

C A N A D I A N
Mennonite

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Confession
pages 6-9
Aid to Iraq
pages 19-21



Confession insights

The fall 2002 issue of *Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology* caught my attention because of its theme of “confession.” I was looking for insight on the role of a “confession of faith” in the life of the church. That I got...and additional insights I hadn’t expected.

Our confession of faith, it seems, is not viewed in the same way by all in our church. Some see it as a summary description of our faith, a general guide for Anabaptist Mennonite thought and life—with the assumption that the statement will keep changing. Others see it in more prescriptive terms, as the basis for defining who’s in and who’s not.

This tension is addressed in the opening essays. For example, Karl Koop suggests that too little care for doctrine could lead to a loss of identity, hence the unifying value of confessions of faith. But they can also be an “instruments of disunity,” he notes, when they are given authority that leaves “little room for dialogue or theological diversity.”

Another essay by Mario Higueros presents a draft of a Guatemalan Mennonite confession of faith, as shaped by that particular context marked by violence and injustice. In that setting, a confession of faith helps to define the church family, which has an intensity born of necessity. At the same time, Higueros states that the confessions of faith “are not formulated to encourage a legalistic spirit or doctrinal boxing-in, but rather are starting points for ongoing reflection on the meaning of the Word of God...”

Another essay by Malinda E. Berry suggests that our church’s numerous well-crafted statements on the evils of racism are not enough when there’s still a way to go in embodying the intent of those statements. A confession or profession of faith needs to be accompanied by confession of shortcoming, suggests the writer.

Other writers elaborate on this connection between the two aspects of confession—confessing our faith and our sin. Be-

ing reminded of more than one aspect of confession became the bonus insight from my reading of this journal. The clearest articulation, in my view, came in the essay by Alan Kreider, which is reprinted by permission in our Faith&Life section (pages 6-9).

Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology is published twice a year by Canadian Mennonite University and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. See the journal website (www.mennovision.org) for more information.

—Ron Rempel, editor

Ascension Day covers

To mark Ascension Day—40 days after Easter—we were drawn to a painting by Chad Friesen for our front cover. And on the back cover we have published an older line drawing of the ascension, along with related scripture texts.

Chad, who now lives in Elkhart, Indiana, began painting as a child while growing up in Jerusalem and Beirut, Lebanon. Here he first encountered the “God’s eye” painted above the doorways of Muslims, symbolizing the presence and protection of God. Now the symbol of the God’s eye appears frequently in his paintings.

“I like to paint because it’s my way of keeping a diary because I cannot write,” comments Chad on his web site. With ataxia and a seizure disorder affecting his motor skills, Chad paints to express his views about life and issues. He lies on the floor to paint, steadying his left hand with his right. To see more of Chad’s work, check out the web site: www.godseyeart.com.

For now, turn again to the front cover, focus on the bright light surrounding the cross, and follow the bright swirl upward. And then reflect on the Ephesians passage on the back cover.

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

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

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

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

Regional correspondents: Eastern Canada:

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

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

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Website preview

Get a preview of the next Canadian Mennonite before it comes in the mail. Selections are posted on our web site (www.canadianmennonite.org) on the Thursday before the date of the issue. This means you can check out the June 16 issue by June 12.

Cover: Christ Is Risen, acrylic painting by Chad Friesen.

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Cambridge, Ont.

Church hosts former refugees

On April 5, Preston Mennonite Church hosted all the families it has sponsored or helped to settle in Canada. It was an evening to renew acquaintances and celebrate friendship.

It was a gathering of old friends, no longer the needy and the helping. Both the hosts and the newer Canadians were greying at the temples as they smiled and talked about children, marriages and accomplishments.

The feature of the evening was the potluck dinner and the music that reflected cultural tastes. The congregation was honoured to have 31 of a possible 44 guests come. One young woman who came at five years of age is married and living in Colorado, others could not come due to scheduling difficulties.

Guests to the church have come from Laos (1979-93), El Salvador (1987-89), Ethiopia (1989), Sudan (1989), Peru (1995) and the Philippines (1990)—35 people in total. We have always admired the diligence with which our

friends have continued their lives.

Within two months of coming to Canada, they were all working. Many people from the church have helped with housing, transportation and support over the years, but the most consistent relationship has been with Rufus and Ruth Jutzi. They have become surrogate parents and grandparents, attending weddings, funerals and even helping to name babies. It was Rufus and Ruth who knew people well enough to sense tension and to take necessary steps to ensure positive relationships all round. Rufus recalls the experience of teaching the Bible with a Laotian and Mandarin copy as well as English. They sought a common word with the aid of a variety of dictionaries until they found a word that brought them together.

We have learned much from these friends who have contributed to our understanding and comprehension of life in their homeland. We continue to enjoy food from countries around the world. One year the Laotian community in Cambridge catered our church Christmas party and we always delight at Laotian refreshments during coffee time when it is Khim's turn to do coffee. The word "papoosos" has a delicious ring to it too as we reflect on Spanish treats.

At the church celebration, two women who had lost touch for at least 12 years each came to the evening hoping the other would be there. They shared a warm embrace and sat together, talking about work, homes, daughters.



Ruth Jutzi claps her hands as she enjoys the fellowship of those she has helped adjust to life in Canada.

But the culmination of the evening came when the Ethiopian crossed the room with his hand extended to the Laotians whom he had never met—greeting them warmly in Chinese. A whoop went up from the crowd and everyone knew the evening had been a great success.—**Nancy Kinzie**



Tieng Lin and Vicki Robinson enjoy renewing old acquaintances.



Ku Wang and Mearle Steckley

Abbotsford, B.C.

Refugee family celebrates new home

To an outsider, it would have appeared to be a typical housewarming party, but there was nothing typical about the party at the Raqi family's new home. It was a celebration of families coming together from two different worlds—the Raqi family of Muslim faith from Kosovo, and the families of the Church of God in Christ Mennonite in Abbotsford. Mr. and Mrs. Raqi, along with their daughters, Hava, Spresa and son Bekim, came to Canada four years ago when the war in Kosovo created a refugee crisis. As Albanians, they describe their life in Kosovo as living in “occupation” under the Serbs. They could not study in their native language or learn their own history. Although Mr. Raqi had a good job, he often had to work long hours, seven days a week. They lived in a home that Mr. Raqi built and a hobby farm of sorts. And then the war came.

“We were told, ‘you have two hours, go’ and so we just took maybe some food, the clothes on our backs,” says daughter Hava. “In that moment, we just ran.”

The eldest Raqi daughter remained in Kosovo because the Serbs had jailed her husband. (He was eventually released and she is still there, with her four children, and misses her family very much.) The family fled on foot to Macedonia—about 100 kms—staying away from the road, travelling through muddy fields and forests. They saw dead bodies on the roads along the way. When they were stopped by Serbs who were looking for men, Bekim made himself look tired and poor and answered questions in a way that would make him seem foolish to the Serbs so that they would not take him away. Back home their house was looted and torched.

When they reached Macedonia, they were put in a refugee camp situated in what Bekim describes as a desert. It was stifling hot in their tents by day and cold at night. There were bugs and snakes—snakes so large that a young boy in the camp was choked to death by one. The camp was fenced off, creating a feeling of isolation. Still, they consider themselves lucky

because they only stayed in the camp for a month.

Through NATO, an opportunity came for refugees to travel to other countries in the world, including Canada.

Mr. Raqi woke at 5:00 a.m. to be first in line and put his name down. They

arrived first in Nova Scotia where they lived on an army base for three months before coming to Abbotsford.

When they first arrived in Canada they didn't know what to think.

“We had been on the plane for such long hours,” says Bekim. “It was dark and raining, there were no houses, we thought ‘where are we?’ It felt like we had travelled to the end of the world!”

When they arrived in Vancouver, they were met by Wilbert and Arlene Giesbrecht, members of Church of God in Christ Mennonite, part of the team sponsoring the Raqi family through the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC.)

Jake and Pam Barkman, Claude and Ruth Friesen and Brad and Donna Giesbrecht, and several others from the church had found and furnished an apartment. Different people helped fill out paper work, took the family grocery shopping, and helped them to adjust. But it was the Barkmans and the Friesens who took a personal interest in the whole thing. Jake called them every day and at first they spent a great deal of time together.

“We have been so enriched by this experience,” he says. “They have become our family.”

Pam remembers praying for the family before they even met. “While the war was on, we would sit together at breakfast and Jake couldn't even read about the war in the papers. It touched us so much; so we prayed, praying for [the Raqi family] even before we met.”

“We were very blessed that the church sponsored us,” Hava says, the rest of the family heartily agreeing. “We don't

know what we would have done if they hadn't been there.”

But the good relationship has been a two-way street. Brad Giesbrecht, the contact person for MCC, says they were spoiled as sponsors, having re-

ceived a family that was so grateful and who worked so hard to make Canada their home.

After a year in Canada, the family applied for landed immigrant status. They have taken hours of English classes and have found work at

Lilydale Farms, Vanderpools Eggs and Bradner Farms where employers praise them for their strong work ethic. Bekim is studying at the University College of the Fraser Valley. Shortly after they arrived, the family decided to move into a smaller apartment because their three-bedroom was “too big, too expensive.” This attitude towards saving and the desire to stay together as a family, allowed them to purchase a new home in Abbotsford, just four years after arriving here.

At the housewarming, Jake asked each person to say a few words. Over and over the words, “this feels like family” were spoken. Jake says it's interesting that they have developed such a close relationship despite their faith differences. “Part of that may be the fact that the Raqis have strong family values and a strong work ethic, something we as Mennonites appreciate and can relate to.”

The Raqis are established and the formal sponsor/refugee relationship is technically over but the relationship has moved beyond formalities. On this evening, they celebrated a milestone together as families.—MCC B.C. release

It's interesting that we have developed such a close relationship despite our faith differences.”

The two edges of confession

We will deepen our understanding and practice of confession, writes Alan Kreider, when we discover that confession has two edges—confessing the acts of God and confessing our sins.

Last Sunday, after a call to worship and three hymns celebrating the power and faithfulness and love of God, our typical Mennonite congregation had a prayer of confession. The worship leader invited us to spend a minute thinking about ways we had let God down in the previous week. We then joined in confessing our sins by reading together 696 in Hymnal: A Worship Book. A reading of 1 John 1:8–9 proclaimed God’s forgiveness.

Then came the children’s time, in which a parent told the children (and the rest of us) about global economic realities. He used 20 Lego people and 50 pieces of chocolate. Americans, represented by one Lego figure, got 17 pieces of chocolate; the poorest Lego people, 4 out of 20, got only one piece of chocolate to share among themselves. After reminding us that according to the Bible peace is a result of justice, the parent led us in prayer.

The sermon picked up the theme, and gave us a vision, based on Isaiah 2:1–5, of God’s future of justice, reconciliation, and peace. If we are “one nation under God,” we stand under God’s judgment as well as blessing. In the sharing time, several people said they had found the sermon powerful. But no one suggested that we ought to confess our sins again. No, we had done that earlier. So we went home (to eat chocolate?), feeling happy—it had been a wonderful service—but also vaguely guilty.

I do not question the importance of the prayer of confession in our Sunday worship services, but I think we need to deepen our understanding and practice of confession. We

will do this as we discover that confession has two edges. With one, we confess the acts of God; with the other, we confess our sins and shortcomings. Confession, this two-edged action, is where God’s story and our story meet.

Confessing God

When we gather, we confess God. We may use a creed (“creator

of heaven and earth..., suffered under Pontius Pilate..., on the third day he rose again”). In our prayers at communion, we confess God by recounting the story of God’s saving acts and giving thanks. We certainly confess God in our songs, which express our faith in the attributes of God (“Immortal, invisible, God only wise”) and also in God’s actions (“Blessed be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free”). Our Bible readings, dramas, and sermons confess God by setting forth the story of God’s actions and pointing to the future of justice, peace, and joy which God is determined to bring into being.

It could be that someone—the preacher or another member—will be inspired to confess God by giving testimony to God’s actions today. “I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation,” says the psalmist (Psalm 40:10). Through testimonies of our own experience we receive eyes to perceive that in our own apparently insignificant lives and congregations God is doing today what God did in the Bible.

Confessing God thus heartens us to collaborate with God with new faith and passion as we anticipate God’s future reign, a world of reconciliation, in which swords will be turned into plowshares, wolves will lie down with lambs, and no one will hurt or make afraid.

This was Jesus’ task, to collaborate with God, being attentive to what God was doing and entering into the action (John 5:19). This also is our vocation: to bring our stories into harmony with God’s story. As we confess God by telling the story of the Bible, we will learn to recognize the ways of God. We also will tell our own stories, of alienation and God’s forgiveness, of despair and God’s saving hope, of need and God’s

Confession...
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We confess God as we celebrate what God is doing and as we commit ourselves to be God's co-workers.

provision. And we commit ourselves to work together with God as we treat others as God in Christ has treated us.

This “motive clause” is at the heart of the ethics of both testaments. God has forgiven us, so we will forgive others; when we were persecuted, exiled and hungry, God was generous to us, so we will be generous to people today who are persecuted, exiled and hungry.

So we confess God by telling the story of the Bible and by telling stories from our world today—from the global church, from our own experience—in which that story goes on. We praise God, the forgiver and giver; we rejoice in God who forgives us and who gives us everything we need; and we thank God for the forgiving and giving we find in the world today and in our own lives. God is good. We confess God as we celebrate what God is doing and as we commit ourselves to be God's co-workers.

Confessing our sin—corporate confession

But how about when our stories are not in harmony with God's story? Then especially we will go on confessing God, for in God is our hope. But we also will resort to the second edge of confession. We will confess our sins, our deviations from God's way. Chris-

tian tradition provides us with two ways of doing this.

Corporate confession is all-encompassing, prayed together by all members of the worshiping community. These “general confessions” are public acknowledgements of sin. Incorporated in regular Sunday acts of worship, they provide strong words and potent images: “We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep”; “we have wounded your love and marred your image in us.” The confession we used last Sunday is one of our hymnal's many valuable resources for congregational confession in this tradition.

I have come to respect the corporate general confession, and to be glad that our weekly services include it.

The general confession states that we are sinners and that we have departed from God's ways. How important it is for Christians to remember this. One is holy, and the rest of us are unholy; we have sinned and fallen short of God's glory (Romans 3:23). So it is sober realism to pray like this, the realism of those who know they rely on God's grace, the realism of truthful self-appraisal, week by week to remind ourselves, in God's presence, that we have sinned, hurt others and offended God.

Again and again, Jesus discovered that the hardest sinners to reach were the religious ones; the good were so much slower to hear his gracious words than the sinners. So too today, regular churchgoers who make their credit card payments on time and don't get drunk in public may especially need the words of the general confession. These words, said week by week, can sink into our consciousness. They can soften our spiritual hardness; they can remind us that we all, in God's sight, are infinitely-loved children in need of forgiveness.

