

CANADIAN Mennonite

April 19, 2004
Volume 8, Number 8

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many members**
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If the foot offend the nose

This winter, a member of First Mennonite Church in Edmonton phoned to tell us that he had just heard a remarkable sermon that we should consider publishing. The sermon explored the meaning of church unity.

"It gave me a way of thinking about differences within the church," said the caller, "including differences on difficult issues such as sexuality." You will find the sermon on page 6.

Using Paul's analogy of the body in I Corinthians 12, the writer probes the implications of being many (different) members of one body.

"It's all well and good to say that the nose and the foot are equally important to the body—it's much more difficult to put into practice," she says. "Sometimes the nose is quite offended by the foot, making it difficult for them to tolerate each other, much less work toward a common goal."

The body analogy is particularly useful for us today, says the writer. "It helps people understand that unity is not defined as sameness, but as variety bound together by a common desire to serve Christ's purposes."

A second article touches on the same theme (page 9). In a recent conversation with the Christian Formation Council, Sven Eriksson reflected on his first year as denominational minister for Mennonite Church Canada.

In MC Canada, we have pastors from a variety of backgrounds, with different leadership styles and theological orientations. What keeps us together? Part of Eriksson's answer focused on the common "culture" that we share—not in an ethnic sense but in the sense of common stories and events that "shape a sense of belonging and connectedness... how people relate and behave."

One of the ways we relate to each other is by interpreting the will of God together, in community. By definition, this implies disagreement, for we all bring our own convictions to the table. One could say that to disagree is part of our

Mennonite heritage—we believe that individual conscience is to be respected, even as we struggle together to discern right belief and practice for our time.

But even our disagreements imply an underlying unity—we have a common starting point. How we disagree and how we deal with tough issues defines who we are. And what we argue about also defines us. We may disagree on some parts of the Confession of Faith, for example, but that Confession is still a common reference point. And no matter how far we diverge on issues such as leadership or worship or sexuality, we continue to look to the Bible as our common foundation.

We are indeed one body with many members. If all were a single organ, where would the body be?

The tortured God

During the Easter weekend, an acquaintance was complaining about Christianity's violent death of its God in the crucifixion. He linked this to the violence Christians have committed in God's name throughout history.

I too wondered about that brutal crucifixion as I watched *The Passion of the Christ*. The torture of Jesus is so excessive, so over the top in that movie! But in the midst of my disgust, I had to reconsider. Aren't people being beaten and tortured and massacred every day? Is torturing a man to death really so unthinkable?

We think of the genocide in Rwanda just 10 years ago. We think of the suicide bombers and kidnappers who pursue their deadly work in many places, the political prisoners rotting in their cells. The point of Jesus' tortured death is not that he suffered more than anyone else, but that on the cross we see God identifying with those who experience the most outrageous suffering in our world. On the cross we see God reaching into the darkest corners to speak a word of understanding and love. Even there, redemption is possible. That is the message of Easter.—Margaret Loewen Reimer

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Web site preview

Get a preview of the next *Canadian Mennonite* before it comes in the mail. Selections are posted on our web site at www.canadianmennonite.org on the Thursday before the issue date. So you can check out the May 3 issue by April 29.

Cover: Students finish another year.
Photo by Dan Dyck.



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Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Janzen brought intellectual passion to church life

David Janzen, a teacher and pastor whose passion for the church was heard at many a conference session, died March 17 at the age of 84.

Janzen's life took him to many places, from farming in Alberta, to teaching in Winnipeg and the U.S., to working with refugees in Berlin. He became pastor of Niagara United Mennonite Church in the early 1960s, and ended his career as a prison chaplain (1973-84).

David Janzen was born in 1919 in Ukraine. In 1924, the family immigrated to Mexico, and then to Canada in 1926, settling on a farm in the Springridge area near Pincher Creek, Alberta. Janzen, the eldest son of a bishop who tended Alberta churches, left school after grade 8 to tend the family farm. He entered Rosthern Junior College in 1937 to complete his high school. Here he met Kathrina Wall and they were married in Coaldale in 1942. (Kathrina died in 1994.)

In 1946, at the age of 27, Janzen began studies at Bethel College in Kansas. The Janzens, with two children, lived in a converted streetcar on the campus. Another child was born there. Janzen graduated in 1948 with a BA degree in philosophy and sociology. He was ordained at Springridge Mennonite Church in August.

In fall of 1948, Janzen began teaching at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, continuing his education at the University of Manitoba where he graduated with an MA in philosophy and psychology in 1952. Janzen greatly enjoyed his 10 years of teaching at CMBC. His courses ranged from Bible and ethics to literature and family life.

"David Janzen was a large part of who I am," noted student Aaron Klassen in a funeral tribute. "A demanding teacher, he was much respected and beloved by his students." However, Janzen raised the suspicion of some church leaders.

"He became a victim of church politics when five bishops got together and threatened to boycott CMBC," noted Klassen. "His term was not renewed."

The family moved to Berlin for three years where Janzen directed a Mennonite Central Committee home for refugees. Here he honed his skills in "bucking the establishment" on behalf of "his refugees." He also took courses with prominent theologians at the Free University of Berlin.



Janzen

Janzen taught at Bluffton College in Ohio for one year before accepting a call to become pastor of the Niagara United Mennonite Church. He also pastored the Bethany Mennonite Church in Virgil for three years and taught at Eastern Mennonite College in Virginia for a year.

He ended his career as a chaplain at

the Niagara Region Detention Centre, while continuing to attend conferences, study and write.

"We met many times over the years," noted Klassen, "and had great discussions or arguments on many issues. He was one of those men who did not require that you agree with him but that you defend your position with solid reasoning. David Janzen was a profound thinker, yet a humble, caring man."

In January, Janzen slipped on his driveway and broke two vertebrae. Medical tests discovered an abdominal tumor which ultimately took his life.

"Janzen's entire life was dedicated to God's work, from caring for the land to caring for the church and the downtrodden. His work made a difference in the lives of many people and we thank God for his life," stated the funeral tribute.

He is survived by three children, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, as well as four siblings.—**Margaret Loewen Reimer**, from reports

Toronto, Ont.

Food for the city from Old Order farms

At first, Tim and Jacqui Schmucker of Toronto thought they would do a favour for a few friends. During their monthly sojourns into Ontario's "Mennonite country" (Waterloo Region), they began bringing back a little extra meat and preserves for others.

Before long, the couple found themselves handing out orders from the back of their car as people lined up for meat that not only tasted better but was free of hormone and drug injections. That was seven years ago.

Today, the couple sells products from Old Order Mennonite and Amish farms in a store they've dubbed "Fresh from the Farm." With a loan from the Mennonite Savings and Credit Union, the couple converted an old beauty salon into a store with a traditional feel to it—hardwood floors, wooden shelves and a chalkboard listing the items in stock.

Customers order from the store's web site (www.freshfromthefarm.ca) and pick up their meat, eggs, bread, cheese and jams at the store on Fridays and Saturdays. Located in East York, the couple also has a west-end Toronto delivery point.

"It's an alternative to agribusiness. It's an alternative to factory farms," says Tim, who is a Mennonite but not Old Order. His full-time job is with the Peacebuilders program of Mennonite Central Committee Ontario.

One problem was that Schmucker's store was taking so much meat from one farmer that he had to turn away his local customers. So Schmuckers agreed to buy only cuts that the farmer was already making for his neighbours—and only after he had met the local demand.—From *Toronto Star*, Feb. 28

London, Ont.

Gingrich followed own vision for mission

Arthur Gingrich, who died on March 20, was someone who thought “outside the box.” His creative, inquisitive mind was a challenge, even to himself.

In his autobiography, *Like a River Flowing*, Gingrich comments on his experience at Ontario Mennonite Bible School: “I regret that more doubts were not formed. I went out of OMBS with far too much certainty.”

In 1936, he joined Oscar Burkholder (his future father-in-law), Oscar’s son John, and Walter McDowell to establish a mission in Markstay, a village east of Sudbury, Ontario. Gingrich and McDowell were commissioned “to establish a beachhead and try, if they could, to win some of these people...to Christ.”

From Markstay they reached out to other communities, meeting people in their homes or in the school.

“We walked as much as 18 miles one way and back for religious services in those early years,” said Gingrich.

One of the better-known stories about Gingrich’s years in Markstay is that he once confronted a bear that

refused to back off, and killed it with his ax.

“A local reporter sent an account of the incident to the *Sudbury Star*, with some slight exaggerations,” said Gingrich. “When the *North Bay Nugget* took it up, the story continued to grow.”

In 1940, Gingrich married Marie Burkholder, who joined him in his mission. Over the years, many people from the Mennonite community went to Markstay to help for short periods of time.

“As...Vacation Bible School grew, we solicited more and more teachers from southern Ontario and as far away as Pennsylvania,” said Gingrich. “I suppose for them it was more fun going into the wild northern woodland to teach than to teach at home. At any rate, we had no problem getting help.”

Meanwhile, it was becoming difficult

finding VBS teachers for churches in the south. “The secretary of the Mission Board complained about this priority we were exercising.”

Eventually Alson Bowman took McDowell’s place. Others who settled in Markstay: Thomas and Elvina Martin, Roy and Dorothy Smith, and Paul and Edna Hunsberger.

In 1952, Gingrich decided to learn French. He moved his family to his sister’s farm in New Hamburg (Ida and Joe Cressman) while he went to Quebec for a kind of French immersion experience. Earl Myers was assigned to the church at Markstay.

When Gingrich returned to Markstay, he was not reinstated as pastor. He joined the Shantyments’ Christian Association and travelled with the railway to lumber camps, preaching to French-speaking men. He also visited isolated villages along the railroad.

Gingrich had many hurtful experiences in the institutional church but he never gave up his passion for sharing God’s good news. He continued to dream about new ventures and to develop a new vision for the church.

After about 30 years, Arthur and Marie left northern Ontario and took a position with Ausable Springs Ranch near Parkhill, Ontario, working with troubled youth. Gingrich was soon pioneering a program with house parents, creating a home environment for patients from the Ontario Psychiatric Hospital.

Many of Gingrich’s visions are reflected in his poetry and writings. Even in a time of deteriorating health he had energy to think “outside the box.” When I visited him in the hospital recently, I told him I was about to retire.

Gingrich said, with conviction, “When you retire, we need to get together and talk about how we can do mission the way Jesus would do it.” We talked about how Jesus would minister in ways that no one has yet imagined.

During his last weeks in hospital he wrote a booklet on his thoughts about life, and his visions of how life should be lived.—**Amzie Brubacher**



Gingrich



Seniors enjoy a buffet in the fellowship hall of Tofield Mennonite Church in Alberta. For several years, seniors from the community (sometimes as many as 250) have been coming to the church on the second Tuesday of every other month for music and a delicious dinner. Four women from the congregation—Margaret Koop, Katie Baergen, Anne Ewert and Mary Regehr—prepare the food. Various groups provide entertainment. The event has become a significant outreach program.—From report by Anne Friesen

Many members of one body

What does church unity really mean? People in the Corinthian church must have winced when they read Paul's definition of "one body." He didn't tell them to chop off a limb and send the problem people away.

I was standing in the foyer after our Christmas Eve service, when I noticed a middle-aged couple I didn't recognize. I introduced myself and asked where they were from. They laughed, blushed a little and said they were visitors from Millwoods Pentecostal, "the competition."

"No, we're all on the same team," I said. "It's good to meet a neighbour." They laughed and agreed.

Why would people from different churches view each other as competition? Sure, we are different stylistically, theologically, and maybe even in a family/cultural sort of way. There are reasons why I choose this church and they choose theirs.

However, we are working toward the same goal, trying in the best way we know how to follow Jesus. We might do better to understand ourselves as playing different positions on the same team.

On January 18 we celebrate "Many Peoples" Sunday, according to the Mennonite Church Canada calendar. It reminds us of the broad diversity of the church and the world. It reminds us that our own small understandings of God and the church are only one part of something much greater than we can imagine.

1 Corinthians 12 is a "many peoples" passage. In it, Paul names a variety of gifts and uses the analogy of the human body to get across the idea that in the church, the body of Christ, we are interdependent. Each part has an important function, yet each needs to rely on all the others if the body is to fulfill its potential for healthy, productive life.

It's an inspiring analogy. Whenever I hear it, the happy melody, "There are many gifts, but the

same Spirit," runs through my head. But let's look more deeply into the passage.

Far from unified

Why was Paul writing so much about unity? A reading of 1 Corinthians makes the answer clear. That church was far from unified. Members of the Corinthian congregation were not functioning as a team—they were competing and fighting with each other. The church was suffering because of deep divisions and a lot of unresolved conflict.

Paul knows this group well; he helped to start this church. He is writing this letter because a delegation from the church has approached him. They are desperate for some outside intervention.

The first 11 chapters highlight a number of problems. Briefly put, the people were arguing about leadership, worship styles, theology, lifestyles and who possessed spiritual authority.

Some members believed that since they were saved, it did not matter how they lived. This individualism resulted in all sorts of social ills, such as immorality, drunkenness, and lawsuits within the congregation. Church life was a huge mess.

Chapter 12 is a challenge from Paul, a wake-up call. The Corinthians need to do a little attitude adjustment and learn what it means to work together if they are to become a healthy church. They have to learn what unity in Christ means.

It's all well and good to say that the nose and the foot are equally important to the body—it's much more difficult to put into practice. Sometimes the nose is quite offended by the foot, making it difficult for them to



tolerate each other, much less work toward a common goal.

Recently I came across a true story about unity in a book by Arthur Paul Boers (*Never Call Them Jerks*).

In a certain Christian community, an old man personified difficulty—he was irritable, messy, fighting with everyone, and unwilling to help. No one got along with him. Finally he left. The leader of the community tried to convince him to return, but the man said no. The leader offered the man a big monthly stipend to come back.

When the man returned, the community was up in arms. The leader explained, “This man is like yeast for bread. Without him here you would never learn about anger, irritability, patience, and compassion. That is why you pay me, and I hire him.”

I would have been up in arms with the rest of the community. How dare he impose this nasty person on us and then have the audacity to say that we need him!

Paul is doing somewhat the same thing, albeit in a more diplomatic fashion. He challenges the Corinthians to look at those people they are so annoyed with and to realize that they need each other. Paul also provides a few guidelines for practising unity.

Two things bind the church together, says Paul: love for each other and the common centrality of Christ. These define unity. The body illustration is particularly useful—it helps people understand that unity is not defined as sameness, but as variety bound together by a common desire to serve Christ’s purposes.

The body can only be what it is meant to be if it possesses all those members and if those members are governed from one centre. When certain people in the Corinthian church claimed spiritual authority because they thought themselves more gifted, Paul reminded them that all gifts come from the same Spirit and that all are meant for the common good. The possession of gifts should not elevate the individual but instead strengthen the whole body in its desire to serve Christ.

Unity in our church

Last week our church mailboxes contained a letter from the Mennonite



Rita Corbin illustration

Church Alberta executive updating us on the situation with the Calgary Inter-Mennonite Church. It was a reminder that issues do not simply go away; we need to pay attention.

Three years ago, the Calgary church voluntarily withdrew its conference membership for five years, mainly because of differing convictions regarding homosexuality. These five years were meant to give everyone a bit of breathing space: time to pray, discuss and discern before final decisions are made.

The whole mess has been painful for everyone. It’s a vivid reminder that we, like the Corinthian church, are not good at handling differences, and that we, like them, need to be involved in the difficult struggle toward unity in Christ.

The body imagery of I Corinthians 12 is particularly poignant in this situation: “As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect....

“God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.”

Many people in the Corinthian church must have winced when they read Paul’s letter. He doesn’t tell them to chop off a limb. I bet they were hoping he would take a stand and send the problem people away.

Instead, like the leader who brought back the contentious old man, Paul tells the Corinthians that sending away the problems in their midst will not solve their basic problem. He tells them to love one another and to make sure that whatever they are doing, they are doing it for the greater good of the whole body of Christ and not their own interests.

Continued on page 8

Body *From page 7*

In some ways, that's a frustrating answer. It means we as a church have to suffer together through our conflicts, and avoid taking the easy way out. Unity does not mean that we all agree. It means we are committed to love each other and to find ways to work together even if the nose and feet can hardly fit into the same small space.

Hopes for a mutually acceptable solution in the Alberta conference seem dim, but we cannot give up. There are two years left, and there are many caring Christians in our conference and in the Calgary church. I pray that we are not going to amputate a limb. That will not solve our problems.

