Ephesians 6:12, he noted that a shalom church must understand the nature of the evil it faces: it is not a struggle against "flesh and blood," but against "principalities and powers," that can be understood as oppressive ideologies that perpetuate injustice in the world. In this scenario, noted Suderman, the struggle becomes real through the practice of loving enemies, which transforms each congregation in "the demonstrative argument of the shalom kingdom."

A shocking example of this transforming practice was shared by pastor Alfred Klassen of Paraguay, who was assaulted and stabbed in his home in 2009. When one of his assailants turned himself in, Klassen forgave him and was with him throughout the whole judicial process, which turned into a bond of friendship and trust between them.

MWC representatives Danisa Ndlovu of Zimbabwe and Janet Plenert of Canada shared experiences from a service of repentance and forgiveness that took place in Stuttgart, Germany, in 2010, which marked the reconciliation of Lutherans

and Mennonites.

Another reconciliation story was shared by Canadian Titus Guenther, who spoke of Christ of the Andes, a statue made of bronze cannons cast and placed on top of the Andes in 1904 to commemorate a peaceful solution to a border dispute between Chile and Argentina.

Especially invited by the Anabaptist Women Theologians of Latin America was Mónica Parada, who provided keys to unmask the symbolic violence that is exercised in everyday life, especially against women.

Parada also traced different views about women throughout history. Although Jesus' practice revealed in the gospels makes clear the intrinsic dignity of women, many male



PHOTO BY JANET PLENERT

A woman signs a banner of the Latin American Women Theologians Network at the 15th gathering of Southern Cone Anabaptists in Chile in January. The banner will be taken to women's meetings in other countries this year.

theologians—from patristic times until today—have striven to keep women in a lower status by constructing an image of a woman as an incomplete and defective being, a "social and religious construct" that the church must begin to overcome for both men and women to achieve full life in God. "We should remove the stones from the rivers of living waters," urged the pastor. ☸

/// Briefly noted

World Directory now available

The Mennonite World Conference (MWC) World Directory includes churches that are rooted in the 16th-century Radical Reformation in Europe, particularly in the Anabaptist movement. This faith family includes more than 1.7 million baptized believers in 243 national conferences of churches in 83 countries. The totals by continental region are: Africa, 38.3 percent; Asia and Pacific, 17.8 percent; Europe, 3.6 percent; Latin America and the Caribbean, 10.5 percent; and North America, 29.8 percent. About two-thirds of the baptized believers are African, Asian or Latin American. In this directory, 101 of the national conferences of churches in 57 countries are identified as MWC members or associate members. These Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches include 1.28 million baptized believers, which represents 72.5 percent of the total in the global faith family. The percentage of MWC membership in each continental region is noted on the maps at the beginning of each section. A print copy of the directory can be ordered by e-mailing kitchener@mw-cmm.org.

—Mennonite World Conference



God at work in the Church Snapshots

PHOTO COURTESY OF MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA



*Susan and Arthur Bast of Waters Mennonite Church, Lively, Ont., have accepted a short-term assignment in Mexico that will celebrate the strong partnership between Mennonite Church Canada and its sister church, the Conference of Mennonites in Mexico. The Basts will serve with Emanuel Mennonite Church in Cuauhtémoc City, Chihuahua, from March 13 to April 13 through *Un Sueño Realizado* (A Dream Fulfilled). As a centre for adults with mental and physical disabilities, *Un Sueño Realizado* teaches income-earning skills and serves approximately 100 community members. It provides access to services such as physiotherapy and counselling, and facilities for carpentry, sewing and leather work. Arthur plans to share his woodworking skills, while Susan will focus on ministries for women and children in the neighbourhood.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF CARMAN MENNONITE CHURCH



When Carman (Man.) Mennonite Church decided to work through a series of six difficult topics over six Sunday worship services last fall, it turned to Mennonite Church Canada's Resource Centre for help. Arlyn Friesen Epp, the centre's director, assisted organizers Wendy Voogt and Marie Dyck in the selection of materials to aid discussions about divorce, mental health, sexuality, parenting, economic crisis, and death and grieving. 'It was a pleasurable experience,' Dyck said. 'Ordering resources online made things easy! When the materials arrived, all we had to do was set up a display and collect information from borrowers. After each topic was covered, we gathered the resources that were not borrowed, re-turned them and waited for our next delivery.' Pictured checking out the resources are, from left to right: Shirley Ens, Cassie Voogt and Jerri-Ann Froese.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Study guide explores 'white privilege' and racism

STORY AND PHOTO BY GLADYS TERICHOW
Mennonite Central Committee Canada

Canadians of European ancestry generally don't pay much attention to the benefits and advantages they enjoy because of their skin colour. So says Sue Eagle, a director of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada's Indigenous Work program.

To help deal with this situation, dubbed "white privilege," a new study guide, supported in part by MCC Canada, has been published to help individuals and

congregations explore how it can be an expression of racism.

"It is impossible to work towards racial justice and reconciliation without naming and dismantling unearned white privilege," says Eagle.

The study guide, "Cracking open white identity towards transformation," contains personal stories and questions for critical reflection and discussion. Eagle is among 15 people who shared their personal



Sue Eagle helped develop a study guide that assists people to examine 'white privilege.'

experiences of white privilege in this resource published by the Canadian Council of Churches.

Married to Harley Eagle, a member of Dakota and Salteaux First Nations, Eagle's reflection, "Mummy, I'm part white," explore the issues that she faces as a woman of white European descent raising two children who are part aboriginal.

"As she grows, Danielle needs to figure out, with her father's and my help, what it means to have a legacy of white privilege, with its racial superiority, from my side of the family, and a history of oppression and internalized feelings of racial inferiority," Eagle writes.

She says it is difficult to recognize the unearned benefits and advantages of white privilege because they are largely invisible and socially accepted. "I can watch the news and see people who look like me depicted in roles that show strength, intelligence and power," she says. "If staff in a store pays attention to me, it is to offer assistance, not to keep an eye on me for fear that I am planning to shoplift."

In addition to mending relations with Indigenous Peoples, Eagle says examining unearned white privilege will also help individuals and congregations experience more authentic relationships with newcomers to Canada. "As people of faith, we believe all children are created in God's image and we want to challenge ourselves and our congregations to live lives that reflect that core belief," says Eagle.