But I confess that I have, at times, been impatient with these confessions. They have seemed so general as to cover everything, or nothing, and so routine as to permit one to say the same words week after week—and to receive the same absolution week after week—whether or not one has made attempts to repent and to amend one's life. At this, Anabaptists today, as in the 16th century, get restive. It appears that Christians assume that sinful actions are ordinary parts of life to be lived with, rather than extraordinary parts of life to be repented of and repudiated. To Anabaptists, the inner life must coincide with the outer life; inwardly appropriated grace must express itself in grace-filled, repentant living.

Continued on page 8

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address this limitation of general confessions, I propose that we insert in them specific confessions tailored to our own congregation's struggles. Our pastoral leaders might decide that, for a period, our congregation needs to ask God's forgiveness for particular sins in order to move forward in freedom. These inserted prayers would be "provers" in the midst of the "ordinaries." They would be provisional, prayed for a period of time, and then replaced by other specific confessions.

In light of last Sunday's worship, our congregation could pray this idea: "We confess that we're living in a world in which our kind of people eat too much chocolate, and we don't know how to change. Forgive us, Lord." On next Sunday and for the coming weeks we could continue to use the same prayer of confession—694 in *Hymnal: A Worship Book* (see italic type below), interpolating the words in regular type:

Forgiving God,
you do not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
We confess that we overload our lives
with too many things.
Our lives are too complex.
We possess far more than our share
of the world's resources.
Forgive us, and teach us how to live
as children of our generous God.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love toward those who fear
you;
as far as the east is from the west,

To

so far you remove our transgressions from us. Amen.

Another time, the congregation's leaders might want to insert in a general confession a specific confession that grows out of the church's experience and worship. For example, the following concern may have emerged: "We're trying to be a church that shares the gospel with people unlike ourselves, but all our instincts are tribal. Have mercy on us, Lord." The church's leaders could then formulate this idea in more felicitous language and insert it as a provisional prayer within a general confession.

Leaders would review these provisional confessions regularly. They would be sure the congregation used them long enough to make them familiar; repetition would underscore their urgency. Then the church's corporate confessions will make articulate our vague guiltiness, and the God who listens to us and loves us will realign us with God's story in freedom and forgiveness.

Individual confession

Where deeper penitence and more personal confession is required, the Catholic and Orthodox traditions have the resource of private individual confession to God in the presence of a priest. Mennonites have less experience of this, and may have prejudices against it. Do we also need private individual confession? If so, what sins does one confess?

Orthodox writer Jim Forest, in his recent book *Confession: Doorway to Forgiveness*, provides four useful tools for examining the conscience: the Beatitudes; the Ten Commandments; Jesus' parable of the last judgment (Matthew 25:31ff); prayer by the 5th century writer Ephraim the Syrian: "Grant to me to see my own faults and not to condemn my brother and sister."

To these four tools, I would add three I have found helpful as I attempt to come to terms with sins that require serious attention. One is monitoring my moods: Am I conscious of living in the abundance of freedom and joy that God gives to us in Christ, or is something alienating me from these? Another useful tool is listening to my brothers and sisters: When they take the risk of going to "another member of the church who sins" (Matthew 18:15), do their oblique or direct words indicate agenda that I must understand and con-

fess?

But the most fundamental tool grows out of our corporate confession of God: Do I sense that I am playing my part in God's story as I am coming to understand it, or have I missed chances to collaborate with God by not living in light of the motive clause? These tools may reveal what I have to confess, and where I need help to see my life afresh from God's perspective.

Do I need to go to a priest for this kind of confession? James 5:16 admonishes us, "Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed." This confession has a reciprocal quality, a mutuality among brothers and sisters that priestly traditions do not emphasize as much. Of course, a Catholic priest may make an excellent confessor; he may enable one to track one's true sins amid a plethora of false leads and be a good midwife of confession. But while many ordained people are gifted as spiritual guides, others are relatively ungifted. Similarly, many helpful confessors are not ordained; in this category come many spiritual directors. Indeed, some of the most fruitful confession may take place in the context of committed spiritual friendship which is intrinsically reciprocal.

Some intractable spiritual problems—such as those having to do with money or life style—may best be discussed between couples, or in small groups. Repentance, enabling creative and risky living in a world in which, for example, we eat grotesquely more than our share of the world's chocolate, can probably only be undertaken in solidarity with others who confess the same sin.

Does it matter what kind of person or group we make our confession to? I don't think so. What matters is absolution and accountability. At various times in my life, I have needed someone who has listened to my confession and has said, in the name of Christ, "Alan, your sins are forgiven." This priestly figure does not need to be ordained, but he or she does need to represent Christ, my saviour, Lord, forgiver.

It is essential that I know that it is Christ who forgives me, when I am so poor at forgiving myself. Like other people of scrupulous conscience who pay too much attention to the voice of Satan the accuser, I need the word of Jesus the savior, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again." My confessional priestly figure will also hold me accountable for what I have promised God and will help me express penitence in action.

What if we continue to sin? What if our sins are deep-seated and intractable? It may take years to unlearn the habits of workaholism or miserliness. What if the structures in which we find ourselves make complicity with sin almost inevitable? However much we try to be alert to the violence and exploitation on which our society is based, we will nevertheless be complicit, closer to the sumptuously fed rich man than to the beggar Lazarus. When our sins have rooted themselves deeply in our personalities and our society, then especially we need help. Testimony and preaching, strong worship, healthy relationships, and committed friendship—all these are confessional resources to help us monitor our journeys and ascertain whether our lives are becoming more coordinated with the story of God.

Conclusion

Many of us, and many of our congregations, have much to learn about both edges of confession. So there is goodness in store for us! We will know delight and growth as we learn in new ways to confess God, telling God's story across the centuries and giving testimony to the work of God in our own time. We will also know healing and hope as we learn to confess our sins.

Alan Kreider is a mission educator with Mennonite Mission Network and adjunct faculty in church history and evangelism at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. He recently edited the book, *The Origins of Christendom in the West* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001).

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Kitchener, Ont.

Music commemorates Iraqi civilians killed

Carol Ann Weaver, associate professor of music at Conrad Grebel University College, premiered her most recent composition, "Piece of a rock—in memoriam," Saturday, May 10, 2003, on the island of Victoria Park, Kitchener, Ontario. Weaver was inspired to write and perform the composition as her way of working for peace.

The text is based on an African proverb, which says that if you have struck a woman you have struck a rock. The story of Moses who struck a rock where living water was found also influenced Weaver's text. Obtaining names from several international peace workers, including John Sloboda of www.iraqbodycount.com and Lowell Ewert, a Peace and Conflict Studies professor at Conrad Grebel University College, Weaver includes actual names and ages of Iraqi civilian victims—mothers, fathers, children, young and old—who have lost their lives in the Iraq war.

The text calls leaders, saints, and queens to listen for wisdom and guidance in days of turmoil and war. The profound words vividly express a cry for peace through the various uses of instruments and sound.

The piece began with each drummer, spaced around the stage, beating a different rhythm entering the realm of sound randomly. As they walked toward the stage their rhythm united until each drummer was standing in a line beating the same rhythm. Weaver's distinctive use of drums, rhythm and space generated parallels to the African talking drum that allowed people to transmit messages from a distance without words. The message of these particular drums was a call for unity.

Vocalist Rebecca Campbell entered with a descending line that pleaded for leaders to listen to the words of the song. Joining her, Weaver provided vocal harmonization intensifying the plea to saints and queens of the

past and present to open their ears. The music built to the cadence as the words cried out "show us a way to peace today."

An overlapping texture began as Weaver continued to sing "show us a way," while Campbell musically painted word images of striking living water identified as children's bodies that are being broken in the devastation of war. Bells and triangles invited audience members to participate with percussion instruments in proclaiming children's need for a voice to sing. An abrupt minor shift emphasized the question, "Did they die in vain?" as bells were again used to represent the

children's lives that are involved in war. In another sudden shift, the gong, bells and keyboard in unison crashed.

In a monotone voice Campbell slowly read the names and ages of the victims. Intermittently, the gong, bells and keyboard sounded. The song ended leaving the listeners to ponder the purpose of war amidst the brutal consequences it brings. Ironically, a plane flew over during the reading of the victims' names penetrating the intensity and emotional impact of

the piece.—**Darlene Hemingway**



Weaver

Abbotsford, B.C.

Singing Along Life's Road

A 90-voice choir performed and led the assembly in singing songs familiar to Mennonite churches and choirs of the 1930s to 1960s. Over 900 people attended this musical event at Abbotsford's Central Heights Mennonite Brethren Church on May 18. The choir, led by Holda Fast Redekopp and Henry Wiebe, performed German and English songs of the seasons: spring (new birth), summer (spiritual development), fall (harvest and thanksgiving), and winter (the end of the road). For many songs the audience joined in the singing.

Narrator John Klassen noted that music was important to Mennonites who came to B.C. as a result of the economic depression in the Canadian prairies. "Music spoke to the key issues of our lives: rebirth, growth, and consolidation," he said.

"Spring" songs reflected the Spirit's work in our lives and people were moved

to accept Jesus as Saviour—the songs of a spiritual springtime, noted Klassen. Summer is a time of flowering, of growing up, and the songs called us to consider the seriousness of life's choices and challenged us to do the gospel and not only talk about it.

Autumn is a time to reevaluate, to take stock of our spiritual condition and reflects an urgency to redeem the time. Winter is the period of aging, weakening, and a desire to redeem what is left. Sponsored by the B.C. Mennonite Historical Society, the event was particularly appreciated by many older people who do not necessarily value contemporary church music and who mourn the loss of church choirs.

This event recalled the glory days of Mennonite congregational and choral singing and reminded those attending of the rich message of well-sung Christian songs.—**Henry Neufeld**

Wiebe family records musical memoir

Some families write history books to preserve stories of the past, but about 50 members of three generations of the Wiebe family spent the May long weekend creating a musical memoir instead.

These descendants of Philipp Wiebe, a Mennonite church choir conductor in Russia in the early 20th century, recorded the German hymns and chorales their grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great grandfather would have conducted.

The family choir, led by conductor George Wiebe, spent May 16 and 17 rehearsing and recording up to three dozen songs at Canadian Mennonite University. Family members travelled from southern Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, B.C. and Ontario, in

order to produce this recording of their musical legacy. The choir also led the German and English worship services of Springfield Heights Mennonite Church on Sunday, May 18.

The title for the recording is *Stimmt An*, commented Wiebe. He referred to the recording as “a disc commemorating the musical heritage left by Philipp and Anna Bestvater-Wiebe. In addition to Wiebe, a well-known Winnipeg choir conductor for many decades, this family includes baritone Phillip Ens Jr., who has an established operatic career in Europe, soprano soloist Karis Wiebe of Germany, B.C. soprano Ingrid Suderman, and cellist Thomas Wiebe of the Toronto Symphony.

Several family members were part of the former CBC Hymn Sing Chorus, including Ens, his brother Peter Ens, Tim Wiebe, and David Matthies. About a dozen or so family members now sing in the Faith and Life choirs of Mennonite Church Manitoba, which have toured extensively in Canada and Europe, and many more are members of community and church choirs. The album resulting from the weekend recording is intended primarily for the several hundred family members as a lasting tribute to their musical family heritage. Copies can be obtained for \$15.00 by writing Phil Ens, Box 1087, Winkler Man. R6W 4B2.

Arts notes

MCC magazine wins award

Mennonite Central Committee received six industry awards from the Religion Communicators Council and the Associated Church Press. MCC's magazine, a *Common Place*, won three awards of merit from the Religion Communicators Council. Awards were for the general magazine category, for writer Maria Linder-Hess' article “Tanzania: Life in the Shadows” and for designer Julie Kauffman's graphics for the same piece in the November 2002 issue. In the RCC category for other print material, MCC also won an award of merit for *Family Stories: Vol. 1*, a collection of photo essay booklets that illustrate families' joys and struggles in Palestine, Colombia, Bangladesh and Indonesia. In Associated Church Press competition, a *Common Place* magazine tied for honorable mention in the special interest magazine category and received an award of merit for the design of the November 2002 issue.

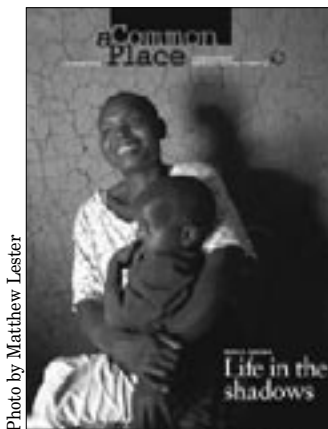


Photo by Matthew Lester

November 2002 issue of a *Common Place* magazine won several awards.

Marpeck biography

A Pilgram Marpeck biography project is among the recent awards granted by the Humanities Research Council. The two principal researchers are Walter

Klaassen of the University of Saskatchewan and William Klassen of the University of Waterloo. The largest share of the \$51,870 grant will be used to support the research of Jonathan Seiling of Stouffville, Ontario, an advanced degree candidate at the Toronto School of Theology. The biography is planned for publication by 2006. Marpeck, a 16th century Anabaptist who died in 1556,

was a prolific writer, energetic church organizer, mediator and engineer both in mining and in procurement of wood and water for the cities of Strasbourg and Augsburg. As a government official he strongly advocated that the state never use violence to enforce its will.—Klassen release

CD release draws full house

The King Street Theatre Centre in Kitchener was packed on May 14 when singer/songwriter Mike Erb and his band featured songs from their first album which was released at the event.

The songs, all written by Erb, included some in the rhythm and blues tradition and others in the general category of “pop/rock.” The band included Ben Janzen and Jamie Alegre (percussion and vocals), Joel Stouffer (drums), Darius McKinley (bass), Chris Latta (guitar), Scott Galloway (keyboards). During the encore, Erb and Janzen, both with Silver Lake Mennonite Camp staff experience, sang a song they had presented frequently at camp. On the CD cover he also thanked his extended family and many friends from Erb Street Mennonite Church. For more information on the CD phone 519-746-6218 or e-mail: info@mikeerb.com



Why I cannot pay taxes for war

The following is from a letter by Murray Lumley of the Welcome Inn Church in Hamilton, Ontario, to John Manley, Minister of Finance. The letter was printed in the Hamilton Spectator on May 3.

I am writing to inform you that I intend to direct the military portion of my federal taxes for 2002 to the Conscience Canada Peace Tax Fund in Trust. The amount represents 7.8% of my net federal tax, calculated from the "Public Accounts of Canada Fiscal Year 2002" which shows that "total military and related expenditures" are 7.8% of "total government expenditures."

My reason for taking this action is... my fundamental belief that armed and violent intervention offered as a solution to human conflict has never produced peace and security but only new generations of hostility. I am a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ and an adherent to the philosophies of nonviolence of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King as more appropriate means of intervention when there is conflict.

