

C A N A D I A N
Mennonite

November 17, 2003
Volume 7, Number 22



Focus on Music

pages 11 - 14

Multi-cultural church

page 21

Second look at partnership

What about binational ties? asked the editorial in the October 20 issue (page 2). Are members of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA really interested in in partnership, now that they have separate structures?

It didn't seem so when the 2003 joint convention was postponed until 2005, and then cancelled altogether last March by the the Joint Executive Committee (comprising the executive committees of the MC Canada General Board and the MC USA Executive Board). The cancellation flew in the face of a 1999 resolution that the two national bodies would meet together every four years.

Little did I expect the passion for partnership that emerged at that meeting.

"We are concerned and passionate about relationships," stated the final report of the Integration Committee in 1999. "This partnership, while not creating a third level of structure, does mandate continuous conversation, consultation, and accountability."

Canadians, at least, were taken aback by how rapidly this mandate was tossed aside. The General Board of MC Canada protested the decision to cancel the 2005 joint gathering, as did delegates in St. Catharines this past summer, especially youth leaders (see Aug. 4, page 16).

So when the Joint Executive Committee (JEC) met in Vancouver in late October, I was curious how the discussion would continue. Would there be recriminations or defensiveness about national loyalties? Would the lines of separation have hardened?

Little did I expect the passion for partnership that emerged at that meeting. The outcome was a reversal of the March decision and a resolve to make another try at meet-

ing together in 2005. See the story on page 15 .

The test will be whether Canadians value the partnership enough to agree to hold their convention south of the border in the summer of 2005.

Special features

In this issue you will find the second supplement on "Our multi-cultural church" (pages 21-24). Included are reflections by Samson Lo on the multi-cultural gathering in Zimbabwe this summer, and a personal testimony by Luc Tran, a Vietnamese pastor in Winnipeg. As well, the Markham Chinese Mennonite Church reports on its recent anniversary, and we get an update on the multi-cultural leadership training that is happening in Ontario and Manitoba.

Accompanying this supplement is a sermon by Hun Lee, a Korean Mennonite pastor, which explores how God uses "wounds and scars" to create lives of beauty (see page 6).

This issue also includes a Focus on Music, featuring new recordings and musical events across the country. See the calendar of upcoming concerts on page 13.

The next issue moves us into the Advent season. To make life a little less stressful for *Canadian Mennonite* staff, we will move to a three-week publishing schedule during this season. So the next three issues will be dated December 1, December 22 and January 12. After that, look for us again every two weeks.

Occasionally, readers report mailing delays or even an issue missed altogether. There's not much we can do about erratic postal service, but do report it to your local post office. If you're missing an issue, contact us and we will gladly send you a copy.

After all, "Mennonites are people who read magazines," according to a recent definition by Emma, age 5. (Emma's mother works for *Canadian Mennonite*.) Enjoy your reading.—**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 on the Thursday before the issue date. So you can check out the Dec. 1 issue by Nov. 27.

Cover: **The House of Doc entertains at the Eden banquets in Manitoba. See pages 28-29. Eden photo.**



Page 37

Winnipeg, Man.

South African bishop visits Manitoba

When T. M. Adonis, 77, bishop of the Reformed Church of Christ of South Africa and Mennonite mission partner, retired from his job as a civil servant, he was told by an African elder not to just sit in a chair by the *kraal* (enclosed pasture), moving only when the sun does.

The bishop took that advice and now travels a great deal, not only in South Africa but as a tireless promoter of biblical education among African Indigenous Churches.

And in September, a “miracle dream” came true when he was able to visit North America, the land of his Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) partners. Bishop Adonis is a co-worker of AIMM Bible teachers who lead seminars in different regions.

“My Lord has just loved me a lot,” he exclaimed during a conversation with *Canadian Mennonite*, “that he gave me this trip before I die!” After years of hosting, teaching and acculturating Mennonite workers in Africa, the bishop had an opportunity to return the visit.

He spent a week in Manitoba, visiting homes, churches, schools and offices. The purpose of his trip was to observe the church in Canada and provide the opportunity for congregations here to learn about their work in Africa from an African partner.

During the visit he graciously resisted attempts to evaluate North American church and society, commenting instead with delight on what he was seeing.

“Your country seems so beautiful and quite big,” he said. He noted the many “old age people” who attend church. “In our country that can be a little bit difficult, partly because we have no cars....” He also liked the part of worship where children are “taken aside” for teaching, something they do not have.



Photo by Leona Dueck Penner

Bishop Adonis accepts a gift—a Canadian Mennonite University toque—from Peter Rempel of Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

When asked about differences between the African independent churches and North American ones, he mentioned the African focus on healing and prophecy. If people are ill, they come forward for prayer. Africans are also accustomed to people prophesying.

“For example,” he said, “When I was young I was a smoker. We were called to the front but I didn’t want to identify myself. The preacher said, ‘Brother, come here. I want to pray for you now.’ I stopped smoking that day. Just threw the cigarettes away!”

Another difference is that “we do not stand straight like you, singing from hymnbooks. No! We sing from memory and use choruses” (and move a little). The greatest needs in his country? The bishop named education, AIDS and transportation.

“Our country is wide and isolated. It’s not easy to get to places,” he said. There are new attempts to hold AIDS workshops but people have to walk “for two or three hours” to get to them. “There isn’t enough public transport.”

The visit to Canada helped Bishop Adonis understand how the church here has shaped Mennonite workers such as Lynell Bergen and Brian Dyck of Manitoba.

“Our people are learning a lot from the Mennonite workers,” he said,

referring to a Bible teaching program that began with Mennonite Central Committee workers in 1982.

“We were behind in leadership because many of our independent church leaders have not been to [Bible] school.” The government wants every church leader to have a certificate of theological schooling.

“And the Catholic and Anglican churches did not pay attention to us because we hadn’t been to school. But some of them wanted to find a way to help us, so the Bible teaching started.” The teaching which Brian and Lynell are doing is helping leaders to be recognized by the government and by mainline churches, he said. “We can conduct funerals now in their churches.”

In his youth, T.M. Adonis joined the Presbyterian Church. In 1959, he joined the Church of Christ, based in the United States. After two congregational splits, one group eventually became the Reformed Church of Christ in South Africa. The church has approximately 1,000 members in 14 congregations in Transkei and Cape Town.

Bishop Adonis was a gracious guest who made us feel good about being North Americans and partners in faith.—**Leona Dueck Penner**

Winnipeg, Man.

Caring for children keeps teacher in tune

Brigitte Martens gets down to the floor to help one-year-old Kayla with a toy as eleven-month-old Natasha climbs into her lap.

"Sometimes we forget what it's like to teach little ones," she says. Her foster children help her stay in tune with the needs of the preschoolers in her Sunday school class.

Brigitte, 51, became a foster mother 16 years ago when her youngest child was 12 years old. Natasha was the family's 35th foster child.

Brigitte's love of children extends to her church family. She can't remember exactly when she began teaching Sunday school at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church but she knows that she was invited to assist when she was 12. At that time Sunday school was taught in German.

Eventually she made the transition from assisting to teaching. Only when her son was born 31 years ago did she take a year off.

"I've tried to take a break or quit since but someone would say, 'Can you substitute?' and I would always say yes. It was disorienting for me not to teach. It wasn't good for my week."

Bean seeds in various stages of sprouting are on her kitchen window sill. Her pre-school students have been getting an object lesson on creation and are intrigued by the visible roots that they can touch.

It is easy to see the pleasure Brigitte derives from relating to children.

"It is so much fun. I enjoy hearing their perspective and I can keep in touch with how their families are doing. Adults are not so open."

Portraits of Christian educators

For a number of years, Brigitte's church has been using the Jubilee curriculum. "It has lots of choices and tips, a lot of ideas that really are doable. The one challenge we have is just not enough time during Sunday school, but it is so adaptable to the children you have," she says.

Although their birth children are adults, Brigitte and Art Martens care for their adopted 10-year-old daughter and their foster children. This past year, Art has taken one of the girls with him to adult Sunday school while Brigitte takes the other one with her.

Brigitte acknowledges the support she receives from her husband.



Brigitte Martens with foster daughters Kayla and Natasha.

"I have a quite wonderful, quiet, very loving and easy-natured husband. When I'm shaken by the world, he'll watch the children." Some of the children the Martens have cared for have had significant neurological damage. Juggling medical appointments and providing for critical needs has never made her begrudge the few hours of quiet in her week that she uses for Sunday school preparation. Her preparation begins when she gets home from church. "By reading the lesson early in the week, it runs through my mind and I can pick things up during the week to use for the lesson," she says.

She appreciates the nudge she received at age 12 to help in the classroom. "I think our young people are shortchanged a bit. Everyone should have a young helper. The training and joy of teaching gets passed on."

One of the greatest joys in teaching, said Martens, are those "ah-ha" moments when students get it—when they understand the story.—**Evelyn Rempel-Petkau**



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**Canadian
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Beauty emerges from wounds and scars

This sermon on the biblical Joseph gives a fresh slant to a familiar text. Hun Lee presented it on August 17 at Charleswood Mennonite Church as part of a series on the theme “Cloud of witnesses.”

Instead of the thornbush the pine tree will grow, and instead of briars, the myrtle. That's God's thought and God's way for our lives. Isn't it a miracle? God works in our lives in mysterious ways, shaping us into unexpected beauty and maturity.

Last June, I saw Mount Robson, the highest mountain in the Canadian Rockies. Like other high mountains, it has huge glaciers, falls and canyons. The trail I walked with my friends was easy but a bit boring because the tall trees along the trail prevented us from seeing the view before we reached an overlook. From here, the view was spectacular—it was a waterfall.

One of the high hills was severely carved, and through that canyon water was falling with a roaring sound. This hill was so different from other green hills. Was it privileged and blessed?

In fact, the carved canyon was a scar. It was said that lava flowed there a long time ago, followed by glaciers in the ice age. The hill was wounded by the glaciers. If the hill had been human, desperate cries would have been heard there: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

But everyone at the overlook stood in awe of God's majesty. It was as if we were in God's presence. Was the roaring sound the cry of the hill or a proclamation of God's new creation?

Yes, the hill was wounded, but God worked for good in that suffering. Romans 8:28 says: “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” That hill bears witness to God's goodness and greatness.

Instead of the thorn bush the pine tree will grow, and instead of briars, the myrtle. This will be for the Lord's renown, for an everlasting sign that

From Jake Krueger photo file

will not be destroyed. That's God's thought and God's way for our lives.

In the Bible we find many witnesses who experience the moulding hand of God. Joseph is one. His life was full of thorn bushes and briars. He was severely wounded by his brothers when he was young. He was threatened with death and abandoned. Lava flowed through his vulnerable life and left a scar.

That was not all his suffering. He had to work as a servant in a foreigner's house where he was accused falsely of being a criminal. He was put in prison. Glaciers carved up his life and left unforgettable wounds.

His life could have been distorted by those wounds. But the Bible says that Joseph's life was full of beauty, mature and complete, not lacking in anything. Why was his life not distorted? Because he faced trials with joy. He was always patient, and he trusted that God would do something good through his suffering. He entrusted his life to God's moulding hand.

Joseph was faithful. He forgave his brothers and embraced them with open arms. He was able to be grateful for all of his life—the good as well as the bad, the joy as well as the sorrow, the successes as well as the failures, the rewards as well as rejections.

Thus Joseph became one of the best examples for us to understand how our life is shaped by God's loving hands. It is not an easy job—it is a hard spiritual task. But we should choose to do the work. As long as we keep dividing our lives between events and people we would like to remember and those we would rather forget, we cannot claim the fullness of our being as a gift of God.

Do we have scars? We may have stories that are not easy to tell without negative emotions. Our lives are not free of thorn bushes and briars. But don't we want to see how the pine tree grows instead of the thorn bush, and myrtle instead of briars? To experience that miracle is to wait for God's time.

"Time heals," people often say. But healing is not possible just by waiting passively. In order for time to heal we should actively work with our pain, and trust in the possibility of forgiveness and reconciliation in God's loving hands. The spiritual task given to us is an ability to accept trials and be patient.

Like Joseph we may have unexpected bitterness. Acci-

dents and wounds may be part of our lives. We have little control over what happens, but we have a lot of control over how we integrate and remember what happens.

Let's not be afraid to look at everything that has brought us to where we are now, and trust God's loving hands to shape us into beauty and maturity. Patience is not easy to learn. In a world where

convenience, satisfaction and speed are attractive, people do not find it easy to be patient.

We hear the voices: "You can choose something else when you are not satisfied with something. Hurry up!" But if we are not patient we will bear no fruit.

In a world that emphasizes visible things, people do not find it easy to trust God. But let's be patient and trust that the treasure we look for is hidden in the ground on which we stand. For God is shaping us with his loving hands.

Being the body of Christ requires the same spiritual task—patience and trust! Together we can be a scenic overlook where people stand and see God's image, and be in awe of God's presence. The cloud of witnesses. We are called to be part of it.—**Hun Lee**

The writer has been leader of the Korean congregation at Charleswood Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, as well as congregations in London and Vancouver. This sermon was printed in The Grapevine, Charleswood's newsletter.



Steinbach doesn't want to be different anymore

On October 22, citizens of Steinbach, Manitoba, voted by a 50.9 percent majority to allow alcohol to be served in their town. It was the fifth vote in 30 years. Steinbach, founded by Mennonites in 1874, has 9,000 people and 25 churches. Following is one man's musings on the vote.

When I saw the media lining up Steinbach councillors on Main Street for interviews on October 22, and heard Peter Mansbridge on "The National" announce that the community had narrowly approved serving of liquor in dining rooms, I was glad I didn't live within the city limits.

This issue has always polarized the community and the media enjoy prodding citizens to get wacky comments from extremists on both sides. Nice to sit on the sidelines for a change.

If truth be known, Steinbach has rarely been dry. There wasn't much written on the early years, of course, but when my grandfather arrived at the Giroux railway station from Russia in the 1920s, he was taken in by the Peters family who ran the Tourist Hotel in Steinbach and the Tourist Hotel had a beer parlour.

Efforts were made over the decades to get that beer parlour to close its doors. In 1950, for example, a petition signed by 239 petitioners was presented to town council asking for a vote on the parlour. The week before the vote, petitioners brought in Gerald E. Splinter, a well-known North Dakota radio minister, for a temperance rally at the Steinbach Gospel Tabernacle. The week after, another temperance speaker was brought in.

The Tourist Hotel put up little defence. The owners said they would abide by the vote. They also published a letter in the German-language *Steinbach Post*, asking voters to consider the hotel's "clean record." (The venerable old *Post*, once the main publication for Steinbach and area, regularly carried ads for breweries.)

On October 20, 1950, predictions toppled: 398 people voted for the sale of liquor and 214 against. The Tourist Hotel wasn't ever voted out; it died of

old age decades later and was replaced, in a fashion, by the Frantz Motor Inn just outside Steinbach town limits.

In September 1962, at age 17, I was appointed *The Carillon's*

first court reporter and I reported on the countless drinking and driving infractions appearing before Magistrate Wallace Darichuk, who was 21.

