

CANADIAN Mennonite

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Colombia refugees
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Ash Wednesday 2003

During these days of confusion and high emotion over Iraq, I happened to be reading the biography of a woman caught in an earlier era of Middle East turmoil—before and during World War II.

At that time, colonial control of the region was winding down, but the imperialist powers were making sure that the “right” leaders were in place. Britain was bargaining over how to create a state for Jews without destroying an Arab homeland. The ideological passions and dirty politics sounded all too familiar.

The woman in the midst of all this was Freya Stark (1892-1993), a madly adventurous and brilliant English woman who loved to travel to remote corners of the Arab world simply to explore and learn. She became one of the world’s leading Arabists. Her writing was “unequaled in its perceptions of remote peoples who make up the Islamic world” (*Passionate Nomad* by Jane Fletcher Geniesse, The Modern Library, 2001).

This female “Lawrence of Arabia,” while fiercely British, spurned the imperialist attitudes of her country. She had a deep respect for both Arabs and Jews (but no patience with extremists). She welcomed the changes that came with the independence of Arab states. The colonial powers, however, still controlled many of those changes. As they blithely “sliced up” the Middle East after World War II, Stark foresaw the legacy of violence and resentment they were leaving to future generations.

The main issues then were Zionism and control of oil. Things haven’t changed much over 50 years. World politics is still shaped by national self-interest, fear and bigotry. War is still considered a viable option, a “quick fix” to complex problems. But maybe some things have changed.

On February 15, we witnessed “the largest anti-war protest in history,” according to reports. Millions of people in

cities around the world took to the streets to speak a resounding “No!” to war with Iraq. This massive uprising, and the broad spectrum of protesters, are surely causes for hope. Even our mass media appear to be digging deeper during this crisis, providing analysis and opinion that go beyond political sloganeering. (An example is the page on “Iraq and a hard case” in the February 15 *Globe and Mail*.)

But even if war is averted, the problems won’t go away. We will continue to be anxious about rising gas prices and falling markets. We will worry that our comfortable lives are at risk. We will continue to fear the terrorist threat.

“The alternatives are stark,” noted Michael Lerner, an American rabbi, after September 11. “Either start caring about the fate of everyone on this planet or be prepared for a slippery slope toward violence that will eventually dominate our daily lives.” Lerner suggested “a global day of atonement and repentance” to focus on how to become a more just and loving society.

You are reading this issue as the season of Lent approaches. Let us begin this sombre season by clothing our minds and hearts in sackcloth and ashes. Let us begin with repentance for our own sins as we pray for a better world.

—Margaret Loewen Reimer, managing editor

Missional focus

What exactly is a “missional” church? That question has been batted around since Mennonite Church Canada adopted missional thinking as its organizing principle several years ago. In this issue, scholar and pastor David Schroeder offers his answer by exploring the biblical record (page 6). This is the first in a two-part series.

Accompanying Schroeder’s article is a provocative image of the church on a canoe trip (page 7) and examples of how missional thinking is being put into practice in Mennonite Church Canada congregations (pages 18 and 19).

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Head office: 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, Ont. N2L 6H7
Phone: (519) 884-3810. Fax: (519) 884-3331. Toll-free: 800-378-2524
E-mail: editor@canadianmennonite.org
Website: <http://canadianmennonite.org>

Staff: Ron Rempel, editor/publisher; Margaret Loewen Reimer, managing editor; Rob Langlade, art director; Barb Draper, editorial assistant; Natasha Krahn, administrative assistant.

Advertising: Barbara Burkholder. Phone: 800-316-4052, Fax: (519) 884-3331, E-mail: advert@canadianmennonite.org

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National correspondent: Leona Dueck Penner, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Man. R3P 0M4. Phone: (204) 888-6781. Fax: (204) 831-5675. E-mail: dueck-penner@mennonitechurch.ca

Regional correspondents: *Eastern Canada:*

Maurice Martin, 97 Riverside Dr., New Hamburg, Ont. N3A 2H6. Phone: (519) 662-1031. E-mail: mauricem@sympatico.ca
Manitoba: Evelyn Rempel Petkau, Box 1191, Carman, Man. R0G 0J0. Phone/Fax: (204) 745-2208. E-mail: erpetkau@cici.mb.ca
Saskatchewan: Karin Fehderau, 99 MacLean Cres., Saskatoon, Sask. S7J 2R6. Phone: (306) 933-4209. E-mail: k.fehderau@sasktel.net
Alberta: Donita Wiebe-Neufeld, 8707 44 Ave., Edmonton, Alta. T6K 0Z9. Phone: (780) 436-3431. E-mail: timanddonita@attglobal.net
British Columbia: Angelika Dawson, 2443 Lilac Crescent, Abbotsford, B.C. V2T 1P5. Phone: (604) 870-0494. Fax: (604) 870-0366. E-mail: angelika@uniserve.com

Board of directors: *British Columbia:* Henry Neufeld, Aiden S. Enns. *Alberta:* Brenda Thiessen-Wiens, Jan Wilhelm. *Saskatchewan:* Bernie Thiessen. *Manitoba:* Ron Loepky, Bernie Wiebe, Paul Krahn. *Ontario:* Lloyd Koch, Mary Lymburner, Betty Dyck, Brice Balmer.

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Website preview

Get a preview of the next *Canadian Mennonite* before it comes in the mail. Selections are posted on our web site (www.canadianmennonite.org) on the Thursday before the date of the issue. Check out the March 10 issue by March 6.

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Cover: The only surviving first edition copy of the *Ausbund* (1564), an Anabaptist hymnbook that is still used by the Amish. It is on display at Goshen College library until April 30. Photo by Jodi Hochstedler

Abbotsford, B.C.

Always a place at the Froese table

I am invited to sit at the table in a bright corner of the kitchen. Coffee is poured, cookies offered and the conversation is cheerful. My hosts are as interested in me as I am in them.

As I chat with Werner and Susan Froese, it becomes clear that this is the hallmark of their ministry and I feel somewhat sorry that I'm interviewing them on the occasion of their retirement. Werner will finish as pastor at Eden Mennonite Church in Chilliwack this June.

Technically it is Werner who is retiring; Susan has rarely worked outside the home.

"I've always been of the mind that if one in the household is running in all directions, then the other one need not," Susan says, adding that they've always managed to live on one income. She's never thought of herself as a

pastor's wife anymore than a woman married to a teacher might think of herself as a teacher's wife. She was Werner's wife and a member of whatever congregation they were attending, and in that way they ministered together.

Their journey has taken them all over western Canada and as far as Mexico, including churches in B.C., Alberta and Saskatchewan. Werner also served as the executive director for Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan. Wherever they have served, their home has been open. "We've had lots of people over and been in a lot of people's homes," Werner says. "My style has been very much connecting, relational."

In their 39 years of service, the Froeses have seen many changes. Susan says the biggest change she's noticed has been in music. Few churches have choirs anymore and the couple has witnessed the struggle many churches have with finding a balance between contemporary and traditional music.

"In a way, that ties into another change I've noticed and that's a change in church thinking," Werner says. "There is less of a commitment to the organized church." He shares examples of people moving from church to church to try to find something that makes them happy, rather than sticking with a church because of a commitment to its theological perspectives.

"The instability of people makes me wonder about the longevity of the church here in B.C."

Werner believes that the greatest challenge facing church leaders is the tremendous pressure of church growth. He refers to the amount of mail he gets encouraging churches to try various programs to get higher attendance.

"I don't want to be critical," he says. "I'm not the kind of pastor who sets five year goals and works towards



Werner and Susan Froese

them. I've always been more of a *Seelsorger* (soul caretaker)."

As he says this, he fills my coffee cup and the conversation turns back to my experiences in different churches. We've talked about my music background, my son, the church I grew up in. They've shown me photos of family and grandchildren. I ask what the future holds and they laugh, telling me they agreed that this was the one question they were not going to answer.

"We only have two plans," Susan says. "One is not to stay living here [in Chilliwack] and the other is to be free and easy until the end of this year." Their children live in Alberta and Saskatchewan and they talk about a desire to be closer to family.

But how do you retire from a calling? I ask.

"You don't!" Werner says, smiling. "But maybe we can have a sabbatical."

By the time they finish their term, they hope to have had everyone in the church over to their place for coffee or a meal. Whatever the future holds for the Froeses, one thing is certain: there will always be a place at the kitchen table.—**Angelika Dawson**

Women's fast includes 20 countries

Winnipeg, Man.—As of February 17, over 950 women had registered for "A Women's Fast for Peace," sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee Canada. In addition, many women and men are fasting without registering, noted Esther Epp-Tiessen, Peace and Economic Justice coordinator MCC Canada.

"In the past week, people in Syria, Palestine, Bangladesh and Democratic Republic of Congo have joined the fast," reported Epp-Tiessen. "There are now 20 countries represented."

The purpose of the fast, which began on January 22, is to pray for women and children in Iraq as war looms. The fast continues until March 8, International Women's Day. Each week, MCC provides an online update with scripture and other materials at www.mcc.org/canada/peace/fast/index.html.—From MCC Canada releases

Harrisonburg, Va.

Couple separated in immigration tangle

Some people thought it was a joke, but Ross and Cathy Smeltzer Erb weren't laughing. The couple was forced to live apart for nearly six months while Ross, a native of Ontario, tried to establish his right to live with his family in the U.S.

Cathy, Ross and their three children had been living in Baden, Ontario, where Ross was a supervisor with Family and Children's Services. The family decided to move to Virginia when Cathy was offered a job as assistant professor of teacher education at Eastern Mennonite University last January. Cathy filed a petition to sponsor Ross' entry into the U.S., and they were told he should have a visa by June or July.

As the move loomed, the case became entangled in "endless loops of no information." She spent hours on the phone as her calls were shunted among State Department offices in Missouri, New Hampshire and Montreal—none of whom claimed to know about her husband's case.

In July, Ross came to Harrisonburg as a temporary visitor. He was hired as associate pastor at Park View Mennonite Church.

But just as the family began its new life, Ross had to return to Ontario to get his police records and other documents. When he tried to return, however, he was told he could not leave Canada until the visa process was complete.

Ross had no choice but to stay in Ontario. Fortunately, he was able to board with families from his former church and to resume his job temporarily. Meanwhile, Cathy and the children found support in their new community.

Several members volunteered to cover Ross' responsibilities until he returned. An adult Sunday school class provided meals three days a week, drove the children to lessons and offered a listening ear. They also treated the children to several "fun with kids" days.

"I don't know how I would have survived without that," said Cathy.

In November, Ross was told to come to the American Consulate in Montreal on December 20. Even though his documents seemed to be in order, this appointment was no guarantee Ross would be granted a visa. But an official simply asked Ross to confirm his information, then wrote "approved" on his file.

Ross says his anxiety didn't entirely disappear until he got a visa stamp at the border. On December 21, he and his family were reunited.

The local congressional representative, whose office handles hundreds of immigration requests per year, says a typical error made by immigrants probably kept Ross from returning to the U.S. earlier.

"People make the mistake of leaving their country of origin without the



Ross and Cathy Smeltzer Erb show the document that finally allowed Ross to join his family after many months.

proper paperwork," he says. The events of September 11, 2001 also have affected immigration, requiring FBI checks and keeping up with rapidly changing procedures.

When hearing about the family's plight some people laughed, says Cathy. Others asked about his skin colour or his ability to speak English. She blames this reaction on the common misconception that citizens of Canada encounter fewer difficulties than other nationalities in immigrating to the U.S.

Ross wonders how much harder the process is for immigrants who don't have his advantages. "We're both English speakers, well educated," he says. "We're familiar with bureaucracy and didn't fear authority."

Ross received his permanent residency, also known as a green card, in January. He had been told to expect it next June.—From a report by **Rachel Bowman**

The article was reprinted by permission from the January 11 issue of the Daily News-Record in Harrisonburg. The writer is a student at EMU.



Edijane Batista Silva (right) of Recife, Brazil, assists a customer in her candy shop. Silva received a loan through a micro-credit program of Mennonite Central Committee Brazil. From three groups of clients with \$7,700 in loan capital, the credit program, known as FRAME, has grown to 25 groups with a base of \$69,000. FRAME is now becoming independent, working through churches and rural associations.—From MCC release

Photo by Hildajane Soares

Missional: To witness in our stations

The emphasis on being a “missional church” means witnessing by who we are in all our stations in life, says David Schroeder in this first of a two-part series. The second article will explore our prophetic and ecumenical witness.

With the reorganization of Mennonite Church Canada and USA has come a new emphasis on being a “missional church.” The change is from what we “do” to an emphasis on “who we are” as witnesses.

All people, not only Christians, are witnesses to their faith. All people act out of a worldview, religious or not, that informs their lives and influences the choices they make. The more we are committed to be a witness to our faith, the more we will seek to bring proclamation and action into line with each other.

The early church was missional. It did not emphasize a specific strategy of missions, or a method of evangelism, or a particular area to be evangelized. The early Christians looked rather to the gifts that God had given them in the Christian community. They paid heed to being followers of Christ in the world.

God's invitation

It is instructive to observe how God comes to sinful humanity: God comes to offer freedom from bondage and an invitation to choose life. We observe the liberation from bondage in Israel's exodus out of Egypt, and we find God's invitation to life in the giving of the law at Sinai.

The Exodus (Exodus 1-15). God's intention to free people from bondage was made evident when God showed mercy to an enslaved people and liberated them. The Exodus became paradigmatic of God's intention to free people from bondage of all kinds, and to allow them once again to act as responsible

beings, as God intended from the beginning.

The Exodus gave a clear indication that God is a freeing and saving God, offering salvation to all who respond in faith to God's self-revelation.

Sinai (Exodus 19-20). At Sinai, God invited a people who had been set free to freely choose life. The problem was that, because of their sin, the

people no longer knew what was right or wrong, and what would lead to life or death. So God, through Moses, revealed the will of God. In the Torah, the Law of Moses, God revealed what would lead to life and what would lead to destruction.

Having freed them to become responsible people, and having revealed what would lead to life and death, God invited the people to choose life. This they could do by pledging to keep all that God had commanded. The Old Testament reveals a long history of obedience and disobedience to God and the way in which God sought to bring the people back to the covenant they had made at Sinai. These attempts culminated in God becoming incarnate in Jesus and once again making the offer of salvation and the invitation to choose life.

Jesus Christ (The Gospels). In Jesus, people could observe both the character of God and what they were intended to be and do in their response to God. Jesus manifested God's intent to seek and to save the lost (those in bondage to sin). He manifested the love of God to all he met and gave hope of salvation to those who had been rejected as hopelessly lost.

Those who followed Jesus were set free from bondage and proclaimed him as Saviour and Messiah. Jesus did what God did at the Exodus. He set people free and allowed them once more to become responsible persons.

Inviting people to follow him was Jesus' way of inviting people to choose life. The way to life could be seen more clearly in Jesus than in the law because it was lived out in the flesh for all to see. Those who followed Jesus called him “Lord” in that they had chosen to do his will.

Jesus in his ministry also revealed how we should respond to God. We can choose to do the will of God as Jesus



Children at Trinity Mennonite Church in Calgary fill the canoe as Eric Olfert speaks about the missional church. At right is Hugo Neufeld, pastor at Trinity. See page 7.

committed himself to do. Jesus placed his trust in God even when he was rejected and killed by those to whom he was a threat. We should do the same. He gave to all the hope that as he was raised from the dead, all those who are in Christ will be raised to newness of life.

Witness in our 'stations'

The early Christians gloried in the salvation that had become a part of their experience through Pentecost and the outpouring of the Spirit. They, too, had been set free from bondage and now were intent on sharing this good news with the whole world. But how should they do this?

Paul simply called on Christians to be Christian in their stations in life. We do not talk much about "stations" anymore, but we should! The early Christians were well aware of their stations in life, and it was here that their witness to the gospel was to be

given (Ephesians 5, Colossians 3:18-4:1, 1 Peter 2: 13-3:7).

Your "station" is the basis of your duty or ethical responsibility to someone else. If you are married, you have a duty to your spouse; as a daughter or son, you have a duty to your parents; as the driver of a car you have an obligation to other drivers on the road.

We hold any number of stations in life simultaneously. In all of them we are to manifest the fruit of the Spirit. To be Christian in our station is really a double-sided testimony. It allows people to see who we were before we gave our lives to Christ and who we now are in Christ. It allows people to see what difference our allegiance to Christ makes when compared to their own lives.

The difference Christ made in the early church can be observed most clearly in regard to Christian slaves. Through faith in Christ, the slave was empowered to be a morally responsible person. Slaves did not have power over whether they were slaves or not, but they did have power over what they did as slaves (1 Corinthians 7:21-24).

Peter indicated that if slaves would obey Christ rather than their masters, they might face persecution. But that is exactly what Jesus did, said Peter (1 Peter 2:18ff). As slaves chose to do what was right and not only commanded, they witnessed to the power of the gospel to set them free.

Continued on page 8

Imagine the church as a canoe trip...

To begin a recent sermon on the missional church, Eric Olfert asked the children to get into a canoe and imagine the church as moving along with the current of God's purpose. The following is from that sermon.

A "missional church" is a church that sees its mission as aligning itself with God's purpose in the world. Join me in imagining ourselves on a canoe trip. Think about the church as being like a bunch of canoes trying to get to the pick-up point in time for supper. Each canoe is one group of church members. One canoe might represent the Sunday School, others might represent the choir, the church council and the service committee.

The purpose of the church's journey could be described as "salvation," "reconciliation," "liberation," "building God's kingdom" or "getting to heaven"—we each have language we prefer. Let the river's current be God's intention, God's purpose, moving us along towards the ultimate goal.