Being a member of Christian Peacemaker Teams, a violence reduction organization that is involved in peacemaking in several war theatres, including the West Bank and Iraq, helps me to follow through on what I believe. I also participate in public events with the Canadian organization "Homes Not Bombs."

I thank the Canadian government for its support of the United Nations, multilateralism and international law in the recent Iraq crisis. However, even though my government publicly opposed unilateral military intervention in Iraq, many Canadian businesses have profited from the sales of military hardware and software that they produce for the war industry. This production creates unspeakable misery for the victims of war and continues to allow for the "war option" that is so easily taken instead of the hard work of negotiation and the "loving of our enemies" as Jesus taught. I recently participated in a protest of

the CANSEC Arms Fair in Ottawa at which at least 80 Canadian companies displayed their "war products." I do not want my tax dollars to support this kind of industry.

Perhaps the most tragic consequence of the war industry is the diversion of huge resources from human needs. As President Eisenhower said in 1953: "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its labourers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children... Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron."

I am not taking this action to escape paying my taxes, but to join with many other Canadians who call themselves "Conscientious Objectors to Military Taxation." Because of the high-tech nature of modern weaponry today, with de-emphasis on the use of soldiers, it is tax dollars that are being conscripted. I ask the Canadian government to make it legal for conscientious objectors to direct our taxes to peaceful purposes, as has been attempted several times by private members bills. There are precedents: Canada has recognized the rights of conscientious objectors (COs) to military service since 1793, and in 1841 COs to the military tax were allowed to redirect taxes to public works. In World War I, COs were allowed to buy "peace bonds" that were used only for the relief of suffering caused by war.

Please let me know what you will do to help ensure that my right to freedom of conscience will be recognized in federal law.—**Murray D. Lumley**

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.

Are our hearts open?

Do we, as Christian Mennonites, have room in our hearts:

- For Christian peacemaking team members who go out to be a presence of peace, but also for our own brothers and sisters and even our own children who have joined the military and know that God the Father is with them?
- For soldiers who quit the military because they feel it's wrong, but also for chaplains who feel that troops deserve to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and who see the Holy Spirit working mightily in their "congregation"?
- For giving material aid to people in need on both sides of a conflict even if some are members of a ruthless regime?
- For peace marchers who are oriented in the cause of Christ and also for those who are not?
- For victims of terrorism but also for the terrorists who can come to know the Lord Jesus too?
- For the scriptures that call us to work and pray for peace but also for the portions that speak of specific wars yet to come before the end of this age?
- For Jesus of Nazareth who empowers us to bring peace to others but who also stated that He came to bring not peace but the sword?
- For God who absolutely delights in us, his children, but who also takes vengeance on whom He chooses and how He chooses?
- For ourselves who want to do good but evil is right there with us?

I hope so. Jesus has and does. Let us

likewise make room. This is how we will love in action and in truth and be able to rest our hearts in His presence, come what may.—**Erwin H. Wiebe, Niverville, Man.**

'Mennonite' not an ethnic label

In the April 21 issue (page 5), an article about the School of Discipleship at Canadian Mennonite University used an unfortunate turn of phrase: "imagine Africans and Mennonites singing, clapping and dancing together." The phrase "Africans and Mennonites" is unfortunate because it inappropriately mixes geography, ethnicity, and faith in describing two groups.

African Mennonites outnumber Canadian Mennonites—by a factor of greater than three to one (according to the Mennonite World Conference World Directory).

Being Mennonite is primarily about church affiliation, even if sometimes what we mean is that the person being described had ancestors with such affiliation.

Given these facts, we should be more careful with our choice of labels.—**Stuart Williams, assistant professor of computer science, Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Man.**

Mennonite church needs strong leadership

Even a cursory examination of the Mennonite Church reveals that all is not well. There is financial mismanagement at the top, a lack of financial support at the grassroots and instead of growing, our numbers are in decline. Do we have informed and knowledgeable people who would tell us why this is happening?

However, it is also fair to say some things are going right. There is a long

overdue separation from the U.S.A. Mennonite Church. Reorganization of the Mennonite Church Canada is a good move. But the most important development is the formation of a Mennonite University.

I firmly believe that strong leadership creates strong churches. Leadership must lead, not follow. Mennonites are suspicious of strong leadership and that has created a continuing problem for our church.

Our sister conferences are dropping the word "Mennonite." That is a mistake as they will eventually discover.

The older generation is primarily concerned about a soft retirement. Our primary concern should be our youth, for they will be the future church.

The Mennonite Church has been preserved for a purpose. We have a message the world desperately needs to hear. But time is running out. What a pity.—**Peter Derksen, Swift Current, Sask**

What kind of God are you modelling?

The Bible instructs fathers, "Do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (Ephesians 6: 4) Paul's words are startling, even revolutionary in their context, for in some cultures, including the Roman empire, fathers had the power of life and death over their children. The injunction not to provoke children to anger upended the power imbalance, calling fathers to a careful use of their power. Corresponding verses of this "household code" in Ephesians instruct Christians about how to follow Jesus' remarkable life to transform relationships at home.

Paul's teaching raises questions. How does a parent act when a child misbehaves? What's a Christian response to a child's anger? What is the discipline and instruction of the Lord? What kind of God do we convey to our children? What is it we want our children to know about God when they're grown? How can we be present to our children the way we trust God to be present to us?

My dad wrestled with this teaching, as I imagine many parents do. In particular, his swift and fiery temper could obliterate a positive impression of "the Lord's discipline," bruising the souls and bums of the children in his care. My

dad's violence damaged his children, and affected our understanding of God.

On the other hand, in many ways Dad pointed us to an awesome, gracious God who delighted in his children. On Sunday afternoon hikes, he marvelled over intoxicating honeysuckle blossoms, tower-



Family Ties

Melissa Miller

ing oaks and a fawn's woodland bed. As a hunter, he demonstrated gratitude and respect for the animal he killed to provide food for his family. In sports, he showed us the importance of playing hard and playing fair. Enthusiastic partaking of ice cream taught the joy of sweet pleasures.

My dad was a big enough man to admit his mistakes. One of the most powerful lessons he taught occurred when he said, "I'm sorry," easing the burden of misplaced anger and confused wounds that had obstructed our love. When he died, I felt

all the residual damage lift from my spirit, like a tough old scab flaking away. I credit God's grace and Dad's genuine apology for the healing.

Your experience may or may not parallel mine. Some of us struggle with the impact of an absent father—gone to work for long hours, absorbed in church activities, or emotionally unavailable. The negative imprint can leave just as powerful a mark as harmful actions.

Meditate on Ephesians 6:4 as you mark Father's Day. Consider the impact of your father on your life. Offer prayers of gratitude for what you learned from the positive actions as well as the negative. Build on the gifts you've been given to offer strength and encouragement to others. Examine your own use of power, particularly towards those with less power who are in your care. What kind of God are you modelling?

Melissa Miller, counsellor and author, operates Family Ties. She is also a master of divinity student and a member of Charleswood Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Winnipeg, Man.

CMU integration means new roles for presidents

When Canadian Mennonite University president-elect Gerald Gerbrandt begins his appointment June 15, it will mark one of the final steps in blending the administrations of three colleges into one university.

It will also mark a personal transition for Menno Simons College (MSC) president Dean Peachey and Concord College president John H. Unger. Peachey takes on a redefined role at MSC while Unger is heeding a call back to pastoral ministry.

Dean Peachey has been appointed vice president and academic dean at MSC, where he will be responsible for all academic programming and administrative matters at MSC's campus at the University of Winnipeg. The current acting dean of MSC, Paul Redekop, will serve as program coordinator of the Conflict Resolution Studies program.

Peachey describes the move as an opportunity to take a well-rounded look at the identity of the college. Developing that identity could include creating a residence program and shaping new academic and student programs.

"The shared leadership of the Federation era was a necessary transition phase," says Peachey. "Now it's time to move to a more streamlined structure. I'm looking forward to working with Gerald."

Gerbrandt shares that optimism. "I am so pleased that Dean is taking on this significant responsibility. His appoint-

ment will provide continuity of vision and growth for MSC, and strong connections between the two campuses." After four years of serving as president of Concord College in a time of tremendous transition—including the mammoth task of moving Concord College to the CMU main campus—John Unger has decided to return to congregational ministry, becoming pastor at Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg effective January 1, 2004.

Looking back, Unger says the fact that CMU has over 800 full-time-equivalent students, that government funding is ongoing, and that the administration building was successfully renovated, are all markers of success.

"This has been a miracle unfolding. That certainly has sustained me, and has brought a growing conviction that this has been worth my investment of

time and energy," says Unger. He adds that seeing changes in students' lives is what gives him the greatest satisfaction.

Unger also served as acting president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College during the 2002-03 academic year while Gerbrandt completed a one-year study sabbatical. Prior to his university work, Unger spent a decade leading Richmond Park MB Church in Brandon, Manitoba. Unger says he is looking forward to a six-month transition period before shifting to his new role in the Winnipeg congregation.

"We will very much miss John's pastoral care and contribution in the community next year," says Gerbrandt. "But we wish him God's presence as he continues his ministry in the congregation."

Canadian Mennonite University is expecting approval this summer of a move to a smaller representative board structure, and is optimistic about overall enrolment growth this fall.—CMU release by **Kevin Heinrichs**



Gerbrandt



Unger



Peachey

Winnipeg, Man.

CMU celebrates third commencement

The 48 graduates of Canadian Mennonite University's third annual commencement enjoyed a beautiful convocation weekend April 26-27 that concluded with Sunday afternoon's convocation ceremony at Portage Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church. Commencement speaker, John Redekop, adjunct professor of political science at Trinity Western University and long-time MB church leader, emphasized the importance of Christian university education in an addressed titled, "Where in a university is God?"

He articulated how God can be found in the university's commitment to truth, its teaching, people, practice and engagement with the world around.

Those in attendance were also treated to some extra pomp and ceremony as Peter M. Liba, the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, participated in the processional and presented each graduate with a provincial pin.

"Whether you realize it or not, your education has changed your life forever and you are embarked on a journey of lifelong learning," said Liba. He encouraged the graduates to thank their parents for supporting them and to use their training to become leaders in the community. Valedictorian Sherisse Penner gave an entertaining and insightful address that included a strong note of appreciation for the way CMU had built a vision of an integrated Christian life. Penner elicited

Veteran interim leader begins as conference minister in Saskatchewan

When Ken Bechtel first heard the call to ministry, God used a megaphone.

The new interim conference minister for Mennonite Church Saskatchewan, Bechtel had been teaching for ten years in the public school system before he felt his heart begin a shift in focus.

He arranged to meet with Herb Schultz, a well-respected church leader in his Mennonite community. Schultz, in turn, agreed to see him because he wanted to encourage Bechtel to consider the ministry. In the week to follow, he received two more confirmations; one of which came through another teacher who was an agnostic. "She asked me why I was wasting my time teaching," he recalled with a sense of wonder.

After studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, where he met his wife Audrey Mierau, Bechtel worked as an associate pastor in Elmira, Ontario followed by 12 years at Danforth Mennonite in Toronto. His decision to then move into interim work was largely influenced by an experience he had during seminary. As part of his course work for seminary professor David Augsburg, Bechtel did a study on a church with a troubled history of pastoral leadership. They had fired one pastor after

another for the last 20 years.

The congregation then used his study to help them effect an attitude change. "It helped me realize that the worst setting can be turned around," he reflected.

Bechtel sees many positives in his chosen vocation. He enjoys the contrast in cultural settings between different Mennonite churches. He enjoys the freedom he is granted as an interim to tackle the issues that need to be addressed. And he likes listening to people's many different stories.

Listening is something Bechtel will be doing a lot of in this his fourth interim position. The first phase of his term here, he says, will be spent in hearing the grassroots take on "what is conference." He will also use a visioning group to help him. This group of individuals was assembled by the General Council and involves people from five different areas of the province who will work together with Bechtel.

A secondary focus will revolve around a taskforce recommendation that was passed during a special delegate meeting over a year ago. The recommendation centered on the idea of a



Bechtel

re-covenanting service between MC Saskatchewan churches to be carried out in 2004. Bechtel sees this as one of his top priorities. And he believes it will need a lot of preparation to carry it out. A third focus of Bechtel's position will be to help Saskatchewan Mennonites discover what or who God is calling them to be—to flesh out a vision.

"It will generate energy in the conference," he said noting that this will only happen if the vision can be translated into action.

Although this is Bechtel's first time doing interim work in a conference position—the first three were pastorates, he is still excited about the challenges that lie ahead. And he believes that inside each faith community God has placed a wide array of gifts—to take Mennonite Church Saskatchewan from the past into a wide open future.—**Karin Fehderau**



CMU photo

smiles when she, in the spirit of her desire to become a Grade 2 teacher, concluded with Dr. Seuss's *Oh the Places You'll Go*: "So...be your name Buxbaum or Bixby or Bray or Mordecai Ali Van Allen O'Shea, you're off to Great Places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting. So...get on your way!" The commencement weekend also included a spring concert that featured the CMU men's and women's chorus, vocal jazz ensemble, CMU jazz band, a guitar ensemble and the CMU Singers. Music varied from jazz classics by Duke Ellington to vocal pieces by Haydn and Rachmaninoff.—From CMU release

Lois Brucki awaits the conferral of degrees during the convocation ceremony at Canadian Mennonite University.

St. Catharines, Ont.

Youth expected to be challenged, grow, at St. Catharines 2003

As of May 15, 400 registrations had been processed for the July 9-13 youth assembly at St. Catharines, Ont.

Challenging questions and spiritual nurture will be the focus at the youth assembly this summer, says organizer Anne Champion, youth ministry director for Mennonite Church Canada. Youth will be challenged with questions like "What if Saddam Hussein and George Bush were friends?" Gareth Brandt is one of the keynote speakers. Brandt says, "I am a skeptic as well as a dreamer and I like to ask questions like, 'What if guns and weapons had never been invented?'" Brandt currently teaches at Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford, B.C., where he also heads up the youth ministry program. He has studied at Steinbach Bible College, Brandon University, Tyndale Seminary, and University of Emmanuel College. He's been on staff at Providence College and Swift Current Bible Institute, and filled the role of youth pastor and conference youth minister for Mennonite Church Alberta and the Northwest Mennonite Conference.

Kathy Giesbrecht spends her days as a Mennonite Church Canada staff person (Resource Centre) and has recently been ordained as youth pastor at Springstein Mennonite Church in Manitoba. Together with the youth, she will explore questions like "What if prayer was not our last resort?" and "What if love was always our bottom line?"