I learned far more there than I can relate here but a few things stand out:

1. There never was a problem obtaining liquor by those who wanted it.

2. Many of those in court weren't concerned about the fine, which was generally a pittance. They would, however, do anything to keep their names out of the paper. (Once I was told by a young man that his name had to be omitted because his ailing mother would not survive the shock. His name went in. Next month he was back facing more liquor charges.)

3. Some of the offenders had few healthy social outlets. Steinbach, like other Mennonite communities, had a powerful work ethic but frowned upon sports and other social activities not related to the church. The first arena was only built in 1967. Until then, Steinbach teams had to rent space in neighbouring village arenas.

And the struggle to get a library was equally arduous. I remember a town council meeting around 1972 where the mayor stated that he had only read two books in his life and attained success in business. Why would anyone need a library? Steinbach didn't have a library until 1973!

The results of the recent liquor vote



Main street in Steinbach, Manitoba.

Photo by Peter Dyck, The Carillon

are a reflection of the changing times. While many of the citizens, especially older folks, still see drinking alcohol as wrong, the baby boomers who now have their hands on the controls have far fewer problems with alcohol.

And while this vote will not change all that much, it is important. It will lead to other votes regarding liquor and these will have greater implications.

Steinbach, I believe, is becoming less unique and that is unfortunate. This community has produced many outstanding people who have made their mark all over the world. Will the forces that created them be as strong in the future?

Many people in this community really don't want to be different; they want to be seen as mainstream and progressive and very prosperous.

It must be noted that far greater influences than the liquor vote have changed Steinbach. What about the automobile industry which the city has so warmly embraced? Or television, another "evil" once strongly resisted? Crass consumerism, more than wine with your meal, is the greatest threat to the community.—

Abe Warkentin

The writer is former editor of The Carillon, Steinbach's newspaper, and founding editor of Die Mennonitische Post, a paper for German-speaking Mennonites in Canada and Latin America.

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. See page 2 for address information.

Many self-supporting aboriginal churches

Douglas Durst, in his letter “Round pegs and square holes” (Oct. 20), needs to examine his ideological bias and do a bit more research. There are hundreds of aboriginal churches in Canada that are self-governed and self-supported.

He would probably be surprised to know that when native people in Canada have been asked for their religious affiliation, by far the majority have identified themselves as Christian.

Second, there are self-governing aboriginal churches in many denominations. The Anglican Church of Canada has had dioceses for many decades that are largely aboriginal. The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada have more than 100 churches that are aboriginal. Other groups like the Christian and Missionary Alliance or the Mennonite-based Impact North have aboriginal churches. Many Roman Catholic churches are aboriginal too.

The Native Evangelical Fellowship of Canada is a denomination that is entirely aboriginal. The former moderator of the United Church of Canada, Stan MacKay, is aboriginal and came from a church that would

have been native-led and supported. It may interest readers to know that the first effort to put the Cree language into writing—which helped enormously to strengthen the culture and language—was done in order to offer the Bible in Cree.

It simply is not true that the Christian gospel cannot reach aboriginal people. My goodness, the Bible is the most widely translated book in the world and faith in the Christ of the gospel has been appropriated by people in every culture that one could imagine.—**Harold Jantz, Winnipeg, Man.**

Confused about Arney's resignation

I have read and reread the report, “Arney leaves leadership role in B.C.” (Oct. 20, page 14), and there seems to be something missing.

I do not personally know Chris Arney, although I am aware that he has been a pastor, Mennonite Church British Columbia conference minister, and recently the director for Evangelism and Church Development in B.C.

So he has held leadership positions in the Mennonite Church for some time, and therefore has a following of people who elected or appointed him.

It is reported that he planned to resign because MC B.C. is facing hard decisions about mission and finances, and he felt it would be easier “without a person as part of the issue.” It appears, on further reading, that Arney doesn't agree with MC B.C. or MC Canada on a number of issues.

So he has decided to go his own way. Perhaps that can be considered biblical—Paul and Barnabas parted company when they did not agree,

although their disagreement did not centre on how church matters were dealt with in Jerusalem.

From Arney's description of different models used by MC Canada, it appears that he has become disillusioned with the leadership of MC Canada. The report states, “His goal now is to help keep MC British Columbia together...” That is interesting since Arney has removed himself from responsibility in that body.

However, “he wants to maintain contact with churches planted during his time with the conference.” This is both noble and disconcerting. When a person who has been in leadership chooses to take a different direction, leaving behind a struggling group of people, because he doesn't agree with the way they do things, what impact does that have on the people who have placed their trust in him?

I believe that we are responsible for what we have in knowledge, abilities, training, position and trust. How we carry out our responsibilities is where this article left its greatest impact on me.—**Margaret Neufeld, Winnipeg, Man.**

Church has wandered from the narrow way

Since I had a stroke, my physical activity has been severely limited. One of the benefits is that I have much more time for reading, study, meditation and prayer. For this I am most thankful.

This has brought to my attention again the wide gate and broad way versus the narrow way described in Matthew 7:13-14. How broad is the way on which I have been travelling? It is obviously much narrower now than it was before I had my stroke. I can no longer spend time gardening, drive my car, attend conferences or church.

My ability to visit family and friends is severely limited and I am unable to spend my time volunteering as my wife and I had planned on doing after retirement. So life's road has narrowed greatly for me in many ways, but it has broadened in other ways.

All of this led me to thinking about

Pontius' Puddle



Christians and the church in general. Without being judgmental, it appears to me that the “way” on which Christians are travelling in today’s world has broadened considerably over the last generation. What was once considered to be unacceptable practice by the church is now commonplace. The time, energy and money spent on such activity makes many Christians indistinguishable from non-Christians.

Scripture admonishes us repeatedly that we are to practise a lifestyle that clearly marks us as different from those who do not believe. Although we are in the world, we are not to be “of the world.” Therefore we need to choose the narrow way that does not include everything to be found on the broad way.

Sadly, our “way” has become too broad, not only in terms of time, energy and resources spent, but also in terms of behaviour, theology and the interpretation of scripture.

May God help each one of us and our schools and churches to choose the narrow way that leads to life everlasting.—**Frank J. Thiessen, Winnipeg, Man.**

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Things you won't hear in church

We hear many things in church. We imbibe the beauty of rich harmonies and poetic hymn texts. We listen to scriptures rendered in that eloquent tone so characteristic of worship leaders who have found out last minute that they're in charge for the morning. We are surrounded by announcements, pastoral prayers, exhortations to give, and blessings for the week to come.

We may also hear—maybe I'm pushing the envelope here—the rare complaint. The service went too long. The clean-up group for potluck didn't show up. The worship committee has been asking for too many choruses and not enough hymns. The pastor has worn the same tie for four straight Sundays.

We Mennonites have developed a knack for dwelling on foibles and faults. In order to correct this problem, I am offering my list of “Ten things you never hear in church,” from versions that have been floating around on the Internet. If you'd like to participate in this exercise,

e-mail me your ideas at timwiebe@mciblues.net.

Ten things you never hear in church (but ought to):

10. “Hey! It's my turn to sit in the front pew!”



Pilgrim Pieces

Tim Wiebe

9. “Pastor, I was so enthralled, I didn't notice that you went 25 minutes overtime.”

8. “I volunteer to be the permanent teacher for the junior high Sunday school class.”

7. “I love it when we sing hymns I've

never heard before.”

6. “Since we're all here anyway, let's start the worship service early!”

5. “Pastor, we'd like to send you to a Bible seminar in the Bahamas.”

4. “Annual meeting? I'm there. Who needs to watch the Grey Cup?”

3. “A church council meeting on Saturday at 8 a.m.? I'd prefer 7 a.m. so I can have my devotions first.”

2. “I'd be happy to lead the liturgical dance procession down the aisle next Sunday.”

1. “Nothing inspires and strengthens me like our annual stewardship emphasis.”

So there you have it, folks: 10 statements that will liven up your church life, make you more grateful and give you something to complain about. Complain? Sure. After all, even your most peace-loving pilgrim can only handle so much good news.



Ray Dirks responds to questions during the launch of his new book.

Winnipeg, Man.

Gallery launches book on global family

A project that was conceived in 1998 has come to fruition in the book, *In God's Image: A Global Anabaptist Family*.

This collection of art, photographs and stories from Mennonites around the world was launched at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery on November 3. It is the first of several planned launches.

The project was a labour of love for Ray Dirks, curator of the gallery, who served as writer, photographer and designer of the book. It was edited by Larry Kehler, also of Winnipeg.

The book offers insight into Dirks' experience of collecting art and organizing an exhibit at the Mennonite

World Conference assembly in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Dirks visited 17 countries on 5 continents in the two years he assembled the collection.

Included in the collection are stories and photographs of daily life and experiences Dirks had while commissioning and collecting the art. The MWC exhibit is about to travel in Europe for a year, beginning in the Netherlands in late January.

"I always made a point of staying with my host families wherever I went," said Dirks. "I wanted to get a glimpse of their lives."

The work also contains a foreword by MWC president Larry Miller, and statistics and a world map that set the stage for the personal stories in the book.

The book is published by Herald Press and is available in both hardcover (\$34.99) and softcover (\$29.99).—From MC Canada release

Waterloo, Ont.

Music festival/conference scheduled for spring

A music festival and conference on Mennonites and music will be held May 28-30 at Conrad Grebel University College.

"Sound in the land," a first-time event, will bring together composers, songwriters, performers of varied styles, writers and scholars. Billed as "a festival/conference of Mennonite-rooted people and their music," it will celebrate a wide array of Mennonite music-making, from four-part music to funk, jazz to folk, chamber trio to techno.

"Mennonite-rooted" music is composed and performed by people with Mennonite roots and/or current church affiliation.

The keynote speaker will be scholar and church music mentor, Mary Oyer. Other participants include the

DaCapo Chamber Choir directed by Leonard Enns; writers Di Brandt, Jean Janzen and Cynthia Yoder; Winnipeg composer Randolph Peters; Toronto jazz pianist Paul Neufeld; singer-songwriters Cate Friesen and Gina Holsopple; American composers such as J. Harold Moyer and Larry Warkintin; ethnomusicologists Doreen Klassen and Jonathan Dueck.

Works are being solicited for the event. Collaborative projects pairing Mennonite composers and creative writers are welcomed. Send abstracts, proposals and inquiries to Carol Ann Weaver, e-mail: caweaver@uwaterloo.ca (Do not send attachments.) Registration information is available at: grebel.uwaterloo.ca/soundinland. —Conrad Grebel release

Thanksgiving fundraiser

On October 19, about 250 people enjoyed an evening of Thanksgiving music at East Zorra Mennonite Church, near Tavistock, Ontario. The \$1,921.00 raised went to support the programs of Agape Fellowship in London. Agape Fellowship, a group of about 30 people, reaches out to the marginalized in its community. Musical groups included the Agape Group from London and an acappella girls' group from East Zorra called Freedom, in its debut performance. The East Zorra Men's Choir and Worship Band also participated. The idea for the evening came from Mary Schiedel, an interim pastor who has been involved in a support position with Agape Fellowship.—From report by **Kathleen Rempel**

Christmas CD aids Africa

A recording of Christmas songs, *The Light Shines*, sung by Kim Thiessen, was released at a recent evening of music and stories at Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary.

Like her first CD, *To Such as These*, which sold over 5,000 copies and generated \$120,000, this CD will help fund Mennonite Central Committee work with AIDS in Africa. Again, the production costs were covered by Foothills and all proceeds go to MCC's Generations at Risk project.

Thiessen's mellow voice (not unlike Anne Murray's) is well-known in Alberta. On the CD launch evening, she performed several pieces from the recording, at times accompanied by Darryl Neustaedter Barg and Jon Guenter with voice, guitar and violin. For "Oh beautiful star of Bethlehem" she was joined by her daughter, Meghan. For an encore she sang, *Leise rieselt der Schnee*, a well-known German carol.

Abe Janzen of MCC Alberta presented plaques to Thiessen, Neustaedter Barg and Darrel Heidebrecht, who represented Foothills church, in recognition of last year's bestseller.

Guest Gladys Oyat, a teacher from Uganda, passionately pleaded for help for Africa where AIDS is rampant. Young orphans are heading families where parents have died. Life expect-

ancy has dropped to 30-38 years.

Julie Mierau, who attended Mennonite World Conference in Zimbabwe and travelled to other African countries, told of the impact this experience has had on her life.

Another poignant moment was Daryl Fife's story about his daughter, Alana, who lost her life while on MCC assignment in Indonesia. He has opened a scholarship fund in her name. Thiessen's new CD is dedicated to Alana Fife and Hannah Showaker



Kim Thiessen, Darryl Neustaedter Barg and Darrel Heidebrecht are given awards in recognition of the terrific sales of their previous fundraising CD.

who were killed in a flash flood in Indonesia nearly one year ago.

Thiessen thanked her supporters for allowing her to use her God-given gift in Christ's service for the good of humanity.—**Irene Klassen**

Advent exhibits

The Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg opened two exhibits on November 14. "Peace on earth," the annual juried exhibition, features art that ranges from photography and painting to collage and printmaking. Artists were simply asked to comment on peace. The exhibition includes works by Peter Martens, Jane Heinrichs, Peter Von Kampen, Jean Wiens, Grace Rempel and others. Meanwhile, Christian Worthington's "The Annunciation Series" is on display in the upper gallery. Worthington, a Winnipeg artist, seeks to express the mystery of the annunciation in hsi paintings.—From Heritage Centre

New recordings

The Light Shines: Songs and carols for Christmas, featuring Kim Thiessen of Alberta and other musicians. This is the second recording produced as a fundraiser for Mennonite Central Committee's AIDS project in Africa, Generations at Risk. The CD was a project of Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary and MCC Alberta. It is available for \$18 plus shipping from MCC, phone 1-888-622-6337.



Pilgrimsongs/Pilgerlieder is a recent recording of 28 well-known German and English hymns sung by Mel and Lynne Braun of Winnipeg, with Laura Loewen accompanying on the piano. It can be ordered from Mennonite Church Manitoba, phone (204) 896-1616, e-mail: office@mennochurch.mb.ca.

Peace...Live it! is a recording of camp songs from the Camps with Meaning program of Mennonite Church Manitoba. It features nine original tunes plus

old favourites, sung by camp staff and the Sargent Mennonite Church Junior Choir. Order from Mennonite Church Manitoba (see above).

Memories, a recording of German, English and Russian music by the Faith and Life Male Choir, has been re-released due to popular demand. The recording was made after the choir's tour of Ukraine and Germany in 1992. It is available from Mennonite Church

Manitoba (see above).



Let it flow through you is a new recording by Road Less Travelled (Doug and Jude Krehbiel),

along with 10 other musicians from various backgrounds. The CD was commissioned by the Mennonite Mission Network of Mennonite Church USA to depict the "mission values" of the church. It features music styles from a variety of cultures. It is available from Mennonite Media, phone 1-800-999-3534.

FOCUS

Music

Music calendar

November 22, 23: Pax Christi Chorale presents Handel's *Israel in Egypt* at Grace Church on-the-hill, Toronto, Saturday 8:00 p.m., Sunday 3:00 p.m.

November 23, 30: Soli Deo Gloria Singers concert with conductor Paul Dueck at St. Matthews Anglican Church, Windsor, Ont. (23), 8:00 p.m.; and Leamington United Mennonite Church with Russell Braun (30), 3:00 p.m.