What kind of church are we? Do we stay in the "safe" waters close to the riverbank where we can easily pull out for rest and refreshment? Close to the bank the current doesn't help as much. There are quiet backwaters and eddies

where you lose ground if you don't paddle hard. It's harder to make progress if you're out of the current. The temptation is to pull in and make camp while you send a few of your stronger paddlers ahead to tell those waiting that you'll be a bit late.

When our Olfert family has its annual May "fishing trip," it's mostly about camping, eating, extreme croquet, and seeing how far the stories of previous fishing trips can be stretched before they break. Last spring the lakes were still frozen so there was no fishing at all, but the fishing trip was still deemed a success. Are there churches like that?

A missional church would approach things differently. When I went canoeing with the campers at Shekinah, we didn't want to be late for supper. We all tried to find the current that would help us get back as quickly as possible. Our leaders knew the river. When one canoe found a good current, they called us and we all shifted over. It's easier to understand God's purpose and follow it when we work at it together.

When we got tired, we would call a "raft-up" and all the canoes would come together, and we would hold on to each other to make a stable raft. That way we could rest, encourage each other, get instructions, discuss options, and share

cookies and drink while we continued to move with the current.

That's what missional church is about. All of us, as individuals and together as a church, need always to be seeking out what God's intention is for the world, both for the corner where we are placed and for the ends of the earth. Notice that in the missional church, everybody is out there together.

Becoming a missional church doesn't require us to throw everything out and start over. Mennonite Church Canada is supplying navigational aids to help us organize ourselves and find God's current. In summary:

- God is at work everywhere before we get there. God is there to welcome us.
- God's work is healing, reconciling and saving the world.
- Our job is being part of this mission and modelling what it looks like, kind of being God's demonstration plots.
- If we are to be demonstration plots, we need to work hard at being different from the crops around us.
- This takes all of us. Nobody gets to stay home and make lunch.

Eric Olfert, from Saskatoon, is Missional Formation and Partnership facilitator in Saskatchewan for Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

Witness in our stations *From page 7*

The same held true for Christian women. They, too, were set free by the gospel. They were admonished by Peter to retain their faith in Christ even though the society (both Greek and Hebrew) expected women to worship the gods of their husbands. Peter admonished Christian women who were prohibited from speaking about their faith to be responsible in their Christian witness (1 Peter 3: 1-6). The impact of the gospel in these women was that they were now morally responsible persons and chose to serve Christ.



The beauty of this approach to witness is that the whole Christian community becomes a missionary society or a “missional” community. This is the true expression of the priesthood of all believers. Being a missional church is more than sending people out to witness. It is more than individual acts of wit-

nessing. It has to do with who we are, with “being witnesses.” Your life in all its relationships is a witness to your faith in Christ.

The early church recognized that our words and our deeds flow from who we are. In our stations, word and deed come together. Thus our witness to Christ is given most significantly in our everyday lives.

Furthermore, the witness given in our stations is always contextually appropriate. When the fruit of the spirit is made evident in a specific station, other persons in the same station understand it. They can observe firsthand what difference the gospel makes to people in that station.

The contribution of the church to the world will depend on

how well we accomplish the task of being Christian in our stations. It is the task of applying the gospel to all of life and of having all of life informed by the gospel.

Marks of true witness

What would it look like if we were Christian in all our stations? I am reminded of Dr. Barkman, a Holdeman Mennonite who interned at a Winnipeg hospital in the 1940s. Since he was known to be a conscientious Christian, he was often assigned to be on duty on days when others wanted to be free.

One evening, a drunk person was brought in with a severed arm. A train had run over him. Barkman refused to participate in the surgery unless the patient received something to deaden the pain. The surgeon explained that, since the patient was drunk, he could not be given an anesthetic.

“But you could give him a local!” replied Barkman. When this was done, Barkman helped with the operation. The nurses later told Barkman that what he had done could prevent him from graduating as a doctor. Barkman responded that if he had to do wrong in order to be a doctor he would not want to be one.

Why ‘missional’ church?

“A missional church is...
*all of God’s people demonstrating and proclaiming
 all of God’s gospel throughout
 all of God’s world” (James Krabill).*

What advantage does the term “missional church” have over expressions like “missionary church” or “church with a mission?”

When the Protestant missionary movement started early in the nineteenth century, sending agencies were called “missionary societies.” These societies provided a chance for lay Christians to become involved in foreign missions in a time when Protestant church leaders generally opposed mission outreach.

These mission agencies found it hard to subordinate themselves to their denominations, even after the latter rallied to the task of missions. Perhaps more seriously, the agencies excused congregations from having to concern

themselves directly with missions. Were they not supporting these agencies precisely to carry out the missionary task for them?

The missionary movement emerged during the time of colonialist expansion of the western powers. Mission was understood as building the church in foreign lands. When colonialism collapsed after World War II, this “Christendom” concept of missions fell into a crisis. Mission-founded churches rapidly became independent and engaged in vigorous mission work of their own.

The crisis in western missions forced a re-examination of our concepts of both church and mission. Biblical studies revealed that mission does not belong to the church but is God’s mission. Jesus sent God’s new humanity (the church) into the world to continue the mission God had given him.

Mission, then, is not to expand the church but to help expand God’s kingdom through the church’s witness in word and

life. The church’s main reason for being is missionary witness. As Emil Brunner says, “God’s Word creates the community in order that the community might communicate God’s Word.... The church exists by mission, just as fire exists by burning.”

The missional church is thus rediscovering that the church is not the owner but rather the instrument of God’s mission. Our missionary witness is directed toward people outside the community, in the neighbourhood and around the globe. This means that while the task of foreign missions remains, the missional church must live in “missionary encounter” with the culture that surrounds it. The foundation and content of its witness is Jesus Christ.

A missional church understands its purpose in light of God’s invitation to participate in aligning all human activity with the intentions of God.—

Titus Guenther

The writer teaches theology at Canadian Mennonite University.

Barkman not only gave his testimony but called into question procedures in the hospital. We are always Christian in a given station and at the same time involved in a larger context.

A good exercise would be to list all the situations in which we have a responsibility to someone else. What would happen if we would relate our witness to everyone we touch in our lives? To give our testimony to Christ in word and deed in all our relationships is to be a missional community.

Once we have a missional mindset, we become aware of people who are in bondage, who are not free to become the persons they were intended to be under God. Then it becomes easier to show people that they can find freedom in Christ and become responsible persons. It becomes easier to indicate what things lead to life and what things lead to destruction, and to invite people to choose life in Christ.

When we witness in our stations, we become aware of how important it is to manifest the fruits of the Spirit in our lives. According to Paul, the fruits are "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22). All these virtues are important in our response to people.

In Colossians 3, Paul lists attitudes and actions that are not appropriate for Christians, such as anger, malice, slander and abusive language, fornication, impurity, greed. As God's chosen ones, bear with one another, forgive each other, just as the Lord has forgiven you, Paul says. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ dwell in your hearts, to which you were called in one body.

The Beatitudes (Matthew 5) point out that those who are "blessed" or true witnesses are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those who are persecuted for righteousness sake.

These virtues seem so out of place in our world. But they are the virtues we are to express in all our stations of life.—**David Schroeder**

The writer is a New Testament theologian and a member of Charleswood Mennonite Church.

Jeremiah for today

The prophet Jeremiah "lived through the 9-11 of the Old Testament, the destruction of Jerusalem," and his model of truth-telling and hope-telling fits our situation today, said Walter Brueggemann during Pastors Week at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in January.

Jeremiah spoke with a voice that was "rich and daring and dangerous and offensive," said Brueggemann, an Old Testament scholar from Columbia Theological Seminary in Georgia. His topic was "Proclaiming the Old Testament: Finding gospel in the Hebrew scriptures."

"The book of Jeremiah is profoundly counter-cultural in the context of the urban elite of Jerusalem" who conducted their affairs as though Yahweh made no difference. These leaders had constructed for themselves an environment of certitude and privilege that made the steadfast love, the foolishness and poverty of God irrelevant.

Jeremiah used images such as physical health and marital fidelity to help his listeners imagine a different reality. As a poet, he presented these images without commentary to his audience, modelling the kind of preaching that supplies materials to the congregation "out of which they can imagine living their lives differently if they want to and if they are able."

"Let the people of God have these scrolls," said Brueggemann. Then trust them to find their own

meanings, because "these scrolls have been making their own way in the life of God's people for a very long time."

Jeremiah's calling was not only to uproot and tear down, but also to plant and build. He was to move into the null point of Jerusalem's experience to bring hope, said Brueggemann.



Walter Brueggemann, left, and Ben Ollenburger, professor of biblical theology at AMBS, share a light moment during pastors week.

"Preaching is moving into the null point and, by speaking, to make things new," said Brueggemann to the 240 pastors and others present. Through preaching, pastors must lead people to re-imagine the world with "decisive reference to the Creator of heaven and earth."

Worship leaders for the week were Lois Siemens and Aveani Moeljono, AMBS students, and Arthur Boers who teaches pastoral theology. A variety of workshops took place in the afternoons. Presenters explored topics such as how pastors can support business people, pastoral care in times of divorce, and conflict-healthy congregations.—From AMBS release

Reading Kierkegaard into 'The Case of Lena S.'

David Bergen. *The Case of Lena S.* McClelland & Stewart, 2002.

The smooth surface of David Bergen's prose belies the emotional turbulence of the teenage lives he portrays in his latest novel. Father of four and veteran high school teacher, Bergen is an experienced and compassionate observer. His talent earned him a nomination for the Governor General's award in 2002.

Mason Crowe is a sensitive, cautiously experimental 16-year-old. The most central figures in his life include a distant and ineffectual father, a macho older brother and three women who present both allure and betrayal: his mother who has left his father, an Indian woman who resigns herself to an arranged marriage, and Lena, his smart, sexually provocative and suicidal girlfriend.

Mason appears helpless in the hands of the wilful Lena, yet is drawn by his own need to rescue her from self-destruction. Bergen masterfully navigates the psychological complexities of this relationship. As often happens in such a situation, Mason is sucked into Lena's negative behaviour instead of saving her from it.

Bergen describes a generation uprooted from its spiritual tradition. Organized religion is treated as an empty relic which fails to provide any solution for these teenagers. In desperation, Lena gets baptized, but it leaves her with even deeper confusion and self-loathing. Bergen seems to make the claim that religion has lost its power to transform.

Interestingly, Bergen originally intended to call his novel *Reading Kierkegaard*. Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish philosopher, was committed to making a fundamental ethical or religious choice, a "leap of faith," and sticking to it, no matter what the consequences. He chose to reject his beloved fiancée in an attempt to test the limits of true love and to purify it.

Lena, like Kierkegaard, eventually alienates Mason, despite her love for him. Bergen interprets Lena's act as self-sacrificial, but it is not the courageous act idealized by Kierkegaard. As the "clinical" title of the book suggests, Lena's act is suicidal. She sacrifices the one person she treasures most, making herself dangerously ill.

With his clean, effortless style, Bergen lulls his audience into treacherous emotional territory. The book simply leaves one depressed—these young people are asking important questions but there are no adequate answers, according to Bergen. I reject

his analysis. Mason and Lena yearn for redemption, for a spiritual life, yet seem to be world-weary and cynical before their time. They lack community, and therefore have no perspective outside of themselves. Bergen accuses institutional religion, as well as all the adults in Mason and Lena's lives, of being spiritually impotent.

Believing that every institution and mentor is a colossal disappointment is the illusion of youth. Late in his life, Kierkegaard realized that sacrificing one's fundamental relationships, like Lena does with her parents, the church and Mason, does not result in personal salvation but simply in self-annihilation.—**Christina Reimer**

The reviewer is a PhD student in religious studies at the University of Toronto.

Sweeter than all the Russländer

The following is a personal response to two Mennonite novels published in 2001, The Russländer by Sandra Birdsell and Sweeter than all the World by Rudy Wiebe.

My grandfather, A.A. Toews, wrote a two-volume *Mennonitsche Märtyrer*, documenting Mennonite sufferings in the Soviet Union. My cousin, historian John B. Toews, translated it into a single volume, *Mennonite Martyrs*. My father, John A. Toews, did a doctoral dissertation on Anabaptist Sebastian Franck and wrote the *History of the Mennonite Brethren Church*. Another cousin, Helmut Huebert, wrote a book about *Hierschau*, the village in the Molotschna where our mothers lived.

You can imagine that by the time I left home, I'd about had it with "Russian Mennonite" stories. I thought I would never read another book on the subject.

It was a surprise to me, then, that I not only read Sandra Birdsell's novel, but enjoyed it. It was like hearing my mother's voice again. In fact, *The Russländer* caused me to go back to my mother's stories and Helmut's book on *Hierschau* to see how much Sandra might have pilfered.

It all sounded so familiar. My mother's Willms family had a cow, and fed the armies that wandered through their village. My mother and two sisters escaped through the barn while the bandits shot up the house and killed

neighbour Peter Dyck, but they didn't, like the girls in the novel, hide in a hole their father had dug. It doesn't matter where Sandra got the stories, of course. The point is that they rang true.

Having braved Sandra's tale, I had a go at Rudy Wiebe. I love the man, but he can be a difficult read. I found that, yes, the book leaped from past to present and from story to story—but it all made sense.

The trouble with Rudy is that, like us Mennonite Brethren teenagers who were scared away from other books, he read his Bible. He discovered Jael, who poked out an army general's brains with a tent peg after luring him into her tent for sex. And he paid attention to Mennonite history, finding real people, struggling with real passions.

So he wrote a book that makes sense like the Bible makes sense—stories of family dysfunction, God, sex and redemption, innumerable begets and begones, the shining and the shunning. Adam Wiebe's redemption seems a bit too complete, too miraculous. Still, I'm not sure I would have ended it differently.

So thanks, Sandra and Rudy, for telling our story again, not leaving history to the historians and theologians. It's good to realize that our ancestors were people, too.—**David Waltner-Toews**

Exodus commentary raises interesting questions

Waldemar Janzen. *Exodus*. Believers Church Bible Commentary. Herald Press, 2000, 496pp.

Waldemar Janzen, long the Old Testament principal at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, is one of a quartet of Mennonites—Millard Lind, Elmer Martens, and John W. Miller included—who studied with the best Old Testament scholars, returned to teach in Mennonite schools, and continue to make significant contributions to the church and to scholarship.

This is the ninth Old Testament commentary in the Believers Church series, and it follows the format of its predecessors. A brief introduction sets out the approach, describes something of the book's contents and suggests its structure. The body of the commentary includes a "preview" of the larger unit, "explanatory notes" on a specific text, followed by comments on the biblical context and "The text in the life of the church."

In this volume, a detailed outline of Exodus precedes 14 essays on topics arising out of Exodus, from "Moses" to "beauty" to "narrative technique."

Janzen describes his approach as "canonical-literary," by which he means that the text as we have it—the "Exodus" we read—exhibits sufficient literary unity to be the object of commentary. On occasion he employs technical terms such as "implied reader," adverts to the history of composition and reception, or refers to other ancient literature. All of this scholarship he employs lightly, and accompanies with lucid explanation, so that it enhances our reading of Exodus.

The hallmarks of the commentary series are the sections on "The text in biblical context" and "The text in the life of the church." Set apart from each other that way, a Believers Church commentary imitates the inventions of modernity—as if the explanation of a biblical text is something apart from its biblical context, and as if that sort of explanation goes on in independence of, and then should govern, the text's life in the church.

The oddness of this modern(istic)

format is reflected also in Janzen's commentary. On occasion, the distinctions seem arbitrary: when he considers the text's biblical context, we often have further explanation of the text itself. And Janzen's discussions of the text in the life of the church vary widely between remarks about a text's history of interpretation (including, often, by Martin Luther and Menno Simons) and his own judgments about contemporary church life: he offers "multimedia use" and "pop music" as contemporary examples of idolatry (meeting "popular 'religious needs'") that Aaron practised and God regarded a capital crime (Exodus 32–34).

To be sure, Janzen's commentary reflects sophisticated exegesis conversant with contemporary scholarship.

And here there will be room for debate.

For example, does the covenant offered in Exodus 19 extend the covenant with Abraham in Genesis 17 (and 15), and recalled in Exodus 2, or is this a different covenant? Does the exchange between God and Moses in Exodus 32–34 elicit a new divine self-definition, even as it introduces the term "pardon" into the biblical vocabulary (Exodus 34:9)? Does God live, and so we, with some tension between an arbitrary but solemn covenant of God, on one hand, and a conditional ("if...then") covenant on the other?

Read the book.—**Ben C. Ollenburger**

The reviewer is professor of biblical theology at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana.

Conversation on religion and science

Nancey Murphy, *Religion and Science: God, Evolution and the Soul*. Pandora Press, 2002, 126pp., \$17.00.

There is a story that someone once asked the great British geneticist J.B.S. Haldane what his study of the natural world told him about its creator. Haldane's answer: "An inordinate fondness for beetles." For those of us who approach science from a theistic perspective, it is not the final word on the subject.

This book records the first Goshen Conference on Religion and Science, held at Goshen College in 2001. The speaker was Nancey Murphy, who teaches philosophy at Fuller Theological Seminary in California. The first section contains her lectures; the second is a transcript of discussions edited by physics professor Carl S. Helrich.

Murphy has lectures on human nature and the soul, God's providential action in the world, and on evolution and ethics. In each, she provides an overview of the theological issues at stake, summarizes scientific findings that influence our understanding of doctrine, and suggests a response.