People who have lost a limb often experience "phantom pain." The injured or maimed part is gone, but the pain is not. It remains as a constant reminder that something important has been lost.

Author Parker Palmer defines Christian community in a way I find both distressing and amazingly encouraging. He says: "We might define true community as that place where the person you least want to live with always lives" (quoted by Arthur Boers in *Never Call Them Jerks*).

That fits with the message Paul has for the Corinthian church and for us.

A workable definition of unity is not sameness, but love for each other, centredness in Christ, and a commitment to learn and grow together.

A philosophy professor I studied with had a good way of thinking about achieving perfection. If we think of it as something unattainable, we will get discouraged.

"If a hammer can pound in a nail, it's a perfect hammer. It fulfills the purpose for which it was made," he said.

If we define unity as everybody reaching the same understanding, we make it an unattainable ideal. If we define unity as being bound together in love with a focus on Christ, we can be unified even though we may differ on some dearly held beliefs.—**Donita Wiebe-Neufeld**

The author is co-pastor of First Mennonite Church in Edmonton, Alberta. This is from a sermon she gave there on January 18.

The body illustration in I Corinthians 12 is particularly useful — it helps people understand that unity is not defined as sameness, but as variety bound together by a common desire to serve Christ's purpose.

Seminary courses in Manitoba

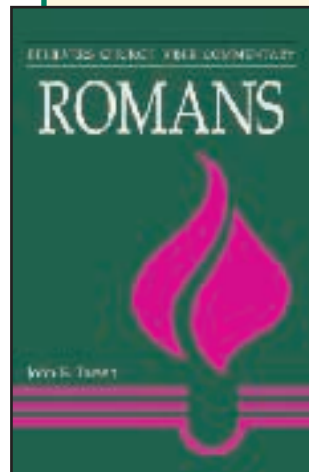
The Evangelical Anabaptist Seminary Program in Winnipeg has been offering several short courses this spring. The courses are taught at Canadian Mennonite University.

"Old Testament theology" was taught by Pierre Gilbert April 19-23. "Preaching the Sermon on the Mount" was led by Herb Kopp on April 26-30. "The Book of Revelation" is being taught by Loren Johns on April 30-May 7.

Another course, entitled "A contemplative approach to youth ministry," will be led by Michael Hryniuk on May 24-28.

Canadian Mennonite University is offering a course on "Worship as the people's work" from July 19-23. The leader is John Bell from the Iona Community in Scotland.

For information on seminary or CMU courses, call (204) 487-3300, extension 328, or go to www.cmu.ca. —From CMU releases



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Denominational minister reflects on first year

Animated conversation marked a recent meeting of the Christian Formation Council as members responded to first-year reflections on pastoral and congregational priorities by Sven Eriksson, denominational minister for Mennonite Church Canada.

Council members talked with Eriksson about issues such as finding and forming pastors, the “profound diversity” on controversial issues and understandings of leadership, and how to foster greater unity.

Finding pastors

Why are churches looking for pastors from outside Mennonite churches? wondered council members. How are these pastors different?

Eriksson replied that non-Mennonites are called “when churches have no clear options or are looking for someone different.... Some newcomers are eager to adapt and learn. They bring fresh perspectives. Others are not as ready.... There’s quite a range.”

Asked who oversees what’s expected of a Mennonite pastor, Eriksson noted that the local church hires the pastor. However, area conferences and MC Canada have some input in credentialling—licensing towards ordination and ordination itself.

Some area conferences offer orientation on Anabaptist history and sexual boundaries prior to credentialling. Or they may require that the candidate take a course on Mennonite history and theology, as Mennonite Church British Columbia does. But these things are not in place in all areas.

“We have very low standards of entry into the Mennonite pastorate compared to others,” said Eriksson. “Presbyterians have a four-year orientation period which is typical for mainline churches. Our process is inadequate. I say that having come through that route myself as a former Baptist!”

Asked what the church should do, Eriksson responded that “we really need to raise the bar in terms of entry requirements. When we raise the bar, it’ll become more attractive; we need to protect our churches from some-

times irresponsible leadership.”

What about pastors called from within the congregation? asked someone. Or lay ministers?

“It’s a healthy trend to call people out of the congregation, part of a strong Mennonite tradition,” he responded. But when it comes to

credentialling, “we need a consistent approach. Also, we need some sense of accountability within the congregations.... The people called to ministry would feel reassured by guidelines.”



Eriksson

Differing leadership styles

Another lively discussion focused on differing understandings of leadership, and the need to identify “true and life-giving Anabaptist principles of leadership.”

Eriksson noted that this is a “huge priority” which will be addressed at this summer’s Ministers Conference where Keith Harder will talk about “Leadership in times of change and

conflict,” focusing on Mennonite distinctives.

Lots of things play into our understandings of leadership: our servanthood emphasis, a commitment to consensus, an aversion to authoritarian or corporate management models, noted Eriksson.

“There’s ambivalence about leadership among us. If we encourage strong leadership, we get chastised; if we don’t, we get chastised too!”

Asked how team leadership plays into this, Eriksson responded that “this is a healthy direction” which combines the tradition of lay leadership with professional leaders. But it does raise questions about what leadership is. How do we work with “power?”

We need to be more open to differing leadership styles, he said. “Some small churches need more directive leadership.... Maybe we’ve been too narrow.”

Visible signs of unity

The discussions of differences led into an invigorating conversation on “our visible signs of unity...our areas of common ground.”

Continued on page 10



The Formation Council, from left: Rudy Franz, Naomi Unger, Sue Steiner (chair), Pauline Steinmann, Don Rempel Boschman, Paul Bergen, Van Hoa Chau, Veronica Dyck, Terry Schellenberg, Jeremy Bergen.

Minister From page 9

“What are the things that bind us?” asked Jeremy Bergen. What is recognized as “counting” in terms of being Mennonite? Controversies over the Confession of Faith, the hymnal, over pastors seem to be part of a larger anxiety over what it means to be Mennonite, he said.

Sue Steiner agreed: “There’s tremendous diversity.... How have you as denominational minister found *our voice*?”

“Functionally speaking, visible signs of unity have to do with a cultural reality which is very powerful,” said Eriksson. “It’s what people talk about...the many stories that shape a sense of belonging and connectedness...how people relate and behave.”

Perhaps this can be found in the “multiple integration structures we’ve experienced in last 20 years,” suggested Steiner, “in outreach work which has been rooted in our immigrant history.”

Others noted that we find our “common ground” in stories, in Advent

and Lenten resources used in many churches, in our hymns, in a common symbol [the dove logo]—“this visual thing which is us!”

How did MC Alberta move from disunity toward greater unity? asked

‘We have very low standards of entry into the Mennonite pastorate compared to others.... Our process is inadequate...we need to raise the bar.’

someone. It was a deliberate process, a refining of a Mennonite “culture” guided by trusted leadership, and embodied in things such as camp and an annual songfest.

“Worship and service held us together in Alberta during a time of trouble. It became a key unifying thing,” said one person.

Even though we may disagree on parts of the Confession of Faith, it is still a symbol of unity, a reference

point.

“How we deal with tough conflict issues within a diverse constituency can also define us,” noted Bergen. For example, the workshop on church conflict by Dean Peachey at the recent

MC Manitoba meetings “sparked an interest even outside the Mennonite churches.”

Annual assemblies “are a powerful point of identification,” said Eriksson. Stories from area conferences and

congregations in crises, emphasizing our history, remembering what we have done together—why would we want to abandon that?

Resources and schools

The resources MC Canada helps to produce grow out of our theology—how do we help them get used? asked Pauline Steinmann and Sue Steiner. How do we encourage churches to remain Anabaptist?

At times, pastors may be gatekeepers and there’s lots of competition from other sources.

“We have to have confidence in the process that produces something, an institutional confidence,” said Bergen.

“And there’s the bond of friendship,” said someone else, “a network of experiences together,” such as attending Mennonite schools. “These create a feeling of being part of something.”

“Associations people have with schools are really great,” concluded Eriksson, “but for a new person coming in, this can be alienating. Hence, there’s a need for a continuing ‘common ground’ experience.

“How to provide glue for more people to bond in, how to provide a knowledge base for them so that confidence can come—those are the challenges.”

The conversations will continue at an assembly workshop with Eriksson this summer in Winkler. The focus will be on how God provides “enough for all” (theme for Winkler 2004) in the midst of our similarity and diversity.—

Leona Dueck Penner

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Dilemma in Dhaka

Helping women in Bangladesh is not as simple as it seems, notes Shari Narine, a Mennonite Central Committee volunteer from Alberta. Below she reflects on a job creation program for rural women for which she is an advisor.

As we sit around the table, discussing a Memorandum of Understanding for organizations that our Job Creation Program will partner with, I find myself struggling with the ideal and the reality.

The issue is whether to demand that our partner organizations hire only women between the ages of 18 and 40.

Why stop at 40? is my initial thought. A site manager explains that the work involves not only fine motor skills but good eyesight.

What about age 18 to start? From my North American point of view, there is no discussion here: 18 is the age of majority; it's when youth finish school and strike out into the working world.

But in Bangladesh, the situation is different. Many girls are wed at age 11 or 12. Many have three or four children before they are even 18, and may be widowed by that age. How do they put food on the table or clothes on their children's backs?

The Job Creation program of MCC Bangladesh aims at helping the poorest of the poor. Help comes not only in the shape of a job, but in providing skills training as well as life training. Employment not only feeds the children of these women, usually the main earners of their families, but gives them a voice in their communities, helps them purchase land, and allows them to educate their children.

Since last September, I have travelled to nearly all the project sites where these women make crafts. When asked their age, some will say 25, others 35. The reality is that not many know exactly when they were born so they simply assume an age.

And herein lies one difficulty in

stating that employment is only for those 18-40 years of age.

Today most would argue that employing a girl who is less than 18 years of age is condoning child labour. How do you refer to a 16-year-old who has three children and an absent husband as a child?

We in the West have the strength of a social system that cares for us. How can we use our standards when we know that no such social system exists

in third world countries? How can we use our standards as a measuring stick for what is right and what is wrong?

This is where I struggle. I know that in the ideal society employing someone under age 18 is child labour. But I also know that in Bangladesh's reality this may mean helping to feed a family. At the same time, I see children pouring out of garment sweatshops. And I continue to struggle.—**Shari Narine**

Another side of liberation in Iraq

In December, I was part of a two-week Christian Peacemakers Teams (CPT) delegation to Iraq.

The mission of CPT is to reduce violence and promote resolution of conflict through nonviolent means. Initiated by Mennonites, Quakers and Church of the Brethren, it is supported by a range of Catholic and Protestant denominations in the United States and Canada.

To a person, the Iraqis whom I interviewed were pleased that Saddam Hussein is gone, but poor security, combined with a national infrastructure left in shambles by the invasion, has tempered their reaction to U.S. rule.

People fear uncontrolled gangs of looters. The telephone system is still down. Electricity is sporadic. Gasoline is in short supply. The drains in the streets are blocked. No one appears to be looking after the common people.

An Iraqi doctor at Al Monsor Hospital predicted it will take 10 years before Iraq is "back on its feet." Most people said they now felt "occupied" rather than "liberated." Meanwhile the U.S. army is hunkered down in guarded bases, venturing out only in heavily armed tanks and Humvees. Attacks by resistance fighters have resulted in the U.S. losing an average of two soldiers a day since the war formally ended.

The soldiers seem genuinely fearful. A colonel in Saddam's former palace in Baghdad asked me what it was like to freely wander the streets of Baghdad. I could honestly state that I never once felt threatened and that the people were genuinely kind. Real liberation could be

found in the hearts of the common people.

Our CPT group was warmly welcomed. Farmers in Fullajah invited our team to lunch after telling us how a misguided attack by U.S. soldiers resulted in the death of eight friends. The soldiers later apologized, admitting they had attacked the wrong house. These Iraqis could easily have harboured hatred for this "American" CPT delegation but instead extended hospitality.

An Iraqi family invited us to their home for an American Thanksgiving dinner. Because their stove had been looted, they cooked all day over a wood fire outside. Borrowed chairs and a table were brought for us. This labour of love in a newfound freedom was typical of the common people.

In another model of Iraqi liberation, the sheikh of the largest Sunni mosque in Baghdad spent four hours talking with delegation members about detention abuses by the U.S. army and its failure to provide compensation for damaged properties. After a delicious lunch our group was invited to pray with the Muslim faithful.

In liberty, East was meeting West. In liberty, Christian and Muslim faiths were together seeking divine guidance for peace in this torn land. I shall always remember the Iraqi people as kind and hospitable. The liberty in their hearts will propel them to find peace and prosperity in their land.—From report by **Laurie Hadden**

Reprinted from the newsletter of Rouge Valley Mennonite Church in Markham, Ontario.

Historic days to celebrate

February 4, 1974: “Resource” first used as a verb at a missions committee meeting. The full reference was “Who will resource us with coffee and doughnuts at the next meeting?”

February 16, 1938: First photograph of a person talking into a microphone published in a Mennonite periodical. This photo became the inspiration for an entire generation of Mennonite photographers.



**Emke
Retro**

Ivan Emke

March 24, 1956: The first public performance by the Thiessen Twins, an accordion and tap-dancing duo popular on the Mennonite banquet circuit until the early 1960s. Their records never sold well as they were recorded at 68 rpm on a machine brought from Russia. Nevertheless, their hits, such as the “Gott ist die Liebe Polka” are still played by some bands.

April 12, 1947: Due to a cooking accident, marshmallows were included in a salad at a potluck in Stetson’s Corners, Alberta. The taste sensation spread, and the rest is history.

May 16, 1981: The Conference of Mennonites in America (COMA) released its “Report on Sexuality.”

May 17, 1981: Seven churches threaten to leave COMA if it doesn’t withdraw its “Report on Sexuality” and discipline all members of the committee.

May 18, 1981: Bureaucrats at COMA decide that their “Report on Sexuality” needs more study. They appoint a task force and set a deadline of August 1994. With any luck, the issue will have resolved itself by then.

July 12, 1971: The first documented use of inclusive language in hymn singing. Some were elated, some confused, and a few men were heard to mumble something about the “thin edge of the wedge.”

October 28, 1986: Formation of MARM (Mennonite Animal Rights Ministry) at a pig roast in Tavistock. The organization supports the annual “Week of Prayer for Animals.”

November 3, 1906: Doctor Schlabach’s Anabaptist Footwashing Powder is patented. It is guaranteed to fulfill Romans 10:15: “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace.” Available wherever you see “Wonder Oil.” Guaranteed to be good until the rapture or the tribulation, whichever comes first.—January 23, 1989

Letters

Core of gospel is love of other

J. Nelson Kraybill’s article, “Four spiritual truths” (Jan. 26), reminded me of my reaction to Bright’s “Four Spiritual Laws” years ago, when they were immensely popular in evangelical circles.

I have come to the conclusion that they are a good starting point for many who desire to live a Christian life. I believe that someone who takes to heart the Four Spiritual Laws cannot help but eventually embrace the “ethical, social and political implications” which Kraybill spells out.

Although Kraybill does not individualize the truths, I was happy to read the personal prayer at the end, implying that individual confession is important.

Different Christian denominations emphasize different biblical truths, as do the different writers of Scripture. A good example is the difference between Amos and Hosea. Both address the same sin (turning away from God) but each has a very different approach.

Hosea is personal and subjective, and speaks of God’s relation to Israel in terms of the most intimate of human relations—parent-child and husband-wife. Unlike Amos who emphasizes the universal sovereignty of God, Hosea puts little emphasis on God’s sovereignty and concern for other nations. Although Hosea sees the same societal evils as Amos (irresponsible rulers, the corruption of

spiritual leaders, degeneracy of worship), for Hosea these are all signs of a deeper evil—Israel’s rejection of its covenant relationship with God.

Both Hosea and Amos proclaim disciplinary acts by which God seeks to create an obedient people. And divine discipline is certainly present in other biblical texts as well.

Writers of the New Testament regarded the experience of Israel as a disciplinary preparation under the law for the redemption accomplished by Christ’s death on the cross (Galatians 3:10-26). The writer of Hebrews (chapter 12) makes use of a number of Old Testament quotations in his interpretation of divine discipline.

Here it is not punishment that is emphasized but the loving God (parent) who pays attention to the erring child (12:10).

