

CANADIAN Mennonite

June 16, 2003
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Our multi-cultural church

pages 19-22

Our multi-cultural church

At a planning meeting last fall for the supplement in this issue (see page 19 for “Our multi-cultural church”), a Chinese Mennonite leader asked one of the important communication questions: Who are the intended readers?

The question emerged in the midst of discussions about whether to include articles in languages other than English. The Laotian, Hmong and Chinese Mennonite representatives around the table quickly agreed that the articles should be in English, since the “target audience” for their stories is the majority, English-speaking membership of Mennonite Church Canada.

They said they welcomed this opportunity to tell the story of what’s happening in churches like theirs, which now constitute about 5 percent of MC Canada’s 35,000 members.

The meeting, convened by Samson Lo, director of multi-cultural ministries for Mennonite Church Canada, represented another step in the quest by *Canadian Mennonite* to serve its increasingly diverse constituency better.

The quest started three years ago in a consultation with Mennonite Church B.C. leaders who noted that a number of “ethnic churches” were declining participation in an every household subscription plan. We heard a similar message in consultations with ethnic church leaders in Manitoba and Ontario.

Canadian Mennonite then obtained a grant from Mennonite Foundation of Canada to help us further explore issues raised in the consultations. One suggestion had been to make more use of the internet to publish articles in languages other than English. We found that translation software produced fairly crude results, and articles would still need a lot of editorial attention.

In the fall of 2001, we learned about the MC Canada Diversity Project, which documented and surveyed the

growing number of church members from recent immigrant groups, as well as the growing number of congregations seeking to become intentionally multi-cultural. The follow-up to this study provided the context for our ongoing inquiry about serving so-called “non-English” readers.

We followed with interest the appointment of Samson Lo and the creation of a program that gives voice to the interests and concerns of the ethnic and multi-cultural churches. A multi-cultural consultation last summer, right after the MC Canada assembly in Saskatoon, gave further visibility to these churches and their desire for a greater voice within their denominational family.

In the fall of 2002, we picked up an idea that had been put forward by Lo—the idea of publishing a special section with a concentration of stories from multi-cultural churches. The centre section of this issue is the first such initiative. A second one is being planned for the fall. The Mennonite Foundation of Canada grant is being used to cover the cost of producing these supplements and distributing extra copies.

The plan is not to institutionalize these supplements. And our goal is not to ghetto-ize these stories by putting them in a special section. (This issue also carries a story about the Calgary Vietnamese church on page 30.) The purpose of these two supplements is to put the spotlight on this growing sector of our Canada-wide church. Our ongoing goal is to include more and more of these stories on our regular pages.

As Mennonite World Conference puts the finishing touches on plans to convene the diverse global family in Zimbabwe this summer, we offer this supplement as part of the effort to embrace the global Mennonite diversity within our own country.—**Ron Rempel, editor**

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Website preview

Get a preview of the next *Canadian Mennonite* before it comes in the mail. Selections are posted on our web site (www.canadianmennonite.org) on the Thursday before the date of the issue. This means you can check out the June 30 issue by June 26.

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Cover: Building bridges between cultures at Charleswood Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. See pages 19-22. Photo by Lynette Wiebe.



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Vancouver, B.C.

New training venture in Vancouver

Peter Dueck, a Vancouver businessman, enjoys conundrums. “I like to solve tricky problems,” he says. “I like to imagine a solution, then work back step-by-step until I see that it works.”

Dueck will need his abilities to figure out how to transplant MEDA’s successful ASSETS program from the United States to Canada. ASSETS is a business training program for low income people sponsored by MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates).

Dueck imagines a program that has plenty of local funders, receives revenue from tuition fees, and involves local people as mentors and trainers. The last part is nearly in place, with over 50 people willing to walk alongside a budding entrepreneur.

Finding funding is more of a challenge. Canada is different because it has more government supports for low income people.

“The government is more involved in the lives of people in this country,” says Dueck, who has worked in both the U.S. and Canada. “Poor people here...might not have as many incentives to think about starting their own business to look after themselves.”

Dueck, in his late 50s, has lots of experience. He directed development and health projects with Mennonite Central Committee in Kentucky in the 1960s, then entered the field of health care in Manitoba. He has worked with offenders both as a probation and parole officer, and with groups serving the mentally ill.

He has also taught business courses, worked as a negotiator, and serves on a number of boards. With his wife, Dina, he is foster parent to a four-year-

old special-needs child.

Dueck also found time to start several businesses, and has just retired as president of Dueck Cobblestones, a landscaping company.

“If you want to compete, if you want to have an edge, then you need to find a new way of doing things,” he says. “That’s what I like about ASSETS—it approaches the problem of poverty from a different

angle than normal.”

When ASSETS was first considered for Vancouver, it was assumed that the target group would be the city’s lower east side—an area steeped in poverty, crime, and drug and alcohol abuse. But Dueck and the committee have

decided against that area.

“There’s already millions of government dollars going into the lower east side,” he says. They asked instead, “Who in Vancouver isn’t being served?”

The answer is new immigrants and refugees. “After Toronto and Montreal, Vancouver gets most of the refugees and immigrants who come to Canada,” he says. “Many of them are educated and skilled, and most are hardworking. What they lack is some training to help them put their energy to use to start a business.”

This is also the group being served by some of the city’s Mennonite churches, which offer English courses. Already, two churches are talking to the ASSETS board about providing office and classroom space.

Dueck hopes to hold the first course in September. But before that can happen, a lot of money needs to be raised.—MEDA release by **John Longhurst**



Peter Dueck will help new Canadians start their own businesses.

Winnipeg, Man.

Tribute to Gerhard Ens

On March 30, about 300 people crammed into the Sargent Ave. Mennonite Church basement to say thank you to Gerhard Ens for 25 years of service to the Sargent community.

It is estimated that Ens has led over 500 Bible studies over the years, in addition to his many other contributions.

The Sargent church has a history of German Bible study stretching back to 1953. Ens was invited to take over the weekly Bible study in 1978 and is still leading the group.

Sargent church, founded in 1949, became the home of many post-war Russian Mennonite immigrants who had grown up in the Soviet era. Soviet officials took Bibles and songbooks from the homes and any religious practice

became dangerous. So religious teaching was especially important to these people once in Canada.

People from various periods in Ens’ life talked about how he influenced them. Edwin Epp, Sargent pastor, began with a devotional from Hebrews 13:7: “Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.” Epp talked about Ens’ popularity as a speaker and his devotion to living what he preached.

Ben Sawatzky talked about Ens as a beloved teacher whose teaching certificate was revoked because of his conscientious objection to the war. John Friesen and Jake Pankratz recounted their time with Ens at the Mennonite Collegiate Institute from 1943-1977. Ens was a witty, versatile and well-prepared

Harrisonburg, Va.

Survivors of violence seek healing at peace institute

Among those attending the Summer Peacebuilding Institute at Eastern Mennonite University are a former prisoner of war, the sister of a military-slaying victim, and a pastor who befriended workers retrieving bodies after September 11.

Nebojsa Bljajic, a Serbian attorney from Bosnia, was a court clerk before war shattered the region. Drafted into military service, then taken prisoner of war, he was starved and beaten for five months in 1995-96. "They thought I knew a lot of things I did not." At home, his wife and children endured "horrible conditions."

After the war, Bljajic trained citizens in election procedures and taught court processes to witnesses and victims of crimes, with support from international agencies.

He has been seeking perspective through the institute workshops on "Armed conflict, trauma and identity," and "Philosophy and praxis of reconciliation." One of his tasks included interviewing colleagues and writing case studies for a peacebuilding manual.

"There were no good and bad guys

in Bosnia, just a dirty war," says Bljajic. He denies any hostility toward his captors: "I put in mind that it was a sort of machine that beat me, not persons."

International agencies have left Bosnia, so Bljajic must look for a new job once he returns. He'll keep working "to improve things in my country, if possible."

For two others at the Peacebuilding Institute, "September 11" evokes horrors 11 years and a continent apart. On that date in 1990, in Guatemala, Helen Mack Chang's sister was murdered—stabbed 27 times—by military men. She had been investigating displaced people's living conditions; the killers suspected her of antiwar activity.

Chang plunged into human rights work following the crime. With a \$60,000 Alternative Nobel Prize awarded her by Right Livelihood, she launched a foundation in her sister's name that seeks to break "a chain of

impunity" for human rights abusers.

After seeking justice for her sister's murder for 13 years, Chang received a blow. The general and two colonels responsible were released May 7 after witnesses fled Guatemala.

"There's no justice. I feel a lot of anger," says Chang. Her foundation receives threats. She hopes the reconciliation workshop at the institute will help her gain inner peace.

Bill Keane brought along his slide presentation, "A New York State of Mind"—a montage of Manhattan scenes before and after September 11, 2001.

Each Thursday morning, from October 2001 to May 2002, Keane, a Baptist pastor in Branford, Connecticut, travelled to New York to counsel firefighters, police, ironworkers.

Keane sees "too much us-against-them," and too little dialogue in American public life. "It would be a neat experiment," he says if the peacebuilding institute could gather folks related to military and security issues with those who oppose militarism.

This eighth annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute, from May 5 to June 20, includes almost 200 people from 50 nations. Another 50 could not get visas.—From report by **Chris Edwards**



Helen Mack Chang of Guatemala and Nebojsa Bljajic of Bosnia exchange ideas at the Summer Peacebuilding Institute.

Photo by Jim Bishop

teacher who taught 10 different subjects. From 1967-1976 he was the principal who oversaw the expansion of the music and sports programs, as well as the shift from German to more English instruction.



Ens

thought through the text. He estimated that Ens has preached over 2,000 sermons. Wiebe recounted how one Sunday Ens sat down in the pew and his wife Anni showed him the bulletin where he was listed as the preacher. Ens

Pankratz noted that at age 25 he was the second oldest teacher at MCI, explaining why principal Ens and his staff were known as the General and his boy scouts.

Menno Wiebe talked about Ens as a preacher who

exclaimed, "Was ist geschrieben ist geschrieben!" (What is written is written). He went to the church office to get a Bible and took his place at the front of the church. That Sunday he preached a magnificent sermon.

Many of Ens' family were in attendance on March 30. He beamed with pride as his grandchildren played the piano, and mouthed along as a grandson recited a poem for his Opa.

Friends recounted how Ens was known as the "Bote Uncle" during his time as editor of *Der Bote*. He still produces Low German radio programs. He received a commemorative silver plate for his service.

In response, Ens noted from experience that nothing is as permanent as something that starts for the time being. The 80-year-old also reminded the crowd to leave something to say at his funeral.—From report by **Conrad Stoesz**

Worship — the beauty of holiness

We put a lot of energy into creating pleasing worship but not enough on learning what worship really is, says Maurice Martin. This is the first in a two-part series on worship.

When I was a child at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church in Ontario, I learned the song: “I’m so glad for Sunday, when I can go to church.” And go to church I did—twice on Sunday and once in the middle of the week!

Church felt comfortable. There I met my relatives and friends—family and “church family.” There I was nurtured in faith. So, going to church is a “habit of the heart” that is still with me, though once a week now seems to suffice.

As a child, I saw the motto up front in bold gothic lettering: Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness. I had no clue what those words meant! Certainly there was little of beauty or the arts. Our worship, like our meeting place, was “plain and simple.” There was an opening song service, followed by a devotional (scripture and prayer), a lengthy sermon (no less than 45 minutes), offering, benediction and closing song. The music was unaccompanied.

There were no banners or other works of art. “The beauty of holiness” lay somewhere else, presumably in the hearts of the worshippers (though one could argue that there is beauty in the plain and simple). That’s how it was in the “Old” Mennonite Church.

Since the 1960s,

Mennonites, like other Christians, have learned to expect a “good show” on Sunday morning. We have worked hard at bringing beauty into the holiness of worship—in music, drama and visual arts. I laud these efforts to engage the various senses as we worship. There is not a great distance between beauty and holiness—both are intimations of the divine. And both are, in many respects, in the eye of the beholder.

And that is part of the problem. People’s tastes in worship, as their tastes in art, vary so much that we have created a consumer mentality of personal choice. Many of the resources on worship feel like “how to” manuals: how to be more creative, more intergenerational, more seeker friendly. We have spent much energy addressing the “how to” of worship but not enough on describing what worship really is.

Three questions

My mentor in my Doctor of Ministry program pushed me to answer three questions: 1) What is worship in general? 2) What is Christian worship? 3) What is Mennonite worship? I cite two answers from within the Christian tradition:

•“Christian worship is a response to the active, gracious, caring God revealed in Jesus as the Christ.... Therefore, since grace is a gift, Christian worship is never other than a response” (John E. Burkhardt, *Worship, a Searching Examination of the Liturgical Experience*, Westminster Press, 1982).

•“An individual Christian coming to church comes not so much to offer worship as to join in an offering continually going on. He (sic) comes not to initiate worship but to contrib-



ute to, and be carried up by, a worship which never ceases, the source and fountain of which lies in the eternal activity of Christ.”

Our understanding of worship is too much grounded in human action, rather than in God’s initiative. It is only through God’s grace that we are able to join the worship of God forever taking place around the heavenly throne.

Walter Klaassen seems to agree with Burkhart (a Presbyterian) and Perry (an Anglican) when he says: “In worship through sacrament and word it is recognized that we have been drawn into God’s purpose by His sovereign graciousness and goodwill toward us. It is a gift which...we have not earned” (*Biblical and Theological Bases for Worship in the Believers’ Church*, Faith & Life Press, 1978).

For Mennonites, worship carries a strong covenantal/ethical component. One Mennonite statement says, “Worship is the renewal of the reality of the kingship of God and lordship of Christ among his obedient, covenanted people” (*The Gathering of God’s People in Worship*). Though the emphasis that worship should yield ethical living is right, we may have lost the sense that worship is a gift of grace.

Eleanor Kreider says, “But most of all, worship is a relationship, something that goes on between persons, between us and God” (*Enter His Gates*, Herald Press, 1990). Marlene Kropf puts it succinctly: “Corporate worship is a primary setting for meeting the Divine Lover” (*Gospel Herald*, Vol. 83, #32).

Bridging heaven and earth

I appreciate Dunlop’s emphasis that we do not initiate worship but come to contribute to and be carried up by a worship which never ceases. The Bible portrays this throughout. The Psalmist affirms that “the heavens declare the glory of God” (Psalm 19). Revelation paints a picture of the redeemed, worshipping God and the Lamb through eternity (4:8-11, 5:9-14). Worship bridges heaven and earth.

