



CANADIAN  
**Mennonite**

September 22, 2003  
Volume 7, Number 18

**Back to school**  
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## Back to school

Coming at the beginning of a new school year, this issue brings you lots of news from Mennonite schools (pages 22-23, and 28), as well as a Focus on Education advertising section (pages 24-27).

If the cover photo is any indication, there's plenty of enthusiasm out there as the new year begins! (Maybe we should check in again closer to exam time.)

Both Canadian Mennonite University and Conrad Grebel University College report expanding enrolments this fall. Both colleges have "resident" students as well as large numbers of other students taking their courses. CMU teaches University of Winnipeg students through Menno Simons College, and Grebel is a teaching college for the University of Waterloo (its residential students are all registered at the university).

In addition, Grebel has a thriving Master of Theological Studies program and teaches students at the Toronto School of Theology through the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre there. So enrolment numbers are increasingly complex as these schools broaden their influence.

This issue also brings you more responses to the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Zimbabwe (pages 6-9). The last issue (September 8) provided "official" reports from Assembly Gathered. This issue includes more personal reflections on the MWC assembly and on travels leading up to that event.

A recurring note in many reports from the assembly had to do with the food. Westerners were amazed at how so many people got fed without modern kitchens or abundant resources. (Some did admit to finding the "tripe" a little hard to take.)

In our last issue, we neglected to give credit for the many wonderful photographs we received from the assembly. The photos were taken by Paul Schrag and Laurie Oswald for

Meetinghouse, a Mennonite editors' group. Schrag is editor of *Mennonite Weekly Review*, and Oswald works in communications for Mennonite Church USA. Thanks to both of you!

As we go to press, fires are still raging in British Columbia. See an update on Kelowna (page 16) where several Mennonite families have lost their homes. And we are reminded that life continues to be desperate in Iraq. See page 20 for a photo essay on Iraq by Lisa Martens, a Christian Peacemaker Team member from Winnipeg who was in the country when the war broke out in March.

These sober realities will undoubtedly remain in our thoughts as we near the Thanksgiving weekend. The next issue, which will reach you around Thanksgiving, will celebrate a significant event—the 50th anniversary of the original *Canadian Mennonite*. The first issue of that periodical was published on October 16, 1953 in Altona, Manitoba. A 50-year history of publishing is surely something for which to give thanks!

## Calling young adults

In January of this year, we began an occasional column in which we invited selected young adults to speak out on issues that concern them. The first in the series focused on "How I handle my money" (Jan. 13). In the second, young people talked about how they use e-mail (Feb. 10).

In this issue, we are reviving the series in a new format with a broader base of respondents. Every few issues we will suggest a topic, inviting young adults to respond, preferably by e-mail. We will publish excerpts of those responses.

Watch for the announcements. The current topic is "missions" (see page 31). What is a missionary? Should our churches send out missionaries?

Send us your thoughts, and feel free to suggest other topics for discussion.—Margaret Loewen Reimer

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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 at [www.canadianmennonite.org](http://www.canadianmennonite.org) on the Thursday before the issue date. So you can check out the Oct 6 issue by Oct 2.

**Cover: Opening week at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg. CMU photo.**



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## Using the gifts of a healer

I work as a home visiting nurse with the Winnipeg regional health authority. Sometimes my clients have just been in hospital and require follow-up. That often involves wound care—dressings, bandages and treatment. Sometimes it involves their medication and follow-up with the physician.

Other times it involves an assessment of symptoms or blood pressure or testing of blood sugar levels.

Many visits involve teaching the client or family how to manage aspects of their care independently. This is especially true in the home intravenous program in which I also work. Here I see folks who have some interesting infections—cat bites or dog bites, or more serious cellulitis or bone infections or HIV complications.

I don't have my own caseload so I am constantly visiting new people. In summary, I do a lot of listening, lots of different nursing activities and lots of teaching.

I see myself as a steward of God's grace in two ways. The first has to do with my knowledge about healing. God has graced me with a care-giving personality. I enjoy my job and am honoured to do the work of a healer. The healing itself is God-given and not something I or the patient has control over.

Healing doesn't necessarily mean physical healing—sometimes emotional or relational or spiritual healing are necessary. I don't profess to be this spectacular kind of healer, but in my small way I know I am doing my bit to improve someone's situation.

We need to remember that Christ's ministry was spectacular in good measure because of the healing miracles he did: mud and spit to cure a blind man's eyes, a touch of his garment to stop a woman's bleeding, curing those with leprosy, casting out demons. So the example has been laid out for us.

The second way I use my gift is to take the time to listen—even

though I don't have lots of time. Many of the folks I visit are shut-ins. For some, my visit is the highlight of the week. If I can show them that someone else knows of their suffering, then I have used this gift of truly listening.

My greatest challenge is not the controlling or bossy client, or the dying patient or the one with language problems. The greatest challenge is the cumulative need that I see in a day. It is so hard when I only have a certain amount of energy to give and the needs seem to require 10 times that amount.

The lesson here is about finding a balance between looking after others and looking after myself.

There are many satisfactions from using these gifts. Someone who is well again and can get back to regular living is wonderful to witness. (I really like closing cases.) Another satisfaction is building connections with others. There is something sacred about these connections.

If one person feels a little less lonely, a little more cared about, a little less isolated, then I have done my job. Glory be to God.—**Joan Cormie**

*The writer presented these reflections at Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg in April during a focus on using one's gifts and vocation to serve God.*



## My Story

I would like to tell you my story,  
But I do not want you to feel sorry.

Now comes the question where to  
begin?  
Because it is an awful mess I am in.

My arms and legs do not work  
anymore,  
But if they are placed right, they are  
not sore.

My mind, eyes and ears are still fine,  
But my throat and voice are rather  
borderline.

My voice is very soft, and not at all  
clear,  
Making it hard to understand, and me  
to hear.

Tiredness and fatigue force me to stay  
In my room in bed most of the day.

Since there is nothing I can do for  
myself,  
It sometimes makes me wish I had an  
elf.

For family and friends I must thankful  
be,  
And also for volunteers who come to  
see me.

Some come to visit, to read and me to  
feed,  
Others just help me with whatever I  
need.

In a Personal Care Home, needless to  
say,  
Staff an important part in my life do  
play.

There is one thing I'm going to share,  
Life is not easy, for those who need  
care.

But my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ  
is deep,  
I know that upon me, his hand he will  
keep.

### Mary Thiessen

*The writer has multiple sclerosis and has lived in a care home in Winnipeg since 1982.*



## A Second Healing

Is there something you want so much  
that you can taste the longing  
metallic on your tongue?  
I wanted to be healed  
just that  
to have the hemorrhaging stop  
the draining of my blood, my life, my  
soul

I went to every doctor  
absorbed the shame and spent all that  
I had  
to my last cent  
I swallowed every shape and taste of  
healing  
in desperation then I joined the crowd  
a nameless woman, face half-covered  
I eddied near and nearer still  
till I could touch His mantle  
(where life had frayed it at the seams)  
and then stepped back into the crowd  
with joy  
and with such fear  
clutching what it was I'd dared to take  
for I was healed!

then Jesus stopped  
He looked around and asked, "Who  
touched me?"  
my heart stopped and the fear  
returned  
I hid among the throngs but Jesus  
called again,  
"Someone has touched me and received  
my power."

Trembling then, I left the anonymity of  
that sea of faces  
I stood exposed awaiting all the worst  
of what might come  
—I had been there before—  
but, oh, then Jesus called me *Daughter*  
He looked into my eyes of longing  
I looked into the eyes of God and I  
heard, *Daughter!*  
I had come home.

From where I'd fallen down before his  
feet,  
Jesus now raised me up to life  
a touch had stopped the flow of blood  
and meeting God incarnate  
brought me to wholeness  
*Your faith has made you well,* He said  
Now go in peace and know  
That you are healed indeed

**Madeleine Enns**

Abbotsford, B.C.

## Klassens to receive Canadian award

**G**erald and Doreen Klassen were "shocked" to learn that they will receive a Governor General's "Caring Canadian Award."

The couple, from Burns Lake, B.C., have been volunteering with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) for the past 12 years. This work, as well as Gerald's volunteer efforts with the RCMP Auxiliary in Burns Lake, led to their nomination.

Gerald talks about a man he met recently in Jacksonville, Tennessee, who lost everything in a tornado.

"When you lose everything, the pain is so great," says Gerald. "As we talked about his house, he shared that his wife had passed away over a year ago. He had tears in his eyes. It became an opportunity to touch that, to share prayer and minister."

The Klassens have a long history of ministry. They pastored in Waldheim, Saskatchewan, for three years and at First Mennonite in Burns Lake for seven years. They did not feel ready for another pastorate, so they opened a restaurant. Gerald got to know several RCMP officers in Burns Lake and one suggested that he volunteer with the auxiliary.

He laughed when I asked him about that experience.

"I bet you're wondering how does a Mennonite pastor get involved with that!" he chuckled. He said his responsibilities opened his eyes to a side of the community that he didn't realize was there.

Gerald patrolled nights with an RCMP officer and responded to reports of violence and substance abuse. He developed close ties.

"I became like a dad to a lot of these young guys."

Volunteering with MDS was a natural step after Gerald and Doreen's pastoral ministry and restaurant business. They also had experience in construction.

When they arrive at a site like



**Doreen and Gerald Klassen**

Jacksonville, Doreen is hostess. She greets other volunteers, shows them their living quarters, and takes responsibility for their needs. She is also responsible for administrative work. Gerald supervises the volunteers and helps rebuild homes.

Both Gerald and Doreen say that a spirit of volunteering was modelled for them in their own homes. Both came from caring families that responded to needs in practical ways.

"Our door was always open," says Doreen. "My siblings and I are adopted, so that tells you something about my parents."

"We always had foster kids," says Gerald. "In that sense, volunteering—giving—was modelled for us." Volunteering, however, was not something they ever expected to be rewarded for.

"We get to meet so many people; we come to a project for a few months and meet people in similar work. The peers, the other volunteers, the victims. It's just rewarding and fulfilling—it's good for us!"

The Klassens are not allowed to know who nominated them for the award, so they don't know whom to thank for the honour.

"We were shocked and surprised," said Gerald. "We thought it must be a mistake! We just do this because we enjoy it."—**Angelika Dawson**

# What I experienced at Africa 2003

Here are some personal responses to the Mennonite World Conference Assembly in Zimbabwe in August. See the September 8 issue for full coverage.

## Gifts of hospitality and prayer

**W**hy did you come to Zimbabwe? This question ran through my head as I met fellow travelers in my tour of the Matopos and Mitshabezi mission communities.

Retired missionary in Argentina, Frieda (Schellenberg) Erb, came because God brought her. She wanted to learn from and revel in the experience. Max Ediger, longtime Mennonite Central Committee worker now in China, returned to where Africans had helped him grow up as a 19-year-old. Cheryl, a young adult from the United States, came with her grandfather to visit a country that had influenced her family greatly.

Lydia Harder of Ontario said she came to get acquainted with another part of the faith family, to be in solidarity with hosts who didn't retract their welcome as their currency plummeted.

Others came to experience the mystery of Africa, find spiritual renewal, and to learn why African churches are growing while those in the West are shrinking.

Although the pre-assembly tour of the Brethren in Christ mission stations around Bulawayo was only four days long,

the experience was unforgettable—seeing the Matopo hills, hearing the sounds of endless praise in Entebele harmonies, the tastes of the finest Zimbabwean foods in a time of scarcity, the incredible hospitality of our hosts.

The tour included schools, the Bible college, AIDS clinics, hospital and the farm with its irrigation system.

In keeping with the theme of the assembly, we shared gifts. There was hearty laughter when I received a huge cooking melon. I shared this gift with our hosts on our next stop and they cooked a traditional melon and maize soup. Along with the soup we were treated to roasted caterpillars.

Zimbabweans are people of frequent and earnest prayer. They expected the same of us. We prayed before and after trips, before, during and after worship, and with each patient in the hospital.

Thulani Moyo, a young pastor at Mitshebesi, said, "We never knew how strong our faith community was before, or how much international support we had. I think this conference will be good for our economy and may even improve our currency rate. Perhaps the government will respect us more because of what they have seen here."

Sicelesile Ncube, a 22-year-old Bulawayo woman, said, "When things are not going well in your life and you sing praises, the devil gets confused." That's a simple strategy for a victorious life in a harsh land.—**Elsie Rempel**

*The writer is director of Christian Education and Nurture for Mennonite Church Canada.*



**Elsie Rempel and Sicelesile Ncube get acquainted at the assembly in Zimbabwe. Ncube was at the Global Youth Summit.**

## Food and generosity

**F**ood is perhaps the clearest sign of the economic disparity in our world. Twice a day we stood, several hundred of us in each line, waiting for the same fare of *sadza* (meat pieces in sauce), greens and sometimes rice.

To many from the North, the food was monotonous, heavy, greasy and served on less than hygienic plastic plates. Many foreigners, Coke bottles in hand, could be seen in front of ice cream stands and restaurants in the city.

The Zimbabweans, Congolese and others who understand shortage and hunger received their twice-daily plate of food with gratitude.

When I tired of eating on plastic plates with a spoon, I thought about church women chopping greens to feed more than 6,000 people, standing over tubs of cold water and washing all those dishes. (There wasn't a disposable dish to be seen.)

While I was chatting with a colleague, a Zimbabwean woman walked up. She held out a package wrapped in newspaper and said, "This is a gift for you." I had never met her. We unwrapped the package: a lovely basket.

Later that morning, as 7,000 people were milling around outside the meeting hall, I felt a tug on my arm. Another young woman reached into her bag and said, "This is for you." Another unexpected gift.

I attended regional caucuses for Europe, North America and Latin America. The first two, with low attendance, were organized and methodical. The Latin American caucus, in contrast, was just plain fun. Raised voices, passionate commentaries, multiple voices talking at once, many people nominated for a particular task.

Creative energy flowed. There was enthusiasm for mission and a challenge to include English-speaking Caribbean representatives. Could it be, several joked, that conference planners moved us Latinos to an upstairs room because we were too loud?

In the final session of the assembly, I was overcome with emotion as we



Photo by Janet Plenert

**Janet Plenert visits babies in an orphanage near Umtata, South Africa. It is estimated that in South Africa alone, 70,000 children per year are born with AIDS.**

joined hands—some 7,000 black and white, Asian and European, Latin American and North American—and sang, "In Jesus we are brothers and sisters."—**Janet Plenert**

*The writer is executive director of International Ministries for Mennonite Church Canada.*

## International choir builds global unity

**I**t didn't matter that Ammeral Johnson didn't read music or know the Ndebele language of Zimbabwe. Johnson said she felt the heartbeat of global songs wrap around assembly worship like a prayer that everyone knew.

Johnson, an African-American from Virginia, and 17 other choir members helped lead worship for the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) assembly in Bulawayo August 11-17. The only other North American member was Bryan Moyer Suderman.

"Coming together with so many different cultures, so many different styles, so many different backgrounds was a foretaste of heaven for me," said Johnson. "Even if we didn't understand the words fully, we got the meaning."

Absorbing the meaning in many languages and musical scores was what the choir did every day beginning two weeks prior to the assembly, said Marilyn Houser Hamm from Winnipeg, key choir leader.

