

CANADIAN Mennonite

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**My soul doth
magnify the LORD**

Happy birthday to MEDA

This year's MEDA convention celebrated 50 years of profitable service (see page 14). I always thought MCC was the most practical manifestation of Mennonite piety, but I was wrong.

MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates) deals in bottom-line reality with slogans like "Business solutions for poverty" and "Putting our equity where our faith is." In MCC you talk about "sustainable development." In MEDA you talk about "profits."

In a way, MEDA is a breath of fresh air. Here you can be a capitalist and a Christian without apology. Here you can admit that you like to live well and want to help others make money so they can live well. The convention was very different from church conventions I'm used to. There were speakers and workshops, but much of the time was for "networking" and having fun together. Lots of tours and time for exploring the city. The tour of choice involved flying to Churchill for a day to watch the polar bears.

And you can do quick fundraising in this group. After a crokinole tournament, the boards were sold for \$1,000 each.

I was intrigued by the juxtapositions: people enjoying their wealth but enjoying even more being able to fund remarkable projects around the world. More than one person told me that many of the business people at the convention would have left the church long ago if it weren't for MEDA. Many feel constantly criticized by the church for making money, and yet the church always wants that money.

My conclusion was that the seeming contradictions within MEDA are not so different from what I live with every day. We North Americans are all part of the rich minority in the world and we struggle to be Christian within our abundance. We can wallow in perpetual guilt or we can live in gratitude, offering what we can to others. And there is much generous offering going on in MEDA.

A prayer during Sunday worship thanked God for the "good news of credit, employment and enterprise." Amen.

This little Babe

While preparing some readings for a performance of Benjamin Britten's "Ceremony of Carols" this Advent season, I looked into the life of poet Robert Southwell (1561-1595). Britten used several of Southwell's poems in his work, including the one featured on the back cover, "This little Babe."

Southwell's vision of the infant Christ is startling—the baby's shivering vulnerability is quickly transposed into the quaking of hell as the warrior babe mounts a fierce attack against evil. Perhaps this militant vision resonated with Britten—he composed the work in 1942 while crossing the submarine-infested Atlantic.

Southwell, too, was writing in the midst of war as the newly reformed English church fought to stamp out Catholicism. Southwell, a Catholic priest and leader of the persecuted minority, was hanged for treason at the age of 33.

So Southwell, like the Anabaptist martyrs, recognized the paradox of that babe in the manger—a helpless fragility combined with confidence in the almighty power of God.

In what is probably his most famous poem, "The Burning Babe," Southwell again strives to portray the paradox of the incarnation, this time with the collision of cold and heat:

*As I in hoary winter night stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised was I with sudden heat which made my heart to glow;
And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire was near,
A pretty babe all burning bright did in the air appear...*

The babe is weeping because none are coming to warm themselves at his fire of love. As the vision of that burning babe disappears, the poet realizes that it is Christmas Day.

Perhaps the babe in the manger will draw us into new imaginative territory this Christmas season as we contemplate the mysteries of his birth.—**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. 22 issue by Dec. 18.

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Cover: *Mary Rejoicing*
Acrylic painting by Chad Friesen.
www.godseyeart.com

Saskatoon, Sask.

Bitter experiences shape pastoral ministry

If you were to ask the average pew sitter how the Mennonite church has changed in the last decade, you would probably hear about more women behind the pulpit. Other than that, some surprising trends have emerged in recent years.

One is that churches are increasingly drawing on leaders from outside groups. Within Mennonite Church Saskatchewan, about one-third of pastoral leadership comes from other denominations or Mennonite conferences.

Ken Quiring is one such pastor. He has been pastor of North Star Mennonite church in Drake, Saskatchewan, since 1999. Quiring is tall and lanky; his intense gaze adds punch to his words.

Quiring's faith journey began in a small Mennonite conference in Manitoba. Despite his church's sincere intentions to introduce its youth to salvation, Quiring picked up the idea that God was mean-spirited, and that one could never know for sure if he or she was going to heaven. His fear-filled childhood led to confused and searching teen years.

"For awhile I explored punk rock and the culture that goes with it," he said, pointing out that the movement focused on social equality and taught him about certain social issues. Years later, he returned to Christian faith and went to Bible college—a good place, he thought, to look for answers. After college he cast about for something to do. It was a toss-up between pastoral work and a Mennonite Central Committee assignment—somewhere he could continue to learn. He chose ministry.

"The congregation of Rosenort Fellowship Chapel gave me a lot of room to work at my beliefs in the context of ministry," he said.

Things went smoothly for a number of years, and then tragedy struck. Three teenagers from his youth group were killed when their car collided

with a combine. Suddenly Quiring was thrust into a crisis situation for which he had little training.

Many of the kids in his youth group were from homes without strong church ties and Quiring found himself providing spiritual care and grief counselling for people outside the



Quiring

religious community. Their appreciation was rewarding. But when he directed his funeral message to reach hurting family members, some churchgoers felt he missed an opportunity to preach an evangelistic message.

There were hurtful confrontations. A year later, he and his wife Yolanda resigned.

Now carrying hurt and frustration from his childhood and community, Quiring began to look for answers beyond his own church group. He attended some sessions of Mennonite World Conference in 1990, and noticed especially one female preacher. He was impressed with her competence and the grace of her leadership style. She happened to be a seminary professor.

"I decided that if I ever went to seminary, I would attend one with professors like her," said Quiring. Through the encouragement of friends, he went to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana. Planning to pursue a Master of Arts, he was contemplating a teaching career in religion and ethics.

Mid-course he realized he needed to sort out his church experiences. The healing and training he received led him to consider ministry again, and he graduated with a master of divinity in 1999.

Quiring chose to work in Mennonite Church Canada, knowing that he could not agree with some of the basic tenets and practices of the church in which he grew up. At the same time, he wants to affirm what was good about his former church community.

"Here [in MC Canada] I feel like I fit in well," he says. "I find a biblical combination of evangelical and Anabaptist convictions, and I can focus my energy on the ministry rather than on defending the ongoing exploration of my faith."—**Karin Fehderau**

Edmonton, Alta.

Catholic spirituality strengthens prison ministry

Speaking with Don Stoesz gives one a sense that here is a man deeply connected to the church, not in the limited sense of a particular congregation, but in a broad spiritual sense.

Stoesz is a member of the Bergthal Mennonite Church near Didsbury, Alberta, along with his wife Naomi and four children, Matthew, Justin, Kevin and Sonya. He also has a strong connection to Catholicism.

The depth of Catholic spirituality and worship, and its strong sense of the sacred, have been profoundly meaningful in his work as a prison chaplain at the Bowden institution.

Stoesz's prison ministry involves pastoral care, counselling and leading worship for inmates who often go through a series of crises during their incarceration. Stoesz walks alongside them, paying attention to their practical and spiritual needs as they struggle to rebuild their shattered lives.

Prisoners, he says, "are interested in receiving immediate answers to

*Paths to
ministry*

New Hamburg, Ont.

Woodcrafters open shop in New Hamburg

Since it opened in 2001, the Furniture and More store—a Mennonite Central Committee Ontario thrift shop—has been a successful venture. The store sells donated household items and new things, including woodcrafts made by local volunteers and recycled furniture.

To meet customer demand for these products, the store launched a Woodcrafters Network and workshop this fall, housed in a trailer donated by Erb Transport. It's the first venture of its kind, says Gerald Schwartzentruber, coordinator.

Ray Schlegel, manager of Furniture and More, approached

Schwartzentruber about the project. Schwartzentruber and other men had been donating woodcraft articles. Why not combine woodworking with fellowship?

