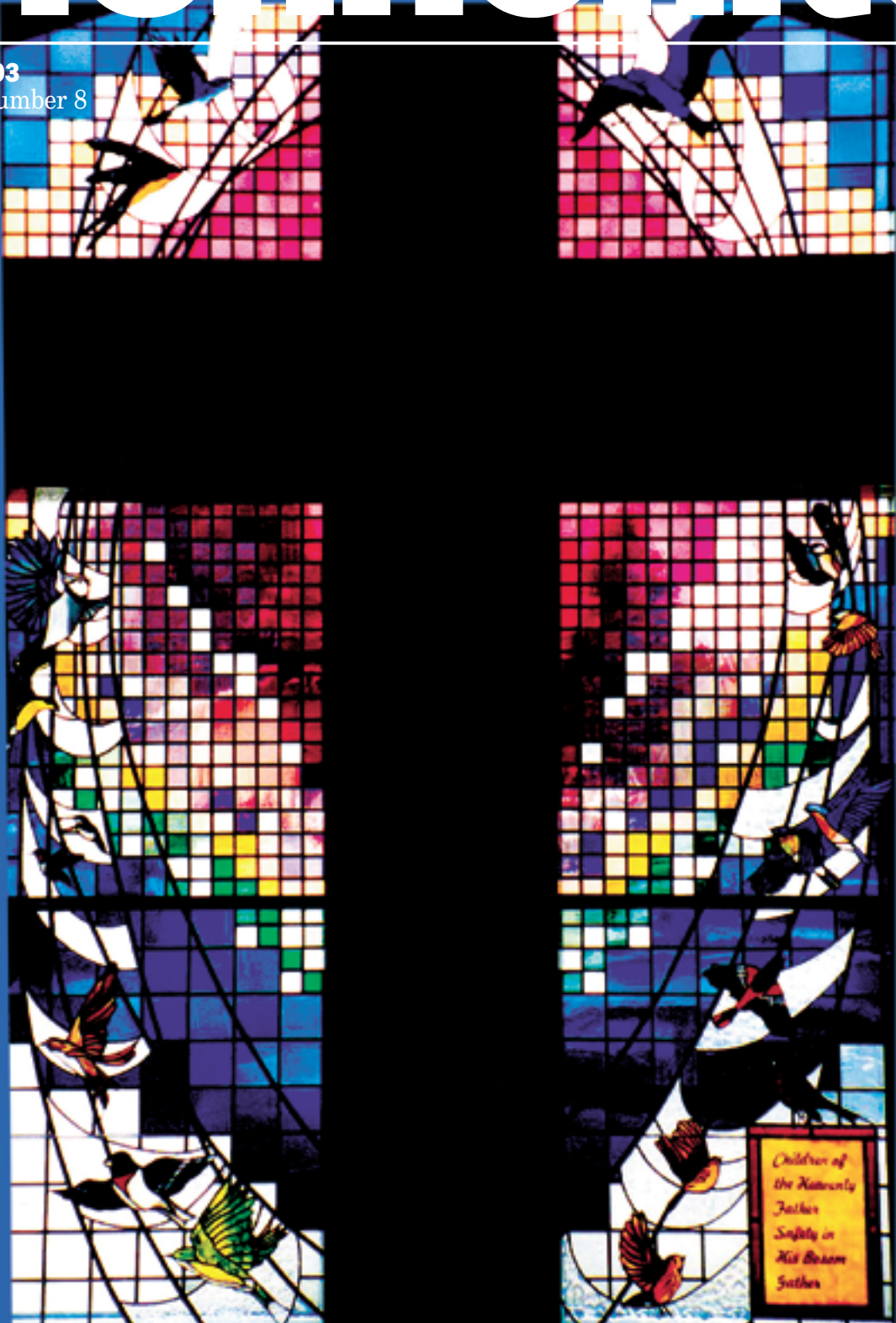


CANADIAN Mennonite

April 21, 2003
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Post-war miscellany

At times, as I prepare this column, a single focus emerges for comment. At other times, such as for this issue, the focus isn't as clear. Hence this loosely related mix of observations and questions.

•War in Iraq. It's over, I guess. At least most of the fighting has stopped. A huge statue of Saddam Hussein has been pulled down and beat upon by Iraqis. And the picture of that event has been broadcast far and wide to signal the end of that dictatorial and oppressive regime and the victory of the United States.

Hawkish commentators are having a heyday as they celebrate what they see as a vindication of the U.S. decision to move its military might into Iraq. Others, myself included, worry about the long-term implications of the "pre-emptive war" policy which the U.S. administration has embraced, despite the reservations and cautions from much of the world community.

Is the world destined to be run by a succession of conquering empires? Are collaborative institutions like the United Nations destined to be impotent and ineffective? Or are these very questions a capitulation to the categories which military victors would like us to adopt? Where should historic peace churches put their conviction and energy at a time like this?

•Spoils of war. To the victor go the spoils, according to an age-old dictum. And that's what appears to be happening as U.S. and British companies line up for lucrative post-war reconstruction contracts. Other countries are vying for a place in the queue.

The crucial question, however, is whether the Iraqi people themselves will benefit from a change of regime in their own country. Will revenues from their considerable natural resources flow to improved conditions for Iraqis? Or will the benefits all flow to the victors and others admitted to the

circle? For how long will reconstruction be narrowly pursued as an extension of a military victory?

Not surprisingly, military oversight is also being extended to post-war aid efforts, creating a dilemma for aid agencies like Mennonite Central Committee (page 14). They traditionally aim for independent supervision of relief, in order not to further legitimize the war. The dilemma isn't entirely new. There have been other instances where relief efforts have been accompanied by military or police protection. This is not a time for MCC to back away from providing aid, but a unique opportunity to minister within the constraints while pointing to a better way.

•Strains between neighbours. "This is a highly emotional time," commented Canadian deputy prime minister John Manley when interviewed by Maclean's magazine (April 14 issue) about Canada-U.S. relations. Indeed. Having decided not to join the Iraq invasion, and then having indulged in a variety of anti-American asides, the Canadian government is now trying to patch up relations.

Interestingly, in a recent civil service leadership shuffle, prime minister Jean Chrétien appointed Peter Harder, of Mennonite background (formerly of Vineland, Ontario), to the key position of deputy minister of Foreign Affairs. In this position, Harder will be positioned to help the Canadian government build bridges or mend fences with its U.S. neighbour.

To what extent, if any, have strained political relations spilled over into the church? It would be interesting to survey attitudes of church members at large. Amongst church leadership, the war has likely strengthened bonds of affinity and common cause between Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada.

What isn't clear, however, is how or whether other forms of partnership will continue to grow alongside the common cause of peace and the joint ownership in a seminary and a publishing ministry.—**Ron Rempel, editor**

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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. This means you can check out the May 5 issue by May 1.

Cover: The memorial window at the Altona Mennonite Church evokes Easter joy in its flight of colourful birds around the cross. The inscription reads: "Children of the Heavenly Father, safely in his bosom gather." Photo by Evelyn Rempel Petkau.

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Winnipeg, Man.

Alberta couple serving at London centre

The London Mennonite Centre has been providing an Anabaptist presence in the United Kingdom for 50 years. Vic and Kathy Thiessen from Edmonton, with teenage daughters Janelle and Katrina, have been serving as Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers at the centre since last August.

Vic is director and manages a staff of 10, while Kathy's roles have included gardening, hosting and counselling. She also home-schools her daughters. The London Mennonite Centre (LMC) is a resource for church leaders to explore how the early Anabaptist model can shape and revitalize the church in the United Kingdom. Founded in 1953 as a housing ministry for foreign students, mostly from India and Africa (former colonies), its programs today include a book service, library, teaching program, and conflict transformation training.

The centre is supported by both MC Canada Witness and Mennonite Mission Network (MC USA) and is administered by the Network.

For someone who has always felt drawn to Europe, working at the London centre (LMC) is a dream come true for Vic. He first discovered the centre while on a backpacking trip in 1975, and returned on two subsequent trips.

"Having gained a real appreciation for the LMC and all that it was doing, and having talked with Nelson Kraybill [former program director], I had the thought that his was the kind of work I could really enjoy doing," says Vic.

The idea remained in his subconscious. "When my work in Edmonton came to a sudden end and Kathy saw the ad for the LMC director position on the same day, it seemed like God had been calling me to this work for a long time," he says.

The search committee was impressed by the couple's combination of theological, pastoral and administrative gifts, according to J. Robert Charles, Network's director for Europe.

Vic and Kathy are finding their ministry to be a mix of busyness, fulfillment and opportunity. It has been an "exciting and comforting experience to be enveloped by the community here," say the Thiessens. The centre has a chapel and two guest rooms as well as programs.

Life at the centre has an "almost sacred yet cozy feel," according to Kathy. Coffee at 11:00 a.m., prayers at 12:50, and tea at 4:00 are part of the routine. Guests regularly stop by: North American Mennonites in search of lodging, scholars who wish to use the



The London Mennonite Centre in England.

library, friends from the Wood Green Mennonite Church where the Thiessens worship, or harried city dwellers who wish to find a listening ear or a quiet place to pray.

The centre offers Cross Currents seminars about once a month with guest speakers. In March, Kathy led a seminar on "Anabaptist perspectives on parenting." Bridge Builders, mediation training for British churches, provides regular seminars.

As well as contact with other denominations in the UK, the centre is making an effort to network with Mennonites on the continent.

"A recent visit to Germany has convinced me that most German Mennonites have virtually no knowledge of the Mennonite/Anabaptist presence in the UK," says Vic. "German leaders are very keen on working more closely with the LMC, and similar requests have come from French, Swiss and Dutch Mennonites."

The Thiessens have found life in England to be a bit of an adjustment. It is very expensive and has a "massive amount of people and cars," notes Kathy. But on the whole, says Vic, "our family is quite happy to be here."

From MC Canada release by **Amy Dueckman**



The Thiessen family currently living in London, from left: Janelle, Katrina, Kathy, Vic.

Winnipeg, Man.

Students report from South Africa and Guatemala

In January, 99 School of Discipleship students from Canadian Mennonite University left for their three-month term, 26 of them in South Africa and 73 in Guatemala. Following are reports.

Red and coloured, black and white, all are precious in his sight. You'll recognize that as a variation on a Sunday school song—only in this case it is our School of Discipleship students who are the “red,” having been a little overzealous to lose their Canadian winter white. We have been in South Africa now for three weeks and already students know they will never be the same.

There are four major people groups in South Africa: Black, Coloured, Indian and White. Each operates as a world unto itself. They live separately, worship separately and associate separately.

School of Discipleship students will be travelling throughout South Africa and living within each of these groups. Students spent their first week in a black township (between 600,000 and a million people living within one square mile). Our sponsors threw us a feast and butchered a sheep for a farewell celebration. Can't you just imagine Africans and Mennonites singing, clapping and dancing together by candlelight?

Our hearts have been broken for the black students we have been teaching. Many of our CMU students would have stayed right there for their full three months.

We cannot help but come back different...a little bigger inside, stronger, more understanding and tolerant, less sure of some things...more sure of others.—**Wally Schmidt, director**

Our two weeks with Habitat for Humanity in Guatemala was a huge success again this year. This is immersion at its best, not only learning the language and culture, but also connecting with the heart of the people you live and work with. We participated in building eight homes for needy families in the regions of Chuva and Columba Costa Cuca. Donations and student labour are essential to the project, but most valuable is the time

spent building relations with the people and loving their children.—**Lance Luke, Guatemala field manager**



Crystal Wiens enjoys the students in Alexandra township, South Africa.

The rural township of Mamelodi sprawls over the rolling lands just outside of Pretoria, South Africa. Small brick houses sit on large, dusty yards fenced in with barbed wire. One-room plywood shacks are scattered between them. An occasional rosebush brings lively colour to the chain-link fences.

When we arrived, the township was silent. Here and there a person sat on a makeshift bench in the shade, watching us with silent curiosity.

We had left the wealthy white Pretoria homes that hosted us for the week. Some of us stayed in homes with lavish décor, courtyards, and even swimming pools. These families, with their grace

and hospitality, had woven their way into our hearts. These families love God, just like the families in Alexandra and in Mamelodi.

Once again we faced the disparity between rich and poor. We divided into small groups and, with a translator of Northern Sotho (one of the 11 official languages of South Africa), we were

dropped off at various locations along the dusty road to take a door-to-door church survey. We sat on homemade benches with township residents and discussed the issues plaguing their community—poverty, unemployment and hunger.

Our afternoon concluded in the stifling heat of a small brick church. Frustration coloured our conversation. Is Mamelodi's poverty the result of laziness, poor transportation or lack of jobs? How does sustainable development work in a community with such rampant unemployment?

What is the church's

responsibility in such a community? We came to no conclusions, but our questioning matures and deepens as we explore this culture. One thing we do know is the healing power of our God, and the uniting power of prayer. For as we joined hands—white and black, Canadian and South African—our English and Sotho prayers both reached the ears of the Lord who created us all.—**Crystal Wiens, team leader**

The School of Discipleship is growing rapidly—applications are up 50 percent from last year. Student fundraising has been above expectations. About \$19,000 went towards building homes through Habitat for Humanity in Guatemala, and \$8,000 for projects in South Africa. When students return in April, they evaluate their year and help redesign next year.

What if love prevailed?

“What if...?” is the theme of the Mennonite Church Canada assembly this summer, based on Philippians 1:1-11. Following is a reflection on the theme by the planning committee chair.

Our three-year-old son, Errol, has a particular fondness for dinosaurs and role-playing. It is not unusual for us to be awakened in the morning by the soft growl of a pretend tyrannosaurus-rex. Fortunately, that t-rex still enjoys cuddling under the warm covers and his claws are retractable.