Rather than interpreting Christ’s death on the cross for our sins as being about an angry God who “evens the score with violence,” I see the central core of the Gospel as being about love that values the other more than self—a grieving parent who gives up life itself in order to save an errant child.—**Elfrieda Schroeder, Kitchener, Ont.**

Truth can be offensive to our liking

In response to many topics that are debated in the *Canadian Mennonite*, I would ask, “How well do we know God?” God is both the God of grace and the God of judgment. It is in the area

of God's judgment that we have difficulty.

Often one is left with the impression that because God forgives our sins we can do whatever we want, that our freedom is based upon what we believe is right. This, however, is far from the truth: God gave us freedom in Christ under Christ's mastery. (Saying "Jesus is lord of my life" requires "dying to self" daily.)

Whom are we pleasing—society and what it believes to be true, or God and what God says. If we have God in us, our lives will more and more reflect Christ's character and lifestyle. Did not Jesus say, if you love me, keep my commandments?

Maybe we need to ask what truth we are avoiding so that we don't have to change (repent) so that we may be truly free from enslavements (addictions, sins, how we live). It is by what God says that I will be judged (held to account).

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God. So each of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14).

"Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap

corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life" (Galatians 6).

If we interpret the scriptures to make us comfortable, we do so at our own peril. The truth can be very offensive to our liking or thinking. A mature Christian recognizes this and will yield to God's desire (will, judgment) in order to be really free.

—**Simon Noordam, Noelville, Ont.**

Movie focuses on reason for Christ's coming

I am responding to the review of "The Passion of the Christ" by Gordon Matties (March 8).

I was part of an advance showing, and later decided to view the movie alone on a weekday afternoon in a theatre that provided all the special effects. The positive messages of Christ were, for me, very clearly conveyed.

What has not been recognized in reviews I have seen is the clearly focused issue of understanding or misunderstanding the reason for Christ's coming and dying. That remains the issue for viewers, both believers and cynics.

Certain characters are clearly

portrayed as the ones who understand—Mary, in particular. By the time Jesus is approaching the cross, Mary Magdalene, some disciples, even soldiers and others, are beginning to grasp the reason for his death.

Understanding who is the Christ is a real issue for us today. Will individuals be led to believe in Christ because of the movie? That is a personal and spiritual question. Perhaps the first concern is to be sure we understand and are renewed in our faith. Then our faithfulness may lead to a wider effect.

If we who supposedly understand more fully than the "charter disciples" fail to comprehend and follow, then we are of all people more miserable, as Paul might say.

It comes down to asking myself: "Were you there?" and "Where are you now?"—**Bill Thiessen, Abbotsford, B.C.**

The Passion and the Jews

I appreciated Gordon Matties' thoughtful review of "The Passion of the Christ" (March 8). Matties raises serious concerns about the limitations and even dangers of such a film, and rightly questions the notion that the point of Jesus' death is how dreadfully

Roll up the rim

Deep in my heart, I know that it's not good to enter contests and go for the big bucks. Such activity merely encourages the materialism already rampant in our society.

But the statement I've just made is in the abstract. What happens when you walk into Tim Hortons, order a coffee, and see a rim just waiting to be rolled? You can comfort yourself with the thought that chances of winning are only 1 in 9. Further, chances of winning anything of consequence—a TV, a bike, a thousand bucks—are rather remote. But as soon as you've rolled up the rim, you are in danger of losing complete control.

Of course, the fact that I purchased one or two cups of coffee each day during our Spring Break trip to Saskatoon had nothing to do with my desire to get something for free. I was merely enjoying the opportunity to relax with a good cup of coffee. As I told

myself each time I rolled up a rim, "I can stop any time I wish." (I can hear my 16-year old daughter replying, "Yeah, right, dad. Whatever.")



Alright, I confess: I was eager—even desperate—to win something. I agonized when the rim said, "Please play again," and whooped with joy when it read, "Win one donut."

I knew that my conscience was beginning to catch up to me when I had a dream

in which I was named the customer of the month at the Tim Hortons store in Winkler. This wasn't exactly God speaking to Joseph about the future of Egypt, but I got the message.

A few days after that dream, I asked friends who were going shopping to stop off at Ten Thousand Villages and stock up on Fair Trade Coffee for me. The next day, I prepared a little coffee canister for these friends.

As I was about to deliver the gift, it occurred to me that I had a "win one coffee" coupon in my pocket, courtesy of a student of mine who doesn't drink coffee. I added the coupon to the Fair Trade canister, and delivered it to my friends with glee.

I had experienced the joy of genuine giving. On top of that, if these friends should happen to win a new pick-up truck when next they roll up a rim, perhaps they'll let me use it—for service-related activities, of course!

he suffered.

What I want to draw attention to is a point that Matties mentions in passing: the caricature of the Jews in the film.

Many readers will be aware of the concerns raised by many Jews and others who are acutely aware of how Christian theologies, especially stories surrounding the death of Jesus, have been used to justify stereotyping, persecution and murder of Jews throughout Christian history.

Will this film fan the flames of an anti-semitism that blames Jews for the death of Christ? Will people assume that the film offers an accurate picture of Jewish leaders and tradition? Will “The Passion” jeopardize the advances of the last 50 years of Jewish-Christian dialogue?

May God give wisdom to the leaders of our churches and schools to use this opportunity to address the anti-Jewish uses of the gospel of Christ, and lead people away from erroneous theologies that lend themselves to misunderstanding and violence.—**Anita Fast, Vancouver, B.C.**

Do we really believe Paul's words?

Thank you for reviving Ivan Emke's column, which still makes me smile. His classic “Ten reasons why men should not be ordained” was one I sent out to friends the first time around; it now circulates on the Internet.

John F. Wiebe doesn't like it, but I find his letter about it very interesting (Feb. 23). He claims to find the column “disturbing” because Paul wrote, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28)—an idea that underlines rather than undermines Emke's satirical point.

Wiebe turns immediately from this to homosexual unions, saying that they should not be called “marriages.” Yet if we take Paul's words at face value, as Wiebe suggests we should, restriction of “marriage” to the union of “male” and “female” persons makes no sense.

Nor, incidentally, can one argue that using “marriage” to describe homo-

sexual unions is a lexical violation: the venerable Oxford English Dictionary indicates that the word has long been used to refer to things other than the union of one man and one woman (polygamy being a notable biblical example), and that “marriage” is now sometimes used for “long-term relationships between partners of the same sex.”

But no one really believes that language cannot change. “Silly” no longer means “holy” as it once did (like the German “selig”), and “marriage” has also undergone changes through the centuries.—**Garrett Epp, Edmonton, Alta.**

Good dialogue begins with deep respect

I agree with Walter Bergen (March 22, page 14) that we need to have a constructive dialogue on homosexuality, and not muddy the discussion with pejorative language. One of the strong contributions Swartley makes with his book, *Homosexuality: Biblical Interpretation and Moral Discernment*, is his dialogical tone.

But I do agree with Paul Doerksen (Feb. 9 review) that Swartley's treatment of western culture is inadequate. In the first place, not all aspects of the sexual revolution are negative. Many of us are glad to use adequate birth control. Many of us value fuller mutuality between males and females.

Second, cultural influence on our beliefs about homosexuality is there on both sides. None of us are free from the biases of our culture. We all need to discern carefully how culture influences our convictions.

To me, Swartley's “analysis of western culture” chapter does not read like an analysis but a list of what's negative about contemporary culture.

More basically, there seems to be an assumption that when we name the critical issue as submitting to biblical authority, we have solved the issue in favour of condemning homosexuality. I do not think that the issue is that easily resolved.

People on both sides of the debate are reading the Bible seriously and authoritatively. Swartley does take seriously scholars who read the Bible

in a way that is open to the possibility of a “blessed” homosexual covenant. He disagrees with their interpretation, but accepts the fact that they are reading the Bible faithfully.

In the church we have deeply held convictions on both sides of the issue. That is why we are highly polarized. At their best, the convictions on both sides are seen to be Gospel, to reflect the will of God.

Of course, our convictions are also coloured by our biases. But our discourse with each other is most productive and healthy when we begin with respect for each other's deeply held convictions.

I also think we need to have a deep modesty about how fully we know the will of God. The Bible tells us that in this life we can only know partially (1 Corinthians 13). I must acknowledge that I don't know all the truth. Conviction is a precious gift. It can also become a curse.

One of a number of “miracles” we experienced as a congregation struggling with convictions around homosexuality was that both the leadership team that led our process and the healing and reconciliation team that is at work now included members who disagreed in basic convictions. Yet both teams discovered that they could enjoy working together, studying the Bible and praying.

They became a microcosm of what I envision the church of Christ to be at its best—people of deep conviction disagreeing but trusting and loving and respecting each other enough to enter a deep dialogue.—**Gary Harder, Toronto, Ont.**

This section is a forum for discussion and discernment. Letters express the opinion of the writer, not necessarily that of Canadian Mennonite or the church. We publish most letters, unless they attack individuals or become unnecessarily repetitious. See page 2 for address information.

Toronto, Ont.

St. Clair O'Connor moves to restore financial health

An nursing home planned by the St. Clair O'Connor Community seniors residence here is unlikely to go forward, said the board of directors at the annual meeting here on March 28.

Construction of the nursing home was initially planned to begin in 2003. However, the financial partner for the project, Borealis Infrastructure Management, pulled out of the project in May 2003, citing a change in business strategy. While the St. Clair O'Connor board continued to pursue new financial partners, they told the annual meeting that the project was likely to fail because of time limits imposed by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

The board also said it was challenged to put together a new financial plan for the nursing home because it violated its operating agreement with the provincial Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 2001 when it bought land in 2001 with money from reserves. The reserve fund cannot be used without permission of the regulator.

A fact sheet distributed by the board stated that in 2002 the Ministry began pressing St. Clair O'Connor to come up with a plan to replace the reserve fund.

"The board believed that pursuing the nursing home project was the best strategy" for meeting the Ministry's demands, the fact sheet stated. A viable financial plan would provide payment for the real estate and enable St. Clair O'Connor to refund its replacement reserve.

In February of this year, the board sent a proposal to the Ministry to resolve the issues. According to the fact sheet, "the proposal stated the board was prepared to abandon the nursing home project and put the property next door up for sale with an open listing."

The proposal also included promises of a reserve fund study, a review of

maintenance management, and the promise that all funds forwarded from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing would be spent in compliance with the operating agreement.

The Ministry responded with a Supervisory Management Agreement which makes the Ministry a co-manager of St. Clair O'Connor for an initial six months. The provincial body will provide the St. Clair O'Connor board with training in governance, review its operations, implement improvements, and take a supervisory

role in financial and maintenance matters.

Officials from the Ministry have started meeting with staff, and the board is optimistic that a more constructive relationship with the regulator is beginning. The lawyers for St. Clair O'Connor and the Ministry need to take some final legal actions before the agreement is in place.

The seniors residence celebrated its 20th anniversary last year.—**Michael Bryson**



Photo by Alain Epp Weaver

Ya'qoub al-Masri is one of 21 Palestinian farmers in Halhul, West Bank, that have been assisted by Mennonite Central Committee and the Union of Agricultural Work Committees to plant fruit and nut trees. The farmers already owned the land but did not have the economic resources to prepare it for cultivation. Families helped cultivate 30 acres of stony land, build retaining walls and dig cisterns. In late January, farmers began planting more than 5,000 apple, almond, pomegranate and peach seedlings.—MCC release

Boissevain, Man.

Manitoba leaders tackle tough issues in congregations

The February 20 Leadership Conference of Mennonite Church Manitoba drew 130 pastors and lay leaders—including 12 from the United Church of Canada. The group met at the Boissevain Mennonite Brethren Church to talk about tough issues.

Worship focused on Ephesians 4—“keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace”—set the stage for a seminar on “Talking about tough issues in congregations” led by Dean Peachey of Menno Simons College. Peachey teaches conflict resolution and has worked extensively with congregational conflicts.

Through anecdotes from his experience, Peachey challenged church leaders to move past fear of conflict to embrace it as an opportunity. “If you want less conflict,” he said, “invite

open disagreement.”

He acknowledged that although there may be some anxiety, acknowledging conflict from the pulpit can be a move towards achieving creative dialogue.

“We need to remember that the only place without conflict is the cemetery,” he said. “The tranquil...graveyard is not the church!”

In helping participants understand what it takes to embrace conflict as an opportunity, Peachey related a story about one church member’s evaluation of “what’s wrong with our church.” The evaluation caused him to stop and think about the church’s merits and realize that “this isn’t my church; it is the church of Christ.”

Peachey encouraged participants to view the process of resolving conflict as a “levelling of the playing field.” He

mapped out a four-stage approach to conflict resolution, beginning with clarification of the issues. He encouraged participants to use a timeline of scheduled dates to come to decisions.

The second stage, said Peachey, is “opportunity for input”—intense study and teaching on the issue for the congregation. Then comes “opportunity for discussion” and the final stage, “opportunity for decision.”

While examining the various stages of conflict, Peachey also reviewed various formats for meeting and methods for structuring group discussions.

Participants were reminded that our goal in dialogue should be to learn about ourselves and others.—**Norm Dyck**

The writer is pastor of Graysville Mennonite Church in Manitoba.

Harrisonburg, Va.

Student gathering offers ‘stories of healing’

Some 140 students and faculty from Mennonite, Brethren, Quaker and other schools across the United States and Canada gathered at Eastern Mennonite University February 20-21 for the annual Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship.

The theme, “Stories of healing,” offered theoretical and practical knowledge of healing skills after a traumatic event, and for accompanying others on the journey to recovery.

The event drew participants from Canadian Mennonite University and Conrad Grebel University College, as well as seven American schools.

A theatre piece, “A body in motion,” was based on the book by Howard Zehr, *Transcending: Reflections of crime victims*. The emotionally intense work was followed by a lengthy discussion.

A highlight was a talk by Peter Loge, former director of the Campaign for Criminal Justice in Washington, D.C. Students especially appreciated his comments on the unique role Christians can have in peacebuilding

efforts in the world.

Other speakers included Lynn Shiner, director of Pennsylvania’s Victims Compensation Program; John Glick of the Gesundheit Institute; Cheryl Talley, a psychologist; and Jayne Docherty and Barry Hart of EMU’s conflict transformation program.

Shiner told the story of her two children being stabbed to death on Christmas Eve, 1994, by her ex-husband, who then took his own life.

“For all practical purposes, my own life was over,” she told her spellbound audience. “The hardest part was learning things about my late husband’s past that should have been revealed to me. Many times I felt that I was the one most responsible for my children’s deaths.”

Shiner worked for legislation in Pennsylvania—passed in 1996—that gives new rights to ex-spouses with shared custody to find out if their ex-spouse had been arrested for any crimes.



Lynn Shiner tells her horrific “survivor story” to students at the Peace Fellowship gathering.

Elizabeth Miller, an international development student from CMU, appreciated all the speakers and workshops. “I liked everything.... It was a safe place to raise questions,” she said.—From EMU release by **Jim Bishop**

London, England

First theology forum draws European scholars

Twenty-six Anabaptists representing nine countries gathered here on March 4-5 for the first London Mennonite Theology Forum. Sponsored by the London Mennonite Centre, the forum brought together Anabaptists from Europe and the United Kingdom to explore the topic of atonement.

Vic Thiessen, director of the London Mennonite Centre and Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker, organized the event. Another Canadian participant was Arnold Neufeld-Fast, who teaches at the European Mennonite Seminary in Bienenberg, Switzerland.

Thiessen said atonement was chosen because of the interest among European scholars in the subject.

"Atonement is central to Mennonite peace theology," said Thiessen. Traditional theories saying that God willed the death of Jesus as punishment for sin are founded in violence and retribution.

"The current interest is largely due to J. Denny Weaver's book, *The Non-violent Atonement*. Weaver's nonviolent atonement, which he calls "Narrative

Christus Victor," suggests that Jesus' life of nonviolently challenging the system was vindicated in his resurrection, which signalled the defeat of the powers of evil.

"Changing the focus of atonement to following Jesus' way of peace and justice...has implications for the life of all Christians, not just academics," said Thiessen. It is also related to the wider issue of how Mennonite theology should relate to traditional theology, an issue being debated more and more as the mainline European churches decline.

Weaver, who teaches at Bluffton College in Ohio, participated in the forum. Other presenters were Margot Longley of Turku, Finland, and Neal Blough, director of the Paris Mennonite Centre.