And that's how the Woodcrafters Network came into being, with a membership of about 20 men. Some refinish furniture, some build new items, and others carve or



Gerald Schwartzentruber in the new woodworking shop.

work on the lathe. The men share creative ideas and decide what products to make.

He sees working with wood as appreciating God's creation. "It is important to see wood as a gift to be used as faithful partners with our Creator God, rather than only a by-product of 'our' craftsmanship," he wrote in the Network's introductory flyer.

Schwartzentruber notes that MCC has chosen responsible care of the environment as one of its top seven priorities during the next three years. One of the slogans of the organization is "recycle, reuse, rejoice."

Schwartzentruber transforms stereo cabinets into cedar chests, and makes garden gates from the pine frames of discarded waterbeds. He goes to auctions to see what he can find to renovate.

Choice items are put into the store's silent auction. Bestsellers are children's beds made from old headboards, wood carvings, toys, clocks, old television and stereo cabinets made into furniture, and garden arbours.

In the back corner of the store is the Tic Tock Shop, where Laverne Schwartzentruber from Baden repairs clocks for resale, a hobby for 40 years.

Schwartzentruber enjoys the woodwork, as well as relating to volunteers. Having been a pastor for over 40 years, he sees this as another form of ministry. Is he retired? He prefers the term "refocused."

For more information call Gerald Schwartzentruber at (519) 662-2177.

—Maurice Martin

questions about faith, trust, family and parole. They have lost almost everything in their lives as a result of the harm they have done to others. They are anxious about what life has to offer them from here on. The rebuilding stage is a long one. The most important words have to do with honesty, trust, hope, forgiveness, grief, confession, acceptance and belonging."

Prisoners' struggles have an impact on their experience of worship. The sense of the sacramental that Catholic spirituality offers is meaningful in that environment.

"I have been challenged to look deep within myself in order to know how I can respond to the questions of the text, as well as the questions of the persons with whom I work," says Stoesz. "The range of emotions experienced in prison life is much greater and more frequent than the day-to-day life of the parishioner on the street. My spirituality has had to grow as a result of these real needs."

Stoesz's attraction to Catholicism grew out of his experiences studying with Catholic theologians such as Gregory Baum in 1986, and working as a



Stoesz

prison chaplain in Quebec in the late 1980s and early '90s. He graduated with a doctorate in philosophy, with a major in theology and minors in sociology and ethics.

Baum impressed him as someone with a broad sense of the world and a willingness to engage society. In prison ministry, 95 percent of Stoesz's colleagues were Catholic nuns and priests whose ministry inspired him.

His disagreements with the Catholic Church—the rejection of ordination for women, celibacy, some hierarchical procedures, and doctrines about the purity of Mary—create stumbling blocks for his full embrace of Catholicism.

Mary, as symbol of the church, is a figure central to Stoesz's spiritual journey. "The Madonna and child is not meant to emphasize the idea of a baby Jesus, but the church within us," he says. "If we leave out Mary, we miss the feminine aspect of the church that helps me love it [the church] more."

Stoesz recently wrote a book, *The Intimate Presence of God: A Seven Step Spiritual Journey*, which reflects on the incarnation of Christ. It is available from the author, phone (403) 224-2248, e-mail: dstoesz@telusplanet.net.

Don Stoesz has been licensed for prison ministry since 1992. Bergthol Mennonite has recommended him for ordination and the process is currently in progress.—Donita Wiebe-Neufeld

Advent in...

Ukraine: A saviour who waits in line

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.... And everyone went to his own town to register” (Luke 1:1-2).

Can you imagine the groans after this announcement? A census of the entire Roman world? This wasn’t a census where a clerk turns up at the door with a questionnaire. This surely meant taking time off work and figuring out what to do with your kids or your aged parents.

It meant making expensive travel arrangements and

staying in overpriced inns. It meant the anxiety of wondering if you had brought the right documents, or if you’d reach the window before the clerks stopped for lunch. Most of all, it meant the dreadful tedium of standing in line.

What is drearier than a line? In Soviet times here in Ukraine, almost every purchase meant standing in three lines: one to ascertain the price and order an item, one to pay for it at the cashier’s desk, and one to claim the item back at the counter.

Life is easier now, but there are still lines for railroad tickets, lines at the bank and at the post office. There are crowds of edgy people milling about at the Russian consulate in Odessa, hoping to complete their paperwork before the place closes.

In Ukraine, tickets for through-trains go on sale half an hour before the train arrives at the station. Late at night, incredible three- and four-pronged lines—one for each train—form around a single ticket window.

One year I read most of Tolstoy’s *Resurrection* while waiting in line to pay my utility bills. Most organizations here have a special employee whose job it is to pay bills and buy tickets—that is, to stand in line.

The nativity scenes we set out at Christmas depict shepherds and Magi adoring the newborn Jesus. More complicated European scenes might show other visitors—bakers with trays of pastry, girls with garlands of flowers, or musicians.

Why has no one thought of setting up an Advent scene with figures of tired, crabby people lined up to register for the Roman census? You could inch Mary and Joseph forward a little bit every day until they reached

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.... And everyone went to his own town to register” (Luke 1:1-2).

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





Zambia: The day Christmas struck

The day that Christmas struck was the day I turned my thoughts outward and my eyes off myself. It was a day I received undeserved blessings through unexpected people.

My husband, Anthony, and I took a day trip to Sinazongwe, a small village on Lake Kariba about an hour's drive from our place in Choma, Zambia. It was a beautiful drive. The hills were radiant with green—recent rains were an answer to prayer.

Anthony spotted a man, woman and child waving for a ride. I was scared to pick up people, and said, "Don't stop."

Anthony was not impressed. "When are you going to stop letting your fear control whether you help others?" he asked.

It wasn't too far down the road when I realized that we just passed up an opportunity to help a couple and their child. Wait a minute! What if it had been Joseph, Mary and Jesus on the side of the road? They may have asked someone for a ride. Would I have helped them?

I made up my mind that if Anthony wanted to give others a ride, I wouldn't stop him.

Wouldn't you know it: we ended up giving about 10 people a ride that day. I learned a wonderful lesson about how to use the little that I have—three empty seats—to help others. It was a glimpse of Christmas.

We arrived at the lake and were awed by its beauty and white beach. We talked about our six months in Zambia, our joys, fears and frustrations. Our trip home was full of stops to help those who were walking a great distance. More than once we heard, "God bless you," as a passenger got out of the truck. I kept thinking that I didn't deserve that blessing.

On the way home, we stopped to see Alfred and Bbodela Munkombwe, who had become like family to us in our first three weeks in Zambia. They were surprised to see us and we enjoyed a few hours together. Anthony told them that we had been thinking and praying about helping Gertrude, their eldest daughter, with her schooling. She had been accepted at teachers' college and we had heard she might not go because of a lack of funds.

The family had saved 100,000 Zambian kwacha so far. We

Continued on page 8

the surly official at the head of the line.

Waiting in line: jostling for position in the boring, anxious, tedious, nerve-racking line. What wouldn't I do to avoid standing there!

How sweet, therefore, to think of the King of Kings, still inside his mother's body, humbly complying with the demands of the bureaucracy, just as we must. The officials who wrote down Joseph's name had no idea who he was or why it was significant that he and Mary had come to Bethlehem.

Caesar assumed that they stood in line at his bidding, but we know that in the providence of God they were there to fulfill a prophecy.

Think of it: Jesus was born while his parents were waiting in line, just as we wait. Jesus was born to live every bit of our boring, anxious life, to bear our grief and carry our sorrow. In the end, Jesus was born to take our place in a sad, doomed, slow-moving line of captives headed up a hill to a cross.