"The language of music in our worship is one of the most significant languages we have. Mennonites have always

**Continued on page 8**



**The language of music in our worship is one of the most significant languages we have. Mennonites have always known how important it is to sing together.**

### **Choir** *From page 7*

known how important it is to sing together. It's our songs that create a mutual sensitivity and blending that connects us to each other and to God."

Hamm gives credit for this togetherness to the grace of the Holy Spirit. "We would have made no headway if we hadn't prepared ourselves spiritually," she said. "We began each day with prayer and Scripture.... And the way music is, it gives back energy, and constantly renewed us...."

Choir members, fluent in 16 languages, brought riches to the treasure chest of daily worship from Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America and Africa. The assembly songbook opened with a section of songs from Africa. The book contains 90 songs in 20 languages, with translations in English, French and Spanish.

The African song, "Hakuna Akaita Sa Jesu," or "There is no one like Jesus," wasn't even in the songbook, but it topped the worship charts. Reserved Europeans and expres-

sive Africans alike danced and raised their arms in praise.

The music committee included Houser Hamm, along with Eunice Khanye, Africa; Agus Setianto, Asia; Jan Marten de Vries, Europe; and Mauricio Medina Benavides, Central and South America.

"One of the best ways to maintain our worldwide community in the interim between our assemblies are the songs we give each other," said Hamm. "The idea of a global church can be very obscure...music gives us practical handles on this and transcends time and space and binds us together."—From MWC release by **Laurie Oswald**

## **From my travel journal**

**July 28:** Stepping into the street in Kinshasa, Congo, is like stepping back in time. Colourful hand-lettered signs are jumbled on decaying concrete block buildings and in front of ramshackle huts. Women balance loads of laundry, firewood or oranges on their heads.

Men sit in the market with huge wads of bank notes on their knees—the money changers of the "parallel market." Everywhere there are throngs of pedestrians. The vehicles that there are careen wildly down the road, dodging potholes, honking loudly.

This is a large country, one-quarter the size of Canada, blessed with good rainfall and soil, rich in minerals. In the past decade, however, the Congolese have seen their economy collapse around them.

People are friendly, glad to see our small group travelling under the auspices of Mennonite Brethren Missions Service International. We represent friendship and hope. We also represent western interests and money, both of which have largely departed from Congo.

**July 29:** We visited the Natanda Mennonite Brethren congregation. A boys' flute and drum band struck up a song as we arrived. The women of the congregation ululated (vibrating their fingers in front of their mouths) as we walked up the aisle. After the worship, we were served lunch while the congregational members watched, their stomachs empty. I revel in the hospitality and cringe at the same time.

**July 30:** Pascal Kulungu arranged for me to lead a seminar on conflict transformation at the Université Chrétienne de Kinshasa. I was expecting a small group but 70 faculty and students showed up. They came with wide-ranging interests: How do I work with the conflict in my congregation over events that happened 10 years ago? What do I do when soldiers are threatening me? How can we talk about peace when children have hungry stomachs?

The university is gasping for breath. Last month members of the faculty received only five percent of their salary. Many students cannot afford the \$240 US tuition.

Third world, developing world—this strikes me as the forgotten world. There are no tourists or white faces. It is exciting to see MCC offices staffed entirely by nationals, but it is also sobering. Westerners have withdrawn at a time when the needs are most acute since independence 40 years ago.

**August 2:** When I arrive in Nairobi, it feels like paradise. I am a guest at Rosslyn Academy, a Christian school started by Eastern Mennonite Missions and the Assembly of God for children of missionaries. Today the student body includes a variety of religions. [Werner and Adelia Neufeld Wiens of Winnipeg teach here.]

The new American embassy (to replace the one bombed in 1998) is a km down the road. Beyond the next intersection is the Canadian High Commission, a huge complex with private tennis courts and swimming pool. In addition to fire drills, the school conducts invader and evacuation drills.

There are a good number of North American Mennonites in Nairobi. On the first Sunday of the month, they gather at the Mennonite Guest House for a hymn sing. This Sunday, the crowd overflows as the 40 attendees are swelled by a study group from Eastern Mennonite University and a MWC tour of seniors from Pennsylvania.

**August 9:** I have spent the week interviewing 14 organizations working in peace and development. Nairobi is the nerve centre for regional efforts. Kenyan ambassador Kiplagat is chairing the latest round of Somali peace negotia-



## African women leaders eager to serve church

**W**omen theologians in Africa may not yet be welcomed with open arms to leadership positions, but they are not discouraged. This was evident at the workshops they led at Mennonite World Conference assembly.

The women conveyed self-confidence and purpose. One of them was Sidonie Swana-Falanga, who was to be ordained on August 24 after years as a teacher of religion. She described how women theologians in Congo have worked patiently with the gifts the Holy Spirit gave them.

“Women in theology studies in

tions. Other groups are working with Sudanese refugees, mediating Christian-Muslim tensions or developing a peace implementation plan for Congo. The highly-educated, dedicated Africans staffing these efforts are unsung heroes.

**August 14:** We are mid-way through Mennonite World Conference. Has it been what I expected? Mostly, yes. An incredible atmosphere of relaxed friendliness pervades the gathering. Europeans and North Americans are in the minority. The music has been more inter-continental than I anticipated. Where are the drums?

The initial impression of Bulawayo is of a physical infrastructure that is remarkably intact. Step into the dorms and the picture can change quickly. At our dorm, broken windows have not been replaced. Most of the toilets and showers do not work. The bank at the conference site closed yesterday because it had no more Zimbabwe dollars to exchange.

**August 16:** African cultures are marked by relationships and connections. Handshakes linger into handholding. The concept of “sharing gifts” pervades the assembly. I wonder: what do we in Canada have to offer to Africans? They do not need our materialism, consumerism, secularism or our attitudes toward sexuality. What do we have to offer in this global gift exchange?—**Dean E. Peachey**

*The writer is vice president of Canadian Mennonite University (dean of Menno Simons College) in Winnipeg.*

Congo did not try to struggle against men,” she said. They are, however, convinced that they are being called to serve the church in leadership as well as in other areas. “The Holy Spirit moves where it will. The same Spirit that moves men, moves women,” said Falanga.

Hellen Bradburn, women’s development consultant for Mennonite Central Committee in Tanzania, described the regional meetings of African women. They want to increase awareness in the churches, set up a structure for women theologians in Africa, and be better connected to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ women elsewhere in the world.

A group of women in Umtata, South Africa, has made a great contribution in Bible study from a woman’s perspective. Welekati Sokutu, a theologian teaching at the University of South Africa, explained the method.

At their twice-monthly meetings, the women begin by sharing their experiences, then look for a Bible text that relates to the subject they choose. They look at the context of the text and formulate questions it raises. Next they look at other biblical writing that can throw more light on the subject. They examine case studies among themselves and document them for encouragement.

They also look for ways to make a difference in their community, like being involved in a home for street children, in local hospices for AIDS patients or in a centre for abused women and children.

The Bible studies of the Umtata group have been published in 11 booklets on subjects such as women in the Bible, sexual issues, AIDS, marriage, parenting, singleness, divorce, aging and bereavement.

Rebecca Osiro of Kenya, one of the organizers of the workshops, encouraged the women to think positively about who they are and what they can do.

“We are women because God wanted us to be women,” she said.—From MWC release by **Lydia Penner**

**Women wash each other’s feet at the assembly.**



## New look at Siberia

Russian Mennonite studies have drawn new inspiration from the paintings of Jacob Sudermann (1888-1937). His "Sketches from Siberia" were displayed at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg this summer.

Sudermann's art was taken out of Russia bit by bit in the suitcases of World War II refugees. Werner Toews of Winnipeg gathered more than 100 of his great uncle's works to create the exhibit of watercolours and drawings.

The exhibit led to a workshop on Mennonites of Siberia, held at the Heritage Centre on June 21. It sought to highlight part of the Mennonite story that has been somewhat forgotten.

A centennial celebration of Mennonite life in Siberia could have

been held in 1997. One would have recalled the first settlers coming from the Chortitza and Molotschna colonies, such as the Peter Wiens family which came to Omsk, Siberia, as permanent residents in 1897. Wiens was among several who established businesses in Siberia, although farming occupied most of the Mennonites there.

It could also have provided a memorial for the many thousands for whom Siberia signified exile and suffering. The workshop touched on these themes.



"The Gate" by Abram Froese, a colleague of artist Jacob Sudermann.

Presentations recognized lay historians who helped put the story of Siberia on the map, such as Jacob J. Hildebrand (*Siberien*), Peter Rahn (*Mennoniten in der Umgebung von Omsk*) and Gerhard Fast (*In den Steppen Sibiriens*). Two more recent publications, *The Siberian Diary of Aron Toews* by Olga Rempel and *The Silence Echoes: Memoirs of Trauma and Tears* by Sarah Dyck, draw attention to the exile theme.

One presentation focused on Sudermann and the art of his colleague, Abram Froese (1899-1942?). A new collection of Froese's art and story, titled *The Gate and Other Paintings of the Gulag*, was launched at the workshop.—From report by Lawrence Klippenstein

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## Barn Talk—wit and wisdom by the bale

According to the playbill, *Barn Talk* is “a play about politics, religion—and other subjects you can’t talk about in the house.” It was performed in a barn near Shakespeare, Ontario, for three nights in late August by local Mennonites.

When playwright Kathleen Cleland Moyer first saw *He Won’t Come in From the Barn* at the Blyth Festival, she saw people on stage with problems and attitudes that were all too familiar. She couldn’t resist “borrowing” the premise—an old fella who won’t leave the barn.

The old fella in her comedy is Jimmy McKay (played by her husband, John Moyer). Jimmy is struggling with the recent death of Molly, his wife of 55 years. Molly was a wise and well read woman, so Jimmy decides to share her wisdom with U.S. president George W. Bush—and he won’t leave the barn until Bush comes to see him!

“I was going to ask the prime minister,” says Jimmy, “but Molly always said if you want something done go right to the top.”

Bush doesn’t come, but others do. So Jimmy shares Molly’s wisdom with his neighbours, an Old Order Mennonite couple, his daughter who is a therapist, the young Presbyterian minister, and his grandson.

The Old Order John S. Martin, played by Rick Cober Bauman who has the Pennsylvania Dutch accent well in hand, is struggling with the fact that his daughter wants to go to university.

“Who put such ideas into her head?” he wonders, part of the mystery with which the writer teases the audience. But the greater mystery is the letters of advice supposedly written by Molly.

Katie, the therapist (played by Chris Derstine), thinks that her father is wallowing in grief and guilt. The Old Order neighbour—ach vell, he always knew that Jimmy was a stubborn old fool! They’ve had their run-ins before.

Whenever Martin says “ach vell,” Jimmy says, “There you go again, them’s fightin’ words!” But when Martin walks out, Jimmy says: “See, you Mennonites don’t know how to fight!” That sub-theme provides a subtle link to the purpose of the production—as a fund-raiser for

Conflict Resolution Network Canada.

Cleland Moyer, a member of Mannheim Mennonite Church, is co-director of the Network and a successful dramatist. Her plays on conflict resolution have been performed in schools across Ontario.

The play pokes gentle fun at seeming inconsistencies in Old Order Mennonite life, such talking on a cell phone while riding on a buggy. Martin explains that, since the phone is wireless, “it doesn’t really connect us to the outside world!”

Martin’s wife Emma (Charlene Zehr) observes that theirs is a “cross-cultural” marriage—John is Mennonite and she is Amish.

Moyer does well in portraying a much older man. He shines in his rendition of old-fashioned revival meetings which he attended for two weeks straight to spite Molly for breaking off their engagement!

The authentic setting in the barn was made even more real by the presence of



**Old Jimmy McKay, played by John Moyer, has some homespun ideas for George W. Bush.**

Victoria, the Holstein cow. As Jimmy read her his letter to Bush, she mooed right on cue!—**Maurice Martin**

### Arts notes

#### Singing ministry in Hungary

After earning a master’s degree in opera at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, Tim Bentsch sang in Romania with evangelist Petru Dugulescu in 1991.

A vision for a ministry of singing in east bloc countries began to take shape. He shared his vision with David Shenk at Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM), and learned that Shenk was launching “A Song for the Nations” ministry in eastern Europe. In 1994, Bentsch and his wife Lorri moved to Budapest, Hungary. In 2000, he was voted best opera singer of the year, in Szeged, Hungary. Last fall, Bentsch helped to organize Budapest’s first sacred arts festival. Next summer they will launch the International Summer Institute of Creative Arts. They have also planned a choir trip to Siberia.—From EMM release



**Bentsch**

#### Wiens and Harder Epp exhibit

The works of Jean Wiens from Winnipeg and Rhonda Harder Epp from Camrose, Alberta, are being exhibited at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg until November 8. Wiens, who works in oil, watercolour and acrylics but especially enjoys the subtlety of coloured pencils, studied art history at the University of Manitoba. “Much of my art deals with women’s issues,” says Wiens. This is her first solo exhibit. Harder Epp’s paintings fall into four groups: The Place Settings deal with colour, shape and composition as primal matter; The Emotives are focused inward; The Commentaries are responses to things she has heard on CBC radio in her studio; the Queen’s Hats are “images that just wouldn’t go away.... This is really about finding pleasure in the form, and celebrating a milliner’s creativity.... A hat is not just a hat” This exhibit is Harder Epp’s first significant show outside Alberta.—From Gallery release

## Prayer—attitude or technique?

In my experience as a spiritual director, I hear people talk about their struggle with personal devotions and prayer.

Recent articles and books by Mennonites suggest that we need more structure in prayer. Personally, I prefer to pray without structure or words—approaching and being approached by God in silence. Why are we now looking for structured prayers when our tradition abandoned them 500 years ago?

Anabaptists leaders must have known about liturgies and prayer books, including morning and evening prayers. Yet they chose to relate to God more informally. Instead of using prayer books, they tried to make their daily life their prayer. When they gathered in community, they offered prayers for and on behalf of the community. Unfortunately, this did not teach individuals how to pray or clarify what constitutes a relationship

to God.

What can we learn from the Mennonite community about prayer? When I am in the presence of my Old Order Mennonite relatives, I am struck by an attitude that permeates their lifestyle, their worship, and their prayers. This attitude is *Gelassenheit*, a German term for “letting loose of one’s self...total dependence, humility, and trust before God” (*Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*).

As a young child, I saw *Gelassenheit* demonstrated through the lives of my parents and extended family. However, as I have become more independent of my family and the church, relying on God becomes more difficult. That is because a) I am busy, b) I want to be in control, and c) I question whether God really hears our prayers.

a) In our busy lives, it is difficult to find time for private worship. How do we expect to cultivate a relationship with God and follow Christ when we

are too busy? In John 15:4, Jesus invites us to consider living more simply, “abide in me as I abide in you.” This means making choices that draw us closer to God.

b) Trusting God and praying are difficult because we want to be in control—vulnerability is understood as weakness. According to North American culture, it is up to us to work hard, to make wise investments, and to be as efficient as possible.

I remember learning lessons on patience and vulnerability when I worked in Africa with Mennonite Central Committee. I could work as hard as I wanted, but in the end my planning relied on the timing of flights, the condition of the roads, and the availability of electricity and fuel. Affluence and reliable social structures have given North Americans an illusion of control that is opposite to dependence on God.

c) Trusting God is not easy when we question whether our prayers really

## How to collect magic pennies

At the beginning of each school year, I encourage my students to donate coins for the Mennonite Central Committee Relief Sale in Morris, Manitoba. In theory, the money should be easy to collect.