It is important to see Sunday as “the Lord’s Day” in the sense in which John of Patmos understood it, as the Day of Resurrection. John declares that on the Lord’s Day he saw a vision of “the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.” The heavenly choir was singing, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power” (Revelation 5:13).

We gather each Lord’s Day in anticipation of worship around the throne of God, where the risen Christ sits at God’s right hand. Each time we participate in communion, we anticipate our enjoyment of the heavenly feast.

How rich our worship would be if our minds and hearts were stretched to embrace such glorious eternal dimensions! Has our Mennonite emphasis on community focused too much on the immanent (horizontal) dimension of worship, and missed the transcendent dimension?

Klaassen says, “We Mennonites are so communally-oriented in worship that we are in danger of worshipping each other, rather than God.” This would appear to be the case when the first words we hear are “Good morning folks” rather than “Gracious God....”

In Genesis 28, we read of Jacob’s dream in which he sees a ladder “reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood beside him.” When he awoke, he remarked, “Surely the Lord was in this place, and I did not know it!” This moment of worship for him was both life-shaping and full of promise.

John’s Gospel reflects on how it is possible that God stood beside Jacob. He quotes Jesus: “I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man” (John 1:51). Jesus is the ladder by which God comes down to us. Jesus in his person bridges heaven and earth. Perhaps the highest moment in John’s view of Christ comes when Thomas, seeing the risen Christ standing before him, declares, “My Lord and My God!” (20:28).

The biblical witness points to a trinitarian understanding of God as the basis for worship. Trinitarian thought allows us to affirm that the Jesus of history is also the Christ of faith and the Lord of the age to come. And so we sing, “Jesus stand among us, in your risen power.” By faith, we see Jesus standing in the gap between heaven and earth. Is that not what worship is all about?

For Christians, God is self-revealing in three persons, and any worship which is not trinitarian is not Christian. Early

Our understanding of worship is too much grounded in human action, rather than in God’s initiative. It is only through God’s grace that we are able to join the worship of God forever taking place around the heavenly throne.

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Worship *From page 7*

in life I heard people begin each prayer with “Gracious heavenly Father,” and end with “in Jesus’ name, Amen.” Jesus taught us to pray to God; never does he invite us to address him (Jesus) in prayer. Only as we understand Jesus as part of the Godhead (Trinity) can we pray to him. We pray to God in the name of Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Worship is doing theology

We “do theology” whenever we reflect on our beliefs. We “do theology” each time we worship, for worship is “God talk,” both talking to God and talking about God. Primary theology is what we experience of God in our personal lives and in worship. Secondary theology is the reflection on that experience; it is “faith seeking understanding.”

Just as we grow through stages of faith, so we grow in our understanding of worship, which is an expression of faith. In my thesis, I argued that congregational worship is shaped both by the received faith tradition in which the congregation stands, and by the primary theology experienced by the worshippers, individually and collectively. I asked people what happens within them and what beliefs are being expressed as they worship.

How are you aware of God? What image of God seems most significant? Do you have certain feelings attached to God? Does your awareness of God shift during the course of worship?

Other questions asked: Which of the three aspects of the Trinity are you most aware of when you worship? Why? What happens when you pray in church? One person replied: “Pray in church?... Oh, you mean when you pray up front!” What worship leaders think is happening may not always be what in fact is happening in the pew!

Those who plan and lead worship might do well to ask on occasion, What is the functional theology of our congregation as we worship? What do we affirm? Are our acts of worship giving good expression to what we believe? These are more important questions than whether people’s preferences are being met in worship.

Our challenge as leaders is to ensure that our worship affirms both the beliefs we share with Christians throughout the ages, and the emphases of our Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage. This will be the subject of the second article next issue.—**Maurice Martin**

The writer, who has been a pastor for 29 years, is currently interim pastor at Hawkesville Mennonite Church in Ontario. Photo by Gerry Musselman.

Worship Epiphany

Looking back on an early childhood worship experience, I remember:

kneeling beside my mother
(on the “woman’s side” of a simple prairie sanctuary)
my small bony elbows rest firmly
against the polished grain
of the cool wooden pew

warmed by her nearness and
the bright yellow sunlight
streaming through
the high cross-framed windows
I listen to the comforting drone
of the white-haired Aeltesta
whose quiet words drift upwards
mingling with the echoing remnants
of an acapella song
as he moves slowly through the
cadences
of a High German prayer:

*Gnaediger Gott, Beschuetze deine
Kinder...*
(Gracious God, watch over your
children)

At that moment,
I was fully at home in a world
where all that I loved
—physically, emotionally, spiritually—
became one
flowing into and around each other.

Even now, the stillness, warmth and
simplicity
of that experience of wholeness,
shapes the way I measure (and seek
to lead) worship.

Leona Dueck Penner

Worship connects with everyday concerns

We shouldn't just come to church to worship; we should come to church worshipping. This comment by one of his professors has helped Alberta pastor Roy Hewko as he reflects on the purpose of worship in the Rosemary Mennonite Church.

"Corporate worship should be a help in developing a lifestyle of worship that carries on throughout the week," he says. "One of the goals of corporate worship is to strengthen the desire to follow Christ in all aspects of life."

The congregation does not currently have a worship committee; services are planned by various groups working both independently and together. These include the Music Committee, Christian Service and Social Concerns, the pastor, church secretary and worship leaders.

Worship leaders are chosen for their ability to lead the congregation comfortably, in a natural manner. Their various styles and choices for the order of service, while somewhat similar, offer a refreshing approach each Sunday. The beginning of the service, for example, may include scripture reading, an invitation to shake the hands of those nearby, or something inspired by the scripture, church calendar or worship theme.

Worship at Rosemary is meant to be inviting and is therefore somewhat informal.

"We have a broad base of participation and are not hung up on perfectionism," says Hewko. "While professionalism and entertainment may have their place, in a congregation our size, about 200 on Sunday mornings, our ministry and people are served better by allowing individuals to use their gifts as they develop."

The broad base of participation

keeps people involved and helps them to "practically connect the worship experience to what they do every day," he says.

Announcements, a necessary part of a community's gathering time, vary from inspiring to perfunctory. However, they provide a practical link between corporate worship and everyday life. The congregation often

has a time of sharing, another way the life of the community and worship intersect.

"Sharing meets a need for some people, and can be an act of worship for the person who shares," says Hewko. Sometimes the worship leader or pastor needs to do some filtering. "We try to...help people understand what is appropriate to share. We also try to allow for spontaneity."

Corporate prayer is a focus in every service. It includes

prayer for the sick, special needs, missionaries, youth from the church (two per week), and for another Alberta church and its leaders.

Rosemary Mennonite has a well balanced demographic. Children, young people, families, middle-agers and seniors are all represented. Is worship geared toward a particular group?

"I think a blended service is the

route to go," responds Hewko. "It has to be a bit like a family meal where everyone gets a little of what they need. Grandpa has his turkey neck, dad gets his drumstick, mom gets the white meat, the children want the potatoes, gravy and dressing. Our worship reaches into all age groups from time to time.

"There is a children's message almost every month, active choirs, our DVBS ends with the children singing during morning worship, and young people are often involved in reading scripture."

Hewko believes it's important not to value any one worship style over another.

"Our experience of worship will be enhanced when that of others is enhanced as well. It's important how we contextualize our culture in our worship. The presentation is important; the message stays the same."

The congregation tends not to reflect much on visual arts in worship.

"We use visual aids infrequently," says the pastor. "The sight lines are not always clear and there is competition for space from our choirs and other activities." The large cross at the front is the one visual aid to worship.

Services generally end with a benediction and prayer which flow from the rest of the service, bringing a sense of closure to the worship time. "I hold my hand above the congregation to give the blessing to the people as I give the benediction," says Hewko. He sees this as a "point of contact" for both himself and the church.—Donita

Wiebe-Neufeld



Participation comes before perfectionism for pastor Roy Hewko.

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Worship leader plans with care

It is Sunday morning at Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Abbotsford, B.C. The pianist is playing quietly as people gather, greeting each other as they sit down and scan the bulletin. Today's order of service will not differ much from most Sundays: call to worship, singing, announcements and congregational prayer, children's feature, scripture reading, message, song and benediction.

Marlene Friesen is one of several worship leaders at Emmanuel. She has been serving the congregation in this way for many years. Friesen feels it is important to begin with a call to worship, a time to draw people in, to focus their attention.

"I sometimes change the order of service, but I have found that people like familiarity," she says. "I like the order as it is; it starts with prayer, and has a more reverent feel in the beginning." She is not sure whether words or music are more effective.

"Beginning with a song pulls people into the sanctuary," she says, "but words seem to focus people more than music. Sometimes it's just hard to get people to come in!"

Where to place announcements is the hardest part of planning a worship service. For Friesen, the most logical place is in the context of congregational prayer because then they become a way to pray for the church. For example, if the youth are having an event, the announcement can be highlighted and included in the time of prayer.

The church uses visual elements such as flowers and banners most Sundays. But creative elements are usually reserved for special Sundays like Good Friday, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

"I like it very much when people use visual arts in worship, but I don't think about it much as a worship leader," Friesen admits. "I guess I'm more of a word person than a visually creative person but it's an area where we could do a lot more."

Powerpoint is new to Emmanuel and the church is experimenting with creativity in this medium. It is primarily used to project words to songs, but

in a recent service, pastor April Yamasaki used the projector in a creative offertory. The theme was stewardship. Earlier in the year, she had asked people to draw pictures and write down ways in which they used their gifts in their everyday lives. As the offering was taken, Yamasaki showed the different things people had written down.

Preparation for worship is an important element for Friesen. She spends a lot of time preparing her call to worship, what she will say before she leads the congregation in prayer, and the prayers themselves. She tries to tie each element into the theme of

the morning – a theme generally determined by the text for that morning's message. She obviously enjoys serving the congregation and invests a great deal of herself in doing that.

"I find myself drawn into scripture and personal meditation just through the preparation," she says. "It's too bad I have to worship lead to get me to take more time for that, but I guess I am just thankful for the "push" to do it.... If it isn't meaningful for me and thus somewhat personal, I don't feel I can reach others or create a worshipful experience for them."—**Angelika Dawson**

Sturgis, Michigan

Visual arts can recapture awe of incarnation

A suspicion of incorporating the creative arts in worship is deeply rooted in some aspects of Anabaptist tradition, said Marlene Kropf at the annual "Art of worship" weekend at Amigo Centre here in April. Kropf is director of Congregational Life for Mennonite Church USA, and teaches at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

"In certain religions, there is a resistance to the idea of beauty in church," said Kropf, who led a workshop titled "Behold the beauty of the Lord."

"Zwingli's reforms led to a devaluing of the visual. Another piece of that resistance is the tradition that human attempts to mimic God's beauty can lead to hubris."

Kropf recalled that in the unadorned Mennonite church of her girlhood, she used to watch the shafts of light that streamed in through the plain glass windows as the congregation sang the traditional hymn, "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

"For me, that was the sound of holiness," she said. "We were singing about beauty, but we never talked about it."

The debate around using the arts in worship dates back to the earliest centuries of Christianity and has peaked at various points in history, especially during the Reformation.

"There's a philosophy out there that the arts can only inspire; they cannot

teach," said Sally Morgenthaler, keynote speaker and a noted worship consultant. She said that of the more than 3,000 languages that exist in the world, there is only one that comes close to achieving universal understanding, and that is visual language.

"Apparently, when decoding any visual message, the brain takes the scene in as a whole while unconsciously 'syncretising' the individual parts that make up the complete image. It is the most natural and accessible form of language," Morgenthaler said.

For Morgenthaler, the omission of the arts in worship has led to a substantial loss of the majesty and awe of the incarnated Christ.

"The word became flesh, and the church has turned flesh back into words," she said. "Because we've chased all the artists out of the church, we don't have the visual vocabulary any more...."

"We've got the vocabulary of Precious Moments," she added dryly.

Another advantage of using art, particularly cutting-edge technologies such as PowerPoint, is that it will engage young people, she said. And they are most likely to possess the skills to create such pieces.

The Art in Worship event attracted some 87 worship and music leaders from Mennonite and other congregations.—
From MC USA release by **Ann Graham Price**

Response to 'Anabaptist Bible'

Does it work to use the "Anabaptist Bible" as a devotional resource?

Reading the Anabaptist Bible is a collection of daily readings, edited by Arnold Snyder and Galen A. Peters (Pandora Press, 2002). Each reading includes a scripture passage, an explanatory bridge, and an Anabaptist reflection on the passage.

The biblical texts were selected by Anabaptists for their *Concordance*, a "Bible digest" they used widely and often committed to memory. It was a collection of what they believed to be the most crucial texts for their life of faith.

The introduction alerts us that access to the world of these texts will not be easy, and that the selections may seem unbalanced. There is a heavy emphasis on themes that are not popular in our church culture or society: persecution, suffering, judgement.

This difficulty was evident in an adult Sunday School class I led on spiritual disciplines. We devoted one week to these daily readings. It was probably the week that yielded the least engagement with the material, and the least desire to keep reading it.

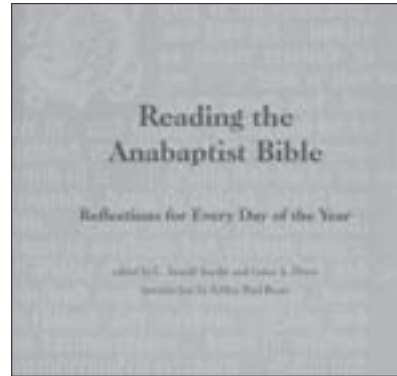
I have slowly fed on this book for a few months now. Often the scriptures themselves have been my "cud" more than the commentary by the Anabaptist writers, who often mostly quote scripture. Knowing the circumstances in which they remembered these texts, however, gives even their repetition a depth that challenges me.

An imprisoned husband, writing to his incarcerated wife, can quote, "For thou, O Lord, delightest not in our destruction; for after the storm thou causest the sun to shine again, and after weeping and mourning thou dost give us joy abundantly.... Hence, my love, O my dearest love, let us patiently drink the cup of the Lord." This under the topic "Light," written from a prison whose darkness we can only imagine.