—**Mary Raber**

The writer, from St. Louis, Missouri, is an MCC worker in Odessa, Ukraine. She is an associate member at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

What if it had been Joseph, Mary and Jesus on the side of the road? They may have asked someone for a ride. Would I have helped them?

From page 7

said we would give the additional 80,000 kwacha for the first semester. It was a blessing to see their thankfulness. Gertrude's eyes showed surprise and happiness when she heard the news.

As we headed out to the truck, Christmas struck. Bodela came up with a bag of freshly picked green maize cobs and six eggs from their chickens. "For Christmas," she said.

But they weren't finished yet. As we neared the truck we heard a "baa." In the back was a goat. "For Christmas," they said again. This goat was from the herd they bought after Anthony suggested they raise goats so they could have their own meat.

Giving away a goat would reduce their herd, a goat they could have butchered and eaten, a goat from a family scrimping to be able to send their daughter to college. A goat we didn't need.

Yet they gave out of their poverty. They overwhelmed us, blessed us and taught us what Christmas truly means—a

priceless gift generously given to those who do not deserve it.

We tried to express how grateful we were. As I grasped the father's hand and thanked him again, I asked him if they could afford to give one of their goats away.

His answer will always stick with me: "Oh yes, by the power of God." Oh, to have such faith and generosity in the face of adversity. May God bless them richly because they have touched us and taught me more than they will ever know.—**Karlene Thiessen**

The writer, from LaCrete, Alberta, is an MCC worker in Zambia.

Christmas gifts, grandmother style

Middle-class grandparents like me often struggle over what kinds of meaningful Christmas gifts they can give to grandkids who already have so much. Two conversations I had recently offer fresh ways of thinking about this.

Over coffee one day at the Mennonite Church Canada offices, Justina Heese, grandmother of two boys and executive secretary of MC Canada Formation Council, told me how she'd begun a new family tradition two years ago.

"Just before Christmas," she said, "I went to Ten Thousand Villages and bought a special Christmas stocking, picturing children from all around the world. I hung it on the mantelpiece, along with the other stockings, and told my grandsons that this was the 'MCC stocking' and anyone could put money into it for the children of Iraq."

Jonathan, then age seven, became an avid promoter of the project. Whenever anyone came over, he'd say, "We're collecting for poor children in Iraq; would you like to give some money?"

Largely due to his encouragement, the family raised \$200.

Last year, Jonathan's response was subtler. Instead of overtly inviting donations, he'd take down the stocking each evening and count the money to see if the gift had grown. Again, they raised

\$200 (with a little help from Justina).

"It would probably have been easier for me to just write out a cheque," she said, "but the stocking made giving visible, tangible for my grandsons and for all of us throughout the Christmas season."

A few days after hearing Justina's story, I was visiting my mother, age 87, at her home in a seniors' complex. I listened in on a meeting where Rose, the activities co-ordinator, was helping the residents organize a Christmas gift-giving project.

Rose carefully explained that she would buy supplies for gift boxes for needy children with the money they had given. She asked them what they would like her to buy, and they agreed on crayons, colouring books, school supplies, hygiene items and candy. Some tenants also knitted slippers.

As Rose was leaving, my mom, whose comprehension is slipping, said suddenly, "When you go shopping tomorrow, I'll pray that there'll be a big sale so you can buy lots of gifts for those children who have so little." The rest of the great-grandmothers agreed

that they would pray too.

It pleases me to think that there was a "Great-grandmother of a sale" at the store the next day!—**Leona Dueck Penner**



Photo by Leona Dueck Penner

Justina Heese with her Christmas stocking that began a new family tradition.

Winnipeg, Man.

Voices join to end abuse

A concert of voices in song and word on October 18 celebrated the launching of a new web site created by Mennonite Central Committee's Women's Concerns Network and hosted by Voices for Non-Violence, a program of MCC Manitoba. The event was held at Crossways-in-Common, a building shared by Hope Mennonite Church, Young United Church and four community organizations.

Voices for Non-Violence continues MCC's 30-year legacy of working with women in preventative and restorative approaches to domestic violence and sexual abuse.

"We believe that every person has the right to live in a non-violent environment, and that we have the responsibility to help create such an environment," says Eleanor Epp-Stobbe, coordinator of Voices for Non-Violence. "Let us join our voices...in peace to end violence," she said to the audience.

House of Doc offered bluegrass, Celtic and blues music, and paid homage to a rich gospel tradition. Kathryn Mitchell Loewen, former MCC Canada Women's Concerns coordinator, was web project coordinator and tour guide in launching the site.

"I see the pipe organ here behind the musicians.... It is a very fitting metaphor for abuse work," says Mitchell Loewen. "The individual

pipes all play a separate role for a larger combined purpose."

She was followed by Sarah Klassen, Winnipeg writer of poetry and fiction. Monica Schroeder's songs of comfort and hope brought the evening to a close.

November was Domestic Violence month in Canada. Go to www.mcc.org/ abuse to get help for abuse, for helping abused persons and for resources on the topic.—From MCC Manitoba release by **Joanie Enns**



Monica Schroeder sings at the concert to launch a new web site promoting non-violence.

Winnipeg, Man.

CD exceeds expectations

It doesn't happen often that a collection of songs for children quickly finds a home in places ranging from Sunday school to seminary. But that is what has happened with "God's love is for everybody," a recording of "songs for small and tall," by Bryan Moyer Suderman.

The CD is in its third pressing—3,000 copies in total—since its release by Mennonite Church Canada a year ago. Congregations, camps, seminary courses, schools, ecumenical assemblies have been using the music. It will also be used in a forthcoming Vacation Bible School curriculum. The project is generating income for the ministries of MC Canada.

"It was amazing," says Suderman. "I was in Hall 4 in Bulawayo [at Mennonite World Conference in Zimbabwe] when a man came up to me, said 'Hey! Disciples-In-Training!' and began singing one of my songs. He's an elementary school teacher in Zimbabwe, and has been enjoying these songs with his class."

Suderman and his family recently moved from Winnipeg to Stouffville, Ontario. He sees his primary ministries as music-maker and homemaker. His wife Julie is a teacher and son Matthew is settling into grade one.

Suderman continues to be surprised at the reception his songs are receiving, from children's liturgies in a Catholic church in northwestern Ontario to a monastic community in Vermont.

"But the most rewarding thing," says Suderman, "is when a child comes up to me and says 'I like your songs' and they tell me which is their favourite. Or when a parent says 'Our kids ask for your CD all the time—it's a good thing we like it as much as they do!'"

Suderman has been doing performances and interactive concerts in schools and churches. "God's love is for everybody: Songs for small and tall" is available from the MC Canada Resource Centre, phone 1-800-665-1954.—From MC Canada release

Hope Rising, a reflective CD written by Rick Pauw that celebrates God's grace in the mysterious way that grace often reveals itself.

Proceeds go to Circles of Support and Accountability, an MCCO Restorative Justice program.

Cost is \$20 [tax incl.] + \$5 postage and handling.

Please send cheque or money order to:

Circles of Support and Accountability,
6 Trinity Square, 3rd floor,
Toronto, ON. M5G 1B1.



Only 350 shopping days til next Christmas

In December 1986, the first column called “Fly on the newsprint” appeared in *Mennonite Reporter*. That column kept readers chuckling every other issue until the end of 1995. With this issue, we launch a retrospective of Ivan Emke’s best columns.

Sometime in mid-November, our local newspaper began to publish whole pages of “letters to Santa.” In order to better understand the generation which will be paying my pension, I read these letters. The average one went something like this:

“Dear Santa: My name is Ryan Payne and I am three years old. This year I’ve been real good so I’d like a Doctor Dreadful Food Lab, a Mighty Morphin Power Rangers set, some Biker Mice from Mars and a Creepy Crawlers Workshop. I’ll leave out a crab sandwich for you and a turnip for the reindeer. Your friend, Ryan.”