When it is time for breakfast the t-rex disappears because “t-rexes don’t eat oatmeal or waffles.” Errol’s imagination is vivid and it can become frustrating for him when his parents do not (cannot?) join in with the same passion. Adults often bemoan the loss of imagination they had as children. Only some of us have the dramatic talent to pretend we’re someone else—to play a role. Often we give up on trying to be creative and leave that to a person with proven ability.

“What if...” is the language of imagination and possibility. Youth and adult planners for Assembly 2003 in St. Catharines have explored a wide variety of “what if” statements in the context of assembly discussion. We were fully aware as we did so, however, that this is not just the stuff of imagination or wishful thinking.

“What if we truly loved and respected one another in the church?” is not a pie-in-the-sky question. We can’t leave questions like this one unanswered. As recipients of God’s salvation gift, we believe we are made new or born again. Part of the mystery and challenge of accepting Jesus Christ as Lord is the transformation that takes place within us. A sense of duty or loyalty may motivate us to make some changes in our lifestyle and relationships, but mostly we learn to recognize God as the author of our change. The apostle Paul is a master at metaphors to describe Christian transformation: dead to sin and alive in Christ (Romans, Ephesians); freedom and slavery (Corinthians, Galatians, Colossians); foreigners and heirs/members of God’s household (Romans, Ephesians); old self and new self (Ephesians) and so on.

In Philippians 1:1-11, the theme text for this year’s assembly, we have another indication of God’s power to transform believers as Paul prays that God who began the “good work in you will carry it on to completion” (1:6). While Paul spends less time here describing the changes in the believer, it is clear that such transformation not only comes from God but is an ongoing process that reaches completion at the day of the Lord.

One of the striking phrases for me in this theme text is “partnership in the gospel.” God transforms us for a purpose—to bring glory and praise to God—which we see spelled out in verse 11. “Partnership” is not one of those New Testament concepts for which we struggle to find a 21st century understanding; we have adequate ways in our society to measure Paul’s words.

Partnership for Paul was not about status or position—the model from our business world—but rather about friendship and common purpose. Even though he was in prison for the sake of the gospel, Paul was cheered by know-

Theme for assembly agenda

The theme for St. Catharines 2003 is “What if all God’s people...” The foundational text of Philippians 1:1-11 provides the following key phrases that give a framework for the assembly agenda.

What if all God’s people...

- “prayed with joy” [worship]
- “shared in the gospel from the first day until now” [recognizing 100 years of national structures]
- were willing to risk persecution “both in my imprisonment and in the defence of the gospel” [upcoming Mennonite World Conference assembly]
- saw God as “the one who began a good work among you and will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ” [missional vision]
- “shared in God’s grace” [multi-culturalism, regionalism, inter-church relations, those in conflict]
- “longed for you with the compassion of Christ” [health care, peace]
- had “love that overflowed more and more” [attitudes]
- practised “knowledge and full insight” [discernment, education]
- saw through to “the day of Christ when you may be pure and blameless” [undergirding purpose]
- could reap the “harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God” [missional vision].

From reflections by the Program Committee preparing for the Mennonite Church Canada Assembly, July 9-13 in St. Catharines, Ontario.

ing that he had friends who shared his purpose of proclaiming (or defending) the good news of Jesus Christ.

The partnership imagery fits well with other word pictures Paul uses, such as the church as the body of Christ. Although Paul is church planter, teacher and mentor, there is no hierarchy expressed here—all are working for the sake of God’s kingdom. It is unclear whether those whom Paul describes as preaching Christ “out of selfish ambition” (v. 17) are also to be considered as partners in the gospel. Nevertheless, it is apparent that those who are partners with Paul have been equipped by God to do so.

The partnerships created and nurtured in Mennonite Church Canada and USA since St. Louis ’99 have not been driven, I believe, by structural complexities but by the desire to partner in the gospel. “Priesthood of all believers,” “partnership in the gospel,” and “being the missional church” all have something in common—the implication that every follower of Jesus Christ is a participant in the work of God’s kingdom.

Paul’s prayer for the Philippian Christians was that their love would grow each day. This love was to grow in knowledge and insight so that these partners in the gospel would increas-

ingly be tuned in to God’s will, able to discern what is best or righteous in the sight of God.

What if love prevailed and we were truly partners in the gospel of Jesus Christ? I think we would find it easy to address issues of our day that divide and weaken the church. A discussion on multiculturalism would not be necessary except to reveal the strengths each of us brings to the whole—there would be no majority or minority groups within the church because in Christ we would all be equal partners! There would be no need for missional formation as all followers would knowingly participate in God’s work in our world.

Discernment on sexuality issues would be characterized by compassionate debate, grace and a desire for healing. Christian Peacemaker Teams would not have to ask for funding or participants, for all of us would desire to make peace actively at all times. If love prevailed, churches would be centres of healing beyond what hospitals and social services can offer. The list goes on....

What a different world we would live in if love indeed prevailed in all the partners of Christ’s gospel! Our Assembly 2003 theme invites us to imagine what could be if we all were equal partners in the gospel, and if the knowledge and insight we sought on all issues were grounded in a Christ-like love. All glory and praise belongs to God who began this good work in us.—MC Canada release by **Craig Friesen**

The writer is chair of MC Canada’s Assembly Planning Committee and pastor at Rosthern Mennonite Church in Saskatchewan.



Craig Friesen

Winnipeg, Man.

Youth delegate chosen for Zimbabwe

Jennifer Egan will represent Mennonite Church Canada at the Mennonite World Conference Global Youth Summit in Zimbabwe this summer. Organizers hope for as many as 50 youth from around the world. “It’s just an amazing opportunity to deepen my faith and learn about other cultures,” said Egan, a grade 12 student at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate here who was chosen from 12 applicants from across Canada. She also confessed, “I’m a little bit anxious...going to a country where there’s a famine and political unrest right now is a little nerve-wracking.”

As preparation, organizers asked delegates to survey their national peers

on what issues concern them. Compiling responses from dozens of youth and youth groups made Jennifer “realize that the church of tomorrow is pretty much in good hands.”



Egan

generations.

In Egan’s survey, Canadian youth raised temptation, peer pressure and the influ-

ence of media as spiritual challenges, and materialism and pacifism as pressing issues on the minds of Mennonite youth.

“Choosing one from the excellent candidates who applied was a difficult task,” said Anne Campion, MC Canada Youth Ministries director. Egan impressed Campion as “articulate, passionate for the church, and real about her own faith journey. She knows this is more than just an adventure and has a strong commitment to Jesus Christ and a desire and openness to be stretched.” Doris Dube, an MWC organizer in Zimbabwe, expects that the youth summit “will be a wonderful thing, with lots of enthusiasm and many youth representatives from surrounding African countries.”—MC Canada

Edmonton, Alta.

Ed and Edna entertain Canadian Mennonite fans

The contents of Canadian Mennonite provided the script for a drama by “Edna and Ed Sawatsky of Barley Grove” at a February 8 dinner here following the annual meeting of Canadian Mennonite. The drama opened with Edna (Amanda Pauls) reading her favourite German periodical, *Der Bote*, and Ed (Rob Bartel) kneeling in fervent prayer. The prayer was rewarded with an airmail delivery of Canadian Mennonite from Arnie Englebrecht’s crop-dusting



Edna and Ed explore the Canadian Mennonite that came by ‘airmail.’

plane. Ed became ecstatic after winning the “Menno pool” by identifying 37 people he knew in the most recent issue. As the winner, he got the leftover *Zwiebach* (rolls) left over from the recent town meeting. The mayor had established the contest as a way of quashing the call for bingo, since gambling wasn’t allowed in the predominantly Mennonite town.

A friend, Frieda Friesen (Andrea

Moses), dropped by to report a scene at the post office. She had seen both John and Jake Driedger sneak letters into the airmail slot as part of their ongoing feud in the letters section of Canadian Mennonite.

Other characters joining in the humour were Timmy Thiessen (Tim Rempel-Friesen) and Gabe Janzen (Justin Fuhr), with a faltering trumpet blast. Timmy offered a song about why people read the magazine: “In my rocking chair I read in the night, opinions wrong and right, from far and near, all come to my doorstep here.... The Canadian Mennonite is all you need, why don’t you check it out with me, you got nothing to lose, it’s basically free.”

Timmy suggested that they reflect on why they like the magazine. The next scene found Gabe in a tree musing, “One of the remarkable things is that even an odd duck like me feels a part of things... every-one’s allowed to talk and offer their voice to the chorus. It reminds me of Sunday’s sermon from I Corinthians 12,” concluded Gabe as he read the passage

about one body with many parts, each having its place.

Frieda Friesen, knitting in her rocking chair, said she had never ventured further than the places she could see from her porch. “But sometimes I’ve wondered sitting here in my chair what things might be like off in the distant lands where only brave MCC workers dare to tread. Just when those thoughts start a-brewin’ in my head, down falls the Canadian Men-



Photos by Ron Rempel

Frieda Friesen reflects on all the brave Mennonites she can read about in Canadian Mennonite.

nonite from Arnie’s plane and I can read all about those workers and all the other brave Mennonites all around the world....

“I like that I’m connected to the people in these pages through a common belief. It’s like my knitting here—each loop is an individual and stands on its own, but they’re connected by a common thread and together make up something better than themselves...a dishcloth—no, they make up something wonderful and blessed.”—**Ron Rempel**

Women’s creativity

Akron, Pa.—The sixth Women Doing Theology conference, entitled “Gifts of the Red Tent: Women creating,” will be held May 16-18 at Eastern Mennonite University in Virginia. Organized by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Women’s Concerns, the event will focus on theology and the arts.

Presenters include Malinda Barry, Iris de Leon-Hartshorn and Reta Halteman Finger. A coffeehouse will provide opportunity to share poetry, songs and other arts.

Contact MCC U.S. Women’s Concerns at (717) 859-3889, or e-mail: tjh@mccus.org.—Conference release

Abbotsford, B.C.

Gallery 7 wraps up twelfth season

Gallery 7 Theatre Company closed its twelfth season with the comedy, "You Can't Take it With You." Director Cliff Prang described the play as "Romeo and Juliet meets My Big Fat Greek Wedding." Set in New York in 1936, the play revolves around the Vanderhoff family headed by a father who is a fireworks maker and a mother who has abandoned painting for playwriting. One daughter is a candy-maker who thinks herself to be a dancer and her husband is a type-setter who plays a mean xylophone. "The world would be a better place if everyone would just relax," says Grandpa Vanderhoff who left his successful job because he wanted more out of life. He now attends commencement ceremonies and raises snakes. Add to that several other wacky characters and you have some good laughs. The only "normal" family member is Alice who becomes engaged to a banker's son.

The characters set the tone for obvious slap-stick humour but through it all comes the challenge to embrace that which is really important to you rather than living up to the expectations of others.

The play was a definite success for Gallery 7 which runs out of EbenEzer Mennonite Church here. It was the highest-attended show in Gallery 7 history, said Ken Hildebrandt, artistic director. Gallery 7 first produced "You Can't Take it With You" in 1997, but Hildebrandt felt it was good timing to bring this comedy back.

"It's a play that challenges us to drop pretence in favour of more truthful living so that we might better experience the richness that life can offer," he said.

This year's schedule included improv comedy, a one-act play festival, and "Death of a Salesman."—**Angelika Dawson**



Mr. Kirby (Patrick Stewart) gets tossed around by Mr. Kolenkhov (Adam Harrison), while Mrs. Kirby (Laura Kalmar) looks on in Gallery 7's recent production of "You Can't Take it With You."

Scottsdale, Pa.

Congregations' support saves VBS series

Even when it seemed impossible to keep Mennonite Publishing Network's Vacation Bible School series alive, congregations came through with more than \$30,000 to keep it going. After the publishing network (formerly Mennonite Publishing House) circulated news of cutting "The Bible Then & Now" series in 2002 because of budget concerns, congregations kept the series flourishing.

The congregations' faith is exemplified in the theme of this year's unit: God's Nomads: Stars & Promises, said Levi Miller, editorial director. The theme focuses on waiting for God, even when things seem impossible. The unit uses activities to help children connect with the daily lives and faith of Abraham and Sarah.

Members of Beech Mennonite and Stoner Heights Mennonite Church in Louisville, Ohio said the series' strong Anabaptist focus and biblical substance make it stand out from other curriculums. They plan a joint VBS week each year.

Elsie Rempel, director of Christian Education and Nurture for Mennonite Church Canada Formation, believes the curriculum fosters biblical literacy by capturing learners' imaginations.

"Then & Now activities and the Travel Journal bring children into Bible times and really connect the 'then' to the 'now,'" Rempel said.

"This year's unit offers an enjoyable, creative plunge into the lifestyle of ancient nomads. The tent building idea made me wonder how a church might be transformed into a desert scene of tents, sand dunes, and the occasional oasis!" Doug Amstutz, pastor of Grace Mennonite Church in St. Catharines, Ontario, highlights the interactive nature of the materials, with a flexible structure that



spreads leadership responsibilities over a larger group.

"From a coordinator's point of view, it's easier to get volunteers once they understand that they are not responsible for a group all morning long for five days. I get excited and enthusiastic when I see how much the children and adults enjoy this way of learning."

Amstutz said that the first time his congregation used this material, attendance for grades seven and eight rose as the week went on.

"And one child asked if we were going to have a second week! It's comments like these that inspire one to continue hosting VBS. It's a great way to do mission in the neighbourhood."