I have found the challenges of these readings to be less like popular "chicken soup" than like the dark, nourishing Swiss bread that is still eaten where the Anabaptists were born. Heavy, flavourful, full of nourishing grains, but not easy on the teeth.

Such a "foreign" text requires the openness we exercise when approaching a foreign culture. We may prefer the chicken

breast, boneless and skinless, but the "communion of saints" from far-away times calls us to taste of a more textured and chewy diet that nourished them in times of scarcity. Put at least a small helping on your plate this year. And give it some time. It's an acquired taste.—**Rebecca Yoder Neufeld**



The writer is a pastor and teacher from Waterloo, Ontario.

Strasbourg, France

Latest selection for global literature shelf

Mennonite World Conference has released its 2003 selection for the Global Anabaptist-Mennonite Shelf of Literature. *Sharing Gifts in the Global Family of Faith: One*

wide inventory of diverse gifts which could be shared among churches." Along the way, they became convinced that gifts, like manna, will rot if they are not shared.

This book explores how gifts and needs bind congregations around the world together. It debunks myths about who is rich and who is poor. It makes bold suggestions, such as why not have a "declaration of gifts we are committed to sharing" be a part of the service of baptism for new members and of communion for continuing members?

The 124-page book is published by Good Books in Pennsylvania in cooperation with MWC.

The Global Shelf of Literature was launched last year to develop a shelf of common literature among the Anabaptist-related fellowships in 62 countries. Each country is encouraged to make the annual selection available in the language of its people.—From MWC release



Photo by Merle Good

Authors Tshmika and Lind

Church's Experiment by Pakisa K. Tshmika and Timothy Lind springs from the dozens of visits the two made to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches throughout the world.

Tshmika and Lind, working on behalf of MWC, planned to produce "a world-

Winnipeg, Man.

Art exhibit ready to be assembled

In March, Ray Dirks made his final trip gathering art and photographs for the "Our Family" exhibit for the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Zimbabwe. The following is from the report of his last trip to Ethiopia, France, Switzerland and Holland.

Shortly after 5:00 a.m. each day, Kenna Dula and Aster Wolde of Akaki, Ethiopia, are on their knees, praying together. Soon the children, daughters Meheret, Peniel and Shalom and son Amanuel, are up and getting ready for school. They slip on their blue school uniforms, including sweaters.

Akaki, just outside Addis Ababa, is in the tropics but the high altitude means cool nights and mornings.

After breakfast the children rush down the dirt and red stone street to school. Aster waits for a bus to take her to her job nearby. She is an accountant in a factory down the highway towards Debre Zeit.

Kenna follows a small path through a field waiting for the rains so the next crop of teff, the grain to make Ethiopian flatbread *injera*, can be planted. Three teenagers break rocks alongside the path which will be sold for construction. People stream through factory gates to start their shifts.

A variety of horse carts, taxis, vans and buses pass by and Kenna catches a bus into the centre of Addis Ababa. He hails a blue and white van—all public transport vehicles are blue and white. The van heads into the im-

mense Meskel Square where under the Derg, the Communist government that ruled for 17 years (ending in 1991), huge portraits of Marx and Engels gazed over the acres of pavement. Kenna walks the last few minutes to his work.

An hour and a half after leaving his home, he arrives at the offices of the Meserete Kristos Church (MKC).

In 1982, leaders of the church were thrown into prison by the Derg. They suffered in abominable conditions for four years and the church was forced underground. Under the most trying of conditions the church blossomed and it continues its explosive growth to this day. The MKC is now one of the largest conferences that make up Mennonite World Conference.

Winnipeg, Man.

Witness to God's art direction

Ray Dirks sees his faith through the eyes of an artist, and God as the ultimate multi-media art director.

Dirks has witnessed God's art direction as he has travelled to 16 countries on 5 continents, gathering art and taking photographs of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ members for an exhibit at the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) assembly this summer in Zimbabwe.

In 1998, Dirks asked MWC if the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery could coordinate the "Our Family" exhibit for the Zimbabwe assembly. The photographs depicting everyday Anabaptist/Mennonite life will be accompanied by works by artists from each participating country. The exhibit will eventually go on tour and result in a book.

Larry Miller, executive secretary of MWC, says this exhibit reveals both the unity of the global church and the diversity of the people within it.

"In it, we catch remarkable glimpses—through the eyes of artists from around the world—of the faith journeys through good times and hard times of brothers and sisters scattered across the MWC family of faith."

When he travels, Dirks makes a point



Photo by Dan Dyck

Ray Dirks displays "Our Family" art selections from Zambia, Uruguay, Taiwan, USA and Canada.

of staying with ordinary people and avoiding tourist hotspots.

"I want to get to know the people, their daily activities, their food, and their congregations.... By North American standards most of my hosts have not been well-off, yet they share so openly and generously of whatever they have."

Dirks has been curator of the Heritage Centre Gallery since 1998. He's also been involved with art in a variety of places, most recently as Artist in Residence at the Overseas Ministry Study Center and research fellow at the Yale Divinity School in Connecticut from September to December 2002.

The Gallery displays six different exhibits per year, showcasing both local and international artists from a variety of backgrounds. As an official part of Mennonite Church Canada, the Gallery shows that art has value for the church.

"It is a chance to meet God," says Dirks. "It can work the same as music or literature in that way."

Dirks and his wife Katie, with daughters Lauren (18) and Alexa (15), attend Jubilee Mennonite Church, a dual-conference congregation.— MC Canada release by Allison Peters with Dan Dyck

Arts notes

From Ethiopia I journeyed to Bienenberg, the European Mennonite Bible School in Switzerland, and then to Zurich where Swiss Anabaptist history can be retraced. After collecting art from French and Swiss Mennonite artists I moved on to Holland.

Ineke and Peter Reinhold were waiting at the Amsterdam Central Station. I moved from urban settings—Utrecht, Almere, Amsterdam—to the country—Bunnik, Krommenie, Mennoerde—meeting people, revisiting history, seeing the current ministry of the church.

It seemed appropriate to end the Our Family gathering trips in the country of Menno Simons. Ending at the beginning completed a circle. My prayer is that the Our Family project will be a circle, going around again and again, for many to experience the global family of faith of which we are a part.

The project now enters its final phase—creating text and photo panels about daily life in the participating countries, making final arrangements for shipping to Zimbabwe. Pray for us as we assemble it. We also must raise more money.

Hope to see you in Bulawayo.—**Ray Dirks**

Publishing notes

The 2003-2005 edition of *The Mennonite Your Way Directory* has been released. It includes nearly 1,500 host families in over 40 countries, with over 200 new communities. For the first time, e-mail addresses are listed. Nancy and Leon Stauffer founded the *Directory* in 1976. In 2002 the effort was transferred to Glola and Jay Basler. The Stauffers continue to offer Mennonite Your Way Tours. The Baslers may be contacted at 80 West Sylvan Dr., Mundelein, IL 60060-3315, phone (847) 949-6179, e-mail: myw@mywdirectory.com.—From MYW release

Choirs affiliate

The Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir (IMCC) and the Menno Singers of Kitchener, Ontario, announced their new affiliation at the children's choir concert on May 4. Several Menno Singers sang with the children to celebrate their new relationship. Costs of the "merger" were provided by the Larry Hoffman Endowment. Each choir will continue to function separately but the affiliation provides the children's choir with charitable status, legal protection and continuity with an adult choir. Plans are to begin a youth choir as well. The IMCC is open to children of all faiths between the ages of 8 and 15. Call Irene Metzger at (519) 748-1611 for more information.—From IMCC release

Exhibit from Siberia

"Sketches from Siberia" is an exhibit at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg that continues to July 19. More than 120 artworks and 40 photographs by Jacob Suderman make up the display. The paintings were smuggled out of Stalinist Russia by fleeing relatives. Suderman died in a Siberian labour camp in the late 1930s. The exhibit was compiled by grandnephew Werner Toews from family collections.—From Heritage Gallery release

J. M. Klassen's recent autobiography, *Jacob's Journey: From Zagradowka towards Zion*, has been updated and reprinted. Klassen, the first director of Mennonite Central Committee Canada, gave the 75 copies of the first printing to family and friends, church libraries and schools. The second printing of 50 copies was sold to individuals and given to libraries. One copy went to the Anabaptist Centre in Seoul, Korea. The 50 revised and updated copies of the third printing are available for \$50.00 from the author, 11 Reichart St. Winnipeg, MB R2G 3C7, phone (204) 339-6198.



Photo by Elmer Heinrichs

Rollin Penner of Winnipeg sings a ditty about rural Manitoba life during a recent visit to the Altona Library. He entertained Altona residents with readings from his first book, *The Greenfield Chronicles*, including a story focusing on funeral announcements on CFAM. He also gave a peek into his upcoming book. Penner returns to his hometown roots every Tuesday on CBC's Radio Noon with "The View from Greenfield," vignettes from the Mennonite settlements near Gruenfeld, Manitoba. His characters, he says, are loosely based on people he knew while growing up in Kleefeld and Steinbach. Penner also read in Winkler and Morden, sponsored by the South Central Regional Library.—From report by Elmer Heinrichs

Response from CBC

A recent CBC television report on Mad Cow disease in Alberta noted that the farm was operated by a "Mennonite" farmer. Dan Dyck, director of communications for Mennonite Church Canada, sent off an immediate complaint to CBC about unfair labelling and stereotyping. "If this farmer were Baptist, or Catholic, or Anglican, would you have identified him as such?" asked Dyck. "What does the identification of one's religious or denominational affiliation have to do with this story?" Jon Whitten, executive producer of *The National*, responded, "You are absolutely right. Please accept our apologies. I have shared your comments with the staff of *The National*, and will make sure the point is made to all."

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.

A phased-in approach might have helped

It seems to me that from the very beginning of Mennonite Church Canada an adequate “business plan” may not have been in place. All the complicated changes in program and procedures were introduced at a time

when very few persons in the central office and on the board seemed ready.

A master blue print incorporating all the components, costs and possible complications may have required closer scrutiny by financial and program specialists. This elaborate, integrated denominational program may have been launched in too much haste.

Placing blame for MC Canada financial woes on those responsible for daily accounting decisions has been disproportionate. The suggestion that computer programs created new problems does not seem like a valid explanation for the “financial fiasco.” I strongly concur with the issues John Neufeld raises (April 21 letter).

Another issue that needs to be addressed by the central office and the “directors” is the expectation for

congregations to “buy in” to a multitude of changes dealing with new labels, structures, and administrative philosophy without adequately preparing those in the pews. The application of change theory principles to launch the totally restructured program could have provided a climate of sensitivity, encouragement, understanding and team work. Even phasing in key elements of the programs might have placed less pressure on the budget.

Furthermore, the process of releasing approximately 20 qualified, committed persons, who hardly had time to utilize their gifts during their short tenure, does not seem timely nor does it do justice to the planned goals.

To read that a “healing service” was conducted immediately after the dismissals is possibly inappropriate. It

High fashion thrift

I have written previously about the cost benefits of shopping at your local MCC thrift store. Where else could you buy a perfectly good loose leaf binder for a quarter, a mug for 20 cents, a 15-year-old date book for 15 cents, and an avant-garde book for a dime? (For example, I recently came across a real trend-setting tome: *Here come the 90's: Managing Your Finances in the New Decade*. If nothing else, I can find out what I've done wrong over the last 10 years!)

Thrift, cost and, um, currency-wise, is where it's at.

But have we really explored fully the fashion possibilities available at our local outlet? With a curt nod to the latest designers and their urbane accents, allow me to take you on a small-town hat-hunt that led me to a state of headwear bliss.

My first choice was a lovely, dark blue hat emblazoned with a feisty-looking leprechaun and the name, “Notre Dame University.” Ah, yes: the legendary basketball and football teams of that revered institution. However, the team's nickname, “Fighting Irish,” was also emblazoned on the brim, and I didn't want to convey the wrong impression.

Another hat said, “Harvey's

Halbstadt House Construction.” The brim was autographed by a few of the previous owner's fans. The bright red colour immediately attracted me and the local-sounding logo resonated in my southern Manitoba heart. However, I realized that the hat was only half-missional. It had the “across the street” message, but what about encouraging me to witness “around



the world?” I'd have to keep looking.

I worked through an assortment of feed company names, herbicide distributor slogans, and baseball team monikers. In each case, however, I felt something was missing. I could feel my accessory instincts buzzing. When would both heart and head come together? Would I find a hat that could allow me to act locally but think globally?

Then it happened. I found “my” hat. It

was labelled “Sparky's Automotive: Bumper to Bumper Auto Professionals.” It was both local and global. It was streaked with strands of red, yellow, green and blue—ideal for the next painting project. I wouldn't need to worry about ruining the hat. It already looked bizarre. Best of all, it fit!

I had a momentary crisis about the price: \$1.25 instead of the usual \$1.00 for your run-of-the-mill, non-missional hat. There are times, however, when one must simply throw caution to the winds and declare, “Price is no object. Wrap it up. Are you sure you couldn't knock 25 cents off the price?”

Today, I'm the proud wearer of a hat that is both swayve (or suave, as the less-sophisticated say) and ethically responsible. Of course, I have my detractors. Son Michael, for example, had this response to my prize: “Dad, that's the dumbest hat yet!”

Oh, well. He's young. And since it bugs him so much, I know exactly what to wear the next time we play ball. If nothing else, he'll always be able to say, with perfect conviction, that while his dad wasn't much of a ballplayer, he was definitely a colourful guy.

is exceedingly important to deal with the “loss” before healing can occur. Individuals who have experience “loss trauma” know the significance of being dealt with in a sensitive manner. This may include follow-up for some persons.

Finally, messages sent to our congregations from the central office have tended to be largely apologetic, but at the same time encouraging constituents to “bail out” the administration. Many of us feel that our trust in our leadership has been fractured. I believe this is also reflected in our giving. This may require revisiting key decisions made in spring.

We want to be optimistic that there will be a proactive, missional approach to the work of MC Canada, so that

trust in the administration and General Board will be renewed.—**Joe Neufeld, Regina, Sask.**

Toews biography a ‘must read’

I read the book *David Toews Was Here*. Author Helmut Harder has succeeded in portraying Toews as he was: a man who loved his God, a man who sacrificed his life for his brethren, a man of colossal faith and deep conviction.