After a couple of weeks, I got tired of reading the same old stuff over and over. “If only there could be more variety,” I sighed, “more soul.” So I got to thinking that maybe the *Reporter* should publish letters to Santa. Surely our young could come up with more creative pleas.

Now, I know that there are some readers who would be troubled by this link with the more commercial elements of Christmas. They would no doubt write their own letters (although not to Santa).

But our job in the Mennonite media is to go boldly into territory that someone else has already abandoned. And this area seems ripe to me. As I envision it, a letter to Santa in the *Reporter* might be something like this:

“Dear Santa Claus: My name is Nicholas Toews-Wiens and I am almost five years old. I have tried to be good this year, even though my Sunday school teacher keeps telling me that I was born in sin and that is why I am so mischievous. But my big brother Larry, who went to Bible school for almost a whole term, said

that we are now in the age of grace, so it shouldn’t matter if I’ve done some bad things this year because I’ve been forgiven so you have to bring me my presents anyway.

“This year for Christmas I would like a John the Baptist waterproof doll and the board game, ‘Shun,’ which I promise to play with all of my friends



Emke Retro

Ivan Emke

and cousins. My dad is going to leave out some of his lentil soup for you. You don’t have to eat it, though. Just give it to the dog. That’s what I do. Have a safe trip.

“P.S. I understand that you sometimes go by the name of ‘St. Nicholas.’ That means we have the same first name. Does that mean that we are related? And are you related to a John Klaus who is now in Paraguay with MCC? His mother used to babysit my uncle.”

Here’s another Mennonite child’s letter to Santa.

“Dear Mr. Claus: My name is Melanie Graber-Gruber and I am six years old. I have been good this year, even though I had to start school in September. I have tried to be quiet and simple, but my teacher says I need to speak up more in class and stop humming hymn tunes when I’m supposed to be doing my sums. So already I feel the pressure of the world.

“But I do not wear makeup or jewelry of any kind, except for a 12 disciples watch that I won at the Sunday school picnic for guessing the number of calories in a marshmallow. While my tradition forbids me to swear to be good from now until

Christmas, I will do my best to refrain from any temptation.

“My grandma says that I should ask for a tea set and some recipe books for Christmas. But I’d rather have a Women in Ministry Communion Set, like the one my Aunt Glenna told me about. Also, I’d like a Barbie foot washing doll and a hymnal with inclusive language.

“Since we do not eat cookies at home, I will leave you a bowl of unsalted peanuts for your snack. Please do not throw the shells away, as they make good compost material.

“Have a safe trip, and I hope that all of this extra work for you doesn’t make you lose a sense of the true meaning of Christmas. Faithfully yours, Melanie G-G.

“P.S. Are you a conservative Mennonite yourself, or maybe Amish? Is that why you drive a sleigh? My dad says that while he doesn’t believe in you, he still supports your stance against the use of fossil fuels.”

Now wouldn’t letters like that be a refreshing change?—December 26, 1994

Letters

Pen pals are friends for life

The following is another letter inspired by a note about Words of Cheer pen pals (Sept. 22, page 34).

Would you be interested to hear from a 90-year-old lady who has had many years of satisfaction from *Words of Cheer* pen pals?

When I was 12 years old I wrote a letter to *Words of Cheer*, our Sunday school paper, hoping some girl my age would write to me. I received several letters, and a few of these girls became very dear friends.

We wrote, we visited, we phoned. Now I’m the only one living.

However, Anna (Horst) Yeager’s

daughter still comes to visit me. She and her husband were here again this fall. They live in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. It has been an enriching experience.—**Mary Shantz, Cambridge, Ont.**

Myth of redemption works in subconscious

Thank you for publishing Sue Steiner's sermons, particularly "The myth of redemptive violence" (Nov. 3, page 6). Using "Gunsmoke" as an example was a good choice. Why does a TV show like this continue to be so attractive?

It seems to me there are four levels to a show like this. First, the action of killing the gunslinger is seen as an immediate way of eliminating the threat. It is like capital punishment—an executed person will never again commit a crime. This could be labelled the utilitarian level.

Second, even though viewers know the outcome of the action, the producers create enough suspense and unexpected twists, so that there is a sigh of relief at the arrival of the "happy ending"—an entertainment level. Third, the forces of good always overcome the forces of evil—a moral view of the world.

Fourth, the most important level is a myth of deliverance. The good guy not only kills the bad guy, he also "delivers" the world from evil so that Dodge City is once again in a land of "promise."

This myth of deliverance makes a show like "Gunsmoke" popular for Christians. In the Exodus story, God delivers his people from Egypt; the theme of deliverance pervades the

scriptures. Christians believe that Christ will ultimately deliver us from this world of sin and death.

It is the third and fourth layers of an action show which would make a "little girl be so excited and oddly comforted." Children can sense that there is conflict around them. They also have a sense that some persons are kinder and gentler than others. Children are excited by the tension around them, and comforted by their experience of being delivered from discomfort or fear.

I am not suggesting that children are aware of the myth of deliverance underlying action shows. In fact, many adult viewers are also unaware of this. Perhaps that is what makes the myth so effective—it works below our consciousness.

Perhaps Christians can find ways of using their story of deliverance to reach those who cannot imagine deliverance in ways other than "redemptive violence."—**Jim Suderman, Winnipeg, Man.**

Education bill fools no one

In "Military recruitment increasing in U.S. schools" (Aug. 25, page 25), the U.S. president's education bill is incorrectly referred to as the "Leave No Child Behind Act."

The words, Leave No Child Behind, are actually the trademarked slogan of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF), an organization that has given children a voice in the halls of power for 30 years.

The Bush administration cleverly named its single-issue education bill "No Child Left Behind." The word

games may fool some people, but the inadequate funding for this bill fools no one. There is little chance it will improve outcomes in most school districts.

On the other hand, the comprehensive Dodd-Miller "Act to Leave No Child Behind," which CDF supports, addresses all the needs of children, including childcare, health insurance for all children, Head Start for every eligible child, housing, nutrition, and prevention of child abuse and neglect.—**Donna A. Lawrence, director, Children's Defense Fund, New York, N.Y.**

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.

Pontius' Puddle



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Sharing our sorrows

In her 70s, when my maternal grandmother no longer had children or grandchildren in her care, she sank into a deep depression. Her psychiatrist believed that she was having a delayed grief reaction “for her dead babies”—Jimmy, Dorothy and Bobby who died as infants, and Bill who died in a car accident when he was a young adult.

In a tragic coincidence, my father’s brother William, who was travelling with Bill, also died that night.

Each family has its stories of death and loss. The losses of these young lives shadows my early memories. The grief of my parents and grandparents took up occupancy in a corner of their hearts, like a persistent and unpleasant guest. Though little was said, the deaths hovered around our family dynamics.

When my brother died in a car accident in 1969, his loss added to our burden. We struggled on in our solitary ways.

Griefs have a way of piling up, particularly when carried alone. My own experiences with infertility and miscarriages led me back to my grandmother’s babies and to my family’s grief—what

the losses were and how they affected individuals and the family as a whole.

About 30 years after my brother died, I asked my dad how he coped with the loss. I was surprised to hear that he had little capacity to “feel” his son’s death at the time, because he was catapulted back into the trauma of his own brother’s death, long



held in silence. Dad didn’t stay stuck there though. In his retirement years, he read about grief, prayed and let go of those he’d buried years before.

Many Mennonite churches mark Eternity Sunday or *Totensontag* as the church year ends. In various ways, churches remember those who have died

and proclaim the Christian hope that Jesus has conquered death. Some congregations offer “longest night” services for those who are grieving. I appreciate the comfort they bring as individuals name their losses in the community of believers.