November 29: Christmas concert at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, 7:00 p.m.

November 30: Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir presents "Carol of the Children," a concert at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont., 3:00 p.m.

November 30: Bach and Handel concert with Canzona, conducted by Henry Engbrecht, and MusikBarock Ensemble at Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, 7:00 p.m.

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, Ont., 7:30 p.m.

December 6, 7: Christmas concert with Manitoba's Faith and Life Male Choir and Women's Chorus, at Winkler Bergthaler, 7:30 p.m. (6), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg (7).

Continued on 14



Celebrate the music of Mennonite-rooted people at the **Sound in the Land Festival/Conference** on **May 28-30, 2004** at Conrad Grebel University College. grebel.uwaterloo.ca/soundinland



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December 6, 7: Abendmusik Advent Vespers at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford, B.C. (6) and Knox United, Vancouver (7), 8:00 p.m. Offering for Menno Simons Centre.

December 7: Christmas concert at United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington, Ont., 7:30 p.m.

December 8: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Christmas concert at Bethel

Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 7:00 p.m.

December 12, 13: "Searching for Christmas" program at Cornerstone Church Mennonite, Saskatoon, 7:30 p.m.

December 11, 18: Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School Christmas concerts: Agassiz at Bethel Mennonite (11); Bedson at Immanuel Pentecostal (18), 7:00 p.m.

December 12: Christmas concert at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, 7:30 p.m.

December 13: Advent concert of North Kildonan Mennonite Church Quartet, Winnipeg, 7:00 p.m.

December 14: Lessons and carols with Pax Christi Chorale at Grace Church on-the-hill, Toronto, 3:00 p.m. Call (416) 494-7889.

December 19: Christmas concert at Rosthern Junior College, Saskatchewan, 7:00 p.m.

December 24: "Shine your light" musical service with choir, hand-bell choir, children's group, violin solo at West Abbotsford Mennonite Church, B.C., 6:30 p.m.



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Mennonite Central Committee Supportive Care Services



Vancouver, B.C.

Joint assembly is essential, say church leaders

It is urgent that Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA hold a joint assembly to work at partnership, agreed the Joint Executive Committee (JEC) at its meeting here October 23-26. The committee is recommending that MC Canada explore the possibility of meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, together with MC USA in 2005.

The unanimous enthusiasm for a joint convention appeared to be a turnaround from the committee's recommendation last March to "discontinue our planning for a binational convention in 2005." The plan had been to meet in Toronto, but the JEC decided that costs, pressing MC USA agenda and other concerns made coming to Canada unfeasible (see Aug. 4, page 16).

The last joint assembly was St. Louis '99 where the decision to integrate the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church moved from the language of "two country structure" to "separate and cooperating church bodies in Canada and in the U.S." Plans to meet jointly in 2003 in this new partnership were later postponed until 2005.

"We haven't had the chance to grieve the separation [into separate national structures]," noted Duane Oswald, moderator of MC USA. His sentiment was echoed by Clare Schlegel of the MC Canada executive who noted that former Mennonite Church people in Ontario are "still grieving the shift from Elkhart loyalty to Winnipeg." Any move to end joint assemblies is premature, he said.

Most committee members, however, were more concerned with building a new partnership between the national bodies.

"I can't imagine having a partnership without having a relationship," said Dan Nighswander, MC Canada general secretary. "And it's hard to imagine a partnership without a joint convention."

One of the difficulties for the U.S. to meet in Canada is numbers. MC USA conventions involve about 10,000 people (adults and youth), while Canada's number about 1,000. Such a group is harder to accommodate in Canada at a reasonable cost.

JEC members discussed models for joint gatherings apart from delegate assemblies but wondered whether people would come. The suggestion to meet in Charlotte for separate delegate conventions with joint sessions gained momentum as the meeting progressed. When the idea was tested with youth ministers by telephone, MC Canada's Anne Campion was almost speechless at the turn of events. Youth leaders have been pushing hard to continue joint youth gatherings.

Beyond assemblies

But partnership is much more than joint assemblies, agreed JEC members. There is much common agenda for the two churches to work at: they share publishing and overseas missions programs, as well as seminary education. They need to work together on "the big issues," such as theology, leadership and global connections.

The committee reviewed earlier documents on cooperation between USA and Canada, including the 2001 statement on "Forming partnerships."

That document proposed five "guiding principles that hold us together" as a North American entity: mission, unity, critical mass, communications, checks and balances (mutual accountability).

This broader agenda has been in limbo while the new national bodies sorted themselves out.

"Setting out a compelling vision of partnership is the most important thing the JEC can do," said Jim Harder of MC USA.

One issue that continues to dominate JEC agenda is the financial rebuilding of Mennonite Publishing Network. The organization is still "fragile," reported director Ron Rempel and chair Ron Sawatsky, with income from operations and fundraising both under projections. Even so, MPN is projecting net revenues this year of just under \$500,000.

The organization is willing to trim more if necessary, and Rempel assured the committee that MPN loan payments to MC Canada and USA will be met. The Barnraising Campaign for debt reduction has been extended until the end of January.

As much as possible, MPN would like to pay back debt from operations and concentrate its fundraising on new projects, such as a new Sunday School curriculum, noted Rempel.

—Margaret Loewen Reimer

Financial update from MC Canada

A third quarter report for Mennonite Church Canada shows that contributions are holding steady at roughly the same levels as last year. Forecasts anticipated 55.5 percent of donation revenue for this period (February 1 to October 31). So far, \$2,157,000, has been received, representing 55.2 percent of a \$3.9 million donation budget. Expenses are about 7 percent under budget.

Donation income (February 1-October 31, 2003)

Year to date target	Year to date actual	Variance	Annual donation target
\$2,164,500	\$2,157,000	\$7,500	\$3,900,000

Toronto, Ont.

New York speaker is highlight of fall session

Experiencing Jesus in the city” was the theme of the fall session of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada on October 25 at Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church.

The setting illustrated the increasingly polyethnic flavour of MC Eastern Canada: the Toronto Chinese church, the largest Mennonite building in the Toronto area, is architecturally Presbyterian but worship is in Cantonese, Mandarin and English. The keynote speaker was Michael Banks, pastor of King of Glory Tabernacle in the Bronx, the first Mennonite congregation in New York City. Banks has pastored for 23 years and is currently an overseer to Mennonite pastors there.

Banks reminded his audience early on that in black culture a speaker counts on “Amen!” and other verbal feedback. The group complied. How do the 14,000 people in MC Eastern Canada—90 or so congregations—relate to the city? asked Banks.

Diversity in itself is not the goal, he said. Diverse values must be subsumed under the kingdom of God or else we engage in idolatry.

Influence the culture, he said. Be Anabaptist urban peacemakers by exerting influence in your places of work, your classrooms, your neighbourhoods.

You don’t scrap the old, he said. You go deeper into that which you already know, but you retool it, admit fresh air into those places where you are fearful and enclosed. Your vision must have “prophetic progeny” in order to engage the future for the gospel.

Banks commented that Mennonites tend to be self-sufficient. “We need healing for our own cynicism,” he said, “for our disbelief that God can work through us to bring hope and healing.” We must find new paradigms to “divest” ourselves for others.

David Brubacher, Minister to Conference, introduced three new staff members: Brian Bauman, Minister of Missions (recently returned to Ontario after some years in California); Heather Gallian, half-time interim Minister of Youth Ministries; and

Sandi Hannigan, half-time interim Minister of Christian Education. Markham Chinese Mennonite Church was received into membership in MC Eastern Canada. The significance of this setting for the event was noted: Toronto Chinese was the mother church that commissioned the Markham church plant 13 years ago. The Executive



Banks

Board presented several updates. Larry Martin, chair of the Finance Commission, reported that congregational giving is running behind in comparison to last year. Lynne Williams reported that the “season of discernment,” the process of addressing differences within the conference, continues. Although for some the process feels slow, it is important to move deliberately, she said. The board meets November 29 to discern next steps.

The third report was about the revisioning process. Marianne Mellinger and Maurice Martin, facilitators, are ready to compile their findings in a document to be tested at the spring delegate session.

The afternoon featured four seminar options showcasing Toronto groups: TOOLS—Toronto Opportunities for Learning and Service; the Toronto United Lao Mennonite Church; the Korean ministry; and the Jane-Finch ministry.

Musicians from Toronto Mennonite New Life Church led music during the morning session, and a group from Toronto Chinese Mennonite in the afternoon.

The audience was reminded of being in an urban setting when it was announced that someone needed to move his vehicle because “the police are at your car.” Perhaps the most unusual sight of the day was dozens of Mennonites lining up to get through the turnstile at the subway station for the journey home.—**Betti Erb**

Jerusalem

Signs of hope in Israel

The German Mennonite Peace Committee toured Israel/Palestine recently, living with Palestinian families and learning first-hand about the challenges of life in the West Bank. They also toured Jerusalem and Galilee, led by Glenn Witmer, Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker.

“It’s one of the most exciting aspects of my Israel assignment—helping to create the bridges that can connect internationals with Israelis and Arabs in this country,” said Witmer in the November issue of *MennoLetter from Jerusalem*.

“Reconciliation! Meeting face to face! Talking to each other, understanding the differences and discovering the similarities! How simple an idea—but how difficult to do at times!”

The newsletter reported on a number of encounters between Israelis and Palestinians. “While the Israeli army continues to construct its dividing wall, slicing families off from their land and neighbours, creating barriers to communication and exchanges, adding to the hostility...there appear some glimmers of hope...”

“These reconciliation voices are small against the roar of the hungry and angry bulldozers. But they are rehearsing a chorus of alternatives for peace that may yet produce a grand finale.... We too need to make our voices heard.”

A hopeful sign is that tourism in Israel is on the increase, up 24 percent over a year ago.

A group named *Musalaha* (Reconciliation) recently took 35 Palestinian and Israeli young adults into Jordan for five days to meet Christians there. For many, it was their first time meeting believers from the “other side.” Some found it

Denver, Col.

Canadian, USA mission leaders pursue common purpose

Nearly three years into a partnership between Mennonite Church Canada and USA mission structures, those charged with oversight continue to find unity in purpose and ministry.

The Christian Witness Council of MC Canada and the Mennonite Mission Network of MC USA conducted concurrent meetings here October 23-25. In their times together, they reviewed their partnership, the ministries they share and the challenges facing them.

"I'm so happy for the strength and vision I see here," said Witness member Ernest Epp of Saskatoon, noting in particular his admiration for the way U.S. Mennonites have spoken against the war in Iraq.

"I was very pleased...to see how, in a very quiet way, both groups are working together," said Bill Hochstetler of Iowa City, attending his first Mission Network board meeting.

The leaders, who meet annually, reviewed a covenant and operating

agreement between the two organizations. They heard reports on international ministries, many of which are shared.

The mission leaders also exchanged counsel on the changing shape of Mennonite mission in light of the new Global Mission Fellowship formed in August at Mennonite World Conference.

"If we take this seriously, it can have a very significant impact in how we envision doing things," said Janet Plenert, Witness director for international ministries and North American representative to the new Fellowship.

"It may mean that we need to cut some strings attached to the work we're doing.... It means we won't have the opportunity to lay down all the rules as we often have done. It will shape our understanding of accountability and expectations for accountability."

Stanley Green, executive director of Mennonite Mission Network, said that "for the first time in the history of mission, we will have true partners with the ability to contribute" from every continent. "Our congregations will increasingly be called on to bring resources—whether people resources or financial resources—that will be partnered with resources in the South.

This will mean we will have multicultural mission teams that come from the global South and North America," he said. "Ultimately, together, we will all be enriched by this engagement."

The group was also enriched by a presentation on the missional church movement by Green and Jack Suderman of MC Canada Witness.

Being missional, Green said, "is not about who the church sends out, but the church itself as a sent people."

Suderman noted that the missional church framework has been at the heart of MC Canada since Abbotsford 2001 assembly.

"Many voices have suggested that it would have been more difficult to achieve the organizational changes of the last 10 years had it not been that the proposed structural changes were closely linked to a sense of renewed vision for the church," he said.

Suderman and Green emphasized that the missional journey did not mean that congregations and area conferences did more activities but their view of the world shifted. The era of Christendom, which gave the church a position of privilege, is over.

"Either our church will embrace its missional role in this non-Christendom context with renewed identity, energy and purpose, or it will become increasingly irrelevant in the life of our people and society," Suderman said.—**Tom Price**

difficult, reported Salim Munayer, director.

Entering Jordan was difficult, with Israelis and Palestinians having to cross the border at different places. The group toured, talked and worshipped with their Jordanian counterparts, ending with communion and assurance that they would continue to receive each other favourably.

One participant reported: "A Palestinian from Bethlehem served time in an Israeli prison during the first *intifadah*. An Israeli reservist did his military service as a jailer in that same prison and still serves there on his reserve duty...; now these two sit together in the desert, to hug and commit to pray for one another."

Musalaha and Youth for Christ have invited youth workers from Northern Ireland to come and share their experiences of working with youth in violent situations.



Solah and her daughters have found a home in Canada, thanks to Mennonite Central Committee B.C.'s Refugee and Newcomers Assistance Program. The program, which assists refugees with sponsorship, family reunification, settlement and integration into Canadian society, was recently awarded the Mosaic Human Rights Award.—MCC B.C. release

Winnipeg, Man.

Plenert appointed to global mission group

Janet Plenert, executive director of International Ministries for Mennonite Church Canada, has been elected to represent North America on the planning committee for Global Mission Fellowship.

The formation of the Global Mission Fellowship signals a new era in the way mission partners relate to one other, signaling the strong desires of organized churches on five continents to view mission as going to and coming from all places.

The planning committee is charged with implementing the actions of the mission fellowship. Mennonite World Conference appointed Peter Rempel, currently part-time Africa and Europe mission partnership facilitator for MC Canada, as part-time staff person.

Global Mission Fellowship began at this year's Mennonite World Confer-



Members of the Global Mission Fellowship planning committee are (front row, from left): Javier Soler from Honduras (representing Central and South America); Fikru Zeleke from Ethiopia (representing Africa); Emmanuel Minj from India (representing Asia); and Janet Plenert of Canada (representing North America). Missing are Johannes Reimer, representing Europe, and Eddy Sutjipto of Indonesia, representing Mennonite World Conference.

ence in Zimbabwe. The idea for the fellowship grew out of the Global Anabaptist Mission Consultation held in 2000 and sponsored by the Council

of International Anabaptist Ministries and Mennonite World Conference.—
From release

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**Mennonite
Central
Committee**

Winnipeg, Man.

Finding common ground in British Columbia

Executive leaders from Mennonite Church British Columbia and MC Canada met at Sherbrooke Mennonite Church in Vancouver on October 24 to find common ground amid ongoing tensions.

This meeting followed four regional “listening meetings” hosted by MC B.C. Those meetings were attended by Henry Krause, moderator of MC Canada, and Dan Nighswander, general secretary. The listening meetings identified both concerns with and appreciation for the national body.

“It was evident that there are a variety of perspectives,” said MC B.C. moderator Doug Epp. Among congregations who have difficulty with MC Canada, some shared a desire to withdraw from membership while others spoke of wanting to work from within to bring about change. On the other side of the spectrum, congregations expressed a strong appreciation for their connection with the national body.