Even with a cause as worthy as this one, however, it pays (as it were) to follow the advice of the author of Hebrews and “provoke” others to do good deeds. Here are a few techniques, designed to maximize your relief sale youth-contribution yield.

Buy some retro-looking containers in which to place the coins. The ones we’re using this year include a Mini-Mart glass milk jug (the kind with the plastic handle and the pull-off paper tab), a Rogers Golden Syrup pail (complete with handle), a Mennonite Heritage Village mini-milk pail, and a Kraft Peanut Butter teddy bear jar. It’s amazing how much more fun it is to drop coins into a personalized container.

Begin a healthy, nonviolent competition between age groups. Tell the Grade

9’s (junior youth) that the Grade 12’s (senior young people) plan to stomp all over them in the compassion-for-others department. Tell the Grade 12’s the same thing about their younger counterparts.



Then, sit back and, in a loving, reconciling sort of way, watch the fundraising fur fly. Try not to make any catty remarks as this occurs.

Get the adults involved: teachers, pastors, youth sponsors. The young people may seem not to care about this grown-up participation, but it does make a difference for them to see older sorts modelling and

sharing their “mettle.”

Set a goal. Begin with the all-time record and go up from there. Chart your progress—perhaps with a poster featuring a thermometer and a smiling picture of your favourite Mennonite martyr saying, “Give ‘til it hurts!”

Promise the winning group prizes from the MCC thrift store. Retro is cool—and there is nothing more “hip” than a disco-era shirt with big collars and silky finish.

Finally, take a picture of the actual “moment” when you dump your hundreds of dollars in coins into the pennies-from-heaven wheelbarrow at the relief sale. A picture is worth a thousand words—and even more pennies.

Oh—one more thing. Try to smile and have fun as you carry out all of the above. Like the moral in the oldie-but-goodie magic penny song, if you do share some joy, you’ll end up having more—and that’s a bargain no self-respecting child of Menno should ever pass up!



make a difference. Despite our prayers for peace, people around the world are still suffering from war while others are living in luxury. How do we come to believe that God really cares about our existence or listens to our prayers? This requires faith: “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). Faith requires trusting in a power beyond our knowledge or imagination.

In a culture that dismisses faith, a simple lifestyle, and vulnerability it is difficult to find the time for prayer and to truly rely on the providence of God.

What can we learn about private prayer and worship from our Mennonite tradition? I believe it teaches us to:

1. Approach prayer with an attitude of *Gelassenheit*. Depending on God is not as easy as it sounds. It requires humility—the proper valuing and loving of one’s self—and trusting in something beyond human effort. It means letting go of the need to control events and people—a vulnerability before God.

2. Examine our concept of prayer. Does prayer engage our mind, body, heart and soul? Do we expect God to change the weather for our family picnic? Do we expect God to keep us from suffering? Do we expect God to speak to us? Do we expect our efforts to lead us to God? Do we expect prayer to make a difference? How we answer these questions will determine how we pray.

3. Live with integrity—ensuring all of life is honest and healthy. For centuries, Mennonites have made their lifestyle their prayer. It requires the daily prayer: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23-24).

4. Attend to our relationship with God. What brings our attention to God? For some people it is tending the garden and for others it is reading Scripture or morning and evening prayers. For some, God is encountered in Sunday morning worship, while for others God is experienced in nature, creativity, or silence.

There are many ways in which the Mennonite tradition has shown, rather than taught, individuals how to pray.

Because we lack a method, Mennonites today feel ill-equipped to pray, either publicly or privately.

However, if we believe that God approaches us with love and mercy, then we can ask God for help. As with any relationship, if we are committed to regular communication, eventually we become comfortable in our conversation. If we approach God with humility, trust, integrity, and our full attention, we can expect God to abide in us.

How we pray may not be as important as the commitment and attitudes we bring before God.—**Miriam Frey**

*The writer, who lives in Waterloo, Ontario, teaches spirituality courses and leads spiritual retreats for groups and congregations.*

## 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.

### Same-sex marriage response crosses church-state boundary

I have two concerns about the “Open letter on same-sex marriage” which Sven Eriksson sent to pastors (see Aug. 4, page 9).

First, I wonder whether Sven’s unambiguous position represents the “grass roots theology” within our congregations. I am aware that the church is not and should not be a “democracy” on matters of faith. But as Christians reflect on faith issues, given current understandings of social conditions, our understanding of God’s will may change over time.

Our understanding of women in the church and slavery, for example, is not at all what the church would have understood even 50 years ago.

Moreover, I suggest that Sven’s letter puts the cart before the horse—our congregations are just beginning to come to grips with the reality of same-sex relationships and what that means for the church. We have not yet

begun to think about faith implications of same-sex marriage.

I think that the possibility of committed, monogamous, Christ-centred same-sex relationships is giving many Christians a fresh understanding of what God intends for relationships between two people.

Second, I question why the church thinks it has anything to say about legalizing same-sex marriage when the government has made it plain that the rights of religions to choose which marriages they will solemnize will not be disturbed.

I see any attempt by the church to influence a political decision which does not impact negatively on faith matters to be as repugnant as an attempt by the government to influence a faith issue which does not impact on governing. Marriage is not strictly a matter of faith; many people marry outside of the church, and the government is right to address what “marriage” may mean to society generally.

Our justice system has identified a human rights violation with regard to same-sex marriage. It is unfortunate that the church should attempt to thwart the government as it tries to correct this violation, especially when the government is guaranteeing the church the right to recognize only faith-based marriages (a right practised by the Roman Catholics and Jews for centuries).

The church is already tied too closely to government. It passes income tax savings to its members for donations, thus making suspect our motives for “charitable giving.” Under subtle pressure from government, the church uses legal structures and agencies to do its work, and has adopted business models for its operation (agendas, budgets and membership rules are major conference issues).

I think it is time to review our Anabaptist-Mennonite platitude that church and state should be kept separate.

I am concerned that congregational autonomy is being eroded. I am concerned that pronouncements are being issued without long-term consensus-building. Most of all, I am concerned that we Mennonites are

ignoring an important area of ministry—God’s call to act as agents of redemption and grace to all people.  
—**Erwin Warkentin, Winnipeg, Man.**

### Joint convention a family matter

I grew up in the States, my husband in Canada. Our families span the continent across both countries.

We now live in Saskatoon with our two small children, and find ourselves wondering how to stay connected with cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents and great grandparents thousands of kilometres/miles away.

The answer is travel. We pack up and go. Dear ones from the States come and see us, too. We play, talk, eat, listen and live together, in Canada and the States. We see each other in the context of our homes, climates and cultures.

There is no other way. How can we understand and love each other as Mennonites if we don’t get together once in a while in both places?

I encourage the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board to consider how its refusal to participate in a joint convention in Canada will affect our North American family.—**Lori Weiler-Thiessen, Saskatoon, Sask.**

### U.S. leaders ignoring promises made

I agree with Craig Friesen (Aug. 4 letter) about the derailing of the partnership with Mennonite Church USA. I also was very disappointed when I read the Joint Executive Committee update in St. Catharines that there will not be a joint assembly in Toronto in 2005.

I was involved in preparing the

proposal for the “one church, two country” model that was approved in St. Louis in 1999, and that included plans for a joint assembly every four years. I have several concerns if that does not happen.

My first concern is the integrity of leaders who do not keep promises that were made. Second, the impression is conveyed that the MC USA Executive unilaterally made a decision to hold their next assembly in Charlotte, N.C. Third, many youth looked forward to those large youth conventions, and some of us promised them that the next one would be in Toronto.

It leaves me with the feeling that the MC USA Executive, like their national leaders, make decisions that seem to imply, “We don’t need you—we can do our own thing.” I hope and pray that the final decision by the Joint Executive Committee in October will be made in the spirit of Christ, rather than in national interests.—**Glenn Zehr, Millbank Ont.**

### Disappointed to see Jimmy Carter photo

It distresses me to see the photo of Jimmy Carter in the context of a conference celebrating the spiritual walk of what is traditionally a peace church (Mennonite Church USA assembly, Aug. 25, page 20).

Some of Carter’s “achievements” for peace:

- Selling weapons to Indonesia at the height of the genocide in East Timor,
- Continuing the arms race with the former Soviet Union, even advocating a “first strike” position under certain circumstances,
- Supporting oppressive governments in Latin America,
- Proposing a massive increase in military spending and a cutback in

social programs,

- Creating the U.S. military’s infamous Rapid Deployment Force to quell unrest and nationalistic activity in places where the U.S. desires control.

As president of the United States, Carter escalated his nation’s policy of brutality in the world. After seeing him idolized in *Canadian Mennonite*, I am ready to throw in the towel.

—**Robert Tessier, Winnipeg, Man.**

### Need more on how grace can bring healing

I have read much in the *Canadian Mennonite* about diversity, calling for compassion, grace and acceptance of homosexual people among us. I find the letter to pastors by Sven Eriksson refreshing (Aug. 4, page 9).

He states that, according to our Confession of faith, it is clear that “blessing same-sex marriages is outside of our understanding and practice of marriage.”

I would like to see more exploration of grace in regard to seeking healing.

In his book, *Answers and Hope for the Struggling Christian*, Henry Warkentin relates the story of a Christian man whom he counselled. The man knew since grade one that he had attraction only to boys. At age 20 he became involved in homosexual activity, which he was unable to shake.

Therefore, he was convinced that his orientation was inborn and that God had created him that way. Warkentin showed him from Scripture how truth can be obscured and we can be misled. The man needed to repent and believe God’s words:

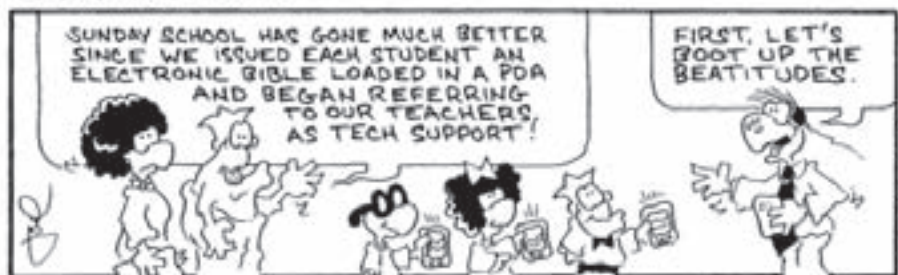
“Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature...all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The young man decided to believe God’s word. He became free of the homosexuality and went on to live a happy life which included heterosexual marriage.

I would like to see more writings, especially by our church leaders, that affirm God’s word and show those in the church and outside the church that allowing grace to prevail can lead to healing and freedom in Christ.—

**Erna Goerzen, Didsbury, Alta.**

### Pontius’ Puddle





Winnipeg, Man.

## Financial review suggests changes at MC Canada

**A** comprehensive review of Mennonite Church Canada's financial operations has resulted in several recommendations.

The review was conducted by Ruth Dueck Mbeba and Neil Janzen of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA). Their recommendations included:

- Hiring an interim financial consultant.
- Improving financial reporting.
- Updating policies and procedures to reflect current structures.
- Implementing a staff performance management system.
- Strengthening the responsibilities of the Financial Policy and Audit Committee.
- More clearly defining the role of the Support Services Council.

The objectives of the assessment were to review lines of reporting, flow of information, budgetary process, and determine the skills required in the finance department.

Dueck Mbeba and Janzen also observed that:

- The annual audit process has generally been well-managed.
- While accounting skills are satisfactory, more weight needs to be placed on financial management and strategic thinking in financial leadership.
- Although the organization is solvent, the re-building of cash reserves is needed.
- Staff are "committed people who love the church, the organization and its mission," and "the organization places a high value on efficient administration."

Lloyd Plett has been appointed Interim Financial Consultant. He will provide guidance, monitoring, and risk management analysis of MC Canada's

financial operations.

Plett, a Certified Management Accountant with over 25 years of experience, was Vice President-Finance at Loewen Windows, a 1,200-employee manufacturer in Steinbach, Manitoba. He continues to oversee Loewen family investments. Plett attends Prairie Rose Evangelical Mennonite Church.

"When I'm done, I hope confidence will be restored in Mennonite Church Canada," says Plett. "There is good work being done here, it deserves

support." Plett will work up to 7 days per month for up to 18 months.

Dan Nighswander, general secretary of MC Canada said, "The review by the MEDA Consulting Group has provided a valuable external assessment of our financial management, with commendation as well as good counsel for improvement. With the changes already implemented and now with Lloyd Plett's appointment as a consultant we want to raise the standards of our financial management."—MC Canada release



Plett

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## Ethiopians host conference on Holy Spirit and missions

**A**s they experienced the most rainfall in 21 years, Ethiopian Mennonites came seeking the face of God.

"This rain will feed the people," an elder said. "And feed our hungry spirits," participants prayed.

The Conference on the Holy Spirit in Mission, hosted by the 106,000-member Meserete Kristos Church (MKC), met here from July 31 to August 3. The group met at what may be the largest Mennonite church in the world, Misrak MKC in east Addis Ababa, with approximately 3,000 members.

A sense of explosive church growth drew about 40 internationals from Honduras, Germany, the Philippines, Indonesia, Kenya, Tanzania, India and North America, along with approximately 150 MKC pastors, evangelists and staff members.

The International Missions Association, a fellowship of eight Anabaptist mission groups, was a key organizer.

Participants enjoyed a rich feast of worship led by Ethiopian choirs and inspirational speakers, stories on the work of the Holy Spirit, and times of confession, fasting and prayer.

Three-way translations from German, Swahili or Spanish into English and

Amharic highlighted the international flavour.

Richard Showalter, president of Eastern Mennonite Missions, said, "We want to experience in a first-hand way the great outpouring of God's Spirit in Africa," a continent in which there are now more Mennonites than in North America.

An Ethiopian leader asked for forgiveness for resenting Mennonites' lack of openness to the Holy Spirit. German evangelist Johannes Reimer invited non-western missionaries to come to Europe, where some 500,000 people are leaving the churches every year.

"Why does the power of God leave us?" Reimer asked in his closing sermon. "What happened to the radical Anabaptists who covered Europe with churches?" As Reimer closed the meeting, hundreds flocked to the front to pray and commit themselves to missions in the power of the Spirit.

Although they were busy hosting tour groups on their way to Mennonite World Conference, Ethiopian leaders expressed deep appreciation for the conference.—From Mennonite World Conference release

Kelowna, B.C.

## Kelowna congregations respond to disaster

**A**s fires continue to threaten Kelowna and people live with uncertainty, churches in the city are responding to those who need assistance most.

Mennonite Disaster Service and First Mennonite Church representative Reatha Thiessen are working with other agencies and the local ministerial to set up an “unmet needs group,” according to Clare Neufeld, pastor at First Mennonite. This group will work with the city’s Recovery Centre to ensure that communication and connecting with resources is done accurately and efficiently.

Harry and Gertrude Loewen of First Mennonite lost their home to the fire. They have found temporary housing for the fall and winter.

Neufeld has heard of others within the Mennonite community that have lost homes. About 260 homes have been destroyed in Kelowna.