Rebecca Holst and Darren Kropf, both from Ontario, will lead worship on Friday afternoon. Holst is a third-year Theatre and English Major at Redeemer University College in Ancaster, Ontario. She is currently working at a four-month internship at Theatre & Company in Kitchener, with a special focus on stage management and education. "I have no idea what the future holds or where I will end up. But I am enjoying the adventure of following God's call for my life," said Holst.

Darren Kropf describes himself as a

"hard core basketball player" who will graduate from high school this year. Active at Tavistock (Ontario) Mennonite Church, Kropf credits his faith community for encouraging him to become a pastor. He plans to attend the University of Waterloo in fall. When asked to help plan the youth event at St. Catharines, he says, "... I immediately said yes ... I see this event as an amazing opportunity to strengthen everyone spiritually and bring us all closer to God. I've seen God move people in many ways, and the event hasn't even happened yet!

I'm excited, thrilled, and just a tad bit overwhelmed with everything that will occur..."—MC Canada release



Winnipeg, Man.

Staff transitions at MC Canada

Four staff persons at MC Canada are making transitions this summer.

Kathy Giesbrecht, a long-time friendly voice on the phone at MC Canada's Resource Centre will end her half-time work there this summer. She will continue her youth ministry at Springstein (Manitoba) Mennonite Church. Giesbrecht was recently ordained by her faith community at Springstein and re-affirmed in her work there. She has been working at the Resource Centre for six years, and juggling her youth minister's position at Springstein.

"My greatest joy has been the privilege of talking with people and hearing what is happening in their congregations, this has infused me with much hope for the days ahead of us," said Giesbrecht. She will leave her post on August 1, but will be around to assist with transition to her successor(s).

Connie Loeppky will also end her half-time position at the Resource Centre. Loeppky has faithfully served many congregations and their worship leaders in various capacities at the centre since 1990.

Loeppky says that she made a commitment one year ago to re-evaluate her plans for leaving in June 2003. She adds, "It has been a privilege to be part of God's ministry by relating to many people via phone, e-mail, letter, and in person. It has been a vocation that never felt like a job but rather a service

that I enjoyed being part of." She is looking forward to exploring the options that an unencumbered future brings. Her last day will be June 30.

Anne Champion, director of youth ministries for MC Canada made a commitment to re-evaluate her role when she accepted her position in February of 2002. "This has been a full and exciting year," said Champion. "My roles of half-time associate pastor, director of youth ministry for MC Canada, and mother of two busy teens has proved to be an immense juggling act." Champion fulfills her pastoral role at Avon Mennonite Church in Stratford, Ont. "I'll really miss the energy of the youth in our churches across Canada, and networking with various youth leaders, and conference youth ministers from different regions," she said. Anne completes her service with MC Canada August 31, 2003.

Isbrand Hiebert, longtime editor of the German language newspaper *Der Bote* is pursuing medical treatment for a chronic health problem. Ingrid Janzen Lamp of Swift Current, Saskatchewan, is currently filling the role as interim editor. Justina Heese, executive secretary of MC Canada's Christian Formation area, said, "I am grateful for the faithful service and vibrant ministries of these individuals. They are a gift from God."—MC Canada release

Winnipeg, Man.

Can more come out of less?

How to carry on important ministries with \$2 million less to spend is a question being asked by many in Mennonite Church Canada. Leaders are responding to the budget crisis by saying that we must refocus our ministries on those things that we can do best as a national church.

The programs of International Ministries (some 125 international workers) remain a vital part of the life-changing work MC Canada carries forward in 42 countries. International Ministries remains strong, say leaders, especially for a denomination our size.

Through the work of Samson Lo, Multi-Cultural Ministries will continue to build connections with the 40 MC Canada congregations (2,000 members) who speak 12 languages. Native Ministries will change its focus to indigenous leadership development and constituency education under the leadership of Walter Franz (half time) and Donovan Jacobs (full time). Native leaders Sam and Lorna MacKay will continue as pastoral interns in their community.

The remaining staff in the Congregational Partnerships department will continue their work of connecting with congregations and providing resources for missional formation. Christian Education and Nurture will develop intergenerational resources and teaching aids that will enhance biblical knowledge from an Anabaptist/Mennonite perspective. The Resource Centre continues to provide recommendations on a wide variety of resources.

Our Denominational Minister will continue to attend to ministerial leadership concerns and the spiritual needs of the whole church. Helping pastoral candidates and churches find each other, encouraging people to prepare for pastoral ministry, and managing the Company of 1000 seminary aid funds are services that continue to be offered.

Youth ministries will continue at the same level that Canadians paid for through the former General Conference, while staff and travel costs incurred by youth assembly planning

are recovered through registration fees.

MC Canada historical records continue to be catalogued and available to researchers through the Mennonite Heritage Centre.

Through the communication of Der Bote and Canadian Mennonite you will continue to read stories about local, national, and international ministries. MC

Canada's web site, which has experienced a 109 percent increase in daily visits in the past year, provides bi-weekly updates of information and provide a vehicle for donating to MC Canada ministries.

Additional resources will be devoted to the Finance department to ensure that accounting is up-to-date. Human Resources will continue to process and provide support for international workers and other staff.

Leaders say that while alternative ways to deliver some of the terminated services are being imagined, some things about our guiding philosophy will not change:

1. Our vision still reminds us that "God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit to grow as communities of love, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world."

2. We understand Mennonite Church

Canada to be a missional church. We have often said that being missional doesn't mean we do more things, but it shapes how we do things.

3. We have a budget of almost \$5.5 million. If we are good stewards of it we can still make a very significant impact on the world.

4. We engage our beliefs on behalf of our congregations in missional witness "across the street and around the world," though in more limited ways.

Through denominational ministry, communications and the work of the General Board we continue to give leadership in forming our identity as Mennonite Church Canada.

5. And most important, God is not changing. God is still working, even though we do not see clearly the way before us.

"Despite reduced resources, there remains much that we can do," said general secretary Dan Nighswander. "We will continue to pray, seek support, and serve according to our calling."—From MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**

**God is not changing.
God is still working,
even though we do not
see clearly the way
before us.**

Global Urbanization

Mobile Seminar in India, January 2004

Instructor: Art McPhee, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Intercultural Studies



Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

• Learn about the challenges of Christian ministry in South Asia's largest cities

Get a close-up look at MCC ministries and ministries run by Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity

Hear from Indian scholars on urbanization issues

See more information at www.ambc.edu/India
or contact Art McPhee, amcphee@ambc.edu.

Winnipeg, Man./Newton, Kan.

Tenth Man becomes JoinHands

Mennonite Men, an organization related to both Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada, wants its supporters to join hands in helping build Mennonite churches.

After more than a year of considering various options, the MM board agreed at its annual meeting in March to adopt the name JoinHands for its church-building program.

This name replaces Tenth Man, the name used since the program's inception in 1983. While Mennonite Men promotes and develops men's resources, one of its main priorities—and its highest profile program—is its church-building program, which provides financial assistance to new congregations as they seek to buy or build their first meetinghouse.

At its meeting in 2002, the MM board agreed to look for a new name for the program and asked for suggestions. They received many. Among those making the final cut were MeetingPlaces, SacredSpaces and International Builders. The board deliberated several hours before coming to consensus on JoinHands.

Board members offered the following reasons for choosing a new name for the program:

- The name should: be inclusive, inviting all people to participate; be part of the transformation process of the new Mennonite Church; emphasize new relationships; fit into the missional emphasis of the church.
 - The name can: revitalize the appeal of the program; be invitational, inviting new people to join.
 - The name Tenth Man has a dated historical reference that has little power to attract new participants.
 - The new name suggests participation with others in a significant project.
- Glenn Ediger, a product designer in Newton, Kan., has created a logo for the program.

The earlier name, Tenth Man, comes from an old European Mennonite system of community organization in which the "schulze," or village mayor, had one elected assistant for every 10 adult male property owners in the vil-

lage. This "10th man" provided support in carrying out administrative duties and in making decisions.



Many felt this name was too obscure and had little meaning for those unfamiliar with the Russian Mennonite context. Another concern was that it was not gender neutral. On the other hand, a number of people liked the name and felt it unwise to change it. Newness won out.

The JoinHands church-building program enlists members who commit themselves to contribute \$100 twice each year to support new congregations. Members may be individuals or groups such as Sunday school classes or men's fellowships.

While it comes under Mennonite Men, JoinHands is a lay movement, run mostly by volunteers from various regions. It has

grown by 40 percent in the past four years, and in 2001 it signed up 70 members, the most in more than a decade. The organization has already made commitments for the next three years, with more requests coming.—MC Canada/MC USA joint release by

Gordon Houser

Winnipeg, Man.

Radio ministry changes name, drops Low German programs

Faith and Life Communications (FLC) has a new "home" in the Mennonite Church Manitoba structure," said Darryl Neustaedter Barg, director of Media Ministries. "It has moved from being an independent ministry of Mennonite Church Manitoba to being part of Media Ministries under Evangelism and Service Ministries. We are working on creating a vision statement that will guide our work in this new structure."

"FLC will continue to produce English and German radio programs, support a men's, women's and young adult choir and operate a recording studio. The name will likely change to Mennonite Church Manitoba, Media Ministries to reflect an effort to use more than radio and choirs to communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ," said Neustadter Barg. It will also include a greater emphasis to communicate the Christian message to younger people.

The decisions to cut the Low German radio program, "Wort des Lebens", reduce staff time and cut programming to Alberta and Saskatchewan because of funding cutbacks has been a source of concern for many supporters. Neustaedter Barg explained that FLC has been operating with a deficit for a

number of years. The deficit was financed by the FLC Memorial Fund which would have been depleted in 2003 unless changes were made.

Donations from listeners have been decreasing since the mid 1990s and with current programming aimed primarily at a more senior group, that funding base has been shrinking, he explained. "Our MC Manitoba German speaking constituency worships in High German, not Low German. Beyond MC Manitoba, we have little evidence that the program was a mission to Low German speaking newcomers to Canada," said Neustaedter Barg.

Listener donations from Alberta and Saskatchewan covered approximately one third of the \$28,400 a year cost to air programs in the two provinces.

Two-thirds of FLC's \$345,000 budget for 2002 came from outside the MC Manitoba budget. Of that \$147,000 came from donations and sponsorships.

The Abundant Life, a 15 minute English radio program, will continue to air Sunday at 8:30 a.m. on CFAM/CHSM/CJRB with Bill Block as new host and producer. The 30 minute German radio program, Frohe Botschaft, continues Sunday at 7:30 a.m. on the same radio stations.—**Evelyn Rempel Petkau**

Akron, Pa.

Aid worker reports on life in post-war Iraq

As Baghdad fell to coalition troops in early April, looters ransacked Al Rashad Psychiatric Hospital, the only mental hospital in Iraq. Terrified, all 1,015 residents fled as looters stole medicine and equipment, then stripped the hospital of doors, windows and light fixtures. On April 25, Mennonite relief worker Steve Weaver visited Al Rashad. Amid the overturned cabinets, he saw decades' worth of patient records scattered about. A lone staff person was painstakingly sorting through the piles of papers, trying to re-file them. This incident tells the larger story of post-war Iraq—the collapse and destruction of hospitals, water purification systems and other vital institutions, which are leaving vulnerable people in desperate straits. It speaks to the persistence needed to make these institutions function again. Weaver of Landisville, Pa., spent nine days in Baghdad in April, helping to distribute Mennonite Central Committee relief kits and comforters. He also assisted MCC Middle East workers Menno Wiebe and Edward Miller to conduct the first in-country assessments for MCC since the war. Weaver reported on his experiences May 8 at the MCC office in Akron.

At Al Rashad, an institution that has received MCC food and assistance since 1996, Weaver learned that some 700 patients were still unaccounted for. As Weaver helped unload MCC relief kits for the remaining patients, a staff person confided that some female patients had been raped during the looting.

Although the Iraq war did not result in the refugee crisis that some had predicted, another crisis may be brewing—one caused by “tired infrastructure,” as Weaver termed it. Iraq’s water purification systems, for example, were strained before and are now in an even more precarious state. Weaver visited a clinic in Sadr City (former Saddam City), a Baghdad slum. There he watched as a doctor examined a sick child and prescribed antibiotics and “two days’ worth of clean drinking water.”



Aid worker Steve Weaver talks about his experiences in Iraq during an interview with Central Pennsylvania media on May 8.

“I was struck by how vulnerable some Iraqis are, how parents can’t even provide something basic like clean water for their children,” commented Weaver. Iraq was one of the most centralized countries in the world with people depending heavily on the government for food and other services. Some 60 percent of Iraq’s 20 million people, for example, were wholly dependent on food distributed by the government at 44,000 public distribution points throughout the country.

“In a situation like this, what happens when the government evaporates?” said Weaver.

In the weeks before the war, Saddam Hussein’s government distributed extra food rations. By early May, Iraqis were believed to still have at least three weeks’ worth of food on hand. However, most had not received any salaries for two or three months. They had no cash to purchase essentials, such as soap.

MCC’s relief kits, which contain basic hygiene items, will continue to be distributed by MCC partners. “The soap is very important,” said Weaver. “It’s more than just the luxury of feeling clean; it could mean the difference between health and sickness.”

He pointed out soap enables people to wash their hands to prevent passing germs. The laundry soap permits them to wash clothing and bedding, especial-

ly crucial if children develop diarrhea, a common illness in areas where water isn’t pure.

MCC had pre-positioned supplies in Iraq during the buildup to the war. Weaver learned that partner agencies distributed some 8,000 relief kits and 30,000 comforters during the war. MCC will continue to send relief kits—some 41,000 in all. Another MCC assessment team left for Iraq May 16 to determine future aid.—MCC release by **Pearl Sensenig**

Akron, Pa.

Muslim children join relief effort

In hopes of collecting more relief kits for Iraq, Northern Virginia Mennonite Church opened its drive to the community. They eventually amassed 335 kits.

Al-Fatih Academy, an Islamic elementary school, had been looking for a project to help people in Iraq. “A lot of the kids have relatives or know of someone in Iraq,” explained Afeefa Syeed, principal. Several of the children know both Iraqis and U.S. soldiers.

As teachers helped the children discuss what it might be like to be a refugee or living in Iraq during the war, the students solicited items for relief kits from their families and friends. They collected about half of the total number of kits and assembled many of them at school.

The academy’s 55 students are also creating letters and cards for Iraqi children that will be delivered with some of the MCC relief kits. They included Arabic-language messages, such as, “I pray for your safety.”

This interfaith effort drew interest from four television stations and the Washington Post, which printed an article about the kits in its April 13 issue.

Muslim-Christian collaboration also occurs in Iraq, where MCC is working together with the Islamic Relief agency to distribute kits.—MCC release

Baghdad, Iraq

Palestinians driven from homes

In the dusty streets of Beladiyaat, a middle-class suburb on the eastern side of this sprawling city of 5 million, young boys of Palestinian origin offload a rickety truck carrying Mennonite Central Committee relief kits and blankets.