Five of the six Bible Then & Now units have been published: Exodus: The Great Escape; Jesus: The Upside-Down Mission; The Bible: Digging for Treasure; Paul: Shipwreck & Dreams; and the current one. The series will conclude in 2004 with Jesus Christ: Mission Accomplished. Ordering information is included in Equipping Canada.—Joint release of MC Canada, MC USA, and MPN

Covenant of blood points to loving God

Discussing Bible stories with the Samogho people in Burkina Faso has resulted in some surprising insights into the Old Testament, reports a mission worker.

Most of the Samogho people in Burkina Faso don't read and had never heard the Koran or Bible in their own language before our arrival. These Muslim villagers were delighted to listen to Old Testament story cassettes and then discuss them with us. That excitement has never worn off.

I will never forget the day that the elderly hunter laughed so hard at silly Jonah that the tears ran down his cheeks. Kwepkiri, a community elder who lost two adult children in one week, identified with Job.

These people have a rich tradition of oral folklore. The Bible stories simply add to or replace their stories. We soon realized that these illiterate people understand the deep meaning of the Old Testament stories better than many North Americans do. Hebrew culture is closer to that of Africa. The elders were touched time and time again at the patience and love of the Old Testament God who continually gave his people another chance. They were surprised at Abraham who bargained with God about the fate of his nephew Lot. They were even more surprised that God accepted Abraham's bargaining.

We chose the theme of covenant for the stories, largely because Old Testament scholars agree on its centrality. I believe the Samogho people understand the Old Testament God as a God of love because they understand the meaning of "covenant."

In the Samogho language, making a covenant is called "drinking blood." In a covenant ceremony, two families from different ethnic groups form a new relationship so that they now relate to each other like blood relatives. Nothing can happen to one family without the other being involved.

The covenant is sealed when the two oldest men from the families drink blood together. First, two feathers pulled from a live quail are given to

the men. The old men slit the top of their hands to draw blood. The feather is wiped in that blood and dipped in a common dish of sorghum beer, the traditional drink. Then each man drinks the beer that has blood in it. That seals the pact. After the ceremony, the two families eat a meal of celebration together.

The Samogho listened in hushed awe as they learned how Moses also sealed a covenant with blood sacrifices (Exodus 24:4-11). It has elements common to the Samogho ritual: it begins with the spilling of blood and ends with the elders eating and drinking with God on the mountain.

Alongside the Red Sea deliverance, this ritual is a watershed for Israel. I had always thought that it is the Ten Commandments, with its love preface in Exodus 19, which provides a tool to assess covenant loyalty. But from the Samogho, we learned that the blood ritual is the deepest point of contact between God and the Israelites. Without this ritual, the Ten Commandments would have no weight whatsoever. Among the Samogho, the "drinking blood" covenant has to be respected. If it is broken, special animal sacrifices have to be made. In other words, blood has to be spilt for a broken covenant to be renewed.

Similarly, Jesus becomes a sacrifice to renew the covenant that is broken. The words of Jesus at the Last Supper are a strong connection with the Old Testament covenants. In the Samogho translation they read: "See, this is my body, which will be given in sacrifice in place of your evil.... See, this is my blood that will be shed in place of your evil. This blood will repair the covenant" (Luke 22:19-20).

The Arabs say, "Blood is thicker than milk," meaning that even if they all drank the same mother's milk, a blood covenant is stronger than any family ties. Nothing shows God's love more powerfully than his desire to live in

covenant with human beings.

Africans have another advantage when it comes to understanding the Old Testament. After the death of a child, the Samogho people say, "This is God's will" or "This was God's timing." At the same time, they blame sorcerers or irresponsible fathers who refused to take the child to the doctor. Can all these aspects reflect reality at the same time?

The Samogho resolve the issue, it seems to me, by believing that nothing happens without God's consent, but that there are human and spiritual forces that work toward evil and God chooses not to intervene. This describes the free choice that God has given. This could be referred to as God's concessive or remedial will. Wars are examples of God consenting to human and evil forces together working evil on others, and everyone is forced to live with the consequences. Many of us Anabaptists have taken Jesus as the norm and therefore devalue the God of the Old Testament who orders war and appears responsible for evil and violence. In his book, *Divine Covenants: Conflict or Harmony*, Archie Penner makes a case for seeing Jesus as the benchmark to interpret the Old Testament God. In the New Testament, this same God is shown in full character.

For Penner, sin and evil exist not by God willing or promoting them, but by God conceding to them in much the same way as our African friends do at the sad event of a child's death. That's probably why they have no difficulty in meeting the God of love throughout the Old Testament.

People such as the Samogho bring a wealth of understanding to the Bible. Contact with them can be mutually enriching.—**Donna Kampen Entz**

The writer, from Fiske, Saskatchewan, is a mission worker in Burkina Faso with Mennonite Church Canada Witness and the Mennonite Mission Network (USA).

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.

Peace activism not going far enough

I was impressed by the multiplicity of responses to the threat of war with Iraq in the March 10 issue. I am concerned, however, that the creative energies of our peace activism are being sucked into demonstrations, sending human shields, and relief supplies.

These are worthy responses, but I want to believe that as a people empowered by God we have untapped possibilities for witness to the powers that think military force is a way of confronting security threats.

I find myself comparing my gen-

erations' response to this crisis with Mennonites who had to find a faithful way during World War II. Like Hitler, Saddam Hussein has been identified as a dictator and murderer of his own citizens. A criticism has been that by not being willing to fight Hitler we were complacent in the face of Jewish genocide.

Mennonites are not willing to support military action against a leader that most agree is not worthy of the power he has. The article on military mom and pacifist prof (page 22) correctly identifies the danger in protesting war just because it uses military force. Both women recognized that they wanted the same things: "peace, security, a world of promise for our children."

What troubles me about Mennonite anti-war activities is that none of them seem to meet the supporters of George Bush where it matters most; we seem hesitant to accept that Saddam Hussein really is a threat to his own people and to the security of other countries. This point was made clear to me by an Iranian who joked that if Bush decides to take out Saddam he will be doing Iran a favour—taking

care of one of their security problems too.

I realized that other countries could be choosing to wage war if they had the means to do so. The Iranian's comment enabled me to look beyond the possibility that such a war is only about U.S. oil interests and determining what freedom should look like; it is about security too.

The Mennonite anti-war protest does not seem to have conversation with those who see Saddam as a threat. As the Palestinian woman in Edmonton noted, her call for peace causes some "to accuse her of supporting Hussein" (page 16). This is not unlike Christian Peacemaker Team members being called "Nazis" (i.e. anti-Jewish) because they stand up for Palestinians.

There is a sense in which speaking out against one side does support the other. Thus, it is not enough to speak out against war; how we speak and what we say need to reflect our convictions too.

I hear some Mennonites saying that

Continued on page 12

The best things in life are free

It all started when my beloved spouse and our precocious 14-year-old attended a Camps With Meaning banquet in Winnipeg. There was a draw. And, well, we won! We won! Yahoo! Yippee! (Not that I'm boasting; that would be tacky.) We won a weekend in the mini-lodge of our choice, at one of three convenient Mennonite Church Manitoba locations.

We decided that spring break would be a great time to get closer as a family in a rustic, roughing-it kind of way. We invited some friends to share the joy. Here is a list for you, dear reader, to consider, when next you're in a position to use a Mennonite camp's facilities. (By the way, did I mention that our weekend was free?)

1. Ingredients for outdoor cooking. Make sure these same ingredients will work for indoor cooking when you realize that "roughing it" meals taste better in theory than in practice.

2. Activities. Chess is good. Books with Mennonite martyr stories will add that light touch for 'round the campfire. And, should you start miss-

ing civilization, a rousing, semi-ethical game of Monopoly is always a treat.

3. Hiking boots. Make sure they're clean and freshly-laced. Just looking at them will make you feel healthier—and with exercise, as with sharing gifts, it's



the thought that counts.

4. A book for your spouse. Inscribe it, tell her it's for a special occasion, and make sure it's a book you've always wanted to read.

5. A copy of Hymnal: A Worship Book, for your Sunday morning family worship. This is your chance to check out all those responsive readings you've never had

a chance to get to! For an extra treat, bring the Hymnal Companion and make lists of your favourite composers!

6. Peace and justice coffee from Ten Thousand Villages. Make sure there's decaf, too, unless you still think you're immune to caffeine after supertime.

7. A songbook with camp favourites from your era—you know, the ones that will embarrass your kids when you start groovin' to them!

8. Good memories.

9. Laughter.

10. Lots of love.

All checked off? Good!

Oh—one more thing! Don't forget your ever-handy Mennonite bi-weekly magazine. After all, that's where you'll rediscover two things. First, we're a family of faith. And second, we're a bunch of Anabaptist oddballs, but as far as God is concerned, we're all winners!

Letters

Activism *From page 11*

U.S. foreign policy is a worse evil than Saddam, using this to justify their protest against Bush's war. I find this terribly insufficient, taking its cues more from the world's anti-war reasons than convictions that ought to motivate Mennonite Christians.

I don't think it is enough to tell Bush and allies not to fight Saddam while denying that they have a legitimate problem. Shouldn't our call for "not war" allow them their own "take" on what's happening?

Without taking away from all the energy being given to anti-war activism, let's keep seeking further expressions of our call to peace!—**Susan Kennel Harrison, Toronto, Ont.**

We continue to wage peace

I write after the start of the war, asking what should I do now? There is a "down" feeling in many, including myself, even though I know it is God who brings peace, and faithfulness is all I am called to do. It is not activism that saves us from war and the consequences of a warist culture.

Nevertheless, even as war happens, we will continue to be waging peace.

Waging peace is difficult. The same effort that goes into waging war must be put into waging peace. Waging peace is tense, tough, challenging. It goes against everything our society knows about the presumed legitimacy of nations to conduct war for their interests.

Recent months have seen a new level of waging peace. This may be the first time in history that there has been such a global, public and reasoned dialogue about the very legitimacy of war. It is a stunning action of global listening and speaking.

Leaders of nations are being engaged in extended dialogue. Whereas decisions for war have rarely involved the people in open debate, waging peace these months has allowed all nations to participate. The success of waging peace is not only about avert-

ing this war (it was certainly postponed for months) but about questioning the very legitimacy of militarism and the expression of power, and about seeking alternatives.

Waging peace has articulated different visions of how nations ought to act, helped the United Nations maintain its integrity, mobilized millions, and persuaded governments. It is no failure to have fallen short of persuading every last one.

All around the world, people are waging peace. These are positive signs, like those of Spring, although they will pass in season. We will continue waging peace, even while others are waging war.—**Randy Haluza-DeLay, Edmonton, Alta.**

End or new beginning for Native Ministries?

After hearing of the Mennonite Church Canada budget cuts that all but obliterated Native Ministries, I need to make a few comments. I have a lifetime of working with Mennonite people and despite their perceived "spiritual superiority" actually find them to be people I can work with quite well.

When I look at the way these cuts have affected Native Ministries staff, I believe that the Creator has opened a door where we as aboriginal people can take ownership of programs in a more equal partnership than what the conference has offered to us so far.

I believe we can develop a new understanding of ministry to aboriginal peoples that is better defined by our culture than the culture of the Euro-Canadian-American that we have been subjected to so far. I believe we can develop programs that are mutually beneficial, not only to our communities but to the Mennonite Church.

I offer the words of Red Jacket, a Seneca-Iroquois orator, who dealt with mission workers in 1805: "Brother, you say there is but one way to worship and serve the Great Spirit; if there is but one religion, why do you white people differ so much about it?... Brother, the Great Spirit has made us all; but he has made a great difference between his white and red children... why may we not conclude that he has

given us a different religion according to our understanding."

I believe we are in a prophetic time when our people will begin to take the lead in offering peace, mutual respect, friendship and understanding to those who have marginalized us as those who do not belong unless we claim the Mennonite name. I believe we are in a time of new revelation, like that offered to those who came from across the waters over 500 years ago.

Is it the end of Native Ministries or a new beginning? I believe it is time for a renewal of Native Ministries and for truly equal partnerships, something we have not seen in our relationship with Mennonite Church Canada. Those are my words.—**Sakoieta Widrick, Winnipeg, Man.**

Need to speak loudly against war

The Canadian Mennonite makes good reading. It is informative, nurturing and, once in a while, challenging. The peace message is there in reports on Christian Peacemaker Teams, on Mennonite Central Committee positioning relief supplies for Iraq, and even something on marching and working for peace locally.

All that is good, but in times such as these we need more. Is it not possible for the periodicals of a historic pacifist church to challenge its readers to say "no" to war? Is the silence out of fear of losing subscribers?

The brute power unleashed in Iraq will never bring peace. It will only provide fertile soil to spread more and more terror around the globe. That power does not come from God.

God's power, infinitely greater than that of the Pentagon—is modelled in Jesus. It is the power of light that loves all unconditionally—the Palestinian as much as the Israeli, Saddam Hussein as much as George Bush.

The Daryl Byler story (March 10) should be a headline on the first pages, not an obscure little news item on page 33.

Another thing—how about putting "Canadian" on the front cover in bolder print? It would be good for us

seniors with fading vision. It would also be good for us to remember that Canadian Mennonites are a distinct people, unapologetically working and speaking for the healing and connecting peace that comes from God.—**Margaretha Ediger, Mission, B.C.**

Need more funding for schools, not less

I am concerned about several things relative to the regrettable financial situation in Mennonite Church Canada (March 24 issue). First, I cannot understand how “unanticipated staff changes in the finance department” can be blamed for poor decisions and errors in judgment.