It will be a “sensitive issue to do an adequate needs assessment,” said Neufeld, since MDS wants to provide labour and spiritual/emotional assistance for those who fall through the cracks.

“The ones who have adequate insurance...are largely being dealt with in a compassionate and helpful manner,” he said.



The burned-out site of Harry and Gertrude Loewen’s home in Kelowna.

MDS is also working in the community of Barriere and is ready to accept volunteers for clean up and rebuilding in the area.

About 250,000 hectares of land have been destroyed by fires in B.C. so far this summer, according to the September 11 *Globe and Mail*. The 10-year average is 23,800 hectares. The province had budgeted \$58 million to fight fires this year; estimates now are \$545 million.

For information on MDS involvement or to contribute financially to

relief efforts, contact Mennonite Disaster Service, phone (604) 870-0494, e-mail: [ajdawson@telus.net](mailto:ajdawson@telus.net). Their web site address: [www.mds.mennonite.net](http://www.mds.mennonite.net).—**Angelika Dawson**

Kamloops, B.C.

## Diamonds amid the debris

**M**arriage was far from the minds of three high school students when they found a diamond ring during a summer service project in British Columbia. The three girls were volunteering with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) when they pulled the ring from a pile of debris.

Buried in ash for nearly a month, the ring belonged to a woman whose home burned to the ground during the McLure-Barriere fire in August.

“Get the bulldozers; that’s all I want,” said the woman after receiving the ring.

MDS opened a project in Barriere in late August after 76 homes burned to the ground. The unusually dry fire season sparked more than 800 fires throughout the province.

“These people really lost everything,”

said youth pastor Mike Roth of Valley View Bible Church. “Most of the people didn’t have a clue what they were going to do.” For two days, youth from Valley View sorted debris and filled dumpsters at eight properties. MDS is recruiting additional volunteers to assist with the cleanup.

MDS is also investigating fire damage in Kelowna where 6 Mennonite families were among the 248 households who lost their homes. MDS is working with local church leaders on an appropriate response. The Kelowna project is not yet ready for volunteers.

Donations for the MDS “BC Wildfire Response” are welcome. More information is available from Lois Nickel, MDS Canada coordinator, at 1-866-261-1274.—MDS release by **Ted Houser**

“Living joyfully with HIV is a real miracle ...”

Read more online in the “Doctors’ Diary.” You’ll experience daily life at the Faith Alive Clinic with MCC Nigeria workers Nathan and Rochele Beachy, family doctors from Cleveland, Ohio.

mother  
son brother  
husband sister  
grandmother  
father aunt  
daughter

Generations at Risk

[www.mcc.org/aids](http://www.mcc.org/aids)



Carstairs, Alta.

## Northwest Conference marks 100 years

**C**entennial celebrations for the Northwest Mennonite Conference here July 25-27 included tours of the sites of the three churches that formed the conference on July 27, 1903 (Mayton, High River and Carstairs).

Only Carstairs has maintained a vibrant congregation. Today, the conference has 14 congregations and several affiliating churches.

The 100-year history was portrayed through various activities, including music, drama, slides and panel discussions. Different groups sang music from the various decades. Intergenerational music in four-part harmony and a male chorus brought back memories.

Ted Regehr was on hand to sign his new book, *Faith, Life and Witness in the Northwest, 1903-2003*. The book of 500 pages, with nearly 300 illustrations, is available from the conference office in Didsbury.

Through drama, the audience revisited the development of winter and summer Bible schools, northern missions, and the significant role played by voluntary service workers. A panel, chaired by Timothy Burkholder, former conference leader, outlined the impact of the Sunday School and evangelistic meetings.

Over 50 percent of the winter Bible school participants were teenagers. Outreach projects have involved Hispanic and Chinese communities. The past 100 years has brought significant changes, most notably to the role of the bishop, music styles and dress codes.

Speakers of various ages also addressed how the conference can equip its people for the next 100 years. Alvin Penner declared that the youth in today's church "have their heads screwed on right," but we need also to appreciate the values of our forebears, take a stand in the face of political



**Owen Burkholder from Harrisonburg, Virginia, encouraged the Northwest Conference to continue teaching that invites to faith during the next 100 years.**

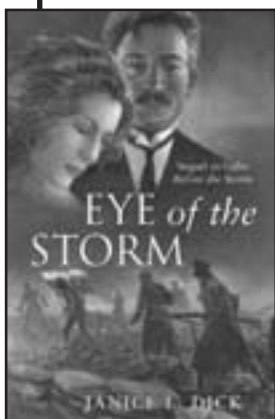
correctness, and balance social responsibility and evangelism. The church needs to be a voice of hope amidst society's apathy and hopelessness.

Raul Gurdian identified five things to carry into the future: love, intelligence, wisdom, patience and humility. Greg Weber, representing the youth, reminded us that our focus should be on transformation. Trends may change, but following Jesus should not change.

Owen Burkholder urged us to continue teaching the children and exploring the love of Christ. Regardless of the changes the future brings, we need teaching that is biblically-based, Spirit-empowered and reinforced by the community.

Merlin Stauffer conducted the closing communion service. Plaques of appreciation were presented to 12 past ministers and their wives who have a record of long service with the conference. In passing on the torch of leadership, Paul and Freda Voegtlin lit their candles from the Christ candle and then lit the candles of youth representatives Raul and Elisa Gurdian and Trevor and Phyllis Kiriaka.—From report by **Harvey Burkholder**

### Crossings of Promise Series



#### Eye of the Storm Janice L. Dick

As their world is torn apart by world war, the Russian Revolution, and church and family conflicts, Katarina Hildebrandt and Johann Sudermann strive to maintain their faith in God. Meanwhile, Paul Tekanin has chosen what he thought to be the path to Utopia, but is instead finding it to be a way of darkness and death. These young people look desperately for a source of balance and safety within the eye of the storm and ask: where is God when life betrays?

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Winnipeg, Man.

## Pastors respond to work and faith issues

**W**hat do pastors see when they look over their congregations on Sunday morning?

MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates) asked Canadian and American Mennonite pastors this question in recent surveys about faith and work-related issues.

According to the 325 pastors who responded, they see people under stress because of the competing demands of work and family and people who are unemployed, underemployed or worried that they will be laid off. They see people in situations of conflict in their workplaces, people grappling with their own prosperity and looking for guidance in a consumerist culture, retired people wondering if they still have anything meaningful to contribute, and young people wondering about Christian career choices.

In rural areas, pastors see farmers struggling to keep their farms, and

people worried that their small communities may not survive. In other findings, 93 percent of pastors said they would find useful a workshop on helping their members deal with faith and work issues.

The survey responses give MEDA a snapshot of where it stands during this, its 50th anniversary year, and will help it prepare to serve the church in the years ahead. Most pastors indicated that *The Marketplace*, MEDA's magazine, provides excellent material for sermons and enables pastors to understand the businesspeople in their congregations.

Other suggestions included providing speakers, videos and gatherings for pastors; making it financially possible for pastors to attend conventions; finding ways to connect MEDA to the vision of the local church; and promoting stewardship and Christian business ethics.—From MEDA release

Winnipeg, Man.

## MCC hires planned giving coordinator

**M**ennonite Central Committee Canada has hired Ken Reddig to fill its new position of Major Gifts and Planned Giving Coordinator.

Reddig will be a resource to provincial MCC offices and will get their ideas for the position.

Reddig would like to promote the work of MCC beyond its traditional constituency. He wants to develop new strategies and build connections with referral sources such as estate planners and trust officers. He will also be working with organizations such as Mennonite Foundation to negotiate individual gifts.

"We are not departing from the church-based and grassroots structure of the organization," says Reddig. "We want to further MCC activities and the work MCC does."

Reddig served as executive director for MCC Manitoba from 1999 to 2002.

Most recently he worked as fundraising coordinator for St. Boniface Research Foundation in Winnipeg.—MCC Canada



Reddig

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### News brief

#### Dogrib people receive New Testament

The 3,100 Dogrib (Tlicho) people living around Great Slave Lake in the Northwest Territories finally have part of the Bible in their own language. On August 23, more than 300 people came to Rae-Edzo for the dedication of the Dogrib New Testament, printed by the Canadian Bible Society. "It's God's timing [for us] to receive the Bible," said Mary Siemens, a Dogrib speaker who helped with the translation. Attempts at translation date back more than 100 years when Catholic missionaries translated Bible stories for the Dogrib people. This translation was a partnership among several organizations and the community.—From Wycliffe Translators release



Harrisonburg, Va.

## Zehr cited for restorative justice work

**H**oward Zehr from Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) was awarded the 2003 International Prize for Restorative Justice by the Prison Fellowship International Centre for Justice and Reconciliation.

The \$5,000 award was in recognition of Zehr's "significant contributions" to restorative justice worldwide. The award was announced during the organization's



Zehr

meeting in Toronto in August.

Zehr is co-director of the Conflict Transformation Program at EMU. He also teaches sociology and restorative justice. The Prison Fellowship is an association of prison ministries in over 100 countries.

"Howard's writing and speaking have fired the imaginations of people in North America, Europe, Africa and the Pacific," said Dan Van

Ness, the Centre's director. "His book, *Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice*, is a foundational work.... It is probably referenced as much as any other single book in the growing literature on restorative justice."

Zehr directed the first victim-offender reconciliation program in the United States, in the 1970s. Zehr suggested that this cooperative, problem-solving approach is a different kind of justice from that of the courts.—From EMU release

Winnipeg, Man.

## Foodgrains Bank at World Trade talks

**C**anadian Foodgrains Bank sent two officially accredited observers to the World Trade Organization talks in Cancun, Mexico, September 10-14. Stuart Clark, senior policy advisor, and Kenton Lobe attended some of the talks and met with trade delegations from Canada and developing countries.

The Foodgrains Bank also co-sponsored a seminar, "The human right to food," and led a day-long meeting on better development aid for agriculture.

The future of many small farmers around the world was at stake as trade ministers from 140 countries met to hammer out a new set of agricultural trade rules. Clark and Lobe focused on those rules that affect hunger.

"The current international trade in farm products is bankrupting developing-country small farmers who are unable to compete with the dumping of subsidized grain in their local markets," said Clark. "The artificially low prices are pushing many of these farmers into poverty and hunger. For some, it's a matter of life and death.

"Imagine what would happen to Canadian farmers if wheat was dumped in here for pennies a bushel and you have some sense of the despair facing others."—From Foodgrains Bank release



MCC Canada photo

**Ahmad Noorbala (left) and Mostafa Mohaghegh, representatives from the Iranian Red Crescent Society, visit with Bob Wiens (right) at a Canadian Foodgrains Bank project near Domain, Manitoba. Wiens is a member of the Glenlea Mennonite Church which supports the work of Mennonite Central Committee through the Foodgrains Bank. The Iranian men spent six days in Manitoba this summer visiting MCC. This past year, the Iranian society provided 11,000 displaced Afghani people with 2,400 metric tons of pulse crops donated by Canadian farmers.**



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Photos: Duke University

# Images of Iraq

**A**n unexploded weapon lying in a civilian area of Baghdad (right) symbolizes the ongoing effects of war in Iraq. The photographs on this page were taken by Lisa Martens of Winnipeg, who was in Iraq as a Christian Peacemaker Team member last spring when the war began.

“I believe that bombs can beat our creative thoughts and questions to death if we let them,” says Martens. “It takes some hard work and God’s grace...for Christians to have creative answers in these violent times.”



**Children at a school in which teachers work for no salary. How much money have U.S. companies made from Iraq since the war started? asks Martens. How much money have Iraqi teachers and health care workers made? The date palm at right is from a farm which has not been able to export its dates, oranges and pomegranates during 12 years of economic sanctions.**



**A hotel security staff person argues with a U.S. soldier about the arrest of an Iraqi civilian in Baghdad. Families do not have access to members imprisoned by the U.S. Some Iraqis have told CPT, “It’s just like Saddam’s time!” Martens wonders: How many Iraqi lives is a U.S. citizen’s life worth, and whose ‘security’ is worth more?**





Calgary, Alta.

## Centre for newcomers celebrates 15 years

In the late 1980s, when refugees from Central America were requesting asylum in Canada, Mennonites here organized the Calgary Mennonite Centre for Newcomers. The Centre celebrated its 15th anniversary in June.

Starting with a volunteer director, donations from several denominations and an office in the basement of the Chinese Mennonite Church, the Centre has grown to become a major immigrant service agency in the city. It now has a staff of over 50 and a budget of \$2 million. With some 10,000 new immigrants coming to Calgary each year, there is continuing need for these services.

At the annual meeting in June, chair Fred Enns of Trinity Mennonite Church welcomed over 150 people to the newly-expanded offices in northeast Calgary.

A jazz trio, "Toot Suite," provided music and *Collective Kitchens Catering*, an enterprise owned by the Centre, provided a multi-ethnic supper. Dale Taylor, Centre director,

and other staff members gave updates on programs in employment, English teaching and community development.

The Centre's treasurer, Ken Friesen from Calgary Inter-Mennonite Church, reviewed 15 years of operation, including how the agency survived years of financial difficulty.

The Centre has now established ongoing—though never guaranteed—government funding. Although the Centre has received over \$11 million in government funding, support from area congregations, Mennonite Central Committee Alberta and private donors has been crucial.

The meeting included testimonies by newcomers who have benefited from the services. Li Xiao Xie from China related how she and her husband had become demoralized by menial, low-paying jobs. They found their way to the Centre's employment counselling service, where they were encouraged to develop realistic career plans and seek employment in their professions.

Marcello Kassiba, a senior from Sudan and graduate of the English as



**Fred Enns, chair of the Centre, Nettie Enns and Zayd Rajab, the youngest volunteer.**

a second language program, spoke of the welcome that Canada offered to immigrants from Africa.

With the new bylaws, individuals and newcomers who are not congregational members will be eligible for membership. —From Centre release

Baquuba, Iraq

## Displaced Iraqi families in desperate straits

A scrawny chicken scampers along the concrete floor in search of sustenance. There is no grain in this building, but it is as close to a farm as Hussein Rahim Sultan and his chickens can hope for at present.

Hussein and his family fled their home in northeast Iraq weeks after the war, one of the Arab families displaced by the Kurds moving in to reclaim their homes. Displaced families are receiving monthly food rations from the United Nations World Food Program, but that will end in November.

The Danish Refugee Council, with support from Mennonite Central Committee, is providing basic household items to these communities. Hussein and his family received an MCC relief kit bucket last month.

Arab families like Hussein's have been forced to settle in abandoned military complexes. They are farmers by trade but the soil here is dusty and dry.

"We brought some animals from

home," said Hussein, gesturing at the chickens. Raising crops is out of the question. Most of the 50,000 displaced people in the region are scrounging for a living. Many are trying to sell items looted from the military camps, even dismantling buildings to sell the bricks.

"There are no salaries, no work," said Hussein. "These [relief kit] items are very useful and we are thankful." With 10 children to care for, Hussein says he simply lives day by day.



**Kevin King, MCC material resources manager, helps distribute relief kit buckets to displaced families in eastern Iraq.**

Almost 4,000 MCC relief kits have been provided to displaced families in this region.—MCC release by **Edward Miller**

Photo by Ali Talib

Waterloo, Ont.