The lectures demonstrate Murphy's clarity and well-structured writing. She attempts to find space for science and theology to interact productively, away from the extremes of a goddess materialism or a biblical literalism. She navi-

gates her way convincingly when discussing the soul and the debate over evolution in the U.S.

Her notion of God's "nonviolent, direct action" in creation, however, needs more fleshing out to provide a convincing alternative to deistic or interventionist positions on divine providence. Her attempts to scientifically validate the Anabaptist tradition feel somewhat strained.

Not all discussions are recorded, leaving some gaps. The decision to leave speakers anonymous may frustrate readers. Information on the discussion participants would have given useful context to some of the comments put forward.

Nevertheless, there is informative and interesting material in this section. The conversational tone is refreshing, although readers who lack theological background may find the jargon a bit dense.

Those who have read Murphy's previous work will find much familiar territory here, although the discussion section provides alternative viewpoints. For those new to the subject, however, *Religion and Science* provides a helpful introduction to the science/theology dialogue.—**John Brubacher**

The reviewer is a PhD student in Zoology at the University of Manitoba and a member of Rockway Mennonite Church in Ontario.

Teenagers reflect on pacifism

Two grade 12 students preached on Peace Sunday last November at First Mennonite Church in Edmonton. The following are excerpts.

Doing the unexpected

In response to a comment about a fight over a book, one of my friends stated, "I'm a pacifist so I'll just sit here and watch." She said it as joke, yet sitting back and not getting involved is how pacifism can be seen.

I am not saying that not getting involved is wrong. In the past, not getting involved in war has been a large part of Mennonite's sense of community and faith, yet I believe that living as Jesus taught requires us to work against violence of all types.

Jesus crossed racial boundaries to talk to a Samaritan woman, resulting in her spreading his message to her town. He sat down to eat with sinners and tax collectors. Even when one of his disciples cut off the ear of one of his captors, Jesus healed his captor.

In all of these situations, Jesus acts in an unexpected way to change the situation. In the times of Jesus, the right hand would have been used to hit others. In calling his follower to turn the other cheek, Jesus is calling them to force a blow...taking power away from the attacker. We are called to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us, "from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt."

These are actions that are unexpected rather than violent, using nonviolence to deal with violence.

Nonviolence is complicated. Confronting a situation and refusing to use hate and violence is complicated. It involves taking the time to understand a conflict, and the wisdom and courage to get involved and make a change. We need to trust that God will give us the courage and wisdom to deal with our problems.

Gideon trusted God enough to approach a huge army with pots, torches and trumpets. We have to have faith that in not fighting back we will make a more profound impact than by

responding in the expected way. We are challenged to put our trust in God by choosing the third way that will promote understanding and compassion rather than a continuation of hatred.

A farmer stated to another with distaste, "I heard you won't fight."

The second replied, "Who told you that? We sure will fight."

Surprised, the farmer said, "You won't go into the army, will you?"

The second said, "No, we don't fight that way. Let me explain. You see that mule over there? If that mule bit you, you wouldn't bite it back, would you?"

"No," The farmer allowed, "I'd hit him with a two-by-four."

"Exactly," the second replied. "You wouldn't let the mule set the level of your encounter. You would use a weapon that a mule wouldn't understand. As Christians we are supposed to use the tools of love, peace and goodwill, tools that our enemies may not even be able to understand."—

Cara Baergen

Remember Peter

I go to a Catholic school. Each morning, a spiritual reflection is read over the intercom system. For the most part, these reflections are a nice way of starting the day.

However, the Remembrance Day scripture had the message that "God calls us to action, and to stand up for what is right." According to this reflection, those we remember on Remembrance Day serve as an excellent example of what it means to respond to God's call. I could not help but feel shocked.

If the issue of being firm in action is to be brought up at all on Remembrance Day, it should be mentioned in the context of Peter in Gethsemane. Jesus is clear in his reaction to Peter's outburst. Supposing Peter had died in his efforts to injure the slave of the

high priest, I cannot imagine that our reaction would be to honour Peter.

Yet, every year at Remembrance Day, we are subject to suggestions that we fought in wars for what was righteous. This is, for most Mennonites, a contradiction. Nonviolent resistance is truly an enlightened response to Jesus' teachings.

We know examples of successful movements of nonviolence. Though these make us feel optimistic about the effectiveness of pacifism, I approach pacifism from a different perspective. Though achievements of someone like Ghandi serve as a brilliant testament to human potential, they don't exactly correspond with what happened in Gethsemane.

The events that unfolded that night did not lend themselves to a happy ending. When Peter was told to put away his sword, the soldiers and high priests did not back off and concede defeat; rather, they apprehended Jesus and killed him the next day.

Not all pacifist resistance leads to favourable outcomes. Before taking a peaceful approach to a problem, it is essential that one's idea of "success" is well defined. Violence gives one an easy definition of success: physical force makes those in the wrong yield by admitting defeat.

Violence is the most primitive, vulgar and simple way to solve one's problems. Regardless of the political complexity or ideological rationale behind it, violence will always bring humankind back to square one of progress. Yet, according to most world leaders, it's still the only way to get the job done.

Does the end justify the means? Pacifism answers that tough question with a tough "no." It forces us to realize that part of pacifism is having to see Jesus being led away to his death by those he is saving. He asked us to put away our swords, but he will still die. Only in his promise of resurrection are we strong enough to endure his request.

As for Remembrance Day, let's keep Gethsemane in our thoughts during the minute of silence.—**David Eggert**

Letters

Letters express the opinion of the writer, not necessarily those of Canadian Mennonite or the church. We publish as many as space permits, unless they attack individuals or become too repetitious. Letters are edited for length and style. This section is meant to provide opportunity for discussion and discernment.

Practical ministry portraits encouraging

What an excellent beginning for the "Practical ministry portraits," featuring the ministry of Shirley and Jake Olfert as custodians. This is in keeping with Mennonite Church Canada's emphasis on the missional church. It also reminds me of the body life prescribed in Ephesians 4:11-16.

Sardis Community Church, of which I am a member, also has such a custodial couple—Margaret and Ray Brisson. They do a wonderful job of coordinating volunteers to clean, dust, vacuum, arrange seating and much more in preparing for the Sunday

services. In addition, they welcome the saints and visitors, minister to shut-ins, and assist weekly in the Doorway Ministry (a service to single moms). Ray and Margaret are an inspiration to many.

Your series gives hope and encouragement, indicating the significant place in the life of the church not just for clergy but for all.

There are many other thoughtful articles in the magazine. Your use of regional reporters seems to be working well and is giving good information on how the church is working in the many regions of Canada.—**George H. Epp, Chilliwack, B.C.**

Non-literal reading sanitizes Bible

Further to the letters on the literal reading of scripture, allow me to make a few comments.

The Bible abounds in illustrations, types, figures, parables. That has never been the question. The point I tried to make in my earlier letter is that the liberal, allegorical, non-literal view of scripture does not allow the

Bible to say what in fact it does say.

This has resulted in the "sanitizing" of terms and concepts to make them more palatable and less offensive. Images, types, illustrations and prophecy are most easily understood when not taken out of context or in isolation, but compared to all other passages of scripture on the same topic. This ensures that one's understanding of any given term or concept is in harmony with scripture as a whole.

This takes time and effort, but is worth it. A detailed concordance, a good dictionary, and even a thesaurus, can be very helpful.

Proficiency in the Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic languages is not required except as it applies to translators. What is required is submission to and guidance by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus did say, "I am the way," but he added "the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." This excludes any other "way," religion or philosophy.

May the Holy Spirit guide all of us into his truth.—**Frank Thiessen, Winnipeg, Man.**

Mennonite men in plaid

Men—Menno males included—have come a long way. We help with the shopping. We cook. We clean. We bond with our children and spouses in sensitive and intuitively process-oriented ways.

The reasons for this reformation are clear. First, we've begun to take this priesthood-of-all-believers thing seriously. Second, we're realizing that being domestic can be fun (especially when it comes to "extending the table" and making chocolate chip cookies). Third, we know that if we don't march in nonviolent formation, our wives will have our hides.

Fortunately, most spouses understand the tremendous strain that being relational and interactive can have on the male psyche. They are willing to allow us periods of planned regression—provided, of course, that we've gotten the housework done.

I was recently part of a group of Menno males that was collectively permitted to shut off the sensitivity

software and meet at a local Canadian Tire to explore our prehistoric hardware roots.

We donned plaid shirts for the occasion; and most of us produced caches of Canadian Tire money to further enhance the event. We also came supplied with shop-



ping lists from home, with the instruction, "If you're going to be there anyway, you may as well pick up a few things."

In spite of our legitimate responsibilities, there was still time for us to long after "necessary male non-essentials:" car parts, golf equipment, updated camping gear and, of course, duct tape. One of our number even went so far as to purchase a 200-piece

tool set—thus establishing himself as the evening's home improvement guru. After all, the more you buy, the more you save.

Old habits die hard. Then again, new ones have a way of slipping into place when we're not looking. At our post-shopping meal in a nearby restaurant, conversation revolved around children, spouses, work, and a brief recognition of one of our number who will be on a four-month sabbatical in Europe with his family by the time this edition arrives in your mailbox.

His gift from all the guys: a pair of Ten Thousand Villages fur-trimmed and exquisitely beaded slippers.

There was no group hug or anything—and we made sure to talk gruffly on occasion and to order deep-fried snacks to maintain our illusion of male indifference. Deep down, however, we were a bunch of soft-hearted Mennonite men—always glad to be together, but just as grateful, when all is said and done, to rejoin our families and share life's many treasures.

Letters

Early cautions about MPH finances

In sorting through personal papers in mid-February in preparation for moving, I came across a *Gospel Herald* article I wrote 42 years ago entitled “My First Publication Board Meeting” (March 22, 1960).

Two paragraphs especially caught my attention:

“One of the major concerns of the business session was the financial health of the Mennonite Publishing House. Some apprehension was voiced that for the second straight year the House has operated with a deficit. It was pointed out, however, that most of this can be attributed to long-term investment in relocation and remodeling of House-owned stores which should more than repay itself in the years ahead.

“It was also noted that, while the final figure for 1959 showed the Publishing House operating at a deficit, the House had carried the weight of tens of thousands of dollars of subsidies. This was necessary for areas of publishing that are not profit-making in dollars and cents but are deemed indispensable to the program of the church... It was generally agreed that such projects should not be curtailed but rather expanded.... Some felt that perhaps the brotherhood will want to share in the support of some of these projects...”—**Paul M. Schrock, Harrisonburg, Va.** (41-year employee)

Chaplaincy not a luxury

How is it possible to consider chaplaincy a luxury (MC Manitoba, Jan. 27, page 16)? Where does the idea come from that “it is not something we should do for the churches”? Who is the “we” and what exactly was done “for” the churches?

I always thought of “conference” as the collective way we do mission in the world in a way that no one church can do alone. Visiting of sick people by pastors or others may be done if the person is known to the church, but what about the many who, for one

reason or another, left the church many years ago? The home church may have lost track of them.

Who is to visit such people? As a conference, it is possible to certify pastoral care visitors. They need coordination (these are very part-time positions, not full time as reported) and this was in place in Manitoba. Such certified care givers may get access to names in a hospital.

I recently spoke to the Minister of Health who said the Manitoba government would like to promote partnerships in wholistic health care.

The Manitoba conference chaplaincy program was a very low budget item that got a lot of “bang for the buck” spent. The decision to cut this program was made without evaluating what the program was doing and without consulting the people involved. I question such decision-making methods by conference bureaucrats who did not even know what was happening.—**Peter H. Peters, Winnipeg, Man.**

Budget crisis an emotional tug-of-war

This has been an exciting time to be involved in Mennonite Church Canada. It has been thrilling to witness the new vision and energy that has been created in congregations all across the country with the shared focus on being a missional church.

It has been energizing to meet with congregations wanting to discern what it means to align themselves with the activity of God.

In the midst of this excitement has come the budgeting error. The pain of this discovery has been severe, and the depth of disappointment staggering. Many people sacrificially poured themselves into the transformation process. To be involved in the process of reduction so early in the development of Mennonite Church Canada is disheartening.

Yet, I have been awed by the depth of commitment displayed by the staff. I have experienced a depth of mourning that is more reflective of a sense of calling than a possible loss of employment. The missional church vision has been the vision for workers in the national church as well.

I am intrigued by the emotional tug-

of-war that I see. On the one hand, I feel the understandable distrust and weariness concerning institutions. But I still feel the excitement of the missional church concept across the country. People are not sure what to make of the institution that has made another error, yet they are still captivated by the vision initiated by that institution.

Despite the competing emotions, the missional church vision is a transforming thing for many. My prayer is that institutional distrust will be overcome by inspirational confidence.

This is not to encourage blind allegiance. Healthy corrections are necessary. But my prayer is that the visionary energy that God has swept into our identity as Mennonite Church Canada would pull us forward in confidence. This is the time for bold prayers, visionary giving, and joyful sacrifice.—**Willard Metzger, chair, Mennonite Church Canada Witness**

Speaking on behalf of First Nations

I am wondering if any official statements have ever been made to the federal government by Mennonite Church Canada regarding the treatment of First Nations people during the colonization and “settling” of this land.

As we all know, our grandfathers (and now we) benefited greatly by easy access to land and opportunity. However, just prior to and during immigration, natives were being dispossessed and brutalized.

While I see it as governments’ responsibility to compensate for injustices and settle land claims in the present, words to the effect that we have never been pleased about actions and attitudes of early governments would probably speed things along. We should discuss this at a conference and adopt a resolution.

Of course, there is also a great need for a better awareness of the horrors which went on. Since most of us still suffer greatly from “sanitized” versions of history, this re-education might have to come prior to convincing people there is justification for and a duty to make such statements.—

Howard Boldt, Saskatoon, Sask.

Winnipeg, Man.

Another Colombian family arrives in Canada

When Enrique and Miriam Torres and their two-year-old daughter stepped onto a plane in Colombia, they knew they wouldn't be returning soon. Continuing threats to their lives had been making life difficult and they were leaving for Canada as refugees, with help from Mennonites in Winnipeg.

"It doesn't take long before those feelings of emptiness start to set in," says Enrique (names have been changed for safety). "It was so good to see people ready to greet us in Winnipeg with smiles and open arms."

"The situation is bad in Colombia," he continues. "It will likely be a very long time, if ever, before we get an opportunity to return."

Mennonite churches in Canada, along with Mennonite Central Committee, have been working with the Mennonite Church in Colombia for the past year to identify and help those living under threat. Douglas Mennonite Church in Winnipeg is one



MCC Canada photo

The Torres' daughter is helped into a winter parka at the Winnipeg airport upon arrival from Colombia.

of the churches that responded to the call for sponsors from MCC.

"I think we were all a little nervous waiting at the airport," says Katy Thiessen, one of several members who

went to meet the family. "More than anything it's about having that human contact. This is now home for them."

Douglas Mennonite will provide financial support for the family for the next year. Church members will also help the family become familiar with daily life in Canada—finding the library, doctor, English classes—and provide moral support.

"Many of the people in our congregation are first or second generation immigrants to this country," says Douglas youth pastor, Bryan Moyer Suderman. Members will be doing what they can to fill the void the Torres family will feel after leaving family and friends. "We need to be a social support for Enrique and Miriam so that they don't feel alone."

Last year, 30 Colombian refugees (10 families) came to Canada with the help of Mennonite churches. This year's goal is to help 100 refugees.—MCC Canada release

Death threats forced pastor to flee

On June 2, Enrique Torres found a note that had been slipped under the door of his home in Colombia. It was a message from FARC—a guerilla organization in Colombia—saying he was at the top of their hit list.

Torres (not his real name) has never participated, or chosen sides, in the conflict that has roiled Colombia for decades. He says all the sides in the conflict are guilty of crimes against the people. His work as a pastor and community leader made him a threat.

He began working on social issues in the early 1990s as a pastor in an area patrolled by FARC guerillas.

"At first, the FARC left the church alone," he says. "But with a change in their leadership came a change in attitude, and when we refused to bow to extortion pressure, those of us in community leadership were forced to leave."

Torres moved to the city of San

Vincente, 250 kms southeast of the capital, Bogota. There he studied business administration and worked as a pastor. There he met his wife Miriam. In February 1999, the government agreed to forfeit the city to the FARC in order to encourage peace talks. When those talks collapsed in February 2002, the region was again plunged into civil unrest.

"I hadn't planned on leaving the country but we weren't left with many choices," says Torres. "We were talking to anyone who would listen...about what was really going on. The peace talks were taking place in San Vicente but at the same time the FARC was using other locations in the region to recruit and train new soldiers, some as young as 13. The people of San Vicente asked us to find nonviolent means to end the war."

With the collapse of the talks, Torres and other leaders, including the mayor, were forced to flee. They spent three days

waiting in cramped quarters before they were airlifted to Bogota. But even here, their lives were not safe.

"We kept moving around but the FARC kept following us and leaving messages on our phones," he says. "They killed the wife of a municipal leader one month after we left San Vicente. It was then I knew that my family would not be safe."

Torres sent for his wife and daughter, and with the help Mennonites in Colombia and Canada, all were able to immigrate to Canada on December 9.

Since peace talks broke down a year ago, 50 church workers and two more pastors have been forced to leave San Vicente. Three pastors have been killed, one of them for refusing to allow guerillas to use the church as a staging ground for attacks on a nearby police station.

"It was about justice when the war first began," says Torres. "It has nothing to do with those ideals any more. Colombia's conflict is about money and power."—MCC Canada release

New York, N.Y.