The study guide is available through the Canadian Council of Churches by calling toll-free 1-866-822-7645. ▄

MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA PHOTO BY DEBORAH FROESE



Speak the wrong language and you'll get the strap. That's the first thing that Ray Mason, left, and Gary McLean learned as residential and day school students. Much has been reported about Indian Residential School students, but the public knows very little about day scholars, who were forced to attend classes without daytime parental access although they were allowed to return home at the end of the day. Although many day scholars suffered the same abuses as residential school survivors, they were not included in the Indian Residential School Settlement. Mason and McLean, president and vice-president of Spirit Wind, a volunteer organization established in 1986 to advocate for school survivors in the indigenous community, spoke freely about their traumatic student experiences to Mennonite Church Canada staff last fall. To view a video of their presentation, visit mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1980. To learn more about stereotypes commonly associated with Canada's first nations, listen to Church Matters Podcast No. 73, 'Unpacking native stereotypes,' with guest Steve Heinrichs, MCC Canada's director of indigenous relations, at mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1981.

DRAWING COURTESY OF MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE B.C.



Artist's rendering of the new MCC Centre to be built in Abbotsford, B.C.

MCC B.C. announces new building project

By ANGELIKA DAWSON
Mennonite Central Committee B.C.
ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) British Columbia has purchased 3.4 hectares on Gladys Avenue in Abbotsford that will house an MCC thrift shop, administrative offices, a material resource centre, Ten Thousand Villages, a café and more.

"We are not just investing in a physical structure," says Wayne Bremner, executive director of MCC B.C. "We are building on a legacy of compassion, increasing our ability to support MCC's relief, development and peace work around the world."

The MCC B.C. Plaza Thrift Shop in Clearbrook will remain where it is while the Furniture and More and Abby East

thrift shops will move to the new building, along with the offices and material resource centre on Marshall Road.

By raising funds to purchase land and consolidating these two thrift shops, MCC B.C. looks to save more than \$350,000 a year in lease costs. Consolidation will also increase efficiency and reduce staffing costs. More retail space, combined with a highly visible and accessible location with ample parking, will increase thrift sales that support the work of MCC around the world.

Along with its thrift shops, MCC also has several programs in B.C. working in the areas of abuse prevention, HIV/AIDS education, and refugee and newcomer

support, among others. The ultimate goal with the new building is to decrease operating costs and increase resources to support its local and global work. The MCC B.C. board members are also excited about the possibilities that will open up with a new building, and to see it build on the legacy of thrift shops in BC.

"What a great experience to see the growth of thrift stores in our community over the past 40 years," says Len Block, MCC B.C. board chair. "The volunteers, the support and the service, all in the name of Christ! This is not just a building. It represents our hopes for the future of MCC and our continued faithfulness and service to God. I am humbled to be part of it."

More than \$6 million in donations and pledges have already been raised towards the \$10 million needed before the anticipated groundbreaking in June.

"I'd much rather see our dollars go towards our own property and building, something that's ours," says Martha Brandt, who volunteers at the Abby East Thrift Shop. "Hopefully down the road the next generation will look back on our decision and say that we were forward-thinking in our actions." ❧

*'We are not just investing in a physical structure.'
(Wayne Bremner, executive director of MCC B.C.)*

GOD AT WORK IN US



Nolan Andres, left, puts on a Conrad Grebel University College tie given him by Paul Penner, Grebel's director of operations, at the Feb. 20 fête honouring Andres as he leaves PeaceWorks Technology Solutions, which he founded 17 years ago. Andres is better known for showing up at a job in shorts, even in winter, but as he leaves PeaceWorks to work at Mennonite and Savings Credit Union as chief information officer, Penner suggests he might need a tie.

From computers to cash

Nolan Andres leaves PeaceWorks for position with Mennonite Savings and Credit Union

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent

In his first year working in information technology (IT) in 1996, Nolan Andres was living at Conrad Grebel University College and his roommate was Tim Miller Dyck, later to become editor of *Canadian Mennonite* and now an owner-employee at PeaceWorks Technology Solutions of Waterloo, Ont., that Andres founded.

Andres thinks that in that first year they had less than 25 invoices and around \$4,500 in billing. He did much of the work alone, but even then was drawing in other people to the work. An experience with a Guatemalan man moved him to continue the development of a business which did IT work for churches, not-for-profit organizations and small family businesses, providing the service in an affordable and

collaborative manner.

Fast forward to late 2012. Andres had helped PeaceWorks develop a board structure and had made himself, as founder and CEO, responsible to that board. He felt that the company was on good footing, with more than 30 employees, many of whom are now co-owners of the company.

PeaceWorks provides IT services for Ten Thousand Villages (TTV), Mennonite Central Committee Ontario, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, Conrad Grebel University College, *Canadian Mennonite* magazine and many other organizations, billing over \$1 million a year.

Although it had been a couple of years in coming, Andres resigned as PeaceWorks' CEO and in early 2013 moved to the

Mennonite and Savings Credit Union as its chief information officer.

In his comments to PeaceWorks' staff and clients at a Feb. 20 fête to honour him, Andres noted that he believes the shared values and mutual interdependence of the employees will continue the vision of providing affordable IT to organizations that are striving to make a difference in the lives of people around the world. He held up TTV as an example of a PeaceWorks' client that affects more than 60,000 people through its fair-price purchase of goods to sell in stores across North America. ☘

Staff change

New music prof will help expand cultural horizons

WATERLOO, ONT.— Maisie Sum, Ph.D., has been appointed to a new faculty position in global music at Conrad Grebel University College, to expand and explore the study and performance of world music in the school's music program."



Sum

Maisie Sum exemplifies global music," says Jim Pankratz, Grebel's dean. "She has studied music at university, transcribed it in homes in Morocco, lived among people who are making music in Africa and Bali, and learned to play instruments from a number of regions of the world. We are pleased that she is bringing her global perspective, her love of music, and her appreciation and respect for musicians to our music program and our community." Says Sum, who begins her duties on July 1, "Music is one way in which we can understand and come to appreciate the various cultures and peoples with whom we share the world. Learning what music is and what it means to people requires that we listen carefully and deeply, and open our ears, minds and imagination."