This book should be a “must” textbook for every student at Canadian Mennonite University. It should be read by all who owe their good life in Canada to the fact that Toews’ efforts enabled their parents or grandparents to come to Canada. An excellent Christmas gift!—**H. Redekopp, Winnipeg, Man.**

Workshops contradictory?

I just received a copy of the Reportbook for St. Catharines 2003. There’s an interesting irony in the Seminar Sampler. One workshop will

deal with “the authority of the Confession of Faith from a Mennonite Perspective,” while a second will deal with our possible membership in the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

If we become EFC members, their Statement of Faith will then be ours, and since that statement calls for positions that are at variance with our own confession, the first workshop is both unnecessary and irrelevant.

Just a thought that could free up a spot for another workshop.—**Vern Ratzlaff, Saskatoon, Sask.**

MCC commended

Mennonite Central Committee was among the non-governmental agencies (NGOs) commended by the United States Institute of Peace for establishing long-term relationships with the communities it helps. Their report says that faith-based NGOs can go beyond emergency aid—their interaction with people through local projects furthers reconciliation. MCC supports two organizations in Bosnia featured in the report: Merhamet, an Islamic agency; and Pontanima, an inter-religious choir.—MCC release

Administrative Coordinator



Mennonite Disaster Service

invites applications for Administrative Coordinator

Position begins: Mid-August 2003
Location: Winnipeg, Manitoba

The MDS Administrative Coordinator manages the binational MDS office in Canada that connects Canadian volunteers with MDS disaster-response projects in North America. Responsibilities include processing volunteers, communicating with Canadian constituents and agencies, fundraising, and supervising accounting and database operations. Applicant must be willing to travel and speak in public. MDS project experience, administrative experience, verbal and written communication skills, and broad knowledge of computer applications are required. Salary with benefits.

Submit resume by July 18:
MDS Search Committee Chair
99 Brixford Cres
Winnipeg, MB R2N 1E1
E-mail: gmfries@mts.net
Fax: (204) 257-3760

mds.mennonite.net



Barn Raising

August 31 Deadline!

- You helped lay a foundation for the restructured Mennonite Publishing Network. Now it is time to finish the barn—to pay off a key loan of \$1.6 million due August 31.
- Look for details at your church.
- A strong church depends on strong publishing to teach future generations and witness to the world.
- Send your tax-deductible donations through your church offering or to one of the addresses at left.

Mennonite Church Canada
“For MPH Barn Raising”
600 Shaftesbury Blvd
Winnipeg MB R3P 0M4

Mennonite Church USA
“For MPH Barn Raising”
P.O. Box 347, 722 Main St
Newton KS 67114



Winnipeg, Man

Plan to join ecumenical body met with enthusiasm

After attending the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) meetings in Ontario May 21-23, Dan Nighswander, general secretary of Mennonite Church Canada, is positive about forming closer ties with this ecumenical organization.

He found the meetings “a stimulating and enriching experience,” and was pleased that the CCC responded with “great enthusiasm” to the news that the MC Canada General Board is recommending to delegates this summer that MC Canada become full members of CCC.

The July 9-13 assembly in St. Catharines will include a seminar in which representatives from the CCC and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) will talk about their visions and respond to questions. MC Canada is also recommending membership in the EFC.

“We have many connections with the programs of the CCC,” continued Nighswander, “and there are more opportunities to connect on projects where we have common interest.” He cited examples:

- Bill Janzen (Ottawa Mennonite) serves as a member of the Commission on Justice and Peace and had input into addressing the government and Canadian public on the Iraq “war on terror;”

- Keith Regier (Breslau Mennonite) serves on the Canadian Ecumenical Anti-Racism Network which is planning a training seminar for the CCC Council at its November meeting;

- CCC is involved in the future of health care, making a presentation to the Romanow Commission and organizing provincial gatherings. Harry Wiens (Altona Mennonite) is involved in these health care discussions.

- Carol Penner (Welcome Inn, Hamilton, Ont.) represented Mennonites at an ecumenical prayer service in Toronto on March 22. The report of that service published in

Canadian Mennonite (April 7) was passed around the CCC table.

- Some CCC churches are initiating studies on AIDS and the CCC is being invited to explore what the churches can say to one another about AIDS. A Mennonite may be appointed to this group.

A highlight of the meetings for Nighswander was an evening when members joined the National Muslim-Christian Liaison Committee for dinner at a nearby mosque that serves the Bosnian community. Presentations were made to one Christian and one Muslim who have contributed significantly to relationships between the two faiths.

A speaker addressed the role of women in the Muslim faith (from a very “liberal” perspective), and there

was a chance to speak with the imam about Islam and his community.

“A young woman spoke to me with great appreciation for the dialogue between her mosque in

Stouffville and the Mennonites of Markham area,” said Nighswander, “with special recognition of the role of Pieter Niemeyer, a pastor at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church.”

“Since I know that a number of our people are involved in dialogue with Muslims,” concluded Nighswander, “I was happy to hear this story and that it was making a positive impression.”—**Leona Dueck Penner**

‘We have many connections with the programs of the CCC and there are more opportunities to connect on projects where we have common interest.’

Akron, Pa.

MCC poised to help rebuild Iraq

Mennonite Central Committee is planning to spend more than \$865,000 in emergency aid, trauma counselling, peace building and clearance of unexploded ordnance in Iraq.

An MCC assessment team visited Iraq in late May and determined that the most immediate needs include food, water and relief kits. MCC plans to place a second short-term worker there to assist with aid administration.

According to Edward Miller, an MCC worker based in Baghdad, the overall situation is improving slowly each day. But with no government in place, limited availability of electricity and water, ongoing looting and the breakdown of law and order, many Iraqis fear circumstances will worsen before they get better.

MCC and its partners—CARE, the Middle East Council of Churches and

the Islamic Relief Agency—continue to distribute blankets, quilts, canned meat and relief kits that were ready before the war. Those supplies, worth nearly \$2.7 million, and the new proposed funding are part of the first phase of a longer-term response that will likely last for several years.

Some of the money is earmarked for immediate food distributions to Baghdad hospitals. Water will be distributed to Hai Tareq Community, a impoverished area in Baghdad that was neglected under Saddam Hussein’s regime. The situation there has worsened since U.S. and United Kingdom forces occupied Iraq.

Relief efforts include food packet distributions to 20,000 families in Mosul, Kirkuk, and Baghdad through the Middle East Council of Churches. Bed packages, which include mattresses, sheets and pillowcases, will be purchased locally and made available to a specialty hospital on

Winnipeg, Man.

Manitoba churches join in celebration

Approximately 4,000 people attended the Celebration 2003 worship service at the Winnipeg Convention Centre on May 25. The 48 congregations of Mennonite Church Manitoba were invited to join in this celebration of their Anabaptist faith.

Filing in with colourful banners, the congregations united to worship as one church.

"Today we will hear stories of the word of God active in the lives of God's people," said Pam Driedger, one of the planners. A mass choir of Faith and Life and Mennonite school choirs, along with storytellers and worship leaders, presented the message of "Faith Alive: Rejoice!"

Worshippers heard about how biblical faith transformed the life of Elizabeth, an Anabaptist martyr condemned to death in 1549. They heard about biblical faith transforming the life of Charleswood Mennonite Church, a congregation which embraces two



Photos by Evelyn Rempel Petkau

A procession of banners opened the celebration of Manitoba churches.

cultural groups—one with European and one with Korean roots.

"We continue to experiment not always knowing what a dual congregation looks like," said John Braun,

Charleswood pastor. "We have a long way to go but for now God has brought us under one roof. God's calling to unity, oneness and peace is a high calling but when we experience it and practise it, it is a gift of God." Ray Loewen, from Seeds of Life Community Church in Altona, shared how his faith has transformed his life and led him to create the "Build a Village" project in El Salvador in response to earthquakes there.

"When we recognize Jesus in the homeless and needy and respond like Jesus, isn't that what we are intended to do in living out our faith?" he asked.

Korey Dyck, of Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, told how his faith led him to stand between Israeli settlers and Palestinian farmers as a member of Christian Peacemaker Teams.

Celebration 2003 was the third joint worship event of MC

Manitoba whose vision is "to be a community of congregations, unified in Jesus Christ, living a biblical Anabaptist faith."—**Evelyn Rempel Petkau**

the edge of Baghdad.

For the past several years MCC has been providing protein foods to the Al Rashad psychiatric hospital. Post-war looters nearly destroyed the facility, which at one time housed 1,200 patients (see June 2, page 19).

Nearly 400 patients have returned. MCC plans to re-equip the sewing workshop with machines and fabric, and purchase patient clothing and other hospital supplies.

MCC has proposed support for an Iraqi/North American trauma awareness exchange, and assistance with counselling. MCC will also be supporting a Middle East peace building specialist visiting Iraq.

In late May, the U.S. occupation forces said there were more than 1,440 sites of unexploded ordnance around Baghdad. The number across the country is still unknown. MCC will support DanChurchAid's ongoing program of de-mining the country.—MCC release



Pam Driedger of Altona Mennonite Church led worship with her husband Gordon at Celebration 2003. At right is the worship band from Douglas Mennonite Church.

Kykotsmovi, Arizona

Campbell's soup labels bring new mini-van

How many cans of soup does it take to earn one mini-van? The students and staff at Hopi Mission School here know the answer: 1.1 million.

On May 17, Bill Zuercher, the school administrator, picked up the silver 2003 Dodge Caravan from the dealer. The school has countless volunteers from the United States and Canada to thank for the vehicle.

These are the folks who for years have been saving labels from Campbell's products. In fact, this is the third van that the school has received through the Campbell's "Labels for Education" program since 1995.

Nicky Peters, a member of Emanuel Evangelical Free Church in Steinbach, Manitoba, has been coordinating the label-collection effort since she and her husband, Ray, arrived at Hopi Mission School in October 2001. Ray is the school's principal.

She counts the labels and bundles them in bunches of 500. She weighs the boxes before they are shipped to Campbell's. She cuts labels as well, since they have to be of uniform size to bundle.

Many of the teachers at the school are Mennonite Voluntary Service workers and all have taken their turn trimming and bundling labels. Teachers Joyce Zuercher and Sharon

Johnson have probably done the most, since they've been at the school the longest.

Peters takes advantage of resources

tion Week, with a poster contest, and firefighters coming to visit the school. We did a food drive at Christmas."

"We also participated in Read Across



Photo by Tuyla White

The Hopi Mission School is delighted with its new mini-van received in exchange for 1.1 million Campbell's soup labels. From left: Nicky Peters, Joyce Zuercher, Joslin Navenma and Trevor Scott (students), Sharon Johnson and Bill Zuercher.

that Campbell's offers. "I sent for a coordinator's kit that had lots of ideas," she says. "Some labels earn extra points, so I separate those out."

"Campbell's will give bonus points for community service, too," she continues. "So we had a Fire Preven-

America," says Peters. "During one week, the staff and students dressed up as different book characters, and we had 'celebrity readers' come in from the community." There are no plans to stop collecting.

"We've already gotten enough for a sewing machine—we needed a little over 12,000 labels for that—and some water coolers for the cross-country team," says Peters. Collection for the next million-label van has also begun.

Labels come in from all over the United States and Canada—English, French and Spanish-language ones. "They come from Mennonite and American Baptist and all kinds of churches. Parents of our school kids bring them in."

Peters has also learned that soup preferences vary according to region. "By far the most common kinds of labels we get are tomato, chicken noodle and cream of mushroom," she says. "We get a lot of clam chowder labels from the east coast, nacho cheese soup from the west coast, and pea soup from Canada."—**Melanie Zuercher**

The renovated front of the Mennonite Church USA office in Newton, Kansas, received an award in April from the local Historic Preservation Commission. The new brick face and royal blue signage with white lettering replaced aqua-blue tin and tiles that blew off in an April 2001 windstorm. "I was at 722 Main when that blue tin went on," said Irma Voran, the exterior design consultant and a former employee. "I remember being so sad the day the blue tin went up, and I was so thrilled when the storm blew it off. So when they called and asked me to help, I was excited."—From MC USA release



Our multi-cultural church

Mix of cultures presents a challenge

With globalization trends, the world is becoming more urbanized (42%), internationalized (Anglos increasingly in the minority), and Asianized (50% of babies born globally are Asian). Every city is increasingly a mosaic of different cultural, language and ethnic groups.

Churches should reflect the same kind of mix. Cross-cultural church planting requires extreme sensitivity to different cultural values and patterns.

In Mennonite Church Canada, there are over 40 congregations who represent cultures and ethnic backgrounds newer to MC Canada, according to the Diversity Project Report. "On the average, over 2,000 persons from across Canada worship weekly in 11 different languages in over 40 distinct congregations. The

total number of persons of their culture that these churches relate to is considerably higher."

In anticipation of this comprehensive study, Hugo Neufeld wrote: "MC Canada congregations are moving from what was once a group of churches consisting of primarily one

main culture, to peoples of many backgrounds." This is a most "positive development" and "there is a need to move toward a newer more mature phase."

After the Multi-cultural Ministry Consultation in Saskatoon last July, in which over 70 participants from diverse ethnic groups and congregations participated, all these groups became

very excited, realizing that their voices would be heard and their needs recognized. This is true especially after *Canadian Mennonite* published reports on the consultation.

As a result there is extensive awareness of what has been happening and of the formation of the Multi-cultural Ministry office in MC Canada as of February 2002.

The purpose of Multi-cultural Ministry is to build connections with the multi-cultural congregations of Mennonite Church Canada, and to ensure that they are better served by MC Canada programs and better represented in denominational leadership.

It is undeniable that Multi-cultural Ministry will take a concerted effort to bring everyone together. Besides diversity in culture, language, tradition, practice and custom, there are also geographical challenges—the fact that our multi-cultural congregations are so widely dispersed in different cities. How do we bring them together, both physically and in spirit? How do we break down the tangible and intangible barriers between groups? How do we learn to appreciate one another?

It is most important to build cross-cultural relations. In the face of rapid social changes, we must affirm our belief in "one church with many peoples," and make every effort to ensure that the ministry of MC Canada is sensitive and able to cater to the needs of our times.

It is our hope that this office will help to build a bridge to facilitate communication between multi-cultural groups, as well as between these groups and other groups and congregations in MC Canada.—**Samson Lo**



Samson Lo



MCEC photo

Girls from the Jane-Finch community in Toronto relate to the Black Creek Faith Community there.