The executive meeting started with a frank discussion about the stresses that current discussions are evoking, and about the hopes leaders have for positive outcomes. The conversation included reports on the listening

meetings and thinking together about actions that could be taken to address the concerns raised.

Many of the concerns are linked with

Participants indicated they had ‘different expectations of the leadership style’....
Some congregations call into question the congregationally-based authority structure of Mennonite churches.

the wider church’s discussions on homosexuality. Specific concerns include the extended dialogue about same-sex relationships without apparent boundaries, the impression of excessive discussion of these issues in *Canadian Mennonite*, the prominent presence of BMC (Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Interests) at the MC Canada assembly in St. Catharines,

and the perceived weak response from MC Canada leadership to congregations that diverge from denominational statements on sexuality.

“Participants at the Listening Meetings also indicated they had different expectations of leadership style and ethos,” said Nighswander. Some congregations do not understand, or call into question, the congregationally-based authority structure of Mennonite churches.

“There are also pressures of cultural change and the influences of how other churches are dealing with these issues that intensify the concerns expressed,” he added.

A special conference session for MC B.C. has been called for November 29. Documents from the area conference, statements from some B.C. congregations, and a report on MC Canada’s response will be distributed to churches in advance of that meeting. Actions that will potentially affect the church across Canada will be reported and tested in churches across the country or at delegate assemblies.

The executive members concluded their discussion with a time of prayer, soliciting God’s guidance and wisdom for each other as they continue to seek a faithful and common path.—MC Canada and B.C. joint release

Young adults challenge B.C. churches

Young adults across Mennonite Church Canada are urging churches in British Columbia not to leave the conference over differences.

In a November 5 letter addressed to Doug Epp, B.C. moderator, young adults expressed their concern “about the direction that churches within Mennonite Church B.C. are headed. We understand that a number of congregations wish to withdraw from the national body as a result of the ongoing discussions on homosexuality and same-sex marriage.

“We are concerned because we do not feel that this is conducive to dialogue and church relations and also because these decisions appear to be rushed. If we as a church body are not able to have dialogue and to discern God’s will for us, then we will have lost what it means to be a community of believers.”

The letter was signed by 165 young adults from congregations in 6 provinces.

“We recognize church splits are a part of our history as Mennonites but we feel that it is not the best way to deal with conflict in the church. Church schisms harm relationships and prevent us from having honest, open discussion. Relationships can only work if we are willing to put in the necessary energy to listen to each other.”

Rifts in the church can “unfairly affect children and youth,” says the letter. But, most of all, “we feel that such a split does not represent what it means to follow Jesus’ example of reconciling love and is not consistent with our mission to be communities of healing and hope.”

The church is always asking for young adult input, concludes the letter, so “as young adults from across the country, we are asking the congregations of MC B.C. to listen to our concerns and to reconsider their positions.”

Correction

In the November 3 story on B.C. listening meetings (page 12), it was mistakenly reported that Vernon Mennonite Church intends to withdraw from Mennonite Church Canada in spring of 2004. Vernon church has not made such an indication. We apologize for any misunderstanding this may have caused.



Kitchener, Ont.

Fundraiser celebrates Mennonite homes

About 1,000 people gathered at Bingeman Park on October 27 to celebrate 100 years of service by two seniors' homes—60 by Fairview Mennonite Home and 40 by Parkwood Mennonite Home, which Fairview acquired in 1994.

The atmosphere at the fundraising dinner was one of excitement about what has been accomplished and joy in being part of a new building for Parkwood, currently under construction.

A total of \$130,000 was raised for the Parkwood building fund. The proceeds from the dinner totaled \$100,000. A silent auction, which included many one-of-a-kind art objects, raised almost \$8,000. Expenses for the evening were covered by donations, and program participants also donated their talents.

Gloria Dirks, Parkwood administrator, was “overwhelmed with the support and enthusiastic response” to the ticket sales.

Clint Jantzi held the crowd's attention with his witty auctioneering of “Trip around the world,” a queen-sized quilt made of 20 different cotton fabrics. It was quilted by 12 women at Fairview, with some assistance from women at Preston Mennonite Church. Over 80 hours of stitching went into the project.

Although bidding for the quilt began at \$300, Jantzi took it to a quick-paced final bid of \$1,800.

Paul Frey, internationally acclaimed opera and oratorio singer, delighted the audience with popular classics and gospel songs. A band assembled by Darrel Martin provided accompaniment. Frey dedicated his performance to the memory of his parents, John and Lucinda Frey, who volunteered at Fairview Mennonite Home.

Jeff Timmermans, 74, gave an illustrated narrative of his Miles for Memories bicycle journey across Canada two years ago. Never having bicycled a great distance, Timmermans cycled across Canada in four months to raise awareness of and research funds for Alzheimers.

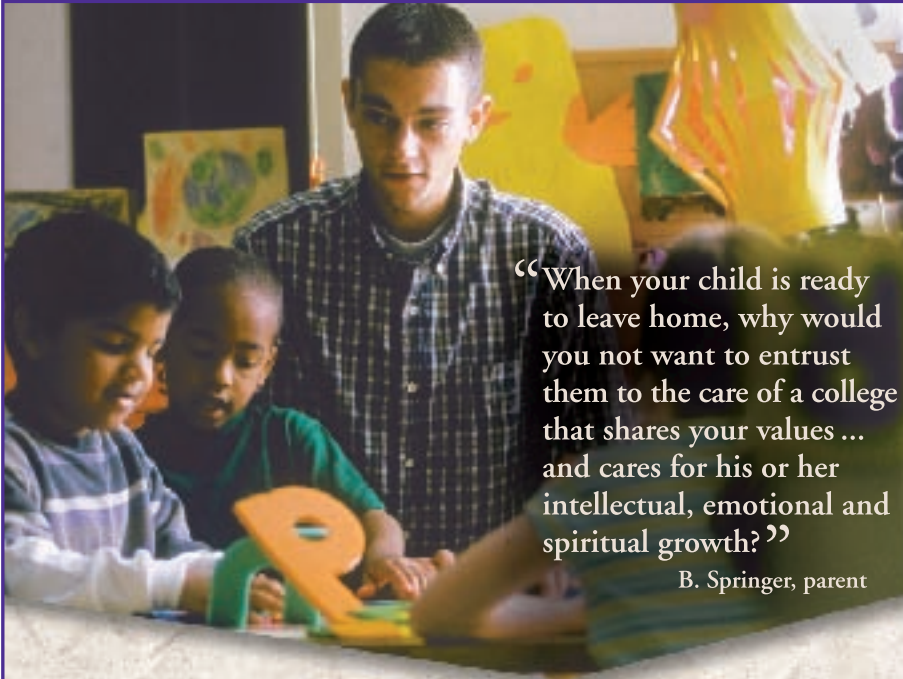
Planning for this celebration began in October 2002. Carol Shantz, com-

mittee chair, remarked that their “dream was to plan a dinner that would be both a celebration of 100 years of service and a fundraiser to build for the next 100 years.... We were blessed with a generous response and the evening surpassed our expectations.”

The new Parkwood Home that is under construction is on an eight-acre

site across from RIM Park in Waterloo. The facility will have 96 long-term beds, assisted living suites, independent living apartments and suites, garden homes and other amenities.

An additional \$1.7 million will be required to complete stage two of the community centre component of the project.—**Bertha Landers**



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Our multi-cultural church

World assembly an unforgettable experience

The Mennonite World Conference

assembly in Zimbabwe was my first world conference. I attended in my capacity as director of Multi-cultural Ministry for Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

It was an unforgettable experience, both unique and invaluable. What was

especially significant was that it afforded me a golden opportunity to meet so many brothers and sisters from various cultures and ethnic groups.

The theme of the conference was "Sharing gifts in suffering and joy." I was able to share with local people as well as delegates from all over the world. Almost

everyone I spoke with asked me questions about our multi-cultural ministry.

Many expressed thankfulness for this new area of ministry, and recognized Mennonite World Conference as a unique opportunity to bring people of diverse nations together. I found the conference an ideal setting for promoting multi-cultural ministry.

I talked with brothers and sisters from India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and China. For the majority of them, it was their first time to the MWC assembly and to southern Africa. All were excited by the new experience for cultural exchange.

In sharing with each other we came to identify with Mennonites worldwide in a much deeper and more meaningful sense.

Given the thousands attending this

conference, it was not easy to find people. You saw someone briefly and then it was almost impossible to find him again. On the other hand, you met people you did not expect to meet.

I had two interesting encounters. Tim Froese, Witness worker in the Anabaptist Centre in South Korea, e-mailed me just before he left. I said I hoped we could find one other at the assembly and have a chat.

On the first day, we did manage to run into each other. He told me about his work at the centre and introduced me to Kyong-Jung Kim, with whom he works. (He studied at Canadian Mennonite Bible College some years ago.) We had good fellowship together and they shared their concerns about the Korean ministry in Korea and Canada.

I also met Jeremiah Choi, a minister from Hong Kong. He led the congregation in singing "God is so good" in Cantonese at the worship on Asia Day. We talked about the fact that we were the only two Cantonese-speaking people at the conference. We shared ideas about conducting short-term cultural exchanges between Hong Kong and Canada.

The conference was such a valuable experience that I can hardly find words to describe what a great time I had with brothers and sisters from nations all over the world. I will always remember the speakers from diverse cultures and nations sharing about their needs and visions.

It was also a great opportunity for networking, especially for staff. I met many people with whom I hope to maintain contact. I see endless opportunities for consultation and exchange. I feel privileged to have been able to attend. I came away both challenged and humbled, and filled with appreciation that I am part of this big family!

—Samson Lo

The writer is director of Multi-cultural Ministry for Mennonite Church Canada.



Samson Lo (Canada), Peter Yuan (China) and Jeremiah Choi (Hong Kong) meet in front of the Asia exhibition at Mennonite World Conference assembly in Zimbabwe .

This supplement was prepared by Samson Lo of Vancouver, director of Multi-cultural Ministry for Mennonite Church Canada. For the previous supplement on multi-cultural churches, see the June 16, 2003 issue.

God did not give up on me

In May 1983, a Canadian immigration officer interviewed me in Vietnam. As my marriage was registered after my sister had already started my sponsorship application, the papers for my wife had not reached the immigration office. When the officer asked me if I was willing to wait for my wife's papers so that we could set out for Canada together, I replied without hesitation, "I'm willing!"

The wait took over 3,600 days! As a result, many people behind me in line left for free countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia way ahead of me.

I knew Joseph's story in the Old Testament. The chief cupbearer forgot about Joseph and he was left in jail for over two years. God in his wisdom arranged for Joseph to have an audience with Pharaoh to interpret his dream. Joseph was elevated to govern the whole of Egypt. (He was only 30 at the time.) I believed that God always plans for the best, but I did not understand why God would allow me to be held up in Vietnam for another 10 years. By the time I arrived in North America I was close to 37 years of age. How high could I reach, how far could I go after I finally got acclimatized to life in North America?

My oldest brother pastors a church in Taiwan. Each time he came to Canada to visit my parents, he would encourage me to study theology. Even though I had dedicated myself to God when I was 18 and had been trained as a preacher for the Chinese church in Vietnam, I had always wanted to serve God in the music ministry. For that reason I rejected my brother's suggestion.

I dedicated myself to God yet I still wanted to decide my own path. In my first two years in Canada, God called me four times, either to pastor an existing church or pioneer in different cities. Every time I used as an excuse my having to take care of my aging parents.

The Lord did not give up on me. In 1995, my brother again came to Winnipeg to visit our parents. He suggested that since I wanted so much to serve God in the music ministry, I might as well enrol in some sacred music courses.

That fall, I began taking music courses at Canadian Mennonite Bible College while working full-time in my brother-in-

law's restaurant. I met two Vietnamese schoolmates who were pastors of the Winnipeg Vietnamese Mennonite Church. When they learned that I had ministry experience, they invited me to preach in Vietnamese at their church. I began preaching in that church on a fairly regular basis.

A year later, when the senior pastor made plans to get married and move to the United States, God called me again



Luc Tran, right, with fellow Asian Mennonite leaders. From left: Onong Prasong, Kuaying Teng, Dan Proovong, Samson Lo.

through the vote of church members. The deacon's board sent me an invitation. This time I could no longer use the "taking care of my aging parents" excuse because I would not be required to move.

After several weeks of prayer, I obediently stepped onto the path that God had prepared for me long ago. On May 1, 1995 I became senior pastor of the Winnipeg Vietnamese Mennonite Church.

I quit the job at the restaurant and enrolled in theology courses. Two years later the senior pastor of the Chinese Mennonite Brethren Church in which I had worshipped resigned. God called me again. In May 1999, I began working part-time at the Chinese church as well. God wanted me make up for what I should have done by making me pastor double time. Because of this I have come to a profound understanding of

why God allowed me to be held up for 10 years in Vietnam, with no religious freedom, a shortage of materials and a lack of stability in my life. God trained and prepared me for my ministry today!

In May 2002, unworthy though I was (I had not even received my diploma in theology), I was ordained by the laying on of hands by many ministers and deacons. I could not but think of God's words: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are

my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

After all of these experiences, I recognize God's hand in my life. Two hymns keep echoing in my head:

"God's way is the best way, / Though I may not see / Why sorrows and trials / Oft gather 'round me; / He ever is seeking / My gold to refine, / So humbly I trust him, / My Saviour divine..."

The other hymn: "The path that I have trod, / Has brought me nearer God, / Though oft it led through sorrow's gates. / Though not the way I'd choose, / In my way I might lose / The joy that yet for me awaits. / Not what I wish to be, / Nor where I wish to go, / For who am I that I should choose my way? / The Lord shall choose for me, / 'Tis better far, I know, / So let him bid me go, or stay."

—**Luc Tran**

Chinese congregation marks 13 years

The following is from a conversation with Gordon Yiu and Newton Phoon, lay leaders of Markham Chinese Mennonite Church in Ontario.

The Markham Chinese church just celebrated its 13th anniversary. We invited David Brubacher, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada minister to conference, to share a message with us.

A display board highlighted our history and the changes that have occurred. Brothers and sisters shared their

cultural leadership training program. The course opened participants' eyes to appreciate the profound history of Anabaptists. Not only did the course strengthen their faith in Christ, it also provided an opportunity to fellowship with brothers and sisters from other ethnic churches in the region, among them Korean, Laotian and Hmong.

In fact, right after this course, the church began a Sunday school class with materials based on the same topic. Our members have found the material really interesting and enlightening.

It is unfortunate that the first part of the multi-cultural leadership training—"Church and ministry"—happened on September 20, the same day that MCC Ontario held its annual relief sale. Many of the lay leaders who had completed "Anabaptist history and thought" were involved in the MCC event, and so we divided our group in two: half participated in the relief sale and the others attended the training in Hamilton. We tackled a challenging question: What is a church? If an alien came to Earth from Mars and asked you to show him or her a church, what would you answer? We learned that there are 96 descrip-

tions in the Bible about what a church is. We also learned that, according to the Bible, every believer is a minister—also an Anabaptist concept.

The materials were an eye-opener. Although only two of us from Markham Chinese church were able to attend, we look forward to sharing what we learned with the rest of the congregation.