—Conrad Grebel University College

ARTBEAT

BOOK REVIEW

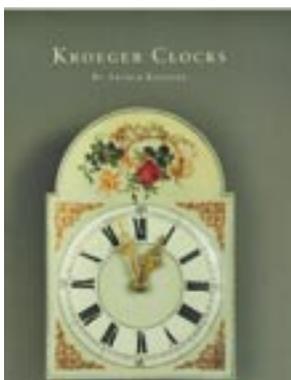
Clocks a symbol of Mennonite heritage

Kroeger Clocks.

By Arthur Kroeger. Mennonite Heritage Village, Steinbach, Man., 2012, 174 pages.

REVIEWED BY HENRY A. REGIER

My cousin Arthur's book about clocks of the Russian Mennonites, and about Kroeger clocks in particular, is the result of a life-long labour. He is the last in a Krueger/Kroeger lineage over two centuries long who created and sold these artifacts, and then cleaned and repaired them in subsequent decades. Many of the clocks served as icons that integrated family, community and colony life over generations.



and the printers, Friesens of Altona, which beautifully reproduced many full-colour photographs of clocks. The foreword, by Al Reimer, provides an important introduction to this complex book.

Arthur acknowledges about 200 people who helped him amass information about many Kroeger clocks over the past half-

century. Many shared a commitment to care for the clocks as they carried them to Eastern Europe and then to South and North America.

While the clocks were an important business feature in the Russian Mennonite commonwealth, the motivation of the successive generations of Kroegers in their clock-making was not primarily capitalistic. They attached importance to the clocks' contributions to the *Gemeinschaft*, or communitarian dynamics.

The author has included short accounts of other clock-makers in the Mennonite colonies of Russia. One of these, David Lepp, was my ancestor on my father's side. After about 1850, Lepp switched to making farm machinery, which led eventually to the factories of my great-great uncle, A. J. Koop. I infer from my father's memoir that, like the Kroegers, he was more communitarian than capitalistic in his motivations.

As Arthur recounts, the first Krueger who came to the Russian Mennonite colonies was Johann, who arrived in Chortitza/Rosenthal in 1804. Rosenthal was in a secluded valley near Chortitza,

to which "Deputy" Johan Bartsch had retreated following the turbulent early years after the first settlement in Chortitza in 1789. When Johann Kruger brought his clock-making tools to Rosenthal, his son Abraham married Margaretha, Bartsch's daughter. Margaretha's younger brother, Jacob, became the *Oberschulze*, or senior official, for the Old Colony. Presumably having his brother-in-law serving in that role didn't hurt Abraham Kroeger's clock enterprise.

With its writings, sketches, family photos and especially the many photographs of the beautiful clocks, this book joins a growing library of books about Russian Mennonites in which the secular and sacred can't be fully teased apart. ❧

Henry A. Regier lives in Elmira, Ont.

❧ Briefly noted

Shaping Families program still available online

The final episode in the three-year *Shaping Families* radio project aired on Jan. 26, featuring Mel and Lorna Claassen of Goshen, Ind., telling the story of their daughter Heidi's heroic fight with leukemia from 2002-03. The Claassens are members of Waterford Mennonite Church, one of the sponsors of the *Shaping Families* program. Budget and program cuts announced in November 2012 eliminated the *Shaping Families* program because of lack of funds. Beginning in January 2010, *Shaping Families* aired on 21 local radio stations and appeared online at ShapingFamilies.com each Friday, and will continue to be available for the foreseeable future from the website, complete with podcasts and study guides. The program was produced by MennoMedia, an agency of Mennonite Church Canada and MC U.S.A. responsible for creating faith-based print, video, radio and web resources.

—MennoMedia

Arthur acknowledges colleagues for providing exceptional help with this book, including Victor Peters and Roland Sawatzky,

FOCUS ON FARMING & GARDENING

COVER STORY

Counting his chickens

Young entrepreneur says, 'I like everything about them'

STORY AND PHOTO BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent

Not many aspiring Alberta farmers find inspiration in Hawaii, but that is exactly what happened for 11-year-old Colin Brown of Carstairs, Alta. While on a family vacation three years ago, the Browns, who attend Bergthal Mennonite Church, Didsbury, rented part of a house and helped to care for the landlady's animals, including a few chickens.

"When she went to walk her dogs, I would play with the chicks," Colin says.

From then on, he was hooked on the birds.

Colin's chickens are not run-of-the-mill egg-laying Leghorns, or the chunky Broilers commonly found in the butcher's section of the grocery store. His unusual heritage breeds are dual purpose and appeal to a growing number of urban backyard chicken owners and collectors, as well as to hobby farmers. Currently, Colin has about 70 birds representing 12 different breeds.

In summer, separate enclosures isolate the varieties, and Colin collects eggs to hatch in an incubator. Extra eggs are sold for consumption. When he has chickens to sell, Brown posts a descriptive ad on Kijiji. Buyers for his chickens sometimes drive hours to his family's farm and pay up to \$30 for each adult, and \$15 for a chick.

Raising the unusual chickens has created some unique opportunities for Colin.

"Once last year, a couple of guys, I think from Big Rock Brewery, came to me," he recounts. "They wanted a rooster to put into a commercial. I had one I wanted to keep." The men paid \$50 to borrow the Buff Brahma, then brought him back the next day.

Colin has also had success showing some of his chickens. Last year at a show in Red Deer, one of his Black Cochin hens was

judged the best-at-show.

Raising chickens is a great educational experience for Colin. "I learn about

everything," he says. "I learn about money and responsibility and stuff. I've never really got around to [keeping records], but I've thought about that. I've also met a lot of people at shows and selling chickens."

Why does he raise the birds? "I like everything about them," he says enthusiastically. "I like hatching them out. I like breeding them. I just like the joy of having them around."

Colin sees farming in his future. "I definitely want to continue with chickens and maybe have a few other farm animals around," he says. "I love the animals. . . I've always been an animal person." ❧



Colin Brown holds his favourite rooster, a Blue Cochin named Harley. 'Harley is the nicest rooster I ever had,' Colin says, adding, 'I would sell one like this for about \$30 to \$35.'

A long row to hoe for an urban farmer

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG

“The health of the land is probably the best indicator of the health of the covenant between God and God’s people.”