This four-page supplement was coordinated by Samson Lo, director of Multi-cultural Ministry for Mennonite Church Canada. He works out of Vancouver, B.C.

Multi-cultural leadership training fills a need

In the past several years, the need for leadership training within the various cultural groups has arisen within Mennonite Church Canada.

Maurice Martin, as director of Congregational Leadership Development, shaped a program using the Pastoral Studies Distance Education curriculum of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Thus a three-way partnership was formed between AMBS, area churches, and MC Canada.

There are five units in the program: Church and Ministry; The Biblical Story; Anabaptist History and Theology; Preaching, Worship, Evangelism; Pastoral Care and Counselling, Administration.

On March 1, 2003, about 65 persons from Hmong, Laotian, Korean and Chinese congregations in MC Eastern Canada met at Steinmann Mennonite Church to study the Anabaptist History and Theology unit. Martin gave his lectures in English, followed by discussion in the various languages, led by persons from within each group.

In the following weeks, participants will individually complete the 10 lessons as well as meet with others in their language group for discussion. The course will conclude on June 28 with a plenary session at First Mennonite Church in Kitchener.

This pattern will be followed for subsequent units, both in MC Eastern Canada and, beginning in fall, in MC Manitoba. It is hoped that it will also be offered in other places across Canada.

The Spanish-speaking groups in MC Eastern Canada will have their own training program because curriculum is readily available and there are persons able to teach in Spanish. Five courses are being developed within the framework of a "School of Discipleship" (Spanish). Noe Gonzalia and Rebecca Yoder Neufeld will teach the first course in biblical studies this spring and fall.

In Winnipeg, however, the Spanish group will meet with the Asian groups and use the AMBS curriculum. The Korean group is in the process of translating the AMBS curriculum for their use. Other groups may decide to do this as well. Two words which might describe the multi-cultural leadership training program are "flexible" and "accessible."



Photo by Lynette Wiebe

Eun Young Kwon (Key) and her daughter, Kaeul, were part of the Korean congregation at Charleswood Mennonite Church.

Responses to leadership course

It helps us to be aware of the Anabaptist-Mennonite roots and thought and particularly to equip and facilitate our vision of each Lao church in each Lao community.—*Boris Sithideth*

It was my great honour to be able to attend the Multi-Cultural Leadership Training led by Maurice Martin. It would be impossible as a Canadian Mennonite without knowing the Anabaptist History and Thought. I strongly recommend we as Christian who have eager hearts to seek words of Jesus Christ should participate the training.—*Ben Yu*

The more I travel and meet with different groups and congregations, the more I see the need for this kind of training.—*Samson Lo*

Maurice Martin was able to draw people from several cultural groups together to reflect deeply on our shared Anabaptist-Mennonite confession of faith. It was equally as gratifying to see how the individual groups engaged in more private settings to come to further understanding of the input given by Maurice.—*David Brubacher*

The curriculum is for pastors or lay leaders who want more training but are unable to leave their congregations for study. The program is designed to be accessible to a broad range of leaders within groups which do not have English as their first language. It is taught on a certificate level, and can be done with minimal time away from other duties. It can also be taken for credit.



Members from Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church discuss beginning a ministry to Mandarin-speaking people. From left: Raymond Ho, Jamieson Sung, Monica Khoo, Ronald Khoo and Mary Mae Schwartztruber, Minister of Missions for MC Eastern Canada.

Faith journey of Chinese Fellowship

Chinese Fellowship of Grace Mennonite Church in Regina is a very small group. The nature of the fellowship is quite different from other fellowships in the church, because the majority of our attendees can only stay three to four years. Each year new students come and members leave.

Therefore it seems that we are in an intensive faith course at Grace Mennonite Church. God sends raw materials (non-believers with atheism background) to us, and after a few years the ready products are sent out to be his witnesses. We thank God for providing the environment for us to build our faith.

The year 2002 was a challenging one to Chinese Fellowship. Since 1999, God had encouraged us to take a big step by doubling our financial contribution to Grace. We learned that as long as we remain faithful in giving, God will take the whole responsibility.

In the beginning of 2002, however, a new challenge came to us. The conference was going to cut their support of our ministry by \$3,000. We decided to pick up the amount even though we didn't know where the money would come from.

As I quietly thought about it, a question came to my mind: "Could you pass the test by simply trusting me?" There was no other place we could turn for

was to focus on God's help through prayer.

That year was a faith trial to Chinese Fellowship. Our attendance decreased throughout the year. However, God was watching over us and finally, last October, he provided an unfamiliar Christian couple from the university to pray for the difficulties we were facing. It was a surprise to me. How could they know our difficulties?

The next day our attendance increased, and the last week of December we were informed by our church treasurer that we had reached \$20,018. Former members outside Regina gave more than usual. God had helped us to cope with our

financial difficulty. (Our contribution to Grace Mennonite in 1993 was \$3,500; last year it was up to \$21,500.)

The increase was remarkable given our unstable membership, with only four members having jobs. God worked a miracle. We have learned a great lesson about faith. Faith is not looking for help by our own

effort. It is not monitoring other people's pockets. Faith is being willing to take the whole responsibility, to open our own pockets to God first, and leaving the rest

to God.

Besides the difficulties mentioned above, my next concern was our Christmas outreach celebration, I wondered how many non-believers would show up. When I raised my concern to God, a statement suddenly came to me: "Why not fasting?"

The next day, I started to fast. God enabled me to do it. And God brought many new people to our celebration. In past years, people would not stay after the meal, but at last year's celebration people didn't want to leave.

God has been gracious to us. He created crisis in order to help us to grow and to experience his marvellous ways of solving our difficulties. There are currently three people studying the Bible individually with me on weekdays. I am encouraged to see their eagerness to learn God's word. All three have accepted the Lord as their personal Saviour. I praise the Lord. Amen.—

Magdalena Widjaja

The writer is pastor of Asian Ministries at Grace Mennonite Church in Regina.



The Vancouver Chinese Mennonite Choir sings during worship.

Photo by Dan Dyck



Church photo

Members of the Edmonton Chinese Mennonite Church prepare food for the relief sale.

help. The result of our fundraising last March wasn't very satisfying; therefore we cancelled our second fundraising last September. We realized that our only way

The testimony of Phuey Muey Chan

Phuey Muey doesn't think of herself as a person to give testimony to her faith. She says she is shy, had no formal education, grew up on the edge of society, was abandoned as a child, felt as handicapped as if she were blind or deaf. But she is happy to tell her story.

She was born in Vientiane, Laos, on July 10, 1958. She had two brothers and two sisters. When she was about 11 years old, her father and both grandparents died. This was more than her mother could bear so the children were sent to other homes. Phuey Muey was sent to a distant relatives where she took care of the children and was not permitted to attend school. She never learned to read or write.

She heard of Christians who believed in God—a God who helped people. Even though she didn't know who God was, each night she asked this God to help her read and write. Gradually she learned and kept a diary of her journey. Her relative found the diary and was surprised that one could learn to read and write without a teacher. Phuey Muey began to believe

displayed on that day in 2002 helped her to understand how her life was before she was saved and how God put her life together in a beautiful new thing.

The old ripped quilts reminded her of her life prior to being a Christian when she didn't even realize her wrongdoings. Now she realized again how much God loved her and John 3:16 came to mind. She saw that pieces of material that are separate from others are nothing, but put together they make a beautiful whole and make people warm.

Burke spoke of her nervous breakdown and how she felt she had to be involved in everything. The doctors told her to slow down and do something she'd always wanted to do. She spent much time on each quilt, likening it to the time God spends working in each of our lives. Each quilt is important, beautiful.

She was especially attracted to the "Spider Web" quilt showing light shining out in different directions, symbolic of God's reaching out to her. This was very personal for Phuey Muey and she feels a need to reach out to tell someone else the good news.

One quilt was divided into four squares—it looked damaged and blurry. When a cross was placed on the middle, its whole appearance changed. It became a beautiful picture for Phuey Muey of how Christ came into her life and made a difference. The "Tree of Life" quilt symbolized how God wants her to be like a tree bearing fruit, being a part of God's people with new life. She wants to be like a quilt, bringing warmth to people.

Phuey Muey was married in 1975 in Laos and has four children. They came to Canada in 1988. She works at a clothing factory in Kitchener and attends Grace Lao Mennonite Church.
—Recorded by **Doris Kramer**

Biblical foundation of Ministry

When God created the first human beings in God's image, the Bible tells us that "God saw that it was very good." It was God's intention that there be good, harmonious relationship between all people and between people and their Creator, and that all would be "good."

Sin destroyed that ideal state, which finally culminated in the Tower of Babel, where multi-ethnicity started.

Throughout the Old Testament there were prophetic voices that called for a move toward reclaiming that "goodness" and being reunited with God and with people, such as in Psalm 100:1 where "all the earth" is to "make a joyful noise to the Lord."

With the coming of Jesus we have a renewed call to all people "that they may all be one" (John 17). With Christ's death on the cross and His resurrection the way was paved for reconcilia-

tion with God and with one another. At Pentecost we saw the early church coming together in over a dozen different nationalities and languages. After that the church branched out "to all the world," as called for by the "Great Commission."

Finally, Revelation 7:9-10 prophesies a beautiful picture of things to be, "a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands.

They cried out in a loud voice saying: 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!'"



Youth from Toronto Mennonite New Life Church lead singing at a youth retreat.

because of this miracle.

On October 19, 2002, Phuey Muey attended an Ontario women's meeting at Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church. The guest speaker was Jane Burke, former missionary, who used quilts to make spiritual applications. This presentation made a profound impact on Phuey Muey and she wanted to share her response with a larger audience.

She had become a Christian at the Laos Mennonite Church in St. Jacobs in 1998, and experienced new life. Before she felt abandoned, now she felt part of something bigger. The old and new quilts

Winnipeg, Man.

African feast launches young adult adventure

Combine a youthful desire to experience the adventure of Mennonite World Conference Assembly in Zimbabwe with an evening of African food, music and dance; mix in some exotic visual decor and a generous audience and you have a fundraising success.

The Southern African Feast at Bethel Mennonite Church here on May 24 raised \$7,000 for the 13 young adults from Manitoba who leave for Zimbabwe on August 3. The event not only met financial goals but provided the 160 supporters with an enjoyable evening of "crossing cultures."

Most of them happily left behind their own culture as they:

- dipped Nshima (cornmeal porridge) into Seswaa (beef) and Pudi (goat) stew with their fingers, and sipped milky-sweet Roiboos (red-bush) tea,
- stretched their minds with quizzes,
- watched an African fable/slide show,
- listened to Africa mission speakers,
- clapped as Nigerian women danced,
- danced their way forward in an African-style offering, waving their contributions.

The event was organized by the young people, along with Sonja Friesen, coordinator from Mennonite Church Manitoba, and Kathy Fast of

MC Canada who was supervising chef. The group plans to visit Brethren in Christ churches prior to the Assembly Gathered. After the assembly, they will visit some tourist sites.

"It was a delight the way everything came together," said Friesen. "This broad representation of rural and urban young people, aged between 20-30, met together about once per month for the past year, to worship and plan; they created their own mission statement, brought their own ideas."

She added that it was wonderful to have Gary Prieb, director of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM), present to encourage the young people. Also participating were Arnold Harder, long-term Congo mission worker, and Peter Rempel, AIMM chair. They were having AIMM meetings in Winnipeg.

"This was more than just a few kids getting together to raise money for an overseas experience," noted a guest. Having various church representatives present "made this a broader, church-sanctioned, community-based event."

Rempel spoke about the importance of nurturing relationships with a suffering but vibrant African church by sending young people to Zimbabwe in spite of the political tensions.

One guest with experience in Africa



Photos by Jake Harms

Bob Wiebe and Sonja Friesen count the offering. In African style, the offering is repeated until the goal is met. So when the goal was met on the first round, a cheer went up!

appreciated the opportunity to talk about Africa in a receptive atmosphere. "The music, food, dance, felt very familiar...." The evening provided a trip down memory lane for those who worked in Africa when churches were just beginning to get their independence.

"It's exciting to see a new generation going to MWC, hosted by a mature African church," he said.

As for the young people themselves, joyful enthusiasm for this adventure was evident in their faces as they welcomed guests into a beautifully decorated dining room, served meals which they'd helped to prepare, poured tea and shared stories.

This was the first of two events. The second, hosted by the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church on May 30, drew 75 people and raised over \$2,600.

This feast ended with a blessing from Bob Wiebe, MC Manitoba director of Education Ministries. "This venture also has the possibility to change perceptions of God's world for these young adults. May they never be the same."—**Leona Dueck Penner**



The Manitoba group on its way to Zimbabwe. From left: Lori Fast, Corey Dyck, Lisa Martens, Virginia Gerbrandt, Leah Bueckert, Kevin Stoesz, Heidi Paetkau, Bonnie Unrau, Leah Bock, Brent Falk, Anne Whitford, Reynold Fast. Missing is Vicki Friesen and coordinator Sonja Friesen.

Harrisonburg, Va.

Women do theology under a 'red tent'

During the biennial Women Doing Theology conference here May 16-18, entitled "Gifts of the Red Tent: Women creating," some 200 participants from the United States and Canada came together under their own "red tent." Shimmering fabric hung from the ceiling to create the tent where they met.

The conference, coordinated this year by Mennonite Central Committee

(MCC) U.S. Women's Concerns, took place on the Eastern Mennonite University campus. Through the presentations and workshops, participants were challenged to view themselves as central characters in their own stories rather than as marginal figures fulfilling back-up roles.

Inspired by *The Red Tent*, a fictionalized re-telling of the biblical story of Dinah, the conference explored

wonder, welcome and wandering as elements of women's experience and creativity. In the novel, Dinah and her relatives rejuvenate themselves and create a community in a red tent reserved for women.

The conference explored wonder, welcome and wandering as elements of women's experience and creativity.