Highlights from our summer ministries include Vacation Bible School, in partnership with Hagerman Mennonite Church. The teenagers and kids enjoyed various activities: worship, drama, singspiration and snacks. It is our hope that they will develop a sense of belonging and make our church their home. They look forward to Bible school next summer.

Because of the electrical blackout in August, we had to cancel our summer camp that was to be held at Jackson Point on Lake Simcoe. The committee instead decided to organize an outreach evening at the end of August, to invite newcomers and friends to a gospel program. We had dinner, games, singspiration and a message from our pastor.



Cutting the anniversary cake at Markham Chinese Mennonite is David Brubacher of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada. At left is Winfred Soong, pastor of the church. At right is Gordon Yiu, chair of the congregation.

thanksgiving and thoughts on some "smile face" paper. Of course, we had a love feast together after the celebration.

Our congregation will become a full member of MC Eastern Canada on October 25 at Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church, our mother congregation. [This church hosted the MC Eastern Canada delegate session.] We will share how God has led our congregation toward this decision, and what we envision for the future.

In February and in June of this year, six members from our congregation participated in the course, "Anabaptist history and thought." It is part of the multi-



Markham Chinese church members share a love feast together.

Leadership training continues in Ontario and Manitoba

In June, over 50 people from various Asian groups within Mennonite Church Eastern Canada met in Kitchener for a final session on unit three of the Multi-cultural Leadership Training program. Unit three focuses on "Anabaptist history and thought."

Leaders decided to begin with this topic since multi-cultural groups are relatively new to the Mennonite church and wish to learn more about the history and theology of this tradition. Students from Laotian, Hmong, Chinese and Korean groups had met in January for an opening plenary session. In the months that followed, they studied in their own church settings, led by their pastor or other leader.

Participants asked good questions: "What are the similarities and differences, strengths and weaknesses, in comparing Mennonites with other denominations? Is this diverse development among denominations good for the church? Why do peacemaking efforts by Mennonites seem to be ineffective in influencing government policy about war?"

In his presentation, instructor Maurice

Martin invited the group to examine Anabaptism's strengths and weaknesses.

In September, the program moved to Winnipeg, where over 30 people participated in the first plenary session studying unit one, "Church and ministry." Participants wanted to study the nature of the church and how to lead it effectively and faithfully. People from Hispanic, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean and Laotian groups were joined by a number of aboriginal leaders who had been unable to attend the first session.

Martin helped the group understand the New Testament images of the church, and invited them to allow the richness of those images to shape their understanding of the life and work of the church.

The second half covered the roles of a pastor: as prophet, priest and people-leader. The study invited participants to reflect on pastor as person, and their own leadership roles.

It is anticipated that the training program will assist lay leaders and pastors to build their congregations together.

The study material is based on the Pastoral Studies Distance Education

program of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, with five units.

Unit one is being offered in Ontario this fall. In winter, the third unit will be offered in Winnipeg, while unit two, "The biblical story" taught by Daniel Hertzler, begins in Ontario. It is anticipated that all five units will be covered within several years.

The multicultural leadership training program is a partnership with Mennonite Church Canada, the seminary and the area conference. Although instruction is in English, discussion is in the first language of the various groups.

Within MC Eastern Canada, 22 Hispanic members from First Mennonite (Kitchener) and New Life Centre (Toronto) are meeting for instruction, using a Spanish curriculum. The first course, a Bible study, is being taught by Rebecca Yoder Neufeld and Noe Gonzalia. Four further courses are projected to run parallel to the courses offered to the Asian groups.

Other cultural groups interested in the training should contact Samson Lo, director of Multi-cultural Ministry for Mennonite Church Canada, e-mail: slo@mennonitechurch.ca.

—Maurice Martin



Members of Vancouver Grace Chinese Mennonite Church had a Fun Night Party on October 31.

Pasadena, Cal.

Young adults consider church's dance with diversity

Dance steps, dance partners, living in the tension of the dance. Was this a Mennonite conference on dancing?

On September 26-28, 35 young adults from throughout North America gathered at William Carey International University in Pasadena, California for a retreat on the theme, "Take my hand: Stories of diversity and hospitality." The annual retreat, which moves around North America, is planned by the Young Adult Fellowship (YAF), a partnership between Mennonite Church USA and Canada.

Yes, the central image of the weekend was dancing. Speaker Jeff Wright, conference minister and director of the Centre for Anabaptist Leadership, explored the elements of dance. "How can the church dance within diversity?" he asked. The setting of the conference—the Los Angeles area and the Pacific Southwest Conference, is a living example, he said, of the Mennonite Church dancing within great diversity.

Every good dance, participants learned, gets its creative energy from the tension between partners. Wright named some of the tensions: the challenge of race and racism, the growing gap between rich and poor, the militarization of our culture, the environmental crisis, gender and sexuality, the urban-rural split, and diversity in theology and worship.

How does the church work creatively within all of this?

There are two key dance steps, said Wright. The first is to "embrace your core values," speaking to diversity out of an identity in Christ. For the conference he works in, the three core values are a relationship with Jesus and a Jesus-centred discipleship, Christian community, and nonviolent peacemaking. That is what it means to be Mennonite.

How these are expressed in worship and church life may be all over the map and embrace a diversity of

cultures. It is the core that defines faith, not the boundaries.

The second dance step, said Wright, is to articulate a theology of power. This theology is not about giving up power (impossible) or using power to help others (patronizing), but about empowering—allowing others to do for themselves what God is calling them to do.

The dance partners include the church (the visible sign of Christ), the world, (especially people on the margins), and the living hope of the Holy Spirit that gives life to the dance. Wright ended with a challenge: "Don't be afraid to dance, even if you end up

stepping on some toes."

The weekend included a farewell for Ken Hawley, who has been involved in young adult ministry in North America for over 15 years. Hawley resigned recently from his position as Minister of Discipling with Mennonite Church USA.

"I am leaving a job, but not a vocation," he said. Hawley was presented with a signed First Nations print from Saskatchewan.

—**Mark Diller Harder**

The writer is Minister of Student and Young Adult Ministries for Mennonite Church Eastern Canada.

Abbotsford, B.C.

Toews traces the 'chronology of disaster' in Russia

At the annual banquet of the Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. on October 18, speaker John B. Toews reminded his audience how difficult it had been for their forebears to emigrate from Russia in the 1920s.

If it had not been for the tenacity of leaders like B.B. Janz, we might have been among those who saw fathers exiled or killed, or who perished in Stalin's gulag. Or we might have been humiliated and discriminated against and hated for our "German" roots."

Although most of us thought we knew this story, Toews added so many details that illustrated the tenacity of our leaders that we came away from the evening with a new appreciation for having escaped "by the skin of our teeth."

Toews reiterated the chronology of disaster from the "Golden Age" in 1914 to the revolution, civil war, Mahkno massacres, the forced collection of grain and produce, famine and death in the 1920s.

Toews told of a typical village where in 1914 there were 400 cows, 200 hogs, 600 horses and 4,000 acres seeded. By 1920, there were only 137 cows, 20 hogs, 60 horses, and 1,000 acres seeded. Help arrived when Mennonite Central Committee began in 1920, and food

began to arrive in the colonies.

Leaders such as Peter F. Froese, C.F. Klassen and B.B. Janz began to work with the emerging communist government to "let my people go." Although leaders drew up lists of 20,000 hopeful émigrés, there were setbacks: repeals, terrifying waits, medical inspections, a devalued currency, a war-ravaged transportation system and uncertainty on the part of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the host country.

Apparently the prayers of many, and the courage and stubbornness of Janz as chief negotiator, opened the way to Canada.

A highlight of the evening was hearing Mary Neumann, Janz's daughter, relate her memories of that chaotic time, especially of having an absent father and a courageous mother caring for children near starvation.

Peter Froese and friends from Yarrow served a superb meal. Wilmer Neufeld led the group in singing, with Mary Geddert at the piano. Jean Neufeld posted photographs and displays from that period.

The event was popular—all 360 seats were sold out two weeks in advance, and 60 extra chairs were set up for those who came only for the lecture.

—**Helen Rose Pauls**

Vancouver, B.C.

Sherbrooke anniversary evokes fond memories

My grandmother went to Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, as did my parents, so my memories of our church go back to early childhood.

I always look forward to Thanksgiving: the smell of wood burning, the rusty orange of the fallen leaves and the height of autumn's bloom. It is a time to give thanks to God.

This year's Thanksgiving Sunday was unlike any I remember. Our church family has had many blessings throughout the years, and this year we celebrated Sherbrooke's 35th anniversary. We shared the day with fellow church members, including a number of Korean families who attend regularly, with the Vietnamese congregation that also meets in our building, and friends from the community.

The church parking lot vanished beneath an enormous white tent set up there. As I climbed the steps to the wooden doors of the church, I could hear the music inside. The smell of a slow-cooking feast meandered up the stairwell. A crowd of friendly faces greeted my family as we searched for a bench.

Our Sunday worship always includes "caring and sharing," when we voice our fears, thanks and sometimes grief. The anniversary service was devoted to just that. We praised God for mercy and never-fading love. We listened with smiles and tears as people offered personal testimonies.

A variety of speakers shared their reasons for having joined this congregation. Some gave thanks for the perfect size of our church family, and the way that everyone notices when someone is absent.

The Vietnamese congregation presented a gift, along with words of encouragement. Some shared memories from distant years. There were stories of complete strangers stumbling into Sherbrooke and finding a new family that accepted them. Heartfelt thanks were expressed by people we had grieved with, prayed for and supported in times of struggle.

One church member recalled how she felt walking down the aisle on her

wedding day, following the steps her parents had taken. The feeling of being bound by a common thread reminded me of God's open arms.

But things change over time. Sherbrooke has become an extended family, a haven in an increasingly busy world.

That sense of acceptance and peace lingered as we gathered in the basement and in the tent outdoors for visiting and good home cooking. Along with known Mennonite specialties

were authentic Korean and Vietnamese dishes. The potluck was a diverse gathering from different cultures and traditions.

The Bible verse placed inside each invitation reflected the spirit of this memorable day. Galatians 6:2 reads: "Carry each others' burdens, and in this way fulfill the law of Christ." As a church we are striving to do just that. Happy 35th anniversary, Sherbrooke!—**Ruthy Peters**

Historical society goes to LaCrete

The fall workshop of the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta was like no other—business was at a minimum.

On September 26 at 7:00 a.m., 38 people climbed into a tour bus in Calgary and made themselves comfortable for the 14-hour journey to LaCrete.

LaCrete, "the crest," was named by the early French settlers who thought the rise in the land looked like a rooster's comb. We passed grain fields yet to be harvested; as we drove north, aspen trees in gold and russet, accented by evergreens, glowed in the sunshine.

Dick Neufeld pointed out places of interest, one being the geographical centre of Alberta. Neufeld told of his teaching days in LaCrete in the 1950s.

Harold Friesen was able to connect most of us genealogically to at least one other person on the bus. Several others talked about their experiences.

It was dark when we arrived at the Tompkins ferry and crossed the Peace River. And what a welcome in LaCrete! We were whisked away by our hosts.

We ate breakfast the next morning at the Pioneer museum just outside town. Helen Brown welcomed us and shared plans for the day. We heard stories of the first Mennonite arrivals in the area in 1937.

Ben Peters, one of the first settlers, related stories of living in meagre shelters, clearing and levelling land for farming. Then a power point presentation featured the development of up-to-



Dick Neufeld, a former teacher at LaCrete, and Ben Peters, one of the first settlers, talk at the fall workshop of the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta.

Waterloo, Ont.

Ron Rempel is roasted royally

Ron Rempel's 24 years at *Mennonite Reporter* and *Canadian Mennonite* were celebrated in a roast of songs, stories and humour at Elmira Mennonite Church on October 18.

The master of ceremonies was an off-the-wall Ivan Emke, who wrote a humour column in *Mennonite Reporter* from 1987 through 1995. Emke teaches social and cultural studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Emke said that the evening pro-

vided him with a forum for all the jokes that Rempel had edited out of his columns over the years. He offered a rich repertoire of quips that kept guests laughing—not least, endless jokes about jello and Mennonite potlucks.

Did you hear about the church that had four new members? One was by baptism and three by confusion of faith. Then there was the MCC sewing circle that had a needle exchange. And a couple of Mennonite pick-up lines: "Do you have a match? I have to light the Advent candle," and "You look familiar—are we related?" And so on.

The evening also featured bluegrass gospel music by Five on the Floor—Bob Janzen, Jim Reimer, Ron Harder and Henry Schmidt.

Margaret Loewen Reimer, current editor, noted that when Rempel came to the *Mennonite Reporter* in 1979, she had already been at the paper six years. She said she wondered what a pastor could possibly know about journalism.

Yet theirs was a sturdy partnership that lasted for 24 years, Rempel attending to the management and public face of things, she taking care of editing and production of the magazine.

Maurice Martin, one of several roasters, dubbed Rempel the Peter Mansbridge of the Mennonite world: ever made to look good by a female colleague.

Emke presided over a zany slideshow that purported to document Rempel's career as a photojournalist. Among the slides: MCC's portable jello canner, a mobile church-planting unit,

and a literal pulpit exchange.

By common consent, Rempel was a difficult candidate to roast. He is not compulsive; he always thinks before he speaks. His striking head of hair was referred to often. The only faintly damning thing that anyone could come up with was that he isn't much of a golfer.

His strengths made for a long list: he knows how to balance a budget; he can be persuasive, conciliatory and stubborn all at the same time; his capacity for enormous amounts of work; his affinity for technology.

Larry Cornies, editor of the *London Free Press*, presented Rempel with a number of receipts for unusual expenses he claimed over the years, one being for "aqua sandals" to walk on water.

Henry Neufeld, chair of Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service, presented Rempel and his wife Kaye with a wall clock.

To end the evening, Rempel spoke of polarizing letters received over the years, yet also of the fact that many generous people refused to be defined by those polarities. His readers' grace and humour helped him remain hopeful.

"Cynicism is not an option," he said.—**Betti Erb**



Ron Rempel, left, shares a joke with Ivan Emke at the farewell dinner.

Edmonton, Alta.

Celebration features Ugandan guests

Guests from Uganda were the highlight of the annual celebration of Community Justice Ministries here on October 30. The evening honoured volunteers of M2W2, a prison visitation ministry.

In Edmonton, volunteers visit inmates in the Edmonton Institution for Women and the Edmonton Institution. Other Alberta programs are Life Line Alberta, Bridge Ministries, Circles of Support and Accountability, and Community Engagement and Reintegration.

The three Ugandan guests were welcomed by Global Hand Drummers, a group whose members come from Uganda, Cameroon, Nigeria and Edmonton. The group provided energetic singing and drumming during the evening.

Gladys Oyat, head of a girls' school in Kitgum and advisor to Mennonite Central Committee Uganda, spoke of the civil war that continues in the northern part of Uganda since independence in 1986.

Rebels are abducting young children, exposing them to starvation and forcing them to kill other children, she said. People are so afraid they live in camps. Oyat said the schools became places of refuge as well. The church, she said, is providing hope in the midst of poverty and violence and fear.

She expressed appreciation to MCC for providing food and blankets, and facilitating workshops.