Nearby 85 white tents, each housing one family, have been erected on the soft, green grass of the small enclosed field. Water from temporary toilets flooded parts of the field, but undaunted youngsters kick a soccer ball around, avoiding only a marked-off hole where an unexploded U.S. missile landed.

Those living in the tents are all of Palestinian descent. They were forced out of their homes throughout Baghdad—including from a housing complex in the Beladiyaat suburb—by Iraqis who argued that Saddam gave Palestinians preferential treatment and ignored his own people. To assist these newly homeless Palestinians, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society established this refugee camp, and MCC, through its partner the Islamic Relief Agency, supplied personal hygiene items and blankets.

The Palestinians tell stories laced with bitterness. “They gave us an hour to leave the house,” says one man. “We only left after they threatened us with

weapons.” A woman named Um Ahmed says she lived in the lower-class neighborhood of Between in central Baghdad for 40 years. Now she and three of her five children sleep in a tent.

Visitors have to tread carefully in this damp field, and not only because of the unexploded ordnance, but tempers are running high; the United States receives fierce criticism. An errant U.S. missile destroyed a nearby residential building, a man shouts; another says that Arab leaders have sold out to America. Earlier, elders asked pointedly if any of the aid being delivered today came from the U.S. government.

Praise for the former Iraqi dictator is scarce in today’s Baghdad, but this



MCC photo by Edward Miller.

Um Ahmed, right, with family members at the Beladiyaat camp, received an MCC relief kit. “The bucket is helpful,” she said, “but I need a house.” Throughout Baghdad, angry neighbours drove out Palestinian families, accusing them of receiving special treatment from Saddam Hussein’s government.

group argues that Saddam Hussein took good care of Palestinians. One man says that if it were not for his family, he would have proudly fought and died for the Fedayeen, Saddam’s notorious guerilla army.

Anwar Salim Al-Awawda of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society office in Baghdad provides free medical services to those in the camp. He says that 35,000 Palestinians came to Iraq after 1948.

Now Iraq’s Palestinians speak the Iraqi Arabic dialect, and these second, third and fourth-generation exiles have never glimpsed their homeland. But unlike in Jordan, Palestinians here have not been eligible for Iraqi passports. Instead they hold documents that identify them as Palestinians. The Ba’ath regime’s pro-Palestinian, pan-Arabist policies meant that they did, however, receive decent housing and even monthly stipends. But clearly many Iraqis viewed this state assistance as unfair.

As the Iraqi nation comes to terms with the present post-Ba’ath political reality and ponders an uncertain future, humanitarian organizations are simply responding in emergency

Continued on page 21



The staff and service workers at Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pennsylvania took time from their work day on May 13 to pack relief kits at the nearby material resources centre. MCC constituents have donated more than 40,000 relief kits for Iraq. Volunteers pack the supplies, including towels, soap, bandages and toothbrushes into five-gallon buckets. At left is Andres Zorrilla; from right are Tina Klassen, Wesley Penner and Lisa Zimmerman.—From MCC release

Homes From page 20

mode. The 85 tents here are fully occupied, and with 250 families registered and waiting to join the camp, an expansion is being planned.

MCC's blankets and relief kits are now nestled among the few household goods these displaced families could carry when they were forced from their homes at short notice. In this traumatic transition from furnished house to sparse tent, the relief items are certainly meeting basic needs. But people here are weary, overwhelmed by their present circumstances. "The bucket is helpful," said Um Ahmed, "but I need a house."—MCC release by **Edward Miller**

Baghdad, Iraq

'Liberty is very expensive,' say Iraqi seniors

One day after Baghdad erupted in a frenzy of looting when the Ba'athist regime fell, 68-year-old Kassem Abdul Hassan watched a mob of 20 men approach the gate of the Home for the Aged in the southeastern Rashad area of the city.

"We told them that this is our home," said Kassem. "We said we have nowhere else to go." The mob did not force their way in, but that night five U.S. military vehicles came to provide protection.

Though the institution avoided being stripped bare—unlike many government buildings, schools and hospitals in the city—the insecurity in Baghdad and the loss of government funding have left the home without a lifeline. Now humanitarian agencies are re-establishing contact with the institution.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and its local partner Islamic Relief Agency (ISRA) recently handed out MCC comforters and relief kits to 140 elderly residents. The MCC relief kits include soap, shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrush, towels and other basic hygiene items. More than 41,000 kits have been collected in North America and Europe during the past six months.

Some of the men and women staying here are retired professionals; many, like Kassem Abdul Hassan, have no surviving family members to care for them.

One dignified woman of 75, Su'ad Nuwi Sa'id, is the sister of a former Iraqi prime minister from the 1950s.

MCC and ISRA have worked at this home since 1999 and at the nearby Al

Rashad Psychiatric Hospital since 1996, delivering vital protein supplies, such as canned chicken and lentils.

The current altered political landscape delights Kassem, who has lived in the home for seven years. "Iraq was like a prison before, and the door to the prison is now open," he said. "People are very lucky for this change—we can say what we think and we have new opportunities."

But he was quick to point out that change has come at a price. Now insecurity in Baghdad is rife, electricity is sporadic and here water trickles from taps for only a few hours a day. More importantly, the government food ration every Iraqi was entitled to and the special pension residents at this home received every three months (U.S. \$125) will no longer be distributed.

"We haven't had liberty for 35 years," said Kassem. "But liberty is very, very expensive."

Residents here are adjusting to the new reality. Meals are daily becoming plainer as food stocks dwindle. For more than four months, residents have not received their government stipend. U.S. soldiers are no longer outside the gate, leaving the home vulnerable as looters and gangs vying for territory engage in fierce gunfights throughout Baghdad.—MCC release by **Edward Miller**

The writer is an MCC worker based in Baghdad, Iraq.

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Altona, Man.

Group studies Mennonites and politics in Manitoba

Mennonites and politics in Manitoba was the topic for six meetings of the local history club here this winter with guest historians.

This was the fourth winter series. Earlier ones have touched on Mennonites emigrating from Russia, an overview of Mennonites, and the emigrations to Mexico and Paraguay.

The group of about 25 was under the leadership of Adolf Ens, long-time professor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, along with input from archivist Lawrence Klippenstein. Several members of the group reported on their research projects.

For example, Dick Hildebrand had interviewed Jake M. Froese, the lone Social Credit member in the Manitoba Legislature for many years. A daughter, Judy Siemens, added personal insights on life in the Froese family. Jim Dyck and Ted Klassen did a study on two friends of the Mennonite people—Valentine Winkler and his son Howard W. Winkler. Brothers Valentine and Enoch Winkler were instrumental in helping Mennonites homestead in Manitoba, and both sat in the provincial legislature.

Valentine owned a grain elevator and lumber business at Winkler, a town established in 1892 and named for him. He served in the legislature from 1892-1920, for a time as minister of agriculture and immigration.

Dyck noted that “by 1915-1920 it was no longer just Mennonite churches negotiating with government but individuals had begun seeking advice, favours, or seeking influence.”

After his father's death in 1920, Howard Winkler ran the family business. In 1935 he was elected Liberal Member of Parliament and served until 1953. A prolific letter writer, Howard's files include correspondence with D.K. Friesen, Bishop David Schulz, J.J. Siemens, and others. Peace, Order and Good Government by T.D. Regehr provided background for the first four lectures, which included an overview of the Anabaptist stance

on church and state.

Mennonites who came to Manitoba from Russia had already practised democratic self-government in Russia. When Manitoba “imposed” municipal government in the 1880s, Mennonites took three positions. The Kleine Gemeinde took the most apolitical position, accepting the leadership of the Chortitzer settlers and urging its members not to vote.

The Reinlaender Gemeinde accepted the idea of a district government of its own members but wanted it under the church, as in Russia. The Chortitzer (East Reserve), Sommerfelder, and Bergthaler did not oppose municipal governments in 1882. These governments did the work that the Gebietssamt, the Mennonite district administration, had done before.

Mennonites soon discovered that if they didn't vote in provincial elections, their representatives would be chosen by the non-Mennonite population. So political involvement grew and Mennonites began running for office. However, not even the popular Erdman Penner could win against Enoch Winkler in 1892.

Highlights for the class were visits by three Mennonite politicians, all Conservatives: Siegfried Enns, MP during the Diefenbaker years, and former MLAs Jack Penner and Albert Driedger. For Enns, running for the Conservatives “was a case of a vacancy waiting to be filled, not really a matter of ideology” when he started. Penner, whose activities in farm organizations got him into the political scene, considered several parties before settling into the PC camp.

Both said the church seemed relatively indifferent to their moving into politics, and never interacted with them on political themes. Penner accepts this since he holds to a strong separation of church and state position. Enns, however, expressed regret that his congregation was not able to be more openly affirming, according to Klippenstein who led the session. Perhaps deserving of a study, suggested Ens, is that Mennonites who entered politics tended to be children or close relatives of bishops or ministers.—From report by **Elmer Heinrichs**

Young adults enjoy getaway from studies and work

May 2-4 marked the fourth annual weekend retreat hosted by, and for Alberta Mennonite young adults. Descending on Camp Valaqua for the weekend, 30 participants from as far north as Edmonton and from Pincher Creek in the south settled in for some relaxed and relatively unscheduled retreat time near the foothills of the Rockies. While the springtime snow laid some drifts across plans for mountain hiking and wall climbing, the main lodge served as centre stage for great games, book reading near the fire, and frequent forays into the hot tub parked just outside the doors.

Jon Anderson, long-time InterVarsity Christian Fellowship worker as well as sessional professor with the University of Calgary and the University of Lethbridge, prompted the group through three engaging and highly interactive

encounters with Jesus' parables. Worship through song was facilitated by participants Ryan Siemens (associate pastor at Foothills Mennonite), his spouse Sandra Siemens; Mark and Christina Deasty (youth sponsors at Trinity Mennonite); and Darrell Krahn (also from Foothills). Also joining the group for one evening were Jim and Lorraine Shantz (Jim is conference minister for Mennonite Church Alberta).

Participants took turns at duties in the kitchen and in the janitorial department as they enjoyed this springtime getaway from studies and employment. Much appreciated was a generous subsidy from MC Alberta which helped keep registration costs at a minimal rate.

A retreat for 2004 is planned for the weekend of May 14-16. Inquiries can be sent to Keith Funk-Froese: keith@holyroodmennonite.ca—**Perry Bartel**

Tours From page 23

our family lived almost 500 miles from grandparents, visiting was always an event. We needed to travel to their communities or they travelled to ours, and it required planning time together. Through spending time together and sharing life experiences and values, bonding occurred.

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The writer is president of TourMagination.



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As I grow older...

The following are reflections by Katie Funk Wiebe drawn from a letter she sent family and friends at Christmas. The letter is on the web site of the Mennonite Association of Retired Persons. The web address is: <http://marp.mennonite.net>

- It continues to amaze me how many words speakers can use to say nothing, especially during an election year. If we were each given an allotment of words to use each year, how many of them would count?
- I have a notepad that measures 5 x 3/4 inches. I call it my notepad for narrow-minded people. Some days I use it myself because it fits my thinking that day. Other days I wish I had a couple of dozen to hand out to everyone I meet.
- An old-timer is someone who can remember when you couldn't eat a dollar's worth at a café, when people were more intelligent than computers, when any man who washed dishes worked in a restaurant.
- You make life meaningful for yourself when you bring meaning to someone else's life by simple acts of love. MEANING in capital letters doesn't come pounding on your door demanding to be let in. You have to go beyond yourself to find it and bring it in.
- FEAR often rides shotgun beside me whenever I encounter a new aspect of aging. I see it also in the older woman who states loudly in a restaurant, "I am not going to pay extra for that mistake the waiter made," or in myself when I am asked to do something I've never done before.
- It takes a lot of heat—and strength and creativity—to make a blown-glass figurine or vase. I saw this at the Karg Glassworks as we watched the men take big blobs of molten glass out of extremely hot furnaces and turn them into breathtakingly beautiful vases. I ponder how much heat God still needs to turn me into a work of beauty to be proud of.
- Oswald Chambers tells me that to turn the natural and physical into the spiritual takes sacrifice. Sacrifice? What's that? That is a concept many people dropped during the thirties when sacrificial giving took the giver to the bottom of the purse.
- I still enjoy new challenges, any kind, even while I resist them. Some people have the idea that as you get older all you want is to be entertained or travel and go to socials. The challenge of being confronted with rethinking my attitudes and theology is sometimes painful, but always a spurt in personal growth. And then a joy.

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Winnipeg, Man.

Danforth Mennonite proceeds with MVS unit

In an inspiring step of faith, Danforth Mennonite Church in Toronto is proceeding with its plans to open a Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) unit despite the elimination of the program by Mennonite Church Canada (see Canadian Mennonite, March 24, pages 12-15, 26; April 7, page 14)

The decision was made at a congregational meeting on April 30. The meeting was called for the express purpose of discerning the issue.

Dalton Jantzi, MVS committee chair said, "Our committee came to that meeting with our books open, with no foregone conclusions. There were no cheerleaders, no pushing of agendas. "It was the kind of climate which set the tone for dialogue that was conducive to reaching a near consensus. My comment to Jim Wert, chair of our church council who walked us through this process was, 'This has felt like decision-making at its best.' It felt as though we were walking on sacred ground."

The church treasurer presented the meeting with a budget picture of a unit with four occupant volunteers. The group also consulted with former members of the Hamilton MVS committee.

They carefully considered challenges of missing support services such as promotion, applicant screening, crises management, conflict resolution, ongoing administrative support, orientations, and retreats—all services formerly provided by MC Canada program staff. To overcome some of these obstacles, they will place a greater emphasis on regional collaboration with other congregations who also host units (Hamilton and Montreal), or international collaboration (perhaps a connection to MVS USA). They also noted that there would be financial challenges with fewer than four volunteers.

Finally, participants asked themselves if they have the energy to start and sustain an MVS unit. In the end they decided that "Good ideas often gener-

ate as much or more energy than it requires to get them working," said Marilyn Zehr, Danforth MVS committee member. "It is our hope and prayer that this will be the case."

They have committed to making the unit work for two years: much of the preparation was completed, applicants were interested in coming to Toronto, and work placements had already been arranged. A two year commitment would allow time to see what new structures or administrative arrangements might result.

More than one person noted "... a sense of the work of the Spirit in this meeting in a way that has not been experienced quite like this in some time," said Zehr. "We could honestly say that it seemed good to the Spirit and to us to continue with setting up a unit with recognition that even after our careful consideration there remain concerns and questions, and so it is with a leap of faith that we continue." One can't plan for exactly how God will work through this situation, she added.

Hawkesville, Ont.