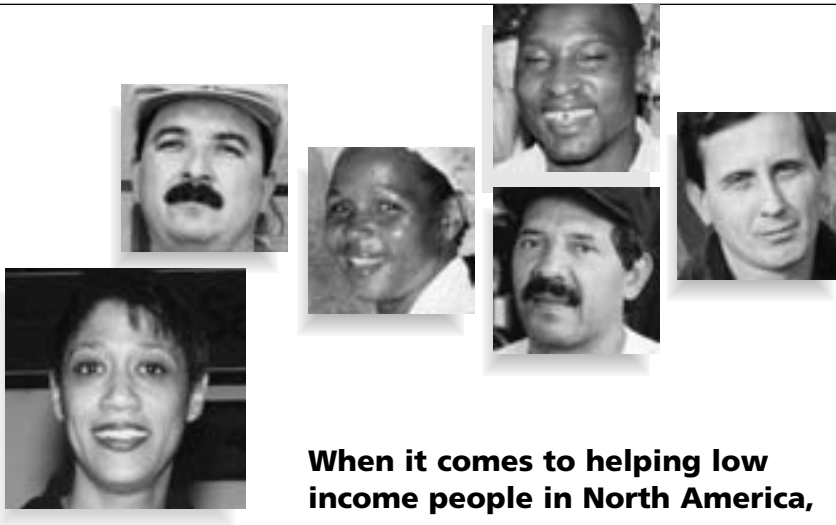
"The red tent is a metaphor for the intergenerational activity of women," explained Mary Lou Weaver Houser, a member of the conference planning committee and creator of the conference's red tent.

The three main speakers were Malinda Berry, a doctoral student at Union Theological Seminary in New York, Reta Halteman Finger, New Testament professor at Messiah College in Pennsylvania, and Iris de León-Hartshorn, director of MCC U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries.

Rather than using a traditional model of one respondent for each presentation, four women discussed their insights after each presentation. An artistic respondent also performed a piece on each presenter's theme.

Workshop topics included the spirituality of birthing and midwifery, caregiving, dance, creating sacred spaces, drumming, dollmaking and papermaking. The event included a celebration of the 30th anniversary of MCC U.S. Women's Concerns and a coffeehouse in which women shared their talents. Participants could knot comforters during the sessions to be sent overseas.

Responses to the event revealed a mix of those who are interested in a more intellectual approach to theology and those who prefer to "do theology" with their hearts and hands. The next Women Doing Theology conference is scheduled to take place in Canada in two years.—**Kristine Sensenig**



When it comes to helping low income people in North America,

MEDA means business!

Many low income people in North America dream about starting their own businesses. But most business training programs are too expensive, or not geared to their unique challenges.

That's where the Mennonite Economic Development Associates' ASSETS program comes in. Through it low income people can receive practical business training, mentoring and access to affordable credit. Since 1993 ASSETS has enabled over 1,100 people to start 296 businesses and create 635 full and part time jobs.

When it comes to helping low income people in North America, do you mean business?

Call **1-800-665-7026** or visit **www.meda.org** to learn how you can give people a hand up, not a handout.



Winnipeg, Man.

New partnership to extend development credit

Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) is venturing into a new partnership with CARE, one of North America's largest international development agencies. The two organizations recently formed MicroVest, a new fund to access millions of dollars for investment in the global microfinance sector.

CARE operates more than 60 microfinance programs around the world. MEDA has a history of development investment work, culminating in the creation of the Sarona Global Investment Fund.

The nudge to work together came from Calvin Miller, a former MEDA Bolivia staffer who now directs CARE's Economic Development Unit.

How will the new venture differ from MEDA's Sarona Fund? The new fund will help MEDA achieve some goals that so far have eluded Sarona, says Gerhard Pries, director of MEDA

Investments Inc.

"At just over \$5 million, Sarona is a relatively small fund—too small to address the many capital demands in the microfinance sector," said Pries. "The management costs of running a small fund are extremely high."

"CARE has significant Wall Street contacts that we expect to tap for capital," he adds. MEDA, meanwhile, is respected by CARE for its values and its long ground-level experience with microfinance investing and management.

Pries says there is a lot of demand for capital in the microfinance sector. The sector is a vital means to alleviate poverty. Studies have shown that small business provides 60 to 75 percent of the employment in developing economies.—From MEDA release by **Wally Kroeker**

Winnipeg, Man.

New international grants manager for MCC

Mennonite Central Committee Canada has hired Deo Namwira as international grants manager, moving the office from Ottawa to Winnipeg.

This position matches MCC projects with CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) grants in agriculture-food security, income generation, health, basic education and peace building programs. MCC, with the help of CIDA, supports projects in 14 countries.



Namwira

"MCC has a good vision for fulfilling God's commandment to help each other," says Namwira. "I appreciate their focus and recognition, without discrimination, of people in need as valuable creatures of God. I want to contribute to the achievement of MCC's mission around the world."

MCC and CIDA are in the midst of a three-year partnership that will access \$7 million for overseas projects.

Following the completion of his undergraduate degree in agriculture from the University of Congo in 1993, Namwira finished his graduate studies at the Evangelical University of Africa in 1997. He immigrated to Canada in 1999 and within a year received his graduate certificate in Conflict Transformation from the University of Toronto. He completed a master of science degree in International Development Studies from the University of Guelph in 2002.

Namwira served several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) while in Africa where he worked on projects to reduce poverty and encourage sustainable development. In his most recent position with Christian Aid, a British NGO, he coordinated aid for refugees in Rwanda, Burundi and Congo.—MCC Canada release

Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Loan proceeds donated to Africa travel fund

More Africans will be able to attend the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Zimbabwe this summer because funds from the remaining debt of a micro-enterprise program in Zimbabwe have been donated to the MWC Africa travel fund.

In 1995, MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates) helped launch the Phakama Economic Development Company in Bulawayo. The program never managed to gain traction, however. Performance was hampered by internal problems, huge devaluation of Zimbabwe's currency, and political unrest.

When the program was taken over by new leadership, MEDA's loan remained unpaid. It was agreed that the current owners would pay \$412,706 (Zimbabwean) to settle the financial obligations. This amounts to \$7,250 US.

Rather than having the funds repatriated, the new owners agreed to contribute this amount to Mennonite World Conference. Not only that, they wrote recently to say that "Phakama would like to donate a further ZW\$100,000 to MEDA towards this noble cause." The combined total of ZW\$512,706 has been turned over to MWC in the name of MEDA.

While the final amount was well below the face value of the loan, "we felt we could not expect payment in full because that might bankrupt the new institution," says Ed Epp, MEDA's director of operations.

Allan Sauder, MEDA president, adds, "This settlement represents a partial forgiveness of debt as well as some tangible support for the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Bulawayo. I am pleased to see closure on this, and pleased that we can make a contribution to MWC."—MEDA release

Portage la Prairie, Man.

Women share same path to ministry

Karen Schellenberg and Judith Doell are two young women who learned to know each other while following a similar path to church leadership. Both were highly involved lay workers in the church when they were called to pastoral leadership by their congregations.

Schellenberg was chair of the Portage Mennonite Church and a social service worker in her community when she was called to be the pastor. Doell was called to lay ministry in the Whitewater Mennonite Church in Boissevain three years ago. Last fall she was hired and installed as associate pastor in her church.

"I had been teaching adult Sunday school and having a blast," said Doell. "It had become such a passion. It gradually evolved into preaching."

Both churches were looking for pastors when they took notice of what was emerging in their midst.

At the 2002 delegate sessions of Mennonite Church Manitoba, the Portage and Whitewater churches were twinned. This partnership and the personal journeys of these leaders has led to a special friendship between the two women and their churches. Last February, these congregations asked to have their partnership extended for another year.

On April 27, the two congregations met for a second joint worship service in Portage la Prairie, during which Schellenberg and Doell shared the sermon.

"I still remember the first conversation Karen and I had as we started planning for our first joint worship service last July," said Doell. "I could not have anticipated what a rich and encouraging experience this would be for me."

"Karen and I had so much in common. We were both mothers with families about the same age. We were both lay women being called into ministry. Both our fathers were also in the ministry. We were both the only

girls in our families. These similarities made me feel so much less alone."

Doell added that their differences are also enriching their ministries.

As "indigenous pastors," they find that so much happens "naturally" in the congregation.

Much of the adjustment that comes with hiring a pastor from outside the church and community is eliminated. But there are growing pains for the congregation when one of their own moves into leadership.

"It takes a tremendous amount of humility," said Doell. She and Schellenberg appreciate the support they receive not only from their congregations but from each other.

"I didn't really think I could do it," said Schellenberg. But being involved in the church means being involved "in something bigger than yourself." She realized one day that she had been happiest that day at a church meeting: "I could talk about my faith. Things came together in that setting."

"If we want leaders in our conference then we must discern them from within, mentor them and allow them to try and to gain confidence," said Wally Kroeker, Outreach Minister at Whitewater. "The church needs to be willing to take the risk and pay the cost in further training and development."

"Being entrusted and empowered with this task that the church gives you is huge and awesome," said Doell and Schellenberg.—**Evelyn Rempel Petkau**



Judith Doell (left) and Karen Schellenberg share their common path to ministry during a recent sermon.

Photo by Grace Fitzell

Elkhart, Ind.

Seminary graduates four Canadians

Four Canadians were among the 33 students who graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary here on May 23. The service was held at College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Indiana.

Matthew Bailey-Dick of Waterloo, Ontario, earned the Master of Arts: Peace Studies degree. He plans to be a full-time parent and will teach a course on the history of the peace movement at Conrad Grebel University College next winter. He is a member of Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church.

Karmen Krahn Fehr of Swift Current, Saskatchewan, earned the Master of Arts in Christian Formation degree with a concentration in worship. She plans to serve the church as a resource for worship. She is a member of Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen.

Garry Janzen earned the Master of Arts: Theological Studies degree. He will continue on the pastoral staff of

Edmonton, Alta.

Shoppers attracted to new thrift store

The doors opened on May 3 to reveal bright and spacious displays while smiling volunteers greeted customers. Eager shoppers lined up at the till, clutching finds of clean, affordable household goods and clothing.

The opening of Mennonite Central Committee's thrift store here was a huge success, pulling in \$1,800 in sales on its first day, and generating many hopes for the future.

The store, located in what used to be an auto parts shop, is sparkling clean and homey, with displays of used furniture, good quality clothes and toys carefully displayed.

"Many customers have said that it feels good to shop here, and that our prices are reasonable," said Barb Brown, manager. "Most of the people coming in are from the neighbourhood. It's great to see them happy with their purchases and to see my volunteers

happy to help them."

The store's location, in a low income part of the city, was chosen to serve the needs of the community. Its proximity to other thrift stores allows needy people, many with little access to transportation, the opportunity to have shopping choices.

Part of Brown's vision is to develop a connection with Social Services so that people can be referred to the store for help with basic clothing and household needs. She also hopes to involve church youth groups as volunteers at the store.

"I'd like to see youth groups make this part of their schedule, maybe coming once each month."

With a background in retail management, and an obvious love for people, Brown, a member of a local Mennonite Brethren church, is excited about her position.

"It's great to be working with other

Christians," she remarked. "The board has been especially helpful in teaching me the 'Menno game' and in working



Frieda Dick, a volunteer at the new MCC thrift shop in Edmonton, arranges donated clothes for display.

Sherbrooke Mennonite Church in Vancouver, where he has served since 1998.

Eunie Yantzi earned the Master of Divinity degree. She will return to Toronto to complete some writing projects. Eunie is a member of Hillcrest Mennonite Church in New Hamburg, Ontario.

Of the 33 graduates, 19 received the Master of Divinity degree. Ten of these will begin or continue pastoring, four are chaplains or will continue training in chaplaincy. The rest will work in various forms of ministry and education. Two of the graduates are from Ethiopia, and one each from Japan, Nigeria, Korea and Indonesia.

Commencement speaker was poet and teacher Jean Janzen. She urged the graduates to make the exclamation "O" a foundation of their living (the "O" of wonder, of sorrow and of home). "Notice that the ordinary is always extraordinary," she said.

AMBS is a seminary of Mennonite Church USA and Canada.—AMBS release by **Mary E. Klassen**

well as a team."

The best advice Brown received came from Martha, a thrift store manager in Calgary, who said, "This is a never-ending job; if you don't get it done today, there's always tomorrow!" Barb finds herself repeating these words as she looks over the boxes of unsorted goods, as she trains new volunteers, and works at the huge task of organizing the sorting and displays.

In its first month of operation, the store has received numerous donations.

"We've thrown very little away," Brown said. "People have largely brought very good, clean things here. Anything we can't use we try to send to places that can use or recycle it." For example, they are selling the wood from an old box spring to be used as recycling boxes.

The store, located at 15311 Stony Plain Road, welcomes donations, including fans to cool the building, and volunteer time. They would also appreciate out-of-date devotionals, such as *Daily Bread*, and other pamphlets to give away. The store's phone number is (780) 443-4047.

—**Donita Wiebe-Neufeld**

Calgary, Alta.

Vietnamese church celebrates milestones

The Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite Church had three remarkable reasons to offer praises to God on April 27. The congregation celebrated its 22nd anniversary, burned its mortgage, and baptized eight adults and seven youth, including two Caucasian young people.

Eleven years ago, the small congregation of roughly 25 people began meeting at its present location at 167 Whitefield Dr. Previously the congregation met at Foothills Mennonite Church. Currently, approximately 160 adults and 40 children attend worship services each Sunday. Services are held in both Vietnamese and English, with the English service involving mainly young people.

Ironically, as it burns its mortgage, the church is already searching for a solution to overcrowding. The lot is too small for significant renovations and parking is an issue. The congregation is considering two options—purchasing a lot and constructing a building, or buying an existing facility. In either case, they hope to stay in the northeast part of the city. Portable trailers are being considered to alleviate an immediate need for more classroom space.

When asked about his vision for the



Photo by Doreen Neufeld

Chau Dang, pastor of the Calgary Vietnamese church, baptizes Lieu thi Phan. She experienced healing from her terrible headaches after becoming a Christian.

future, pastor Chau Dang mentioned three areas: small groups, children's ministry, and training members for outreach.

"We want to expand our small groups to keep people together. This involves training small group leaders and creating a friendly atmosphere so

that non-Christians feel welcome. We are looking to expand our children's ministry by offering more activities, Vietnamese language school, art classes and tutoring starting this fall. This is an opportunity to provide a needed service and outreach to our community."

About 45 people have attended the first two sessions of an eight session program called "Evangelism Exploration." Dang explains: "We believe every Christian must know how to witness and share the gospel. This program helps to train them to share."—**Donita Wiebe-Neufeld**

Elkhart, Ind.

Departing churches form other ties

The 1995 decision to merge the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church has changed the face of those denominations in the United States.