Rachel Nantongo said that in 1992 she knew she wanted to do something special for God. She felt called to visit prisoners, in time establishing an organization to help rehabilitate prisoners, and assist their families. The programs focus on education and generating income.

Evarest Bizimungu told his story of being imprisoned in 1992 when he was charged with killing someone. Although he knew he was innocent and was confident God would help him, he remained in miserable conditions in prison for three years while the charge was investigated.

When he was finally released and



Photo by Lorne Buhr

Gladys Oyat, Rachel Nantongo and Evarest Bizimungu pose with board members of Community Justice Ministries at the recent celebration.

returned home, he found everything gone except for one chair. He said those who arrest you take your property because they also are poor. Yet he expressed gratitude to God, and to MCC which paid his daughter's school fees. He said his life had gone from prison to praise.

Volunteers received mugs in recognition of their work. Ken From, director, reminded the audience that

Community Justice Ministries is a vital voice for reconciliation and grace, and stands against the dehumanization of people. Public money is not adequate to keep the volunteer program going, so financial help from offerings is necessary.

The evening concluded with singing by Bizimungu and Nantongo, accompanied by the drummers.—From report by **Linda Neufeld Buhr**



The House of Doc entertains at the Eden banquets in Manitoba.

Waldheim, Sask.

Women's retreat focuses on gifts

The Saskatchewan Women in Mission retreat was held at Shekinah Retreat Centre's Timber Lodge on October 17-18. The theme of the weekend was "Gifts and blessings."

Marie Peters Stewart chaired the opening evening and presented a devotional. A women's trio from Rosthern—Esther Funk, Arlene Heppner and Helen Thiessen, with Pat Hildebrandt at the piano—presented a beautiful concert, accompanied by piano or tape. The music was interspersed with scripture and stories.

Saturday was a beautiful fall day. Speaker Colleen Friesen shared her experiences in life, illustrating them with pictures of scenery and selections of music. She organized her stories around Lamentations 3:22-24: "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for God's compassion never fails. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness...."

Friesen's second presentation included passages from the Psalms. In her final presentation after lunch, she asked us to remember three things: be alert for God's call; turn to the Bible and the congregation to get answers

that we need; and recognize the gifts and blessings God gives. She read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 that speaks of the various gifts in the body of Christ, and that all need to work together to build up the church.

Everyone is called to discover his or her gifts, she said. God has given you a gift to help you through hard times. Her parting challenge was to look deep within us for our gifts, and then share them with the congregation.

We divided into groups and discussed our gifts. Marianne Harder thanked Friesen and presented her with a bouquet of flowers. Tina Williams closed the session by reading "My greatest hope," a reading that says that times of trouble can become a blessing. Williams encouraged younger women to attend the retreat.

After *faspa* (lunch), everyone left for home with much to think about.

—From report by **Katherine Hooge** and **Irma Neudorf**

Leamington, Ont.

Women explore family issues

The Women of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada held their fall workshop at the North Leamington United Mennonite Church on October 18. Approximately 120 women attended the event.

Three workshops were offered from

which participants could choose two. Monica Schartner Hanson of Leamington spoke about balancing on the fine line between family and career. Formerly a counsellor with Shalom Counselling, she now has her own practice.

Barbara Martens, a massage therapist, reflected on her her time in Palestine



Monica Schartner Hanson (left), Barbara Martens and Linda Tiessen led workshops at the women's meeting in Leamington.

as a member of Christian Peacemaker Teams. Her topic was, "Walking with and getting in the way."

Linda Tiessen, administrator of the Leamington United Mennonite Home, led a workshop on elder care. Among the things she shared was the following poem by an unknown author:

Age is a quality of mind,
If you have left your dreams behind,
If hope is cold,
If you no longer look ahead,
If your ambitions' fires are dead—
Then you are old.
But if from life you take the best,
And if in life you keep the jest,
If love you hold:
No matter how the years go by,
No matter how the birthdays fly—
You are not old.

—From report by **Wilma Good**

Winnipeg, Man.

Eden banquets celebrate value of community

The Eden Foundation fundraising banquets in October featured a father and daughter presentation, along with a family musical group.

"When life hands you a sack of hammers..." was the theme of Lynette Wiebe's presentation at banquets in Altona, Winnipeg and Steinbach. Lynette and her father, David Schroeder, presented personal stories about the value of family, community and church in sustaining people during difficult times.

Schroeder said we are all disabled and able at the same time. He highlighted the opportunity each of us has to exercise our gifts in supporting our families and people in our community during periods of loss. We need to give of

our gifts to those who may not be up to the demands of the day, he said.

Schroeder (Doc Schroeder) is former professor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College. Wiebe works in communications at Mennonite Church Canada.

Overall attendance at the three banquets was 850 people. Guests enjoyed music provided by House of Doc, a talented group of young people from the "Doc Schroeder" family. Their sang both new and traditional music.

Several business sponsors in Winnipeg and southern Manitoba donated generously to the event, along with participants. The proceeds will support the work of Eden Health Care Services in three locations. —From Eden release

Graysville, Man.

Graysville congregation celebrates 50 years

On Thanksgiving weekend, more than 220 people gathered to celebrate 50 years of ministry at Graysville Mennonite Church.

The congregation began after World War I when 12 Mennonite families from Russia settled here. At first they met in homes, then shared a church building with a

United Church congregation. The families became a congregation in 1953, the Graysville Berghaler Church.

The Graysville church is perhaps the only congregation in Manitoba that has moved twice to a new location—while remaining in the same building. The first move happened in 1953 when the congregation purchased and moved a former United Church building to a different location.

In 1960, the congregation was forced to move again when the Department of Highways wanted to re-route Highway 245 to what would have taken it through the front porch of the church. Rather than becoming the first drive-through church in Manitoba, the congregation decided to move the



Music is a big part of the congregation's life. Past and present members perform at the Graysville church celebration.

building 150 feet northeast and make some renovations. More recent additions to the building have provided additional space.

Since its beginnings, six pastors have served. Current pastor is Norm Dyck, with his wife Rose and son Malachi.

The weekend celebration began with a Saturday evening meal followed by a program featuring musical talent. There were numerous opportunities to share memories and food during the weekend.

A highlight was a celebration of the

Lord's Supper. As five of the six pastors together served communion, one longstanding member observed that history was being made. The pastors were a visible reminder of the half century of ministry the congregation has experienced and extended.

Celebrating God's walking among them over the past 50 years gives this small rural congregation encouragement to face the future, knowing that God will continue to be there.—**Bob Pauls**



Norm Dyck, Graysville pastor, addresses the 50th anniversary gathering.

Saskatoon, Sask.

Editor of German paper visits Saskatchewan

Kennert Giesbrecht, editor of *Die Mennonitsche Post* since April, spoke in Saskatchewan recently about his work with the German-language paper. Originally from Paraguay and now based in Winnipeg, he was accompanied by his wife Gredal and son Adrian.

Giesbrecht presented a workshop at the Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan sessions. In addition, he spoke at the Berghaler Church in Warman on November 1, and at Bethany Manor in Saskatoon on November 2.

Leonard Doell, chair of the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan, introduced Giesbrecht at the meeting here. Abram Janzen, a current writer for the *Post*, talked about David Dyck, a ferry operator who wrote for the papers under its former name, *Steinbach*

Post. He would gather stories for the paper as people crossed the river on his ferry. He eventually came to be known as *der Fisher*, as he "fished out" stories.

The paper contains news of Mennonite communities, letters, Bible stories, serials, humour, recipes and obituaries. It also produces a paper for children and youth, called *Der Blatt*, which is used in schools.

MCC began the paper in 1977 as part of its program for Low German Mennonites in Canada, Mexico and South America who wanted a way to keep in touch with relatives. First editor was Abe Warkentin, who decided to put the letters he was receiving into a newsletter. (He remained editor for 12 years.)

Giesbrecht showed slides of some of the beautiful areas of Mexico and South America. He also showed the severe conditions faced by many Mennonites.

There have been few changes to the paper over the years. Recent issues have introduced some colour.—From report by **Vera Falk**

Colorado Springs, Colo.

USA Council explores role of area conference

Expanding the role of area conferences was the focus of the Constituency Leaders Council of Mennonite Church USA here October 17-19. The council, which includes conference ministers and moderators, along with other representatives, gives council to the Executive Board of MC USA.

Some area conference leaders said conference opportunities are increasing at a time when financial resources are decreasing, which makes the need for collaboration more important than ever. Other conference leaders discussed how Mennonite Church USA's priority to become missional, and the push by constituents to localize ministries, are raising the need to restructure their conferences. Still other leaders shared how the merger of the former General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church has produced changes.

"Given the general economy of our country, and shifts in how money is being allocated within our congregations, many of us are feeling a squeeze of heightened expectations but not

heightened income," said Jim Lapp, conference pastor for Franconia Mennonite Conference. "This means that we need to develop greater communication with our constituency about who we are and what we do.

"One thing that helps us is the fact that conferences seem to be losing whatever vestiges of competition there have been in the past and are seeing that we are allies for each other." MC USA has 21 area conferences. The Leaders Council is chaired by Roy Williams, moderator-elect of MC USA.

"Conferences are sandwiched between Mennonite Church USA and congregations, and we are in the process of understanding what that means," said Dorothy Nickel Friesen, conference minister for Western District Conference. "We agree we are all connected. But deciding how we are going to be connected will be our new task."

Table groups also responded to reports by Jim Schrag, executive director of Mennonite Church USA, on the state of the church, and on the Atlanta delegate process and establishing global connections. Other

discussions included the role of assemblies in the life of the church and the vision for education as a ministry of the church.

One concern that emerged from the groups is that youth ministry remain a core priority.

"We need to figure out what is most important," said Shana Peachey Boshart, youth minister for Central Plains, "and then figure out how conference and denomination work together to make it happen."

"It is of utmost importance that we make some headway in understanding the important role of area conferences," said Schrag.—From MC USA report by **Laurie Oswald**

Elkhart, Ind.

Mission agency recreates itself

Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission International (AIMM) will be totally restructured. The decision comes after years of discussion that included African Mennonite and indigenous churches.

AIMM was founded in 1912 as Congo Inland Mission. Currently it is a partnership of six conferences, several of which had planned to withdraw because of financial difficulties. The organization has had difficulty recruiting long-term personnel.

The transformation process will include the following:

- Congregations will partner directly in mission activities and decision-making. Conference mission agencies will be welcome as partners, as in the past.
- AIMM will change from a North American agency to a partnership with churches in Africa.
- Partnership Councils with decision-making responsibility will be set up in each country of mission activity.
- Central administrative staffing and costs will be reduced significantly. Continuing partners are Evangelical Mennonite Conference, Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Mission Network.—AIMM release

Western District reports weakened centre

Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Western District Conference minister, reported to the Constituency Leaders Council by reciting 10 ways the conference initials, WDC, apply to its ministry. One of the points was "weak district centre."

Friesen said she feels the conference has lost its core and identity after the merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church two years ago.

"Whereas there used to be a north-south feeling to relationships, with the Newton-Winnipeg connection, the shift towards Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada has brought an east-west flow to relationships," Friesen said. "This has brought a somewhat lost feeling to our constituency, and questions about who is resourcing whom...and wondering who is leading all this."

She also cited how the economic

downturn in the Midwest has deeply affected giving levels in the conference.

"Without the former giving pattern in Western District, we cannot sustain half of what we do," she said. "That has nothing to do with vision and mission but has to do with economics."

Nevertheless, the conference is strong in many ways and hope abounds, she said, despite all the transitions.

"We dedicate churches," was another of the 10 points. Another was "wholistic dynamic Christians."

The Ohio conference reported that the awareness of conference is very shallow when you get beyond the level of leaders.

"An average person sitting in the pew knows virtually nothing about conference," reported Tom Kauffman, conference minister. Ohio leaders are responding to this through various new initiatives, including developing more links to conference and a missional vision.—From MC USA

School notes

Discovery day at Rockway

Kitchener, Ont.—On December 5, Rockway Mennonite Collegiate is hosting a Discovery Day for students interested in learning more about Rockway programs. The day will begin with registration at 8:30 a.m., followed by games, activities, chapel, free lunch and an afternoon of visiting classrooms and getting to know the teachers. A session for parents will begin at 12:30 p.m. and run for the afternoon while students are in class. Childcare will be offered during the afternoon. The day ends at 3:00 p.m. For more information, call Tom Bileski at (743) 5209, extension 3029, or visit the web site at www.rockway.on.ca.—From Rockway release



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People & Events

Winnipeg, Man.—Abe Dueck, director for 12 years of the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies here, received an Award of Recognition from the Association for Manitoba Archives on September 25. Since 1980, Dueck has been active in the historical committee that gives direction to the MB centre and has helped interpret the story of the Mennonite Brethren church in Canada. Given his background in church ministry, teaching and Reformation history, Dueck is a sought-after teacher and consultant. He has also been a longstanding board member of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society.—From release

Photo by Susan M. Dueck



Rick Neufeld (left) was installed as pastor of the Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church on September 21. Participating in the service were his wife, Carol; Dan Kehler, associate pastor; and John Klassen, director of leadership ministries for Mennonite Church Manitoba. Neufeld, former lead pastor at Morden Bergthaler Church, replaces Peter Penner, who has moved to the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church. (Penner was installed there on October 26.) Altona Bergthaler's pastoral team now consists of Neufeld, Dan Kehler and Jayson Giesbrecht.—From report by Elmer Heinrichs

Transitions

Births

Armstrong—to Marlys Neufeldt and Alan, Toronto United Mennonite, a son, William Scott, Sept. 4.
Baergen—to Anna Janecek and Rene, Toronto United Mennonite, a daughter, Noa Maria, Oct. 17.
Harder—to Adrienne and Chris, Hanley Mennonite, Sask., a daughter, Masyn Jorgia, October 14.
Harms—Teri-Lynn (Heinrichs) and Ashley, Altona Bergthaler, Man., a son, Spencer Theodore, Aug. 29.
Heinrichs—to Lorraine and Greg, Altona Mennonite, Man., a son, Layton Gregory, Oct. 30.
Hoffman—to Vicki and Tim, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a son, Andrew Alexander, Oct. 22.
Kehl—to Karen and Steven of Vancouver, First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., a son, Henry Russell, Aug. 16.
Marshall-Klassen—to Pamela Klassen and John Marshall, Toronto United Mennonite, a daughter, Georgia Susanna, Oct. 8.

Molander—to Jeanette and Dana, Grace Mennonite, Regina, Sask., a son, Connor, Oct. 27.

Packull—to Lisa and Reiny, First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., a son, Benjamin Eric, Aug. 8.

Patkau—to Tori Rozon and Robyn, Hanley Mennonite, Sask., a son, Jayce Anthony, April 23.

Rahn—to Denise and Martin, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a son, Luke Hayden, Oct. 19.

Reimer—to Jennifer (Dyck) and Brian, Zion Mennonite Church, Swift Current, Sask., a son, Joel Diedrich, Oct. 23.

Sloss—to Christine and Andrew, Toronto United Mennonite, a son, Elliot Allan, Sept. 6.

Stoesz—to Michelle and Conrad, Sargent Ave. Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., a daughter, Rebecca Anne Marie, Oct. 25.

Umar—to Kathy Clemence and Salim, First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., a son, Simon Allan, Oct. 11.