Neufeld-Fast in his response suggested that Weaver's model denies other biblical motifs. British scholars Jeremy Thomson and Simon Barrow also questioned the narrowness of the

Weaver claim and discussed the darkness of God in the atonement. James Jakob Fehr from Germany questioned the commonality of Anabaptist views and noted that the urgency of their situation forced them to focus on the practical rather than theoretical aspects.

Many said that "to have a peaceful atonement theory enables them to discuss peace seriously with the congregations they work with," observed Longley. With such an understanding of the atonement peace becomes central to what it means to be a Christian.

"It was great to meet Mennonites from the rest of Europe," said Thomson. Dankwart and Brunhilde Horsch, Mennonite farmers from Germany, attended because of their interest in peace theology.

Participants have proposed meeting again in the Netherlands in the fall of 2005.—From report by **Bethany Keener**, with **Vic Thiessen**

It is important to have a firm rooting in the history, culture and theology of the Mennonite church. AMBS is a gathering point of Mennonite thinkers and doers and is an excellent place to form lasting relationships with present and future church leaders.

— Joel Miller, AMBS student in the Master of Divinity program from Bellefontaine, Ohio, and St. Louis, Mo., recipient of a full-tuition Church Leadership Award.



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Bujumbura, Burundi

Families desperate for food and blankets

Some 5,530 households devastated by the country's decade-long civil war, looting and flooding recently received beans, blankets and other items from Mennonite Central Committee.

"People were so desperate that as we cleaned out the beans [that had fallen into] our shoes, children would stand close with open hands," reported Zachee Nzeyimana, MCC Burundi facilitator.

Blankets are also desperately needed—some families share a single blanket.

Some 70,000 kilograms of beans, 2,000 blankets, 128 school uniforms, 428 school kits and additional clothing were distributed in several provinces with the help of Miparec, a Burundian peace organization.

Local peace committees organized by Miparec selected recipients. They included widows, orphans, and displaced people. Also included were Batwa families, the poorest and most socially ostracized ethnic group.

In Burundi's highlands, night temperatures can be chilly. Some Batwa families exchange children at



Photo by Zachee Nzeyimana

Members of the Batwa community in Burundi enjoy their blankets from MCC.

night so that girls from two families can share one blanket and boys can share another.

Security was a major obstacle. In one area, soldiers threatened violence if they were not also given blankets, but Miparec persisted in gaining permission to proceed as planned.

Before each distribution, Miparec leaders asked local people to share their experiences. Leaders named poverty, death, rape and lack of education as results of the ongoing violence. Miparec encouraged people also to share ideas for settling problems nonviolently.—From MCC report

Newton, Kan.

Giving stabilizing in U.S. church

Contributions to Mennonite Church USA agencies "appear to have begun to stabilize," says Ron Byler, associate executive director for MC USA's Executive Board. "There is growing energy for the vision and direction of our new church.

"A brighter economic picture in many parts of the country has also contributed to the financial upturn."

The Executive Board, agencies and area conferences have had a difficult time the past two years bringing expenditures in line with expected income, he said.

For 2003, Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Education Agency and the Executive Board all report higher than expected bequest giving. Income for the Executive Board was 10 percent higher than budget

due to increases in Firstfruits giving by area conferences and bequests. Area conferences gave \$60,000 above expectations, and giving increased in 14 of 21 area conferences.

Contributions to Mennonite Mission Network's operating budget were down 2 percent, compared with 2002. But overall gifts to the network were up 7 percent—estate gifts were up 36 percent over the previous year.

In light of the decline in contributions to the operating fund, Mission Network staff kept expenditures 5 percent under budget. Giving toward the operating budget was \$400,000 below projected totals.

Congregational giving toward the Mennonite Education Agency increased for the first time in nine years, and church matching grants (for

student support) rose to a record high. In the grant system, congregations give to schools and the institutions match those funds.

In 2003, total congregational support of Mennonite education through the education agency was \$3.02 million—up from \$2.91 million in 2002. Of that total, church matching grants were \$2.16 million and congregational giving was \$864,000.—From MC USA release

**Check out the
Canadian Mennonite
web site at**

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Washington, D.C.

Colombians urge U.S. to cut military aid

On March 11, Ricardo Esquivia, Mennonite peace activist from Colombia, joined three other Colombian religious leaders in a meeting with U.S. Congressional staff. The leaders spoke of measures that deprive Colombians of their rights and urged the U.S. government to cut off military aid to Colombia.

The religious leaders also want the U.S. to pressure the Colombian government to see that security measures do not undermine basic rights of citizens. They urged the U.S. to investigate military officials who are alleged to have colluded with paramilitary forces terrorizing civilians.

"We're joining our voices with the international community to seek peace, to bring light to what is happening," said Esquivia, vice-president of the Colombia Council of Evangelical Churches.

Despite facing threats of arrest

unless he stops his peace efforts, Esquivia plans to begin work in a region of conflict in April. Esquivia said his international profile and letters of support that poured into Colombia have helped protect him (see

The U.S. government has spent nearly \$3 billion in aid to Colombia since 2000, with an emphasis on military aid

Feb. 9, page 24). Esquivia helps distribute food for Church World Service.

Other leaders testifying at the U.S. hearing were Leonardo Gomez Serno, a Catholic bishop; Milton Mejia, leader of the Presbyterian Church of Colom-

bia; and Amanda Romero, a Quaker.

Gomez said that the government has created a massive network of informants who sell false testimonies against religious people. During 2003, 45 Protestant pastors in Colombia died at the hands of armed groups, and 300 churches were shut down. Catholics reported that five priests and one seminarian were murdered, two priests abducted and other leaders threatened.

The U.S. government has spent nearly \$3 billion in aid to Colombia since 2000, with an emphasis on military aid that goes beyond its original commitment to anti-drug efforts. It is estimated that 80 percent of the cocaine in the United States is produced in Colombia, as well as much of the heroin.

U.S. aid for 2004 includes \$554 million in military aid and \$150 million for development.—From Mennonite World Conference releases

Armin Wiebe: "a real spitz poop" in Canadian letters"



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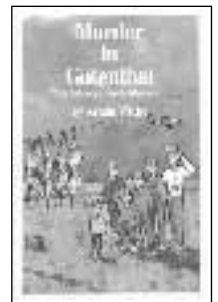
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Winnipeg, Man.

Response to Iraq continues

One year after bombing began in Baghdad, Mennonite Central Committee continues its efforts to alleviate suffering in Iraq.

"Through generous contributions of funds, school kits, and other material resources, MCC supporters have acted on their desire to reach out with compassion, rather than weapons of war," said Menno Wiebe, MCC representative in Iraq.

Assistance from North America has made a significant difference to institutions such as the Mansour Pediatric Hospital in Baghdad, which received \$40,000 for new lab equipment and supplies.

"Previously...doctors had to wait until a patient reached an acute stage of illness before they could make a diagnosis," said Wiebe.

Other contributions by MCC: \$60,000 for food for 5,000 people in 31 hospitals in Baghdad; \$100,000 for tuberculosis medication; \$114,500 for school rehabilitation; four containers of canned turkey.

Another key element in MCC's postwar response has been \$133,000 towards de-mining efforts in southern Iraq. The project, implemented by DanChurchAid's Humanitarian Mine Action, ranked sites with mines according to danger to local residents.

MCC has also supported "All-Our-Children," a consortium of agencies that focus on health needs of children and youth.

For more information on MCC's response in Iraq, visit www.mcc.org/iraq.—MCC Canada release

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CANADIAN
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Strasbourg, France

Plans for global youth group move forward

Five young people will be chosen to consider action on proposals from the first Global Youth Summit, held last August in conjunction with the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) assembly in Zimbabwe.

In January, executive officers of MWC authorized the formation of a Youth Continuation Committee, with one representative from each of five continental regions.

The youth committee will bring the voices of youth to MWC gatherings, beginning at a meeting with officers and staff in December. The youth will meet with the General Council in 2006 and 2009.

Already participants from last summer's youth summit are engaged in lively conversation via e-mail. Jeremie Ngoya of Congo reported on a regional youth meeting in Kinshasa. Silas Absalom of Kenya noted a national youth conference and efforts to reach out to youth in Tanzania and Uganda.

Elina Ciptadi of Indonesia is writing a column in the conference magazine and made a presentation to the synod in January. Jennifer Egan of Canada talked about sharing her Zimbabwe experiences with Manitoba students and seniors.

About 220 young people from 28 countries met in Zimbabwe last summer. Before that summit, youth groups from around the world completed surveys that named challenges facing youth and suggested how the church can address these issues. About 1,500 youth responded to the survey.

Survey results were discussed in Zimbabwe. Delegates reported to the General Council and proposed several global and local actions. Among actions suggested: regional youth gatherings, a global communication network and a Global Youth Summit web site.

For a full report of the first Global Youth Summit to General Council, go to www.mwc-cmm.org.—From MWC report by **Ferne Burkhardt**



Loren E. Swartzendruber (centre) was inaugurated as the eighth president of Eastern Mennonite University on March 27. With him are former EMU presidents **Myron S. Augsburg** (left, 1965-80) and **Joseph L. Lapp** (1987-2003). Ordained in 1975, Swartzendruber served 10 years with the Mennonite Board of Education before becoming president of Hesston College in Kansas in 1994. As part of the installation at EMU, Swartzendruber received a stole designed from fabric from around the world, symbolizing EMU's welcome to students from many cultures. In his address, the new president spoke about "sacred conversations" that teach and transform.—From EMU releases

Prince Albert, Sask.

A visit to China

From January 5-23, Ed and Holly Olfert took their pastoral skills to China. The invitation came from Kathi Suderman, who together with her husband Rod, is in-country coordinator for China Educational Exchange (CEE).

Kathi asked if Ed would be a resource person at a gathering of CEE workers in Thailand. She added that if he was coming anyway, it would be a good thing to make a pastoral visit to Todd and Jeanette Hanson in China.

Todd is a member of Grace Mennonite, the church that Olfert pastors in Prince Albert. Jeanette is a member at Tiefengrund, just an hour down the road. Sudermans are from Aberdeen, Saskatchewan; another teacher, Cari Friesen, is from Mount Royal in Saskatoon. All are supported by Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

Ed and Holly left on January 5 with support from Saskatchewan churches



Ed and Holly Olfert

and 167 school kits from Mennonite Central Committee. The following is from the Olferts' report.

Enroute to dinner one evening, some former students of Hansons are eager to practise their English on Ed.

"What is your job?" asks Tracey.

"I'm a pastor."

"But what do you do?"

"I work in a church."

She is confused. "You don't look like a pastor!" She adds: "Do you just talk to a bunch of people?"

Ed senses that the implication is "Is that really a job?" And he reminds himself that he is in China, where things appear to be measured by their work value.

"I talk to a bunch of people, and we talk about God. Sometimes, they come to talk to me, or I go to visit them. I visit prisoners in jail, and prisoners who have been released from jail."

Ed senses that she has no words to put a value to that activity. The topic is changed.

On Sunday Jeanette suggests that Ed address the church where they attend and she will translate. It is the only registered Protestant church in the city.

As Jeanette goes outside with active 18-month-old Kate, she encounters Tony, who has walked out of the service. Again, Tony, a student, feels drawn to the church but is disappointed at what he hears.

"No matter what the scripture passage, it's always exactly the same message—salvation! Aren't there also things to learn about how Christians should live? We never hear about that!" Today his frustration has been fuelled by Ed's comments about ministry to a released offender.

January 12 is the day for school kit distribution. A bus laden with education officials, PR folks, and the church minister takes the group up a rocky mountain trail to a village where the children wait in neat rows. Olferts join Jeanette on the stage with other dignitaries.

Back in Nanchong, the Olferts are hosted at an expensive restaurant. The room is again filled with education officials, a uniformed party representative, and the headmaster, with everyone wanting to toast the foreigners who came to help their schools.

Jeanette explains that the kits are from churches in Canada, working with the church in Nanchong. The senior education official is amazed. "There is a church in Nanchong? I didn't know that!"



The Chen family, outside their bamboo hut, work to keep the church going in rural China.

Someone else shouts, "But it makes sense that you would help schools! After all, your Jesus was a teacher, wasn't he?"

On their last day in Nanchong, Olferts visit a Christian family in an isolated community in the mountains. The Chens live in a bamboo hut, farm a little piece of rice paddy, and work to keep the tiny Christian community united. Wealthier neighbours look down on Mr. Chen, because he is so poor. "Why should we believe in your God; what has your God ever done for you?"

Chen acknowledges that there are possibly more viable ventures he could develop, but it would be at the expense of his church work. The Chens borrowed dishes and feed Olferts a sumptuous lunch.

At a beautiful resort in northern Thailand, Olferts make four presentations to CEE teachers. The heading is, "Tales, yarns, and anecdotes: Stories of God's faithfulness," based on Joshua 24.

The Olferts hear many yarns from the 50 teachers—testimonies of God's presence, evidence of love for the Chinese people. They hear of the government's determination to bar foreign evangelism, and how this program responds.

The teachers identify local churches, and use their energy alongside the local faith community. They bring a theology of peace and healing to their classroom, and to their friendships.

—From report by **Ed and Holly Olfert**

Qom, Iran

Muslim-Mennonite dialogue continues in Iran

Qom, known as the most “religious” city of Iran, was the location of phase two of a Muslim-Mennonite academic dialogue February 15-16. Eight North American Mennonites joined a similar number of Shi’ite Muslim scholars for a discussion on “Revelation and authority.”

This dialogue is the culmination of an exchange program initiated by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and the Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute in 1997. MCC and the Khomeini Institute sponsor a Mennonite couple studying in Qom (Matthew and Laurie Pierce) and two Iranian Muslims studying at the Toronto School of Theology (Mohammad Farimani and Yousef Daneshvar). The students in Toronto relate to the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre, which organizes the academic dialogue together with the Khomeini Institute.

Phase one of the dialogue took place in Toronto in October 2002 on the topic: “Muslim, Christians and the challenges of modernity.” Four Iranian scholars came from Iran for that event. Their trip included a visit to an Old Order Mennonite farm, a Niagara Mennonite home (and Niagara Falls), and a Mennonite worship service.

On this occasion, the Mennonite group was treated to Iranian hospitality over a two-week period. This was a propitious time for a visit—on February 11 the North Americans joined dignitaries in Teheran to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Islamic revolution; and on February 20 they observed the elections for Parliament.

Tours took the group to a model prisoner of war camp which is now a museum, palaces of the former shahs and the contrasting simple home of revolutionary leader Ayatolla Khomeini, and the beautiful city of Esfahan, with its historic market and mosques.

Particularly memorable was a visit to the home of the late Murtada Mutahhari, an internationally known Islamic thinker and drafter of the constitution of the Islamic Republic. He was assassinated only three

months after the revolution by a dissenting faction.

Most of the Muslim scholars chosen for the dialogue had received doctorates from western universities and spoke English well. The participants from the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre were A. James Reimer (director), Lydia Harder, Phil Enns and Susan Harrison. Americans included David Shenk, Jon Hoover and Roy Hange, who have extensive experience with Islam, and Ed Martin of MCC.

The dominant motif of the dialogue was the relation of revelation to reason. Islam sees no contradiction between a high view of human reason (a gift from God) and a high view of revelation (the divine will as revealed through Gabriel to the prophet Mohammad in the Qur’an).

The Christian doctrine of “original sin” which has corrupted human nature and requires a sacrificial atonement, has no equivalent in

Islamic theology. While Islam does not consider human beings to be perfect, God expects them to use their reason to follow the path of obedience to Allah. In their high view of human responsibility, Shi’ite Muslims have something in common with Mennonite Christians.

Remarkable also was the respect both sides showed toward each others’ scriptures. Professor Towfiqi, who has taught Christianity to Muslims for some 40 years, knows the four Christian gospels for memory and referred numerous times to “our Lord Jesus Christ.” His expression represents the respect Muslims have for Jesus as a great prophet (not divine) who will return with the twelfth Imam to establish an earthly kingdom of justice.

There are of course substantive differences in how Muslims and Christians interpret their texts. Muslims achieve a much greater consensus on the meaning of the



Mennonites and hosts in Iran. Standing, from left: A. Haghani of the Khomeini Institute, Jon Hoover, Roy Hange, Susan Harrison, an Iranian participant, Lydia Harder. Front: David Shenk, Phil Enns, Jim Reimer.