Church sends off pastors with friendship quilt

Hawkesville Mennonite Church said its good-byes to Herb and Shirley Schultz on April 27. They came as intentional interim pastors for a one-year period, but extended their stay until the congregation completed its visioning sessions with Jeff Steckley. After 20 months the time came to say good-bye. Herb and Shirley took turns to be with each of the adult Sunday School classes, saying they did not want to disturb the class in any way—an impossibility.

During morning worship on April 27, the children presented a puppet show which was much appreciated. What a fitting way for them to share their talents.

Shirley presented a candle and candleholder to the congregation. After lighting the candle, Herb and Shirley together brought the message, "Let the fire burn," challenging the congregation to be a light and a fire for all to see. The hymn of response was a rousing, "Guide my feet."

After the traditional potluck meal, everyone gathered for an afternoon of fellowship in singing and sharing with fun and laughter. One person shared that laughter and crying are almost the same because in both cases the tears flow.—Elo Wideman



Hawkesville Mennonite Church presented this friendship quilt to Herb and Shirley Schultz who finished their term as interim pastors. The house blocks were personalized by each family while some of the tree blocks were in memory of those who died during the Schultz pastorate.

One sign of hope appeared in the form of committee volunteers; a call for two more persons from the congregation resulted in four willing responses. Many current members have experienced voluntary service through MVS and Mennonite Central Committee. Zehr said, "We see it as an important investment in the young adults of the Mennonite Church. In the past many MVSers have become our current church leaders. The congregation is hoping and praying that this commitment will bring about a new spirit of life and energy in their congregation. "We do not know what the new structure or umbrella for MVS will look like but many of us are quite confident that something new will evolve and ultimately will be necessary." Danforth is striving to enhance connections with their local community through the work placements MVSers will do and through the household and the lifestyle commitments the members of the household will make.—MC Canada release

Lethbridge, Alta.

Variety of hats remind women of diversity

About 70 women attended the Alberta Women in Mission annual conference held at Lethbridge Mennonite Church on May 2 and 3. Many women wore hats depicting their role as gardeners, quilters, musicians, writers, bank employees, cooks, to follow the theme, "The hats we wear: celebrating our diversity" based on II Corinthians 12. During the evening the "Raging Grannies," a group of singing grandmothers entertained the group. Their lively "protest" songs were quite hilarious. A skit by Kate Janzen poked fun at the way we change hats. As she told the story of a family, two volunteers were busy exchanging hats.

In her first presentation, Kathy Fast, the guest speaker from Mennonite Church Canada, wore an African dress and turban, a gift from the school where she taught. Fast, who spent several years in Africa, was challenged to accept a teaching position for which she had not felt qualified and the experience stretched her beyond her comfort zone. Instead of hiding our talents for safekeeping, they should be invested and allowed to grow.

In Fast's second presentation she wore a leather hat made by a Kalahari Bushman. Just as the Bushmen go out in groups for protection, we need supporting persons around us—a network of person with other gifts and talents.

For her third presentation she wore a bicycle helmet, pointing out that a bicycle is made up of many parts and that each one is essential. In all of her examples, Fast interwove scripture and everyday living, giving new and refreshing insight into II Corinthians 12. The business sessions brought reports on various

projects. Among the projects continuing are support for missionaries Todd and Jeanette Hanson, Global Families, Tobia and George Veith in Macau, and



Anne Neufeld (left), editor of the history of Alberta Women in Mission, presents the first copy to Carol Sawatzky.

tuition assistance for women attending post-secondary Mennonite institutions.

Executive positions were affirmed or re-elected: Beth Moyer, president; Rita Dahl, vice president; Carol Sawatzky, secretary/treasurer; and Bev Janzen, camp rep.

A silent auction of 52 items netted \$650. One half of the proceeds and the offering will go to Mennonite Church Canada and half toward hymn books for Camp Valaqua.

In the memorial service, Tena Bloudoff of Taber read a brief profile of the women who have passed on to their reward. Susie Thiessen, the oldest one, died at age 103. A rose was presented to Elfrieda Wiens, 88, who was the oldest participant.

The theme song, "In our hands" was sung several times, a fitting reminder of the talents we have in our hands.—

Irene Klassen



Kathy Fast speaks to the women wearing African dress.

Gem, Alta.

Historical society meets despite snowstorm

It was snowing and blowing a bit on April 26, so we allowed extra time to travel to Gem to attend the annual meeting of the Mennonite Historical Society. The farther we went, the worse it got, but when we phoned George Paetkau in Gem we were told the weather was okay. By the time we got to Strathmore the power was out and we couldn't see any sign of life, but by then it was impossible to turn back. Our two-hour trip took three hours and forty minutes of the worst driving conditions we ever encountered. Although some Calgaryans phoned to cancel, the contingent from Edmonton arrived in time!

We debated whether to hold the meeting and decided since the executive, several area representatives, and a handful of members were there, we would carry on. Rescheduling seemed impossible.

Jake Doerksen welcomed us to the Mennonite Brethren Church. Jake Harder, chair, called the meeting to order. In the past year a library and archives were established in Calgary where visitors can research their roots. Harder commended Judith Rempel, the archivist for her invaluable expertise. The "Policies and procedures" manual, prepared by Judith, was circulated. The newsletter has grown to 16 pages.

The members approved a policy of rotating three-year terms for the new executive which includes Colin Neufeldt, chair; David Wiebe-Neufeldt, vice chair; and Ralph Dahl as treasurer. A \$20 membership fee is to be established in 2004.

A few more local folks arrived for the story-telling in the afternoon. Linda Lauber told the story of the (Old) Mennonite Church beginnings in Duchess. Henry Retzlaff and Jake Wiens shared memories of Rosemary and Countess. George Paetkau and Irene Klassen shared stories of Gem and New Gem. Jake Doerksen, who has pastored the Gem MB church for many years, as his father did before him, gave us his account of its history.

The cooperation and community efforts among the Mennonite Church,

Mennonite Brethren and General Conference Mennonite Church have been quite remarkable. George Paetkau told a story about the day Henry Tiessen took a truckload of young men and boys to pick rocks which were used to build the foundation of the church at Gem.

Due to the inclement weather, the evening program took place before the

banquet. Jessie (Neufeld) Kehler, who grew up in this area, spoke about various people and events that influenced her life. Her husband, Larry Kehler, shared some of the highlights of his recent visit to Iraq with a Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation.—**Irene Klassen**

Abbotsford, B.C.

B.C. women reflect on prayer

There were smiles and even tears among the music and the silence as women reflected on the theme, "Beside still waters: the journey of prayer." On April 27, 195 women gathered for the annual B.C. Women in Mission inspirational day at Emmanuel Mennonite Church.

Speaker for the afternoon was Marilyn Houser Hamm of Winnipeg, who has served in various capacities with Mennonite Church Canada.

"The topic this afternoon is of vital importance," she said as she referred to recent challenges in her own life. "Prayer is a journey of mountains and valleys. Isn't it wonderful that God is

there?"

During the course of the afternoon, those present were able to not only listen but to participate in response to the speaker's words.

Houser Hamm began her talk by pouring water from a pitcher to a basin so that all could hear and see the cleansing, soothing water trickling down. In the space of life and wholeness, she asked, "Where is that space for you?" Some prayer is like breathing, she said. "Be aware of your breath. Be aware of God's presence around you." Morning is a natural time to come to God in prayer; she believes that "God blesses us in special ways in the morning." Houser Hamm then went to the piano to play and sing as she led the group in a musical prayer response.

In another exercise, Houser Hamm read the familiar Psalm 23 and asked each person to stop and think, "Where [on which verse] does your mind stop? What does God ask you to do?"

Even memorized prayers can have meaning, she said, reciting the Lord's Prayer. "The amazing thing about a prayer like that is that we can mature into it. Prayers we have memorized call us and move us and teach us."

Other features of the afternoon program included music by the Emmanuel Church children's choir, and a memorial service for women in Mennonite Church B.C. congregations who had passed away during the past year. An offering totaling \$3,848.05 was collected for several Women in Mission projects.

Unlike previous years, the inspirational day did not go into the evening, but concluded with supper following the afternoon session.—**Amy Dueckman**



Marilyn Houser Hamm used water as an image of wholeness to be found in God as she led the B.C. Women in Mission on a journey of prayer.

Kitchener, Ont.

Stand-off averted between neighbours and housing project

A stand-off between a Mennonite housing initiative and a neighbourhood group was averted when both parties compromised to reach an agreement.

MennoHomes, established several years ago by Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Waterloo region, had originally planned a 24-unit affordable housing development on land to be purchased from a Lutheran church in Kitchener. Neighbours objected, however, by appealing the application for severance and title. (See December 2, 2002 issue, page 18.) Taking the neighbours' objections into account, MennoHomes initially scaled back the development to 20 units. However, the protests of neighbours continued. They said they would appeal the development to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) if further changes were not made.

MennoHomes, confident that it could win at an OMB hearing, got the backing of the city's planning department, which sought the support of a city council committee.

However, when the committee's meeting was postponed because of a snow storm, all parties agreed to use the extra time to try again to work out a deal. The neighbours agreed to withdraw their appeals if MennoHomes would scale the development down to 16 units. MennoHomes, in turn, was concerned that its cost per unit for land would remain the same if it built only 16 units.

At this point, the city stepped in and said that if MennoHomes and the neighbours could come to an agreement, it would sell some frontage to MennoHomes, buy back a portion of the land and convert it into parkland—possibly a community garden. "The compensation from the city was

the 'deal-maker,'" said Martin Buhr, president of MennoHomes. On May 5 city council approved the deal. The agreement is significant, said Buhr, because "a suburban in-fill site is being developed as affordable housing with the immediate neighbours on-side.... In focus groups, families had expressed the dream of decent and affordable housing in a safe and secure neighbourhood. That dream is close to being realized."

Buhr also reported that one of the city councillors had commented that in all her years of municipal service, she had never seen a compromise of this magnitude where all parties made major concessions and still maintained they were pleased with the outcome.—**Ron Rempel**

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Listowel, Ont.

Listowel celebrates 40th anniversary

A 40th anniversary, with the theme “God’s faithfulness endures to all generations,” was held at Listowel (Ontario) Mennonite Church on April 27. The celebration and homecoming provided opportunity for the many persons connected with the Listowel Mennonite congregation through the past 40 years to fellowship and reminisce.

LMC’s founding pastor Amsey Martin and former pastor Brian Laverty both spoke of God’s faithfulness based on passages from Psalms 100 during the morning service.

The spirited congregational singing of over 300 people attending, as well as several music groups—LMC’s choir, a men’s quartette, and a ladies trio—provided a celebration in music. During “moments for children” pastor Fred Lichti led the children in filling a time capsule scheduled to be opened in 25 years. The children included

drawings they had done and a number of adults contributed letters they had written to their young children and grandchildren.

A fellowship dinner at noon was followed by an informal afternoon session.

The oldest member of the congregation, Lloyd Snider, who celebrated his 98th birthday that day, was presented with a boutonniere by his granddaughter, Anita Carter.

In recognition of their contribution to LMC, each of the spouses of pastors who served at LMC through the years were presented with a floral plant.

Forty years of LMC history was compiled and shown in a video presentation by Rob Annis. Former pastor Ray Erb gave the afternoon’s meditation. The day of celebration concluded with an anniversary cake and fellowship.—

Darlene Culp

School notes

Students donate meals

Goshen, Ind.—Some students at Goshen College skipped meals on May 15 in order to support the local food bank and specifically to support military families who are financially stressed. There were 64 who skipped lunch and 88 who skipped dinner. The idea came from Don Blosser, professor emeritus of Bible who heard that military families in nearby South Bend were having trouble making ends meet due to family members serving overseas. Some students who don’t eat on campus donated canned food or donated money to go toward the effort. Since fewer staff were needed to serve the day’s meals, those savings were added as well. A total donation of \$828 went to the food bank. Some people were surprised that “peace people” would be willing to contribute toward military families.—From Goshen release



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Mennonite Church Canada is moving forward in our calling to be a community of the healing and hope. Will you continue to partner with us in prayer and financial support?

Peace training

Fresno, Cal.—Fresno Pacific University (FPU) is launching an International Peace Education Development project to help teachers and leaders from around the world receive training at FPU. Mennonite Central Committee has committed \$30,000 to this project, enough to fund one student. The program is run by FPU's Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies. For this coming year, the centre is targeting students from Brazil and Ethiopia, which have Mennonite colleges, and Vietnam. Dalton Reimer is project coordinator. FPU is affiliated with the Mennonite Brethren church.—From MCC release

Transitions

Births and adoptions

Augerman—to Jim and Marlene, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a son, Carter Jayden Dillan, May 19.

Buller-Goulding—to Jody and Jamie, Hillcrest Mennonite, Alta., a daughter, Rogan Cadence, May 16.

Dyck—to Shannon and Henry, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a son, Hudson Jay, May 16.

Dyck—to Ernie and Rita, Douglas Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Julia Megan, May 3.

Gawlina—to David and Helene, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Mara Jade Erin, May 13.

Gossen—to Paul and Sharon, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a son, Matthew Tiessen, March 4.

Harris—to Michelle and Chris, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Jaryn Elizabeth, April 29.

Linke—adopted by Jennifer and Tom, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a son, Nicholas Martin Andrew, on April 14. (Born June 20, 2002 in Russia.)

Martens—to Dale and Yvonne, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., a son, Eric William, April 27.

Penner—to Waldo and Laurel, Ottawa Mennonite, Ont., a son, William Seth, April 18.

Rempel—to Dan and Cathy, Douglas Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Meghan Cathleen, March 25.

Shantz—to Byron and Amelia, Shantz Mennonite Church, Ont., a son, Dawson Dylan, April 14.

Marriages

Buhr-Voth—Lorne Patrick

and Carie Lynn, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., April 12.

Cherewayko-Sawatzky—Scott and Jacquie, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., April 26.

Letskeman-Friesen—Dan and Kristen, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., April 5.

Deaths

Baerg—Jack, 74, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., March 17.

Dyck—Justina, 83, Bergthaler Mennonite, Morden, Man., February 28.

Epp—Ruby, 79, Zoar Mennonite, Sask., April 21.

Goerzen—Helene, 89, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., April 22.

Janzen—Nettie, 81, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., April 23.

Klassen—John C., 83, Bergthaler Mennonite, Morden, Man., April 27.

Loewen (Dyck)—Agnes, 90, Clearbrook Mennonite, B.C., May 17.

Thiessen—Elizabeth, 93, Zoar Mennonite, Sask., April 10.

Baptisms

Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg—Thomas Epp, January 12.

East Zorra Mennonite, Ont.—Katie Yantzi, Ben Schlegel, Chantelle Leis, April 27.