War will be grim for struggling Iraqis

Sixty percent of Iraqi people don't have access to clean water, and unclean water is already a major cause of death in Iraqi children, said Margaret Hassan in a January 29 meeting with Mennonite Central Committee staff.

Hassan, a British woman who works for CARE International, spoke about how war might affect Iraqi people. MCC's support of CARE's work includes health and providing clean water.

If in the event of war, military forces target electricity infrastructure—as happened during the 1991 Gulf War—Iraq's ailing water and sanitation systems would not function at all, leading to additional outbreaks of dysentery and other illnesses, Hassan said.

Fuel stations would also be out, leaving people without transportation. "But this is not 1991 all over again,"



This banner was raised at various factories and schools in Iraq during the February 1-15 visit to that country by a Christian Peacemaker Team delegation. It says, "To bomb this site is a war crime. Geneva Conventions Article 54." Canadians in the delegation were Lisa Martens of Winnipeg, Jane Pritchard of Toronto and Matthew Bailey-Dick of Waterloo, Ontario.

CPT photo

Winnipeg, Man.

Conferences join in call for peace

Eight Mennonite conferences and Mennonite Central Committee Canada signed a January 31 letter to the Canadian prime minister urging him "to do everything possible to prevent a war on Iraq."

"Our concern is not only for our own people," said the letter. "It is for all people and against all war." The letter describes the international involvement of Mennonites through MCC, supported by the Canadian International Development Agency, and their link with sister churches in some 63 countries.

"A good number of our people in Canada trace their family histories to other countries, including some with very oppressive governments. These factors inform our view of the Iraq situation. We do not dismiss the claim that the Iraqi people have long suffered under a very oppressive government.... Nor can we propose a quick and certain alternative method for achieving the desired changes.

"Nevertheless, we believe that a war would make things much worse. Even with a quick 'victory' there would be thousands of deaths. Also, in too many instances the installation of a more sympathetic government has not led to lasting improvements for the people....

"Further, instead of reducing the threat of terrorism, a war on Iraq could increase it. In our view the 'war on terrorism,' begun in the fall of 2001, has relied too much on military might and too little on addressing 'root causes.' This approach has deepened hostility toward the West and encouraged the West to see the rest of the world as a source of threats, thereby deepening an ominous global divide. Already, it has increased the vulnerability of minorities, including Christians in Muslim-majority countries, Muslims in the West, and Jewish people in many areas.

"It is urgent that the West find a different way of responding. One action that would signal a new direction is a substantially increased commitment to address the poverty facing half of the world's people. Another would bring

new energies toward a just resolution of the Israel-Palestine question...actions such as these would indicate that the West is committed not only to its own interests but to certain principles and to the well-being of the whole human family."

The letter ends: "May God give you wisdom and strength for these difficult decisions." Signers are leaders of the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference, Brethern In Christ Conference, Mennonite Church Canada, Evangelical Mennonite Conference, Sommerfeld Mennonite Church, Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethern Churches, Old Colony Church, Chortitzer Mennonite Church and MCC Canada.

The same leaders sent a joint letter to their churches, urging them to "let their light shine by boldly and actively witnessing to the way of peace." Specific actions suggested are prayer, urging government leaders to seek nonviolent alternatives, visible witness to the way of peace and encouraging one another.—MCC Canada release

commented Hassan, who has lived in Iraq for 30 years. "In '91 people had money." As the economy has suffered because of international sanctions, Iraqi people have been forced to sell their assets. Additional hardships caused by war could be devastating.

Much of the population depends on monthly food rations. Currently the government is giving two months' worth of rations so people can "stock up" before a war begins.

Hassan said she recently met a teacher who has sold all of his furniture and purchased second-hand clothing for his family on credit. His daughter dropped out of school because they couldn't afford appropriate clothing.

Recently, MCC contributed \$23,500 toward CARE's purchase of large, portable water tanks. CARE will also receive at least 10,000 relief kits that MCC plans to ship to Iraq this spring. These supplies will be needed in Iraq regardless of war, Hassan said, noting that many Iraqi children "have never

seen a toothbrush."

Hassan commended MCC for "chipping away at the sanctions issues" in addition to sending aid. MCC has spoken out against United Nations-imposed economic sanctions through statements and letters to the UN, meetings with government and diplomatic staff, and other advocacy work. MCC has also sponsored visits to Iraq and carried out a food parcel protest aimed at U.S. congressional representatives.

On January 31, MCC signed a letter urging the UN Security Council to consider being briefed on the implications of war on non-combatants and children in Iraq.

"As international humanitarian agencies responding globally to need, we are deeply concerned that the Council is consistently overlooking the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of potential military intervention, particularly on children," the letter read.—MCC release by **Maria Linder-Hess**



Sally Butler of Lancaster, Pennsylvania (left) meets Gracy Putul Marandi (centre) at her convent school in Kolkata, India, last fall. At right is Sister Jones, principal of the school. Butler has been supporting Gracy through Mennonite Central Committee's Global Family Program. Elizabeth and Herman Enns of Carrot River, Saskatchewan, have supported children in India through Global Family for 40 years. The program, which provides educational sponsorships in 33 countries, is celebrating its 50th year in 2003. It began after the Korean War when MCC built a school for orphaned boys. A new project is Ntseleni Preschool in Engcobo, South Africa. At the initiative of a retired teacher, parents contributed 30 bricks each for a preschool building. The Global Family program also supports a home for 25 orphans in Priazovske, Ukraine, a vocational school in Lebanon and a centre for children with mental disabilities in Jamaica. To become a sponsor, call (888) 622-6337 or visit the web site: www.mcc.org/globalfamily.—From MCC reports

Altona, Man.

Church must get involved in health care

Polls indicate that health care is the number one concern for Canadians. If this concern is not reflected in the churches, "there is a disconnect that shouldn't exist," says Harry Wiens, chair of Mennonite Health Services Manitoba. "Somehow connections aren't being made between faith and health."

In December, Wiens attended meetings of the Ecumenical Health Care Network, an arm of the Canadian Council of Churches, in Kingston, Ontario. Mennonite Church Canada is an affiliate member. The network was considering further responses to the Romanow report.

"We thought the focus of our response should be internal rather than devoting resources to political involvement," said Wiens.

Although MC Canada will not be attending more meetings, Mennonite Health Services Manitoba wants to work to ensure that health care gets placed on the national church's agenda. Pam Driedger, executive director of the Manitoba organization, notes that Mennonites have no statement on what they believe about health care.

"We need to re-invest the larger church in health care," said Driedger. "Caring for the sick is part of the fundamental call to discipleship."

"We need to go out to the churches and develop a statement that's owned by the churches so it's not just an organizational document," said Wiens. Mennonites are handicapped because they cannot speak with any authority on health care.

The Manitoba group sees the need for a Canada-wide organization to pull the church into discussion and action. It is developing resources to help the church re-enter the discussion.

The church has an important role to play when issues such as privatization, abortion, national drug program, or physician-assisted suicide arise. "Many of the issues have faith implications," said Driedger.

"Healing is the work of the church. There are a whole lot of things the medical profession cannot cure."

Wiens noted particularly issues around the dignity of human life, extent of treatment and the best use of resources.—**Evelyn Rempel-Petkau**

Winnipeg, Man.

Putting into practice the missional church

About 50 people from 38 congregations across the country met at Charleswood Mennonite Church here on January 5-7 for the first missional church training event. Also present was a representative of the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference.

The course, "Leadership in a missional church," is sponsored by Mennonite Church Canada Formation and Witness. It has three objectives: 1) To understand the biblical/theological foundations and historical influences at the heart of missional church

and activity with these intentions. God's will is best discerned in community, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Leaders need to be equipped and in dialogue with each other so that our congregations can be continually nourished, challenged and mobilized by God's hope for the world."

According to Jack Suderman of MC Canada Witness, God's intentions for the world are clearly described in "the bookends" of the Bible: Genesis 1-2 and Revelation 21. "While some things in between are not always clear, the bookends bring some clarity," he

asserted.

He described two ways to approach scripture. Those who see the Bible as a mirror seek answers to what's happening in their own lives. The starting point is "my questions." Those who see the Bible as a window immerse themselves in questions raised there, questions they may not have been asking or prefer not to ask! The

latter approach to scripture takes more time and energy.

The course has five areas of focus. Marilyn Houser Hamm (Congregational Partnerships, MC Canada) will lead reflections on worship from a missional perspective. Suderman will lead the study of biblical/theological foundations for the life of the church. Chris Arney (director of Evangelism and Church Development, Mennonite Church B.C.) will focus on the historical and contemporary contexts in which the church exists. Alan Kreider (mission educator with Mennonite Mission Network USA) will describe congregational culture and transformation. Jeff Steckley (Giving Project consultant coordinator for Mennonite Church Eastern Canada) will offer tools for congregational process.

In this first session, the group became conversant with terms such as "Christendom" (synthesis of church and state in the fourth century) and "postmodern context." Christendom assumed that church and state are allies because they share similar goals and values. People were made Christian by their baptism or "christening."

Sixteenth-century Anabaptists protested against Christendom by asserting that people should be Christian "by choice, not by birth." They believed that church and state should be separate, and that the dominant culture does not necessarily live by Christian values.

In our postmodern society, the inclination is to value personal experience and local reality over institutional structures, including the church. In our multicultural society, we can no longer assume that we live in a Christian society. The church is no longer in a privileged position; we are in the midst of a "crumbling Christendom."

Is this something to be lamented? Or do we, like our Anabaptist forebears, see the church as a counter-cultural reality with a renewed vision for service and witness? How does a church increasingly on the margins encounter its culture in a missionary way? This course will look at these questions.

Chris Arney further described our age as one of great diversity and staggering need. People's spiritual needs are great. We live at hyper-speed. We live in a Canadian context as well as an international Christian community. All of these present challenges for the church.

What do we need to change to embrace a "missional" identity? In other words, what are the "missional church footprints" we can identify in the life and work of our congregations? The proof of the pudding will be in the eating, as course participants test what they have learned in their congregations.

Future training sessions are scheduled for May 4-6, September 7-9 and December 7-9.—**Maurice Martin**



Photo by Dan Dyck

Chris Arney paints a picture of postmodern culture for the students in the missional church leadership course.

understandings; 2) to consider the implications of these understandings for the nature and activity of the church; 3) to prepare participants to lead congregations through similar learning experiences.

Course participants will augment the work already begun by the missional church training persons appointed by each area conference: Jim Loepp Thiessen in Eastern Canada, Norm Voth in Manitoba, Eric Olfert in Saskatchewan, Marvin Baergen in Alberta, and Gerd Bartel in B.C.

The theological focus is as follows: "We understand that God wants to reconcile the entire world to God's intentions that are best known to us through Jesus Christ. The church is sent into the world to align its purpose

Why I'm taking missional church training

People from 38 congregations, from B.C. to Ontario, gathered for session one of the missional church leadership training in Winnipeg (see story on page 18). Participants commit themselves to carry forward learning to the congregational level. Here is what they have learned so far.

Karen Heidebrecht Thiessen, pastor of West Abbotsford Mennonite Church in B.C., felt called to participate and then was encouraged to represent Mennonite Church B.C.—a work of God in her, she feels.

She is interested in knowing more about how missional church thinking might complement her training in Natural Church Development (a congregational tool promoted by the Leadership Centre Willow Creek Canada in Winfield, B.C.). She strongly affirms the missional church direction.



Thiessen

“The highlight has been for me to spend some time thinking about how culture needs to shape us. It needs to shape us, but not define us. The post-modern values need not be at our core.”

Asked how to move from a personal affirmation to implementation, she reflected on her experience with a congregation that was in demise.

“My congregation would rather change than let [its] community die. Our situation set us up for becoming more missional—to go places where we haven't gone before because what we were doing wasn't working... We don't know where God is leading, but we are willing to follow.”

“I am very excited that MC Canada is moving in this direction,” she said.



Chiew

Billy Chiew, associate pastor in the Vancouver Chinese Mennonite Church, came to find out how the missional church is reflected in scripture.

“My passion is to really see that this

is a possibility in my context—Asian, with Asian parents. I want to help people really see what I see, to help others experience it.”

He acknowledges that he can expect resistance in his congregation. People will say this vision is “not relevant in our culture.” He adds that he is “grappling with it step by step, still trying to digest how this will fit into my culture in a workable, practical way.

“I want my congregation to articulate what Anabaptism and our spiritual heritage is.”

Norman Meade relates to First Nations Alliance (Winnipeg) and the Manigotagan Community Chapel. He has had a long-time involvement with MC Canada's Native Ministry. Meade is getting close to retirement and wants to be involved in his home community of Manigotagan, Manitoba, for the rest of his life.



Meade

“The church was placed on my mother's property 50 years ago,” says Meade. “Now God is telling me I need to be there.” He feels that the missional church training will “help me to set my footprints down...in the home community.”

A meaningful moment for Meade was the “missional church explained in easy terms through the analogy of the bookends” (Genesis and Revelation). The stories between the Garden of Eden and the New Jerusalem illustrate God's redemptive activity in the world. The bookends highlight God's purpose and provide a focus for missional church thinking from a “big picture” perspective.

Len Sawatsky, director of mission for the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference, chose to attend the course because “our interest is in moving in

the same direction. This will help me in focusing our thinking...”

While noting that “all of it has been helpful,” a highlight for Sawatsky was the training in facilitating a group discernment process. “I'm leaving for South America next week and will be able to use the practical ideas when I go.”

As for the future of missional church leadership, he says, “I'd like to see stories of where this is actually working, not just theory.”



Sawatsky

Ed Olfert, pastor of Grace Mennonite Church in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, is interested in tools for how Christians can live faithfully within the challenges of our culture and our place in history.

A highlight for Olfert occurred during worship when participants shared a “holy moment” from the Christmas season. Recalling a respectful relationship which had developed between a released high-risk offender and a community member caused Olfert to comment, “I saw that God was at work here, and I asked myself, ‘How can I be part of this, how can I help foster these kinds of relationships in others?’”

Olfert's “holy moment” personalizes the broader missional church question: Where is God at work and how can I actively become a part of that work?—MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**



Olfert

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FOCUS

Summer

Camp has message for the church

There we sat around a burned-out campfire, reflecting on the summer that had been and fearing the goodbyes that would follow. We spoke of memories and feelings; some said thanks while others praised their friends; there was laughter and tears. The ground we were sitting on was holy and many of us had taken off our sandals to prove it.

This is one of the traditions at Silver

Lake Mennonite Camp in Ontario. After all the campers have packed their bags and the camp is cleaned, the staff pause to sing, share, pray and anoint each other for our separate journeys.

I find myself reflecting on camp's impact on the campers, staff and the church. Our theme last summer was "Discovering God's Treasure," which challenged all of us (for we are all campers) to consider many of God's treasures, including the Kingdom of God. The natural ingredients that make camp what it is display in a tangible way Jesus' vision for a new kingdom.

Camp is a place to live in an intentional community, where living simply without television becomes a way of life, where work, worship and play are integrated each day, where our contact with God's creation heals us by bringing us into contact with our own humanness. Camp shapes children in many other ways.

Camp impacts the staff in ways that we often underestimate. For those who say that camp is not a real job, walk one day in any counsellor's sandals and you will discover otherwise. These young people are given responsibility beyond their years. They are challenged to learn conflict mediation, to listen to difficult disclosures, to answer questions like, "Does God breath?", to deal with bedwetting and homesickness, and to bandage scars of the skin and of the heart.

Staff are challenged to act crazy in front of others, to sing boldly and lead worship confidently. Each week these young people are asked to make a community out of a diverse crew of children and to love each child as God loves them. Camp molds staff into incredible leaders.

Camp also gives its staff a place to speak and live their spiritual journeys honestly. In 90 percent of my staffing interviews, applicants speak of camp as one of the most important spiritual places, the Mecca of their faith. No matter how much or how little faith they may have, camp puts faith in them. Camp is a place where young people can live out their idealism and creativity with little chance of being laughed at or ridiculed.

I am a former and future pastor, and wonder how my experience as a camp director will impact the way I work in a congregation. How do our camps impact our churches? That is the question that followed me all summer. I think the camp has a prophetic voice that the church needs to hear.

That prophetic voice says, "Live simply, love and respect creation, build communities, live justly and fairly, become like little children, accept all for who they are, worship, work and play are one, give real responsibility to the youth, and live idealistically. These are but a few messages that I hear the camp telling the church. What have you heard the camps saying?—Reynold Friesen

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Ontario music camp celebrates 20 years

For 20 years, Ontario Mennonite Music Camp has provided an opportunity for musically talented youth, ages 12-16, to use their gifts to praise God in a fun-filled, faith-based setting. With the guidance of gifted staff, young people are nurtured to provide musical leadership in the church.

The program runs for approximately two weeks (this year from August 10-22) at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ontario. The daily schedule involves morning and evening chapel, choir, master classes, seminars on various subjects from crafts to creative movement, recreation, evening concerts and campfires. The daily routine is coloured with theme days, trips, service projects and leading worship in local congregations and seniors' residences. The final program showcases the hard work of the campers and includes a musical.

Marilyn Houser Hamm, director of Worship and Spirituality for Mennonite Church Canada, was deeply impressed as a guest director in 1994. "I am delighted to have had the experience," she wrote to the camp board. "That a Music Camp exists for young people of Jr. High age group—a group often stereotyped as difficult to work with and awkward—is amazing in its own right. But the calibre of the young people and your exceptional staff was so high that one can only marvel...."