Ayatollah Mesbah (left), a powerful Muslim leader, welcomes Jim Reimer to the dialogue in Iran.

Qur'an than do Christians with their Bible. Muslims "let the text stand" as God's literal, revealed word, and then find a variety of spiritual meanings in it.

The head of the Khomeini Institute is Ayatollah Mesbah, a leading Islamic scholar and member of the 70-member

elected Council of Experts which chooses the Grand Leader, the most powerful figure in Iran. In his closing address to the group, Mesbah called on all religions to join in the struggle against secularism and moral decay, especially among the youth.

Reimer's response noted several commonalities: the conviction that the intellectual life should not be separated from faith and devotion to God, and the importance of an upright moral life.

The Mennonites presented Ayatollah Mesbah with the *History of Mennonites in Canada*, the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*, and the Fall 2003 issue of *The Conrad Grebel Review* with the proceedings of the first dialogue. The proceedings of this dialogue will also, *Insha' Allah* (God willing), be published.—From report by **A. James Reimer**

News brief

Record numbers see Dead Sea Scrolls

The Canadian Museum of Civilization in Quebec attributes a 20 percent increase in visitors to the extraordinary success of its exhibition of the Dead Sea Scrolls. "People have recognized that this exhibition is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see some of the most rare and significant objects from biblical times, including three of the first scrolls discovered," said Victor Rabinovitch, president of the museum. Eight lectures by biblical experts were offered for a second time each evening to accommodate the people lining up at the museum's 500-seat theatre. The exhibit closed on April 12.—From museum release

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Relief kits to Haiti

Mennonite Central Committee plans to provide 700 relief kits valued at \$37,700 to Haiti, along with canned meat and \$60,600 in financial assistance. Most of the assistance will support the National Coalition for Haitian Rights, a partner agency that cares for those who have been assaulted or driven from their homes.

Two hundred kits will go to refugees who fled Haiti in recent months and are now living in the Dominican Republic. Haiti was plagued by human rights abuses such as police brutality, disappearances and torture long before the current crisis.

Since the takeover by rebel forces on February 5, the crisis seems to have peaked, but the fallout continues. There are many displaced families.

Currently 32 adults and 5 children are part of MCC Haiti, including 10 full-time and 11 part-time national staff. MCC programs in most locations outside of Port-au-Prince functioned normally through the crisis.—From MCC release

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Also at CMU this summer: Seminary and undergraduate courses including "Worship as the People's Work," instructor: John L. Bell, July 19-23; "A contemplative Approach to Youth Ministry," instructor: Michael Hryniuk, May 24-28; Sports camps (basketball and volleyball).

Abbotsford, B.C.

Seniors have a SOOPer experience in Arkansas

Sisters Mary Dyck, age 81, and Linda Hayton, 73, could be considered “snowbirds,” but of a different sort. Instead of spending two months vacationing this past winter, they participated in Service Opportunities for Older Persons (SOOP), a program of Mennonite Central Committee.

The two Chilliwack women joined eight others in El Dorado, Arkansas, serving in a soup kitchen, helping underprivileged children with their schoolwork, and serving tea in a seniors’ home, among other things.

“I learned how to play Bingo,” confessed Mary. “I’d never even watched bingo before, and then I had to be the caller!”

Linda, who had experience in administration, helped in the office of a Habitat for Humanity project.

At home, Mary volunteers at Eden Mennonite Church in Chilliwack, making blankets to be sent overseas. In El Dorado she used that skill. She and Linda became aware of “Mission of Hope,” which supplies food and blankets to poor people in the area. Mary tied 11 quilts for the mission.

A highlight for the sisters was working two days a week in a grade one classroom. Another was the Salvation Army soup kitchen. Violet, the cook, appreciated the sisters’ help so much she had tears in her eyes when they left. The women also built friendships with the other volunteers, sharing a communal meal each evening and sharing experiences.

Linda said that one of the things she learned was how fortunate she is. Unemployment in El Dorado is high. The oil fields dried up and the population of the once-bustling town is dwindling. Many live below the poverty line.

“Even the well-to-do people there live modestly,” she said. “They would be shocked to see how elaborate some of our homes are.”

The sisters agreed that this is an



Mary (left), Violet and Linda work together in the Salvation Army soup kitchen.

experience every able-bodied senior should try. “Keep working; it’s the best thing!” said Linda.

The women are active in Chilliwack, volunteering at the MCC Thrift Shop and in their churches. The soup kitchen experience has inspired Linda to see if the Salvation Army in

Chilliwack could use help. And they may pursue another SOOP assignment in the future.

For more information on the SOOP program, phone 1-888-622-6337 or visit the MCC web site at www.mcc.org/getinv/soop/index.html.—From MCC release

Kitchener, Ont.

Credit union marks 40 years

On March 30, over 350 members of Mennonite Savings and Credit Union (MSCU) gathered at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church for the credit union’s 40th annual meeting.

Long-time member Rufus Jutzi described the world of 1964, when MSCU opened. He highlighted the founding vision of J. Winfield Fretz and the support from the church community that led to the formation of the Waterloo County Mennonite Credit Union, its original name.

Alf Willms, founding member of the Leamington branch, spoke of the growth and challenges from 1965-89. Julie Konrad, newly elected board member, related recent stories of growth in facilities and services.

The Inter-Mennonite Children’s Choir

presented a number of songs, and Henry Paetkau, president of Conrad Grebel University College, gave the keynote address. Paetkau noted that in 1964 Conrad Grebel was in its first year. Both institutions were strongly influenced by J. Winfield Fretz, the first president of Grebel.

“Most important for the success and growth of this unique financial institution is its faithfulness to a vision and a mission rooted in the Christian faith, and expressed through the Anabaptist faith tradition,” said Paetkau.

“That base line is the true measure of success.... Whatever happens above the base line must be consistent with and faithful to those values, or the bottom line won’t be worth it.”

The business session was led by Kaye

Drake, Sask.

Mission trip to Mexico furthers partnership

With God behind you and his arms beneath you, you can face what is before you.”

This blessing from 96-year-old Agnes Ewert from North Star Mennonite Church here was shared with our van of 13 people as we turned south onto highway 20 on February 7.

Our destination was Cuauhtemoc, in the state of Chihuahua, Mexico.

We were to spend a week of worship and work with the people of Centro Comunitario Emanuel and congregations of the Conferencia Menonita de Mexico.

Centro Comunitario Emanuel is a Christian fellowship born of the work of Mexico mission workers Isaac and Maria Bergen. When Bergens began, the district was a dangerous place. Two youth gangs were active and there was an average of one murder a week.

The Bergens set up a drop-in centre and organized basketball teams. Soon the gangs ceased and the violence diminished. Plans to construct a police station were cancelled because it was no longer needed.

The Bergens saw a need for a workshop to provide employment for



Participants in the Mexico project. Front row, from left: Alison Quiring, Adriana Quiring. Middle row: Yolanda Quiring, Angelica Quiring, Myrna Ewert, Denise Bartel, Leona Ewert, Bill Ewert. Back row: Shane Wolfe, Ken Quiring, Ed Ewert, John Bartel, Les Wolfe.

disabled people. It now produces a variety of products and provides much-needed income. People in this district were impressed by the Bergens' Christian faith and many have responded by committing themselves to a life of faithfulness to God.

The group of believers began to dream about a place for worship and fellowship. With the help of the Mexico Mennonite conference, they began a building project across the street from the workshop. When completed, it will provide a sanctuary for worship, meeting rooms, a physiotherapy clinic and sewing room.

Our visit had two goals. One was to help with the building project. The second was to explore forming a partnership with the Emanuel congregation and the Mexico conference (Blumenau,

Burwalde and Steinrich congregations), through the Blumenau congregation.

Work toward the first goal consisted of painting the sanctuary, putting up gyproc in the office and meeting rooms, and fastening the subfloor on the second storey. North Star Mennonite Church will provide financial assistance for the project from bequests to our congregation.

The second goal was achieved through a meeting with the missions committee of the Conferencia Menonita de Mexico. We shared dreams and promised to report to North Star about our experiences and the possibilities for this partnership.

Our fondest memory is the hospitality of our hosts. People from the congregations stopped in regularly to give a hand. We stayed near Blumenau church, about 10 kilometres outside Cuauhtemoc. Members of this church often dropped by for morning or evening visits, and opened their homes.

A special memory is the Mexican lunches prepared by the Emanuel congregation each day.—**John Bartel**



Alf Willms talks about the founding of the Leamington branch of the credit union.

Rempel, MSCU board chair. In 2003, MSCU membership grew by 5 percent to 14,537 members. There was asset growth of 15 percent to \$429.4 million. Members were invited to help increase membership by 1,000 in 2004.—From MSCU release

Elmira, Ont.

Old Order women thrive in business

Kitchen Kuttings, a bulk food store here, is owned and operated by three Old Order Mennonite women. Lydia and Elmeda Weber and their friend, Nancy Shantz, began by selling summer sausage at the market, a hobby that developed into a successful business.

In the Old Order Mennonite community, it is expected that girls will become wives and mothers. Because young men are more likely to leave the Old Order church than their sisters, a significant number of Old Order women remain single. When Lydia, Elmeda and Nancy recognized that they would probably not marry, they began to dream about how they could support themselves and own their own home.

Like other teenage Old Order girls, they began working as mother's helpers. They moved on to other jobs, collecting a variety of experiences. Lydia and Elmeda worked at Bowman's Weaving in St. Jacobs where they made woven mats and learned business skills.

Nancy and Elmeda learned to make homemade chocolates at a candy shop. They sold baking and other products at the local farmers' markets. All three said these experiences were invaluable in learning retail skills.

When Lydia and Elmeda were in their late 20s, they moved into their own home. The old house was inexpensive to rent but it had no electricity or running water. They had grown up without indoor plumbing or electricity so it wasn't really a hardship. Two years later Nancy moved in with them.

While the three were working at part-time jobs, they decided to begin selling summer sausage and other food at the market. Their Kitchen Kuttings business began at the St. Jacobs market in 1988. The women sold homemade egg noodles, gingerbread boys, apple butter and honey, along with summer sausage made according to a Weber family recipe.

"We began it as a hobby; we weren't really concerned about profit," said Elmeda. As the business picked up, the three proprietors began to dream of

making it a full-time business.

The following year the three moved to Elmira. They found living in town convenient—they didn't need to hitch up the horse to get to church or to the grocery store. They began to make inquiries about setting up a small store.



Photo by Roy Draper

Kitchen Kuttings is an expanding business in Elmira.

To their surprise, they had the opportunity to take over a small cheese and bulk food store. Trying to be practical business women, they took two of their brothers along to see the store before they committed themselves. They were alternately thrilled and terrified, wondering if they could make it a success.

Their families were supportive, as was the broader Old Order community, although there were some questions about having a business in a town.

Because the store already had an established customer base, the business never faltered.

"Customers would come in and ask if we had a certain product and we would say, 'I'm not sure, I'll have to go and see,'" laughed Elmeda.

Business picked up as new products were added—jams, pickles, relishes and cookies by the box. Soon there was a shortage of warehouse space and the women decided to rent the neighbouring unit for storage and packaging.

After 13 years, Kitchen Kuttings was bursting at the seams. During the

busy Christmas season the women found it tiring to pile and re-pile heavy boxes because they had inadequate storage.

"We couldn't work efficiently," said Lydia.

It was the landlord who proposed a solution. He moved his next-door realty business down the street so Kitchen Kuttings could expand into

his former office. Business increased again with a larger store and better exposure on the corner. New equipment has increased efficiency and more staff have been hired.

Kitchen Kuttings' emphasis on customer service has paid off well. And Elmeda, Nancy and Lydia have realized their dreams of owning a business and their own home.—**Barb Draper**

Reminder to Congregations

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CANADIAN
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Calgary, Alta.

Missional training for Alberta churches

Approximately 20 people from 7 Alberta churches gathered at Camp Valaqua March 19-21 for missional training.

The weekend featured sessions on biblical interpretation and Anabaptist ecclesiology, led by Jack Suderman from Mennonite Church Canada Witness, and sessions on nurturing, teaching and worship alternatives with Elsie Rempel of MC Canada Formation.

Jim Shantz, Alberta conference pastor, led three periods of worship with different worship styles. The main planning was done by Marvin Baergen, missional formation and partnership facilitator for MC Alberta.

Participants enjoyed the relaxed environment and the opportunity for discussion—especially into the evenings. The conversations were as challenging as the presentations.

Baergen introduced a discussion on the changing face of mission over 2000 years with a video, “The Three Ages of

the Church” (Apostolic, Christendom, today). One of the women said she had more understanding of her own congregation after the discussion.

Elsie Rempel showed us how we might incorporate theory of multiple intelligence into worship and educational settings. Many traditional worship practices reflect a variety of ways of knowing, learning and worshipping. Jim Shantz introduced us to Taize worship—silence, readings and music.

Suderman had us work in groups of three to produce a compelling reason for the existence of the church. The statement had to be no more than 20 words and pass two tests—the “Winnipeg Blue Bomber” and the “religious pluralism” tests. What compelling purpose does the church have that is different than that of the Blue Bombers, or any other religion?

Suderman’s exercise covered religious conservatives who pursue the standard business/sports/military

model of success. It also caught liberals who pursue models of faith that mask distinctively Christian elements. Are we confident and comfortable being Christians? Could our church vision be used by some other religion?

The fact that objections to “missional” language are coming from both liberals and conservatives suggests that there is something valuable in the missional perspective.

The two Alberta training sessions in 2004 will cover four areas of study—biblical and theological, historical and contextual, worship, and church transformational processes. All were introduced at this session, with Suderman and Rempel especially emphasizing the first and third.

More sessions are planned for November 19-21. We expect even more participants will find their way to Valaqua in November.—**Dan Jack**

Corrections

Third place winners in the the Fine Arts Festival for Youth in Calgary were Jenny Lathrop and Jenny Ratsoy for their “Hand of God” creation (March 8, page 10). Meghan Thiessen won a category prize for written work. In the photo of the MCC Alberta groundbreaking (March 8, page 30), several people were wrongly identified. Ed Buschert is chair of the building committee, not contractor; Jake Elias is vice-chair of MCC Alberta, not treasurer; Sterling Rempel is chair of Mennonite Mutual Insurance (not Aid). Also on the photo is Sheryl Janzen (not Cheryl).

The list of historic sites in Ontario (March 8, page 23) stated that a congregation at Altona Mennonite Meetinghouse began in 1890. In fact, the first congregation began meeting there in 1852 or 1853, when the church was first built. The first congregation from the Ontario Mennonite Conference met there after the split between the Old Order and Ontario Conference in 1889.

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New Hamburg, Ont.

New product line at thrift shop

Mennonite Central Committee Ontario Thrift Shops are committed “to living our faith by raising funds for MCC Ontario by selling quality donated items at reasonable prices, practising and promoting faithful stewardship and care for God’s creation through sharing of our gifts, and the responsible use and reuse of resources.”

“Clothing and More...” in New Hamburg is living up to this mission in exciting and creative ways. The store began its work in 1981 with five volunteers and managers Vera and Norm Helmuth. Today, it is a bustling agency with Shirley Gingerich as general manager and a volunteer base of approximately 175 men, women and youth... “and we are always looking for more volunteers,” enthusiastically states Gingerich.

On March 13, at the “back room sale,” this dedicated group of volunteers introduced a new line of products—“recycled crafts.” These crafts were introduced by Recycling Network managers Judy Shantz (weaving), Marj Kaethler (fabric crafts), and Joanie Willms (clothing manager).

These products were developed to help to deal with un-saleable donated

items. Clothing that is ripped and stained is turned into much needed rags and wipes for area businesses and individuals. Jogging pants and sweatshirts have been transformed into cottage blankets. Velour and velvet pieces are hand-crafted into beautiful comforters. Large pieces of denim, donated by a soap-testing factory, become chenille mats, table runners and hot plates.

During a recent visit, I found myself caught up in Judy Shantz’s excitement as she described how these pieces of denim are sewn together, creatively cut and washed to create the chenille look.

“We recycle as much of the un-saleable items as we possibly can,” she explains. The new items were snatched up the day they were introduced, by an appreciative crowd of 228 customers. These “recycled crafts” make beautiful gifts as well.

In celebration of its 23rd anniversary, Clothing and More... will be having a workroom sale on April 17, featuring soccer shoes, shorts, roller blades, and books. A trip to this quaint and welcoming thrift store benefits not only the customer but helps in the mission of MCC.—**Joy Wagler**

Elkhart, Ind.