## Grebel turns 40 with increase in students

**F**or four decades, young adults eager to make a difference in the world have come to live at the Mennonite college on the University of Waterloo campus. On August 22-24, Conrad Grebel University College celebrated its 40th anniversary with a weekend reunion.

For the 400 former students, faculty and staff who attended, highlights included Grebelfolk (featuring alumni musicians) and a service with the reunion choir. Special guests at a president's reception included Grebel's first president, Winfield Fretz, now living in Kansas, and the first chaplain, Walter Klaassen, from Saskatoon. Visitors also got a peek into the new apartments.

Marcus Shantz, Alumni Committee chair, said there was a larger turnout than expected. The committee was "really happy to see so many alumni from the 70s and 80s.... It was great to talk with friends from way back and

listen to songs that you hadn't heard for a long time."

Although the residence building has gone through changes over the years (the dining room, student services area, patio addition, and the current extension), the dorm rooms are still the same. The new apartment building curves

around the chapel, creating a courtyard where the trees shade the geese that still make Grebel their home.

Over the past year, Grebel has been getting a facelift in anticipation of more students (including the "double cohort" in Ontario with the elimination of grade 13). The residence has been expanded to house 142 students, an increase from 116. On Labour Day, 96 frosh arrived, joining 46 returning students. The students represent all six faculties of the university.

Mennonite students make up 48



**Winfield Fretz, president of Grebel from 1963-73, greets alumni at the 40th anniversary event.**

percent of the total, the others ranging from Christian Reformed to Greek Orthodox to Muslim. They come mainly from Ontario, with some from Manitoba, the United States, Germany and Africa.

There are 32 senior students in the new apartment complex. They are considered on-campus associates. The college also has 23 off-campus associates who participate in the academic, religious, musical, athletic and social life of the college. Joining the residence and academic building is the four-storey John E. Toews Atrium, scheduled for completion in October. It will enlarge the music facilities.

The number of University of Waterloo students taking Grebel classes is up 13 percent from last year. The Master of Theological Studies program has 67 course enrolments. In total, the Grebel community includes 206 students, faculty and staff, and thousands of UW students who take courses at the college.—From Grebel releases



**Grebel alumnus David Martin helps his son, Kevin, move into his room this fall. They were greeted by smiling dons on move-in duty, from left: Suzanne Bender, Lindsay Shantz, Karen Wall and Alison Clemmer.**



Kiev, Ukraine

## Ukrainian students take a trip to their capital

**A**fter 13 hours on the road, 38 eager high school students arrived in their country's capital.

"Is this Kiev?" they continually asked, noses pressed to the bus windows. Most of these youth have seen little beyond their home towns.

In recent years, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has provided grants to schools in southeastern Ukraine, where the former Mennonite Molochna Colony was located. Poor economic conditions have limited the schools' programs and supplies. One principal went so far as to call the rural areas an "information vacuum."

On July 16-19, MCC sponsored a field trip to Kiev for representatives from 20 schools. For most, this was their first journey to Kiev, a city that dates back to the 5th century. They learned the difference between reading about a place and seeing it for yourself.

"This is so beautiful," whispered one student, observing the frescoes of the 11th century Cathedral of St. Sophia.

Exploration included both ancient



Photo by Rebecca Spurrier

**Ukrainian students pose in front of the Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev.**

and modern sights. A highlight for many students was walking down the twisting, cobbled Andrii'ski Street, once home to famous artists and poets, and now a place for art galleries and

curio sellers. Students were also eager for glimpses of their president's house and the stadium where their favourite soccer team plays.

The tour ended with a visit to the Chernobyl Museum, where they learned more about the nuclear meltdown that occurred in 1986, the year some of these students were born. Elevators, escalators and the subway system provided plenty of photo opportunities.

The group was accompanied by four teachers, who were grateful for the field trip.

"We want our children to strive for something better," reflected Irina Belan, vice principal of Molochansk School No. 1, located in the former Mennonite town of Halbstadt. "We need to help them understand and appreciate their past."

Another vice-principal noted that the impact of this trip will probably last throughout their lives. One student couldn't wait to tell her parents "everything—in the exact order that it all took place."—MCC release by **Rebecca Spurrier**

*The writer, from Pennsylvania, is an MCC community development worker in Tokmak, Ukraine.*

Winnipeg, Man.

### CMU sees enrolment growth

**E**nrolment has increased in all three of Canadian Mennonite University's program centres—at the main campus, at Menno Simons College and in Outtatown, CMU's Discipleship School.

As of the second week of September, 406 students had registered at CMU's main campus, 333 for full-time studies. Outtatown has 101 participants.

More than 1,000 students have registered for at least one course in conflict resolution or international development studies through Menno Simons College at the University of Winnipeg. Registrations on both campuses represent a full-time equivalent of 842, up 10 to 15 percent.

"This is a tremendous vote of confi-

dence in CMU as we enter our fourth year of united operations," says president Gerald Gerbrandt. "Students are increasingly recognizing the value of a quality university education offered with a uniquely Christian perspective."

Students in Outtatown (formerly School of Discipleship)

spend eight months in international service and learning, with sites in Guatemala and South Africa.

Preparations continue for homecoming weekend September 26-28. Events include the installation of Gerald Gerbrandt, CMU's first president, on Sunday. The guest speaker is Stanley Hauerwas, professor of theological ethics at Duke University Divinity School.—CMU release



# FOCUS

## Education

### Doctoral program for ACTS

Beginning this fall, ACTS seminaries affiliated with Trinity Western University in Langley, British Columbia, will offer a Doctor of Ministry degree. The four-year professional degree will emphasize leadership and spiritual formation.

ACTS received approval for the program in June from the Association of Theological

Schools. The new program will have two sites: the Trinity campus in B.C. and another in Ontario (beginning next May, pending government approval).

Five seminaries are part of ACTS: Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Canadian Baptist Seminary, Canadian Theological Seminary (Alliance), Northwest Baptist Seminary and Trinity Western Seminary (Evangelical Free Church). ACTS was established in 1985.

### Bonhoeffer tour in Europe

From May 6 to 20, 2004, James Reimer and Peter Frick, Religious Studies professors at the University of Waterloo, will lead a tour through Germany, Poland, and the Czech Republic to visit major sites important in the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945), one of the most influential theologians of the 20th century.

The tour will include Bonhoeffer's birthplace (Breslau) and boyhood home (Berlin), the universities he attended (Berlin, Tübingen), his pastorates in Germany and Poland, the seminary of the Confessing Church that he directed, the Benedictine monastery in Ettal where he stayed during his underground work against Hitler, and the concentration camp where he was executed (Flossenbürg).

Bonhoeffer is best known for his book, *The Cost of Discipleship*, and his *Letters and Papers from Prison*, published posthumously.

Frick and Reimer are both specialists in German theology, the Nazi period and Bonhoeffer scholarship. Frick teaches religion and theology at St. Paul's College at the University of Waterloo. Reimer teaches religion and theology at Conrad Grebel University College and at the Toronto School of Theology.

For more information and a brochure, call Reimer at (519) 885-0220, ext. 234, or e-mail: [ajreimer@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:ajreimer@uwaterloo.ca).—  
From release



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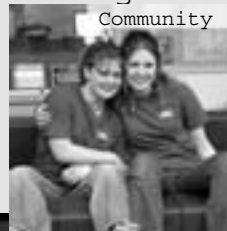
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We believe that discipling happens through relationships, so Bethany offers students the opportunity to get involved in a mentoring relationship. This provides additional strength to the growth students experience through the spontaneous mentoring that happens through faculty, staff and friends.

The location of Bethany College contributes to its family atmosphere. We are in Hepburn, just 30 minutes from Saskatoon. Our location provides the peaceful intimacy of the prairies and the conveniences of a city nearby. Bethany's close proximity to Saskatoon allows for many opportunities for ministry throughout the school year.

In addition to ministry experiences off campus, there are many ways to get involved in the Bethany community. Our sports program includes hockey, soccer, volleyball and basketball; a Ministry Arts department featuring touring ministry teams such as our Chorale and Bethany Players.

Our programs include a four-year Bachelor of Arts degree (which includes an internship); a three-year Bachelor of Biblical Studies or Bachelor of Christian Ministries; a two-year Diploma of Biblical Studies; and ExCiTe—Experiencing Christ Together, a one-year program.

Freshman and junior students are part of a 10-day trip with Youth Mission International. Senior students head overseas for a three-week cross-cultural experience. This year the senior class is going to Peru.—From Bethany release



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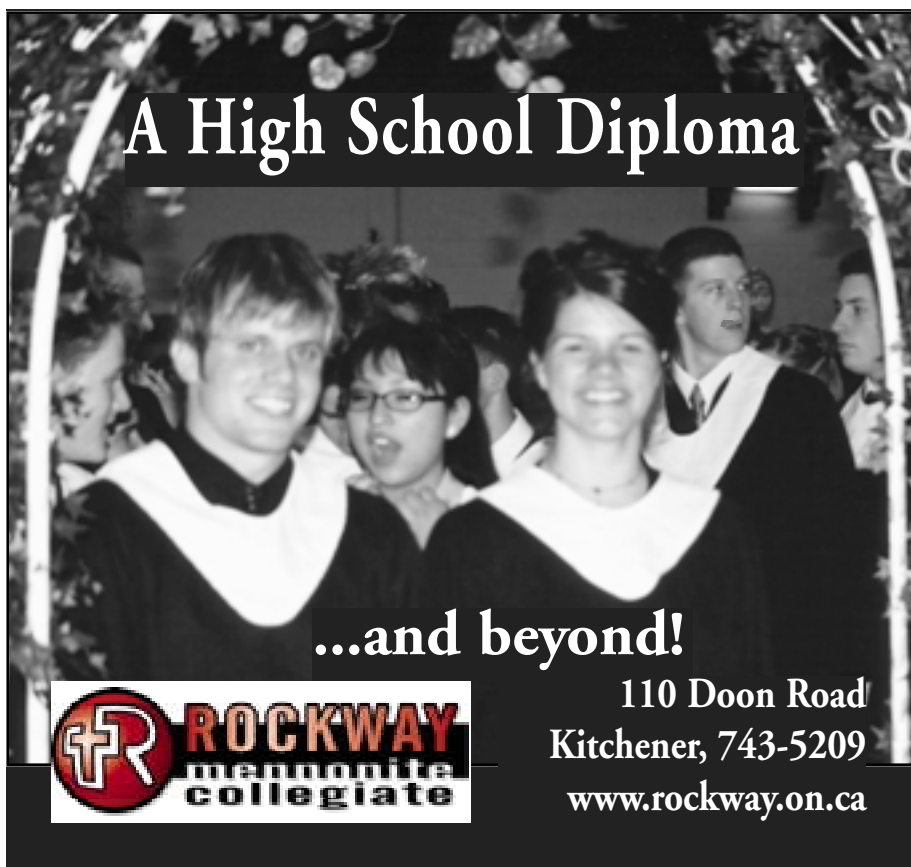
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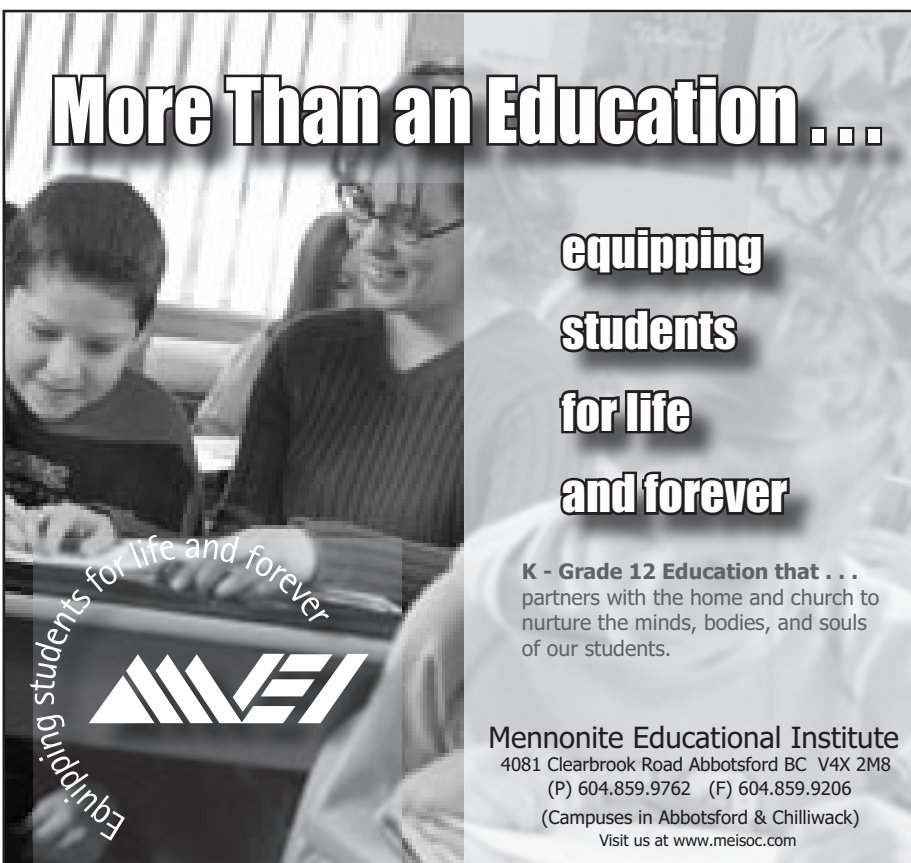
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## Peace bracelets for Iraq

**O**n February 27, Larry Kehler joined Westgate Mennonite Collegiate in Winnipeg for chapel. He spoke about his time in Iraq as a member of Christian Peacemaker Teams.

The children of Iraqi families drew pictures for him and told him to tell us, the children of Canada, that they loved us and didn't want the war either.

This story touched me, and when Kehler challenged us to respond in some way to bring hope to the children of Iraq, I decided to do something. That something evolved into an amazing project that spread through the entire school.

I had learned how to make bracelets with two lengths of yarn. I thought that I could send bracelets I made with a delegation to Iraq for the children there. When I talked about it

with my friends, they told me that they wanted to help as well.

One of my teachers, Krista Neustaedter-Barg, suggested that I involve everyone in the school.

On March 21, I spent my day travelling from class to class with a few friends, teaching the students and teachers how to make bracelets. We now have over 600 bracelets and there are still more coming in.

It was exciting to see one of my dreams come true. We are planning to send the bracelets with Rick and Jan Janzen in April and people will see that they get to an orphanage in Iraq.