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



With their church mission statement displayed on their banner, this group of 14 people from Wellesley Mennonite Church (Ontario), spent March break on a service project in Harlan, Kentucky. The inter-generational group left on March 8 for southeastern Kentucky. Harlan is in the Appalachian mountains, so the last 10 miles of driving was all curves and steep inclines. The Wellesley group joined 34 people from Faith Works in Hamilton to repair houses for the Appalachian people. Leadership and organization was provided by Mennonite Central Committee, through a program called SWAP (sharing with Appalachian people). Accommodation was in a former correctional facility with the men separated from the women. Breakfast was served at 7:00 a.m. so they would be ready to travel to the work site by 8:00 a.m. The experience was very rewarding. A sign posted in their temporary dining hall summed up the experience: "To the world you might be one person, but to one person you may be the world."—Larry Roes

Congregations, are you sending in your Transition?

We welcome announcements of births, marriages, deaths and baptisms in your congregation.

Send us your information by mail, fax or e-mail (addresses on page 2).

If you need a Transitions form for faxing or mailing, call 1-800-378-2524, ext. 223.

Mennonite

Kitchener, Ont.

Pastoral assignments add to transition list

There is considerable movement in pastoral leadership in Mennonite Church Eastern Canada this spring, extending into the fall. The list of pastoral transitions grows longer as congregations increasingly call persons to short term interim supply or intentional interim ministry assignments.

Beginnings

Claire Osinkosky will begin as pastor at Preston Mennonite Church in mid July. She is currently working in a Church of the Brethren congregation in Virginia, as well as in the resource centre for the Virginia Mennonite Conference. She has experience in church planting in eastern U.S. and Alberta as well as pastoral experience in Ohio. Steve Drudge will begin as pastor at Steinmann Mennonite Church on September 1. He is leaving Rouge Valley after 17 years of ministry there. During that time the congregation has built a new facility and hired a second pastor on a part time basis.

Maurice Martin began as interim supply pastor on May 1 on a part time basis at Hawkesville Mennonite Church. He will continue his work with Canadian Mennonite. He also continues in a part time assignment with Mennonite Church Canada to provide leadership education to multicultural groups in MC Eastern Canada and MC Manitoba, and other locations to be determined.

Mary Mae Schwartzentruber will begin as pastor of Bloomingdale Mennonite Church in mid September. She will be leaving her assignment as missions minister for MC Eastern Canada at the end of her four year term. She has previously served as pastor at Stirling Avenue and Nairn congregations, and as interim executive secretary for MC Eastern Canada.

Phyllis Kramer will begin as pastor of Windsor Mennonite Fellowship in August. She will be ending her interim assignment at Steinmann to take this assignment. Phyllis has also in the past served as interim chaplain at Fairview Home, and as interim supply pastor at Bloomingdale.

Ruth Johnston will begin as transitions pastor at Agape Fellowship on July 1. She has much experience in working with people who have been marginalized and alienated in their

communities. She has also served two terms with Mennonite Central Committee in Algeria and Jamaica.

Mary Schiedel will begin a four-month interim ministry assignment at East Zorra July 1 to October 31 while pastors Delmer and Elsie Epp are on sabbatical. Mary has been pastor at the Elmira Mennonite Church and Hillcrest Mennonite Church. Virgil Gingerich has accepted an interim assignment at Zurich Mennonite Church, beginning July 1. He has served as a pastor in the Evangelical Missionary Church and has taught at Emmanuel Bible College, from which he recently retired.

Endings

Herb and Shirley Schultz completed an interim ministry assignment at Hawkesville Mennonite Church on April 30. They will be retiring for the second time and plan a summer of travel and relaxation before considering further assignments.

Enos and Doris Kipfer will retire from Agape Fellowship on June 30 after a number of years of ministry there. They look forward to having more time with their family.

Renee Sauder will end her ministry at Erb Street on May 25 after a busy year of transition and a major renovation project at the church. She plans to take the summer off, then do a different form of ministry for a time.

Marianne Mellinger is ending her interim assignment at Preston on May 25. In addition to some travel which includes attending the weddings of two of her children, Marianne plans to continue in her therapy practice, teaching in the Ministry Option of the Master of Theological Studies program at Conrad Grebel University College, and consulting with pastors and congregations.

Glyn Jones is ending his pastoral assignment at Wilmot in June. He and Susan, who completed her ministry at Breslau in March, will be going to Botswana with MC Canada Witness, accompanied by their two daughters.

Harold Hildebrandt Schlegel is ending his ministry at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church at the end of June and will take time off to take on more of the parenting role and take occasional courses, as Dianne begins seminary at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation.

Harold and Judy Shantz will be ending

their ministry at Zurich at the end of June and plan to move closer to where their family lives.

Glenn Zehr will be ending an interim ministry assignment at Bloomingdale in August. He and Mary Ellen continue to live in Millbank, where he had been pastor at Riverdale Mennonite Church. Audrey Mierau Bechtel will be completing her ministry as chaplain at Fairview Mennonite Home and visitation pastor at Preston at the end of June. She will join Ken in Saskatchewan, where she hopes to complete her training as a specialist with Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education.

Reynold Kipfer will be ending his ministry as supply preacher at Preston Mennonite in mid July.

Kevin Block will be leaving The First Mennonite Church in Vineland to study in preparation for serving as an ordained minister in the Anglican Church. Kevin ministered and grew with the Vineland congregation through some significant changes and a major building project.—**Maurice Martin**, with MC Eastern Canada release by **Muriel Bechtel**

People & Events

Winnipeg, Man.—Heinrich Loewen has been appointed director of the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies here, effective August 1. He replaces Abe Dueck who served as director for 12 years. Loewen holds an M. Div. in Pastoral Ministry and Church History from Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno and a PhD in Theology from the Evangelische Theologische Faculteit in Louvain, Belgium. After serving as the founder and president of the Union of Anabaptist Churches in Germany, Loewen was the founder and president of the Bibelseminar in Bonn.—From CMBS and Canadian conference of Mennonite Brethren churches release

Mennonite Church Canada

West and south come east for Assembly

Henry Krause, Peter Stucky, and April Yamasaki will bring messages to the delegate assembly worship services at the annual assembly in St. Catharines this year (July 9-13).

Krause is a pastor at Langley Mennonite Fellowship in B.C. and is moderator of Mennonite Church Canada. He divides his time between these activities, family (he and wife Edith have four children), and partnering with his brother Alf at a berry and vegetable operation. Krause studied sociology at the University of B.C. and acquired a Master of Divinity degree from Regent College in Vancouver. He will preach on opening night (Wednesday) on the theme "What if grace prevailed?"

Peter Stucky is the president of the Mennonite Church of Colombia, and also pastors congregation in Bogota. Born and raised in Colombia, Stucky studied theology and Bible in



Krause



Stucky

Israel, Europe, and the U.S. He is a graduate of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Stucky participates with the Colombian Mennonite Church in building bridges between the illegal armed groups of the left and of the right, different political leaders, the military, academics, farmers, and displaced persons. He is married to Leticia and has three sons. At the assembly, Stucky will reflect on the question "What if peace prevailed?" during Thursday night's worship

April Yamasaki is an author, preacher, and pastor. Among other projects, she has been a writer and co-writer of Remember Lot's Wife and Other Unnamed Women of the Bible; Leadership and Community; and most recently, Making Disciples, a leadership manual for discipleship and baptism preparation. She majored in Political Science at the Univer-



Yamasaki

sity of B.C. and holds a Master of Christian Studies from Regent College in Vancouver.

Yamasaki is the lead pastor at Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Abbotsford. She is married to Gary Yamasaki, an instructor at Columbia Bible College. She will address the theme question of "What if love prevailed?" during the Sunday morning worship time.

Local congregations are invited to join assembly delegates for worship at any of the worship services (Wed and Thursday, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Saturday, 7:30 p.m., Communion service; Sun., 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.).—MC Canada release

Finances the focus of 'listening' meetings

Mennonite Church Canada is holding a series of "listening" meetings to give members an opportunity to interact with leadership on MC Canada's financial situation and early

March decisions to cut programs.

Two such sessions were recently held in Manitoba: May 1, Altona (see May 5 issue, page 17); May 8, Winnipeg. Questions that arose during the discussion time revealed a mixture of concern, confusion and lament. Participants were concerned about how decisions were made to reduce programs. They lamented the loss of those programs that had been a part of how they understood the work and ministry of MC Canada. There was confusion over "flow-through" funding (donations that arrive at MC Canada offices but are designated for other organizations, such as Eastern Mennonite University, Christian Peacemaker Teams, and others), and the lack of advance warning about the gravity of the crisis.

Participants were concerned about how this past year will affect the vision and mission of

A quick e-mail may not be enough

It is nothing new to talk about the speed and relative accessibility of global electronic communication. Those who are "wired" to the internet can make ideas or needs known around the world instantaneously. I regularly receive requests for prayer or financial assistance from folks around the world. These requests come from parties known and unknown to me, and range from the legitimate to the outright laughable.

One of the great advantages of electronic communication is that it is easy. Urgent needs can be communicated quickly, widely and inexpensively. Response time can be greatly reduced.

One of the disadvantages of modern communications is that it is too easy. Particularly when needs are shared, I want to respond to them as quickly

and easily as the request appears, and then forget about them. There is a certain weightlessness about e-mail that makes me want to "fire back," and then assume the matter is closed.

I am grateful for the immediacy of communication that I and others with access to computers enjoy. I am nervous that this immediacy gives me a sense of being aware of more and doing more that I actually am. I sometimes feel that I no longer need to go looking for needs in the world, or that I no longer need to pursue possibilities for meeting greater needs or fostering longer-term relationships. If there's a need out there, somebody somewhere will set an e-mail chain in motion. The need will appear in my in-box, I will say a prayer or send a cheque and e-mail my friends to do the same, and the

From our leaders

matter will be looked after until the next need finds its way through cyberspace to me. It's that easy!

In a global church, we must learn to foster meaningful and equitable partnerships with neighbours near and far. Meaningful partnerships arise when all sides invest the time and energy required for careful, thoughtful dialogue. To be a true partner with fellow Christians and others around the world, I must be ready to do more than read and respond to the messages in my in-box.



Pam Peters Pries, executive secretary, Support Services Council, Mennonite Church Canada

MC Canada. Some commented that congregations feel distant from MC Canada, that there is an overwhelming sense of newness (some continue to struggle with programs that have new names), and concern about the impact on schools and area conferences. One questioner pondered whether “the vision remains intact.” Others were interested in seeing what ministries and staff remain, and how the work of MC Canada Formation and MC Canada Witness will continue.

As the discussion was brought to a close, one participant said, “I commend you for calling the meeting. I feel we need to do things together. How will we draw each other back together?”

Similar meetings were held in Alberta (May 27, First Mennonite, Edmonton; May 28, First Mennonite, Calgary) and are scheduled for Saskatchewan (June 17, Wildwood Mennonite, Saskatoon; June 18, Hague Mennonite, Hague). All meetings will begin at 8:00 p.m., following a 6:30 meeting for members of the MC Canada pension plan.

A similar session has already been held in conjunction with spring delegate sessions in Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (April 11-12), and an opportunity for B.C. members will occur in conjunction with the annual delegate sessions of MC British Columbia (June 6-7, Cedar Valley Mennonite).—MC Canada release

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Trip explores question of who owns the land

From April 28 to May 4, 2003, 11 spirited young adults (and young-adults-at-heart) participated in the 7th annual Mennonite Church Eastern Canada Northern Exposure learning trip. The trip’s theme, “Only God Can Own the Land,” provided a chance to experience God and think about God’s creation in new ways.

Based in the Timmins area, the group listened to a wealth of contrasting perspectives on who owns the land, especially the trees, in Northern Canada. We heard from the Ministry of Natural Resources who approve forestry management plans, toured Tembec, a huge sawmill, walked through a clearcut, visited Mattagami First Nations who have their own logging contract and heard from North Watch, an environmental protection agency.

The sacred teachings of a community elder had participants marveling at the deep respect and love shown toward them, members of a cultural group that had caused great suffering and loss to First Nations people through impositions like residential schools. As the elder spoke of the Creator, his words seemed very holy, revealing humility but also great strength.

Gifts of song and of affirmation from new First Nations friends, emotional daily sharing circles and breathtaking hikes helped all who contributed to the trip bond together quickly. By the end of the week, it was clear that this experience had been a thought-provoking, transformative one for many.—Sara Wert

Mennonite Church Mennonite Church Manitoba

Sawatzky awarded

Reg Sawatzky, recording engineer for Faith and Life Communications, was presented with a certificate from Mennonite Media, Harrisonburg, Virginia. Mennonite Media recorded “Parenting” radio spots in the FLC studio for which they won the Crystal Awards of Excellence in the Communicator Awards 2002 audio and video competitions. These international competitions received 1249 entries in the audio competition. Melodie Davis, writer and producer of the spots, wrote of Sawatzky’s work: “your work was very important to the excellence achieved with these spots so

you deserve a ton of recognition, and maybe this (certificate) will help to formally affirm it.”

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

has started its work

As the school year is winding down, the work of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan is beginning a new direction as interim conference minister Ken Bechtel gears up in his new position. Bechtel has met with the visioning group twice since starting and the meetings have been profitable, he says. “Our initial tack is moving toward the re-covenanting service,” he said referring to a taskforce recommendation voted on in 2001.

Starting in the fall, Bechtel and the visioning group will be meeting with different MC Saskatchewan congregations to get feedback on this process. Marco Funk, youth pastor at Rosthern Mennonite, is a member of the visioning group. He clarified the agenda further by stating their intention to “gather information from congregations and individuals on their perception of the conference.”

Mennonite Church Alberta

Mennonite Church Alberta

On May 16, Trinity Mennonite church submitted their second “site specific amendment” application to the municipal district of Foothills. The application seeks permission to build a church on land the congregation has purchased just south of Calgary city limits. The first application, made last summer, was rejected by area residents because of concerns about increasing traffic. For the past year, Trinity has made efforts to visit residents to get to know them, to hear their concerns, and to discuss building plans to ensure they are well informed. The hearing for the

second application will be held in the next two months. In the meantime, Trinity continues its ten year rental relationship with the Convent Christian Reformed church in southwest Calgary, where they meet for worship Saturday evenings. Trinity Mennonite is grateful for the prayers of other congregations and individuals as they await the results of the second hearing and continue fundraising to pay for the land and their future building.

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Nominations still

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Mennonite Church B.C. nominations committee is looking for volunteers and asking for prayers that volunteers will be found. With the annual sessions fast approaching in June, the committee is still looking for people to fill several positions on the finance, nominations, and program committees as well as a treasurer. Members of Mennonite Church B.C. churches may either volunteer or submit names of people who qualify so that the nominations committee can contact them. For more information on the work of these committees and what is involved in serving in any of these capacities, please contact Peter Sawatzky at 604-850-8040 or e-mail pshs@telus.net.