Nearly 16 months after the birth of Mennonite Church USA, 167 congregations have withdrawn from the denomination, representing a total membership of 16,603 in 21 area conferences. The result has been the creation of 15 new fellowships and additions to the membership rolls of nine other denominations.

For example, the Association of Mennonite Evangelical Congregations (AMEC) is made up of one congregation from Lancaster, two from Atlantic Coast and nine from Eastern District conferences. Virginia Conference's Cornerstone District, with 15 congregations, pulled out en masse.

Lancaster Conference lost the most congregations—49. Another 35 congregations in Lancaster are considering their future in MC USA.

"The merger may have been more of an opportunity to withdraw rather than the root cause," noted Ed Kauffman, conference minister for Central Plains.—From *The Mennonite*, May 20

Waterloo, Ont.

Term deposits assist churches

Since the inception of Church Builder term deposits in 1997, Mennonite Savings and Credit Union has partnered with members to donate over \$81,400 in bonus interest to 87 churches and organizations across Ontario. Of those recipients, 23 have received over \$1,000.

Church Builder deposits offer investors a competitive rate of return on their two-year investment. In addition, MSCU donates a 1/2 percent in bonus interest to the Mennonite, Amish or Brethren in Christ organizations of the members' choice.

Church Builder term deposits are available through all MSCU branches until September 30.

"MSCU's mission is to effectively

meet the financial services needs of our members in a manner that is consistent with the values of our Anabaptist faith community," says Karl Braun, Member Relations manager. "The *Church Builder* program is just one way that MSCU works together with members to support churches and church institutions."

MSCU, founded in 1964, currently has 14,091 members, 94 employees in 5 branches, and assets of \$435 million. It is the 9th largest of 302 credit unions in Ontario and 31st in Canada in terms of assets. It handles about 20 percent of all agricultural lending by Ontario credit unions.—From MSCU releases

Goshen, Ind.

Youth ministers imagine the 'new church'

What will the church look like in the future? What kind of church leadership do we need? What is the purpose of the church?

Fourteen conference youth ministers and fifteen guests from various agencies and schools grappled with these big questions in their annual meeting May 14-17. They met both at Goshen College and at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary under the theme "Leaders for a new church."

Anne Campion from Mennonite Church Canada and Steve Ropp from MC USA began the meeting by asking each person to tell his or her "call" story. The variety of stories illustrated the many ways that God calls leaders for the church. The meetings continued with a blend of worship, reporting, open time to reflect, and discussion of issues.

The MC USA youth ministers affirmed several guidelines for youth conventions. They favour meeting every two years, and with MC Canada every fourth year. They reaffirmed the primary purpose of the convention as encouraging youth to make or deepen their commitment to Christ.

However, instead of focusing on identity formation as the secondary principle, they want to help youth to see how God is at work through the Mennonite Church and Anabaptist principles. If youth learn to appreciate the church, their identity would have a firm foundation on the gospel. Focusing too much on identity formation can descend into ethnic trappings.

Luke Gascho of Goshen College's Environmental Learning Centre led the group in engaging imaginatively with the theme. In one exercise, groups created fairy tales to illustrate the purpose of the church. Underneath the dragons, wandering healers and magic glasses that emerged were profound truths about the church as a place of God's transforming love.

Participants grappled with both their hopes and their fears for the church. They find hope in the authentic worship and commitment and

relationships of young people. They hope that the new church might be like a dance, drawing in everyone it meets, playing many kinds of music.

But what if the church is too distracted by consumerism and individualism to care about what God is doing? And what if the vision and gifts of young people are overlooked or unwelcome?

In the closing worship, Anne Campion of MC Canada encouraged the youth ministers to identify with both David and Samuel. They anointed each other to recall their own anointing for leadership. They also reflected on the important task of calling and mentoring youth as the future leaders of the new church.—

Becky Horst

U.S. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is accepting applications for the position of MCC U.S. Executive Director. The director provides vision and oversight for all MCC programs in the United States and is responsible to the MCC U.S. board.

Familiarity with MCC constituency, strong relational administrative skills, and cultural competency required. Experience with budgeting, administration, pastoring, preferred.

Significant travel time within the United States.
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For a full job description contact: Charmayne Brubaker,
717-859-1151, cdb@mcc.org or your nearest MCC office for the full job description.



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Recycler keeps old furniture from landfill site

When people recycle, they usually take their newspapers and glass to the nearest “green earth” facility.

Menno Penner of First Mennonite Church here does it a little differently. He dismantles old television cabinets



Menno Penner uses wood from old television cabinets to build drawers that fit inside the cabinets.

and uses them for other purposes.

For the last two years, Penner has used his talents at the local Village Green Furniture store. He doesn't like to see the good wood in older furniture, like television consoles and stereo cabinets, go to the landfill site. So, in his basement workshop, he uses this wood to make drawer fronts for dressers. The drawers are then fitted into old consoles.

Unlike the factory-built dresser drawers that are often of flimsy construction, these drawers are built solidly from plywood. Penner dislikes working with particle board because it is difficult to repair.

Penner has been an avid recycler and a “Mr. Fix-it” all his life. While living on the farm during his earlier years, he had to be innovative when repairing items by making use of what was available. While working at the hospital in Rosthern for nine years, he repaired everything from razors to heart monitors to leaky pipes. In the community he also helped with building projects and remodelling homes.

While working on a Voluntary Service assignment for a housing organization in Cleveland, Ohio,

Penner's skills were doubly tested. It was challenging enough to maintain nearly 200 houses and apartments in the rough inner city, but to do all that on a shoe-string budget forced him to become even more skillful. The previous winter, he had done similar



work in a Hispanic community in Brownsville, Texas.

Penner again put his skills to work when his family moved to Saskatoon. He and his wife Melita served a VS term at the local Mennonite Central Committee depot. Penner renovated many areas of the building. He also repaired items for Ten Thousand Villages that had been damaged.

How did he get so good at fixing things? Penner shrugs with typical modesty and points out the obvious: “You learn to do these things to save money and because there's no one else around to do it.”—**Melita Penner and Karin Fehderau**

People & Events

Toronto, Ont.—Greg Rollins, 30-year-old Christian Peacemaker Team member from Surrey, B.C., was held in an Israeli prison for 17 days without charges after being arrested in Hebron on May 18. At the time of his arrest, he was simply watching Israeli soldiers checking Palestinians' identification. On May 29, the Israeli High Court overturned a deportation order against Rollins and ruled that he can stay in the country until the petition challenging his arrest is heard. Rollins was released on June 4. In prison, he and five others in his cell were counted six times a day. “It was ludicrous,” said Rollins. “Where could we go? I lost 10 pounds.” He added, “The Israeli army did this to try and scare us and other international peace groups.”—From CPT Canada release

Elkhart, Ind.—Mennonite Camping Association has chosen two persons to serve as church and camp liaisons on its board. Elsie Rempel will represent Mennonite Church Canada and Ken Hawkley Mennonite Church USA. Hawkley, from Chicago, is Minister of Discipling with MC USA. Rempel, from Winnipeg, is director of Christian Education and Formation for MC Canada.—From MCA newsletter

Winkler, Man.—Don Dyck was granted the 2003 Physician of the Year Award by the Manitoba Medical Association recently. Dyck has been called a “visionary” for pioneering of Manitoba's first rural-based radiology department in the 1970s, and he has continued to update his department with state-of-the-art imaging. Dyck, a highly regarded teacher and role model, is known for his patient care and willingness to do emergency consultations at any hour. He is a member at Covenant Mennonite Church here.—From Medical Association report

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People & Events

New Hamburg, Ont.—Val Fleming, 75, went to the Ontario Mennonite Relief Sale on May 31 for some strawberry pie, but she came home with a \$44,000 quilt. Fleming, from Beamsville, couldn't resist the feature quilt at the auction—the award-winning “Kaleidoscope of Nations” (*Canadian Mennonite* cover, July 1, 2002). The quilt, coordinated by Renske Helmuth of the Listowel Mennonite Church, incorporates fabrics from all the countries in which Mennonite Central Committee works and was stitched together by more than 70 women. Fleming plans to use the quilt as a bedspread. While planners were disappointed that it won't be on public display, they appreciate the generosity of the buyer. The entire sale raised about \$350,000 for MCC.—From *K-W Record* reports

Richmond, B.C.—Peace Mennonite Church here has called two new staff to ministry. Jesse Nickel, who was raised in the congregation, began June 1 as youth worker responsible for youth and children's programs. Timothy Kuepfer will begin August 1 as lead pastor. Timothy and his wife, Sandra, and their three sons were raised in an Amish-Mennonite community in Ontario. He has been a teacher in Ontario and Belize, and served in Zimbabwe with SIM International. He recently served as associate pastor at University Chapel in Vancouver while studying at Regent College.—Congregational release

Transitions

Births

Buhler—to Candice and Scott, Osler Mennonite, Sask., a son, Brady Lane, May 2.
Buschert—to Clare and Kevin, Wilmot Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont., a son,

Oliver Edward, April 23.
Entz—to Nancy and Ben, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., a daughter, Julia Dawn, May 9.
Gingerich—to Bonnie (Landers) and Douglas, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., twin sons, Cole Douglas and Kyle Robert, May 16.
Nickel—to Stephanie and Jeff, Emmanuel Mennonite, Abbotsford, B.C., a daughter, Emma Grace, May 27.
Weber—to Cheryl and Robert, St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont., a son, Luke David, May 25.
Wichert—to Gail Friesen and Doug of Calgary, a son, Jack Douglas, April 22.

Marriages

Bender-Janzen—Darrell “Chip” (Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont.) and Wendy (St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.) at Hidden Acres Camp, Ont., May 24.
Froese-Thiessen—James (Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man.) and Jaime (Grace

Winkler Mennonite Brethren), in Winkler, May 24.
Janzen-Wolgemuth—Darryl (Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.) and Alexandria (Prairie Rose EMC, Landmark, Man.), in Landmark, May 25.

Deaths

Brubacher—Abner S., 76, Bethel Mennonite, Elora, Ont., May 4.
Derksen—Frieda, 95, Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask., May 29.
Epp—Annie, 70, Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask., April 16.
Froese—John Peter, 74, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, May 26.
Goossen—Walfried (Wally), 62, Hamilton Mennonite, Ont., May 26.
Guenter—Annie, 79, Osler Mennonite, Sask., May 17.
Hildebrand—David L.D., 90, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., May 25.
Janzen—Henry, 88, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, May 29.
Matty—Derek, 21, Emmanuel Mennonite, Abbotsford, B.C., May 3.
Rempel—Helena, 74, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, June 1.
Thiessen—V. Lloyd, Zoar Mennonite, Waldheim, Sask., May 25.
Zehr—Sarah, 96, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., May 4.

Baptisms

Hamilton Mennonite, Ont.—Laura Oulahen, Jessica Pearce, June 1.
Osler Mennonite, Sask.—Susan Braun, Joel Sawatzky, Heather Wall, May 18.
Wilmot Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.—Meghan Wagler, May 25.
Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask.—Steven Elias, Chantel Mierau, May 25.

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



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Mennonite Church Canada

Financial update for 2003-04

A recent donation report for Mennonite Church Canada shows that contributions are holding steady at roughly the same levels as last year.

Forecasts anticipated 22.6 percent of total donation revenue for this time period (February 1 to May 31); \$886,000, has been received so far, representing 22.7 percent of a \$3.9 million donation income budget. About 75 percent of MC Canada's annual income this year is forecast to come directly from congregational and individual giving.

The remaining 25 percent is received through sales, fees for service, deferred contributions, investments, subsidies, and grants from mission partners. Expenses remain in line with forecasts.

A complete revenue and expense budget will be presented to delegates at this year's assembly in St. Catharines (July 9-13), together with projected budgets for 2004-2005 and 2005-2006.—MC Canada release

Mass choir for assembly

A mass choir is being organized for the Sunday morning worship service on July 13 at the MC Canada assembly. All assembly participants, and others who are interested, are invited to sing!

Rehearsals are scheduled for Thursday, July 10, at 8:15 p.m. at the St. Catharines United Mennonite Church, and Sunday morning prior to the service. For more information, contact Art Wall at (905) 935-3919.—MC Canada release

Invitations to prayer

Mennonite Church Canada Witness invites you to participate in the ministry of prayer for the following:

- The annual assembly coming up in July 9-13 in St. Catharines. As participants in PrayerNet, come to the international worker alumni evening (Thursday after worship, 8:45-9:45 p.m.) to hear stories about the power of prayer.

- Lillian Haas in Burkina Faso has returned to her village after seven months of language study, ready to begin developing a writing system (orthography) and literacy materials for the Siamou language. Mamina has come forward to assist Lillian in the project. Praise God for bringing Mamina to this work and pray for a good working relationship.

- Cheryl Woelk of Swift Current, Saskatchewan has been working in Korea this past year with the Korean Anabaptist Centre under the internship program of MC Canada Witness. She is excited by what she has learned and is renewing her commitment to peace program development at the centre. Pray for her as she builds up resources for the Korean people who are seeking Christ's way of peace.

- Mission associate Bonnie Klassen writes from Bogota, Colombia, about the atrocities that people suffer. One rural woman who hasn't returned home for some time, told her: "I'm not sure I ever want to go back. Perhaps I can't handle the pain of facing the decimation of my family. Once we were 48 cousins; now only 7 are left. Last year alone, 31 of my cousins were brutally assassinated by one of the armed groups...without counting their spouses and children. We no longer get



Photo by Dan Dyck

Eva Siemens of Winnipeg is one of dozens of Canadian Women in Mission members sewing bags for this year's assembly in St. Catharines.

together to sing and dance. With whom would we dance?"

Pray for the peace witness of the church in Colombia as it works in this violent context. Pray that God's desire for reconciliation becomes a reality.

The PrayerNet newsletter is available via email at: witness@mennonitechurch.ca.—MC Canada release

Women's groups sew bags for assembly

Women from across Canada are sewing 1,500 tote bags for adult and youth delegates at this year's annual Mennonite Church Canada Assembly in St. Catharines.

The request to Canadian Women in Mission (CWM) to make bags came late. It was only at the March 2003 Leadership Assembly that the CWM executive learned of the opportunity. Still, sewing groups from across Canada are rallying to the cause.

Some bag makers have added their own brand of creativity to selected specimens. Two are embroidered with the MC Canada dove

symbol. Some have handy pockets on the outside; others are quilted. One denim model has a log cabin quilt pattern. One features the front of a jean jacket, complete with pockets.