Volf examines pluralism

How do we think about good and evil in the context of cultural pluralism? That was the central question underlying the Theological Lectureship presented by Miroslav Volf at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, February 26-27.

Volf, who teaches theology at Yale University Divinity School, examined the way the Gospel of John set up dualities—light and dark, truth and falsehood, spirit and flesh. While these appear to be stark opposites,



Photo by Mary E. Klassen

Miroslav Volf explored how Christians should claim their identity in a culture of plurality.

Volf pointed out how the gospel presents God as creator of rich plurality. God in Christ seeks to overcome oppositional dualities “so as to leave room in creation only for reconciled differences.”

Using the theme, “Christian faith and the varieties of contemporary pluralism,” Volf examined religious, social and political pluralism in today’s culture. John’s gospel does not support the impulse to denounce pluralism or enforce strict boundaries, Volf argued. John calls believers to be a particular kind of sectarian: one who courageously names the evil that others may do but forgives them and is willing to die for them.

Volf is author of *Exclusion and Embrace: A theological exploration of identity, otherness, and reconciliation*, named by *Christianity Today* as one of the most influential books of the twentieth century.

This is the 25th year that the seminary has hosted the theological lectureship.—From AMBS release



MCC photo

Mennonite Central Committee Canada will rent this facility in Plum Coulee, Manitoba, for two years instead of building at its headquarters in Winnipeg. During this period, MCC Canada will make a decision on the location of a national warehouse. Donors who have committed funds to the warehouse project will be contacted. A centralized depot will streamline the gathering and shipping of material aid and will provide more space at provincial offices.—From MCC Canada release

Church buildings shared by many groups

Many congregations in Mennonite Church Eastern Canada share their facilities with a surprising variety of groups. Here is a sample of Ontario churches, and one in Quebec. (See also April 5, pages 30-31.)

Community Mennonite, Stouffville

Instead of buying a building or constructing one, our church chose to rent space from a retirement home. We have an auditorium, large boardroom and kitchen, with adult Sunday school classes in the restaurant downstairs. We see this as our home over the long term and we have no plans to move elsewhere. We see it as a better use of our money than owning a building. Furthermore, the space gets rented out to other community groups throughout the week.—Gord Alton, pastor

First Mennonite Church, Kitchener

Our church building is used by many groups—Menno Singers, a home-schooling group, parent-child groups such as Our Place and House of Friendship's Live and Learn, and various addictions groups. Our building is used constantly throughout the week by many groups whose programs we support.—Gary Knarr and Mark Diller Harder

Harrow Mennonite Church

Alcoholics Anonymous has met in our building every Wednesday night for more than 40 years. For the congregation, that has meant simply staying away from the building on Wednesday nights—no meetings, no planned activities. The building is theirs for the evening, and it has worked out well.

We also host an Overeaters Anonymous group that meets every Monday morning, and a Tai Chi group every Friday night, except during the summer.

Each of these opportunities is a special extension of our congregation's mission in our community.—Greg Yantzi, pastor

Poole Mennonite, Milverton

Every Thursday afternoon at Poole,

Barbara Mae Hutchinson, a nurse practitioner, holds a clinic for a considerable number of Mennonites from Mexico who have moved into the area in recent years. A translator is present. English as a second language classes are also held at the church.—Paul Dyck, pastor

Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite

The church gymnasium is used every Thursday morning by the Waterloo Active Living Club, an exercise program for seniors.—Pauline Nickel

Waterloo North Mennonite

Waterloo North is a busy place apart from its own active congregational life. In the past year there were three sessions of Royal Conservatory of Music examinations; recitals; a 40th anniversary concert of Conrad Grebel University College; a practice for Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony's Youth Orchestra, and four concerts for Suzuki cello.

There are board meetings of all kinds, from Treetops Condominiums to Grace Mennonite Brethren Church; family reunions; fundraisers (a car wash for Inter-Mennonite Singles, fundraisers for Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre and Rockway Mennonite Collegiate thrift store); weddings and dinners; Christmas parties (including one for Sudanese immigrants and a New Year's potluck by the Japanese-Canadian Community Association).

There are many other miscellaneous events in our building—a square dance, retirement tea by the midwifery association, a staff training day for a local agency, a book launch for a writer in the congregation, and a seminar for spiritual directors.—Tanya Sawatsky, coordinator for rental groups

Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal

The House of Friendship is one of the most fully used buildings I know. The Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal meets here on Sunday mornings and has a church office here. But we are just a fraction of what goes on.

There are two residential programs for refugees. Project Refuge is run by Montreal City Mission, a United Church program whose office is also in this building. The other is Famille Refuge, run by House of Friendship itself. The building also has the Conseil de Mennonite Quebec office and RIVO, a program focusing on victims of torture. The dining room and gym double as classrooms for English and French as a second language program run by volunteer teachers.

Tuesday noon the cook puts on a community lunch for people living in the building, workers and volunteers. Friday evening is another community meal that includes past residents, with some sort of activity following the meal.

There are other programs, including outings for refugees. In between, space is rented to Narcotics Anonymous, church groups, and childcare programs yoga classes and countless other activities. The building is used to the max.—Lucille Marr, co-pastor

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Floradale, Ont.

Floradale group helps build church in Ecuador

For the past 15 years, Floradale Mennonite Church has sent service teams to various parts of the world. Recently a team returned from Ecuador.

On February 6, a group of 17 people—including 2 people from Black Creek Mennonite Fellowship, our sister church in Toronto—landed in Guayquil, Ecuador. The mix included people ages 14 to 65, single and married. We were billeted in homes.

The Iglesia Mennonita Comunidad de fe is located in Duran. Dan Delagrang, a missionary from the Rosedale Mennonite Conference in Ohio, helped plant the church. It has grown from a small group of believers meeting in an alley to a spirit-filled congregation with property of its own.

We came to help finish the church building. Mixing and pouring concrete,

and laying cement block walls was backbreaking work. The electrical wiring was challenging because of the lack of safety standards.

A Vacation Bible School for about 100 enthusiastic kids was held each afternoon from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. The Ecuador-

rian women had planned it well but appreciated all the craft supplies we brought.

We had an opportunity for a trip into the Andes Mountains and also spent time relaxing as a group.

Worshipping for two Sundays with our brothers and sisters in Ecuador was a powerful experience. We sang “How great thou art” in unison, with Spanish and English intermingled in a great choir of praise. The congregation

spent a lot of time in prayer and singing, trusting God for their needs.

Despite the language barrier, we formed deep bonds through living in homes, working and playing together. The people were extremely generous with their meagre belongings. We were blessed, both by learning from their example and by our intergenerational experience as a group.

The church held many fundraisers to make the trip possible. Some members paid their own way. The group also received a grant of \$2000 from Mennonite Savings and Credit Union to pay for supplies to finish the church in Ecuador.—From a report by **Eleanor Buehler**

Despite the language barrier, we formed deep bonds through living in homes, working and playing together.

Winnipeg, Man.

Church leaders reject defence system

Twenty Canadian church leaders, including the moderator of Mennonite Church Canada, are urging the Canadian government to “unequivocally reject the expensive futility of ballistic missile defence [BMD].”

In a March 15 letter to Prime Minister Paul Martin, the Canadian Council of Churches said that proposed security solutions like BMD “fail to counter the nuclear threat and precipitate further insecurities.”

A Canadian government web site states, “The Government is committed to ensuring and enhancing the security of Canada and Canadians. Examining possible Canadian participation in the Ballistic Missile Defence of North America is one aspect of meeting this commitment.”

The United States, which has been researching BMDs since the 1940s, wants to deploy a BMD system this fall.

The Pentagon itself lacks confidence that a star wars-like missile interception system will work, said the letter from church leaders. “And so it pursues a space-based element that violates an overwhelming global consensus against the weaponization of space.”

Missile defence is one of the largest



Photo by Diane Kruithoff

Young adults led worship at Hunta Mennonite Church in Ontario when they returned home for the Christmas break. From left: Donna Landis, Dawn Landis, Erin Van Alstein, Jody Johnson, Jenny (Johnson) Martynshya, Steve Kruithoff, Melissa Kruithoff, Kevin Kruithoff, Chris Beauchamp, Dennis Landis and son Quinn. On February 29 the congregation commissioned Polly Johnson as lay minister. The day included communion and a meal. The church hosted World Day of Prayer on March 5, also followed by a meal.—From report by Bill Heavener

Jos, Nigeria

Peace training brings hope to Nigerians

Last year, when Amina Ahmadu came to a peace workshop led by Mennonite Central Committee, she was traumatized by losing family members in the Christian-Muslim violence that rocked this city in 2001. She believed she was not safe among Christians.

Instead of costing her her life, the workshop showed her the power of conflict transformation. She credits the workshop, and another one she attended earlier this year, with transforming her into a person dedicated to peace.

Now Ahmadu and other Muslims and Christians trained by MCC in north-central Nigeria spread the message of peace. Workshops were

held in Jos in February for more than 60 women from rural areas torn by recent conflict.

Tensions in the region are exacerbated by spiraling poverty, a lack of jobs and an influx of migrants from other parts of the country. Some 900 people disappeared or were killed when riots erupted here in 2001.

In recent weeks, fighting has broken out in the Wase, Langtang and Shendam areas. Christians and Muslims are locked in violent battles over land and cattle.

At the February workshops, women told stories of friends and neighbours killed in recent weeks. One spoke of a friend who travelled to a neighbouring village to sell cattle, and never returned.

"Bringing these women together is truly like laying the foundations for a new, just community," said Gopar Tapkida of MCC. "Hearing their stories compounds the complexity of the conflicts that we are dealing with



Photo by Dave Klassen

Nigerian women sell their wares at the market to support their families.

and [underscores] the devastating situation of victims."

Peacemaking can come with a cost. Ahmadu reports losing her teaching job because of her stand for nonviolence. Yet interest in peace workshops is growing.

"Hope lies in looking at the situation with new lenses," Tapkida said. "We see the transformation of the participants."—MCC release by **Joanna Hiebert Bergen**

The writer, from Winnipeg, is co-representative for MCC Nigeria.

research programs in the U.S., with a budget of approximately \$9 billion US in 2004.

The letter points out that Canadian churches have told successive Canadian prime ministers that "the possession, use, or threat to use nuclear weapons can never be understood to be within God's plan for creation." Instead of wasting resources on "unworkable" defence schemes, church leaders urge the government to address worldwide crises in health, poverty, violence and human rights.

The letter is signed by Henry Krause for MC Canada, along with leaders from Quaker, Catholic, Methodist, Salvation Army, Greek Orthodox and other churches. The entire text of the letter can be found at www.mennonitechurch.ca/news.

Project Ploughshares, the Canadian ecumenical disarmament group and Mennonite Central Committee are among other groups voicing concerns about BMD.

Individuals may send letters of concern to Paul Martin (fax 613-941-6900), Minister of National Defence David Pratt (fax 613-995-8189), Minister of Foreign Affairs Bill Graham (fax 613-996-9607), and their member of parliament. Letters may be sent without postage to members of parliament at House of Commons, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa K1A 0A6.—From releases

Souderton, Pa.

Nickels for worms

Claude Good collects nickels—and saves lives—through a The Worm Project. Good, a former mission worker, is a volunteer at the Franconia Mennonite Conference office. Five cents will buy a de-worming pill that kills parasites that feed on the bodies of underfed people. In 2003 alone, with money raised from church and Internet contacts, Good sent 3.2 million pills to more than 65 countries. The mint-flavoured pill is taken once every six months.

A Sunday school class did the math: in high-infestation areas, worms eat about one ounce of a child's ingested food per day. In 16 days a child will lose one pound of food to worms, in six months about 10 pounds. So \$5.00 in nickels would equal 1,000 pounds of extra food for malnourished children, instead of children losing 1,000 pounds to the worms.

For more information, go to www.Wormproject@FMC-online.org.—From MC USA release



Photo by Dan Marschke

Maria Isabel Espinal carries water for her family from a spring in Las Pozas, Honduras. In many places in the world, women and children begin the day by fetching water from community faucets and wells. During droughts, finding water can occupy much of the day. As many as one billion people (one-sixth of the world's population) do not have a safe source of water. Espinal is encouraged by steps being taken by MCC to create a better water supply in her village. In Laos, MCC is providing cement rings that keep well walls from caving in. In Brazil, MCC is part of a national project to build one million cisterns to collect water for household use. In Palestine, MCC is helping to build eight huge cisterns to promote crop diversity. In India, a project focuses on de-silting water to grow food on 50 acres. MCC is also digging tube wells for drinking water in Mozambique, researching arsenic removal from shallow wells in Bangladesh, and capping mountain springs in Haiti to prevent contamination. To learn more, see "Water is life," an MCC photo gallery at www.mcc.org/gallery/04_02/index.html.—From MCC releases

News briefs

Anglicans authorize same-sex blessings

The Anglican Church of Canada's overall governing body, the General Synod, will be asked in May to affirm two motions on same-sex unions. The first motion gives any diocese, with the concurrence of its bishop, the authority to bless "committed same-sex unions." It also calls for "continued respectful dialogue and study of biblical, theological, liturgical, pastoral and social aspects of human sexuality."

The motion states that "even in the face of deeply held convictions about whether the blessing of committed same-sex unions is contrary to the doctrine and teaching of the Anglican Church of Canada, we recognize that through our baptism we are members one of another in Christ Jesus, and we commit ourselves to strive for that communion into which Christ continually calls us."

The second motion asks the Faith, Worship and Ministry Committee to assist the church in implementing the resolution. It also asks the committee to prepare resources on sexuality and "the changing definition of marriage in society."—From Anglican News Service

Canadian Council celebrates 60 years

The Canadian Council of Churches is marking its 60th anniversary this year. The first event will be an ecumenical service on May 13 at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church in Toronto, the church where the Council worshipped at its founding in 1944. A forum on ecumenical dialogue will take place on October 4 in Ottawa.

The Council began with 10 churches pledging to work together. Today its 19 member churches—ranging from Anglican, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox to Protestant and Roman Catholic—make it one of the broadest national ecumenical bodies in the world.

Mennonite Church Canada has observer status in the Council and will consider full membership at its delegate assembly this summer.—From releases

People & Events

Chicago, Ill.—Doug Pritchard from Toronto, and Carol Rose from Wichita, Kansas, have been named co-directors of Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT). Pritchard, 55, is currently coordinator of CPT Canada, a position he has held since 1997. He is a member of Toronto United Mennonite Church. Rose, 44, has been pastor of the Mennonite Church of the Servant in Wichita for six years. The two succeed Gene Stoltzfus who has directed CPT for 16 years. Initiated by Mennonites, Church of the Brethren and Friends (Quakers), CPT supports nonviolent alternatives to war and lethal conflict. The transition to new leadership is scheduled for September 1.—From CPT release

Congo—The Mennonite Brethren Church in Congo has taken an unusual step—ordaining a female minister to work in economic development. Mama Kadi will work in spiritual formation and development among pastors' wives. She will help women establish small businesses and work towards the equitable distribution of resources among Congolese men and women. Mama Kadi is not the first MB woman to be ordained. In 2000, the church ordained Charly Lukala Londa to pastor a congregation in France, where she was studying. The United Nations has identified "Mama Theologians" as key in addressing poverty and health among women in Congo, a country which the UN says has the highest mortality rate in childbearing in the world.—From *Christian Leader*

Kelowna, B.C.—Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) held a leadership training workshop at Green Bay Bible Camp here March 16-19. Fifteen participants from British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba learned

about volunteer management and the roles of project directors, cooks, office managers, crew leaders and construction supervisors. Workshop graduates are now ready for leadership roles on MDS projects.—From MDS release

Akron, Pa.—Karl and Evelyn Bartsch from State College, Pennsylvania, left March 5 for North Korea where they will teach English to 60 scientists for a month. MCC has participated in agricultural work and sent food aid to North Korea but MCC personnel have not



Karl and Evelyn Bartsch

lived there before. The Bartsches served with MCC Korea from 1962-65. Jake and Louise Buhler from Saskatchewan will arrive in mid-April and teach until the end of June.—From MCC release

Transitions

Births/adoptions

Braun—to Lianne and Dan, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Cara Mae, Feb. 22.

Dueck—to Michelle and Rudy, Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., a daughter, Kaija Miriam, Mar. 21.