Houser Hamm described the importance of OMMC for the Mennonite Church: "I had a strong sense that what was happening at the camp was building the church in the best possible ways. To value the gifts and talents of young people at this early age and to channel the development of those gifts in the church is a wonderful example for all congregations throughout the Canadian conference."

Staff are university-trained musicians, primarily from Mennonite congregations, who offer training in piano, choir, voice, winds and brass, and strings. These teachers often are former campers who return to share their gifts with the next generation.

From the testimonies of campers: "I learned to be more confident about my singing and to believe in myself." "You build friendships that last a lifetime!" "[You learn] to worship God more freely than before...singing songs as a group of Christians is always meaningful."

The camp is planning a 20th anniversary reunion for August 15. Past campers, staff and board members will gather to share music and memories. For more information about the camp or the anniversary event, call Conrad Grebel University College at (519) 885-0220, or visit the OMMC website at <http://grebel.uwaterloo.ca/OMMC/index.html>.—Camp release

Menfolk reinvented in Manitoba

To reach a greater audience, Manitoba's Menfolk, usually a summer event, has been moved into the city and into the winter months. The change means "we can attract more 'fringe' Mennos, in artists as well as audience," said Brenda Grunau, committee member.

Menfolk will be held this year on March 2 at the West End Cultural Centre in Winnipeg, with events beginning at 1:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. The afternoon will feature traditional folk, bluegrass and Celtic music with

House of Doc and Doug & Jess (Reimer). It will also showcase local art and a silent auction.

The evening will feature four local bands: the Redstarts, Carter Monrose, Mike Petkau & band, and Kicker. Also featured will be Jason Neufeld (the Mennonite Bandit), creator of the Fringe play, "Confessions of a Repressed Mennonite."

Call (204) 896-1616 or e-mail: menfolk2003@hotmail.com.—From Menfolk release

New curriculum from Ontario educators

Eleanor Snyder and Sandi Hannigan, Christian education practitioners in Ontario, have collaborated in writing *Kids and Blessings: Living the Beatitudes*, a curriculum suitable for Vacation Bible School, church programs, camps or inter-generational worship. The authors, who funded the project themselves, have also been marketing it to private schools.

The curriculum invites children to follow Jesus' way in pursuit of happiness. It introduces children to the beatitudes as a model for right living now and as they grow into adolescence. The curriculum is appropriate for Early Childhood through Grade 8.

Based upon the Workshop Rotation Model, children participate in different workshops, hear a Jesus story, and respond in a variety of ways—through art, games, drama, nature exploration, research, reading/writing, problem-solving, and role plays.

Worship resources include an original "Blessing Song" written by Ann Weber Becker, and other songs. Allan Rudy-Froese has contributed current-day Beatitude stories. Resources also include Bible memory, litanies, and worship visuals.

The curriculum comes in a single-binder format with reproducible materials. Leadership training for congregations is available from the authors. Distributed by Pandora Press, this curriculum is available for \$75.00 from The Bookshop, phone (519) 745-1560, e-mail: bookshop@pandorapress.ca.—From release

Winnipeg, Man.

Welcome Inn models missional church

Show me what a missional church looks like; we need to hear the stories about where missional church is already happening.”

This is an oft-repeated sentiment from pastors, church leaders and members, as people struggle to put handles on the missional church model. While the word “missional” may be new, the practice is not. And there isn’t only one model—there are as many examples as there are people.

One example has been around for decades in Hamilton, Ontario. In fact, it could well be a missional church training centre.

The Welcome Inn Church, which grew out of the Welcome Inn Community Centre, is a vital, missional church. Most folks who use Welcome Inn services and worship there on Sunday mornings likely wouldn’t know that their version of Christ’s mission in a post-modern world could be described as “missional.” They

Working in partnership

In partnership with others we will dedicate ourselves to combat the poverty of exclusion and loneliness,” says the vision statement of Welcome Inn. “We will foster healing and justice, trusting in the mystery of faith.” Its mission is to be a place in which “all people are celebrated and loved unconditionally, enabled to give as well as receive.”

The Welcome Inn Community Centre runs a variety of programs, including Teen Drop In, programs for seniors, food pantry, after school program, women’s and men’s group and a day camp. Welcome Inn also partners with other community programs, such as Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous, a community health centre and Circles of Support for ex-offenders.

Volunteers are essential to these programs. Marg Savoie, a food pantry recipient, has been a volunteer for 26 years. Current Mennonite Voluntary Service workers are Adam Carter and Julie Rempel.—**Dan Dyck**

simple embrace it and live it.

Marion Rutter has been attending Welcome Inn church for seven years. For the last four years, the retired teacher has been part-time administrative assistant for the Community Centre. She says her title is “House Mommie.” She is also the resident storyteller.

“This is the place of loaves and fishes,” she says. “We plan an event wondering if we’ll have enough food. We’ve never had a community event where there’s not been enough food.”

Rutter is “impressed by this place because we have few staff and a huge volunteer base.” The community centre and church operate with 6 staff people—only one of whom is full time—and a volunteer base of over 200.

Rutter was first attracted to the church because she liked the non-hierarchical structure. “Everybody is equal.” When she first came, she “didn’t know who the pastor was.”

Mike Hannigan has been on staff for nine years and now serves as executive director. The former Brethren in Christ pastor with social work training has also served on binational boards of Mennonite Central Committee.

“In the early days, Welcome Inn was MVS [Mennonite Voluntary Service]. They established the program and agenda. MVS is still an incredibly



Photos by Dan Dyck

Claudette Joseph (from a community health centre), Adam Carter (Mennonite Voluntary Service) and Bill Carr (community volunteer) prepare a meal with the Seniors Support Program at Welcome Inn.

important piece—it’s a core to our heritage,” said Hannigan.

Hannigan credits Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, MC Canada and the Hamilton Mennonite Church with support. Still, ongoing funding and human resources are the two biggest challenges of running Welcome Inn.

“An ongoing dynamic is how [to] keep this connected to the Mennonite world. How do we connect service and faith in an ongoing way?... How do we maintain that symbiotic relationship between Welcome Inn Church and the community centre?”

While pondering these broad challenges, Hannigan gazes thoughtfully at the ceiling. “We are in a poor neighbourhood. It’s a struggle and, frankly, if we are true to our mission, we will always struggle.”

Being a missional church doesn’t necessarily mean being a congregation and community centre in a city core. But it does mean being open to all. As Rutter puts it, “We target everybody. This is a grace filled place.”—MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**



Rutter

New magazine for leaders

Leaders seeking to build on the missional church vision will find blueprints and tools in a new quarterly magazine.

Leader: Equipping the Missional Congregation, published by Mennonite Publishing Network (formerly Mennonite Publishing House), will succeed *Builder* magazine, which will be discontinued in May.

The new 32-page magazine is expected to release its first issue during the assemblies in Canada and the United States this summer.

"*Builder* had a largely educational focus, whereas *Leader* will also integrate aspects of congregations, missions and worship as they pertain to joining God's work in the world to bring hope and reconciliation to our communities," said Byron Rempel-Burkholder, the new magazine's managing editor, based in Winnipeg.

"*Leader* will tend toward the practical, helping leaders to see what the missional church does, what it looks like, some how-tos.... We want this to be a service, an interactive and dynamic forum where leaders can share ideas and sharpen each other."

Leader will continue the seasonal worship resources for Advent, Lent and Easter, he said. But the Bible lessons and adult teaching materials of the *Builder* Uniform Series will be contained in a separate quarterly publication, *Adult Bible Study Teacher*.

Rempel-Burkholder will work closely with senior editor Richard A. Kauffman, former pastor and currently an editor at *Christian Century*.

"I care about the Mennonite Church and this gives me a way of being involved," said Kauffman.

"And this also gives me the opportunity to help us reflect on two questions I believe are very important in forming missional congregations: Why are we here in this place at this time? What are the opportunities for ministry here in this place?"

Kauffman and Rempel-Burkholder will consult with a publishing council consisting of representatives from executive staffs of MC Canada, MC USA, Mennonite Mission Network, and Mennonite Publishing Network;

and with an editorial committee to include pastors, denominational leaders and mission representatives.

New goals include greater involvement of church leaders in shaping the magazine; greater intentionality in being a binational publisher; and a clearer purpose, focused on the missional vision.

Marlene Kropf, an editorial committee member and director of the MC USA Executive Board Office of Congregational Life, commented that "it's

very important that Canada and the United States have a joint project at a time when some fear there's been an increasing disconnect between the churches."

Justina Heese, executive secretary of MC Canada Formation, is a member of the publishing council. "What makes *Leader* unique is that it holds the missional vision of the transformation process. Mennonite Church Canada Formation, Witness and leadership see themselves as united in this vision for the church," she said.—MC Canada and USA joint release



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Zaporozhye, Ukraine

MCC sends medical supplies to Ukraine

Hospital equipment and other medical supplies arrived here just in time for Christmas, celebrated January 7 in Ukraine.

The shipment, sent by Mennonite Central Committee British Columbia, included used hospital beds, wheelchairs, walkers, bedside tables, sheets, gowns, soap and health kits. The local Christian Medical Association (CMA) helped the supplies clear customs.

“Everything is of very good quality,” said Zoya Gerasimenko, director of CMA. “Please thank everyone who worked on this shipment.” MCC B.C. has shipped five containers of medical supplies to Zaporozhye since 2000.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the quality of health care in Ukraine has deteriorated. Many hospitals can no longer afford to purchase supplies or replace worn-out equipment. Patients must provide their own syringes, medicines, bandages and food—items they can rarely afford.

MCC B.C. has shipped five containers of medical supplies to Zaporozhye since spring 2000. Sending material aid is always a complex process, and medical supplies require special expertise, both to gather and to distribute.

In 1998, cardiologists Art and Marlyce Friesen of Abbotsford, B.C., visited Ukraine and were disturbed by the lack of supplies in the hospitals they visited. They talked with MCC workers about what might improve the situation. The Zaporozhye area, where Mennonites have strong historical connections, seemed a logical place to start.

In B.C., the Friesens and MCC collected used equipment, which was shipped from the MCC warehouse in Abbotsford. They determined to ship only non-electric items and nothing that could be found more cheaply locally. Medications were not included due to difficulties in clearing customs.

The CMA handled the paperwork and allocated the supplies to Zaporozhye hospitals.

“Everything finds its owner,” says Gerasimenko, who works tirelessly to connect the supplies with hospitals and clinics. “Even if we don’t know where to place an item right away, eventually it will turn out to be perfect for someone.”

Gerasimenko finds that hospital equipment opens the way for Christian witness. In Soviet times, believers were often considered backward or dangerous elements in society, and even now those prejudices remain. However, when believers come forward with much-needed medical supplies, asking nothing in return, people become curious.

With each shipment, “we try to send a portion of aid to places where no help has gone before,” Gerasimenko says. “In one hospital people come by especially to look at a certain bed we gave them. The patient who lies in it is always told where it came from.”

Because of the positive response, MCC recently sent a medical container to Kirovograd and has planned another for Rovno in western Ukraine, to be distributed through the Hope to People mission.—**Mary Raber**

The writer, of St. Louis, Missouri, is an MCC volunteer in Odessa, Ukraine. She is an associate member of Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Kitchener, Ont.

New ‘refugee program’ for youth

Isabella Sellar of Saskatoon will coordinate Mennonite Central Committee Canada’s new “In Exile, For a While” youth initiative. In Exile is a simulation in which youth assume the role of refugees and encounter the daily events of displaced people.

“The program is based on understanding the experience,” says Sellar, who recently worked in Venezuela on a project with Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs. “When young people feel some of these emotions first-hand, they will have a better understanding of what it means to be a refugee.”

The premise for In Exile was developed by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and Canadian Lutheran World Relief. In Exile recreates international situations with adults in the role of military fighters or United Nations workers and youth playing refugees.

On their way to a safe haven, these “refugees” face a host of difficult situations. They may be ambushed by thieves or threatened by local militia. Some may be kidnapped or separated from their families. Those who get as far as the refugee camp endure some of the tedium that is a part of life in these camps—filling out forms, waiting for food, waiting for word that you can return home or to the safety of another country.

“This is what is real. If it’s too glossy, they won’t really understand the message,” says Sellar. The simulation can be as short as two hours or last a 24-



Sellar will head youth initiative.

hour day. The discussion following the exercise plays a significant role.

“It’s all acting but the people who take part still feel the inequality and most of them want to do something about it,” says Sellar. She hopes to direct those emotions into something concrete.

For more information about In Exile, contact Sellar at (519) 745-8458 or e-mail: ias@mennonitecc.ca. —MCC release by **Jonathan Tiessen**

Seoul, South Korea

Korea centre promotes peace in anxious climate

The political uncertainty of the Korean peninsula is a constant cause of anxiety, said Sheldon Sawatzky after recently travelling there. Sawatzky is Mennonite Church Canada Witness partnership facilitator for East Asia.

South Korea's Anabaptists are working at peace building through the Korea Anabaptist Centre here. The centre celebrated its first anniversary last November with a Peace Seminar that attracted 50 church and civic leaders, as well as civil-action groups. The centre provides peace resources and education through printed materials, seminars, conversations and English classes.

"Interest in Anabaptist distinctives is growing but very selective," said Tim Froese, co-director of the centre. "To the Korean church, talk of discipleship and Christian community is attractive, but a commitment to nonviolent peacemaking is foreign and often misunderstood. On the other

hand, peace and nonviolence are our greatest contact points with the non-Christian community. Our vision is to keep these emphases in balance and in conversation with each other."

Two Korean staff members—both former military personnel—are powerfully promoting the peace that comes from knowing Jesus Christ. Working for peace is not something Kyong-Jung Kim or Jae-Young Lee ever imagined they would be doing, Froese said. (For Lee's story, see Aug. 5, 2002 issue.)

As a student at Canadian Mennonite University, Lee was astonished to hear Mennonites discussing world problems in church—most Korean churches avoid political involvement.

"Churches that talk about pacifism automatically get in trouble with the government," Lee said. Lee's transformation from military man to Christian pacifist is important for the Anabaptist movement in Korea, said Froese. He "has already made significant contacts and presentations on peace and reconciliation programs." In addition to interests in restorative justice and reconciliation, Lee is hoping to get Korean youth involved in Mennonite-related service and exchange programs in other countries.

Lee completed a master's degree in conflict transformation at Eastern Mennonite University in 2002 and is now part of a 14-member conflict-resolution group that does research and writing for the South Korean context. They also lead seminars on these themes for educators.

North Korean defectors present a growing problem in South Korea. Unfamiliar with a capitalist economy, they are often victims of scams and



Jae-Young Lee and Kyong-Jung Kim, both former military men, now promote peace through the Korea Anabaptist Centre in Seoul.

Photo by Marietta Sawatzky

treated as inferior beings. The Anabaptist centre offers English classes for these refugees.

According to Lee, it is a matter of time before the two Koreas reunite. However, when U.S. president George Bush linked North Korea to an axis of evil, the hopeful dialogue was totally blocked, Lee said. He believes that North Korean refugees may be helpful in spanning the chasm between the two countries.

Other Korean Anabaptist ministries in which Mennonites are involved include Abba Shalom Koinonia and the Jesus Village Church. Abba Shalom is located near the demilitarized zone. The community, founded in 1987, conducted Bible institutes, summer work camps and spiritual retreats, but is currently inactive because its leader, Yoon-Sik Lee, is studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Indiana.

Jesus Village Church, in the city of Chunchon, strives to rediscover the vibrancy of the early church and take discipleship seriously. In 2001, the church began an alternative school. Erwin and Marian Wiens of Ontario currently serve there. Karen Froese reaches out to international women and assists them in adjusting to life in Korea.—From MC Canada release by **Lynda Hollinger-Janzen**



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Markham, Ont.

Hagerman church fosters two new congregations

Hagerman Mennonite Church was established more than 60 years ago in a small hamlet north of Toronto, surrounded by farms and market gardens. Over the last 20 years, the community has experienced massive change.

Hagerman is now part an urban community bordering Toronto, with many immigrants, particularly from Asia. About 55 percent of the population is people of colour; 3 out of 10 people identify themselves as Chinese.

Rather than being weakened by the confusion of change, the congregation shifted into a mindset that allowed new ideas and identities to emerge. There was a sense that to resist change would be the death of the church. Out of that fertile ground two new congregations have emerged.

In 1990, Winfred Soong and others

from the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church asked Hagerman about using its facilities for outreach to new immigrants coming from Hong Kong. The members of the Hagerman congregation realized that they were not equipped to reach out effectively to their new neighbours and voted unanimously to share their space.

By 1993, the Markham Chinese Mennonite Church was established as an emerging congregation, with about 30 people participating in Sunday afternoon services.

Demographic shifts were affecting Hagerman in other ways. Property values were rising, along with massive new development and higher density living. This encouraged young couples and retirees to buy homes farther north, many in the Stouffville area.

By 1995, a significant number of members from Hagerman had a vision to start a new church in Stouffville. The congregation held a series of meetings to discern future directions. After a challenging but healthy process of listening to each other, it was clear that there were two equally valid visions: to start a new congregation in Stouffville or to renew the Hagerman congregation to adapt to a multi-cultural and urban environment. Both groups agreed to bless the other's vision.

Community Mennonite Church of Stouffville was established in 1996, with 30 adults and 25 children. A similar number of adults, but fewer children remained at Hagerman. Pastor Gordon Alton agreed to work with each group during a transition period that lasted for four years. Gerald Good is now the pastor for Hagerman.