These words of Ellen Davis from Duke Divinity School reflect Kenton Lobe’s strong attachment to the land and his passion for agriculture. Not that he has any plans to move from his city lot in the heart of Winnipeg to a farm. Instead, the instructor of international development studies at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) plants where he is planted.

In his south-facing front yard, he and his wife, Julie Derksen, along with their two young children, have dug up a good portion of their lawn and put in a vegetable garden. They have added a cold-frame greenhouse against the house, harvest

rainwater off the roof and they will have a clutch of chicks in their backyard coop come June.

“We have just eaten the last of the tomatoes we grew in our garden last year,” says Lobe, hoping to harvest even more this year.

At CMU, Lobe is excited about entering the third growing season of the university’s on-campus farm. The half-hectare farm on the city campus follows a Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) model.

“CSA is a different marketing approach that invites sharers of the farm to purchase a share in the beginning of spring and to share the risk of the farm throughout the season,” explains Lobe. Last year, it grew between 65 and 70 varieties of vegetables

for 25 households. There are plans to expand that to 30 households this year.

“We are looking to provide a kind of example of what urban agriculture looks like,” says Lobe. “The literature on urban agriculture is exploding as you have more and more folks moving from rural areas to urban centres. This is happening in many other parts of the world and is becoming a main way of meeting food-security needs. We’re trying to explore what that means in a North American context.”

Lobe’s interest in farming stems in part from his six years of work with public policy and advocacy for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. “One of the key issues was Canada’s aid dollars and how we were, or were not, supporting small-holder agriculture in the global south,” he says. “After six years of writing policy briefs and research papers on small-scale farming, I continually found that I knew very little about the hands-on work. I wanted to take some of the learning from the books into my hands.” (See “Suggested reading” sidebar above.)

Lobe is grateful to be in a place that allows him to write, think and teach about sustainable agriculture as well as practise it. “There is something about engagement with the farm that allows for ongoing reflection about the incarnation and the embodiment of who Jesus was and is,” he says. “It requires and nurtures the discipline of patience.”

Physical engagement with the land and caring for creation brings the land back into the conversation about people and God, leading Lobe to exclaim, “I can no longer imagine my faith outside of this work.” ☘

Suggested reading

- *Bringing it to the Table: On Farming and Food* by Wendell Berry
- *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating* by Norman Wirzba
- *Making Peace with the Land: God’s Call to Reconcile with Creation* by Fred Bahnson and Norman Wirzba
- *Scripture, Culture and Agriculture: Reading the Bible with Agrarian Eyes* by Ellen Davis

—COMPILED BY KENTON LOBE

CMU FARMERS’ COLLECTIVE PHOTO



Kenton Lobe, left, and Megan Klassen-Wiebe harvest basil at the urban Canadian Mennonite University Community Shared Agriculture farm.

Life in Egypt

An introduction to Young Voices' newest bloggers

BY EMILY LOEWEN

Young Voices Co-editor

*Young Voices is excited to welcome Isaac Friesen and Wanda Wall-Bergen as our newest bloggers. Isaac and Wanda are currently serving in Egypt with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) as foreign-language instructors and peacebuilders. They have been writing about their experiences on their own personal blog, *Life in Egypt*, and have given Young Voices permission to re-post their work on our site. To serve as an introduction, Isaac answered some questions about their experience to date.*

EL: *Why did you decide to serve with MCC?*

IF: We grew up hearing the exciting stories of various friends and family members who had served abroad with MCC. Years later, we had graduated and married, and the time just felt right. We wanted adventure and challenge, and to participate in a meaningful cultural exchange. And to be able to serve in an organization that focused on relationship-building; this was more of a draw than anything.

EL: *What have been some of the highlights of your term so far?*

IF: The first few months were like one long honeymoon, where we were suddenly immersed in a place so different from home. With many thousand years of history and many millions of people, Egypt is a place of supreme depth and character. The walls, the fruit vendors, the donkeys, they all seem to have interesting stories. Indeed, I have never been bored here.

A second highlight has been the people. I like to tell friends back home that Egypt is not camels, protests or pyramids; rather, Egypt is people. Crowded along the narrow Nile River, Egypt is simply bursting with warm handshakes and smiling faces. Many Egyptians face great hardship, yet, judging by their patience, kindness and generosity, you would almost never know it.

EL: *What about some of the struggles or challenges?*

IF: Personally, the greatest challenge has been the near-constant attention we receive while out in public. Egyptians are generally not shy, and are easily excited by foreigners. Even though remarks are rarely negative, the shouts can be grating after a while. Oh, to go for an evening walk without feeling self-conscious!

On a broader level, it has been a struggle to live in a place with so many problems: poverty, unemployment, lack of access to healthcare. It is all probably worse than you imagine. Millions of students graduate with dreams, but few find real options.

Indeed, it is sometimes hard not to feel depressed. And as relatively wealthy North Americans, we often feel a sense of guilt creeping in. That said, the Egyptian people are famously good-humoured and resilient.

EL: *How has your faith, or your perspective on it, changed since you've been in Egypt?*

IF: It is difficult to say. Perhaps we will be better able to answer this question in a few years. No doubt, our perspective on faith has changed a lot in Egypt. Religion is very central to life here. We have been inspired by the faith of our Coptic brothers and sisters in Christ.

Yet practices are very different from our North American Mennonite traditions.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ISAAC FRIESEN



Isaac Friesen on the banks of the Nile.



Wanda Wall-Bergen and Isaac Friesen are serving in Beni Suef, Egypt, as foreign-language instructors and peacebuilders with Mennonite Central Committee.

And to be frank, the cultural divide has been somewhat spiritual as well. At times, our perpetual curiosity and questions are not altogether spiritually satisfying. I think we have learned how valuable a faith community of relatively similar, critical-minded individuals can be.

EL: *Tell me about the experience of living in Egypt during a time of so much political change?*

IF: It has been a crazy couple of years politically. Protests, strikes and elections have become the norm, along with the odd outbreak of violence. Many people's nerves are frayed. Yet Egypt is not the war zone world news sometimes makes it out to be.

In contrast to before the revolution, these days Egyptians are always talking politics. It has been fascinating to listen to the currents and shifts in opinions. Sadly, many people have become completely disillusioned. A revolution which once held such promise has thus far borne so little

fruit.