Ehnes—to Sherry and Kurt, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Olivia Ryan, Mar. 16.

Epp—to Terri and Peter, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a son, Noah Benjamin, Feb. 8.

Grenier—to Jodi and Rich, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Jady Justess, Mar. 30.

Hiebert—to Jacqueline and Wilfried, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., a daughter, Celina Isabella, Mar. 25.

Janzen—to Kristi and Paul, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., a daughter, Erinn Ryleigh, Mar. 20.

Kauenhofen—to Linda and Alan, Carman Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Robyn Leann, Mar. 2.

Krabbe—to Cathy and Mark, Riverdale Mennonite, Millbank, Ont., a daughter Makenna Kaylin, Apr. 1.

Kuepfer—to Christina and Ken, Riverdale Mennonite, Millbank, Ont., a son, Jarvis Reuben, Mar. 23.

Marsh-Lansard—to Carmen and Marcel, Valleyview Mennonite, London, Ont., a daughter, Isabella Ramona, Feb. 27.

Masse—to Tracey (Brand) and Derek, Zurich Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Hailee Faith, Jan. 12.

Pytyck—to Marlene and Kevin, First Mennonite, Calgary, Alta., a son, Daniel Benjamin, Apr. 2.

Ramer—to Lea Anne (Goertz) and Jamie, Zurich Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Payton Annelea, Feb. 29.

Redekop—to Jackie and Chris, of Vancouver, B.C., Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., a son, Hayden Christopher, Feb. 16.

Rowe—to Christine (Unrau) and Dwayne, of Brampton, Ont., Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., a son, Andre Joseph, Mar. 5.

Rygiel—to Christine and Kent, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Brontë Elizabeth, Mar. 2.

Smith—to Michelle (Steckle) and Rick, Zurich Mennonite, Ont., a son, Matthew Gerald, Jan. 19.

Tiessen—to Cheryl and Chris, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Claire Nicole, Jan. 25.

Weber—to Juanita and Justin, Riverdale Mennonite, Millbank, Ont., a son, Nathaniel David, Feb. 17.

Marriages

Funk-Kruger—Marco and Karen, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., Mar. 20.

Steckle-Overholt—Jeremy and Tabitha, Zurich Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 11.

Deaths

Boldt—Lydia, 89, Niagara United Mennonite, Ont., Feb. 12, correction.

Braun—John L., 86, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Mar. 12.

Epp—Hilda, 84, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Mar. 21.

Friesen—John, 80, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Mar. 17.

Gingerich—Amos, 93, Zurich Mennonite, Ont., Dec. 31.

Goertzen—Olga, 85, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Mar. 20.

Guenther—Eric, 83, First Mennonite, Kelowna, B.C., Mar. 23.

Harder—Anna, 91, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Mar. 27.

Krueger—Benjamin Jacob, newborn son of David and Tracie, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Mar. 13.

Martens—Tena, 87, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Mar. 12.

Mierau—Esther Pauline (Ettie), 77, Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask., Mar. 30.

Ngongo—Steve, 15, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Mar. 21.

Oesch—Beverly, 48, Zurich Mennonite, Ont., Dec. 19.

Waschmann—Horst, 73, First Mennonite, Calgary, Alta., Mar. 26.

Baptisms

Grace Mennonite, Regina, Sask.—Mrs. Wang Ai Chun, Mar. 21.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes transitions announcements within four months of the event. When sending by e-mail, please identify congregation (name and location).

Mennonite Church Canada

Baergens finishing tasks in Colombia

Dreams for the future and the demands of the present are crowding Rudy and Helen Baergens' schedule during the final months of their



Rudy and Helen Baergens

Mennonite Church Canada Witness assignment in Colombia.

As the only full-time professors at the seminary in Bogotá, they keep getting requests. Seventy-four students took a course in theology last year. The Baergens have done considerable teaching in outlying areas—in places like La Mesa, Medellín—and are planning to go as far away as Venezuela in the next weeks.

Rudy will be acting director of the seminary until April 30 while director Alix Lozano is on leave.

In addition to daily demands, a vision for a pre-university School of Leadership is emerging. The goal is to have a two-year decentralized, interdisciplinary program for training in church work, mission and evangelism, community development and conflict transformation.

"We have been pleased by the level of interest within the Anabaptist community for this program," says Rudy. Next steps are to finalize the curriculum, put administration in place, and deal with the

financial implications.

Meanwhile, the leadership of the seminary is facing a challenge. There are no plans to find successors for the Baergens. Instead, MC Canada Witness is planning to fund a full-time Latin American position at the seminary. "The dream is to have a director, an academic dean and several teaching staff on full-time salary," says Rudy.

The Baergens will move to Winnipeg this summer where Rudy will take on the pastoral leadership of Bethel Mennonite Church. As they near the end of their term, the Baergens feel blessed by the many relationships they have established.

"We feel affirmed that our work and presence has been appreciated in this difficult context. We pray for sufficient energy and wisdom to do our endings well," said Rudy.—MC Canada release

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Explore committee on pastor-church relations

"Like porcupines, we need each other, yet we needle each other." This is how one writer describes the pastor-congregation relationship. On March 27, the Leadership Commission conducted a workshop to help congregations of MC Eastern Canada explore the value of having a Pastor-Congregation Relations Committee.

Leroy Shantz, chair of the Leadership Commission, Muriel Bechtel, Minister of Pastoral Services, and Betty Pries were resource persons for the event, held at Waterloo North Mennonite Church.

They first described what such a committee is not. It is not for salary review, pastor evaluations, or pastoral search. It is not a channel for com-

plaints regarding the pastor or a disciplinary body—that belongs to the Leadership Commission.

The committee would be three to five people who pay attention to issues that arise in pastor-congregation relationships, both spoken and unspoken. It is a safe, confidential place for the pastor or the pastor's family to bring concerns. It helps the pastor recognize what changes in leadership style may be needed. It tries to understand what it is like to be a pastor.

In short, the committee is interested in helping the pastor be the best pastor he or she can be, and helping the congregation be the best "employer" it can be.

The group of over 50 participants divided into buzz groups to examine case studies of situations in which a Pastor-Congregation Relations Committee could be helpful. Several congregations talked about the committee they have in place. It became clear that there is a variety of ways to do this work. Even without a committee, elders or others can be given the mandate to do this important work.

Resource packets on pastor-congregation relationships can be obtained from the MC Eastern Canada office, including the *Faithful Servant*, *Faithful Employer* document and a conflict resolution policy.

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Spring retreats offered in Manitoba

The annual 55 Plus Retreats continue to be popular events, offering experiences of worship, fellowship and recreation with other seniors in a natural setting. Speakers at this year's retreats will focus on fruitful living in the senior years.

The Camp Moose Lake retreat from May 31-June 2 will feature Larry Hirst speaking on "Bringing forth fruit in old age." He will cover such topics as bearing fruit despite losses, bearing the fruit of joy in the valley of the shadow of death and bearing fruit as we minister to the sick and dying.

Since June 2001 Hirst has been chaplain at Bethesda Hospital and Place in Steinbach.

Jake Harms and Jake Neufeld will be the resources for the 55 Plus Retreat at Camp Koinonia on June 7-9 on the theme "Aging—bane and blessing." Neufeld is a senior lay minister in the Whitewater Mennonite Church in Boissevain. Harms, a retired pastor, is involved in a ministry to seniors in the Douglas Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Retreat directors can be contacted for details: Camp Moose Lake—Abe and Susan Wiebe, phone (204) 326-9322.; Camp Koinonia—Jake Harms at (204) 669-1349.

Camp Koinonia will be host to the June 4-6 birding retreat under the leadership of experienced birders Adolf Ens of Winnipeg, Fran Giesbrecht of Landmark and Robb Nickel of Winnipeg.

The environs of Camp Koinonia in Turtle Mountain Provincial Park provide many species for observation and enjoyment. There will also be opportunity for other leisure activities as well as a service to celebrate

God's activities as Creator.

For families eager to get out and enjoy spring, Camp Assiniboia will be hosting a Family Fun Fest on June 5. Ropes courses, pony rides, face painting, and a silent auction are just a few of the activities offered. For more information call 204-864-2159.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

News from Rosthern Junior College

Rosthern Junior College is announcing the resignation of two staff members at the end of the current school year. Pat Cooley, who has been teaching English, will be retiring this year. Fion Ko, who first came to the college as a student, will be finishing her work as resident dean in the women's dorm.

The Student Recruitment Committee has announced a tuition savings plan. The idea is simple: set aside a small amount of money for your child each month and let it accumulate for five or ten years until your child is ready to enter RJC. The program is administered by Mennonite Trust of Waldheim. No money or interest would be lost if the student decides not to attend RJC when the plan matures.

Unlike government plans, the RJC plan has no tax implications. It's simply a savings plan to ensure tuition funds. Call the school for more details at (306) 232-4222.—
From RJC releases

Mennonite Church Alberta

Camp Valaqua dedicates new spaces

One of the projects at the May 8 workday at Camp Valaqua will be work on the "Meditation Trail." The trail recognizes the donation that came to the camp from the sale of the Alberta Mennonite Home for the Aged in Coaldale in the early 1990s.

The trail is meant to encourage self-directed spiritual reflection. It will have signpost inscriptions along the way. The "Meditation Trail" will be dedicated at the fall workday on October 16.

Camp Valaqua dedicated two other projects last May. The Vauxhall Cabin recognized the funds that came to the camp from the sale of the Vauxhall Mennonite Church. The old cook's cabin was renovated into a wheelchair accessible cabin with a bedroom, bathroom, living room and deck. The Vauxhall project included expanded boardwalks to the forest campfire circle and to the main lodge.

The Vauxhall Cabin provides the camp with multi-use accommodations for



Dedicating the Swift Current Meadow last May are, from left: Brian and Colleen Dyck, Ray Friesen and John Piera, Valaqua committee chair.

summer camp volunteers and rental groups.

Swift Current Meadow was also dedicated last May. When Swift Current Bible Institute (SCBI) closed, it donated funds to Camp Valaqua for purchasing additional land. The meadow recognizes that SCBI's work in inspiring Christian faith continues at camp. A bench and an inscribed rock mark the site.

Ray Friesen, the last president of SCBI, dedicated the site. Colleen Dyck, a former student, and her husband Brian sang "The years go by." The Swift Current Meadow is located on a bluff overlooking the main lodge.—
From Valaqua releases

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Seminar for new pastors

Clarifying the Call is a mandatory seminar for all new pastors to Mennonite Church B.C. The seminar deals with church polity and is run by the Church Ministries committee.

This year's seminar was scheduled for early May but the date has been changed to June 3 at the conference office in Abbotsford. For more information, contact Henry Klierer at (604) 850 6658.

The miracle of the church

The existence of the church is a miracle! Given the internal propensity to self destruct, and external forces that oppress, no other explanation seems adequate.

From its birth in political and religious opposition through centuries of persecution, compromise, weak discipleship, factionalism and materialism, the church has survived. It not only has survived, but in many parts of the world it is growing by leaps and bounds!

The church exists and thrives for one reason. It is God's church and it will not fail. Hell with its dark fury cannot subdue it, for Christ himself is her head.

For us who find ourselves in the middle of strident voices from both right and left, who are working hard to bring organizational and financial stability to a new entity, who find ourselves in the

middle of congregational and conference "brush fires," or who are just plain trying to "do church"—what possibilities does this miracle suggest?

The metaphors of Peter and Paul are instructive. We are a spiritual house, suggesting that buildings and structures are only secondary. We are a holy priesthood, the forgiven and forgiving people of God. We are a chosen people with unique privilege and responsibility. We are a holy nation, suggesting a sanctifying presence among the unholy nations, a kind of political force knowing no boundaries and needing only God's armour for its battles. And we are the body of Christ, suggesting functional harmony as each member takes his or her place.

As the church faces pressure to conform to the "isms" of the culture, and as we seek to give definition and shape to that

sometimes elusive thing we call the missional church, such metaphors can help breathe new life. We have grown accustomed to defining the church by its activities—what it does or produces, but any activity must spring from identity.

We are the church birthed by God, reflecting Christ to the world, driven by the power of the Holy Spirit and living in harmony as all members function according to their gifting.

The miracle of the church is that God uses the likes of us "cracked pots" to carry out his divine mission on earth!

Jim Shantz, Conference pastor, Mennonite Church Alberta



From our leaders

Employment opportunities

Bethany College, Hepburn, Saskatchewan invites applications for a part-time interim position (50%) as

ATHLETICS and RECREATION DIRECTOR
for the 2004-05 year (August 1-May 1)

Functions: Oversee administration of the athletic and recreation departments; Develop and supervise coaching staff of athletic teams; Develop student leaders in recreation area; Mentor students as disciples of Jesus Christ; Teach courses in General Studies (possible).

Competencies:

Essential: Commitment to Jesus as Saviour and Lord; Excellent relational skills in a team setting; Anabaptist/Evangelical theological perspective; Bachelors Degree.
Desirable: Training and experience in athletics and recreation; Gifted and experienced administrator; Coaching training and experience; Masters Degree.

First review of resumes will be May 15, 2004.
Applications will close when the position is filled.

Contact:

**Academic Dean
Bethany College
Box 160, Hepburn, SK S0K 1Z0
Phone: (306) 947-2175
Fax: (306) 947-4229
E-mail: dheidebrecht@bethany.sk.ca**



"To uphold personal dignity through compassionate service and Christian love"

DIRECTOR OF CARE

Due to the retirement of the incumbent, Donwood Manor Personal Care Home Inc. has a rewarding and challenging permanent full-time position for a Director of Care.

Donwood Manor is a 121 bed faith-based, fully accredited long term care facility located in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The Director of Care provides leadership in Nursing, Therapeutic Recreation, Staff Development, Admissions, Continuous Quality Improvement, Social Work and Volunteer Services which strive for quality resident care consistent with the mission and vision of Donwood Manor.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor Degree in Nursing is preferred
- Must be eligible for registration with CRNM
- Minimum three years experience in long term care
- Minimum three years experience in a Senior Management position
- Must demonstrate strong leadership, written & verbal communication skills
- Must have a strong commitment to the ideals expressed in the mission statement

Applications are to be received no later than May 7, 2004 to:

**James Heinrichs, Executive Director
Donwood Manor Personal Care Home
171 Donwood Drive
Winnipeg, MB R2G 0V9
Phone: (204) 668-4410
Fax: (204) 663-5429
E-mail: jheinrichs@donwoodmanor.org**

ACADEMIC DEAN/ INSTRUCTOR

Bethany College, Hepburn, Saskatchewan invites applications for a full-time position as Academic Dean/Instructor beginning August 2004.

Functions: Provide leadership for the academic program of the College; Oversee the faculty team in fulfilling the mission of the College; Effectively represent the College in the academic community; Either teach in the area of Christian Ministry/General Studies or fulfill other administrative duties.

Competencies:

Essential: Commitment to Jesus as Saviour and Lord; Anabaptist/Evangelical theological perspective; Excellent relational skills in a team setting; Excellent administrative skills; Masters Degree.
Desirable: Gifted and experienced teacher; Church ministry experience; Familiarity with a Bible College setting; Doctoral degree.

First review of resumes will be May 15, 2004. Applications will close when the position is filled.

Contact:

**President, Bethany College
Box 160, Hepburn, SK S0K 1Z0
Phone: (306) 947-2175
Fax: (306) 947-4229
E-mail: president@bethany.sk.ca**

Christian Alliance International School in Hong Kong has the following vacancies effective August, 2004:

**PRINCIPAL (Secondary)
TEACHER LIBRARIAN
SECONDARY ENGLISH TEACHER
HOME ECONOMICS TEACHER**

Minimum requirements are a B.Ed. (or equivalent) with a relevant major. Previous experience in an international school setting is desirable. Preference will be given to candidates holding a Master degree if applying for Principal or Teacher Librarian. Further details about the positions, closing dates and the application process may be found at the school web site at www.cais.edu.hk. Inquiries may be directed to

**Mr. Art Enns, Headmaster
Phone: (852) 2713-3733; Fax: (852) 2760-4324
E-mail: aenns@cais.edu.hk**

Personal data will be used for recruitment purposes only.

**Columbia Bible College
is currently seeking for
Dean of Students**

Columbia Bible College is responsible for the development of policies and programs for the Student Life Department of the College and the hiring, training and supervision of the Student Life staff. This includes coordinating the counseling services of the College and providing services for students. The Dean of Students works with the Academic Dean in developing strategies of learning as well as with the Academic Dean and Registrar in developing guidelines for registration and admission.