The new church in Stouffville had the result of strengthening the partnership between Hagerman and the Chinese congregation. The two congregations were now of a similar size, sharing space. The Chinese church began worshipping on Sunday morn-

ings, making it possible for the children to meet jointly for Sunday school. (Although the Chinese adults wished to study and worship in their first language, the children were fluently bilingual.)

Joint services followed by potluck lunches were held several times each year as a way of building relationships.

This partnership was expressed in economic terms when the Markham Chinese congregation purchased the parsonage adjacent to the church from Hagerman. Although each congregation now owns a part of the property, the space is freely shared by both groups for their programs. The members of Hagerman agreed that the funds from this sale would go to help the congregation become established in Stouffville.

Three healthy congregations are now functioning (involving about 180 people), each with a distinct identity but an interconnected history. We could not have mapped out this future ourselves. The only explanation is that God's guiding hand has helped each group to adapt and support each other through a challenging period of change. The pieces of the puzzle have fit together beautifully, in ways we could not have imagined.—**Joanna Reesor-McDowell**

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Ushers give first impression of the church

John Gunther has been an usher at Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Abbotsford, British Columbia, for 10 years. It is a role he finds fulfilling and the experience has stretched him beyond his own comfort zone.

Gunther sees the role of ushering as more than the obvious tasks of handing out bulletins and greeting people as they enter the sanctuary.

"You are a part of the worship team and as such have the responsibility of ensuring people are comfortable, they know where to go," he says, adding that ushers also "answer questions relating to church services, functions and amenities."

"You have the opportunity to be one of the first to give visitors a first impression of the church, a responsibility that, I think, is sometimes taken

for granted."

Aside from the tasks people see, ushers also do things behind the scenes that others might not be aware of.

"What people don't see is that we ensure newcomers are shown either to the sanctuary, child rooms or Sunday School rooms," he says. "We are also given the responsibility of meeting newcomers and...a first impression, or a pleasant experience helps in possibly setting the tone for the remainder of the service."

As head usher, Gunther is also entrusted with safety and coordinating a response should an emergency arise, something most congregation members don't even think about on a Sunday morning.

One of the surprises of the role has been the way it has allowed a rela-



Part of the ushering ministry team at Emmanuel, from left: Herb Nickel, John Gunther, Pete Bergen, John Toews.

tively shy person like Gunther to meet people.

"It is a great opportunity for someone like myself who is not an outgoing person, or a conversationalist to talk to people, because it somehow is easier if you carry the title of usher, and in that respect, at least for myself, it is very fulfilling," he says.

Being an usher also has its perks. Ushers usually stay in the back during the service, where they often get the most comfortable chairs and can listen in a relaxed atmosphere while still performing their duties. But it is being a part of a ministry team that is most important to him.

"I am a firm believer that you get more out of church if you contribute," he says, "even if it is in a capacity that is not high profile."—**Angelika Dawson**

Ushers set tone for worship

Reg Epp hesitates before he answers the question that has been put to him: How does an usher facilitate worship on Sunday mornings?

Epp knows the answer. As the head usher at Cornerstone Church Mennonite in Saskatoon for the last 13 years, the modest grandfather of triplets knows the dynamics of ushering—what works and what doesn't. But he hesitates because he wants to find the right words to convey what he knows to be true.

"The most important thing," he says, "is to be mindful of setting the tone for the worship service."

This involves more than handing out bulletins on a Sunday morning. An usher needs to set people at ease by providing a friendly greeting and seating them "quickly and courteously." Treating visitors and newcomers with extra attention is an important aspect of this role.

An usher needs to be particularly careful with special needs a person may have and to treat those situations with sensitivity.

For example, if someone is frail and elderly, she doesn't want to be escorted all the way to the front pew. Likewise, individuals using a wheelchair or a walker need special consideration in

seating.

Epp goes for the personal touch when he ushers. He tries to connect with each member, using a special remark or observation. He

manages a complement of eight ushers every week; there are four teams that rotate so each usher only serves one Sunday a month. This means that Epp is responsible for a total of 32 individuals every month. He encourages young married couples to be involved and he even has one 12-year-old boy who wants to usher with his father.

Everything does not always run as smoothly as he would like, however.

"We've had some trying times," he admits, referring to the huge crowds that come to Cornerstone for funerals, Easter services and other events. And on a recent Sunday they had to phone an ambulance because someone was experiencing an asthma attack.

Although his job may, at times, be complex, his personal dictum is simple: "If people don't realize the usher has done his job, then the usher has done his job right."—**Karin Fehderau**

Practical ministry portraits

News brief

Rice protest

A professor at a U.S. Mennonite college is urging people to join a "bag of rice" protest against war in Iraq. Jim Satterwhite from Bluffton College suggests that people put half a cup of uncooked rice into a bag and mail it to U.S. president, George Bush, with the words: "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. Romans 12:20. Please send this rice to the people of Iraq; do not attack them."—From release

Akron, Pa.

Indonesians grieve with MCC workers

Mennonite Central Committee workers in Indonesia have felt an outpouring of support from Indonesian Mennonites following the deaths of Alana Fife of Winnipeg and Hannah Showaker of Newville, Pennsylvania.

The two young MCC volunteers died January 22 when a flash flood swept them away near Salatiga, Java (see Feb. 10, page 15). As news of the tragedy spread, Indonesian Mennonites joined the search for their bodies.

As members of the SALT (Serving and Learning Together) program, "these young people 'belong' not only to MCC but also belong very clearly to the families and churches that host them," said Jeanne Jantzi, MCC Indonesia representative. "Their host families and churches shared deeply in the tragedy and the grieving that

followed."

While MCC workers worked on the logistics of sending the bodies home, local Mennonites supported them in numerous ways.

"Dozens of people, especially church members, just dropped everything for the whole week and came to share the suffering with us," Jantzi said.

The churches also provided emotional support to the Indonesian host families. Fife and Showaker lived in the homes of Mennonite pastors.

Daniel Warren, the SALT participant who witnessed the flood, writes, "I talked with my parents over those days and tried to explain that I was by no means alone in my grieving.

"More than 40 people from my church alone in Sukodono made the three-plus hour trip at various times to visit with me and attend memorial services."

More than 300 people attended a January 25 memorial service in the city of Salatiga.

"A steady stream of people travelled to Semarang, where the bodies were kept in a funeral home, to lay their hands on the caskets and say goodbye," said Jantzi. Fife was cremated in Semarang. Altogether, five memorial services took place in Indonesia.

Church members travelled to the airport as well when MCC workers flew to Manitoba and Pennsylvania, accompanying Fife's ashes and Showaker's body.

Memorial services in Newville and Winnipeg incorporated some of the same prayers and hymns used at services in Indonesia, including "Amazing grace" and "How great thou art."—From MCC release by **Maria Linder-Hess**

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Petitcodiac, N.B.

Janzens honoured by crime prevention association

The New Brunswick Crime Prevention Association presented Siegfried and Margaret Janzen with an award on November 30 for their “dedication and professional conduct” in working with offenders and victims.

Siegfried was inducted into the “Crime Prevention Hall of Fame.” Now in their early 80s, the Janzens are workers with Mennonite Central Committee Maritimes. They have hosted parolees in their home, served as mediators between offenders and victims, and visited those in prison.

Siegfried often gets called to take on cases that others have given up on.

The wife of one inmate stayed with Janzens for over 11 years so that she could visit her husband. That couple now often attends Petitcodiac Mennonite Church, where Siegfried served as pastor for 10 years.

Earlier in their lives, Janzens served with MCC in Europe, assisting refugees after World War II. They also ran a masonry business in Nova Scotia for many years. Occasionally they think about retiring.—From MCC Maritimes report by **Tom Snowdon**

Elkhart, Ind.

Distance training for pastors is a ‘treasure’

The Pastoral Studies Distance Education program at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) is a “hidden treasure,” according to Jewel Gingerich Longenecker. As associate dean for leadership education, Longenecker witnesses the enthusiasm of those who discover the program, which allows pastors and others to take college-level courses at a distance.

The five-unit course meets a need for people who are interested in understanding their faith better and learning about the church but don’t think of themselves as seminary students. They don’t have to move to the campus.

Students in the program communicate long-distance with an instructor. They also choose a mentor, usually someone from their local area, for regular conversations about their learning.

The program is not a replacement for seminary but “a first step in a journey of theological education,” says Longenecker. “The program helps [students] in their discernment process and gives them confidence that they can do this level of work,” she added.

Julie Rempel completed the first unit, “Church and Ministry,” in the fall of 1999 while trying to decide whether to begin graduate school. She is now in the Master of Divinity program at AMBS and is serving as a pastoral intern at Welcome Inn Mennonite Church in Hamilton, Ontario.

Initially, Rempel was “a little fearful” because the curriculum was so pastor-oriented. The experience turned out to be enriching and helped prepare her for seminary. “I could also begin to picture myself as a pastor in a Mennonite church,” she said.

Not all students plan to pursue seminary study, however. Many are pastors who remain in their ministry assignments.

David Crable, a Pennsylvania coal miner who was called by his congregation to the pastorate took five years to complete the program. When he began his studies at the recommendation of the Allegheny Conference, Crable was struggling to balance his full-time pastorate and studies with his 60-hour week in the coal mine.

“I’d have my course notes and a pen in my dinner bucket and would study while I was waiting for my buddy to come out of the mine,” he said. Crable had been out of school since age 18 and unsure about handling that level of study.

“God was with me and put the right people in my life, though,” he said. He credited his wife, Bettie, and his mentor, Daniel Hertzler, for supporting him. Longenecker is excited to see that interest in the program is growing. “It’s a real gem of a program,” she said. “We’re trying to shine a light on it.”—AMBS release by **Annette Brill Petty**

News briefs

Anti-war statement pulled from newspaper

Stars and Stripes, the United States Department of Defense official newspaper for those serving overseas, pulled a full-page anti-war statement from its February 5 edition at the last minute, even though it had already been paid for. “We feel it would be inappropriate for us to profit from the publication of both pro and con war messages,” said the *Stars and Stripes*, conceding, however, that the paper has run “support the troops” ads. The “Not In Our Name” statement, signed by over 50,000 people, from artists to politicians, has appeared in over 45 newspapers. A coordinator of the anti-war statement said that “servicemen and women overseas have a right to know that public support for a war on Iraq is both thin and eroding.” The pulling of the ad followed on the heels of Laura Bush, the first lady, “postponing” a literary symposium at the White House when she got word that anti-war poems might be read.—From release

Briercrest team aims high

The women’s volleyball team from Briercrest Bible College in Caronport, Saskatchewan, has captured the attention of the Canadian Colleges Athletic Association. In a league dominated by larger colleges, the Briercrest Clippers are currently among the top 15 college teams in the country. The school has about 700 students. Led by coach Liesl Barg, the Clippers refer to their playing as “sports ministry.” Like the school’s other teams, they intentionally build relationships with opposing teams, meeting after games for food, testimonies and fellowship. Teams have travelled to other countries to play, coach and work with churches. Briercrest offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sports Ministry.—From Briercrest release

Rosenfeld, Man.

Kuhl spent 22 years in lay ministry

After 22 years in lay ministry at the Rosenfeld Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Herman Kuhl is trying to find a comfortable place in the pews.

Kuhl, with his wife Helen, moved here in 1960 to teach. Both served the church in many different capacities, and in 1979 the congregation called Kuhl to be its lay minister.

"I just continued to walk with the people. I often felt inadequate. I always saw teaching as my first calling," said Kuhl. With encouragement from his family and congregation, he moved humbly into the leadership role.

"I never saw myself as a pastor for the long term.... After one year, at a congregational meeting, the church clearly said, 'You are our pastor. We want you to baptize and serve communion' and they commissioned me,"

said Kuhl.

Kuhl accepted the call one year at a time. "I always insisted it come up at the annual meetings and they always



Helen and Herman Kuhl

gave me very solid affirmation."

For 22 years, Kuhl made room alongside his full-time teaching job to prepare sermons, put together the Sunday bulletin, lead weekly Bible studies, prepare baptismal candidates, conduct funerals and make hospital visits on his way to and from work.

In 1993, Kuhl retired from teaching and recently began to think of retiring from ministry. "Because I'm past 65 I suggested that the issue of pastoral leadership be raised but I realized unless I made a definite move nothing would happen."

The decision to hire someone from outside the church seemed to be a

natural move, said Kuhl. Last summer the congregation, with a membership of about 80, hired Walter Hiebert, half-time teacher at Mennonite Collegiate Institute, to a three-year term. While Hiebert is from the Mennonite Brethren conference, "he is no stranger to our church," said Kuhl.

Although the move to salaried leadership seemed inevitable, Kuhl believes the church loses something by giving up the practice of calling lay ministers from within the congregation.

At meetings with other Mennonite pastors in the area, "I have often been thankful I am not on salary," said Kuhl. "I had a flexibility in my schedule that they didn't have. I did what I could...there were no guilt feelings."

Although he has no regrets about retiring, he does "feel empty a bit," he said. "You miss a lot of things that are part of being in that job. I always shook everyone's hand. There was always that contact, even with the kids." It's a bit painful to pull back.

"The church has been extremely gracious to me," concluded Kuhl. On June 2, the congregation held a special service to celebrate the Kuhls' ministry. Retiring from the pulpit while staying in the same church will require adjustment.

"It is what we wanted but it is difficult. The church has been our family. There is a sense of giving our children over to someone else."—

Evelyn Rempel Petkau

News brief

Presbyterians settle amount for abuse claims

The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the federal government have signed a deal under which the church will pay \$2.1 million to victims of abuse at the Indian residential schools it ran. The church will commit a further amount (up to \$1 million) for other efforts toward healing. It is hoped that most claims can be settled without trials. The Presbyterian Church was one of four denominations involved in running Indian schools for the government from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1970s. It operated 11 schools, some of which were transferred to the United Church in 1925. The Anglican Church of Canada, which recently agreed to pay \$25 million in compensation, operated 26 schools. The Presbyterian Church is named in fewer than 2 percent of the 12,000 claims of abuse, the United Church in about 8 percent, the Anglican Church in 18 percent and the Roman Catholic Church in about 73 percent.—From releases

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Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Latin Americans examine effects of globalization

From coffee fields to textile factories, from church programs to government offices, economic globalization's impact is increasing across Latin America and the Caribbean.

In the first of several consultations, some 40 Mennonite Central Committee partner agencies met here January 13-15 to share ideas for how MCC, and North American Mennonites, should respond.

Most participants agreed that globalization—defined loosely as the increased flow of goods and services across national boundaries due to lowered trade barriers—can hurt the poorest and most vulnerable members of society.

Ideas for solutions varied widely. Some called for changes so that globalization's promise of prosperity was available to more people, while others believe the "free trade" system is unsustainable on both social and

ecological levels. In either case, participants agreed, North Americans have a stake in this issue since goods consumed in North America are increasingly produced in other countries.

The conference, held at a Mennonite retreat centre here, drew participants from across Mexico, Haiti, Central and South America, as well as the United States and Canada. They ranged from grassroots activists to government advisers.

Nelson Garcia Lobo, of the Honduran Mennonite Church's Social Action Committee, said his country's situation reflects globalization's shortcomings. As Honduras has opened its markets, cheap U.S. corn, subsidized by the U.S. government, has flooded the market, making it difficult for Honduran farmers to sell their crops for a profit.

More Hondurans are turning to the *maquilas* (factories, often clothing

assembly shops run by foreign companies) for work. While working conditions are acceptable in some of these factories, others treat workers as disposable, he noted. Family and community structures are often damaged when parents must work 12 or more hours a day.

Meanwhile, the gap between rich and poor is increasing, with 80 percent of Hondurans now living in poverty. Social services have been slashed in recent years as mandated by the "structural readjustment programs" of the World Bank, while 35 percent of Honduras' budget goes to pay its national debt.

Others at the conference also spoke for those on the margins: street children in Bolivia, *maquila* workers in Nicaragua and indigenous people in Guatemala.

A three-member committee summed up options for action:

- "Neo-liberalism with a human face," or accepting globalization while calling for international policies to give poorer countries more power to determine their future. These policies would include reducing government and corporate corruption, protecting national industries for a time to allow them to become competitive, promoting infrastructure and access to resources for the poor and relieving poor countries' debt.

- A complete change from the system of globalization by supporting unions, calling for policies to protect small businesses and farmers, decreasing dependence on exports and eliminating external debt.

- A "radical Christian vision" that promotes the church as an alternative community in which members develop a "theology of enough." Modelling systems of local production and consumption that honour both people and creation.

Future consultations are planned for Asia in May, and for Nepal and Africa in 2004. MCC will take perspectives from the consultations into account when shaping its programs.—From MCC release by **Rachel B. Miller Moreland**

Abortion statement to be tested

In response to a call from constituents, Mennonite Church USA Executive Board adopted a statement on abortion at its January meeting. The statement considers abortion "counter to biblical principles" but encourages compassionate response to those caught in a complex issue.

The statement will be sent to the Constituency Leaders' Council, area conferences and other groups for feedback before delegates vote on a final draft at Atlanta 2003 in July.

"Both our former denominations had developed strong statements on this issue, and we wanted to bring these two statements together in a way that can be studied and used by our congregations today," said Ron Byler, Executive Board associate executive director.

The statement balances a strong stand against abortion with an equally strong plea for the church to provide faith-based alternatives—such as working for a more just health-care system—and compassionate communities of discernment. Former physician George Stoltzfus coordinated the process with a subcommittee.

"This statement speaks against abortion but at the same time doesn't vilify the person who has had an abortion performed," Stoltzfus said. "This statement is explicit in its language about the need to be unflinching about sin but at the same time the need to deal with real people who need to be cared for in the church."