The "peace bracelets," as I have come to call them, will hopefully bring some joy to the children in Iraq as they struggle with the war that is tearing their country apart. May God bless them and be with them.—**Megan Klassen-Wiebe**, Westgate student

### School notes

#### 100 years in Goshen

**Goshen, Ind.**—There wasn't always a "Goshen" in Goshen College. It wasn't until 1903, nine years after the founding of Elkhart Institute, that Goshen College opened its doors in its present location. On September 16—100 years later—historian Joe Springer presented "Town recruits gown: How GC came to Goshen," to celebrate the anniversary and begin this year's Afternoon Sabbatical lecture series. Goshen mayor Allen Kauffman participated in the celebration. Goshen's first-year class has grown by 35 percent over last year. The class has one of the highest grade point averages and SAT scores in the history of the college. A total of 912 students are enrolled for the fall semester.—From Goshen releases

#### EMU group to South Africa

**Harrisonburg, Va.**—Thirty Eastern Mennonite University students arrived in Johannesburg, South Africa on September 1 for the school's first semester-long study seminar. Students will study three cultures of South Africa—indigenous African (primarily Xhosa), European (Afrikaans and British) and Indian. The students will also study the activities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the influence of the church in South Africa. They will spend time in various regions of the country.—EMU release



Photo by Mary E. Klassen

**Satoru Kanemoto of Japan talks with Willard Swartley of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) at the East Asia Theology Consultation at AMBS in July. The consultation brought together 35 Asian and 15 North American theologians and church workers to discuss teaching and ministry in East Asia. Robert Lee, director of the Tokyo Mission Research Institute at Tokyo Biblical Seminary, coordinated the event together with AMBS and Mennonite Mission Network. Xiyi Yao, an AMBS graduate from China, said: "What was most helpful to me was the opportunity to get to know both Japanese and Korean Christian scholars connected with Mennonite missions.... This could serve as a stepping stone for further exchange and discussion."—From AMBS release**

### Reminder to Congregations

When your young people leave home for school or work, remember to sign them up for a Canadian Mennonite subscription.

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## Long road to ministry

**A**t age 17, I stood as the invitation was given to offer my life for service in the kingdom of God. I sang, "I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord," but I prayed that I wouldn't be sent to China.

I had heard stories of persecuted Christians and martyred missionaries. I went to Winter Bible School, knowing that as a woman my options were limited.

*Age 25:* University, marriage and motherhood felt right, with plans for a Mennonite Central Committee assignment. These events happened. Not in China, however. Algeria and Jamaica were challenging, rewarding places to serve.

*Age 45:* My children needed less attention. Doors opened for me to finish university and do some clinical pastoral education. This led to my employment in a ministry to lower income people. I worked with many casualties of organized religion. I often felt a longing to gather them together and offer a different kind of church experience.

*Age 50:* Divorce loomed as inevitably as being caught in the current crashing over Niagara Falls. I felt that possibilities for service in the church had crashed with me. Instead, the church was my life raft to healing. A counselling position with female victims of violence opened up.

*Age 60:* I began to downsize my work responsibilities, looking ahead to giving time to church-related ministry such as voluntary service or Christian Peacemaker Teams. Out of the blue, a call came from Mennonite Church Eastern Canada.

"Would you consider being interim minister at Agape Fellowship House Churches in London?"

My first thought was, "At my age! This is way too late!"

As I thought and prayed over the next week, laughter bubbled up. I thought of ancient Sarah, chuckling in disbelief as the angelic visitors tell of her giving birth to a son. I pondered

the improbability of what Yahweh was asking of me.

Now, I look back and see God was leading by little nudges, opening doors and times of teaching as required. Once in a while, when we least expect it, the still, small voice grows with a great crescendo. The Holy One pulls out all the stops and calls out, "Okay. Now you're ready. Go for it!"



**Ruth Johnston (left), new interim pastor at Agape Fellowship, with congregational leaders Pat and Bill Smith.**

Then, beyond all human reasoning, we realize that God's timing is right.  
—Ruth Johnston

London, Ont.

## Agape Fellowship says farewell to Kipfers

**I**n June, Enos and Doris Kipfer completed 15 years of pastoral leadership with the Agape Fellowship House Churches here. Their first worship service was at the Rotholme Women's Shelter in 1988. In 1990, both Enos and Doris were licensed by Mennonite Church Eastern Canada.

They shared a full-time job. Enos was also on call as a volunteer chaplain at the Men's Mission (Mission Services of London). Doris had another part-time job.

In one of their last services, Enos recalled the change and growth over the years, and peoples' eager contributions to worship. He affirmed the group's ready acceptance of newcomers. He said it was a challenge to find sermon material relevant to the needs of people from the inner city.

Doris appreciated the way people put their trust in her. She saw people who faced significant mental health issues taking risks and trying new things. Over the years she accepted the fact that she could not meet everyone's



**Doris and Enos Kipfer with their retirement gift from Agape Fellowship—a drawing by Earl Meyers.**

needs—she needed to know when to help and when to back off.

The Kipfers' sense of humour was evident as they reflected on their shared ministry.

Enos said, "We had fun...I'd do it again." They have enlarged the original vision of Agape Fellowship, a vision that welcomes marginalized people as well as more traditional church members.

There was a great farewell party following worship on May 25. Ruth Johnston is the new interim pastor.

—Mary Schiedel

Baden, Ont.

## Sunday morning wedding

**A**ugust 31 was a Sunday of new beginnings at Shantz Mennonite Church. Students were thinking about the first day of school, teachers were gearing up for a new school year, and Eric Scott and Roxana Sudrijan were married during the worship service.

Scott and Sudrijan met at work and began attending Shantz church a year ago. After their engagement, they met with pastor Jim Loepp-Thiessen for premarital counselling. Both expressed a desire for a small, simple

wedding. The idea of a Sunday morning wedding appealed to them.

The worship service focused on living our lives in harmony with God and with one another. Then came the marriage ceremony, with a more specific focus on the couple. The celebration continued with a potluck lunch.

Scott and Sudrijan expressed gratefulness for the opportunity to begin their life together in a celebration that included a few family members, friends and the larger church

family. (Most of Sudrijan's family lives in her native Romania.)

This morning of new beginnings was a wonderful way to welcome a season of renewed commitment and service.

—Karen Winter



**Roxana Sudrijan and Eric Scott leave the sanctuary following their Sunday morning wedding. Behind them is pastor Jim Loepp-Thiessen.**

## Standing on holy ground

**I**went to see an old friend, Nancy, recently. Nancy is an aboriginal woman in her 50s, I'm guessing—a great grandmother. She has raised many of her grandchildren. She is a product of residential schools.

One of her children died by his own hand in prison, others at painfully young ages. A physically disabled son lives in Nancy's home. I've seen her chew his food before she puts it into his mouth. A grandchild died in a foster home; another was severely mauled by a police dog. Nancy has struggled with her own addictions.

Throughout our conversation I sensed again that I should be shoeless, that I stood on holy ground. There is something about Nancy's determination to create family in this mess that moves me to tears. I know no one else who works so hard with so little.

Our Christian concepts don't offer much language to describe the transformative power that Nancy offers me. Perhaps our current emphasis on "missional church" says it best. If God is creator, why should we be surprised to find God wherever we go? God is always there ahead of us.

It's fun to tell Nancy that I experience God through her, that she is a blessing to me. In doing so, I offer a blessing to her.—Ed Olfert

*The writer is pastor of Grace Mennonite Church in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.*

### Take note!

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**Lydia Boldt, one of the few remaining members of a women's quilting group at Niagara United Mennonite Church in Ontario, stands beside a quilt presented to Pleasant Manor in Virgil on September 6. The quilt, made by the women in the 1970s, has the names of the quilters embroidered onto the squares. The group has met weekly since the 1930s, with proceeds from their quilt sales going to Mennonite Central Committee.—From Pleasant Manor release**





Photo by Juanita Fox

Ten Thousand Villages provides a fair wage for artisans such as Bella Agnes who lives in a community for former leprosy patients in southern India. Because Villages provides a market for her woven bags, Agnes does not need to beg for her livelihood. Ten Thousand Villages Canada was one of the organizations participating in World Fair Trade day on May 17. The stores across Canada promoted fair trade by distributing complimentary gifts and serving fair trade coffee. Store locations are available at [www.tenthousandvillages.com](http://www.tenthousandvillages.com). —From Villages release

## Calling young adults!

*Join the conversation in Canadian Mennonite by responding to issues that matter to you.*

In January and February, *Canadian Mennonite* featured responses from selected young adults on “How I handle my money,” and on “How to use e-mail wisely.” Now we’d like to broaden the conversation.

Every two months or so, *Canadian Mennonite* will present a question for your response. We’ll publish excerpts of the comments we receive. So, if you are between the ages of 18 and 30, look for the questions and send us your thoughts. Also, send suggestions for future topics. *Today’s topic:*

***Missions: What is a missionary?  
Should we send out missionaries?***

**E-mail:** [editor@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:editor@canadianmennonite.org)

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Winnipeg, Man.

## MCC cans pork instead of beef

Given concerns over the mad cow crisis, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) will be packaging pork instead of beef in Manitoba this fall.

“We are sorry we have had to make this decision in light of the difficult circumstances Canadian cattle producers are facing,” says Manitoba meat canning committee chair Wilf Unrau. “We are sorry we can’t help them out more.”

Instead of cattle, MCC will be looking for donations of pork for canning in Winkler November 27-29. MCC will continue to can pork in Canada until all restrictions on overseas shipments of beef have been removed.

Last year, volunteers from across Canada helped to can an estimated 22,000 pounds (10,000 kilos) of meat for displaced people overseas. The MCC portable meat canner has been in operation since 1946. Its first visit to Manitoba was in 2002.—MCC Canada release

Cochrane, Ont.

## Hunta worships at museum

Hunta Mennonite Church held an outdoor worship service at the Hunta museum during its Pioneer Days on August 10. The museum is owned by church members Jerry and Phyllis Miller.

The Millers were the first couple to be baptized in the old Hunta Mennonite Church over 30 years ago. This outdoors service was an outreach effort.

The service had a wonderful turnout of more than 70 people, including visitors from across Canada and the U.S. Everyone joined in singing some old-time gospel favourites such as “In the sweet by and by” and “I’ll fly away.” Polly Johnson, interim pastor, spoke on “Jesus and the pioneer spirit.”—From report by **Bill J. Heavener**

Hornell, New York

## Family's love for Botswana lives on

**T**im and Sandi Cober's letters home from Botswana described their joy in sharing their neighbours' simple lifestyle, their commitment to the gospel—and the devastating toll that AIDS was taking on a country they had grown to love.

The Cobers and their infant son Jake were killed in a car accident in 1997. (A daughter, Sorina, survived.) Their ministry, however, continues.

A recent memorial donation from their extended family to Mennonite Central Committee's Generations at Risk AIDS program will support a Christian youth centre in Botswana that offers information about AIDS and promotes a chaste, healthy lifestyle.

Tim Cober was from Kitchener,

Ontario, a member of the Brethren in Christ church. He met Sandi at Messiah College in Pennsylvania. They married in 1991. Because they were working on their own in Botswana, rather than through a mission board, their financial situation was precarious. They were enthusiastic, nevertheless.

AIDS remains a devastating part of daily life in Botswana. At present, some 38 percent of the population is HIV-positive, contributing to the destruction of an entire social structure. Adults who would normally drive the economy and care for families are becoming weak and dying in huge numbers.

The Cobers took sick neighbours to the clinic and befriended orphan children.

On September 24, 1997, the family was travelling to Gaborone, the capital, when a truck collided with them head-on. A local pastor riding with them was also killed. Three-year-



Photo by Benjamin Krause

**Sorina Cober, right, and cousin Christina Corkey look at photos taken while Sorina's parents were missionaries in Botswana.**

old Sorina spent six weeks in a full-body cast.

The family was overwhelmed with support. People in Canada raised money for Sorina's medical expenses and established a fund for her education.

Recently the family decided to make a donation that would reflect the Cobers' values. The youth centre in Francistown, Botswana, supported by MCC and the government, seemed an ideal match.—From MCC release

Newton, Kan.

### JoinHands passes \$1 million mark

**I**n January, Mennonite Men's church-building program passed the \$1 million mark in grants to new congregations for building projects. Director Jim Gingerich called this a milestone, but he hopes the next million comes more quickly.

Mennonite Men, an organization related to both Mennonite Church Canada and USA, began as Tenth Man in 1985. In March, the name changed to JoinHands.

Since that beginning, the program has provided grants to 37 congregations in Canada, the United States and overseas. Grants have been approved through 2006 for projects totalling \$303,000 in seven congregations. The two Canadian congregations that have received grants are Trinity Mennonite Church in Calgary and Lao Christian Fellowship in St. Catharines, Ontario.

The grants are up to 20 percent of the building but do not exceed \$50,000. Since 1999, a tithe of all grants has been given to help build churches overseas.—From MC Canada report



MCC photo by Allan Dick

**Mel Alves DaSilva, age 8, tries out a toothbrush provided by Mennonite Central Committee. Mel lives behind the municipal garbage dump in Olinda, Brazil, where her family makes its living by recycling trash. Because the public schools are overcrowded, she attends informal classes sponsored by the local Anglican church and MCC. Allan Dick and Delphine Pagotto-Dick, of Port Colborne, Ontario, recently completed an MCC term developing literacy among these families.—MCC release**



Mission, B.C.

## Second visit to Guatemala for Cedar Valley

One of Joel Huber's memorable moments this summer was walking through a Guatemalan town holding the hand of a young boy. Huber was there as part of the summer ministry team of Cedar Valley Mennonite Church.

"We were visiting homes in this town after a morning of VBS [Vacation Bible School]. This young boy about eight years old just grabbed my hand and was pointing out things in the town," he says. Huber was amazed that a young child would so readily befriend a stranger.

This was a second visit to Guatemala for some of the Cedar Valley group. For Doug Pankratz, youth pastor, the decision to take the young people was easy. Bob Adams, a member of his congregation, had launched a small university called Christian Education Ministries International in Guatemala. During the summer, Adams opens the campus for local ministry.

"It was such a good option for us," said Pankratz. "We knew him [Adams]; the ministry is established. He is



Joel Huber and a Guatemalan boy tour the town.

familiar with local ministries and churches, so it worked well."

The 23-member team left Mission on July 2 and spent two weeks doing construction, painting, helping in



The ministry team from Cedar Valley Mennonite Church on its way to Guatemala.

orphanages, taking clothing and toys to people living in a city dump, and helping a local church with its VBS program.

Nearly 300 children, ranging in age from 4 to 12, showed up daily to sing, listen to Pankratz speak, and do crafts.

Breaking children into "small" groups of approximately 40 for crafts was a challenge. Although Sunday School teachers from the church did some translating, for the most part all that was needed was minimal Spanish and some sign language.

Allison Rempel, another team member, was struck by the emotion with which church members prayed. Whenever they visited a home or were in a church setting, church members were unable to leave without praying.

One evening, when team members had already spent a full day at construction sites and orphanages, they were scheduled to do a worship service at a men's rehabilitation centre.

"No one wanted to go," said Rempel. "We were all tired. We left late, the van ran out of gas, it was pouring rain and we got there 45 minutes late, still saying we should just go home."

That experience ended up being one of the most memorable of the trip.

"We got inside and there were about

40 men in a little room, perfectly attentive. We sang some songs, did our dance and music ministry. Joel Huber gave his testimony and shared some scripture verses and they all wrote them down. We all walked away...feeling so much closer to God, like we really were meant to have been there," she said.

A unique part of the trip connected the B.C. community with Guatemalan children living on a garbage dump. Before their trip, Pankratz and other team members had visited several schools in the Mission area and asked for donations of leftover school supplies.

The response was overwhelming. "We left schools with boxes and boxes of stuff," as Pankratz. "And the looks on the faces of kids [in Guatemala] when we handed them a Ziploc bag with used crayons—they were so happy to get those!"

This fall Pankratz will report back to the schools and show pictures. The trip was costly—approximately \$1,700 per member—but when Pankratz thinks about the valuable lessons learned, he knows it was worth every penny.