For a complete list of qualifications and job description, please see our website: www.columbiabiblecollege.ca/employment

Interested persons should forward their resume (either by e-mail, fax, or hard copy) by May 15, 2004.

**Dr. Paul Wartman, President
Columbia Bible College
25411 Livestock Road
Abbotsford BC V2T 2Z8
president@cbcc.columbiabiblecollege.ca
Fax: (804) 855-5065**



Bluffton College seeks applicants for the following positions:

ARCHIVES and SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARIAN

beginning August 1, 2004. This 12-month position has primary responsibility for the archives and the Mennonite Historical collections. The focus of this position is in the development of a program that supports the integration of these collections into the curriculum of the College and encourages undergraduate research. Required: Master's degree from an ALA-accredited program; archives and/or special collections experience and training, including preservation; commitment to user-oriented library services and undergraduate research; excellent oral and written communication skills. Preferred: Minimum 3 years' experience in an academic library setting; broad knowledge of Mennonite and Anabaptist history and thought; reading knowledge of German; familiarity with MARC format cataloging for special collections materials and knowledge of current archival descriptive practices.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR in ART

for one year (with possible extension) beginning fall semester 2004. Teach courses in graphic design, and two-dimensional studio media. Additional assignments in art foundations and general education. MFA in graphic design with 2 years professional experience. Expertise in painting and drawing, or printmaking also preferred. In addition to the materials listed below, submit an exhibition record with the vita, and a slide portfolio featuring 20 works of art.

Review of applications begins immediately and continues until an appointment is made. Send letter of interest, vita, three letters of reference (submitted directly from the referee), and official transcripts to

Elaine Suderman, Academic Affairs
Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave.
Bluffton, OH 45817-1196

Bluffton College welcomes applications from all academically qualified persons who respect the Anabaptist/Mennonite peace church tradition and wholly endorse Christian higher education in a liberal arts environment. Equal opportunity employer. Members of underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply. www.bluffton.edu/about/employment/index.html

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Tri County Mennonite Homes (TCMH) invites applications for the position of Executive Director. TCMH, with its head office in New Hamburg, ON is a not-for-profit charitable corporation sponsored by 18 congregations of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada. TCMH is a comprehensive community resource serving the counties of Waterloo, Perth and Oxford. TCMH provides residential services for seniors ranging from independent housing through to long term care, as well as services to adults with developmental disabilities.

The Executive Director is accountable to and responsible for implementing the actions and directions of the TCMH's Board of Directors and for coordinating the activities of the corporate office staff, in addition to supporting the Administrators in each of three operating divisions.

A full employment description is available online at www.tcmhomes.com/ed.htm. Resumes for this position will be received until April 26, 2004, and may be submitted by email to ed.search@tcmhomes.com or mailed to the:

Search Committee Chair
Tri County Mennonite Homes
200 Boullee Street
New Hamburg, ON N3A 2K4



Employment/Ministry Opportunities MCC Supportive Care Services

MANAGER OF CARE

required for a full-time position managing and directing the activities of a staff supporting 12 individuals who are developing life skills toward independent living in an apartment setting in Chilliwack, BC. Position requires Registered Psychiatric Nurse, Registered Nurse, Occupational Therapist or Physical Therapist. Training/experience in the area of psychosocial rehabilitation and in mental health preferred. Position starting ASAP.

LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES

required at Valhaven Home in Abbotsford, BC. PT positions currently available in addition to casual shifts.

For information & application, contact:

Leslie Friesen, Personnel Assistant
Phone: (604) 850-6608; Fax: (604) 850-2634
E-mail: leslie@mccscs.com

Announcements

Mennonite Central Committee U.S.'s Office on Crime and Justice and Mennonite Conciliation Service are sponsoring an Advanced Training Institute, entitled

"WORKING WITH GROUPS"

October 11-15, 2004

at the MCC Welcoming Place, Akron, PA.

The cost is \$450 (\$500 for registrations received after September 17); some scholarship assistance is available. Visit www.mcc.org/us/peaceandjustice/mcs.html for more information or contact:

MCS
Box 500, Akron, PA 17501
Phone: (717) 859-1151
E-mail: mcs@mccus.org

REACH LOST SOULS OVER
CHRISTIAN RADIO.
MINISTERS AND LAY
PERSONS CONTACT: DAVID
or LINDA AT (705) 235-3072
E-mail: cksofm@vianet.ca
www.cksofm.netfirms.com

For rent

Camps with Meaning has openings for guest groups in late August at Camp Assiniboia (Headingley) and Camp Moose Lake (Sprague). Ideal for family gatherings. Contact 204-895-CAMP for more information.

Retreat cottage for rent on the Little Mississippi River near Bancroft, ON. Wood stove, hydro, running hot and cold water and flush toilet. Accessible year round. Ideal for weekend or week long getaway. Call (519) 471-3309 or e-mail: kcdrudge@skynet.ca

CANADIAN
Mennonite



Advertising Information

Contact
Barbara
Burkholder at:
1-800-316-4052

advert@
canadianmennonite.org

Subsidies available for conference

Kitchener, Ont.—Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada is offering 10 subsidies to people attending the North American Stewardship Conference in Toronto, June 23-26.

Several Mennonites are leading workshops at the event, including Mark Vincent from Design for Ministry, Lynn Miller from Mennonite Mutual Aid, and Wanda Roth Amstutz from Grace Mennonite Church in St. Catharines. Keynote speakers are Lloyd Axworthy, now director of the Liu Institute for Global Issues, and Reginald Bibby from the University of Lethbridge.

For information about subsidies, call Jeff Steckley,

Giving Project Consultant, at (519) 650-3806.—From MCEC

Conflict resolution conference in June

Waterloo, Ont.—“Come back to the core,” a conference celebrating conflict resolution in Canada, will be held here June 2-5. The conference is sponsored by Conflict Resolution Network Canada, based at Conrad Grebel University College.

Interaction 2004 will provide a national forum for exchanging ideas, practices and programs around conflict resolution.

For more information, e-mail: crnetwork@crnetwork.ca or phone (519) 885-0880.

—From reports

June 5: Hike-a-thon for Camp Valaqua. Call (403) 637-2510 for details.

June 11-13: Young adult retreat at Camp Valaqua. Call Holyrood church at (780) 466-3277.

June 18-19: MCC Alberta Relief Sale in Coaldale.

Saskatchewan

May 5: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon with John McLeod, aboriginal businessman, 7:30 a.m.

May 7: Rosthern Junior College/Canadian Mennonite University at Osler Mennonite Church: banquet 6:00 p.m.; concert 7:30 p.m.

May 8: CMU Chamber Choir at Bethany Manor, Saskatoon, 2:00 p.m.; at Mount Royal Mennonite 7:30 p.m.

May 16: Rosthern Junior College spring concert.

June 2: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon with Jim Dyck on world food industry, 7:30 a.m.

June 6: Shekinah Bike-a-thon.

June 6-8: Pastor/Spouse Retreat at Camp Elim with Sven Eriksson.

June 11-12: MCC Relief Sale in Saskatoon.

June 12: Ride-a-thon for Youth Farm Bible Camp. See www.yfbc.ca.

June 24-27: Rosthern Junior College musical and graduation (27).

June 29: MC Saskatchewan Camping Commission comedy and dessert night at Youth Farm Bible Camp, Rosthern.

July 2-4: Shekinah 25th anniversary celebrations.

July 7: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

August 4: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

September 10-12: Junior high retreat.

September 30-October 2: Canadian Mennonite Health Assembly at Shekinah.

November 13-14: Musical, “Pull of the land,” at Rosthern Junior College. Fundraiser for Mennonite Heritage Museum.

Manitoba

May 1: Women’s Enrichment Day at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, sponsored by Manitoba Women in Mission, beginning 8:30 a.m. Speakers: Pam Driedger and Marilyn Houser Hamm on prayer.

May 2: Film premiere of “Remembering our Mennonite Heritage” by Otto Klassen, at Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, 7:00 p.m.

May 7, 14: “The well is dry” seminar on caregiving by Joanne Klassen, at Emmanuel Mennonite, Winkler (7) and Canadian Mennonite University (14). Call toll-free 1-866-493-6202.

May 8: Intergenerational Volleyball Tournament at Canadian Mennonite University, hosted by Young Adult Council.

May 14-16: “Come walk with me,” a gathering of the Supportive Congregations Network at Crossways (222 Furby St.), Winnipeg. Contact Karen Schlichting at (204) 772-9610.

May 21-23: Camp Moose Lake Workathon.

May 27, June 3: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate concerts at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg. Senior high (May 27), junior high (June 3).

May 28-30: Work Day and Seven Lakes Canoe Trip at Camp Koinonia, led by Kevin Stoesz.

May 31-June 2: 55 Plus Retreat at Camp Moose Lake with Larry Hirst.

June 5: Family Fun Fest at Camp Assiniboia, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

June 5: Convocation at Menno Simons College, Winnipeg, 3:30 p.m.

June 7-9: 55 Plus Retreat at Camp Koinonia with Jake

Calendar

British Columbia

May 1: Scrapbooking fundraiser for youth ministry at Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Phone (604) 327-3913.

May 8: Lecture by Ray Dirks on “Mennonites and art” at Garden Park Tower, Abbotsford, 7:00 p.m., sponsored by Mennonite Historical Society of B.C.

May 29: MCC World Fair in Black Creek. Call Sharon Janzen at (250) 337-4004.

June 1: Annual meeting of M2/W2 at Garden Park Tower, Abbotsford, 7:30 p.m. Call toll-free 1-800-298-1777.

June 4-5: MC British Columbia annual delegate assembly at Eden Mennonite, Chilliwack.

July 14-18: MCC Family Camping Trip to Vancouver Island. Contact Darryl Klassen or Elsie Wiebe Klingler at (604) 850-6639.

August 20-22: 50th Anniversary Homecoming at First Mennonite Church, Burns Lake. Contact Rob Wiebe, e-

mail: rwiebe@futurenet.bc.ca, fax: (250) 698-7363.

August 23-30: MCC Quilt Show at Clearbrook Public Library. Call (604) 850-6639 or visit www.mcc.org/bc.

September 17-18: MCC Festival at the Tradex, Abbotsford. Call (604) 850-6639 or visit www.mcc.org/bc.

September 19: MCC Festival of Praise at Central Heights Mennonite Brethren Church, 2:30 p.m.

September 25: MCC Fall Fair at Civic Centre, Prince George.

Alberta

April 30-May 2: Women’s retreat at Camp Valaqua on “Music as therapy.” Speakers: Evelyn Roden and Margie Koop. Call Beth Moyer at (403) 327-0629.

May 7: Camp Contact meeting at Camp Valaqua, 8:30 p.m.

May 8: Workday at Camp Valaqua. Call (403) 637-2510 for details.

May 15: Songfest at Foothills Mennonite, Calgary. Conductors: Mark Bartel and Joanne Wiens.

Harms and Jake Neufeld.

June 13: Charity golf event for Eden Foundation at Winkler Golf Course, 1:30 p.m. Call (204) 325-5355.

June 22: Canadian Mennonite University President's Golf Tournament at Kingswood, Winnipeg. See www.cmu.ca for details.

June 26: Camp Koinonia Golf Tournament at Winkler Golf Course.

June 26-27: MCC Bike the Whiteshell cyclathon.

June 28: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate graduation at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

July 3: MCC Cycle Clear Lake cyclathon (formerly Spruce Woods).

July 7-11: Mennonite Church Canada annual delegate assembly in Winkler.

July 15: IronMan golf marathon for Eden Foundation at Winkler Golf Course, 1:30 p.m. Call (204) 325-5355.

July 17-18: 75th anniversary celebration at Schoenfelder Mennonite Church, Pigeon Lake. Call (204) 864-2285, e-mail: schoenfelder75@hotmail.com.

July 19-23: Course on worship with John Bell of Iona Community, Scotland, at Canadian Mennonite University.

October 2: MC Manitoba Equipping Conference at Canadian Mennonite University.

Ontario

April 23, 24: Menno Singers and Pax Christi Chorale perform Vaughan Williams' "Dona Nobis Pacem" and Durufle's "Requiem" at Benton St. Baptist, Kitchener (23), and Yorkminster Park Baptist, Toronto (24), 8:00 p.m.

April 23, 24: Mennonite Church Eastern Canada annual delegate session, United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington.

April 26-30: MCC meat canning in Guelph.

April 30: MEDA spring banquet at Conrad Grebel University College with speaker John Fast.

April 30: Rockway Mennonite

Collegiate, Envirathon-Servathon.

April 30-May 1: Engaged Workshop at Living Water Mennonite Fellowship, New Hamburg. Call (519) 656-2256.

April 30-May 1: Women's retreat at Hidden Acres Camp with Janine Schultz. Register by April 26. Call (519) 625-8602, e-mail: info@hiddenacres.ca.

May 1: Fundraising breakfast and annual meeting of Shalom Counselling Services at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, 8:30 a.m. with speaker Margaret Janzen.

May 1: MCC workshop on refugee sponsorship at Grace Mennonite, St. Catharines. To register call (905) 646-3161, e-mail: delphinep@mennonitecc.on.ca.

May 2: Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir concert at Breslau Mennonite Church, 3:00 p.m.

May 7: Anniversary celebration at Mennonite New Life Centre, Toronto, 2:00-9:00 p.m. For details, phone Kathy Wert at (416) 463-8551.

May 8: Springfest at Niagara United Mennonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake, 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

May 8: Riverdale Mennonite Church Goods & Services Auction and bake sale at A.E.X. truck depot (beside Anna Mae's Restaurant), Millbank, 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. Proceeds for missions. Call (519) 595-4453.

May 10, 11: Seniors' retreat, "Spiritual self care for seniors," at Hidden Acres Camp. Speaker: Miriam Frey. Noon meal provided. (Monday program repeated on Tuesday.) Call (519) 625-8606.

May 15: Garage sale at Erb St. Mennonite Church, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., for building fund.

May 16: Spring concert at United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington, 7:30 p.m.

May 20: Spring concert at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.

May 25-29: Quilt Festival at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church. Proceeds to MCC.

May 28-30: "Sound in the

land" music festival/conference at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo.

June 4-5: MennoFolk at Hidden Acres Camp, 7:00 p.m. Friday, 3:00 p.m. on Saturday. Phone Mark Diller Harder at (519) 650-3806, e-mail: markdh@mcecc.on.ca.

June 10-12: Homecoming weekend at Breslau Mennonite Church. Visit www.breslau.org/homecoming or call (519) 569-8637 for details.

June 15-18: Summer Training Institute for church leaders by Conciliation Services Canada, at Conrad Grebel University College. Contact Nan Cressman, phone 1-866-782-0287.

June 19: Graduation at Rockway Mennonite Colle-

giate, Kitchener.

June 20: United Mennonite Educational Institute (UMEI) graduation, Leamington, 2:30 p.m.

July 11: UMEI Pancake Breakfast, 8:00 a.m. Service 10:00 a.m.

July 19: UMEI Watermelon Open .

August 13-15: Ontario Mennonite Bible School reunion at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo.

August 19: Peach social at United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington.

United States

June 2-5: MCC Binational Thrift Shop Network conference, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Subscriber services CANADIAN Mennonite

How to subscribe:

- Individuals who are part of Mennonite Church Canada or one of its five area conferences can ask to be placed on their congregation's group subscription list. The subscription is paid by the conferences.
- Others who wish to order a subscription can use this form. See contact information below.
Rates: \$32.50 for one year (includes \$2.13 GST); \$52.50 (Can.) to U.S.; \$73.00 (Can.) for overseas.

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- Changes will be made immediately but may take 4-6 weeks to take effect because of printing schedules.

Contact information:

Canadian Mennonite, 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 6H7
 Phone: (519) 884-3810 Toll-free: 1-800-378-2524 ext.221
 Fax: (519) 884-3331 E-mail: office@canadianmennonite.org

The Lord's favour

**Lord, thou hast been favourable unto thy land;
thou didst restore the fortunes of Jacob.
Thou didst forgive the iniquity of thy people;
thou didst pardon all their sin....**

**Mercy and truth are met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
Truth shall spring out of the earth;
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.
Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good;
and our land shall yield her increase.**

Psalm 85



Photo by Rosemarie Cunningham