EL: *What are some of the funny or different cultural practices that you've had to adjust to?*

IF: The first thing people often notice is the driving. Basically, the only rule is that there are no rules, which can make things fun and frightening! And while in North America drivers communicate with lights, here it is horns, which make it loud and

Sadly, many people have become completely disillusioned. A revolution which once held such promise has thus far borne so little fruit.

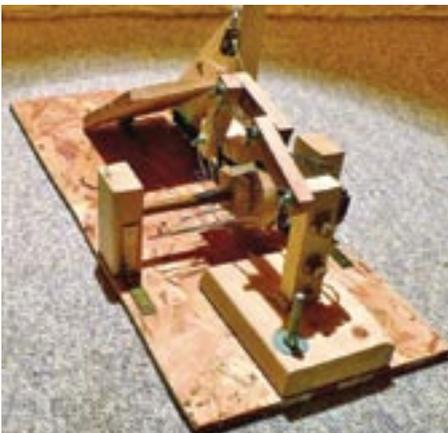
clear where someone is going.

Egyptians are an incredibly generous people. You best not compliment someone on their shirt or sunglasses because you will likely have to spend the next 20 minutes fighting off their attempts to give it to you. Shopkeepers and taxi drivers will almost always tell you your items are free when you first try to pay. We soon learned that these types of offers are a formality more than anything. From cups of coffee to half-eaten sandwiches, you should always offer to those around you first! ☘

Telling an old story through new music

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JESSE KRAUSE

BY RACHEL BERGEN
Young Voices Co-editor



Jesse Krause's foot pedal instrument consists of bicycle spokes and a hacksaw blade. It's played by stomping.

Jesse Krause, 27, spent nearly a year in total fashioning instruments out of whatever he could find and writing music based on biblical stories, all to tell an old story in a new way.

Jesse and his younger brother, Thomas, 23, performed *Geräuschbiest*, based on Daniel 4, at the Winnipeg New Music Festival on Jan. 30. The festival, which is generally dedicated to new classical music, established an offshoot called Pop Nuit this year, which featured new pop music from four different acts over two nights.

Most of the text from *Geräuschbiest* is taken straight from the Bible and is

harmonized with chant, Jesse explains, saying, "It's more storytelling."

Geräuschbiest tells the story of Nebuchadnezzar, who had a terrifying dream about a prominent tree and a call from an angel to strip it of its branches. Nebuchadnezzar asked Daniel to interpret the dream.

According to Daniel, this was a call for Nebuchadnezzar to strip himself of his wealth and power, and to live in the wilderness until he could accept God's sovereignty over all kingdoms on earth. He was also called to renounce his sins and wickedness by being kind to the oppressed and doing

what was right.

The piece ends with text from Ecclesiastes 3:18-21, that compares people to animals.

The entirety of *Geräuschbiest* follows this theme.

Beyond actually writing new music, Jesse took the call to produce new music se-

a long time], but they still sound like the same kind of music. If you build the instruments, you have control over what the tuning systems are and what you're going to do with them."

Jesse and Thomas have always enjoyed playing music together. Both treasure being

'New things are happening on [instruments that have been around for a long time], but they still sound like the same kind of music. If you build the instruments, you have control over what the tuning systems are and what you're going to do with them.'

(Jesse Krause)

riously by inventing new instruments. The work is played with pedals; stringed instruments, including a moose antler; and an instrument called a "rotary octochord."

"I worked in my apartment's spare bedroom using logs, instrument strings and pickups that I harvested off of guitars, tuning pins out of a piano, bicycle parts and a lot of hardware," he says. "The instruments were continually tweaked and changed."

From these free harvested materials, Jesse's instruments produced different sounds that could enable Thomas and him to create entirely new music.

"An instrument is quite specific in the types of music you can play on it," Jesse explains. "New things are happening on [instruments that have been around for

able to collaborate musically as brothers.

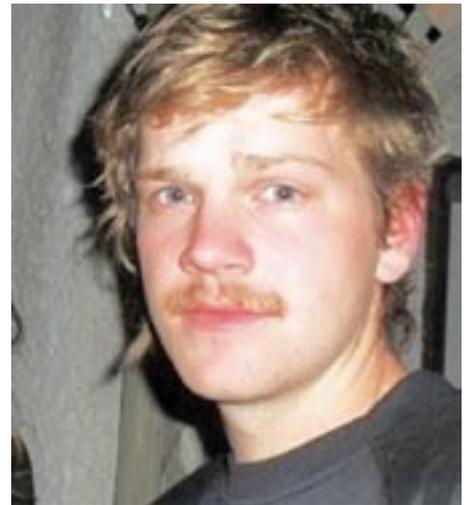
"Singing with another person, especially my brother, is such an intimate thing," Thomas says of the experience.

Pop Nuit also featured artists like Sarah Neufeld from the alternative band Arcade Fire, and the band Royal Canoe, which is made up of several Mennonite young-adult musicians.

The brothers are both talented musicians with their own musical side projects, including Thomas's band Alanadale and Jesse's band Flying Fox and the Hunter Gatherers. Jesse also conducts the Riel Gentlemen's Choir and the choir at St. Margaret's Anglican Church, Winnipeg, where he attends. ❧



Jesse Krause



Thomas Krause

Bringing biblical themes to the big screen

How a young Mennonite is finding his way in the world of film

BY EMILY LOEWEN
Young Voices Co-editor

Dreaming big can be dangerous when you've got an obsessive personality. Once you've got a crazy idea, you need to make it happen. That's a lesson Paul Plett learned after he dreamed of making a feature-length film and then found a

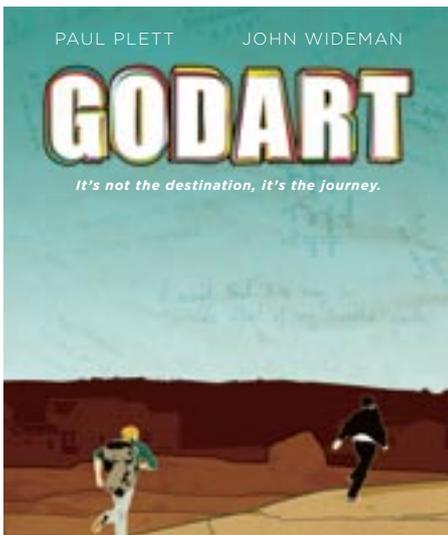
community to make it happen.