Warkentin—to Melissa and Gregory, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Lily Melika, Oct. 2.

Warkentin—to Shadell

Permanand and Marshall, Toronto United Mennonite, a daughter, Maya Katherine, Sept. 4.

Wiebe—to Lorrie and Lloyd, Altona Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Jesse Layne, Oct. 21.

Marriages

Boblett-Enns—Wes and Maryelin, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 11.

Enns-Dueck—Marcus (Sargent Ave. Mennonite, Winnipeg) and Colleen, in Winnipeg, Man. Sept. 6.

Fox-Falk—Shane and Treva (Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.) at Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Oct. 4

Hildebrandt-Enns—Ryan (Killarney Mennonite, Man.) and Jennifer, Sargent Ave. Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Oct. 11.

Hawkins-Weicker—Michael (United Church) and Julie, Tavistock Mennonite Church, Ont., at Stratford Park, Sept. 20.

Kroeker-Peters—Joel and Heather (Hanley Mennonite, Sask.), at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Man., Oct. 11.

McKenna-Schmidt—Eion

and Donna, Breslau Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 2.
Nickerson-Sobie—Nathan and Kristin, Sargent Ave. Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man. Sept. 12.

Toews-Hawkins—Jim and Tania, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 25.

Wollman-Mandel—Darcy and Kate, Rosemary Mennonite, Alta., Oct. 25.

Deaths

Baer—Raymond, 82, First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., Oct. 13.

Erb—Mary, 77, Crosshill Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 23.

Harms—Spencer Theodore, newborn son of Teri-Lynn (Heinrichs) and Ashley of Winnipeg, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Aug. 29.

Kroeker—Katharina, 82, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., Oct. 18.

Martens—Elizabeth, 83, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Oct. 14.

Neufeldt—Henry, 88, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Oct. 20.

Reimer—Barbara, 48, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Oct. 3

Rempel—Ron, 52, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., Oct. 28.

Schroeder—Anna, 89, Salem Home, Winkler, Man., Oct. 7

Schroeder—Lydia, 100, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Oct. 4.

Sommerfeld—Tina (Katherine), 91, Zion Mennonite Church, Swift Current, Sask., Sept. 16.

Thiessen—Susan, 83, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Oct. 24.

Willms—Erna, 96, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 22.

Baptisms

Zion Mennonite Church, Swift Current, Sask.—Carla Thiessen, Dan Richert, Rose Paczkoski, Oct. 12.

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

Prayers answered in South Korea

"God is good!" wrote Tim Froese, Witness worker in South Korea, in October. The Korea Anabaptist Centre in Seoul will be able to stay in its current location as new space is being arranged.

"Our benefactor not only agreed to extend our stay in our current office space for one month, he is working hard to find another space for us nearby. Join us in thanking God for his goodness and his timing and pray that our longer term space needs will be met this coming month."

A Christian business group is the centre's landlord. "For two years they have supported and welcomed our presence," said Froese. The centre was to move out October 31, but this was in the middle of their second anniversary celebrations. The extension was good news.—MC Canada

More prayer requests

Pray for Laura Eriksson, a Winnipeg volunteer, who is assisting with writing the prayer requests for Witness PrayerNet.

Bruce Yoder and Nancy Frey in Benin are thankful for God's healing touch during Bruce's recent bout with kidney stones. Pray for continuing good health as they minister to students at Benin Bible Institute and continue leadership training seminars.

Pray for Susan Allison Jones and Glyn Jones and family as they adjust to life in Botswana. They are learning a new language and nurturing new relationships in the midst of many Mennonite Ministries team changes.

"Two long term Bible teaching couples are finishing

their work over the next months and an MCC couple will be leaving in February," they wrote. "Pray for the people who are leaving and the people who are here as we work with those changes."

Note that the 2004 prayer week booklet, "Prayer—in the Peace of Christ," will be available in the December issue of *Equipping*, as well as on the Mennonite Church Canada web site and through the Resource Centre.—MC Canada

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Missions minister reflects on his role

When asked what he understands by "missional church," Brian Bauman laughs.

"I have discovered that the definition is wide and varied.



Bauman

MC Eastern Canada.

Mennonite Church Canada speaks of mission "from across the street to around the world." Bauman suggests that the congregations will do the "across the street" stuff. The denomination or area conference can participate, but people in the congregation are best aware of who is across the street, and what there is to do.

Bauman adds that the congregations are still interested in the "across the world" aspect, praying for and giving to overseas missions. And increasingly congregations are doing more in short-term overseas assignments.

What is Bauman's role in the mission of congregations?

"I am most interested in

In short, my definition: the congregation is the centre of mission."

Bauman is the new Minister of Missions for

doing as much listening as I possibly can...to help discern what the congregation is striving to do," he says. He asks congregations, "What is it you need or want from the conference to do the work you have decided to do?"

Is there a shift to congregational autonomy, even in the area of mission?

Bauman reflects that there seems to be a generational shift away from denomination-ism. It does seem that the congregation will play a greater role.

He notes that often larger congregations have resources to be more autonomous than smaller ones. The latter will likely need to find partners to work with. Conference can be such a partner. Perhaps Bauman can be a broker for some of these partnerships.

Similarly, with regard to church planting, Bauman says, "Lone rangers don't make good Anabaptist church planters. We need to plan for partnerships, with lots of 'parent' congregations and other support."

Bauman agrees with Hubert Schwartzenruber's emphasis (as earlier Missions Minister) that we should not see new churches as "mission" congregations of conference. Rather, all congregations of MC Eastern Canada are "missions congregations" in the missional church vision.

Bauman was Conference Minister in the Pacific South West Conference of Mennonite Church USA, where he had oversight of church planting and leadership development for first-generation Anabaptists. He was comfortable in cross-cultural settings, rubbing shoulders with immigrants who have just entered the Mennonite Church.

"They have such an enthusiasm, reflecting on, talking about their love of God. It was infectious. Their example helped move me towards church planting and trying to

figure out what Anabaptism looks like in the city and in cross-cultural settings."

Bauman believes we need to extend an invitation not only to the poor or to immigrants, but also to urban middle and upper class folks.

"I strongly believe our Anabaptist theology has a lot of appeal," he says. "I have been looked in the eye by a fourth generation Californian raised Roman Catholic saying, 'You don't seem to understand that everyone needs to hear this [the Anabaptist story]. Or the pastor who said, 'Thank God—I'm finally Mennonite.' Those stories drive me."

Will there be changes in the way missions is conducted under Bauman's leadership?

"I don't know yet," he says. "I assume that if we wish to continue to be relevant, that will involve change.... The only way to continue to be relevant is to bring Christ to our culture, and it is changing rapidly."

He also notes that when the current group of givers is gone, there may not be the financial resources for mission. In the meantime, he says, "God will not abandon us.... We are not going anywhere that God has not gone before."

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Equipping Conference held in Winkler

Combining the Education and Ministers and Deacons conferences for the first time, Mennonite Church Manitoba program directors were uncertain what the response would be, but nearly 250 people came for the day of workshops and worship.

"It is an overwhelming response," said John Klassen, director of Leadership Ministries, at the Equipping Conference on October 4 at the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite

Photo by Evelyn Rempel Peikau



Participants in the evangelism workshop in Winkler discuss how they understand evangelism and how their churches are involved. At left is Sven Eriksson, denominational minister.

Church.

Sven Eriksson, Denominational Minister for MC Canada, spoke about centred leadership during the worship time.

"I have never been so out of control as this year," said Eriksson. "I find myself in several storms. They test our centres."

He showed how Jacob's struggle with Esau and with God left him with grace, "being freed and centred, transformed and limping with a new capacity to serve and be a leader. Whatever we are called to do, our ministry is not about skills or tasks but about being centred in God, touched by His grace. Ministry is watching and responding out of this stillness that knows God in a very deep place."

Workshops focused on a wide range of people in ministry—pastoral care givers, treasurers, Sunday school teachers, council members, worship planners and leaders.

A large number attended a workshop on evangelism offered by Norm Voth, director of Evangelism and Service ministries, and Titus Guenther, Canadian Mennonite University professor of theology and missions. Guenther gave a historical overview of missions and evangelism.

Discussion confirmed his observation that these topics has often been met with "strong emotion and mixed emotions." Voth, whose MC Manitoba position was

recently expanded to full-time, looked for suggestions on what churches are doing and need help doing.

Legal issues for hospital visitation

"I was in the hospital and my pastor didn't visit me," is a concern that pastoral care visitors hear with growing frequency. As privacy laws become more stringent, pastoral care visitors have no way of knowing when church members are hospitalized and desire a visit.

Pam Driedger, executive director of Mennonite Health Services of Manitoba (MHSM), is working with the Interfaith Healthcare Association of Manitoba, the Manitoba Interfaith Council and the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education to lobby government for changes that will assure hospital patients receive the spiritual care that they want.

Protecting a person's privacy is important, noted Driedger. The Personal Health Information Act which protects the privacy of health information was legislated by Manitoba in 1997. In January 2004, the federal Privacy Act will go into effect in all provinces.

While the intent of the Act is good, "the current interpretation often results in reduced access to certain services," said Driedger. In the past, pastors and deacons had access to hospital lists and people who

worked in hospitals often mentioned names of patients to their pastor.

"Now your pastor or deacon can only visit you if you or someone in your family specifically requests a visit."

When people check into a healthcare facility they are often asked if would like to see a chaplain, said Driedger. Many answer "no" because they feel a visit is "not absolutely necessary." What they fail to realize is that their presence in the facility will remain hidden from any spiritual care provider. People who are not asked are treated as if they had said "no."

Several groups are lobbying the hospitals and government regarding these concerns.

"Research has shown that spiritual care can have a significant impact on health outcomes," said Driedger. Privacy "is not more important than ensuring that people have access to the best possible care, including spiritual care, at a time of need."

In the meantime, Driedger encourages members to tell their pastor when they or a family member are going into the hospital and to indicate to the hospital staff if they wish to receive spiritual care.

Among the options that MHSM suggests is carrying a form of identification stating your denomination and desire for spiritual care in case of hospitalization.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

Student fund

A recent report by the Mennonite Church Saskatchewan Finance Committee is highlighting a new Student Education Fund being initiated by the conference. The interest earned by the fund each year will be used to help students at various schools affiliated with the Mennonite Church. Starting in the fall of 2004, students may apply for assistance through the Education Commission.

Speaker's Bureau

During the October 1 Pastor's Gathering in Langham, an initial copy of the MC Saskatchewan Speaker's Bureau was distributed, with the suggestion that more names be added to the list.

The Bureau lists individuals who are available to speak in churches around the province. The list will be finalized by early December.

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Evangelism committee continues tasks

The Evangelism and Church Development Committee of MC British Columbia is alive and well! With the resignation of director Chris Arney, the committee has continued on with the goals and activities of encouraging evangelism and church development in B.C.

The following are some of the initiatives that the committee is working on. The roles and responsibilities of the current team, in this interim period without a director, have been dispersed to all members. Each individual has enthusiastically responded to the need of the hour.

A conversation is being held with Church Ministries Committee as to the possibility of "re-drawing" the lines of these two ministry teams. Both groups have some common goals, alongside the concept of discipleship training. The question has been raised about re-structuring into one larger entity.

This conversation will continue over the next months as the ECDC "re-vision" its duties. They remain in contact with the church plants to ensure that relationships remain strong and so that workers may be encouraged.

ECDC met on October 30 at Bethel Mennonite Church to create a task outline for ECDC over the next year.

Employment opportunities



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Silver Lake Mennonite Camp invites applications for the position of Assistant Director. As part of a leadership team of three Directors, the Assistant Director will participate in hiring, leading and supporting a staff of approximately 40, giving overall direction to the children's summer camp program, and fulfilling registration duties. The position begins part-time from January 1 to April 30, 2004 and becomes full-time from May 1 to Aug. 31. The successful applicant will demonstrate a love of children, have proven administrative and leadership skills, work comfortably with young adults, and be able to articulate her/his faith in word and action. Previous camp experience is an asset.

Silver Lake is an accredited member of the Ontario Camping Association and the Mennonite Camping Association. More information about us is available online at www.silverlake.on.ca.

Please send a letter of application, a resume and the names of two references to:

Ben Janzen, Director
c/o Silver Lake Mennonite Camp
33 Kent Ave.
Kitchener, ON
N2G 3R2
Phone: (519) 747-0627

Questions can also be directed to Ben Janzen at the number above.

Application deadline is December 8, 2003.

Die Vereinigung der Deutschen Mennonitengemeinden K. d. Ö. R. sucht zum 01. November 2004

den/die LEITER(IN) bzw. JUGENDPASTOR(IN)

für die überregionale Jugendarbeit in Norddeutschland.

Ihr Aufgabengebiet:

- Unterstützung und Aufbau der Jugendarbeit in den Norddeutschen Mennoniten-Gemeinden
- Organisation und Durchführung von Freizeiten für Kinder und Jugendliche
- Begleitung und Schulung von ehrenamtlichen Mitarbeitenden

Wir bieten:

- eine abwechslungsreiche und herausfordernde Tätigkeit
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Wir suchen:

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- Bereitschaft, sich mit unseren mennonitischen Gemeinden zu identifizieren

Bitte schriftliche Bewerbung bis 01. März 2004 an:

Peter-Paul Paetkau
Hochstr. 22
D-33818 Leopoldshöhe (Germany)
Telephon: 0049-5208-8903
E-Mail: pppaetkau@t-online.de

Mennonite Church Canada Formation invites applications for

MANAGER OF THE RESOURCE CENTRE

Responsibilities include: the continuing development and operation of the Resource Centre; creating a network of consultants and experts in the area of congregational life; collaborating with MC Canada congregations and area conferences in the production and sharing of resources; some travel.

This is a full time position to start in January, 2004.

Direct inquiries, resume and references to:

Justina M. Heese
Executive Secretary
Mennonite Church Canada Formation
Phone: (204) 888-6781 in Winnipeg or (866) 888-6785
Fax: (204) 831- 5675
E-mail: jheese@mennonitechurch.ca

Camp Assiniboia (Headingley, MB) invites applicants for

CAMP MANAGER

Responsibilities include personnel leadership and oversight of physical operations and guest services. This year round position is ideal for a motivated couple with an Anabaptist faith commitment and a willingness to relate to an MCM congregation (see additional position available below). Team-building, organizational & maintenance skills an asset.

Contact by February 1, 2004:

Mennonite Church Manitoba,
Phone: (204) 896-1616
E-mail: camps@mennochurch.mb.ca

Additional year round position open at Camp Assiniboia:

HALF-TIME RENTAL SECRETARY

to coordinate group schedules and provide hosting.

Childcare provider with housekeeper duties needed for 2 girls ages 10 & 4. Live-in position preferred, or Monday to Friday 6:30 am until 6:00pm, or a semi-detached 2 bedroom bungalow apartment is available for person/couple interested in providing child care & housekeeping as an added income, call Jim Schultz 1346 Queens Bush Rd., Wellesley. Home: (519) 656-3322, Cell 588-1045

For rent

2 bedroom basement apt. for rent in Stouffville, ON. Separate entrance. Go Train 10 min walk. \$900/mth, utilities included. Available immed. Telephone: (905) 642-0526 evenings.