Grief counsellors stress the need to recognize the loss, and to psychically shift from relating to the loved one as a living presence to a sustaining memory. The process includes naming what one valued about the loved one, letting go of the attachment, and, while claiming that history, reinvesting energy in the living world. Individual grief journeys—both the pace and the form—are each unique.

“Earth has no sorrows that heaven cannot heal,” we remind ourselves in a familiar hymn. When I think of my family’s accumulated grief, I sometimes wonder if that’s true. One thing I do know is that sorrows shared in the community of faith are eased.

The writer, a counsellor and author, operates Family Ties in Winnipeg. She is a member of Charleswood Mennonite Church.

Gaza City, Gaza

Bulldozers come to Rafah...again

When the bulldozers came “it was like an earthquake,” said Fayez Abd el-Banna. He lost a four-storey home in October when Israeli military tanks attacked the refugee camps of Rafah, southern Gaza Strip and left 278 families homeless.

On November 9, Mennonite Central Committee and the Culture and Free Thought Association, an MCC partner in the Gaza Strip, distributed food

“Where are we going to live? In tents? How are we going to live?”

parcels and blankets. Each family received basic supplies such as oil, flour, beans and cheese—enough to last a family of seven for two weeks. MCC contributed \$14,146 for the local purchase of the food and blankets. MCC also joined with Catholic Relief Services in late October in another food distribution to more than 400 families in Rafah.

“This assistance is...a sign of solidarity from churches in Canada and the United States,” said Sami Barhoum, a member of Rafah’s local emergency committee, which ensures that relief is distributed fairly and efficiently.

Recipients remain fearful of what the future holds. “Winter is coming soon,” said Im Zuheir Dohan. “Where are we going to live? In tents? How are we going to live?”

The United Nations and the Rafah governor’s office have counted at least 1,250 people who lost their homes during October demolitions. The past three years of demolitions have left over 5,000 people homeless in Rafah alone. Some have found temporary lodging with extended families. Others are living in tents, schools and football

stadiums.

Rafah, in addition to being one of the most volatile parts of the occupied Palestinian territories—it is close to the border with Egypt and to Israeli settlements—is also the most economically depressed. Poverty and unemployment hover between 70 and 80 percent.

Although the stated objective of the military raids in October was to seal tunnels used for smuggling cigarettes, people, and weapons between Egypt and Rafah, Palestinians and international observers believe that the demolitions were part of an Israeli strategy to control the border with Egypt.

It is not the first time Rafah residents have lost their homes. Most of them are descendants of Palestinian refugees who lost their homes during the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 and have been forbidden by Israel to return to their villages. The recent house demolitions have reinforced for



Photo by Alain Epp Weaver

Fayeze Abd el-Banna is interviewed by a Rafah television station during MCC’s distribution of food.

Rafah’s residents their existence as stateless refugees.—From MCC release by **Alain Epp Weaver**

Baghdad, Iraq

School kits for children in Baghdad

The 570 girls crammed into 10 dusty classrooms at Bureir Bin Khuder Primary School here recently received school kits from Mennonite Central Committee and Architects for People in Need.

In one classroom of 67 students, Beyda Ahmed and Sabreen Abdelkhal share a narrow wooden bench. They look at the items in their kit.

“My favourite subject is Arabic,” says Beyda. “I like the crayons and pencils the best—for writing.” When the girls go home at noon, more than 700 boys come for four hours of classes.

Mainly Shi’i families from southern Iraq settled years ago in this Baghdad slum. The former regime proclaimed the settlement illegal, and for 30 years Hai Tareq has not received municipal services such as water and electricity. Raw sewage runs alongside paths and roads.

Nor were school buildings provided. In 1976 the community built this school.

The Ministry of Education eventually provided desks and blackboards.

Now the 30 teachers are being paid new salaries. The students are eager, now that they have materials to use. But difficulties remain.

“Water is the biggest problem in this area,” said Helga Fleischhacker, administrator of Architects for People in Need. With MCC’s support, water tankers are delivering clean water and jerry cans to residents of Hai Tareq.

MCC has also helped Indonesian churches to assist Iraqi children. The Inter-Church Body of Solo, which works for unity among Protestant churches in Indonesia, recently donated \$867 to help ship school kits to Iraq. Indonesian television had shown images of Iraqi suffering, and Indonesians of all faiths were looking for ways to help.

Since the war in Iraq officially ended, MCC has provided 86,846 school kits.—From MCC releases

Winnipeg, Man.

MEDA celebrates 50 years of 'doing business'

Just over 500 people gathered to celebrate "MEDA at 50" at the Fairmont Hotel here October 30 to November 2.

The anniversary convention included a look at the history of MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates), a call to be global citizens by Lloyd Axworthy (former Minister of Foreign Affairs), and performances by a variety of area musicians. There was lots of time for networking, tours and even a crokinole tournament.

The mission of MEDA is "to bring hope, opportunity and economic well-being to low income people around the world through a business-oriented approach to development." Other slogans heard during the convention: "Opting for the poor while keeping an eye on the bottom line," and "Searching out ways for the poor to dine at the global table." The annual report was entitled, "We mean business."

Mingling in the halls and meeting rooms, however, were not only business people, but church leaders, school presidents and even students. One of MEDA's goals is to develop more connections with students and churches.

MEDA members are proud of their organization.

"MEDA programs are the best-kept secrets that Mennonites have," declared Milo Shantz of Ontario in his look at the past. Rudolf Duerksen paid tribute to MEDA's legacy in Paraguay, a combination of Christian compassion and micro-credit that spurred development for both Mennonites and indigenous people.

Odette Austil, a long-time MEDA employee in Haiti, said she continues to be inspired by MEDA's vision of empowering the poor, despite experiencing six management changes and five government coups.

But will the vision survive into the next generation? Cal Redekop proposed agenda for the future: 1) globalize the MEDA structure, 2) involve more women, 3) energize young people by helping them study business in an Anabaptist setting, 4) share MEDA insights with the global development community.

"Micro-enterprise was invented by MEDA," said Redekop, "and now it is being trumpeted by the *New York Times* as a new discovery."

MEDA should draw from the "untapped equity sitting in the pews," suggested Peter Dueck, director of a new MEDA/MCC program in Vancouver. "We need to put our equity where our faith is!"

There were many excellent seminars to attend. A popular one is the "Economic forecast and commentary" provided by economists Henry Rempel of the University of Manitoba and Jim Harder of Bluffton College in Ohio. Their clear analysis of world trends and trade patterns was fascinating to this newcomer.

I discovered, for example, that the United States is the world's largest foreign debtor, and that de-linking subsidies from production would solve many problems of trade. At the heart of capitalism's troubles is executive pay, which has ballooned to 400 times the average wage earner. Also staggering was the statistic that there are currently more people in the world than the total of those who have ever lived.

Another fascinating seminar told the story of Mennonites in Russia from a business perspective. Mennonite factories produced 12 percent of all agricultural machines in Russia, said Wally Kroeker, editor of *Marketplace*, MEDA's magazine, and much of the flour. H.A. Niebuhr designed his flour mills on the Pillsbury model in the United States, which he had visited. Some of these large factories provided housing and medical services for their employees. (Niebuhr even built a spa based on the German model.)

Architect Rudy Friesen showed the evolution of Mennonite buildings in Russia, including commercial buildings in cities. Johann Esau, Mennonite mayor of Ekaterinoslav (now Dnepropetrovsk), built a tram system for his city and founded a university. Ken Reddig filled in the story of those who moved to the U.S.