The eight-page statement includes four sections: beliefs of the church, confessions about areas the church needs to strengthen, commentary, and a recommended reading section. This current statement incorporates much-needed new information, Stoltzfus said.

The document encourages discernment within the faith community, but it does not ask the church to call for legalizing its pro-life stance. One section reads, "Because of the diversity of moral conviction in the civil community, we realize that what the law permits is not necessarily moral behavior for the Christian. We believe, however, that the church should witness to society concerning the general presumption against any human decision to terminate life."—From MC USA release

People & Events

Akron, Pa.—John Hostetler is the first staff person to have served Mennonite Central Committee for 50 years. He says a pastor's "shoulder tapping"



Hostetler

prompted him to volunteer with MCC in the 1950s. Hostetler has done financial work in Europe, directed material aid programs in Akron and coordinated special projects for the MCC East Coast office. While working in Frankfurt, Germany, he married Katherine Penner, an MCC volunteer from Ontario. Hostetler, now 77, says he plans to continue with MCC for one more year.—From MCC release

Winnipeg, Man.—What do you get when you mix cold January weather, cozy facilities, giant Dutch Blitz cards, a spiritually led worship team, great meals, a captivating speaker and 74 enthusiastic young people? Another exciting young adult retreat at Camp Koinonia! Despite the minus 20 degree temperatures, people enjoyed skiing, ultimate frisbee, snowshoeing and broom ball. Kathy Fast of Mennonite Church Canada led the sessions, entitled "Invade the darkness." She related her experiences in Africa and engaged us in identifying areas of darkness in our church and culture, and ways we could bring God's light to these concerns. Kathy commissioned us to be the light of goodness and truth as we encounter others from across the street to around the world. The retreat was organized by the Young Adult Council of Mennonite Church Manitoba, with special recognition to Sandra Friesen.—From MC Manitoba release by Kevin Stoesz

Waterloo, Ont.—Darren Brunk, who recently completed an MA in International Relations at the University of Waterloo, left February 11 for an internship in Rwanda. He will be helping the National Youth Council there to develop its communication materials and plans for addressing HIV/AIDS among youth in Rwanda, one of Africa's poorest countries. Brunk, 25, is an intern with the Coady International Institute in Antigonish, Nova Scotia (St. Francis Xavier University). The youth internship program is administered by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Brunk is a member of Rockway Mennonite Church.—From release

Toronto, Ont.—St. Clair O'Connor Community Inc., a Mennonite housing project, is planning a new 160-bed nursing home. Construction is scheduled to begin in fall, and completion is slated for late 2004. The Ontario Ministry of Health awarded the nursing home bed licences to St. Clair O'Connor in 2001. Funding and construction will be provided by Borealis Infrastructure Management Inc.—From St. Clair O'Connor Community release

Transitions

Births

Braun—to Brigitte and Bryan, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, a daughter, Sabrina Hope, Dec. 31.
Daigle—to Nancy (Kliewer) and Robert, of Connaught, Ont., Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Natalie Ursula, Jan. 18.
Ellison White—to Julie and Mike, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont., a son, Ethan Elmer, Jan. 30.
Fast—to Karina and Doug, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, a daughter, Katie Ann, Nov. 19.

Friesen—to Lorraine and Ed of Winnipeg, Elim Mennonite, Grunthal, Man., a son, Owen Timothy, Feb. 10.

Grey—to Anne Nikkel and Denis, Warden Woods Mennonite, Toronto, a son, Nicholas Jacob, Dec. 8.

Hamm—to Alison Li and Ernst, Toronto United Mennonite, a daughter, Clara, Feb. 6.

Heide—to Rebecca and Duane, Rockway Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont., a son, Nicholas Cameron, Jan. 1.

Hiebert—to Leanne and Reg, Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, a son, Aiden Louis, Feb. 4.

Kirk—to Celia and Jody of Port Dover, Ont., Warden Woods Mennonite, Toronto, twins Marley May and Noah Clarence, Nov. 27.

Krahn—to Christy and Peter, Fiske Mennonite, Sask., a son, Seth Peter Derksen, Jan. 27.
Logan—to Lori Kroeker and Dennis, Toronto United Mennonite, a son, Samuel, Dec. 24.

Musselman—to Bianca and Paul, St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Larissa Diana, Feb. 4.

Pauls—to Cintia and Carlos, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, a son, Cael Anthony, Nov. 9.

Reimer—to Nicole and Kevin, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Jasmine Rene, Dec. 29.

Rempel—to Colleen and Chris, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., a daughter, Madison Kennedy, Dec. 5.

Wichert—to Audrey and Geoff, Toronto United Mennonite, a daughter, Beatrice Lilith, Jan. 31.

Wiebe—to Liane and Trevor, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., a son, Hayden Scott, Dec. 19.

Wiebe—to Mariam and Javier Oliva, Toronto United Mennonite, a daughter, Sofia Beatriz, Jan. 18.

Marriages

Bergen-Peters—Jeremy and Katherine, Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Jan. 11.

Bergen-Rempel—Martin (First Mennonite, Winnipeg) and Anny, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Jan. 19.

Dueck-Penner—Mike and Amy, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 12.

Grebe-Kroeker—Kevin and Elizabeth (Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.), in Vineland, June 22.

Neufeld-Canaday—Harry and Deanna, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Jan. 18.

Unrau-Block—Johnnie and Kristin, Elim Mennonite, Grunthal, Man., Jan. 25.

Deaths

Bergen—Helen Willms, 78, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., Jan. 21.

Cressman—Nelda, 88, Shantz Mennonite, Baden, Ont., Jan. 14.

Dick—Agnes, 78, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., Dec. 15.

Giesbrecht—Frieda, 73, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., Jan. 27.

Gubler—Ludwig, 73, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., Jan. 7.

Leis—Millis, 86, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., Jan. 29.

Neufeld—Agnes, 80, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Jan. 4.

Sawatzky—John, 86, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 25.

Schroeder—Ernst, 59, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., Jan. 15.

Schultz—Elizabeth, 79, Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont., Feb. 10.

Schwartzentruber—Erlis, 84, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., Jan. 24.

Thiessen—Susie, 104, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., Jan. 20.

Van Riesen—Else, 92, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 10.

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

Assembly theme makes surprise appearances

“What if...?” appears to be a question on the minds of many these days.

The theme for the Mennonite Church Canada assembly in St. Catharines this summer, this question also appeared coincidentally in a Canadian Mennonite University advertisement (Jan. 27 *Canadian Mennonite*) and in *The Marketplace*, the magazine of Mennonite Economic Development Associates. It was also a Prayer Week topic in Essex cluster of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada.

The CMU ad asks, “What if war can’t stop terror?” Communications director Kevin Heinrichs says, “The whole idea is that we want to talk about our distinctives rather than trying to appeal to everyone. What do students really talk about in the classroom? What if war can’t prevent terror? Then what do we do?”

In *The Marketplace* (Jan./Feb. issue), Art DeFehr poses a series of “What if...?” questions starting with “What if God was serious about creating everyone equal?” Dave Brubacher, who led Prayer Week in the Essex cluster, explored three questions: What if we lived as we prayed? What if we embraced the mystery of Christ? What if we lived to reveal Jesus?

The theme was inspired by Philippians 1:1-11. Anne Campion, MC Canada youth ministry director, presented the passage to the Y_MAD (Young Mennonite Assembly Designers) who completed the question by asking, What if love prevailed?, an overarching theme in the Philippians text.

Program committee chair Craig Friesen comments that the theme is a big one, both in theological terms and challenge. “Christendom is crumbling—the church and state are growing apart. The commitment and energy we invest in shaping the church and our call from God is perhaps more important now than at any other time in our history,” said Friesen. “What if



Above, logo for 2003 adult assembly. Below, logo for youth assembly.



all God’s people showed God’s love all the time?

“Asking the challenging questions can invigorate us and help put the church on God’s trajectory.”

Assembly logos were designed by Lyndon Froese

(youth logo) and Lynette Schroeder Wiebe. Froese commented that “the heart represents both God’s love and the core of a human’s being.” The heart is open, it continues on like the infinity sign, communicating that God’s love is infinite. The flames symbolize both the intensity of God’s love and our hearts being re-kindled at assembly.

Schroeder Wiebe commented, “Like ripples from a pebble skipping across the water, the effects of this question are far-reaching.” Our ideas and understandings can spread out to affect our world. All God’s people “create ripples as they connect with each other and as each seeks to explore the question, ‘What if...’”—Dan Dyck

On-line donations a surprise

The success of on-line donations to Mennonite Church Canada via the MC Canada web site is surprising planners. Al Rempel, director of resource development, is enthusiastic about the possibilities.

Articulating a common vision

Identifying and interpreting our vision for the present context is an important task of the church, within congregations, area conferences and nationally. We work at this task informally much of the time, and more formally in specific initiatives.

Articulating a vision is difficult enough. Articulating a common vision presents even greater challenges. There is considerable diversity within and among congregations with respect to theological understandings and their expression.

The challenge is to respect this diversity while articulating a vision that all can support. Can we accomplish this and avoid the risk of simply ending up with the lowest common denominator? Where do prophetic voices fit in? Unless we continually

examine our vision, the tendency is for leaders, and others in the organization, to operate in maintenance or survival mode.

So we dialogue with each other, as congregations and in larger gatherings. Not surprisingly, we hear the diversity of emphases that we already knew were there. We hear support for particular programs and activities but less enthusiasm for the organization that has overall responsibility for them.

How do we arrive at consensus? Do we compromise and meet in the middle? This tends not to happen when positions are firmly held. Do we opt for one end of the spectrum and thereby alienate those at the other end? Not a good idea either.

So we need to continue working at

From our leaders

identifying what we feel are the priorities and emphases to which we give our energies and resources. If established programs are the right priorities, then we need to encourage each other to participate in them more eagerly.

But vision implies moving beyond what we are doing at the moment. Will we allow ourselves to be pushed in new directions? Hopefully we can create a situation where we see the organization as “us” rather than as “them,” and claim ownership of it. The vision will then be a common vision and all will have a vital interest in the programs, and organization.

Allan Klassen, deputy moderator, Mennonite Church Saskatchewan



"We have not heavily promoted this capability, and yet people are finding it," he said. "It's a low cost way of inviting people from the church and beyond to invest in God's mission."

Since beginning last November, the capability has facilitated over \$11,000. "We do not know whether these donations came only because of the on-line method. What is important to us is that our donors have found it to be convenient and safe."

"I'd like to invite visitors to the web site to read news stories about God's work in the world and then consider making a donation," said Rempel. Readers can log onto www.mennonitechurch.ca/—
Dan Dyck

Pray for Witness workers

- Remember Anne Garber Kompaore (Burkina Faso) who joined 30 Hebrew researchers from various organizations for two weeks in England, learning how to contribute to the Keyterms of Biblical Hebrew Project. The product will be a useful resource for Bible translators all over the world. Thank God for the commitment to excellence in Bible translation.
- Pray for Nancy Frey (Benin) whose father died of cancer on January 3. On January 6, her uncle, George Weber, died in an accident in Iraq while traveling with the Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT) delegation. Pray for Nancy, her husband Bruce Yoder, and their children Jeremiah and Deborah as they grieve these losses. They returned to Canada for the funerals.
- Pray for Bonnie Friesen, Witness associate teaching at Zaporizhya Bible College in Ukraine. She is particularly concerned about her aging mother, who just moved into the Grunthal (Manitoba) Menno Home. "Mom has fallen three times since I left for Ukraine," writes Bonnie. The move "is a big and difficult

challenge for her..." She recently reported that the move went well and her mother seems "content and at peace."

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Consider partnership in seminary program

Mennonite Church Manitoba considered a proposal regarding the Evangelical Anabaptist Seminary Program (EASP) at its delegate session February 14-15. The program offers courses in Winnipeg in conjunction with Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary (MBBS) and Canadian Mennonite University.

These schools, as well as Steinbach Bible College and five Mennonite conferences, are sponsoring this venture. Jake F. Pauls, MC Manitoba executive director, and John Klassen, director of Leadership Ministries, have been attending the meetings of the interim board.

The partnering conferences and institutions hope to create a Manitoba setting for seminary training. Since a growing number of pastoral candidates express reluctance to relocate to the USA for training and many receive their seminary education in non-Anabaptist seminaries, "it becomes our responsibility to explore the merits of making Anabaptist education more accessible to Canadians," states the proposal. "Looking at the numerous pastoral vacancies that will need to be filled in the next 10 years also gives us good reason to seriously consider this possibility."

Specifically, MC Manitoba is being asked to work in partnership in areas of governance, finance, faculty and students; to affirm MBBS and AMBS as the institutional partners under whose degree granting authority the program is offered; to affirm

the core values and anticipated outcomes; to contribute a minimum of \$1000 for 2003-2005; to review the partnership in 2005.

"This program holds great promise for the training of pastors and leaders for our congregations in keeping with our Anabaptist heritage," said Pauls. "The interim board of EASP would like to see a more permanent commitment coming from us soon. There are many questions to be asked...but how can we say no?"

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

Bechtel appointed conference minister

Ken Bechtel will be coming on staff with Mennonite Church Saskatchewan as Conference Minister, beginning in April. The appointment is an interim one and will last until 2005.

"He will work at uniting us toward a common vision," said Allan Klassen, deputy moderator of MC Saskatchewan General Council.

Bechtel, who has worked in several interim situations, is current pastor at the Breslau Mennonite Church in Ontario.

Armin Krahn, MC Saskatchewan moderator, sees the conference minister role as having two major emphases: to connect with individual pastors and churches and to help with programming and planning for MC Saskatchewan.

First fundraiser for camps

The Camping Commission, which manages all three conference camps in Saskatchewan, held its first fundraiser on January 25. Although the camps raise money on an individual basis, this Comedy and Dessert night was organized to help all camps under the conference umbrella.

Considering that the weather was less than cooperative, the evening was a

success, said commission member John Dyck. With the temperature at minus 35 degrees, fewer people are willing to venture out but those who came were generous.

A total of \$900 was donated toward the camping ministry. The money will help to relieve the financial pressures of the camps' summer programs.

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Natural Church and Missional Church

One of the subcommittees of MC British Columbia's Church Ministries Committee is called "Natural Church Development" (NCD). The NCD approach assesses the strengths and weaknesses within a church and offers positive ways to overcome obstacles and build on strengths.

The committee has been encouraged to see how NCD fits with the Missional Church paradigm as healthy churches seek to share the gospel "across the street and around the world." Last year, Gerd Bartel, Mennonite Church Canada development and missions director for B.C., and the NCD committee worked together to sponsor four leaders from B.C. churches to get training for this process within their churches.

The four began with NCD training in December and will continue with Missional Church training during this year. For information on how your congregation can be involved in the NCD process, contact Henry Kliever at the MC British Columbia office at (604) 850 6658.

Unless otherwise credited, the articles in TheChurches pages were written by Leona Dueck Penner (Mennonite Church Canada), Maurice Martin (Eastern Canada), Evelyn Rempel Petkau (Manitoba), Karin Fehderau (Saskatchewan), Donita Wiebe-Neufeld (Alberta), Angelika Dawson (B.C.). See page 2 for contact information.

Employment Opportunities

Menno-Hof is accepting applications for

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Opportunity to share your faith in the Anabaptist tradition with people from around the world! Menno-Hof provides a lovely completely furnished apartment, with all expenses paid plus a monthly stipend. Position available May 6, 2003. For more information contact:

Joseph Yoder
Box 701 Shipshewana, IN 46565
(260) 768-4117; mennohof@tln.net



MCC BC
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Mennonite Central Committee is the relief and development arm of the Mennonite Church in North America (see www.mcc.org for more details). This position is responsible for creating awareness for the mission of MCC and generating financial contributions from individuals, churches, businesses, and foundations through a variety of fundraising activities. MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. The qualifications for this position include: a good knowledge of MCC and its supporting constituency, excellent inter-personal, communications, team building and problem-solving skills, an understanding of fundraising principles and strategies and the ability to move from ideas to results. Experience in fundraising is desirable and related experience in marketing, promotions and management is an asset.

To apply please send a cover letter and resume to:

Personnel Department – Resource Development Position
MCCBC, Box 2038, 31414 Marshall Road
Abbotsford, BC V2T 3T8
Send fax to: (604) 850-8734, or
E-mail to: wbremner@mccbc.com

Apply before March 21, 2003 to ensure consideration

Due to an upcoming retirement, we seek a

DIRECTOR OF CARE

Herbert Nursing Home Inc., is a ministry of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan to seniors. We regard the dignity and worth of each individual as a special creature of God. As such, we strive to offer a wholistic approach to enhance their physical, mental, social and spiritual lives.

Are you an RN or RPN with supervisory/managerial experience, a commitment to quality care which you effectively use to inspire others, and ability to serve as a spiritual leader through your personal Christian example? Are you wanting to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the elderly in a challenging, positive work environment?

Some formal education in administration and/or geriatrics is desirable; good references, including a criminal record check, will be required.

Submit current résumé and references on or before March 8th to:

Adminstrator, Herbert Nursing Home
Box 520 Herbert, SK S0H 2A0
Telephone: (306) 784-2661 Fax: (306) 784-2449

FULL-TIME PASTOR

The First Mennonite Church invites applications for a full-time pastor beginning in the summer/fall of 2003. Located in Vineland, The First Mennonite Church is a congregation of about 60 members and an equal number of children and youth. We are a diverse group of urban and rural people drawn together to worship and experience God's community within the unique setting of our historical church.