Isn't there a General Board and a committee that makes the decisions? It seems odd to blame new software programs for unwise decisions. It also seems improper to blame poor

decisions on a “reduced knowledge of previous financial patterns.” Careful records have been kept and they were available to anyone.

Further, since there was a “lack of financial history” on which to base revenue projections, wouldn't ordinary common sense have resulted in a cautious approach? As far as I know, one of the real reasons for the errors is that those in charge did not heed the words of realistic caution that have been spoken. Another matter that disturbs me greatly is that MC Canada is reducing the grant to Canadian Mennonite University. First, the reduction in this grant seems to be at a higher percentage than the overall budget reduction. Second, it seems to me that undergirding the Christian education programs of all of our postsecondary institutions should be a matter of higher priority for our denomination, not lower.

Moderator Henry Krause stated that we want to maintain those ministries that would be most difficult for area conferences or individual congregations to deliver (page 13). Certainly CMU and the other schools (Grebel and Columbia) are included in that category! We need to continue these long-standing and effective programs. They need more denominational support, not less.

We have said that it is from our schools that our congregational leaders will come, trained in Anabaptist theology and practice. Why then would we reduce the grant to CMU? How can we address the need for pastoral leaders unless we undergird and increase programs in theological education, youth work and other ministries, in flourishing institutions? How can we help our young adults prepare adequately for service in a wide range of professions and occupations without the integrative studies currently being offered?

I hope that those who are adjusting priorities will revisit the issues and increase funding to CMU!—**John H. Neufeld, Winnipeg, Man.**

Eulogy for the passing of the Native Ministries program

you were the flagship of a missional church of a bygone era
when the bergthaler vision first turned south then north
following a call to bridge society's chasm
ignorance indifference neglect
embracing a common heritage at the margins of society
where God nurtures Intotemak ["my friends"]
for His purpose

but now you have succumbed to this decade's mantras
restructuring debt crisis structural adjustment
today's 'weapons of mass destruction'

i will not mourn your passing into an artefact of history
lest i tarnish the memories

a sense of calling that echoes still
having looked deeply into each other's eyes
and seen the likeness of God's image
having searched holy texts together
and been moved by the body broken
having gazed deeply into each other's souls
and felt the movement of the Spirit.

i will not mourn your passing but celebrate the bonds that cannot be broken
honouring Intotemak, my eternal kinsfolk: Esther, Henry, Cara, St. John, Thelma, Alex, Susan, Jacob, Trudy, Jeremiah, Barbara, Herman, Katy, Ike, Lorna, Malcolm, Mary-Jane, Harry, Maria, Martin, Jemimah, Terry, Elna, Otto, Martha, Sandy, Hulda, David, Margaret, Victor, Mina, Willie, Lydia, Sam, Edith

all these and more who walked the path of life with me
i will not shed a tear for you but for myself
after all passages are times of sadness
the winds of abandonment and loss chill my bones
scattering the ashes of what could have been.

i will not weep for you but for my church
floundering on the shoals of modernity
it seems the 'emperor has no clothes'
and doesn't know it.—**Johann D. Funk**

Voices for peace may be deceptive

The editorial of March 24 stated, “I've been struck in the past months at the range of voices—not only the established peace groups...” You have identified a concern we all should have if we truly want to petition for peace.

We may find our voices blending with a common chorus, but not a chorus of harmony. Many voices are speaking out not for peace, but to further their own agenda, and I believe we must be prayerful in our associations. These groups may not be marching to bring peace but division and agitation.—**Duane Bauman, Fullarton, Ont.**

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Amman, Jordan

Will MCC aid to Iraq involve the military?

As Mennonite Central Committee prepares to implement aid programs in Iraq, MCC staff are concerned that military involvement may be necessary.

MCC is committed to helping the most vulnerable people and to working with people on all sides of a conflict. In a war situation involving occupying forces, however, such a task is difficult. Scenes of American and British troops handing out food aid and the uncertainty of who will govern Iraq are also raising concerns for aid groups.

“Our concern relates to how we can be seen as an impartial agency not tied to any military or political agenda,” said Willie Reimer, director of MCC’s Food, Disaster and Material Resources office.

Aid has trickled into Iraq since the war began March 20. Convoys from the Jordanian government and Doctors Without Borders have entered the country. A British military ship unloaded relief goods and the Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society has distributed some goods near its border with Iraq.

A civilian convoy to Baghdad in early April included hygiene supplies provided by the MCC-supported All Our Children. But security guarantees for future shipments remain tenuous. For MCC, the question is how best to deliver aid to those in need.

“In the civil war in Sudan, MCC partners had a policy that they would not distribute food if either government soldiers or rebel soldiers were present,” said Reimer. In Iraq, that may be wishful thinking. Does this mean humanitarian groups like MCC will have to rely on military forces to provide aid?

“Only if vulnerable people will otherwise not receive any food or water would MCC utilize such methods,” said Reimer.

MCC experience in past conflicts has shown that military and humanitarian goals diverge widely.

“The military uses food to further their own strategic objectives, with aid being part of their ‘hearts and minds’ campaign,” explained Rick Janzen, MCC co-director for the Middle East.

NGOs (non-governmental organizations) try to provide aid based on need. There is fear among humanitarian agencies that the military will co-opt their efforts, that NGO work will be seen as part of military activities.

NGOs have experience in responding to emergency situations, and are able to identify the most vulnerable people, said Janzen. In addition, relief agencies know what type of aid is needed and how to involve local people; they try to respect the dignity of recipients. According to an Oxfam report, aid controlled by the military is often neither appropriate nor cost-effective. U.S. food aid to Afghanistan in 2001 did not consist of local foods and cost about \$7.50 per kilo; United Nations World Food Program aid costs an average of 20 cents per kilo and includes local staples.

“Soldiers handing out packets of food off the back of a military vehicle may make for good public relations back home,” said Janzen, “but it does not make for a good aid program.”

Though military involvement in humanitarian work is sometimes necessary to ensure security, it can contravene international standards for disaster response. These guidelines state that aid should not further a particular religious or political view, and should not be used as an agent of a government’s foreign policy. International Humanitarian Law, meanwhile, stipulates that military forces are obligated to protect civilians and assure their survival; the Fourth Geneva Convention requires an occupying power to ensure food and medical supplies, and the maintenance of public health.

Humanitarian workers argue that these rules do not mean that the military should control aid. Rather, NGOs, because of their proven abilities, must take the lead on providing relief.—MCC release by **Edward Miller**

Letter to church and government

In a March 29 statement, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Executive Committee made an appeal to churches and to the U.S. government on the war in Iraq.

The U.S.-led war is “a violation of God’s will for peace and God’s desire that human conflicts be transformed through nonviolent means,” said the statement. “We grieve the loss and maiming of all human life—Iraqi, British and U.S.—for all people are created in God’s image. We grieve the destruction of God’s good creation. And we grieve the broader context and impact of this war...”

That impact includes more suffering for Iraqis, a “widening breach” between the U.S. and the international community, “growing loss of civil liberties in the United States” and global instability.

Recognizing that Mennonite churches have “differing views about how to faithfully respond,” the statement invited churches to choose responses that are appropriate to them. Suggestions included keeping churches open for prayer, daily readings, educational events, giving to aid efforts, interfaith meals and “connecting with and supporting families of U.S. troops” in the community.

The statement appealed to the U.S. government to “immediately cease hostilities against Iraq,” work to restore trust with the international community, generously support rebuilding efforts in Iraq under UN leadership, and give agencies like MCC “unimpeded access to deliver aid and work at development projects in Iraq.”—From MCC U.S. release

Akron, Pa.

Hotline for soldiers re-thinking war

The voice on the other end of the line is hushed and nervous.

Describing how he signed up for the army to get a chance at education, the 19-year-old says he isn't sure he could kill someone. He wants to get out of the military, but he's afraid of the consequences. Can anyone help? This plea is familiar to Titus Peachey and Conrad Moore, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. staff who answer calls to the GI Rights Hotline: 1-800-394-9544. Operated by a coalition of peace groups, the hotline has seen calls skyrocket in recent months as the reality of war hits home. The hotline received 3,582 calls in January, twice the normal volume, and 3,118 in February.

"People join the military for all kinds of reasons—education, job training, the promise of a career with early retirement—but rarely because they actually want to kill people," Moore says.

Moore, who grew up in Philadelphia,

speaks from personal experience. He joined the Marine Corps following high school and fought in Vietnam. At the same time, Peachey was teaching in Vietnam as part of his alternative service as a conscientious objector (CO). By the time Moore completed his tour with the Marines, he had decided that the toll of violence—on both bodies and souls—was unacceptable. Not all the calls they receive on the hotline are from potential conscientious objectors. For some, circumstances have changed since enlisting. A parent may be ill or a child on the way. Some calls are from worried spouses. Other callers face mental health problems or abuse from their commanding officers. Some are in hiding, having gone absent without leave. Legally, recruits who haven't yet gone through basic training can be released



Titus Peachey, left, and Conrad Moore discuss their work with the GI Rights hotline.

Photo by Benjamin Krause

simply by refusing to attend the training and writing a letter explaining their circumstances. That advice is so simple that callers sometimes hesitate to believe it. They also explain to callers the complex procedure of applying for a C.O. discharge.

Some face harassment from their local recruiters when they explain their change of heart. Moore and Peachey occasionally contact the recruiters directly and send documents explaining legal options.

The hotline is just a fraction of Peachey and Moore's peace-related work, which also includes speaking to youth groups and congregations and the "Ask-A-Vet" web site, www.mcc.org/ask-a-vet.

"I find a lot of joy in empowering people this way, and in playing a role in keeping people from making a horrible mistake," Moore says. "The military wants to tell you otherwise, but you cannot kill people and still be the same person. You will be changed forever."

For Peachey, the voices on the other end of the line represent a group that once repelled him.

"When I was a 20-year-old CO in Vietnam, I viewed U.S. soldiers as personally responsible for the war," he says. "Later on I began to see that many of them are also victims."—From MCC release

Winnipeg, Man.

Voluntary service program buys more time

New funding will buy time for Mennonite Church Canada's Christian Service Ministry as it prepares to wind down operations in Canada.

And even though preparations are being made to wind up the program, a simultaneous effort will be launched to look into alternatives for sustaining the program.

The new money, totalling \$46,000, comes from a designated bequest for Mennonite Voluntary Service from an American donor, and a contribution from Mennonite Mission Network (MC USA).

The funding will allow Brad Reimer to remain on staff until January 31, 2004. He has been charged with administrative support of MVS and Service Adventure in Canada. (Other short-term service such as Youth Venture and Group Venture will be dropped.)

The new money will allow existing units (Hamilton, Winnipeg, Lethbridge,

Montreal) to continue receiving administrative support (travel, medical and visa issues) until next January. Units in Riverton and Edmonton are currently vacant. New applicants will continue to be accepted although their administrative support will end in January unless alternatives are found.

New units planned for Toronto, Ottawa and Calgary are rethinking their plans. Reimer will work closely with Network staff on revising administrative policy and planning voluntary service possibilities in Canada. People with counsel are invited to contact him at 1-888-885-2565, e-mail: breimer@mennonitechurch.ca.

"The [original] short deadline didn't allow for proper closure. With this funding, we are hoping to give the VS program a better transition," said Jack Suderman, executive secretary for MC Canada Witness.—MC Canada release

East Jerusalem, West Bank

Aid for cut-off families gets through checkpoint

After weeks of pressing for permission from the Israeli military, Mennonite Central Committee and four other Christian organizations recently succeeded in bringing food supplies to 1,200 families in the southern Gaza Strip. At least 5,000 Palestinians live in the Mawasi, a narrow coastal strip eight miles long by a half mile wide. Traditionally reliant on farming and fishing, they are surrounded by 10 Israeli settlements. Trapped between settlements, Israeli military outposts and the sea, these Palestinians have become prisoners in their homes. Over the past 30 months, the Israeli military has severely limited movement in and out of the Mawasi. The Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem observes that the residents "live in intolerable conditions and are engaged in constant and prolonged struggle to survive.... An entire community is imprisoned."

Alain Epp Weaver of MCC and other Christian aid representatives arrived at the military checkpoint into Mawasi on the morning of March 31. They were told by the soldiers that, while they had a permit for the goods to enter, the permit had not passed through the correct channels and that the group would have to wait until after the soldiers' lunch to enter. The goods would need to be unloaded at the checkpoint and reloaded onto a truck from the Mawasi side. Each of the 1,200 flour sacks and food parcels would have to pass through an X-ray machine.



Photo by Brian P. Duss

Alain Epp Weaver, right, and Paschalis Pappouras of Orthodox Christian Charities, wait at the Mawasi checkpoint to transport a shipment of food.

As convoy participants waited, they spoke with people waiting to go back to their homes. Majd has been kept out of Mawasi for months on end, separated from his family. Basima, had left Mawasi when she went into labour. Following a stillbirth, Basima had been trying for days to get home. At the end of the day, Basima and Majd were still waiting. The soldiers finished lunch at 2:30 p.m. and allowed the first truck to approach the checkpoint. The checkpoint normally shuts down at 5:00 p.m., but insistent calls by the church groups to

military officials gave them until 6:30 p.m. to unload the trucks. Soldiers nearby shot several rounds towards the city, saying that they were targeting Palestinian snipers.

At 5:30 p.m. convoy members went into the Mawasi with members of the local organizations responsible for distributing the food.


"Yes, we need the food," said Abu Faris, one of the local residents. "But what we want most is to be able to go to Khan Younis [nearby city] without a checkpoint."