"God used us to meet a need but also used them (the Guatemalans) to teach us," he said. "That's what makes a trip like this so excellent."—**Angelika**

**Dawson**

## People &amp; Events

**Waldheim, Sask.**—Four generations of the J.J. and Renate (Mathies) Dyck family met for a reunion at Shekinah Retreat Centre here June 27-29. Of the children of J.J. and Renate, four attended: Rena Kroeker, C.J. Dyck, Clara Dyck and Helene Funk (Peter J. Dyck could not attend for health reasons). The event, with 73 registrants, included singing, recreation and reminiscing, including a story about an ancestor who spent 10 years in America and joined the California gold rush of 1849. On his way back to his fiancé in Prussia, he was forced to throw most of his gold overboard during a storm. He had only enough for wedding rings and watches. His watch now belongs to his great-great-grandson.—From report by **Helene Funk**

**Kitchener, Ont.**—Ben Janzen of Kitchener, Ontario, began his new role as director of Silver Lake Mennonite Camp on September 1. Ben has worked for the camp for the past eight summers and was assistant director. The Silver Lake Board is grateful to Reynold Friesen for directing the camp for the past five years, and to Henry Pauls for serving as administrator for the past ten years.—From camp release

**Waterloo, Ont.**—Wanda Gingrich was born on Good Friday 1933; two days later, on Easter Sunday, Esther Cassel Mummau was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Four years later, each girl received a copy of *Words of Cheer* in Sunday school. This church magazine had a column for pen pals. One day there was a letter about a girl who was born on Good Friday. The Easter child's mother answered, and the mothers began a correspondence until the girls could write for them-

selves. This past Easter, Wanda and Esther celebrated their 70th birthdays together. "Once or twice through the intervening years we lost track of each other," said Wanda, "but we always found each other again."

**Winnipeg, Man.**—Mennonite Disaster Service has hired Lois Nickel as administrative coordinator for the Winnipeg office. Nickel was a technical service manager for Powerland Computers, and also has experience as camp director and minister of youth. She attends Hope Mennonite Church. Nickel replaces Nathan Koslowsky who is studying at Canadian Mennonite University. By supporting Canadian volunteers from the Winnipeg office, MDS is able to avoid the devaluation of Canadian dollars crossing the border to the binational MDS office in Akron, Pennsylvania.—From MDS release



Nickel

## Transitions

## Births

**Boyd**—to Michael and Crystal, Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, a daughter, Nico Kalei, Aug. 22.

**Fretz**—to Sarah and Paul, Valleyview Mennonite, London, Ont., a son, Benjamin James, June 13.

**Harder**—to Amy and Allan, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., a son, Joel Allan, June 19.

**Hiebert**—to Jennifer and Brent, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., a daughter, Quincy Rae, June 27.

**Hildebrand**—to Tracy and Jody, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a son, Carter Reid, July 5.

**Mohr**—to Tory and Steve, St.

Jacobs Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Rachel Emma Elizabeth, Aug. 2.

**Penner**—to Cateland and Greg, Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, a son, Noah Matthew, Aug. 25.

**Peters**—to Lori (Fast) and Jason, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., a daughter, Sheridan Brooklyn Hope, Aug. 19.

## Marriages

**Doell-Brown**—James (Altona Bergthaler Mennonite) and Sandra, at Altona Mennonite, Man., Aug. 10.

**Dyck-Dyck**—Russel (Winkler, Man.) and Christina, Hoffnungsfelder Mennonite, Glenbush, Sask., Aug. 17.

**Braun-Marion**—Colin and Brigitte, at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Aug. 16.

**Fransen-Lepp**—Aaron (Ottawa Mennonite) and Shelley at Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 30.

**Klassen-Bless**—Daryl and Natalie, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., June 28.

**Kruitoff-Brown**—Steven Garry (Hunta Mennonite, Ont.) and Beth Ann at Orangeville Baptist Church, Ont., Aug. 23.

**Hildebrand-Pappel**—Eric (Altona Bergthaler Mennonite) and Marlo, at Hildebrand home, Altona, Man., Aug. 16.

**Hoepfner-Krahn**—Nathan and Julia, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Aug. 23.

**Huynh-Wiley**—Hop and Lindsay, Peace Mennonite, Regina, Sask., Aug. 2.

**Loepky-Giesbrecht**—Christopher (Altona Bergthaler Mennonite) and Janelle, in Winnipeg, Man., Aug. 16.

**Nickel-Niessen**—Jason (Fairview Louth Mennonite Brethren) and Jennifer, (Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.), at Fairview Louth MB, St. Catharines, Ont., Aug. 1.

**Penner-Dyck**—Kevin (Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man.) and Jennifer (Winkler Mennonite Brethren), Aug. 23.

**Wiebe-Epp**—Pat (Bethel Bergthaler, Man.) and Roni,

Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Aug. 10.  
**Wiens-Hiebert**—Joe and Amanda, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., near Grunthal, Man., Aug. 16.

## Deaths

**Fransen**—Sue, 47, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., May 29.

**Funk**—Helene Dyck, 86, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask. July 15.

**Gascho**—John, 78, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., Sept. 6

**Harder**—Helen (Dyck), 86, Clearbrook Mennonite, Abbotsford, B.C., Aug. 23.

**Johnson**—Susan, 83, Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Aug. 30.

**Loewen**—Maria, 92, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Aug. 3.

**Mantei**—Elsie, 79, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Sept. 3.

**Penner**—Kay, 82, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Aug. 15.

**Reimer**—Clara, 92, First Mennonite, Calgary, Aug. 23.

**Rempel**—Hedwig, 89, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., July 29.

**Rempel**—Hedy, 88, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., July 29.

**Toews**—Maria, 97, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man. Aug. 21.

**Wideman**—John Alvin, 73, Wideman Mennonite, Markham, Ont., Aug. 21.

**Zacharias**—William P., 92, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Aug. 4.

## Baptisms

**Hoffnungsfelder Mennonite-Glenbush, Sask.**—Rebecca Epp, Aug. 31.

**Peace Mennonite, Regina, Sask.**—Allyson Epp, Aug. 17.

**Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont.**—Sarah Fackoury, Brad Loree, Brent Steinmann, Stephen Yantzi, June 8.

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



## Mennonite Church Canada

### MC Canada appoints new webmaster

Grant Klassen is MC Canada's new webmaster. Klassen, who began work on September 4, has had experience as a web developer, digital photographer and multi-media producer. He has served on the board of Faith and Life Communications for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba.

Klassen will work two days per week. He succeeds Daniel Rempel who is returning to university to study law.

MC Canada's web site is becoming the source of choice for information and news about the church. The web site receives an average of 500 visitors (not including staff) and 7,000 page views each day.

The Talk-about bulletin board is one of its most frequently accessed features. Next to the United States and Canada, visitors come most frequently from European and Scandinavian countries.—MC Canada release

### Autumn prayer requests

- Cari Friesen, a new Witness worker, has arrived at Chongqing Normal University in China to teach English through the China Education Exchange program. Pray for Cari as she becomes familiar with her new context. Pray that she will develop meaningful relationships with students and colleagues.

- Two mission families are in transition as their children return to Canada to begin studies. Rachel Hounphan, daughter of Pat and Rad in Thailand, is studying at the University of British Columbia. Rebekah Ramsay, daughter of Marlow and Vicki, workers in Mongolia, will be a grade 12 student in Maple

Ridge, B.C. Pray for God's caring for these young people and their families.

- Thank God for an extension of the rental contract for the Korea Anabaptist Centre in Seoul. As of the end of October, the situation is uncertain again. Tim Froese, Witness worker, writes, "Pray that God will provide for our growing space needs and that we will be flexible in seeking alternatives if...necessary."

- Pray for clarity as MC Canada explores avenues for Christian service (see page 38).

- Pray for Walter Franz and Donovan Jacobs of Native Ministries work in leadership training and bridge-building, and as they seek a balance between the needs of native and non-native congregations.

- Omar and Ester Cortes-Gaibur work with "5 & 2 Multiplying for All" in Santiago, Chile, a ministry for women and children experiencing domestic violence. The program has limited resources and is seeking local partners. Pray that God will open new doors.—From MC Canada releases

## Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

### Mellinger and Martin will review mission

Marianne Mellinger of Kitchener and Maurice Martin of New Hamburg have been contracted by the Executive Board to facilitate a review of MC Eastern Canada's overarching mission.

Before moving to Ontario several years ago, Mellinger was a pastor in Pennsylvania. She recently completed an interim pastorate at Preston Mennonite Church. She also offers consulting to clergy and congregations, and brings a wealth of experience in processing issues in the church.

Martin is a pastor, writer

and educator with a long history in MC Eastern Canada. He has worked with Mennonite Church Canada in lay leadership development.

In spring conference sessions, delegates supported the two goals of a re-visioning process: 1) to review the overarching vision and mission of MCEC as an area conference (church) of Mennonite Church Canada; 2) to develop a new missional strategy by which MC Eastern Canada congregations partner in God's mission in the world.

During the process, the Christian education and youth positions have been reduced to half time. From September until April, Mellinger and Martin will each work one-quarter time to develop an identity document and a proposal for governance and staff structure.

How delegates respond to the proposals in the April session will determine the future direction of the review.—MC Eastern Canada release

## Mennonite Church Manitoba

### New youth pastor at Grace Mennonite

Grace Mennonite Church in Winkler has hired one of its own members, Cory Kehler, as youth pastor. Kehler, formerly a supervisor in a furniture store, recognized that God has been leading him on this path for some time.

The people in his home congregation know him well.

"Sometimes we don't see in ourselves what others see in us," said Kehler, age 32. He recalls how he was urged to teach Sunday School six years ago.

"I never thought of myself as a Sunday school teacher but I finally gave in to their prompting."

From there Kehler was led

into youth ministry. Three years ago he began working with Sharon Peters, then youth pastor, and began to discover his own gifts. When the youth pastor position became vacant, many in the church urged him to apply.

"I wrestled with it for awhile.... God answered things so clearly." He added that "when the vote came, it was such a strong vote of affirmation. That was the clincher."

Kehler began his work at Grace on August 5.

### Camps celebrate God's goodness

It has been another rich summer of ministry to children, youth, and adults with mental challenges at Camps Assiniboia, Koinonia and Moose Lake.

"Over 1,300 campers were thrilled by the dynamic activities, cool counsellors and memorable Bible lessons," said Bob Wiebe, director of Education Ministries.

In November, Camps with Meaning will celebrate God's work in its summer ministry. The celebration banquets will include stories, music and images of the summer program, using this year's theme, "Peace—Live it!" Guests will be invited to make a financial contribution.

The banquets are: November 1 at Camp Koinonia near Boissevain, 6:00 p.m.; November 2 at Douglas Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, 5:00 p.m.; November 8 at Winkler Berghaler Mennonite Church, 6:00 p.m..

## Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

### Questionnaire coming on conference vision

MC Saskatchewan's envisioning team, under the leadership of conference minister Ken Bechtel, is sending a question-

naire to individuals and congregations throughout the province.

The team is asking for input about MC Saskatchewan's vision. The information will be gathered in mid-November and used to prepare a draft for a re-covenanting service. The draft will be presented at conference in February.

In other news, phase one of the Vibrant Rural Churches Project has been completed. The one-year endeavor, sponsored by MC Saskatchewan, employed two staff people for a one-year term.

Eric Olfert and Naomi Unger have completed a report on ideas they collected during their visits to rural churches. They are using the information to set goals for the next part of the project.

"The visits have been refreshing and positive," said Olfert. A conference to discuss the final outcome of the study may take place in the new year.

**Mennonite Church Alberta**

**Thanks from Camp Valaqua**

Camp Valaqua is happy to

report that we had an enriching camping program this summer. Our staff members dedicated themselves to their campers. Our chaplains inspired us in their sharing of God's word. Many volunteers worked hard to keep us safe and well fed.

Most of all, we delighted in the campers who made Camp Valaqua come alive with their activity and enthusiasm. Thank you for your prayers and support for our camping ministry.—Camp Valaqua

**Mennonite Church British Columbia**

**Listening meetings this fall**

Area listening meetings for Mennonite Church British Columbia are planned for October. (See the calendar on page 38 for dates and locations.)

The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the relationship between MC British Columbia and Mennonite Church Canada, and how that relationship will affect future planning for provincial congregations.

A budget will also be accepted at a delegate meeting

in November.

"Based on what we are formally and informally hearing, it has become evident to the executive that the issue of MC British Columbia's relationship with MC Canada needs to be clearly resolved before we can move ahead in any effective way with questions of future vision and related budgets," wrote Doug Epp, chair of MC British Columbia.

Congregations are encouraged to discuss these issues prior to the meeting that will be held in their area.

*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.*

**Resources notes**

A coffee table book based on the art exhibit at the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Zimbabwe will be published this fall. *In God's Image*, compiled by Ray Dirks and Larry Miller, will include art and daily life photographs from the many countries where Mennonites and Brethren in Christ reside. Dirks, curator of the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg, collected art work from 17 countries for the exhibit. He is planning to tour with the exhibit in Europe and North America, and to make slide presentations available to churches. Miller, executive

secretary of Mennonite World Conference, has written introductions to each chapter in the book.—From reports

A resource on current developments in Israel/Palestine is the *MennoLetter from Jerusalem*, an Internet newsletter edited by Glenn Witmer. The latest issue includes reflections on the latest violence from Jewish leaders, as well as news about the first Christian Arab Israeli university. Witmer is a Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker in Israel. To receive the newsletter, e-mail: newsletter@mennojersalem.org.

**Following Christ in life**

"For whoever thinks he belongs to Christ must walk the way Christ walked" (Hans Denck, 1526).

Our spiritual forebears believed that those who confessed Jesus had need for no other yardstick in life than Jesus' own life, death, resurrection and teachings. That choice put them at odds with their time and in a state of constant danger as they railed against immorality and hypocrisy in church and state, shared the Good News with people who hated their cause or gave aid to their persecutors.

Yet they persisted in this "foolishness," applying the life and teachings of Jesus to all aspects of their world. And in so doing they turned their world upside down.

It's hard to stand in contradiction to society's choices. It's so much easier to surrender than stand up, become silent

than be silenced. But they couldn't do that (at least, not at first).

Their concrete application of Jesus' life and teachings was a radical departure from the selective ethics of the time. (I suspect it still is.) Their "one foundation" in Jesus as saviour and lord brought about distinctives that still characterize our movement.

History teaches that a spiritual heritage can become dry and brittle, and shatter into a thousand shards if devoid of the life that Jesus brings. When Jesus says we are forgiven, he assumes we have need of a forgiver. When he tells us to go and sin no more, the statement presupposes that we have things about which to repent. To insist that we are well when we are "sick unto death" (as Kierkegaard said) has nothing to do with health, and everything to do with denial.

Each generation must embrace Scrip-

ture's admonition to have in all our words and deeds the mind of Christ. Our allegiance to a living Jesus requires that Christ take centre stage in determining how we live.