Plett, 27, who attends Toronto United Mennonite Church, and John Wideman had moved in the same circles of Mennonites interested in creative projects, and when they finally met they decided to

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PAUL PLETT



Paul Plett is a Mennonite filmmaker living in Toronto.



Plett's film Godart won the best no-budget feature at the Toronto Independent Film Festival in 2012.

make a movie together.

"We started talking a lot and saying why don't we make something way bigger than we can handle," Plett says. And so *Godart* was born.

The film chronicles the journey of two young men, played by Plett and Wideman, who meet on Canada's East Coast and end up road-tripping across the country together. Through that narrative, the film examines bigger themes. *Godart* looks at "a particular generation of twenty-something-year-olds who have more access to more things than they've ever had, ever in history, and probably have less purpose of what to do with their lives than ever before," Plett explains.

vimeo.com/60519745, where viewers can contribute money to the team by adding a tip.

Although it's the largest in scale, *Godart* isn't Plett's only completed film. He has made others, most of which are set in the Global South and examine social or political issues there. Having grown up in Zambia and Sudan while his parents worked with Mennonite Central Committee, he's familiar with life in Africa. In these projects he believes his Mennonite upbringing influenced his work. "There's a context where I think that grace is required," he says, "and I think that grace is no better articulated than it is in the Bible and in Christianity."

Because his creative projects aren't fi-

'There's a context where I think that grace is required, and I think that grace is no better articulated than it is in the Bible and in Christianity.'

(Paul Plett)

While the film is not expressly Christian, or even Mennonite, Plett enjoys working with themes found in the Bible. "The parables of Jesus really resonate with me a lot, and the idea of selflessness and selfless sacrifice," he says. "I'm never going to find that to be an old or tired idea. I think I'll be using that in my work, you know, until I die."

For Plett, who graduated from the Toronto Film School, putting together a feature length film was a challenge for a team with few resources or industry connections. They tried to pay all of the contributors something and they had to cover transportation and food on the cross-country journey. The project was primarily funded by Plett, Wideman and David McDowell, who also provided the soundtrack, as well as by Indiegogo, an international crowd-funding site.

Of course, they also called in plenty of favours. "I remember we just . . . asked every favour and twisted every arm we could," says Plett.

Their work eventually paid off. They completed the film and it won the award for best no-budget feature at the Toronto Independent Film Festival last summer. The film was recently released online at

nancially sustainable yet, Plett takes on contract film work with a number of international nongovernmental organizations to pay the bills, since his years of living in Africa mean that he's familiar with development work. While Plett enjoys working in the development field, and hopes to remain a part of the conversation, his dream is for the creative films to become sustainable on their own.

Without industry connections, however, it's not an easy road to success. Plett has had to forge his own path since leaving film school. "For what I want to do, there's no blueprint, there's no road map," he admits. "I have to write that myself. I have a really easy time with artistic-type stuff, and the business aspect is more of a challenge for me."

But completing *Godart* has shown him that with the right collaborators, and the support of a strong community, it's possible to do the projects he feels passionate about. "You kind of get the sentiment," he says, "that if you really believe in something, and you just go ahead and you start doing it, you'll be able to find a way to finish it." ❧

Schools directory

Elementary/Secondary



Menno Simons Christian School
Integrating sound academic learning with growth in character, faith, and service to God.
www.mennosimonschristianschool.ca
AN EDUCATION FOR LIFE! Calgary, Alberta



Mennonite Collegiate Institute
GRADES 7-12
EXPERIENCE
RED LIFE, CHOIRS,
SPORTS, ACADEMICS
& MORE!
www.mciblues.net
GRETHA, MB



Rosthern Junior College
Christian Day & Boarding
HIGH SCHOOL (Grade 10-12)

Traveling Open House
Grace Mennonite,
Regina.
Friday, November 30th
6:30 - 9:30 PM

*Founded in Faith,
Driven by Possibilities!*
For More Information visit our Website at
www.rjc.sk.ca or Call us at (306) 232-4222
To Schedule a Visit or Tour email

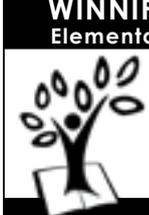


ROCKWAY MENNONITE COLLEGIATE
For Grades 7 to 12
*Forming Faith...
Building Character*
www.rockway.ca

...inspiring and empowering students to live as people of God.



WESTGATE COLLEGIATE
www.westgatemennonite.ca



WINNIPEG MENNONITE
Elementary & Middle Schools

- Christ centered education
- High academic standards
- Small class sizes
- Safe, caring environment
- All faiths welcome

TRAIN UP A CHILD...Proverbs 22:6
www.wmems.ca

Post-Secondary



NURTURING DISCIPLES AND TRAINING LEADERS TO SERVE
BETHANY COLLEGE
www.bethany.sk.ca



Embrace Complex Issues
Learn to See Differently
cmu.ca
CMU | CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY



COLUMBIA BIBLE COLLEGE
Prepare to Make a Difference.
columbiabc.edu



GREBEL
Challenging Mind and Spirit
Hundreds of programs.
Dozens of friends.
One campus.
grebel.uwaterloo.ca



McMaster Divinity College
mcmasterdivinity.ca

Calendar

British Columbia

March 28: Columbia Bible College campus view day.

March 28,29: Good Friday Blues services at the House of James, Abbotsford, featuring the Good Friday Blues Band, at 7:30 p.m. both evenings. For more information, visit goodfridayblues.wordpress.com. Proceeds to the Cyrus Centre.

Apr. 12-14: Youth Jr. Impact retreat at Camp Squeah.

Alberta

April 27: Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta annual general meeting and conference, at First Mennonite

Church, Calgary, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Theme: "Historical roots of mutual aid as practised among Mennonites." Speakers, panel discussion, exhibits and lunch. To register (by April 20), call 403-250-1121 or e-mail mhsa@mennonitehistory.org.

Saskatchewan

April 13: A Buncha Guys spring concert, at Mayfair United Church, Saskatoon, at 7:30 p.m.

April 14: "Songs for the Sale" fundraiser for the MCC Relief Committee, at Forest Grove Community Church, Saskatoon, at 7 p.m.