MCC contributed about \$7,500 to the initiative, which will provide about \$45,000 worth of locally-purchased flour, beans, rice, sugar, oil and cheese to the families. Each food packet will last an average family three weeks. Other participants in the shipment were the Lutheran World Federation, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision and International Orthodox Christian Charities. A local committee identified needy recipients and supervised the distribution of goods.—**Alain Epp Weaver**


The writer, from Bluffton, Ohio, is MCC Palestine co-representative.

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Khan Younis, Gaza Strip

Palestinian teens live in captivity

The joy of childhood is a precious commodity in the Khan Younis Palestinian refugee camp here. Machine gun fire and missiles keep residents awake at night. High unemployment translates into meagre meals, with nearly a quarter of Pales-

tinian children malnourished. With 50 percent of the population under age 15, schools must operate two or three shifts, and even then most classes number over 40 students. Children in Khan Younis listen as parents and grandparents reminisce about their former homes, but dreams of return are circumscribed by the electric fence that effectively imprisons the residents of the Gaza Strip. When asked of his hopes for the future, 17-year-old Yousef gives a short laugh and replies, "None." People live on a day-to-day basis, he explains, so

how can he think ahead? Hundreds of children in Khan Younis take part in activities organized by the Culture and Free Thought Association (CFTA), established by Palestinian women's groups. Mennonite Central Committee supports summer camps organized by CFTA. Yousef is one of four to five million Palestinian refugees worldwide. In 1948, his grandparents were among the 700,000 who fled or were forced from their homes in what is now Israel. Most Palestinian refugees today live within 100 miles of their former homes but Israel refuses to allow their return.

Under Israel's Law of Return, any Jew (or even anyone with a Jewish grandparent) can immigrate to Israel, claim automatic citizenship and move to Yousef's family's former village.

In the Khan Younis camp, it's not uncommon for five to seven people to live in each room of a home. Meanwhile, illegal Israeli settlements have been built adjacent to the camp on confiscated land.


"Everyone lives in fear, but we've become used to fear," says Mona al-Farra, a ninth-grade girl who dreams of becoming a surgeon. Mona's friend, Eman el-Astal, is an eleventh-grader who plans on studying journalism. "Fifteen of my relatives have been killed," she says softly. "Seven of them were under age 12."

Mona, Eman and Yousef all agree that peace is possible, but it must include recognition of refugee rights.


"Why shouldn't we be able to return and live in peace with Jews?" asks Yousef. "Palestinians and Jews lived together in peace before."—From MCC release

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Elmira, Ont.

Old Order farmers threatened by poisoned creek

In 1989, long before the Walkerton water tragedy, the town of Elmira was forced to close its wells because of chemical contamination. Further investigations found that the whole aquifer under the town is poisoned, and that DDT and dioxins are leaking into the creek along which Old Order Mennonites have farmed for generations.

Residents had long suffered from the foul odors emanating from Uniroyal, a local chemical plant which produces plastics, rubber products and pesticides (including Agent Orange during the Vietnam War). Citizens had just organized APT Environment (Assuring Protection for Tomorrow's Environ-

ment) to deal with the air pollution when the water crisis hit. Fourteen years later, this citizens' group knows a lot more about the horrific damage caused by hazardous waste (Elmira is one of the most contaminated sites in Canada). They also know how difficult it is to get action from corporate polluters, governments and environmental agencies.

"No one is taking responsibility," says Susan Bryant, a founder of APT Environment. An English professor, Bryant has volunteered countless hours to the cause, becoming an expert and passionate lobbyist in the process. "We have made a difference," she acknowledges. The citizens' group was

successful in getting the Ministry of the Environment to order Uniroyal to clean up the aquifer over the next 30 years. (Uniroyal is part of Crompton Corporation based in the U.S.)

The group also exposed the illegal polluting activities of Varnicolor, a solvent recycling company, forcing it to close. (And the threat of a lawsuit from residents suddenly ended Uniroyal's longstanding odors.)

But although pollution from Uniroyal is not spreading as fast now, there has been "little removal of the source of the contamination," says Bryant. Many of the storage pits of hazardous waste have not been **Poisoned creek** From page 18

Continued on page 19

Pollution is a peace issue

The town of Elmira is a "war casualty," says resident Henry Regier, "but Mennonites have never picked up on it as a peace issue."

Elmira is in the heart of Ontario's Waterloo Region, first settled by Mennonites in the early 1800s. During World War II, munitions were produced in this town, the waste from the process buried and forgotten. During the Vietnam War, the Uniroyal chemical company produced Agent Orange, the infamous defoliant that also attacked the health of American soldiers.

"We are the Love Canal of Canada," says Regier, who speaks not only as a citizen but as a scientist. Trained in zoology and eco-studies, he headed the Institute for Environmental Studies at the University of Toronto before he retired and moved to Elmira six years ago. (In the early 1960s, he also served on the board of Conrad Grebel College.)

Regier was involved in the project to clean up the Great Lakes, an effort he says is "half finished," stalled under a government which is "utilitarian in emphasis." In Elmira, he has become active in APT Environment, the group that has been pressuring Uniroyal and the



Regier

government to clean up the dangerously polluted soil and water.

There is some progress, says Regier. "Things are only half as bad as 15 years ago," he says, "but the government is trying to find a way to declare victory and leave the field." The Ontario Ministry of the Environment recently announced that it is ending air monitoring in Elmira.

Any environmental clean-up happens only under great pressure from citizens, notes Regier.

"It's a degrading way to operate for activists," he says. "We have to be cruel."

Concern for the environment is an ethical responsibility, Regier is convinced. Our current lifestyle is highly dependent on chemicals. While much attention has focused on cancer-causing dioxins, scientists are beginning to wonder about the effects of pharmaceutical products that are finding their way into the water. We are seeing the rise of allergies, deformities and even genetic changes, says Regier, "but we don't have the relevant science for it yet."

Obviously, the threats to our environment won't be fixed by a few activists and lobbyists. It's going to take the concerted effort of citizens, businesses and governments to even acknowledge the problem, as Elmira has discovered.—

Margaret Loewen Reimer

Executive Coordinator



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cleaned up. Recent tests of the site revealed dioxin in a ratio of 56,000/trillion in the soil (the limit for agricultural land is 10/trillion). An even greater concern is the nearby creek that flows to the Grand River. Pressure from APT Environment resulted in a 1995 study of the Canagigue Creek by the Ministry of the Environment. Most of the farms along the creek belong to Old Order Mennonites. The report showed high levels of dioxins all along the creek and flood plain. "Have you told the people who live there?" asked Bryant when the findings were presented. "That's not our job," said the Ministry. Then who is the advocate for the farmers? she asked. Try one of those Christian farm organizations, she was told. A study by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food took milk samples from the regional milk truck but not directly from the affected farms. What would

the Ministry have done if those samples had shown contamination above acceptable limits? "Closed down the milk operations," was the reply, reinforcing Bryant's experience that the citizens pay the price for the failure of business and government to take responsibility. She could find no government department that would talk to the farmers about the risks they face. Finally she found a regional health official willing to help her contact the farmers. About 10 families came to a meeting at the Old Order school. Hesitantly, these Mennonites shared stories of cancer, developmental problems and other ailments, wondering if they were related to the creek. They talked about filling their children's sandboxes and their gardens with sand from the polluted flood plain. A 2003 Human Health Risk Assessment of the creek, which analyzed cancer risks by mathematical formulas, looked at three groups at risk: workers on the Uniroyal site, trespassers,

and "recreational/resident." Nowhere did the study mention the Mennonite farmers who live directly off the land. Rather than engage in debate over the report, the citizens' group is simply continuing to call for specific measures to clean up the contamination, specifically by closing off the flood plain and excavating the "hot spots." Its mission remains "to make a fuss and keep up the fuss" until the environment is safe for those who live and work in the community.—Margaret Loewen Reimer

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Saskatoon, Sask.

Delegates approve MCC warehouse renovation

The delegates of Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan gave a “thumbs up” to the newest building proposal that will see a two-year dream brought to completion. After four regional meetings and a four-hour delegate session on March 21, delegates voted in favor of a renovation that will cost upward of \$450,000.

Originally brought to the annual meeting last November, the proposal caused some consternation. The idea was new, the glaring lack of parking space was not sufficiently addressed, and the cost seemed prohibitive. The MCC board decided to gather ideas and further feedback. Meetings were held in early March in Swift Current, Saskatoon, Rosthern and North Battleford. At the second meeting, a number of people stood up to give their support to the redevelopment but cautioned the board.

“On March 21, make sure that the figure you come up with is one you can stick with,” said one individual.

Melitta Penner wondered how the MCC board could justify spending all that money when there are so many needs around the world. The proposal seemed to contradict the underlying philosophy of relief work, she said. The response from board chair Lucille Wall was genuine.

“I’ve struggled with that question a lot,” she admitted, “but it keeps coming back to the potential of the building.”

For two years, the board has been trying unsuccessfully to rent out the undeveloped part of its warehouse. A 10-year tenant moved out in 2000 and there was no one to replace them.

“We’re losing money on that space every month,” Wall pointed out.

On March 21, the caution came through loud and clear.

“It’s easy to sign the loan,” said Dave Boldt of First Mennonite, “but it’s hard to pay it back.”

Others were against the proposal for different reasons. There is little walk-by traffic in the industrial area where the MCC building sits. It is a 20-minute walk from the nearest bus stop and parking is a concern. Some

felt it would be better for MCC to relocate.

Before discussion from the floor, the board and staff took time to share their vision for MCC Saskatchewan. Eric Olfert from the board, talked about the need to get past the “sending mentality.”

“We’re good at sending relief,” he said, adding that we need to see the recipients as real people that we can learn from. “We need to change the chute to a bridge that includes two-way traffic.” Bruno Berg, MCC director, pointed out the need to invest in “a greater public witness.” Staff explained how much each program could benefit with the extra space and visibility.

The vision of the MCC board revolves around three things: planning for the future through global education; increasing the profile of MCC in Saskatchewan; and increasing the market for Ten Thousand Villages.

“MCC’s witness to our community is not large enough or loud enough”

agreed Craig Friesen of Rosthern. During the financial discussion, some opponents of the proposal were silenced by the realization that renovating was the most cost-effective option. To lease and upgrade another location would be twice as expensive, and so would buying another building. An amendment, later defeated, proposed that half the fundraising be completed before construction begins. The original proposal then received majority approval in a ballot vote. In reflecting on the opposing views, one man suggested that the problem may be a generational one. He felt that those who put much volunteer time and money into the work of MCC are willing to contribute to relief work but not to a new building. MCC’s vision, he pointed out, will need to be caught by people in their 20s and 30s.

“We should promote MCC in a way that’s attractive to [that] generation,” he said.—**Karin Fehderau**

Steinbach, Man.

Church planting discussions in Manitoba

Church planting was the topic of a March 22 meeting here. About 14 people gathered at Steinbach Mennonite Church to discern God’s leading for church planting within Mennonite Church Manitoba.

Marv Wirzba led the group in a devotional based on 1 Kings 18:20-19:5. Like the prophet Elijah, we vacillate between discouragement and courage, he said. We need to remember that God is the source of both the call to mission and the power that moves it forward.

The group wrestled with a focus statement developed by Norm Voth, director of Evangelism and Service Ministries for MC Manitoba. The statement is a call to plant multiplying missional congregations that align themselves with God’s mission to reconcile all creation. The group wrestled with language and values regarding the strategy of church planting.

“Is our focus in church planting people who have traditional connections to Mennonite congregations or others?”

was a question that stimulated lively discussion.

After looking at church planting options, the group reflected on church planting in specific communities. A year ago, MC Manitoba received an invitation from an individual in Neepawa to plant a congregation there. Wally Kroeker, outreach pastor from the Whitewater Mennonite Church, suggested that this as our “Macedonian call” (Acts 16:9).

Participants decided to explore the potential for a congregation in Neepawa. They also committed themselves to asking their congregations how they will participate in the larger work of church planting.

It was obvious from the discussion that church planting raises many questions. But there was also a mood of excitement and expectation for what God will do if we will faithfully respond to the call to make disciples.—From MC Manitoba release

Winnipeg, Man.

Students organize relief kit drive

When the 452 students at George McDowell School here embarked on a campaign to promote reading, they wanted to make an impact in their community. The students, from kindergarten to grade nine, turned the three-week reading drive into an awareness and fundraising campaign.

"It was the students that made it all happen," says Ken Bartel, vice principal. "They were able to raise over \$4,200 over the three weeks promoting 'I Love To Read.' The money they collected was used to buy and package school, health, sewing and newborn kits for MCC. I think the entire process really opened their eyes to the world around them."

"I Love To Read" is a program in Canadian schools to encourage young people to read. The idea of a fundraiser came from the grade six class which wanted to do something for those less fortunate overseas. After exploring op-

tions, the students made a presentation to the school's citizenship committee which sent a delegation to Mennonite Central Committee.

The students chose relief kits as their most effective option. The hands-on experience of making individual kits sold them on the idea. "They all got involved. There were reminders and posters on every door of the school," says Bartel. "The grade nine class used three of our assemblies to remind students about what we were doing and why. The grade six class updated the charts showing how much money we had raised each day."

In addition, the citizenship committee invited several speakers to talk about



MCC Canada photo

Students from Westgate Mennonite Collegiate in Winnipeg spent an afternoon in March packing school kits for children in Iraq. The project started when faculty and staff from CAMS (Canadian Association of Mennonite Schools) raised \$2,600 to purchase 400 kits. MCC has sent 40,000 school kits to Iraq this year.

poverty. The speakers included two MCC representatives, four overseas teachers and a Colombian immigrant to Canada.

The kindergarten to grade three students packaged school kits, while the grade four to grade six classes bought health kits with the money they raised. Grade seven and eight students made sewing kits, and the grade nine students packaged newborn items for young mothers.