In "How to succeed when Wal-Mart comes to town," Reg Litz from the University of Manitoba shared tips on

how small businesses can achieve success. In "The future of international development," Damian Von Stauffenberg, formerly with the World Bank, noted that MEDA's style of micro-finance is the new "fad" in development.

Ruth Shapiro of CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) spoke of the need to engage "civil society" in developmental issues, a theme echoed by Kiberia Kinweenjewa from East Africa. We need civil structures that involve human rights and empower people, said Kinweenjewa. He also emphasized that "Mennonites need to work with Africans in the quest for peace" before development can happen.

Lloyd Axworthy, at the Friday evening banquet, made a passionate plea for a change in thinking and way of doing business—to become global citizens. The former politician is currently heading efforts to change governments' focus from national security to human security, and from military intervention to the "responsibility to protect" people in conflict situations.

Convention-goers were treated to a parade of local musicians: baritone Phil Ens and the Faith and Life Male Choir, a string trio, and the Winnipeg Mennonite Children's Choir. George and Esther Wiebe led singing. Songwriter Steve Bell and Michael Card were featured at a fundraising concert during the weekend.

Preacher for the Sunday morning service was Renee Sauder of Waterloo, Ontario, who suggested that one's calling is where one's work and true passion coincide. Building on the example of Lydia in the New Testament, she commended listeners for using their talents to help others.

During the annual meeting, which was efficiently brief, members heard that donations were up 10 percent, to \$1.3 million this year. Canadian board members are (from west to east): Lorna Goertz, Kevin Neufeldt, Paul Tiessen, Dave Guenther, Lee Friesen, John Fast, Gloria Eby, Ron Mathies and Doug Wagner.—**Margaret Loewen Reimer**

'MEDA began with 'flying mission'

MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates) had its beginning in the "Flying mission" of 1952 when six North Americans flew to Paraguay at their own expense to see how they could help Mennonite war refugees there.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) had helped resettle these 5,000 Mennonites from Russia and provided aid, but these refugees had no means to rebuild their lives.

In December 1953, MCC director Orie Miller and seven other men decided to form an organization that would provide venture capital for needy people. Among the founders of MEDA were Ed J. Peters of California (chair), Erie Sauder of Ohio, C.A. DeFehr of Manitoba and Edward G. Snyder of Ontario. Most of the projects for the first decade were in Paraguay.

Initially, MEDA was organized as a corporation. Each member was expected to buy five common shares at \$10 each, and ten preferred shares at \$100 each. The 10 charter members pledged a minimum of \$5,000 each. Membership grew slowly, to 126 in 1971.

In 1974, MEDA changed from a for-profit corporation to a not-for-profit one,

both to attract more members and to make it easier to obtain government funds. (A long-time partner of MEDA is the Canadian International Development Agency.)

Meanwhile, Mennonites were forming other associations: Church, Industry and Business Associates (CIBA) in 1969, and Mennonite Business Associates (MBA) in 1973. These two joined to form Mennonite Industry and Business Associates (MIBA) in 1976.

In 1981, MIBA and MEDA merged to help people in business and the professions "connect faith and work in a needy world."

Today, MEDA has about 3,000 members and 190 staff in over 30 countries. It operates out of three North American offices: Winnipeg; Waterloo, Ontario, where MEDA president Allan Sauder is located; and Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

"Product lines" of MEDA include micro-finance, production-marketing linkages, investment fund development, community economic development, and member services.—**Margaret Loewen Reimer**

Anniversary symbol

The *Inukshuk*, a familiar Canadian icon inherited from the Arctic Inuit, was the symbol of the MEDA convention, "Business as a calling, 2003." The Inuit erected these figures of stone to mark the way for those who followed. Appearing in animated video clips



during the sessions, the *Inukshuk* was to remind MEDA members of those who showed the way, as well as bringing to mind the many "separate stones" making up MEDA, each supporting in a common

purpose, giving direction to those who will follow.

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World Vision International

"Providing exemplary leadership in business approaches to international development." *Mennonite Central Committee*

"Impressive down-to-earth business sense."

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

These are just a few of the compliments sent to Mennonite Economic Development Associates for our 50th anniversary. But they're really addressed to all our supporters—without you, MEDA's work would not be possible!



If you want to connect your faith and work in a needy world, contact MEDA at 1-800-665-7026 or visit www.meda.org

Read all the congratulatory notes at www.meda.org/50th/congrats.html

Waterloo, Ont.

Grebel dedicates ‘stunning’ new atrium

On November 9, with the sun streaming in through the huge windows, Conrad Grebel University College had a service of dedication for its new facilities, including a new four-storey atrium.

The new facilities include a student apartment building, residence extension, renovations and, tying it all together, the John E. Toews Atrium. Toews was honoured because of his success in development and fundraising as Grebel president from 1996 to 2003.

Renovations generated student lounge space and more music studios. The apartment building houses 32 students in 8 apartments. Together with the 26 new beds in the residence, the residence population has increased by 50 percent, to 174.

The atrium, linking the residence and office/classroom building, is the fulfillment of a 25-year dream, a dream which came true during the 40th anniversary year of the college. The project was funded by donations, beginning with a \$500,000 “challenge” gift. This campaign eventually raised \$1,402,000.

The atrium becomes the “gathering space” for the college.

“It is both a physical structure, and a symbol of the mystery and miracle of community building,” said Paetkau. And it creates accessibility to all floors with the addition of an elevator. The coffee bar is named “Common Ground” to symbolize this community space.

A commissioned sculpture, entitled “Ties that bind,” was fashioned in copper plate by artist Jo-Anne Harder, and funded by D’Arcy and Anne Luxton. Harder noted that creating the work was “both gratifying and terrifying.” The large wall sculpture portrays themes of place, memory and identity, separation and assimilation.

Paetkau and vice-chair Dawn Regier paid tribute to the many persons who worked on the project. Arnie Bender was project manager with Protrend Construction. Paul Penner, operations manager at Grebel, was applauded for his extraordinary efforts during the construction. The “coping committee”

and the custodial crew helped the college deal with the inconvenience and chaos.

Carolyn Sherk, former board chair, presented Toews with a copy of the plaque that names the atrium in his honour. Toews commented that the atrium was “stunning,” far beyond his expectations.

David Johnston, president of the University of Waterloo, also commended the college on the stunning construction. He noted the three distinctives of Conrad Grebel University College: Mennonite religion and culture, music, and peace studies.



Grebel photo

After the ceremony, people toured the new facilities and visited in the dining hall over coffee.—**Maurice Martin**

Winnipeg, Man.

CMU welcomes single board structure

Canadian Mennonite University adopted a single board structure and a new mission statement at its board meetings October 24-25.

“There’s no question this represents an historic shift in how CMU is governed,” says Gerald Gerbrandt, president. “It’s the end of an era, and the beginning of another...one which strongly positions us to move forward.”

On Saturday morning, the boards of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Concord College and Menno Simons College met a final time as distinct boards. The meetings concluded with reminiscing and celebration. Each board reflected on how it had gained an increased sense of cooperation with the others.

Then the boards met as the newly constituted CMU Council. Its first act was to elect an integrated CMU Board of Governors. Members are: Herta Janzen

of Winnipeg (chair); Kerry Enns of Gretna, Man. (vice-chair); Lois Coleman Neufeld of Winnipeg (secretary); Jake Thiessen of Altona, Man. (chair of finance); Eleanor Andres, Winnipeg; Walter Bergen, Abbotsford, B.C.; Ruth Friesen of Edmonton (appointed by Mennonite Church Canada); Harvey Goossen, Kitchener, Ont.; Ken Kliewer, Altona, Man.; Ed Reimer, Winnipeg; Harold Hildebrand Schlegel, Elkhart, Indiana; and Jane Woelk of Winnipeg (appointed by Mennonite Brethren Manitoba).