Request

Request for **GEA-RJC** History book. In preparation for making a 2005 history book we are missing the following graduation or all school photos: 1906, 1910, 1913, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1926, 1927, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1937. If you have one, or know anyone who does, please contact Sylvia Regier, Box 208 Laird, Saskatchewan, S0K 2H0, (306) 223-4324. Thanks very much.

Canadian Mennonite



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Akron, Pa.

MCC completes food aid to Africa

Emergency food aid begun during a devastating drought in southern Africa in 2002 has been completed in Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. Zimbabwe continues to receive food shipments.

"Overall, the drought has passed" in most countries, said Willie Reimer, Mennonite Central Committee director of Food, Disaster and Material Resources. "The support was...very helpful."

In Zimbabwe, where the last harvest was meagre, MCC will provide corn and beans to the end of December, and possibly after that. "If the rains are good, they will only harvest next May or June," said Reimer.

Reimer said 1,200 metric tons of corn and 155 metric tons of beans were distributed in Zimbabwe during the first phase, and equal amounts will be distributed over the next few months.

MCC's partner in Zimbabwe is the Brethren In Christ Church.

In Zambia, MCC provided \$544,218 to purchase local corn, and sent 140 metric tons of beans. Seeds for this year's harvest were also provided. MCC sent approximately \$95,238 to Malawi to purchase 240 metric tons of corn. To Mozambique, MCC sent 180 metric tons of corn, 18 metric tons of oil, 1 metric ton of salt and 37 metric tons of beans.—From MCC release

Waterloo, Ont.

Birthday party raises money for AIDS

Vanessa Snyder-Penner from Waterloo North Mennonite Church celebrated her tenth birthday on October 25 with seven girlfriends and a sleepover.

This, however, was a party with a difference. Instead of presents, Vanessa's friends brought cash and cheques.

For a "Change our world" project at school, Vanessa had decided to focus on the AIDS crisis in Africa. Because she felt she already had "enough stuff," and December 1 is World AIDS Awareness Day, Vanessa asked her friends to donate money as a tangible way to respond to the AIDS crisis. There was an added incentive: Vanessa's parents said they would

match the amount raised.

The partygoers, who named themselves Young World Helpers, contributed \$87.00. With the matching sum, it made for a total of \$174.00. Since then, a

member of Waterloo North congregation has also contributed.

Like all good ideas, Vanessa's project is inspiring others. Rachel, a friend from school, is working with her on the project and they will do other fundraisers this year.

Vanessa's party did include some essentials. The girls found chips and cookies and enjoyed a couple of movies. They played twister, ate chocolate fondue and

pizza, and had French toast the next morning.—**Betti Erb**



Photo by Julie Snyder-Penner

Vanessa Snyder-Penner (foreground) and friends at her birthday sleepover.

Employment opportunities cont.

PART-TIME CHAPLAIN

United Mennonite Home for the Aged in Vineland, ON requires a chaplain due to the incumbent retiring.

Under the direction of the administrator, the chaplain is responsible for developing and delivering the religious and spiritual care programs. These responsibilities are carried out in accordance with the Home's policies, procedures, mission and philosophy.

This is a part time position requiring the following qualifications: ordained minister within Mennonite Church Canada, training and experience in gerontology, education in spiritual and religious care, fluent in German.

Applicants are invited to submit resumes by fax.

Fax: (905) 562-3711

The Department of Chemistry at Goshen College invites applications for a

FULL-TIME TENURE-TRACK POSITION

Primary teaching responsibilities will include Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry. May also teach courses outside area of expertise and/or in the general education curriculum. Research involving undergraduates will be expected.

Applicants must submit materials by January 15, 2004. Ph.D. required. Preference will be given to candidates who exhibit both strong professional and teaching credentials. To apply, visit the specific position announcement on the Goshen College web page www.goshen/employment. Women and minority persons are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Administrative and teaching faculty members are expected to share this commitment.

Foodgrains Bank information meetings

Ingersoll, Ont.—Two Ontario Mennonite churches are among a number of venues in which the Canadian Foodgrains Bank will be holding public information meetings this fall.

One meeting will be held at First Mennonite Church in Vineland on November 23, at 7:00 p.m. Another will be held on November 26 at Community Mennonite Church in Stouffville, at 7:00 p.m.

Rob Finlay, Logistics Officer at the Foodgrains Bank, will speak on “Shipping, stewardship and CIDA: the right mix,” and will share his thoughts on how Ontario crops fit into the program. Dan Wiens, Hunger Education coordinator, will present ways to engage Canadian youth in issues around hunger.

For other meetings, call David and Kathryn Mayberry, Ontario coordinators, at (519) 485-3642, or e-mail: mayberry@oxford.net—From release

AIDS kits for home volunteers

Akron, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is offering an AIDS care kit for volunteers who provide home-based care. The kits are being assembled in North America and sent overseas. They include items such as pillowcases, bed sheets, towels and washcloths, rubber gloves and soap, and a \$100 donation.

With World AIDS Day on December 1, MCC is highlighting these kits as a tangible way for congregations to respond to global AIDS. MCC also offers resources for worship and reflection on its web site, at www.mcc.org/aids.

For information on how to compile an AIDS care kit, go to the web site or call 1-888 622-6337.—From MCC release

Four choirs at Christmas

Menno Singers, Inter-Mennonite Children’s Choir, Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Senior Choir and the Chapel Choir of Conrad Grebel University College will present “Four choirs at Christmas” on December 5 and 6, 7:30 p.m., at St. Matthews Lutheran Church in Kitchener, Ontario. Each choir will perform some of its own repertoire and join together for several works. This is the third performance together of the four choirs.—From Menno Singers release

Peace theology project invites papers

Akron, Pa.—A two-year peace theology project on how peacemaking relates to questions of security and justice in today’s world is currently underway. Hosted by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), and supported by the Mennonite Foundation of Canada, the Showalter Foundation and the Frank Epp Memorial Fund, the project is currently calling for papers.

Papers are invited from professionals in social work, law and public administration, as well as biblical scholars, those involved in advocacy work and people trained in the humanities and social sciences.

“Our peace theology...often doesn’t give us many handles for addressing questions of security,” said Judy Zimmerman Herr, co-director of the MCC Peace Office. Anabaptists have focused on what they don’t support, but they need to address how they can work together in ordering society. “Our experience is ahead of our theology” in working at these things.

The project will culminate in a conference, “Seeking the welfare of the city: Questions of public peace, justice and order,” planned for August 1-4, as well as a book. To see the call for papers, check MCC’s web site: www.mcc.org/peacetheology/index.html.—From MCC release

Calendar

British Columbia

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

December 6, 7: Abendmusik Advent Vespers at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford (6) and Knox United, Vancouver (7), 8:00 p.m. Offering for Menno Simons Centre.

December 24: “Shine your light” musical service with

choir, hand-bell choir, children’s group at West Abbotsford Mennonite Church, B.C., 6:30 p.m.

Alberta

January 23-25: Junior Snow Camp at Camp Valaqua.

February 14-15: Mennonite Men’s Curling Bonspiel in Didsbury. Contact Herman Epp at (780) 335-3894.

February 20-22: Senior Snow Camp at Camp Valaqua.

February 27-28: Mennonite Church Alberta 75th delegate sessions at Rosemary Mennonite Church.

March 19-20: Missional Church training at Camp Valaqua.

Saskatchewan

December 3: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m. Audrey and Ken Bechtel on “Church as business.”

December 5-6: Dinner theatre at Rosthern Junior College.

December 12: Shekinah Fundraiser at Timberlodge with A Buncha’ Guys, 7:00 p.m. Call Russ Regier at (306) 249-3650.

December 19: Christmas concert at Rosthern Junior College, 7:00 p.m.

January 2-3: RJC Alumni Tournament of Memories.

January 7: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m. Tammy Forrester on women in business.

January 24: MC Saskatchewan Camping Commission fundraiser.

January 30-February 1: Senior high retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

February 4: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m. with Ernest Epp.

February 14-15: Shekinah Fun Days.

February 27-28: Mennonite Church Saskatchewan annual



Some typical items in an AIDS care kit.

sessions in Rosetown.

March 3: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

March 27: Shekinah fundraising banquet at Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

Manitoba

November 27-29: MCC pork canning in Winkler.

November 29: Christmas concert at Canadian Mennonite University, 7:00 p.m.

December 6, 7: Christmas concert with Faith and Life Male Choir and Women's Chorus, at Winkler Bergthaler, 7:30 p.m. (6), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg (7).

December 8: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Christmas concert at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 7:00 p.m.

December 11, 18: Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School Christmas concerts: Agassiz at Bethel Mennonite (11); Bedson at Immanuel Pentecostal (18), 7:00 p.m.

December 13: Advent concert of North Kildonan Mennonite Church Quartet, 7:00 p.m.

January 9-11: Senior youth retreat at Camp Koinonia.

January 16-18: Junior youth retreat at Camp Koinonia.

January 23-25: Young adult retreat at Camp Koinonia.

February 7: Canadian Mennonite annual meeting and banquet at Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg. Meeting 4:00 p.m. Banquet 6:00 p.m. Speaker: Ken Reddig. Contact Ron Loepky at (204) 261-4949.

February 13-15: Junior youth retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

February 20-21: Annual session of MC Manitoba at Whitewater Mennonite, Boissevain.

March 5-7: Retreat for families with mentally handicapped members at Camp Assiniboia.

March 12-14: Junior high youth retreats at Camps Koinonia and Moose Lake.

Ontario

November 21-22: MDS Canada annual meeting. Friday banquet at St. Clements Community Centre, 6:30 p.m. Call (519) 742-8458 for tickets. Saturday meeting at Countryside Mennonite Fellowship, Hawkesville, 8:30 a.m.

November 22, 23: Pax Christi Chorale presents Handel's *Israel in Egypt* at Grace Church on-the-hill, Toronto, Saturday 8:00 p.m., Sunday 3:00 p.m.

November 23, 30: Soli Deo Gloria Singers concert (conductor Paul Dueck) at St. Matthews Anglican Church, Windsor (23), 8:00 p.m.; and Leamington United Mennonite Church with Russell Braun (30), 3:00 p.m.

November 25: Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp annual members dinner, 6:30 p.m. Annual meeting, 7:45 p.m. Call (519) 625-8602 to reserve a seat.

November 27: Willowgrove information night and annual meeting at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Markham, 7:15 p.m.

November 28, 29: United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington, Grade 11 drama, "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," 7:00 p.m.

November 28-30: Ten Thousand Villages Mennonite Christmas Festival at Harbourfront Centre, Toronto.

November 29: Peace seminar for Christian police officers at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo. Call Wendy Shoreman at (519) 745-8458.

November 30: Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir presents "Carol of the Children," a concert at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, 3:00 p.m.

December 5: Discovery Day for prospective students at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.

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.

December 7: Christmas concert at United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington, 7:30 p.m.

December 12: Christmas concert at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, 7:30 p.m.

December 14: Lessons and carols with Pax Christi Chorale at Grace Church on-the-hill, Toronto, 3:00 p.m. Call (416) 494-7889.

United States

January 26-29: Pastors Week at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Theme: Effective ministerial leadership. Phone 1-800-964-2627, e-mail: bsawatzky@ambs.edu.

March 25-28: Mennonite Health Assembly in San Francisco. Phone: (219) 534-9689, e-mail: info@mhsonline.org.

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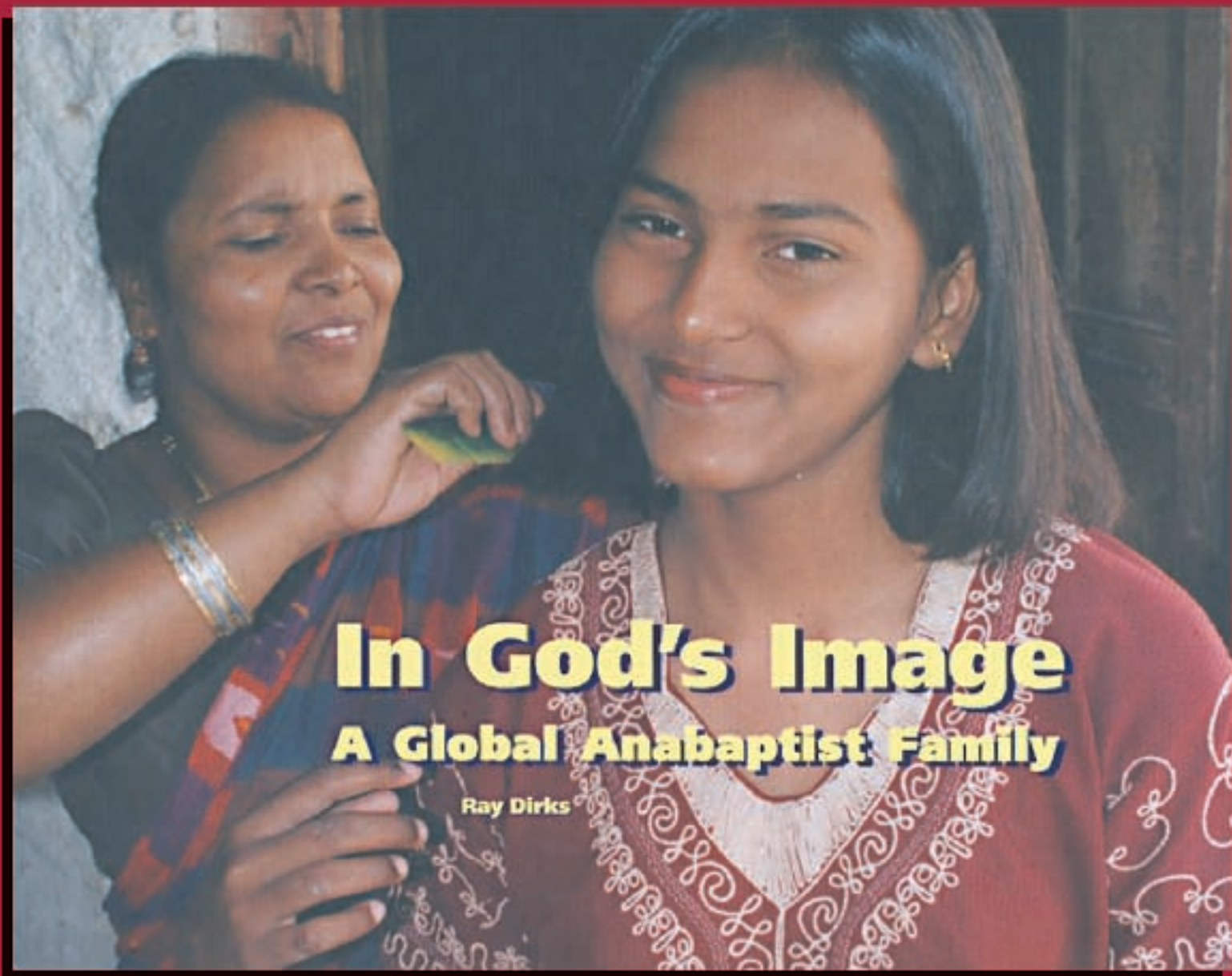
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This is the cover of a new book that celebrates the variety of art and daily life within the Anabaptist global family. See page 11.