Rather than accepting the pizza prize for raising the most money in their grade level, the grade nine class opted to use that money for more newborn kits. The grade two class decided, in the spirit of the project, to share their pizza party with another class.

"They really picked up on the idea of thinking beyond themselves," says Bartel. "They were able to receive some kind of understanding of what it means to contribute to the lives others and of people they've never met."—MCC Manitoba release

Rosthern, Sask.

RJC plans centennial celebration

Rosthern Junior College is preparing for its 100th birthday. The first class of six students assembled at RJC on November 14, 1905 under the tutelage of Hermann Fast. The classes were all in German and took place in a rented portion of a failed hotel.

Today, RJC teaches a full high school program, offers numerous "extras" such as outdoor education, sports, choral music and art, and the classes are all in English.

The Centennial Steering Committee is producing a book of memories and photographs to capture the sweep of the school's first 100 years. All associated with the school are being solicited for stories, photographs, recollections—and suggestions for a fitting title. The committee wants to present the school's history from the personal view of the

people who shaped the school, and were shaped by it.

"We're as interested in the mundane as the fantastic, as enthusiastic about everyday experiences as we are about the big events." While photographs of a historic nature are required, the committee also welcomes photographs of students in the environment of the school—at work, at play. All photographs will be returned. Editor is George Epp of Rosthern. Sylvia Regier of Tiefengrund is the photo editor and Marg Epp of RJC is the business manager. Others on the committee are Walter Peters of Hanley, Pat Cooley and Brad Nichol of RJC, Bernie Tiessen and Esther Patkau of Saskatoon. Material can be sent to them or to: History Book Committee, Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0; e-mail: georgepp@sasktel.net.

Winnipeg, Man.

Vision or leadership—what comes first?

It began with a phone call from a small rural congregation. The caller wondered if Mennonite Church Manitoba had any funds to help them hire a pastor. They had functioned with interim leadership for the past several years but longed for a permanent pastor to lead them. Norm Voth, Missional Formation facilitator, began a dialogue with congregational leaders. It became clear that one reason they wanted to hire a pastor was to give them a vision. Further conversation suggested that clarifying a vision should precede calling a pastor. Once the congregation had a direction, they could look for a pastor to help them fulfill their goals, rather than hiring a pastor who would develop a vision for them. Voth and the church developed a plan to help the congregation identify its vision and set goals for implementation: congregational homework, a weekend retreat, and a follow-up. Individu-

als were invited to reflect on various periods of the congregation's history, including the decision by charter members to function with lay leadership. "There grew a sense that they were not just recipients but also participants," said Voth. As they asked, "Where is God at work among us, in the community and in the wider church?" the focus shifted to how they could participate in God's mission. Instead of calling a pastor to give them the vision, they discerned God's movement and then called leadership to help them participate in that movement. A second piece of homework was a gift inventory. Everyone in the congregation was invited to identify the gifts of everyone else. This was an affirming exercise for individuals and gave the congregation a clear picture of the resources they already had. A weekend retreat allowed members to engage in discussion and fellowship together.

"The calling of a pastor from among their own came as a surprise, and might not have been possible had they not clearly articulated their own sense of calling and place in God's work," said Voth. In the end, Portage la Prairie Mennonite Church identified its vision, set specific goals, and hired Karen Schellenberg as part-time pastor. "Probably nothing is more gratifying than seeing individuals and congregations begin to see their role in God's mission," said Voth. Other congregations can get help in exploring a missional vision for their congregation by contacting Kathy Fast, phone (204) 888-6781, e-mail: witness@mennonitechurch.ca.—Joint MC Canada and Manitoba release



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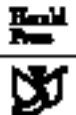
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Akron, Pa.

MCC sends aid to Philippines

Mennonite Central Committee is assisting families displaced by fighting in Mindanao, southern Philippines, where the U.S. military is considering sending 1,700 troops.

Fighting erupted in mid-February between the military and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Tensions have long simmered in Mindanao, a Muslim-

inated Philippines. The groups had signed a cease-fire in 2001, and the current conflict came just weeks before a scheduled round of peace talks. The fighting has displaced some 80,000 civilians. MCC workers Andrea Beck and Luke Schrock-Hurst are helping to distribute the nearly \$23,000 of emergency food aid. Four MCC partner organizations have

distribution.

Beck, of Grantham, Pennsylvania, works with Initiatives for International Dialogue in Davao City, Mindanao. On February 16, she joined a group carrying relief supplies to the North Cotabato town of Pikit.


Beck reports, "There are 39,000 evacuees in Pikit. Some say they were ordered by the military to leave their homes, while others sensed the impending war because of massive military build-up and hurriedly evacuated.

In the afternoon we went to a warehouse in the village of Buisan, where about 389 families are staying—more than 3,000 people. Most are sleeping makeshift tents outside. We left a portion of the food for the parish to distribute. There is still lots to be done. The evacuees are living in bad conditions and not getting much food. Illness is so a consideration. Please pray for this situation."

Schrock-Hurst, MCC Philippines co-representative, visited Cotabato with Filipino workers. He heard several bombs explode during his visit and power has gone out from time to time because electrical towers have been targeted.

The Bush administration is preparing military exercises for the islands south of Mindanao, supposedly to help wipe out Al Qaeda-linked terrorist groups," Schrock-Hurst writes. "The reality is that many thousands of families in Mindanao will experience much trauma and violence in their lives." The United States is considering sending troops to help Philippine soldiers fight the rebels. Last year 1,300 U.S. soldiers were sent to help train the Philippine military.

The presence of U.S. soldiers in the Philippines is controversial. The U.S. operated large military bases there since 1992, ending centuries of foreign military presence. The current Philippine constitution limits the activities of foreign troops on its soil.—MCC release by **Maria Linder-Hess**




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Waterloo, Ont.

Young adults hear about call to ministry

On February 28, I joined about 60 other young people at Conrad Grebel University College to hear three pastors tell how their callings emerged.

The evening included a meal followed by a presentation and question time. Its goal was “to support or nurture a call culture, that it becomes usual and typical to hear the invitation to consider a call to ministry and to honour and respect that calling,” said Ed Janzen, Grebel chaplain. Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, Grebel and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) sponsored the event. I’ve been drawn to the idea of full-time church work and it was good to hear how others had been moved to follow their nudgings from God. It was interesting to hear how each pastor who spoke took indirect routes into ministry.

Muriel Bechtel, now Minister of Pastoral Services at MC Eastern Canada, had her first career in community

nursing. She agreed to serve as a church elder, then later went to seminary (because, she said with a smile, she had so many questions her pastor could not answer). Then she was asked to be an interim pastor, and finally took a permanent position. Bechtel described her sense of call as something that emerged organically but was confirmed along the way.

Sue Steiner, lead minister at Waterloo North Mennonite Church, also came to pastoral work later in her professional life. She described how there were no role models for female pastors growing up, and the first time she even considered the option was when a writing professor at Goshen



Ed Janzen (left) and Timothy Dyck discuss how the church calls its leaders.

College asked her if she had thought about seminary.

While working at Provident Bookstore, she found she loved worship planning and being a youth sponsorship chair and elder. She went to seminary, worked for MC Eastern Canada for a few years, and then accepted a pastoral placement.

This idea of calling as being moved by what you love hit home for me. I’ve been involved in worship planning at Waterloo North for a number of years. The deep satisfaction I’ve found in that has been an important part of my own decision to quit my job as a journalist and computer professional to start seminary this fall.

Harold Hildebrand Schlegel, a pastor at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, completed the trio with his story of how his personal struggles with Christianity while studying agriculture led him to switch to theology at Canadian Mennonite Bible College and ultimately into pastorship.

“The situation we’re in, in terms of leadership, indicates there’s an urgent need for a response,” Janzen told me later. “I don’t think this is a one-of thing with the kind of interest that was expressed.”—**Timothy Dyck**

The writer is a member of Waterloo North Mennonite Church in Waterloo, Ontario.

Abbotsford, B.C.

New staff at Columbia

Columbia Bible College is welcoming several new personnel to its team.

Michael Szuk has been appointed registrar. Szuk, who has been filling the role on an interim basis since September, comes with a broad experience.

He has been on staff at Western Pentecostal Bible College since the early 1990s and is currently completing his PhD in New Testament studies. Lou Sawchenko began as the Director of Development in March. He earned his PhD degree in Administration from the Uni-



Szuk



Sawchenko

versity of Alberta and has served in a variety of roles, including president of Millar College of the Bible in Pambrun, Saskatchewan, professor of Strategy and General Management at Trinity Western University, and as general manager at Fraserway RV Group of companies in Abbotsford.

Doug Epp will begin as Director of Service Learning in August. His duties will include overseeing student service learning stints and working with students. Doug has been pastor of Crossroads Community Church in Chilliwack since 1994 and is moderator of Mennonite Church British Columbia.—

From CBC release



Epp

People & Events

St. Catharines, Ont.—Gerhard Thiessen, the longest-serving minister of the St. Catharines United Mennonite Church, died here March 9 at the age of 78 after a heart attack. He celebrated his 25th year as an ordained minister in 1995 and continued to preach regularly in German. His interpretation of the Bible and convincing preaching style attracted worshippers beyond the congregation. His life took him from his birthplace in the Molotschna Colony in Russia through war service and prison camp to Germany, where he married Ilse, to life in Canada in 1951. He worked as a bricklayer and later as administrator and chaplain of the Vineland Home for over a decade.—**Henry Hildebrandt**



Thiessen

Abbotsford, B.C.—A Mennonite Central Committee training program won recognition at the recent Fraser Valley Cultural Diversity awards. “Above the Underground” is training in retail and customer service. Participants receive training in a clothing store, as well as help with resume writing, job search and computers. In six years, the program has had nearly 250 participants, 90 percent of whom were women and more than 75 percent visible minorities. The program, under MCC B.C.’s Employment Development, is funded by the provincial government. The program competed against Walmart, Envision Financial and Revy for the award.—From MCC B.C. release

Transitions

Births

Dyck—to Annette and Colin, Rosemary Mennonite, Alta., a son, Jaimyn Colin, April 7.

Dyck—to Tracy and Kevin, Glenlea Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Peyton Helene, March 19.

Gole—to Jennifer and David, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Jill Lindsay Ann, March 26.

Krahn—to Susanne and George, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Myla Grace, March 21.

Richards—to Karla and Bill, Shantz Mennonite, Baden, Ont., a son, Adam Kenneth, March 28.

Schmidt—to Jackie and John, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., a daughter, Calysta Emily, March 13.

Whetstone—to Jayne and Tim, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., a son, Caleb Ronald Raymond, March 25.

Marriages

Wiebe-Mandel—Leo and Donna, Rosemary Mennonite, Alta., April 5.

Zacharias-Dalke—Brian and Lorelei, Emmanuel Mennonite, Abbotsford, B.C., March 22.

Deaths

Enns—Peter Isaac, 85, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., March 20.

Franz—Adina Louise, 55, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., March 18.

Heagle—Earl, 81, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, March 28.

Janzen—Lydia, 87, Eden Mennonite, Chilliwack, B.C., March 15.

Peters—Nick, 87, Clearbrook Mennonite, B.C., March 27.

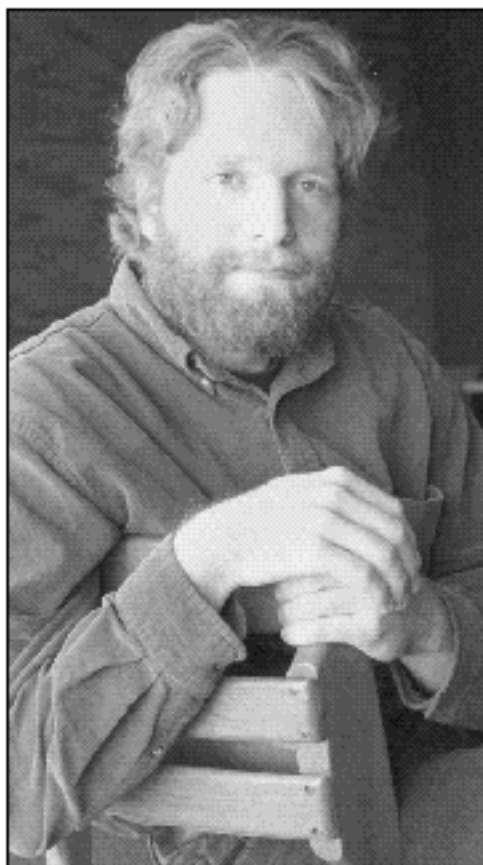
Wiens—Peter, 93, Clearbrook Mennonite, B.C., April 6.

Woelcke—Georg, 77, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., March 14.

Baptisms

Elim Mennonite, Grunthal, Man.—Ryan Friesen, March 30.
First Mennonite, Burns Lake, B.C.—Frank and Anne Wiebe, Duncan McFee, Mary Guenter, April 6.

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



“I am at AMBS because I am on a quest to learn about radical peace ministry—radical in the sense of something that gets back to the root of Christian faith; radical in the sense of something that is truly challenging.”