The board will also include one faculty and one student representative, and has an option of appointing two members-at-large. The first extended meeting is scheduled for December 5-6.

The board has representation from a broad range of Mennonite churches. While both ownership conferences—Mennonite Church Canada and

Barriere, B.C.

Breaking down barriers in Barriere

The first disaster came in August with flames that scaled mountains, scorched highways and leapt across rivers. As wildfire engulfed a sawmill and homes went up in smoke, the North Thompson area of British Columbia heated to unbearable temperatures.

One man, exposed to more heat than he could handle, dove repeatedly into the river, returning to fight the blaze that threatened his toolshed.

Young boys stranded at a mountain cabin watched the flames close in around them. With no paddles or life jackets, they got into a rowboat and floated out the fire in the lake with moose, bear and other wildlife.

A firefighter, struggling to protect a neighbour's home, burst through a wall of flame when the fire came at him from two directions. The home was saved but the man spent 21 days in a burn unit.

As the ashes settled across the valley, the stories painted a picture of a community transformed by fire. In addition to visible scars of burned homes and blackened hillsides,

community dynamics had changed.

The second disaster came in October when a tired community learned of another setback—Tolko Sawmill, the town's largest employer, announced that it would not reopen.

The random path of fire had already divided the population. Seventy-nine homes were destroyed while houses next door survived unscathed. Barriers formed between haves and have-nots, the insured and uninsured, the employed and unemployed.

Asking for assistance was difficult. Some turned to the church, others to the newly formed Community Recovery Committee for the North Thompson.

The volunteer labour of Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) was one resource. In September, MDS volunteers helped with cleanup and organizing a recovery committee.

"I've never been involved with charity before," said Rob Rutten, chair of the committee. Rutten lost his home and business to the fire.

Volunteers began framing, pouring concrete, laying tile and running wires. Further up Highway 5, they assembled roof trusses with volunteers from the Evangelical Free Church.

Karen Medland, pastor of the United Church, had begun working in Barriere before the fire. From her perspective, the fire provided a unique opportunity to work together.

"A door has opened into so many people's hearts," said Medland. "Our God of grace and love has come to surface and broken down more barriers than we could imagine."

MDS volunteers here will work through the winter. Those interested in assisting can phone (250) 672-5666. MDS is also collecting donations at 306-2265 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5J3.—MDS release by **Ted Houser**

Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba—have appointees, there are also members from the Evangelical Mennonite Conference and the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference.

The other milestone was the approval of CMU's new mission statement. It reads: "Canadian Mennonite University is an innovative Christian university, rooted in the Anabaptist faith, moved and transformed by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Through teaching, research and service CMU inspires and equips women and men for lives of service, leadership and reconciliation in church and society." This statement will be supplemented by two further statements—a series of basic commitments, and some program-specific statements (for Menno Simons College, CMU main campus and Outtatown—formerly the School of Discipleship).—From CMU

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Fishing for peace

I'm slouched comfortably in the nose of a fishing boat. The only sounds I hear are the rumble of waterfalls, the whiz of lures through the air and the calls of waterfowl companions.

Suddenly there's laughter. As we make our way to the other boat, my Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) colleague, Art Arbour, exclaims, with arms stretched a metre apart, "I caught a Northern Pike this big." It has been a good day.

Maria and Lillian Swain and their daughters have invited the members of the CPT Asubpeeschoseewagong project at Grassy Narrows, Ontario, out for a day of angling. We love to fish, but the day also fit with our mission to be peacemakers.

In November 2002, CPT was asked to be present at a blockade Grassy Narrows residents put up to assert their rights to their traditional lands. Initially, CPT's role centred on keeping the blockade peaceful, but it soon became apparent that we needed to help address the structural violence that underpins the reasons for the blockade. Relationship-building is fundamental to such work. That's where fishing fits in.

The necessity of repairing the strained relationship between natives and non-natives cannot be overstated. You've heard this story before: settlers came to these parts and flooded the Anishinaabe (Ojibway) with hydroelectric development, forced them into residential schools and reserves, dumped mercury into their waterways and logged their hunting grounds.

Although the blockade reacts against encroaching clear-cuts, the dispute is bigger than logging. As Joe Fobister of Grassy Narrows succinctly puts it: "Treaty rights are the issue."

In 1873, Joe's ancestors signed a Treaty #3 with the Canadian government to enshrine their right to hunt and trap. It is hard, however, to trap in a clear-cut. Abitibi Consolidated, the pulp and paper company, logs the forest with little appreciation for residents' right to trap, hunt, pick berries, harvest wild rice and pray in the forest. For years, residents participated in the official forest manage-



A resident of Grassy Narrows looks up the road to a clear-cut area.

ment process set up by the Ontario government.

After their concerns were repeatedly dismissed, they set up the blockade as a last resort.

Life at the blockade has been quiet this autumn since logging trucks have stopped using the road past Grassy Narrows. But logging continues in the community's traditional area, and a roving blockade could go up at a moment's notice. CPT's role in trying to keep things nonviolent will be as vital as ever.

We are also here to address the structural violence that affects the Anishinaabe nation on a daily basis. One way we do that is by connecting non-native people in Kenora—and elsewhere—with their First Nations neighbours here at Grassy Narrows.

The more connections we make, the more we can begin to restore a relationship that has been tarnished for too long. Fishing together is a start.

—**Nicholas Klassen**

The writer, who served as a CPT reserivist at Grassy Narrows, is from Vancouver.

Winnipeg, Man.

Martens joins team supporting logging protest

Lisa Martens of Manitoba, who returned from Iraq in June after a five-month stint there with Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), has joined a CPT project near Kenora, Ontario, where First Nations people are protesting clear-cut logging.

Martens and a CPT delegation of five people left for the area on October 31. (The delegation joined the full-time CPTers for 10 days.) They are supporting the Asubpeeschoseewagong Netum Anishnabek (Grassy Narrows First Nation) to reduce the risk of violence while citizens work to stop Abitibi Consolidated from clear-cutting the area.

CPT has been connected with the Grassy Narrows people since 1999.

"Working with the people of Asubpeeschoseewagong as they stop the

clear-cutting is about how I go about being a Christian white person," Martens stated. "Fortunately for my people, the indigenous people haven't broken the treaties from their end. Their part is to let people of European descent and other immigrants live here.

"But, corporations and governments are breaking the treaties from the other end, by clear-cutting for example, and that's where I'm partly responsible."

In recent decades, Grassy Narrows people have dealt with residential schools, forced displacement, flooding by hydroelectric dams and mercury poisoning from the pulp and paper industry. Treaty 3, made with the federal government, is supposed to protect the land for the use of indigenous people.

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from the provincial government. And there are several versions of Treat 3 and many interpretations. After trying conversational and legal means for years to stop the clear-cutting, members have now put up a series of blockades.

"They want to share responsibility for the forest instead of having decisions made without their genuine input," says Martens. Chemicals spraying is poisoning the berries and fishing is being threatened.

CPT members are present at the blockades and in the community to reduce the risk of violence, to encourage provincial and federal governments to respect the treaties and to invite church folks and others to work for better relations between themselves and indigenous nations.—From CPT release

New Waterford, N.S.

New 'frame' work builds cooperation in Maritimes

Conflict between labour and management has led to generations of division in this Cape Breton coal-mining town of 7,000 people. Since the industry's complete collapse in the late 1990s, the Sisters of Charity, in partnership with Mennonite Central Committee, have been encouraging people to work together.

"Some people had really lost their bearings," says Martin McCarthy, production manager at New Waterford Art and Frame, a business started by the sisters and MCC. Ideas for economic development offered by the new company represent a significant shift as people begin working on a more cooperative basis.