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

Employment opportunities

Perkasie Mennonite Church, Perkasie, Pennsylvania, a theologically progressive congregation with average attendance of 80-100, seeks

HALF-TIME PASTOR

to join pastoral ministry team. Perkasie Mennonite values and encourages use of everyone's gifts and incorporates a wide variety of music and arts into its worship services. Strong Anabaptist beliefs and peace and justice issues are important to the congregation.

We seek an energetic, warm, welcoming person with good communication skills who feels God's call to ministry. Primary responsibilities will include administration work, pastoral care, and preaching. Send resumes to

Virgil Miller, Search Committee
Perkasie Mennonite Church
320 West Chestnut St., Perkasie, PA 18944



**MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
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invites application for the position of

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This position requires a person with a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and non-violent peacemaking. MCC is seeking an individual to work at Restorative Justice as well as education and advocacy in partnership with Aboriginal communities and organizations.

Position is .8 FTE. Deadline: June 18, 2003. Position available immediately. Resumes and cover letter to:

Cath Woolner, Mennonite Central Committee
50 Kent Ave., Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1
Phone: (519) 745-8458
E-mail: cathw@mennonitecc.on.ca



Conrad Grebel University College
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The Accountant is responsible for all aspects of the financial planning and reporting for the College and, as a member of the administrative team, reports directly to the President. The successful candidate will have completed, or nearly completed, a recognized professional accounting program (CGA, CMA), demonstrate proven competency in using accounting software, possess excellent administrative and communication skills, and be sympathetic to the Anabaptist-Mennonite values of the College.

Conrad Grebel University College is the residential and teaching college of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada offering programs of study at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. CGUC is affiliated with, and located on the campus of, the University of Waterloo. Salary and benefits are similar to those of the University.

The position is available in September 2003. Applications are being accepted until June 15, 2003 and should be directed to:

The President, Conrad Grebel University College
140 Westmount Road N., Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6
(519) 885-0220 x237
E-mail: cgcpres@uwaterloo.ca

Canadian Mennonite

EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Canadian Mennonite is seeking an editor/publisher for its biweekly periodical based in Waterloo, Ontario.

Canadian Mennonite serves as a primary communication vehicle within Mennonite Church Canada and its five area conferences. Owned and operated by Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service, Canadian Mennonite works in a covenant relationship of trust with the church, seeking to provide fair and accurate information, faith profiles, inspirational articles, news, and analysis of issues facing the Mennonite church. Canadian Mennonite is guided by the church's confession of faith and thereby seeks the welfare and vitality of the church with the practice of editorial freedom.

The editor/publisher is accountable to a representative board, guides and directs the magazine, provides a vision and strategy for growth, and generally has responsibility for the publication.

Applicants should be self-motivated and have: strong administrative, relational, communication and listening skills; publishing knowledge; a journalism degree or related experience; computer competence. The ideal candidate will be a member of a Mennonite church and have wider denominational knowledge.

Interested persons may direct inquiries and submit resumes by contacting the search committee by June 15:

Henry Neufeld, Chair
Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service
Phone: (604) 946-3961
E-mail: hneufeld@telus.net

Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg is seeking a LEADING PASTOR

In addition to preaching, our Leading Pastor, working with our two Associate Pastors, will be involved in giving inspirational leadership to the congregation, its ministries and its outreach. The Leading Pastor also takes an administrative leadership role with the Pastoral Team and other staff, and reports to the Church Council.

Bethel is a large church, with typical Sunday attendance of approximately 500, spanning all generations. Bethel is a member of Mennonite Church Canada. In addition to the youth, young adult, seniors, and care group activities, Bethel has substantial neighbourhood outreach programs.

Interested persons are encouraged to submit a covering letter and resume by June 30th to:

Pastoral Search Committee
Bethel Mennonite Church
870 Carter Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3M 2E2
E-mail: office@bethelmennonite.ca
(please use MS Word format)

Canadian Mennonite

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Calgary, Alta.

Sales brisk for CD supporting AIDS prevention work

Foothills Mennonite Church thought it would do well to sell 1,000 copies of the locally produced CD "To Such As These.. Songs and Lullabies for Children Around the World." That was one year ago. Today, distribution has reached 6,333.

The initial 1,000 copies, released in late summer 2002, went so fast that organizers immediately ordered a second pressing, and later in fall a third and fourth.

"To Such As These..." is a collection of traditional and contemporary songs featuring local Foothills singer, Kim Thiessen, along with other Canadian

musicians and children. The CD was produced in partnership with Mennonite Central Committee Alberta with proceeds going towards MCC's Generations At Risk program. The program is a 10-year MCC partnership with Mennonite churches in Africa. The funds support the work of preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS by supplying blood testing kits and health kits to people. The program also provides HIV/AIDS awareness training.

The CD sells for \$18.00. So far, sales have grossed over \$90,000. Over 3,500 have been sold in Canada and 1,500 in the U.S. Requests from MCC's web

site have come in from as far away as the United Kingdom and Alaska.

Doug Klassen, pastor at Foothills, says several organizations came together to help with the project including

Faith and Life Communications in Winnipeg, who provided recording studios, and Golden West Broadcasting, who provided a grant. Many others, including Daryl Neustaedter Barg who produced the CD, donated their time. Abe Janzen, executive director for MCC Alberta, says they felt privileged to be part of the "To Such As These..." project, adding the CD has done a good job of raising awareness.

Klassen attributes the success of the CD not just to the people in his church, but to people throughout North America who wanted to be part of the vision of addressing the needs of people suffering from the devastating effect of AIDS in Africa.

"It's been a real rallying point. People are busy but they still have the desire to give," he says.

Doug Klassen says plans for a second CD are already underway. Foothills Mennonite has already received enough in donations to get the project off the ground and if all goes well, Klassen says the second CD should be ready by September.

"To Such As These...Songs And Lullabies For Children Around The World" is available at MCC offices and Ten Thousand Villages stores.

—MCC Canada release

Announcement

Former members and friends are invited to celebrate the 100th ANNIVERSARY of HAGUE MENNONITE CHURCH	
Saturday August 9, 2003 5:00- Supper, Music, Memories	Sunday August 10, 2003 10:30-Worship, Fellowship
Advanced Registration Please:	
Hague Mennonite Box 73 Hague, SK S0K 1X0 E-mail: Dave.Duane@sk.sympatico.ca	Jacqueline Funk Phone (306) 225-4550 Fax (306) 225-2042

Concert to launch CD of original music

Hamilton, Ont.—Rick Pauw and other musicians from the Hamilton area will launch a new CD, *Hope Rising*, at a concert on June 20 at 7:30 p.m. at Hamilton Mennonite Church. The proceeds from the sale of the CD of Pauw's original music will go to Circles of Support and Accountability, a Mennonite Central Committee Restorative Justice initiative.

The musicians include: Adam Carter, guitar/vocals; Kate Church, violin; Linden Gossen, percussion; Matt Henderson, bass; Jessie Hetherington, vocals; Jake Letkemann, piano/vocals; Rick Pauw, guitar; Jennifer Pfenninger, vocals; Karen Sheil, vocals; Helen Toews, flute; Curtis Wiebe, banjo/harmonica/vocals. The CD was recorded by Michael Noack at Swordfish Digital Audio in Hamilton and mastered by Craig Douglas at Last Adam Productions in Milton.

For more information call (905) 522-7653 or e-mail: pauw@attcanada.ca.—

Call for papers on Mennonites and refugees

Winnipeg, Man.—A history conference examining the interaction between North American Mennonites and refugees will take place September 30 and October 1, 2005 at the University of Winnipeg. The conference will mark the 25th anniversary of the arrival into Canada of Vietnamese "boat people" and other southeast Asian refugees in 1979-1980.

Conference organizers welcome research papers on: the historic, cultural and theological context which led Mennonites to establish refugee sponsorship programs; the cross cultural experience

of both the refugees and the Mennonite hosts; the organizational response by Mennonite institutions; the long-term inter-ethnic relationships between Canadian/American Mennonites and newcomers from the southern hemisphere.

Organizers also welcome submissions for story telling by both hosts and refugees.

Send proposals to: Royden Loewen, Chair in Mennonite Studies, University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Man. R3B 2E9 or e-mail to r.Loewen@uwinnipeg.ca.

The conference is hosted by the Chair in Mennonite Studies. It is sponsored by the Divergent Voices of Canadian Mennonites subcommittee of the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada with funds from Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

10,000 expected at MC USA Assembly in Atlanta

Atlanta, Ga.—When an expected 10,000 Mennonites meet for Atlanta 2003 in July at Mennonite Church USA's first churchwide assembly, they will reach beyond the convention walls at the Georgia World Congress Center.

Mennonites of all ages will extend the invitation from Atlanta 2003—"God's Table, Y'All Come"—within the urban community. They will carry God's welcome into the streets during the July 3-8 gathering when they participate in a March for Reconciliation to the Martin Luther King Center; a hymn sing at Centennial Olympic Park; citywide servant projects; and a Freedom Prayer Walk through the historic Sweet Auburn district.

Jimmy Carter, former U.S. president and Nobel Peace Prize winner, has been invited to speak for the opening joint worship service July 3, but he has yet to confirm his avail-

ability.

The table theme for Atlanta 2003—with five conventions including the adult assembly and conventions for young adults, youth, junior high and children—is based on Luke 13:29, "Then people will come from the east and west, north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God."

Delegate business includes voting on whether to approve churchwide statements on abortion, access to health care and immigration. Delegates are representatives from Mennonite Church USA's 21 area conferences and 992 congregations with about 114,000 members.

The largest performing arts event—"Many Voices, One Spirit"—will be a concert celebration July 4 of worship through music, drama and voices lifted together in praise. Solo and ensemble will reflect the diversity of the new Mennonite Church USA through performances given by Anglos, Hispanics, African-Americans and Native Americans.

For more information on Atlanta 2003 go to www.atlanta2003.org.

October 6-8: Pastor/spouse retreat. Contact MC B.C. for details.

October 17-19: Women in Mission retreat at Camp Squeah with speakers Angelika Dawson and Benita Warkentin.

November 1: MCC B.C. annual meeting.

November 7-9: Scrapbooking retreat at Camp Squeah. Contact Christa Lynn Nikkel, e-mail: nikkel@telus.net.

Alberta

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

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 12: Golf tournament for MCC in Coaldale.

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

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

Saskatchewan

June 13-14: MCC Relief Sale in Saskatoon.

June 17-20: AMBS course with James Reimer at First Mennonite, Saskatoon.

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

June 28: Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan Genealogy Workshop with Tim Janzen, at Bethany Manor, Saskatoon.

July 2: MEDA breakfast meeting at Grainfields, Saskatoon.

July 4-6: Rosthern Mennonite Church centennial celebration.

July 5: Canadian Foodgrains Bank sale in Hague.

July 26-27: 75th anniversary of Hoffnungsfelder churches. Call (306) 824-2081.

August 6: MEDA breakfast

Calendar

British Columbia

June 21: MCC B.C. promotional luncheon, Garden Park Towers, Abbotsford. Art and Marlyce Friesen to share about work in Ukraine. Call (604) 850-6639 for tickets and more information.

September 12-13: MCC B.C. Festival 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 at Civic Centre, Prince George.

meeting at Grainfields, Saskatoon.
August 9-10: 100th anniversary at Hague Mennonite Church. Call (306) 225-4550, e-mail: dave.duane@sk.sympatico.ca.
September 3: MEDA breakfast meeting at Grainfields, Saskatoon.
September 5-7: SMYO Junior High retreat.

Manitoba

June 13-14: Winnipeg MCC Festival and Relief Sale at Canadian Mennonite University.
June 13-15: Baseball tournament at Camp Assiniboia.
June 14: Farewell banquet for John H. Unger, Canadian Mennonite University, 6:30 p.m. Call (204) 487-3300.
June 19: Benefit evening for Eden Health Care Services with David Schroeder and House of Doc music group, Grace Mennonite Church, Winkler, 7:00 p.m.
June 21-22: Bike the Whiteshell for MCC.
June 23: Graduation of Westgate Mennonite Collegiate at Bethel Mennonite Church.
June 26: CMU President's Golf Tournament at Breezy Bend. Call Curt Warkentin at (204) 487-3300, e-mail: cwarkentin@cmu.ca.
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.
September 20: Morris MCC Relief Sale.
September 26-27: Brandon MCC Relief Sale.
October 4: Equipping Conference with Ministers and Deacons Conference at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church.
October 17-18: Women in Mission fall retreat at Camp Assiniboia. Speaker: Kathy

Giesbrecht.
October 25: Preaching workshop at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.
November 1, 8: Preaching workshops at Grace Mennonite Church, Brandon (1) and Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite Church (8).

Ontario

June 6: Spring concert at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.
June 6-7: MennoFolk at Hidden Acres Camp. Call (519) 650-3806, e-mail: markdh@mcec.on.ca.
June 7: 33rd Mennonite Community Sale in Leamington, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at United Mennonite Educational Institute
June 10: Chicken barbecue fundraiser at Hidden Acres Camp, 5:30. Music by "Unworthy." Bring mug. Call (519) 625-8602.
June 14: Ontario Mennonite Historical Society annual meeting at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, 2:00 p.m. Theme: "New Mennonites come to Ontario."
June 15: Jubilee homecoming at North Leamington United Mennonite Church.
June 18: MEDA Waterloo sponsored event with reports from Nicaragua, at Coldwell Banker Peter Benninger Realty, 508 Riverbank, Kitchener, 7:00 p.m. Call (519) 725-1633 to confirm attendance by June 11.
June 19: MEDA breakfast at Stone Crock, St. Jacobs, with David Brubacher, 7:30 a.m.
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 (adult and youth convention) at Brock University, St. Catharines. Theme: "What if God's love prevailed?"

Other countries

July 3-8: Atlanta 2003, the first Assembly of Mennonite Church USA, with five conventions (adult, youth, young adults, junior high youth and children) gathering under one theme, "God's Table, Y'All Come."
August 11-17: Mennonite World Conference Assembly in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Correction

A story about a Mennonite Church Manitoba Lay Leadership Conference in Winnipegosis (May 5 issue, page 25) referred to Esther Krahn as co-pastor at Nordheim Mennonite Church with her husband Abe. She prefers to be identified as "pastor's wife."

Subscriber services Mennonite

How to subscribe:

- Individuals who are part of Mennonite Church Canada or one of its five area conferences can ask to be placed on their congregation's group subscription list. The subscription is paid by the conferences.
- Others who wish to order a subscription can use this form. See contact information below.
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“Jesus said to his disciples, ‘...stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.’.... While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven”(Luke 24:50-51).



“I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ...may give you a spirit of wisdom...so that, with your heart enlightened, you may know...what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe...

God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places...

God has put all things under Christ's feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body” (from Ephesians 1:15-23).

From The New Testament: A Pictorial Archive From Nineteenth-Century Sources. New York, Dover.