Such discipleship is not optional for Anabaptists (or for believers in any era). This centrality of a person is the most important possession that our movement can talk about. For if we lose sight of Jesus at the centre, we have no movement. We have only a museum piece. If we lose our passion for the one we follow, we not only cease to be Anabaptist. We cease to be Christian.—Chris Arney

*Chris Arney, director of Evangelism and Church Development, Mennonite Church British Columbia*



**From our leaders**



## Divorce involves the whole church

*The following is from an article that appeared in the newsletter of First Mennonite Church in Edmonton, and in Timbrel. The writer was part of a Sunday School class discussing non-traditional family structures and the church.*

I am divorced and divorce hurts. It hurts all of us. Marital breakdown is not a new phenomenon. It has been happening for decades. If the church truly is the body of Christ, we have wounds to heal.

When I left my husband, taking my son Liam, I considered leaving the church in which I had grown up. I did not want to be judged. I did not want to explain the cause of the divorce. And I did not want to envy my ex-husband.

He and his new wife attend a church where he has always received sympathy as a man whose wife left him. His church offers a support group for divorced people, something our church does not.

Adversity challenges faith and the faith community. Many divorced people choose to leave the church temporarily or for good. The reasons—feelings of failure, judgment, betrayal, abandonment. These feelings could be healed with love, support and faith.

The death of a marriage is like the slow death of a loved one. The illness

is diagnosed, every treatment attempted. Then comes the realization of imminent death—and then the death itself. There is, however, no funeral, and rarely is there formal support for the one who grieves.

Given current divorce statistics, more church members will find themselves separated or divorced. More children will live in single-parent homes or in a blended family.

Liam and I moved into my parents' home. We were fortunate to have a temporary refuge. Unfortunately, returning to my childhood home changed how my parents, and others, interacted with me.

I lost some of my independence and the privileges I took for granted as a adult. I no longer received invitations that did not include my parents. Our living arrangement created challenges for my parents' role as deacons in the church.

A failed marriage all too often leaves parents questioning their ability to protect their children. My parents felt many of the feelings I felt. My father, who had walked his "princess" down the aisle to another man, felt anger and frustration. My parents also needed support. We always hope that people can be reconciled after a separation. For me, however,

counselling, prayer and efforts by my pastor were unsuccessful.

Studies suggest that children who experience crisis—the death of a family member, serious illness, relocation, the divorce of parents—share similar emotional challenges. The impact depends on the emotional support available.

Liam is now four. This divorce will influence his life. But having parents in an unhealthy marriage would also have influenced him greatly. Love and support will be key to his wellbeing.

Whether you believe that divorce is right or wrong isn't really the issue. Christ asks us not to judge others, but love them.

### Suggestions for support

Here are some suggestions from people who have been there:

- Write a note. It means a lot.
- Arrange chairs unevenly for church events. Single people appreciate this.
- Make a point of sitting next to someone who is separated or divorced.
- Trust that a divorced woman is not interested in your husband.
- Touch is healing.
- Take someone a casserole or some baking.
- Invite divorced families in for a meal.
- Don't pretend that life is normal. Ask a child if he or she wants to talk about feelings.
- Invite children of divorced families to join you at sports or other events. Boys who live primarily with their mothers need male role models.

• Nurturing a child's faith is a partnership among parents and members of the congregation—not just Sunday school teachers. This partnership may encompass a variety of situations.

• Consider organizing a support group for divorced people.—**Catherine M. Kuehne**

### Employment opportunities

Parkwood Mennonite Home requires an experienced

#### ADMINISTRATOR

to assume responsibility for a 96-bed long-term facility. The successful candidate will have a passion for people and strong financial skills, as well as previous operational experience in long-term care.

Accountable to the Executive Director, and as part of the senior management team your values, proven through experience, will assist the organization in mastering all the challenges of moving from our current 40-year old, 58-bed facility to the new and expanded Continuing Care Retirement Community in east Waterloo by summer of 2004.

This position will be of interest to persons possessing a bachelor's degree and a minimum of 3-years leadership experience in the Continuing Care Retirement Community industry.

Expressions of interest in this position will be received until October 3, 2003 and may be mailed to:

**Search Committee**  
c/o The Executive Director  
515 Langs Drive  
Cambridge, ON N3H 5E4

### For sale

**Church Staff, Worship Leaders: Special-order Mennonite Advent-Christmas-Epiphany 2003 bulletins** by October 1. Series of six, features worship resources coordinated with Leader magazine. \$12.99 per hundred, plus shipping. Call Faith & Life Resources, 1-800-245-7894.

## Peace seminar for police officers

**Waterloo, Ont.**—Police officers affiliated with Anabaptist churches are invited to discuss how they integrate their faith with their profession at a peace seminar at Conrad Grebel University College on November 29.

The seminar is sponsored by the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies at Grebel and the Mennonite Central Committee Ontario Peacebuilders program. Discussion will focus on using force, attitudes of the church to policing and how police officers see themselves within the church.

The discussion is from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Lunch will be provided. This is the first in a series of dialogues on how Mennonites deal with law and law enforcement, both locally and internationally.

For further information, call Wendy Shoreman (former Toronto Police Services), at (519) 745-8458.—From releases

## Call for response on service ministries

**Winnipeg, Man.**—Delegates to the Mennonite Church Canada assembly in July passed a resolution seeking alternatives to the cutbacks of Christian Service Ministries. The program was eliminated in the budget decisions made last March.

A task group assigned to study ways of maintaining service ministries in MC Canada brought the resolution.

In responding, the Christian Witness Council, which oversees service ministries, is seeking feedback from delegates, church leaders, and others. A background document and questionnaire are available. Deadline for submissions is October 6.

A survey is available at [www.mennonitechurch.ca/survey/index.html](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/survey/index.html). To request documents and a printed survey, e-mail: [rjsuderman@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:rjsuderman@mennonitechurch.ca), or phone 1-866-888-6785.

"If the future of Christian

Service ministry as a program of MC Canada is important to you, then we need to hear from you now," said Jack Suderman, executive secretary of Witness. A reference group will help discern the future of this program.

The Witness Council will generate a report for General Board meetings November 6-8.—MC Canada release

## Calendar

### British Columbia

**October 6-8:** Pastor/spouse retreat. Contact MC British Columbia for details.

**October 8, 14, 16, 18:** Mennonite Church British Columbia Listening Meetings, 7:00 p.m. Emmanuel Mennonite, Abbotsford (8); Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver (14); First Mennonite, Greendale (16). First Mennonite, Kelowna (18) at 10:00 a.m.

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

**October 18:** Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. banquet with speaker John B. Toews. Call (604) 853-6177, e-mail: [archives@mhsbc.com](mailto:archives@mhsbc.com).

**October 18, 19:** Thanksgiving Vespers with Abendmusik Vesper Choir at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford (18) and Knox United, Vancouver (19), 8:00 p.m. Donations to Menno Simons Centre.

**November 1:** MCC B.C. annual meeting at South Langley MB Church.

**November 6-8:** Mennonite Disaster Service informational evenings: Vernon Mennonite (6), Greendale MB (7), Peace Mennonite, Richmond (8), 7:00 p.m. Reports from volunteers.

**November 7-9:** Scrapbooking retreat at Camp Squeah. Contact Christa Lynn Nikkel, e-mail: [nikkel@telus.net](mailto:nikkel@telus.net).

**November 29:** Mennonite Church British Columbia delegate meeting at Bethel Mennonite, Aldergrove, 8:30 a.m. to noon.

### Alberta

**October 18:** Workday at Camp Valaqua. Call (403) 637-2510 for details.

**October 24-25:** MCC Alberta annual meeting at Coaldale Mennonite Church.

### Saskatchewan

**October 1:** MEDA breakfast at Smiley's Restaurant (not Grainfields), Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

**October 1:** Pastors' gathering on "Learning while leading."

**October 8:** MEDA banquet at Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, with speaker Allan Sauder, MEDA president, 6:30 p.m. Call (306) 665-5775.

**October 17, 18, 19:** MCC Saskatchewan Support Circle workshop at Grace Mennonite Church, Regina (17), 7:00 p.m.; Rosthern Mennonite (18), 10:00 a.m.; Massey Place Community, Saskatoon (19), 2:00 p.m.

**October 17-18:** Women in Mission retreat at Shekinah.

**October 25:** Alumni Volleyball Tournament at Rosthern Junior College.

**October 31-November 1:** MCC Saskatchewan annual meeting at Laird Mennonite Church.

**November 5:** MEDA breakfast at Smiley's Restaurant, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

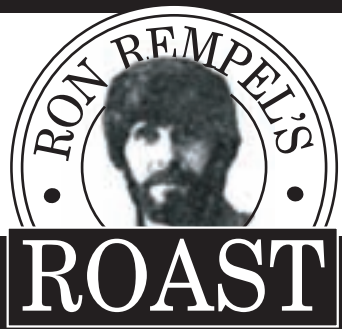
**November 14-15:** MC Saskatchewan Bible Conference with Harry Huebner at Grace Mennonite, Regina.

**December 3:** MEDA breakfast at Smiley's Restaurant, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

### Manitoba

**October 4:** Equipping Conference with Ministers and Deacons Conference at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

## Plan to Attend



An evening of song, stories, humour and food remembering 24 years of service

Featuring: Ivan Emke  
Master of Ceremonies

Saturday, October 18, 2003  
Elmira Mennonite Church  
Elmira, Ontario  
Dinner & Program: 6:30 pm

Tickets: \$25 per person  
available from  
Betty Dyck  
(519) 669-8314

**October 5:** Ukraine Dessert Night with Jake and Dorothy Unrau at First Mennonite, Winnipeg, 7:00 p.m.  
**October 5:** Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School opening program at Portage Ave. MB Church, 2:30 p.m.  
**October 11-12:** 50th anniversary celebrations at Graysville Mennonite Church. Phone (204) 828-3359.  
**October 16, 23, 24:** Eden Foundation fundraising banquets with David Schroeder and House of Doc at Altona EMMC Church (16), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg (23), Steinbach Mennonite (24). Call (204) 325-5355 or 866-493-6202, e-mail: edenfdn@valleycable.com.  
**October 17-18:** Women in Mission fall retreat at Camp Assiniboia. Speaker: Kathy Giesbrecht.  
**October 18:** MC Manitoba special delegate meeting at Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite, 1:00 p.m.  
**October 21-22:** J. J. Thiessen Lectures at Canadian Mennonite University with Paul Hiebert.  
**October 23-25:** Youth ministry course and conference at Canadian Mennonite University with Rick Bartlett.  
**October 25:** Preaching workshop at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.  
**October 27:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate annual meeting, 7:30 p.m.  
**October 30-November 2:** MEDA 50th anniversary convention at Fairmont Hotel, Winnipeg. Call 800-665-7026.  
**October 31-November 2:** Quilting retreat with Val Pankratz at Camp Moose Lake.  
**November 1, 2, 8:** Camps with Meaning banquets at Camp Koinonia (1), 6:00 p.m.; Douglas Mennonite Church (2), 5:00 p.m.; Winkler Bergthaler (8), 6:00 p.m.  
**November 1, 8:** Preaching workshops at Grace Mennonite Church, Brandon (1) and Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite Church (8).  
**November 7-9:** Quilting retreat with Meg Suderman at Camp Moose Lake.

**November 14-15:** MCC Manitoba annual meeting at Richmond Park MB Church, Brandon.  
**November 19:** Evening with the Arts at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, 7:30 p.m.  
**November 21-22:** MCC Canada annual meeting, Winnipeg.  
**November 27-29:** MCC pork canning in Winkler.  
**December 11, 18:** Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School Christmas concerts: Agassiz at Bethel Mennonite (11); Bedson at Immanuel Pentecostal (18), 7:00 p.m.  
**December 8:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Christmas concert at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 7:00 p.m.

**Ontario**

**September 29 and 30:** Seniors retreat at Hidden Acres Camp (choose one day). Theme: Reflections on World Conference, with Ray Brubacher. Call (519) 625-8602 or 888-9642.  
**October 3-5:** Silver Lake Camp work weekend. Call (519) 747-0627.  
**October 11-12:** 50th anniversary celebrations at Harrow Mennonite Church. Call (519) 738-2148, e-mail: harrowmennonite.on.ca.  
**October 18-19:** Open house at Hanover Mennonite Church, Saturday, 1:00-5:00 p.m. Dedication Sunday, 2:30 p.m.  
**October 18:** Farewell dinner for Ron Rempel (former *Canadian Mennonite* editor) at Elmira Mennonite Church.  
**October 20, 21, 27, 28:** Regional meetings for Mennonite Savings and Credit Union, 7:30 p.m. Elmira Mennonite (20), Wellesley Mennonite (21), MSCU head office, Kitchener (27), UMEI, Leamington (28).  
**October 25:** MC Eastern Canada delegate session at Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church. Speaker: Michael Banks from New York.  
**October 25:** Marriage Encounter banquet and auction at Kitchener MB

Church. Call (519) 896-7877.  
**November 1:** Silver Lake Camp annual meeting at Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church, 4:30 p.m. Fish fry and sausage dinner, 5:00-8:00 p.m.  
**November 2:** Menno Singers performs "Requiem for the Victims of Chernobyl" with two Ukrainian choirs at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, 3:00 p.m.  
**November 7:** Benjamin Eby Lecture at Conrad Grebel University College featuring John E. Toews, "Toward a theology of leadership affirmation: Rethinking ordination," 7:30 p.m.  
**November 9:** Atrium dedication at Conrad Grebel, 3:00 p.m.  
**November 14-15:** MCC

Ontario annual meeting at Brother Andre Catholic High School, Markham.  
**November 29:** Peace seminar for Christian police officers at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo. Call Wendy Shoreman at (519) 745-8458.  
**December 5, 6:** Four choirs Christmas concert (Menno Singers, Inter-Mennonite Children's, Rockway Collegiate, Conrad Grebel chapel choirs) at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, 7:30 p.m.

**United States**

**October 2-4:** MCC United Nations seminar for students. Phone (212) 223-4062, e-mail: unoffice@mcc.org.

**Subscriber services** 

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- 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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**Contact information:**

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 Phone: (519) 884-3810 Toll-free: 1-800-378-2524 ext.221  
 Fax: (519) 884-3331 E-mail: office@canadianmennonite.org





# Conrad Grebel University College

...where tradition and innovation meet

Conrad Grebel is a residence and academic institution that is grounded in the beliefs and practices of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. Situated on the University of Waterloo Campus, students living at Grebel study at and graduate from the University of Waterloo. With over 150 programs of study available, you can experience on-campus living in a Mennonite setting while gaining knowledge and skills to change the world!



## Trisha 3rd year Systems Design

"I came to Grebel because I liked the idea of living in a smaller residence within a Christian Community while attending a public university" says Trisha Niemeyer. "The Skybunks were a draw too." One of her courses, Doing Development: Issues of Justice and Peace, as well as late night discussions and Community Supper speakers have challenged Trisha to question her future plans. "Even though I'm in the same program in which I started, my future plans have made a 180 degree turn. The Grebel influence is quite evident through the sway away from pure technology towards social impact issues within an engineering context." Outside of Grebel, Trisha's main involvement is with Engineers Without Borders, an organization that supports education and awareness of poverty in developing areas by establishing appropriate technical solutions to problems that arise out of these conditions.

**Favourite Grebel activities:** Chapel and Community Supper

**Favourite Grebel meal:** Pizza!

**Extra-curricular activities:** Intramural sports, chapel, larger leadership team, don, Engineers without Borders

**The best thing about Grebel is:** the people! friendships, large windows, fresh bread