In Manitoba, bolt ends of fabric were contributed from a church member working in the textile industry. One group seems to have struck a rich vein of surgical green fabric, lending a certain antiseptic look to the bags. Other groups rounded up their own materials. Men also got into the act.

CWM president Dodie Lepp said, "When the executive heard about this need and the opportunity it presented, it didn't take long for us to decide to take the plunge and commit to the project. It's a very concrete statement of our commitment to the church."

The idea was borrowed from a similar project in Saskatchewan, where Bethany Manor (Saskatoon) residents sewed tote bags for this year's sessions of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan.

Dan Dyck, director of communications for MC Canada, said, "It's a very organic kind of project. Even though many of the makers won't be at the assembly, the project symbolizes our connection to one another, and a desire to serve.... I have been absolutely amazed by the generous response from Canadian Women in Mission."

Bags will be available for sale to delegates at registration time. Proceeds will contribute to the ministries of MC Canada. Those choosing not to purchase will be asked to return their bags at the end of the assembly, for re-use at future events.—MC Canada

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

New Brunswick church marks 25 years

This summer marks the 25th anniversary of the Petitcodiac Mennonite Church in New Brunswick. The congregation invites people to join them for celebrations spread over several months, on the themes of remembering, rejoicing and renewal.

The "remembering" was the focus of June 14-15 meetings when Mark and Mary Hurst returned from Australia for a visit.

The congregation will rejoice July 26-27 with reflections by church leaders. Judi Snowdon is writing a special piece of music which will be performed at that time. Mary Mae Schwartzentruber, minister of missions for MC Eastern Canada, will join the congregation for Sunday worship and the potluck and open house to follow.

October 18-19 will combine thanksgiving and focus on renewal for the future. Pauline Steinmann and Martha Burka will lead the congregation in a "dreaming of the future" session.

The year of celebration will end in December with the publication of a book to chronicle the church's 25 years. It will include various greetings received during the year, the presentations from the various events, and a list of the dreams for the future.

As a lasting memorial of the year, the congregation will plant 25 trees along the property beside the highway. As each tree is planted in Petitcodiac, funds will be sent to Mennonite Central Committee to plant trees in Somalia as part of their "Trees for Life" project. Individuals and groups are invited to contribute \$45 to this project.

Specific dates and times will be posted on the web site (<http://petitcodiacmennonitechurch.org>) as each event approaches.

People "from away" are asked to let someone from the church know if hosting is required. Those unable to attend are invited to write a few reflections or memories of their involvement with Petitcodiac Mennonite Church.

Ordinations in MC Eastern Canada

Mark Diller Harder was ordained at First Mennonite Church on May 11 for his congregational ministry as well as his work as minister of Young Adult Ministries in MC Eastern Canada.

Vicky Roeder Martin was licensed toward ordination at Floradale Mennonite Church on May 18.

Ann Campion will be ordained at Avon Mennonite Church on June 22. She is associate pastor at Avon and, until August 31, serves as part-time director of Youth Ministries for Mennonite Church Canada.

Kurt Schwarz, chaplain at St. Clair O'Connor Community in Toronto, will be ordained at Warden Woods Mennonite Church on June 22.

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Enlarged Equipping Conference in October

Bob Wiebe, director of Education Ministries, together with John Klassen, director of Leadership Ministries is planning an enlarged "Equipping Conference" this fall. This learning opportunity will take place on Saturday, October 4 at the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

The event will combine the traditional October "Equipping Conference" with the annual Ministers and Deacons Conference. It will be a resource to Christian educators, Mission Committee members and Stewardship Committee members, as well as pastors and deacons.

"We are hoping that each

congregation will be well represented," said Wiebe.

The conference will include worship and a wide assortment of workshops. They include Christian education topics touching on Sunday school, youth work, superintendents' department, and adult education.

The change to a Saturday is "a change which many in the education circle have been requesting," said Wiebe. Vern Klassen Wiebe is coordinating this project.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

Rural churches project off to a good start

Naomi Unger, one of two people working on the Vibrant Rural Churches Project, has visited three of the five churches on her list: Superb Mennonite, Fiske Mennonite and Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite. The meeting at Superb took place on April 27 and included about half the congregation.

"People were generally positive," said Grant Martens, pastor at Superb. Unger led the group through a list of questions that gave her the

information needed for the project.

"Among the numerous things that I've observed in these churches is that where the generations work with and for each other, that interaction is life-giving," noted Unger.

A meeting at the Mayfair Hoffnungsfelder Mennonite with Eric Olfert offered an interesting example about how well this partnership can work. The Mayfair church had only four children but one young woman suggested running a Vacation Bible School program.

The older couples in the congregation decided that they would invite their grandchildren to come, and together with the community children, they had an attendance of 30 children. The older couples pitched in to help with the summer program. Mayfair is planning to repeat the program again this summer.

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.



Chris Suderman has his temperature taken before entering his school in Beijing as a precaution against SARS. He is the son of Rod and Kathi Suderman, administrators of China Educational Exchange. Mennonite workers in China report that life is slowly returning to normal as schools re-open their doors after a month-long interruption. "Living in SARS-land certainly has its frustrations, but we are trying to go about our daily activities with a sense of humour," said Rod.—From MC Canada Witness

School notes

Pastoral interns

Winnipeg, Man.—Eight Canadian Mennonite University students are serving as pastoral interns this summer in various churches, including one in the United States. This program gives students a chance to test out their ministry skills. Mennonite Church Canada, through The Company of 1000, provides small bursaries to the interns. Mennonite Church USA partners with five U.S. Mennonite colleges in a similar venture, the Ministry Inquiry Program. This summer, the U.S. program has 26 participants.—From releases

Interim president

Fresno, Cal.—Jim Holm has been appointed interim president of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, effective June 16. Holm has been dean of students and director of constituency relations since 1997. Known as a dynamic church leader, Holm is completing a Doctor of Ministry degree from Fuller Theological Seminary in the area of spiritual formation and leadership training.—From MBBS release

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Employment Opportunities

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)**

WARDEN WOODS MENNONITE CHURCH in Scarborough, Ontario requires a

YOUTH LEADER

beginning in September 2003, to work seven hours per week. Key responsibilities are to coordinate youth activities and teach Sunday School. We are looking for a person with energy, Mennonite sensibilities, and a critical consciousness.

For more information about job description, terms, or to send resume, contact:

**Martha Smith Good, Pastor
Warden Woods Mennonite Church
74 Firvalley Court
Scarborough, ON M1L 1N9
(416) 694-1138 ext. 30
E-mail: wwmc@wardenwoods.com**

Silver Lake Mennonite Camp is a children's summer camp and off-season retreat facility located in Hepworth, Ontario, and is associated with Mennonite Church Eastern Canada. We are currently seeking a full time

DIRECTOR

The Director will provide vision and leadership and will be responsible for year-round camp programs. The successful candidate will be directly involved in the operation and management of a summer camp program, off-season rentals of the camp facility, day-to-day financial management and ongoing promotion of the camp.

Silver Lake Mennonite Camp is committed to Anabaptist Christian beliefs and values, and the Director is expected to share a commitment to this unique element of our mission.

Please visit www.peaceworks.ca/~slmc/director for a complete job description. Applicants should forward their resume by June 30th to

**James Berg, SS#1, 10 Bay Berry Lane
Niagara on the Lake, ON L0S 1J0
E-mail: jcberg@vaxxine.com**

Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Morden located in Southern Manitoba requires a

FULL-TIME SENIOR PASTOR

for a congregation of 300+ members. Candidate should be an enthusiastic individual willing to provide spiritual leadership and guidance and is committed to an Anabaptist understanding of faith.

For more information please contact:

**Ruth Derksen (Chair Pastoral Search Committee)
901 Gilmour St., Morden, MB R6M 1R9
Phone: (204) 822-5666; E-mail: jrderkse@mts.net**

Applications accepted until July 30, 2003.

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH GREENDALE invites applications for a

LEAD PASTOR

Our church, rural in location (approx. 1 hr. east of Vancouver), but diverse in attendance and membership, is seeking a full-time lead pastor. The congregation, with an average attendance of 140 is presently served by a full-time Youth/Assoc. Pastor.

Starting date is negotiable. Please direct inquiries and résumés to:

**Pastoral Search Committee
c/o Vic Ewert
42369 South Sumas Road
Chilliwack, BC V2R 4W3
Church phone: (604) 823-4411; Home phone (604)823-6931
Fax: (604) 823-4486; E-mail: fmcgreendale@excite.com**

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
perkmenno.org**

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Fall delegation to Colombia

Winnipeg, Man.—This fall, Irene and Jack Suderman will lead a delegation of up to 14 people to explore Mennonite faith in action in Colombia. The Sudermans served in Colombia from 1989-94. Jack is currently executive secretary of Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

“Mennonites in Colombia are in many ways today’s Christian pioneers of peace on a deeply conflicted spiritual frontier,” says Jack. He hopes the travel/learning experience will enhance or create partnerships between the Colombian and Canadian church.

The trip is scheduled for

November 13-25. The deadline for registration is July 31. A portion of the cost will be tax deductible. To register or learn more, contact Al Rempel at 1-866-888-6785; email: arempel@mennnitechurch.ca.—From MC Canada release

Menno Homes celebrates 40 years

Waldheim, Sask.—On June 27, Menno Homes of Saskatchewan, Inc. will celebrate its 40th anniversary. Since 1963, it has been providing residential and vocational support to people with disabilities.

The initiative for this venture came from leaders in Saskatchewan Mennonite churches. Menno Homes has

changed from being an institution with 43 people to a non-profit organization that owns or manages eight group homes and three vocational units, all located in Waldheim. The

vocational centres provide employment for the 40 residents as well as 20 clients from the area.

An open house will be held on June 27 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.—From release

Mennonite sites in historic tour

Waterloo, Ont.—Two historic Mennonite sites will be part of a regional heritage tour on September 20. Doors Open Waterloo Region will include the Detweiler Meetinghouse, a restored 19th century Mennonite church in Roseville, and the Brubacher House of 1850 on the University of Waterloo campus (see back cover).

The tour, which will include about 25 sites, is from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. More information is available on the web site: www.doorsopenontario.on.ca or by phoning (519) 748-1914.—From releases

Correction

The story on volunteer Paula Dyck (May 19, page 31) mentions thrift store manager Melita Hildebrandt. The correct name is Melita Penner, who was co-manager at the time.

ABNER MARTIN MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP

Annual scholarship awarded by the Menno Singers to a fulltime student, graduate or undergraduate, who is affiliated with the Mennonite Church Eastern Canada.

Applications must be received by August 15, 2003.

For application documents or further information contact:

Lewis Brubacher
16 Euclid Avenue
Waterloo, ON N2L 6L9
Phone: (519) 884-3072
Fax: (519) 888-9168

Used books raise money for MCC

Akron, Pa.—Booksavers, a volunteer organization that re-sells used books to raise money for Mennonite Central Committee, contributes \$60,000 US to MCC each year. It has three locations in the United States—Hagerstown, Maryland; Ephrata, Pennsylvania; and Harrisonburg, Virginia.

First housed in the basement of a Ten Thousand Villages store, Booksavers began in Hagerstown in 1996 when MCC supporters learned that schools were dumping tons of old library and textbooks in landfills every year.

The organization sells mostly to companies that recondition and re-sell books. Some books are sold on the internet. Some have the bindings cut off so the paper can be sold to recycling plants. Booksavers staff would like to find a way to burn the bindings for heat. Until then, they’re the only part of the book that can’t be used.—From MCC release

Calendar

British Columbia

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.

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

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Employment opportunities

Eben-Ezer Mennonite, located in Abbotsford, B.C., invites applications for a full-time salaried position as

ENGLISH MINISTRIES / ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Eben-Ezer is a bilingual, multi-generational congregation, with a large German contingency located in the beautiful Fraser Valley.

We are seeking an individual who will provide strong spiritual leadership and guidance for our English members with a heart for C'n C and Young Marrieds, and who is not afraid to challenge these members to grow.

The successful candidate will have theological training in a Mennonite / Anabaptist perspective and be guided by the Mennonite Confession of Faith.

This position becomes available in the summer of 2003. For job description and more congregational information OR to submit a resume, please contact:

Search Committee
Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church
2051 Windsor Street
Abbotsford, BC V2T 6L9
Phone: (604) 850-8422; Fax: (604) 850-8455
E-mail: eemc@telus.net

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

Alberta

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: Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Didsbury, 100th anniversary. Call (403) 337-2223 or 335-9421.

Saskatchewan

June 27: 40th anniversary of Menno Homes, Waldheim, 2:00-4:00 p.m.
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 meeting at Grainfields, Saskatoon.
August 9-10: Hague Mennonite Church centennial celebrations. 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.
November 14-15: MC Saskatchewan Bible Conference at Grace Mennonite Church, Regina.

Manitoba

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 21: Welcome Party for young adults moving to Winnipeg, at Home Street Mennonite Church, sponsored by MC Manitoba Young Adult Council.
September 26-27: Brandon MCC Relief Sale.
October 4: Equipping Conference with Ministers and Deacons Conference at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church.
October 11-12: 50th anniversary celebrations at Graysville Mennonite Church. Phone (204) 828-3359.
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 20: Launch of CD by Rick Pauw and others at Hamilton Mennonite Church, 7:30 p.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 Colle-

giate, 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?"
July 13, 19: Pancake Breakfast (13) and Watermelon Open (19) at United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington.
August 10: Reesor Picnic at Backus Conservation Area, Port Rowan. Worship 11:00 a.m. Call (519) 586-2986.

Quebec

August 2-3: Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal 25th

anniversary. E-mail: dave@sauder.org.

New Brunswick

July 26-27: 25th anniversary celebrations at Peticodiac Mennonite Church. (October 18-19 will focus on renewal.)

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.

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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.
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 Fax: (519) 884-3331 E-mail: circul@canadianmennonite.org



The Detweiler Meetinghouse (above) and the Brubacher House are two historic treasures of the Mennonite past in Waterloo Region, Ontario. Both date from the mid-1800s and have been restored to that period. The meetinghouse is located in Roseville, near Kitchener, and the farmhouse, administered by Conrad Grebel University College, is now part of the University of Waterloo campus. These sites will be included in a heritage tour on September 20 (see page 38).