Rich in worship and fellowship, the congregation seeks an enthusiastic individual to provide spiritual leadership and guidance and who is committed to an Anabaptist understanding of faith.

For more information please contact:

Darren Pries-Klassen, Search Committee Chair
(905) 688-6272 or
Muriel Bechtel, MCEC Minister of Pastoral Services
(519) 650-3806

CAMP DIRECTOR
STRINGS STAFF and WINDS STAFF

Ontario Mennonite Music Camp is looking for musically gifted young adult staff for the 2003 camp period. Ideal candidates will be creative, organized, with enthusiasm for working with youth, and have a solid grounding in Anabaptist Mennonite values. Contact by March 7:

Conrad Grebel University College at (519) 885-0220

Is God calling you to use your leadership abilities, management skills and two or more years of cross-cultural experience to serve others through MCC?

This year MCC needs people to provide leadership to MCC programs in Europe and West Africa and to programs in Congo, Sudan, Somalia, Angola and Rwanda/Burundi. In 2004, MCC will need leaders in Nicaragua, Uganda, Lebanon, Kenya, Russia/Ukraine, the Philippines and Washington, DC. Also in 2004, MCC will need a director for its Visitor Exchange Program.

Plan ahead. Apply now. Contact:

Charmayne Brubaker, Human Resources,
(717) 859-1151, cdb@mcc.org

or your nearest MCC office for job descriptions and more information about these upcoming MCC leadership openings. Application review begins March 2003.

Goshen College Biology Department is seeking a

BIOLOGIST

for a two-year appointment, which has the possibility of becoming tenure track. This full time position will be divided, approximately half teaching and half as the "Lindsey Fellow". Responsibilities of the Lindsey Fellow include being the Director of the Environmental Studies Program, supervising field research at the Merry Lea Environmental Center, and coordinating collegiate program development at Merry Lea. The teaching responsibilities will include three courses per year, out of the following possibilities: a non-majors biology course, Introduction to Environmental Studies, Zoology, Botany, Marine Biology and Ecology. Ph.D. required, and teaching experience is preferred.

To apply, visit the specific position announcement on the Goshen College web page www.goshen.edu under employment. Goshen College is an AA/EEO employer; members of underrepresented groups are invited to apply. Goshen College is affiliated with the Mennonite Church.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

LEAD PASTOR

Milverton Mennonite Fellowship is a rural congregation on the edge of Milverton, about 20 minutes north of Stratford, ON.

Join our team ministry as team leader in leading our congregation of varying ages. Ministry focus places high value on: worship, being spirit led, prayer, prophecy, equipping and releasing lay persons, missions. Opportunity for an experienced pastor with team leadership abilities.

Information available upon request, e-mail: milvmenn@perth.net
Reply in confidence to:

**Pastoral Search Committee
Milverton Mennonite Fellowship
Box 323 Milverton, ON N0K 1M0**

Salem Mennonite Church, Salem, Oregon, seeks full-time

PASTOR

Candidates will have a strong commitment to Anabaptist beliefs centered around Jesus Christ's life and teaching. Candidates need strong preaching skills and a leadership style that develops and draws upon the skills of the congregation.

Salem Mennonite Church is a 100+ member congregation located in Oregon's capital community. Salem is located in the beautiful Willamette Valley with the Pacific Coast mountains to the west and the majestic Cascade mountains to the east.

For information contact:

**Jim McKinnell, Pastoral Search Committee Chair
Salem Mennonite Church, 1045 Candlewood Dr. NE,
Salem, OR 97303
(503) 540-7444; mckinnellj@attbi.com**

Applicants should send a Ministerial Leadership Information Form to:

**Larry Hauder, PNMC Conference Minister,
1520 N 20th St., Boise, ID 83702**

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at: 1-800-316-4052**

Publishing note

The Jesuit Center in Amman, Jordan, together with Mennonite Central Committee, has translated two mediation manuals into Arabic: "Tools for Living" and "Respect, Responsibility and Resolution." MCC supported the effort with \$20,000 from the Canadian International Development Agency. The Jesuit Center provides training for lay

leaders. "We don't have enough materials in our own language to work at resolving conflict," said Emil Eldik, who teaches theology at the centre. He has attended the Summer Peacebuilding Institute at Eastern Mennonite University in Virginia. MCC offices in the Middle East will distribute the manuals to peace workers.—MCC

A trading system of perpetual motion

Our family farm is located on the Canadian prairies, a region of millions of acres of productive soil and less than four million people. It makes for a very small "domestic market;" we export a lot of what we produce.

Our farm is a mix of livestock and crops. Hog manure provides fertilizer for our crops, some of which in turn feed our hogs. However, many of our other requirements (machinery, gas and oil, chemicals) come from beyond our neighbourhood.

People have always traded what they have in abundance for what they do not have locally—a win-win situation. In more recent history, colonization was more often theft than trade. And now national interests and political borders have been thrown off by what we call "globalization."

Globalization is nothing without transportation. There is a lot of "movement of goods," and it doesn't always make sense.

An acquaintance once travelled to international trade shows to promote his product—a type of flooring for hog barns. In the Netherlands, he asked some hog producers about the state of their industry. They said it had been a good couple of years, what with the cheap tapioca the European Union was importing from Taiwan for hog rations.

Months later our friend visited hog producers in Taiwan. He commented: "So, profit margins must be okay, what with the inexpensive tapioca available for your hog rations." They laughed and laughed at his ignorance.

"We would never feed tapioca to our pigs!" they said. "The Europeans dump their heavily subsidized feed barley on our island, and we're happy to accept. It's much cheaper than our tapioca (and it makes for a better quality of ration)."

Moving stuff around generates wealth for the mover but it also clogs up our atmosphere with carbon compounds, which brings us into the debate around the Kyoto Protocol and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

According to experts such as those doing the Nebraska Tractor Tests: "We have achieved no real gain in fuel efficiency in spark-ignited tractors in 75 years." Are manufacturers not capable of improving engines? Or are they not allowed to?

Thinking globally, whose financial interests would not be better served if transportation were powered more efficiently?

In the past decade, Canada's railway lines have been abandoned. Now our highways are congested with trucks. A train loaded with 10,000 tons of wheat uses 6,000 horsepower, or just over one-half horsepower per ton. Trucks use 400 horsepower to haul 40 tons, about five percent as efficient. Why are we doing this to ourselves?

Since corporations took over ("integrated") a huge portion of hog production in Manitoba, animals are moved to two or three different sites, in some cases hundreds of miles away, before they make that final trip to market. Rather than mixing rations on site, grain is now trucked to a central mills and prepared rations are then trucked back to the barns.

Is all this expenditure of fossil fuel necessary to turn a pig into pork? Obviously not, but it is part of the production contract. One corporation owns the mills, the trucks, the hog contracts and the slaughter facility, maximizing control. Every time a product is moved, it makes money for the corporation.

Can we survive the fall-out from globalization? Can we encourage one another as individuals, companies and nations to sort out what's most respectful of our environment and ourselves?—Meetinghouse release by **Marg Rempel**

The writer farms with her husband, Ron, near Ste. Anne, Manitoba. She helped found the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council.

Peter Dyck to speak at canning fundraisers

Kitchener, Ont.—Peter Dyck, storyteller and long-time Mennonite Central Committee worker, will speak at three Ontario fundraising events for MCC meat canning projects.

On March 15, he will speak at a fundraising breakfast at Calvary United Church in St. Jacobs. That evening he will speak at Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church at 7:00 p.m. Call (519) 745-8458 to buy tickets for the breakfast. On March 16, Dyck will speak at a fundraiser in Leamington.

Dyck served with MCC in England during World War II. After the war, he and Elfrieda directed MCC's material aid program in Holland and then worked with refugees in Germany. Dyck served at MCC headquarters until his retirement in 1982.—From MCC Ontario release

Workshop on witness in early church, today

Elkhart, Ind.—A workshop at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary on March 21-22 will focus on how Christians can share the good news in a pluralistic and violent world.

Speakers for the event, titled "Christian witness in a multi-faith environment: Inspiration from the early church," are Nelson Kraybill, AMBS president, and Alan and Eleanor Kreider, long-time mission workers in England.

The workshop will draw inspiration from the early church, when Christians witnessed from the margins of political and social power.

To register, contact the AMBS Church Leadership Center, phone (574) 296-6207 or check the web site at www.ams.edu and enter "Early Church" in the search box.—AMBS release

MVS Canada seeks alumni

Winnipeg, Man.—Mennonite Voluntary Service coordinators in Canada are updating their lists of MVS and Service Adventure alumni. They are asking all past volunteers to file their names and contact information with Monika Selluski at the Mennonite Church Canada office, phone 1-866-888-6785, or e-mail: mselluski@mennonitechurch.ca.

The oldest "living" MVS unit in North America is Welcome Inn in Hamilton, Ontario, begun in 1966. Two new units are in development in Toronto and Ottawa. By fall of this year, there will be 7 units in Canada, with 25 volunteer openings.

Brad Reimer, associate director of Christian Service Ministry for MC Canada, hopes to reconnect alumni by developing a newsletter and special events.—From MC Canada release

Novelist to present Bechtel Lectures

Waterloo, Ont.—Author Rudy Wiebe will present the 2003 Bechtel Lectures in Anabaptist Mennonite Studies at Conrad Grebel University College here March 6 and 7. His subject will be "Possessing land."

The March 6 lecture will address "The fiction of ownership;" the March 7 topic is "Mennonite land fictions." Both lectures begin at 7:00 p.m. The Bechtel Lectures were established in 2000 by Lester Bechtel in honour of his late wife, Alma.

Rudy Wiebe, from Edmonton, is the author of nine novels and several collections of short stories. For more information about the lectures, call (519) 885-0220, ext. 265.—From college release

Calendar

British Columbia

March 7, 8: MCC Relief Sale banquets in Chilliwack (7) and Vancouver (8). Call (604) 850-6639 for details.

March 7-8: Youth Workers Conference at Columbia Bible College with Mark Driscoll. Call (604) 853-3567, ext. 323.

March 29: Camp Squeah Fundraiser Coffeehouse at First Mennonite Church, Vancouver. Call Angelika Dawson at (604) 870-0494.

April 12, 13: Abendmusik Lenten Vespers at Emmanuel Reformed Church, Abbotsford (12), Knox United, Vancouver (13), 8:00 p.m.

April 18-20: Graduation weekend at Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford.

April 26-27: Camp Squeah Paddle-a-thon. Call 1-800-380-2267.

April 27: B.C. Women in Mission Inspirational Day.

April 29: Columbia Bible College golf tournament.

June 6-7: LEAD conference and Mennonite Church British Columbia annual sessions at Cedar Valley Mennonite Church, Mission.

Alberta

March 7: Coffee house at Lendrum MB Church, Edmonton, 8:00 p.m., featuring Dale Nikkel and others. Call (780) 439-8792.

March 15: Dinner theatre, "Imagining a peaceful world," at Foothills Mennonite Church, Calgary, 5:30 p.m. Speaker: Jennifer de Groot. Sponsored by Alberta Women's Network, MCC Alberta.

April 18: Edmonton Inter-Mennonite Good Friday service at Myer Horowitz Theatre, 10:30 a.m.

April 26: Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta annual meeting at Mennonite Brethren Church, Gem, followed by fundraising banquet with

speakers Jessie and Larry Kehler. Call (403) 378-4372.

May 24-25: Songfest at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Didsbury. Mass choir conductor: David Regier Sawatzky.

July 26-27: Bergthal Mennonite Church, Didsbury, celebrates 100 years.

Saskatchewan

March 3, 6, 7, 8: MCC Saskatchewan Building Project meetings, 7:00 p.m. at Bridgeway Community Church, Swift Current (3), First Mennonite, Saskatoon (6), Rosthern Mennonite (7), Hope Mennonite, North Battleford (8th at 2:00 p.m.)

March 3-5: Regional meeting of Mennonite Camping Association at Shekinah Retreat Centre. Speaker: Vern Ratzlaff.

March 5: MEDA Breakfast at Circle Dr. Grainfields, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

March 8: Alumni gala at Rosthern Junior College.

March 14, 15: Rosthern Junior College dinner theatre.

March 21: MCC Saskatchewan special delegate meeting in MCC Warehouse (45th St., Saskatoon), 7:00 p.m.

March 22: Workshop on supporting a survivor of sexual abuse at Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

March 23: Youth worship (SMYO) at Osler Mennonite.

March 28: Open house at Rosthern Junior College.

April 2: MEDA Breakfast at Circle Dr. Grainfields, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

April 4-5: Songfest at First Mennonite, Saskatoon. Concert Saturday, 7:00 p.m.

April 11-12: Youth Hungerfest at Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon.

April 12: Women in Mission Enrichment Day at First Mennonite, Saskatoon.

May 2: Fundraising banquet for Rosthern Junior College and Canadian Mennonite University.

May 4: Spring concert at Rosthern Junior College.
May 7: MEDA Breakfast at Circle Dr. Grainfields, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.
May 11: Concert at Rosthern Junior College, 2:30 p.m.
May 31: Prairie Falcon Motorcycle Rally for MCC.
June 4: MEDA Breakfast at Circle Dr. Grainfields, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.
June 13-14: MCC Relief Sale in Saskatoon.
June 19-22: Rosthern Junior College musical (19-21) and graduation (22).
July 4-6: Rosthern Mennonite Church centennial celebration.

Manitoba

March 2: Mennofolk at West End Cultural Centre, Winnipeg, 1:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
March 5: Candlelight vigil for peace at Canadian Mennonite University, 8:00 p.m.
March 7-9: Peace-It-Together at Canadian Mennonite University. Theme: "The information bomb: Exploding the myths of media violence," with Aiden Schlichting Enns.
April 4-6: Manitoba Mennonite Marriage Encounter weekend in Winnipeg. Phone (204) 757-4705.
April 13: North Kildonan Mennonite Church Quartet spring concert, 7:00 p.m.
May 25: Celebration 2003 for MC Manitoba churches at Convention Centre, Winnipeg.
May 25: Concert with Faith and Life Male Choir and Women's Chorus at Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, 7:30 p.m.
May 26-28: Plus 55 Retreat at Camp Moose Lake with speaker Peter Wiebe. Call (204) 896-1616.
May 30-June 1: Birding Retreat at Camp Moose Lake. Call (204) 896-1616.

Ontario

March 1: Menno Singers concert (Bach and Brahms motets) at St. John's Anglican Church, Kitchener, 8:00 p.m.
March 4, 5, 17, 20: Mortgage seminars sponsored by Mennonite Savings and Credit Union, Aylmer EMMC Church (4), Elmira Mennonite (5),

Stirling Ave. Mennonite, Kitchener (17), Leamington United Mennonite (20), 7:30 p.m. Call 1-888-672-6728.
March 5: Family night at United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington.
March 6-7: Bechtel Lectures at Conrad Grebel University College with Rudy Wiebe.
March 7-9: Marriage Encounter at Niagara Falls. Call (519) 743-5255.
March 8: DaCapo Chamber Choir concert at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener, 8:00 p.m., featuring works by Leonard Enns, Samuel Barber and Bach.
March 10-11: Grandparent/Grandchild Retreat at Hidden Acres, New Hamburg, with Allan and Marilyn Rudy-Froese. Call (519) 625-8606.
March 15, 16: Fundraisers for meat canning, Calvary United Church, St. Jacobs, 8:00 a.m. (call 745-8458), Kitchener MB Church, 7:30 p.m., Leamington (16). Speaker: Peter Dyck.
March 17-19: Regional meeting of Mennonite Camping Association at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp.
March 21-22: Engaged Workshop at Hawksville Mennonite Church. Call (519) 656-2256.
March 22: Menno Singers all-day hymn sing fundraiser at Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church, 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
March 22: Fundraising dinner and auction for Fraser Lake Camp at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Markham.
March 25: Mennonite Savings and Credit Union annual meeting at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, 7:30 p.m.
March 26: Day of Quiet Prayer at Bethany Mennonite Church, Virgil.
March 28, 29: Grade 7-9 drama at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate: "Macbeth: A Cautionary Kids' Tale..."
March 30: Dedication of new addition at Erb St. Mennonite Church, Waterloo, 3:00 p.m.
April 7: Promotion dinner for Ontario Mennonite Relief Sale at Bingeman Park Lodge, Kitchener. Call MCC at (519) 745-8458.

April 7, 9: Mortgage seminars sponsored by Mennonite Savings and Credit Union, Crosshill Mennonite (7), Hillcrest Mennonite, (9) 7:30 p.m.. Call 1-888-672-6728.
April 11-12: Mennonite Church Eastern Canada Spring session at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate.
April 16: Pax Christi Chorale performs Bach's *St. John Passion* at Grace Church-on-the-Hill, Toronto, 8:00 p.m. Call (416) 494-7889.
April 21-25: Meat canning at University of Guelph.
April 25: Day of Quiet Prayer at Tavistock Mennonite.
April 25: Envirathon/Servathon at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate.
April 25-26: Engaged Work-

shop at Milverton Mennonite Fellowship. Call (519) 656-2256.
April 25, 26: Menno Singers and Mennonite Mass Choir perform Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at Benton St. Baptist Church, Kitchener, 8:00 p.m.
April 26: Women of MCEC Enrichment Day at Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church, 10:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Speaker: Wanda Roth Amstutz.
May 2, 3: All-school drama at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.
May 7, 8: Dinner theatre "James and the Giant Peach," at United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington.
May 16-19: Alumni Weekend at Fraser Lake Camp.
May 21: Day of Quiet Prayer at Blenheim Retreat Centre.

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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
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