— Matthew Bailey-Dick,
student from Kerilworth, Ontario,
in the Master of Arts in Peace Studies program

See more at www.ambs.edu



Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Elkhart, Indiana
1 + 800.364.2627

Mennonite Church Canada

Farewell lunch for staff

At a farewell lunch for staff members who recently lost their jobs due to budget cuts at Mennonite Church Canada, Janet Plenert, executive direc-



Plenert and Umurisa

tor of International Ministries, gives a farewell gift to her administrative assistant, Flora Umurisa, who began her work last November. Echoing the sentiments of other speakers before her, Plenert spoke with emotion about the way Umurisa had embraced the vision of her new Mennonite family and her sorrow over interrupted plans and the uncertainty of her future. Plenert gave thanks for the blessings of having worked together and drew hope from the promise of spring flowers which are born out of homely bulbs—ugly little things—which make it through the winter and result in beautiful things. This hope was symbolized by the daffodils on the panels in the background (designed by Lynette Wiebe and Ernie Wiebe) which were surrounded by prayers and blessings from staff “for those who go and for those who remain.” The panels will be hung in the entrance of 600 Shaftsbury and an apple tree will be planted on the grounds to honour the gifts, passions and energies these

staff brought to the ministries and programs of MC Canada.

Improved pension plan for MC Canada

Following a survey of pension plan members in 2001, Mennonite Church Canada has announced an enhanced group retirement plan.

The improved plan, to be implemented on May 1, will respond to concerns for increased investment choice, improved access to account information, and a continuing focus on socially responsible investment. The changes were approved by MC Canada’s Support Services Counsel at Leadership Assembly meetings in March.

Group Retirement Services (GRS) at Great-West Life/London Life will provide all record keeping and investment services. The plan features the following:

- A variety of investment options, featuring Meritas socially responsible investments;
- An investment and retire-

ment planning guide (also available on CD);

- 24-hour real time internet access to member accounts at www.grsaccess.com;
- 24-hour telephone access to accounts and transaction options through an interactive voice response system (IVR);
- Toll-free call centre support from an investment specialist.

Regional information sessions will be held in the near future.

The MC Canada pension plan serves approximately 800 members employed by MC Canada, its member congregations and related institutions. Total assets of the plan are approximately \$28,000,000.

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Inviting to reconsider evangelism position

Mennonite Church Manitoba is inviting each church to send two or three representatives to a meeting on May 27 at

Attitude and mandate of missional church

Juxtapose the Great Commission on the Great Commandment, and you get a wholesome mix of attitude and mandate. The Great Commandment—“love God and your neighbour as yourself”—is the basic attitude with which to approach all of life. Love!

Loving God is possible unconditionally even if at points in our lives we don’t understand God. Loving people doesn’t mean agreeing with all they do or stand for.

Goodness knows, there are enough strange ideas out there. Yet we are called to love unjudgingly. Every person lives with some values on which to base life, however strange they may seem to us. We are all on a journey, learning what works, recognizing higher values as we go, and hopefully living with ever increasing levels of self-discipline. Love from and to God and others is the basic

attitude that enables good choice making.

The Great Commission—“go into all the world and preach the gospel”—is the basic mandate given by Jesus through his love of God and human beings. The gospel is about the love of Jesus—the Great Commandment lived out by God, modelled to the ultimate degree of death.

“Greater love has no one than this, that he should lay down his life for his friends.... Beloved, if God so loved us, we should love one another.”

The availability of God’s love to every person (Jew and Gentile) is in the back of our minds as we interact with our East Indian, Spanish, Chinese and Caucasian neighbours. It is something we have received permission to offer anyone in Jesus’ name. Quite an amazing privilege. It’s not to be forced on anyone. It’s not to be turned into a program. It’s just

From our leaders

a mindset of good news.

Here’s a resource to offer anyone. One beggar, having discovered, where to find bread, makes it available to another beggar. There’s good stuff to be had: peace of heart and mind, blessing of health, the outlet of hope. Indeed, good news!

The mandate of the Great Commission tests the extent to which we have accepted the attitude of the Great Commandment. At its heart, this is what it means to me to be the “missional church.” Mandate and attitude—gift from our Creator, Saviour, Lord and Friend

Henry Kliever,
Conference Minister,
Mennonite Church B.C.



Carman Mennonite Church at 7:00 p.m.

The Vision and Mission statement of MC Manitoba stresses the importance of evangelism and service work, and led to the creation of a separate Evangelism and Service ministry for MC Manitoba. Three years ago, a full-time position was created for a director of this ministry.

Shortly after, Mennonite Church Canada asked MC Manitoba to second this director for half-time Manitoba Mission Partnership facilitator.

"This was a good overlap," said Hugo Peters, MC Manitoba board member. "Given the hoped for 14 percent budget increase in church giving didn't come at that time, we were able to fund it more comfortably."

The elimination of the MC Canada position brings into question the future of this position.

"It is time to give churches the opportunity to reconfirm the decision to push in this direction, to test that part of the vision," said Peters. Representatives will be asked to consider the implications of a full-time director of Evangelism and Service.

Feedback from delegates

At the annual delegate session on February 15, roundtable discussions gave opportunity for delegates to speak to programs, dreams and concerns that ministry directors and board members had raised.

What leaders heard was encouragement and affirmation, some regrets and words of caution, as well as suggestions for further outreach.

Youth and young adult programs were affirmed: "Bob Wiebe is on the right track." Several noted the absence of youth and young adults at the delegate session and suggested deliberate efforts to include them.

The Evangelical Anabaptist Seminary Program was strongly endorsed. "We can't

afford not to do this.... We need trained leaders with an Anabaptist perspective."

Many appreciated the ways camping ministries resource the churches and beyond. Leadership Ministries was recognized for its assistance in working through difficult issues in church settings and in placing pastoral leaders as well as mentoring pastors.

Many expressed sadness over the loss of the hospital chaplaincy and Low German radio programs and regret that they didn't have more input into these decisions. "We need to give a strong voice to somehow continue the visitation/chaplaincy. It is important to represent a body, not just oneself."

Delegates appreciated the cluster groups, the October meeting with congregational representatives, and joint worship services. They voiced a need for outreach to German-speaking immigrants from Paraguay and Mexico. "Can we use the resources of all the churches to help those churches in the areas where the majority of these families are settling?"

Delegates encouraged more outreach and partnering with other churches or organizations in inner city ministries. "Community ministries need more attention. How can we relate to the marginalized?"

The delegates have given board, staff and reference groups helpful feedback to chew over as they launch into a new year.

Women in Mission prepare for fall retreat

Manitoba women are invited to mark their calendars for October 17-18, the annual retreat at Camp Assiniboia. "Open hearts; Open doors" will be the theme. Kathy Giesbrecht, Resource Centre manager and youth pastor at Springstein Mennonite Church, will speak on the topic of Christian hospitality.

Plan to arrive around 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. on Friday and

bring a friend for this inspirational event, said Viola Mirochnick. For more information, call Viola at (204) 889-6366 or Renate Dueck at (204) 668-9828.

Mennonite Church
Saskatchewan

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

NEW STAFF AT Camp Shekinah

A number of new faces will be showing up at Camp Shekinah this summer.

Don and Christine Epp, formerly of Moose Lake in Manitoba, have recently moved on-site to begin their positions. Don is the new maintenance manager and Christine will be food services coordinator, a new position at Camp Shekinah.

Camp director Carl Wiens is taking a sabbatical leave from May 1 to September 30. Replacing him for the summer is Brent Guenther and Denise Martens. Helping to facilitate the larger groups of children in the school program is Jesse Ens. A recent university graduate, Ens is hired on for May and June.

The Shekinah Retreat Centre Commission also has a new face. Bernie Thiessen is the new commission chair.

Mennonite Church
Alberta

Mennonite Church Alberta

First Thrift Shop for Edmonton

Volunteers are busy cleaning and painting a former auto parts store at 15311 Stony Plain Road that will become a Mennonite Central Committee thrift shop. The store will be a first for MCC in Edmonton.

After much searching, the location was chosen on the basis of need in the surrounding residential areas, the availability of good bus access and parking, and reasonable rental cost. The store is scheduled to begin operations the first weekend in May. The date for an official opening has not

been determined.

The store welcomes donations of clothing and household goods. MCC is currently conducting interviews for the position of shop manager.

Valaqua staff still needed

Plans for the summer are in full swing at Camp Valaqua. Hebrews 12:1-3 provides the inspiration for the theme: "All time all stars: Heroes of faith." Staff hiring and volunteer assignments are going well; however, a few needs stand out. Valaqua is still searching for male counsellors, a lifeguard, a student nurse, and a few adult and teen kitchen helpers.

Call Don or Tanya at (403) 637-2510 if you can help out this summer.

Mennonite Church
British Columbia

Mennonite Church British Columbia

FOR \$60,000

On April 26 and 27, dozens of canoers and kayakers are hitting the Fraser River to raise funds for Camp Squeah's Staff Bursary fund. Their goal is to raise \$60,000 to support returning students.

Each summer, more than 80 young people volunteer their time and talent to work at Camp Squeah. Many of these summer staff return to college or university after the summer. They volunteer at Squeah because they believe in the ministry of Squeah's summer camp program. Many come because they feel called by God.

This fundraiser supports their ministry. For more information on the Paddle-a-thon and the Bursary Fund, check the website at www.camp-squeah.bc.ca—Camp Squeah release

Employment Opportunities

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is seeking qualified applicants for the full-time position of

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

in Washington DC. Start date: June 2003. Qualifications include college degree or equivalent life experience, ability to utilize a variety of leadership styles; easy adaptability to varying needs and personalities of workers, skilled at organizing and prioritizing work, able to administer and coordinate worker placements; lead unit activities; provide logistical support; facilitate growth in the spiritual life of unit and each worker; ability to model and promote an anti-racist identity with the unit as well as the local community. As all MCC personnel, this person also needs to be a Christian, active church member and committed to nonviolent peacemaking. Contact:

Charmayne Brubaker, MCC
Phone: (717) 859-1151; E-mail: cdb@mcc.org

or your nearest MCC office for a copy of the job description and application form. Application review begins immediately.

FULL-TIME PASTOR

The First Mennonite Church invites applications for a full-time pastor beginning in the summer/fall of 2003. Located in Vineland, Ontario, 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 historic 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

Applications being accepted until May 1, 2003.

Goshen College is seeking a
COLLEGIATE PROGRAM COORDINATOR

to support the mission of Merry Lea by designing and delivering collegiate-level environmental field courses. This individual would be responsible for developing program, implementing/teaching pilot courses in the summer program, recruiting students, grant writing, and collaboration with other institutions of higher education and professional organizations. The academic focus of this position is in the field of agroecology. The Collegiate Program Coordinator will work with other Merry Lea team members as well as with the Goshen College Biology department. Requirements include post-graduate degree in an area of agroecology.

To apply, visit the specific position announcement on the Goshen College web page

www.goshen.edu/employment

Women and minority persons are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Administrative and teaching faculty members are expected to share this commitment. Applications accepted until May 15, 2003.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF WORSHIP AND DISCIPLESHIP

Sardis Community Church, Chilliwack, BC, is looking for a Pastor who can help us with Worship and Discipleship. We desire a spiritually mature person who treats his or her work as a holy pastoral calling, is immersed in Scripture, is prayerful, and demonstrates a deep love for Jesus. Ideally, the candidate has gifts in leadership, music, discernment, encouragement and administration.

For more information, contact:

Betty Poettcker, Search Committee Chair
46726 Braeside Ave.
Chilliwack, BC V2R 5M6
E-mail: abpoet@shaw.ca; Phone: (604) 824-8710
Fax: (604) 858-4079

Christian Alliance International School (CAIS) is a K-12 school located in Hong Kong. The school utilizes a Canadian curriculum and aims to provide students with a high quality biblically-based academic program offered in a secure, nurturing learning environment. Several teachers are required for the 2003-2004 academic year. For more information about the school, employment opportunities and the job application process, please visit our web page at <http://www.caiss.edu.hk> or contact:

Mr. A. Enns, headmaster, at:
E-mail: aenns@netnavigator.com
Phone: (852) 2713 3733
Fax: (852) 2760 4324



Niagara Christian Collegiate is a private, inter-denominational Christian school that is rich in tradition and heritage, established in 1932. NCC is confidently moving forward to "impact the world, one student at a time" and is embarking on a visionary strategic plan that is very ambitious. We have committed this vision to God and look forward to His leading! The time has come for us to seek a focused, passionate, and professional individual for the position of

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT.

Position Summary: Responsible for the Development Department, including capital fundraising, operational fundraising, planned giving fundraising, corporations & foundations fundraising, alumni relations, and institutional communications.

Responsible To: CEO

Personal & Professional Qualities: NCC is looking for someone with fundraising experience in a Christian non-profit setting (preferably in education). The desired applicant should be self-motivated, an excellent communicator, able to manage multiple projects simultaneously, and be very organized. Working knowledge of Blackbaud Raiser's Edge Software is also a plus.

Please send a resume, letter of intent, and statement of faith as it relates to Christian education. Application inquiries will be accepted until May 30, 2003.

Although we thank all applicants in advance for your interest, only those being considered further will be contacted.

Please reply via mail or e-mail to:

Kent D. Warkentin, CEO
Niagara Christian Collegiate
2619 Niagara Parkway
Fort Erie, ON L2A 5M4
kwark@niagaracc.com or ncc@niagaracc.com

OFFICE MANAGER

Menno Home Intermediate Care Facility invites applications for the new position of Office Manager.

Responsibilities include:

- Administration of payroll/benefits programs
- Interpretation and application of the collective agreement
- Office assistance to Administrator & Director of Care
- Supervision of office staff

Position requires high-level communication skills, supervisory and H.R. experience, and relevant education/training.