Manitoba

Until April 27: "From Paraguay to Winnipeg: Explorations of place home and childhood" art exhibit at Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery, Winnipeg. Featured artists: Miriam Rudolph and Bennie Peters.

March 29: Winnipeg First Mennonite Church presents Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* at the church on Good Friday, at 7 p.m. A free-will offering will be taken.

April 4: CMU spring banquet and fundraiser.

April 8: Jazz@CMU.

April 14: Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church adult choir presents Parts II and III of *The Messiah*, at 7 p.m.

April 18-20: Westgate Collegiate senior high musical.

April 27: CMU spring concert featuring choirs and ensembles.

April 27: Mennonite Collegiate Institute fundraising supper, at Buhler Hall, Gretna, at 5:30 p.m. Concert featuring Ted Swartz, "Laughter is a sacred space," follows at 7 p.m. For more information, or to register, call 204-327-5891.

Ontario

March 23: Elmira meat canning fundraising breakfast buffet, at Calvary United Church, St. Jacobs, at 8 a.m. Speaker: Ron Mathies, MCC executive director emeritus. For advance tickets, call MCC Ontario at 519-745-8458.

March 23: Menno Singers/Nota Bene Baroque concert, featuring **(Continued on page 38)**

(Continued from page 37)

works by Bach and Zelenka, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, at 8 p.m. For ticket information, visit mennosingers.com.

April 5: "Peace, Pies and Prophets" presented by Ted and Company Theater Works, at Conrad Grebel University College's Great Hall, at 7 p.m. Fundraiser for Christian Peacemaker Teams. For more information, e-mail canada@cpt.org.

April 5-7: Marriage Encounter weekend at Jericho House, Port Colborne. For more information, visit marriageencounterrec.com or call Marjorie Roth at 519-669-8667.

April 9: Mennonite Savings and Credit Union's 49th annual meeting,

"Stories of social justice," at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden. Registration at 6:30 p.m.; meeting at 7 p.m. An excerpt from Theatre of the Beat's newest production will be featured.

April 12: Benjamin Eby Lecture with Leonard Enns at Conrad Grebel University College chapel.

April 12: "Peace, Pies and Prophets" presented by Ted and Company Theater Works, at Toronto United Mennonite Church, at 7 p.m. Fundraiser for Christian Peacemaker Teams. For more information, e-mail canada@cpt.org.

April 12-14: Dinner and theatre presentation at Floradale Mennonite Church; *Mom, It's Time to Sell the House* by Barb Draper. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

(12, 13); play begins at 8 p.m.; 2 p.m. matinee (14). For dinner reservations, call 519-669-4356.

April 13: "Peace, Pies and Prophets" presented by Ted and Company Theater Works, at United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington, at 7 p.m. Fundraiser for Christian Peacemaker Teams. For more information, e-mail canada@cpt.org.

April 19: Menno Youth Singers present a coffeehouse and silent auction, at Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church, Waterloo, at 7 p.m. Free.

April 19: 12th annual ham dinner fundraiser for MCC's meat canner project, at Hamilton Mennonite Church, from 5 to 7 p.m.; entertainment to follow. Vegetarian alternative available. For more information or tickets, call 905-387-3952 or 905-528-3607, or email hmc@cogeco.net.

April 19,20: MCC and Theatre of the Beat present the *Forgiven Forgotten* Tour, a play and conversation about restorative justice and a Christian response to crime, at the Conrad

Centre, Kitchener; (19) at 8 p.m., and (20) 2 and 8 p.m. For more information, visit forgivenforgotten.wordpress.com.

April 20: Women of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada holds its spring Enrichment Day, at Tavistock Mennonite Church; registration at 9:30 a.m., activities run from 10:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Theme: "Wonderfully made: Women, faith and self-care. Speaker: Terri J. Plank Brenneman of Goshen, Ind. To register by April 5, contact Florence Jantzi at 519-669-4356 or jantzi@golden.net.

April 20: Shalom Counselling Services fundraiser, "Lessons my mother taught me," featuring Roger Martin, dean of Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, at St. George Banquet Hall, Waterloo, at 6 p.m. Music by Michael Wood Trio. To reserve tickets by April 10, call 519-886-9690.

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.

Residential Mortgage Special

3.19%*

5 Year Term

A simple home. Intentional living.

"We really want to honour God with our money! Our friend suggested we speak with MSCU about our mortgage."

Joshua Hall, Kitchener member

Continue *your* conversation with MSCU, where faith and finances meet. ♥



Mennonite Savings and Credit Union

www.mscu.com
1.888.672.6728

* After relationship pricing. Rate subject to change. Annual Percentage Rate (APR) is equivalent to the Annual Interest Rate. APR assumes no fees or charges apply. If fees or charges apply, your APR would increase.

EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE LIKE NEVER BEFORE

TOUR THE LANDS OF THE BIBLE

WITH A MENNONITE PASTOR OR PROFESSOR

ISRAEL/PALESTINE
PASTOR PHIL WAGLER
APRIL 16 – 25, 2013

WORLD OF PAUL
TOM YODER NEUFELD
MAY 1 – 17, 2013

STEPS OF MOSES
NELSON KRABILL
JULY 22 – 31, 2013

MORE TOURS IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER



BOOK YOUR LIFE-CHANGING JOURNEY TODAY!

(800) 565-0451

office@tourmagination.com

www.tourmagination.com/CM



Cruises, Eco-Adventure, Educational & Heritage Tours also available.

Classifieds

Announcement

Canadian Word Guild
AWARDS

**MYSTERIES OF GRACE
AND JUDGMENT DVD**

For special awards sale see:

www.mysteriesofgrace.com

Travel

**Visit Europe
the
Mennonite Way!**

12-15 day individual or group hotel Tours focusing on Mennonite/ Anabaptist heritage in Holland, Belgium, Germany, Poland and Switzerland.
www.mennoniteheritagetours.eu

MUSIC COORDINATOR POSITION

NUTANA PARK MENNONITE CHURCH in Saskatoon is looking for a Music Coordinator to serve as choral director and work with a music committee to develop and enhance the role of music in our congregation. This is a part-time position. Please send all inquiries and/or resumes to: Selection Committee, Nutana Park Mennonite Church, 1701 Ruth Street, Saskatoon, SK S7J 0L7; or email: npmc@npmc.net. The deadline for applications is May 24, 2013.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

TORONTO UNITED MENNONITE CHURCH (TUMC) invites applications for a full-time Associate Pastor position. This position has a primary focus on children and youth ministry (grades 6-12), with a secondary focus on supporting the lead pastor and lay ministry team in pastoral care and ministry to the full congregation. TUMC is a vibrant urban Church in the Mennonite Anabaptist Tradition that serves members and adherents from across the greater Toronto area. For more information, please visit: www.tumc.ca.

We seek an Associate Pastor who has a strong theological background and commitment to Mennonite faith and Church, an appreciation for diversity, a passion for ministry, empathy for the particular issues that youth face, and enthusiasm for walking with the youth and the congregation through our personal and collective journeys. The full job description is available at: www.mcec.ca/jobs/pastor-associate

We encourage interested candidates to contact Henry Paetkau, Area Church Minister for Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, at: hpaetkau@mcec.ca before March 31, 2013.

Employment Opportunities



**Mennonite
Central
Committee**
British Columbia
**MENNONITE CENTRAL
COMMITTEE BC
STAFF ACCOUNTANT**

Qualifications include: proficiency in Office 2010 and Dynamics, CPA certification, accounting diploma/degree, 5 years' experience in not for profit accounting. Good communication skills, pro-active problem solving, ability to prioritize and maintain confidentiality.

For a complete job description and more information visit bc.mcc.org/getinvolved/workwithmcc or contact Sophie Tiessen at stiessen@mccbc.com or call 604-850-6639

NORTH LEAMINGTON UNITED MENNONITE CHURCH in Leamington, Ontario is inviting applications for a full time **PASTOR**. The pastor will be someone who has a passion for ministry, possesses visionary leadership and values building relationships.

The pastor will work as part of a pastoral team ministering to all age groups. Involvements will include worship and preaching, relationship building, developing and growing lay leaders, congregational visitation and missional outreach.

The pastor will be committed to Anabaptist theology and practices and have received post secondary training from an Anabaptist seminary or university or have pastoral experience in an Anabaptist congregation.

Inquiries, resumes, and letters of interest may be directed to:

Henry Paetkau, Area Church Minister
Mennonite Church Eastern Canada
4489 King St. E.
Kitchener ON N2P 2G2
Phone: 519-650-3806
Fax: 519-650-3947
E-mail: hpaetkau@mcec.ca

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ST. CLAIR O'CONNOR COMMUNITY INC. (SCOC), a Not-for-Profit, Intergenerational Home, which was developed under the sponsorship of two Mennonite Churches, is now inviting applicants for the position of Executive Director. SCOC is committed to providing a continuum of care for the residents of the SCOC community.

SCOC receives funding from both the Provincial and City Governments, in support of the Long Term Care unit, Adult Day Program, and Housing operations.

This dynamic, independent individual will be responsible for the direction, finances, planning, funder relations and obligations, resident relations, and resident family relations, as well as ensuring good community relations. A key aspect of the responsibilities will be to provide direction in the planning and implementation of the SCOC's Long Term Strategic Plan and developing an organizational structure in support of the Strategic Plan. The Executive Director reports to the SCOC Board of Directors.

SCOC is located in Toronto at the corner of St. Clair and O'Connor streets. SCOC offers a competitive salary and benefits package.

Please submit applications with resumes by April 15, 2013 to:

By email to retlaw@fradsetr.com

or

Walter Friesen
Board Chair
St. Clair O'Connor Community Inc.
2701 St. Clair Ave. East
Toronto, Ont.
M4B 3M3

Advertising Information

Contact *Canadian Mennonite* Ad Representative
Graeme Stemp-Morlock
1-800-378-2524 x.224
advert@canadianmennonite.org

Turning waste into food

'Nothing else like' student-run composting program

BY KRISTINA LOPIENSKI

Goshen College
GOSHEN, IND.

GOSHEN COLLEGE PHOTO BY JODI H. BEYELER

Where might you find coffee grounds, potato skins and egg shells mixed with meat, napkins and leftover spaghetti? Typically, beside other garbage in the dump. In fact, for years, this is where Goshen College sent its food waste.

However, in 2010 the college implemented a new practice, taking something perceived as “dirty trash” and transforming it into something of value: compost.

But Natasha Weisenbeck, a junior majoring in public relations who has volunteered with the student compost team for three years, figured out a way to greatly improve the college’s approach.

Weisenbeck (*pictured at right*) identified the need for a better compost screening solution, so she designed a system that made it easy to separate the final product from the woodchips that are combined with the food waste: a pivot screener hangs on a 20-degree angle allowing the compost waste to fall through the screen and be collected, while the woodchips tumble to the end. This cuts the time to separate the compost from the chips in half and creates a better quality final product.

A benefit of the simple approach is that it is cost-effective, with just an eight-month payback. This is the result of using student labour and a reduction in garbage bags and landfill costs. The composting boxes only cost about \$150 in materials to build, while composters that use electricity are as much as 10 to 100 times the cost. Between waste pickup fees and garbage bag savings in the kitchen, the college saves an estimated \$1,800 per semester.

On a typical weekday during the semester up to 45 kilograms of food waste are produced in the college’s dining hall. When students are done eating, they have the option to scrape fruit, meat, napkins and any other compostable waste from their plates into waste receptacles clearly designated for composting.

At the end of a day, a student volunteer collects the receptacles and dumping all of the contents into the campus compost bin, a large insulated wooden box located behind the dining hall dumpsters. Woodchips that are received free from local tree trimmers are added as mulch and combined with the food waste at a two-to-one ratio to provide airflow. This introduces bacteria to the food, which prevents odours and helps break up the pile.

On-site composting lasts for at least three weeks. Decomposition continues for up to three more months prior to the screening process, during which the woodchips are separated and removed, using Weisenbeck’s pivot screener.

The cycle is complete when the compost is returned to the college’s dining service to be used as a natural fertilizer in its small garden, which eventually produces vegetables and herbs for meals to be served to students. ▮



Natasha Weisenbeck demonstrated Goshen College's composting system at the U.S. Composting Council conference in January. 'We're unique in the sense that our operation is very low-tech and extremely low cost,' she says. 'There was nothing else like it there.'