Menno Home has 196 beds and is located in beautiful Abbotsford, BC. For more information, contact the Administrator:

32910 Brundige Ave., Abbotsford, BC V2S 1N2
Phone: (604) 853-2411 E-mail: a.enns@mennohome.org

Goshen College is accepting applications for the position of

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
 FOR THE FAMILY BUSINESS PROGRAM**

The individual will provide leadership for the Family Business Program. The Director has sole responsibility for strategic and program planning, program operation, annual budgeting, member and sponsor recruitment, communications, and teaching two courses annually. The position is highly visible in the surrounding community. Masters or PhD degree preferred with experience as CEO of a challenging entrepreneurial or family business, or experience working with multi-generational family businesses.

To apply, visit the specific position announcement on the Goshen College web page

www.goshen.edu/employment

Women and minority persons are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Administrative and teaching faculty members are expected to share this commitment.



TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

MEI is a growing independent K-12 school of over 1500 students. Applications are invited for the following teaching positions available September, 2003:

Choral Music Teacher

Successful candidates must be dedicated to Christian Education and possess the following qualifications:

- Valid BC Teachers certification
- Proven ability to inspire love of music and dedication to excellence in music.
- Experience with instruction of choral groups of varying ages, numbers, and range of ability
- Experience directing musicals and concerts
- Experience arranging music to meet the needs of choral groups

Spanish/English Teacher (Temporary Contract)

Kindergarten Teacher

Submit resume, transcripts, references and a statement of faith by April 30, 2003 to:

Peter Froese, Superintendent
4081 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford, BC V4X 2M8
Fax: (604) 859-9206 E-mail: cwall@meisoc.com
www.meisoc.com



Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Manitoba anticipates openings for the following staff positions beginning September 2003.

TEACHING

A full-time or part-time position for Senior 1-4 with a focus on mathematics or senior science.

RESIDENCE STAFF

Both a male and female opening for a youth ministries assignment working with young people in our residence program.

All successful applicants must be gifted individuals who love working with young people and are in agreement with the Mennonite Confession of Faith.

Please direct all resumes and inquiries to:

Paul Kroecker
Box 250, Gretna, MB R0G 0V0
E-mail: principal@mcblblues.net

Goshen College's ITS department announces an opening in its Data Systems group for a

TECHNICAL SPECIALIST

to be filled May 2003 or as soon as possible. Position is responsible for advanced report writing, data systems support for administrative users, web application development, project management and research & development in the area of advanced uses of the college's administrative systems. Excellent technical and communication skills, advanced SQL and report writing skills, web/database programming experience, database and Linux/UNIX system administration required.

To apply, visit the specific position announcement on the Goshen College web page

www.goshen.edu/employment

Women and minority persons are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Riverton Gospel Chapel, an Evangelical Mennonite church in Manitoba's Interlake, seeks a

HALF-TIME PASTOR

With attendance of 75 - 100, this friendly/loving congregation has a high percentage of young families. The area provides other employment opportunities in various sectors including farming and construction, and has good schools. In addition to preaching and teaching skills, the congregation seeks an individual who can nurture its people, improving their relationship with Christ and provide them with tools to be Christian witnesses to each other and in the community. The candidate's education and experience will be weighed against the requirements of the position.

Contact:

Paul Peters; E-mail: paul@vidlr.com
Home: (204) 378-2740; Business: (204) 364-2442
Riverton Gospel Chapel
Box 356, Riverton, MB R0C 2R0

Continued on page 30

Menno Home plans 50th anniversary

Abbotsford, B.C.—When the Menno Home began as a 26-bed retirement home in 1953, there was a small farm connected to the operation. Two years ago, the home built a little chicken coop on the grounds to remind people of their farm days. Residents helped gather the eggs until that became untenable.

On May 24, the Mennonite Benevolent Society will celebrate the home's 50th anniversary. An open house will be held from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. The grand celebration will take place at Columbia Bible College, beginning at 5:30 p.m. It will include dinner, entertainment, reflections on the past and the launch of the anniversary book.

The home, with about 500 residents, includes a hospital and suites for independent living.

For more information, call (604) 853-2411; e-mail: c.daly@mennohome.org.—From Menno Home release

Announcements



Prairie Performances (Winnipeg) presents:

"An Evening of Great Wind Band Music"

Musical Director - **Dale Lonis**

with guest artist **Rami Oren**
Associate Principal Trumpet
Israel Philharmonic Orchestra

at the **Winnipeg Art Gallery Auditorium**
Thurs. & Fri. May 1 & 2, 2003
8:00 pm

Admission \$14.00
Seniors \$12.00
Students and children \$5.00

For tickets call 488-7733

Calendar

British Columbia

May 9, 11: MCC B.C. fundraising dinner with speaker Roger Neill, at Willowpark Church, Kelowna (9) and Westwood Mennonite Brethren, Prince George (11).

May 10: Scrapbooking fundraiser at Peace Mennonite Church, hosted by Sherbrooke youth, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Call (604) 327-3913 or e-mail: nickel@telus.net.

May 18: "Singing down life's road," Mennonite music for special occasions at Central Heights Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, 3:00 p.m. Tickets: Mennonite Historical Society of B.C.

May 24: Black Creek World Relief Fair at Community Association Hall, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

May 24: 50th anniversary of Menno Place (home/hospital) at Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, 5:30 p.m.

June 5-7: First Nations and First Settlers in Fraser Valley conference at University College of the Fraser Valley.

June 6-7: LEAD conference and Mennonite Church B.C. sessions at Cedar Valley Mennonite Church, Mission.

Wanted

Seeking experienced nanny/ housekeeper in Winnipeg; two young boys; full-time one year term position; contact Jennifer at (204) 774-4381 or e-mail: rumtuzzel@shaw.ca

For Sale

Scenic 595A on quiet river near Parry Sound. 200A old fields never sprayed or chemically fertilized. Valuable clay for pottery. Asking \$189,000. Call (813) 399-1854

Books: 12 volume Interpreter's Bible Commentary. Old and New testament with maps. Gently used. Contact (519) 655-2981.

September 12-13: MCC B.C. Festival, Auction and Relief Sale at Tradex, Abbotsford.

September 14: MCC B.C. Festival of Praise at Central Heights Mennonite Brethren Church, 2:30 p.m.

September 27: MCC B.C. Fall Fair, Prince George.

Alberta

May 2-3: Alberta Women in Mission annual meeting in Lethbridge. Speaker: Kathy Fast on "The hats we wear—celebrating our diversity." Call (403) 327-0629.

May 3-4: Young adult retreat at Camp Valaqua. Call Pam Bartel (403) 381-7078, e-mail: brother_love72@hotmail.com.

May 10: Work day at Camp Valaqua. Dedication of Swift Current Meadow and Vauxhaul Cabin, 2:30 p.m. Call (403) 637-2510.

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

June 3-5: Pastors retreat at Camp Valaqua.

June 7: Camp Valaqua Hike-athon. Call (403) 637-2510.

June 14: Open house at Camp Valaqua. Call (403) 637-2510.

For Rent

Retreat cottage for rent on the Little Mississippi River near Bancroft, Ontario. Wood stove, hydro, running hot and cold water, shower and flush toilet. Accessible year round. Ideal for fall or winter getaway. Call (519) 471-3309 or <kcdudge@skynet.ca>

Announcements

The **SPRINGRIDGE MENNONITE CHURCH**, Pincher Creek, Alberta, invites all former members, friends and families to come celebrate our

75TH ANNIVERSARY

on June 28 & 29, 2003. Please reply by June 15th to:

Leona Janzen, Box 550, Pincher Creek, AB T0K 1W0
(403) 627-2293; ljanzen@telusplanet.net
Kurt Froese, Box 700, Pincher Creek, AB T0K 1W0
(403) 627-4130

June 20-21: MCC Relief Sale in Didsbury.

June 28-29: Springridge Mennonite Church 75th anniversary, Pincher Creek. Call (403) 627-4130, e-mail: ljanzen@telusplanet.net.

July 25-27: 100th anniversary of Northwest Mennonite Conference at West Zion Mennonite Church, Carstairs.

July 26-27: Bergthl Mennonite Church, Didsbury, 100th anniversary. Call (403) 337-2223 or 335-9421.

Saskatchewan

May 2: Joint concert and fundraising banquet with Rosthern Junior College and Canadian Mennonite University, Osler Mennonite Church.

May 4: Station Singers spring concert at Station Arts Centre, Rosthern, 3:00 and 8:00 p.m.

May 7: MEDA Breakfast at Grainfields, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

May 11: Spring concert and art show at Rosthern Junior College, 2:30 p.m.

May 31: Prairie Falcon Motorcycle Rally for MCC.

June 4: MEDA Breakfast at Grainfields, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

June 7: Youth Farm Ride-athon (horseback).

June 7: Shekinah Bike-athon.

June 8-10: Pastor's retreat at Shekinah with Ken Bechtel.

June 13-14: MCC Relief Sale in Saskatoon.

June 17-20: AMBS course with James Reimer.

June 19-22: Rosthern Junior College musical (19-21) and graduation (22).

July 4-6: Rosthern Mennonite Church centennial celebration.
July 26-27: 75th anniversary of Hoffnungsfelder churches. Call (306) 824-2081.

August 9-10: 100th anniversary at Hague Mennonite Church. Register by phone at (306) 225-4550 or e-mail: dave.duane@sk.sympatico.ca.

Manitoba

May 1: Spring Concert, Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School Bedson at Westwood Community Church, 7:00 p.m.

May 3: "Enlarging the circle," interchurch conference on disabilities at Covenant Christian Reform Church, Winnipeg. Call (204) 261-6381.

May 3, 4: Abbotsford Male Choir and Faith and Life Male Choir at Winkler Berghthaler Mennonite Church (3) and Elmwood Mennonite Brethren Church, Winnipeg (4), 7:00 p.m.

May 8: Spring Concert of Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School Agassiz at Bethel Mennonite Church, 7:00 p.m.

May 9: Manitoba Women in Mission Enrichment Day at Morden Berghthaler Mennonite Church, 8:30 a.m. Speaker: Janet Plenert.

May 16-18: Work Day and Canoe Trip for young adults at Camp Koinonia. Call (204) 896-1616.

May 25: Celebration 2003 for MC Manitoba churches at Convention Centre, Winnipeg.

May 25: Faith and Life Male Choir and Women's Chorus at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 3:30 p.m.

May 26-28: Plus 55 Retreat at Camp Moose Lake with speaker Peter Wiebe. Call (204) 896-1616.

May 27: Mennonite Church Manitoba meeting with church reps at Carman Mennonite Church, 7:00 p.m.

May 30-June 1: Birding Retreat at Camp Moose Lake. Call (204) 896-1616.

June 2-4: Plus 55 Retreat at Camp Koinonia with speaker Menno Janzen.

June 6-7: Winnipeg MCC Festival and Relief Sale, Canadian Mennonite University.

June 8: Eden Foundation/Big

Brothers Big Sisters Charity Golf Tournament, Winkler, 1:30 p.m. Call (204) 325-5355.

June 21-22: Bike the White-shell for MCC.

June 23: Graduation at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate.

June 28: Camp Koinonia golf tournament at Winkler Golf Course, 8:30 a.m.

July 5: Cycle Spruce Woods for MCC.

July 10: Eden Foundation "Ironman" golf marathon. Call (204) 325-5355.

July 16: Fundraising golf tournament for MCC at Quarry Oaks Golf Course.

July 20: Memorial stone placement at Lena Mennonite Church site. Call (204) 885-2425.

Ontario

April 27: 40th anniversary at Listowel Mennonite Church, 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

May 1: Biblical literacy evening at Danforth Mennonite Church, Toronto, 7:00 p.m. Continues Thursdays to June 5. For details e-mail: robert@stoneyard.net.

May 2, 3: All-school drama at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.

May 2, 3: Floradale Mennonite Church drama, "The Least of These," 7:30 p.m. Call (519) 669-0830.

May 3: Shalom Counselling breakfast and annual meeting at Erb St. Mennonite Church, Waterloo, 8:30 a.m. Reserve at (519) 886-9690.

May 3: Spring concert by DaCapo Chamber Choir at St. John the Evangelist Church, Kitchener, 8:00 p.m.

May 4: Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir concert at Breslau Mennonite Church, 3:00 p.m.

May 7, 8: Dinner theatre "James and the Giant Peach," at United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington.

May 10: Springfest at Niagara United Mennonite Church, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Bake sale, auction, music, food.

May 10: Gospel concert with Summit and Unashamed at Listowel Mennonite Church, for building fund, 7:30 p.m.

May 12 or 13: Seniors' retreat

at Hidden Acres on "The changing faces of Mennonite ministry" with Werner Packull and Gerald Good. Call (519) 625-8602.

May 15: MEDA breakfast at Stone Crock, St. Jacobs, with Steve Rannekleiv, 7:30 a.m.

May 16: Hesston College Bel Canto Singers at Listowel Mennonite Church, 7:30 p.m.

May 16-19: Alumni Weekend at Fraser Lake Camp.

May 21: Day of Quiet Prayer at Blenheim Retreat Centre.

May 25: Spring concert at United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington.

May 31: Ontario Mennonite Relief Sale, New Hamburg.

June 6: Spring concert at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate.

June 6-7: MennoFolk at Hidden Acres Camp.

June 7: Mennonite Community Sale in Leamington.

June 15: Jubilee homecoming at North Leamington United Mennonite Church.

June 21: Day of Quiet Prayer at Valleyview Mennonite Church, London.

June 21: Graduation at United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington.

June 21: Graduation at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.

June 28: Aylmer Auction for Relief at Aylmer Fairgrounds.

July 9-13: Mennonite Church Canada assembly at Brock University, St. Catharines.

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Resurrection hope

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.



For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water...
And a highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not pass over it,
and fools shall not err therein.
And the ransomed of the Lord



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shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be
upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing
shall flee away.

Isaiah