"Entrepreneurship is an issue for us," says McCarthy. It has been a challenge for people to start their own businesses. In the past, decisions were made on their behalf in a confrontational labour-versus-management manner.

But times have changed and so have people's attitudes. Those who have chosen to stay in the community despite massive layoffs want to take greater responsibility for their economic future.

Cape Breton's economy suffered its first major setback in the early 1990s when the federal government announced a moratorium on cod fishing. Cheap offshore coal dealt the region another massive blow and by 1998 the province's mining sector was gone as

well, forcing people to apply for social assistance or seek employment elsewhere.

MCC's presence here began with an invitation from local business owners wanting to identify their economic strengths and weaknesses. MCC commissioned a volunteer couple, experienced in economic development, to begin the foundational work for a new business venture. New Waterford Art and Frame was the result of their efforts.

Last spring, responsibility for the cooperative passed on to New Dawn Industries, a local development agency.



Margei Gillis believes that artists and members of the new art and frame cooperative will have the most impact on Cape Breton's economic future.

"We really need new business that is not connected to the collapse of the coal mines," says Margei Gillis of the Sisters of Charity, a board member of New Dawn. "It's going to be the artists, not the politicians" who will make the difference, she says.

The business, although not yet self-sustaining, is promoting its products "off-island" to tourists, through trade shows, on the Internet and to displaced Cape Bretoners looking for reminders of home.—From MCC Canada release

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

People with AIDS become care providers

Joyful ululations filled the room during a recent graduation ceremony here for AIDS care providers.

Although more than 500 people have completed the 10-day training course offered by the Meserete Kristos Church (Mennonite), this class was different. Nearly all of them are HIV-positive.

Care at home is crucial in a country where some 2.1 million people live with AIDS, and hospital beds and medicines are in short supply. But even family members who have been taught that HIV can't be spread through casual contact often shy away from interaction, says Samson Estifanos, former director of the program. They fear the illness and its stigma.

"HIV-positive people have less fear," he says. "And this service [as care-givers] also gives them a function in society."

The course, supported by Mennonite

Central Committee, includes training in caring for wounds, massage and mobilizing resources. The program pays HIV-positive care providers 10 birr—about \$1.52—for each home visit.

Most of the graduates, who range from teenagers to grandparents, have already seen spouses, parents or children die. Their stories illustrate the devastating impact that AIDS is having on Ethiopian families.

Bekelech Anito a mother of four, was



Photo by Matthew Lester

Shewarezad Ayalkibet, left, and Tirunesh Belachew, graduates from the AIDS care program, discuss their struggles with HIV.

terrified that her unfaithful husband would contract HIV from a prostitute. She begged church leaders for permission to divorce, but the church was hesitant to get involved. They knew she would not be able to support herself if she left her husband.

"We didn't give her case proper attention," admits a church elder. Anito's husband begged her forgiveness before he died of AIDS. Now she is living with the disease.

Zewdie Negussie, a farmer in his late 20s, believes he got AIDS from used needles after he was diagnosed with tuberculosis.

Others tell of involvement in prostitution and witchcraft before becoming Christians. Not all have found full acceptance within the church, but they are grateful for those who have shown God's love. Now it's their turn to return some of that love as they care for others.

MCC supports the AIDS training through its Generations at Risk program. In addition to training care providers and raising awareness about AIDS, the church offers counselling services, support for orphans, rehabilitative training for prostitutes and street children, and support groups. —MCC release

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Langley, B.C.

MCC sessions around 'God's table'

Inspirational and informational" was how one attendee described the annual sessions of Mennonite Central Committee British Columbia, held at South Langley Mennonite Brethren Church on November 1.

The day included storytelling, power point presentations, video and workshops, as well as business meetings for MCC's Supportive Care Services and Social Housing Society.

Keynote speaker Gladys Oyat from Uganda shared her enthusiasm about the theme for the day, "Around God's table."

"'Around God's table' depicts service, like Jesus' last supper with his disciples," she said, adding that the theme verse—Romans 12:4-5 (the body of Christ having many members) also depicts sharing, as we share our gifts with one another.

Oyat described the difficulty of life in Uganda. Even though the war has ended, it is not over, she said. She described those living in camps, and how thousands of children are abducted and forced to fight. But the church is bringing hope.

"It is amazing that many of you recognize the suffering of Ugandans even though you have never met us," she said. "You have given food, in the name of Christ, you have supported religious leaders with training, you have sponsored students through the Global Family project, you have supported us as we have fought AIDS. You are bringing resources around God's table. You don't know us, but you serve those in need."

The day included the official separation of MCC Social Housing Society from MCC B.C., and a change of name to More Than a Roof Mennonite Housing. MTR Mennonite Housing will relate to MCC B.C. much the same way that Mennonite Disaster Service and Ten Thousand Villages do.

Stories and images from Nicaragua and Jamaica brought to life the many ways that voluntary service workers strive for justice among those in need.

Nathan Janz told of weeding a field in Nicaragua because the farmer, Arcadio Artolah, also the pastor of the

local Mennonite church, was fighting to get his stolen cattle back. Artolah was spending weeks in the city—hours away from his farm—negotiating with the police.

"It was the least I could do," Nathan said, "helping ensure that this year's food supply was realized, showing Christ's love to a Nicaraguan brother and his family."

Roger Neill shared his elation as he saw justice done for Ivan Barrows, a man imprisoned for 29 years for breaking a window. Because of the efforts of Neill, a Christian journalist and the church that partnered with MCC, Barrows was restored to his family who thought he was dead.

Nine months later, Barrows was awarded \$9 million Jamaican for the illegal incarceration, Neill said, describing the outcome as a miracle from God. "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor," he said.

The day concluded with prayer and song, and participants feeling that they had been nourished "around God's table."—From MCC B.C. release

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Laird, Sask.

MCC Centre for Saskatchewan on its way

Over 200 people attended the opening session of the Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan annual meeting at Laird Mennonite Church on October 31 and November 1.

Over the course of two days, delegates chose a new chair for the board, reflected on MCC Saskatchewan's new vision, and heard from several speakers, including Ron Mathies, director of MCC, and Rick and Jan Janzen, Middle East directors. They marvelled at the against-all-odds advancements achieved by MCC Saskatchewan during the past year.

To start the weekend, MCC auctioned off a *kilim*, a 40-year-old hand-woven rug from Iraq. Brought back by George and Pearl Richert who worked on an MCC assessment team in Iraq, the rug was sold for \$2,000 to a group from Osler Mennonite Church. The *kilim* will be on display in the church.

On Saturday, the emphasis was on reports and elections. John Elias of Saskatoon replaces Lucille Wall as board chair. Elias has been connected to MCC over 24 years, mainly in the field of mental health. He has also worked with Ten Thousand Villages as a consultant.

The reporting was upbeat. Dennis Heinrichs talked about Ten Thousand Villages' mission to create work for people in developing countries. Plans to open a new store in Saskatoon are on the way.

In Regina, a remarkable turnaround in leadership has occurred. For a long time, two different groups ran the Villages program, one in Saskatoon and the other in Regina. After struggling through persistent revenue losses this past year, the independent board in Regina stepped down. The Saskatchewan board has opened a new store in Regina, bringing the total number of Village stores in Saskatchewan to four.

A controversial topic that has brought delegates to their feet on numerous occasions has seemingly cooled down. After a series of meetings in March, the redevelopment of the Saskatoon office has gone ahead. Construction began in spring and Phase 1 of the MCC Centre should be finished by Christmas.

Peter Schroeder, project manager, is excited about the progress being made.

"A lot of the constituency was concerned about the cost," he noted, but money is being saved. "We thought we would need a water and sewer system coming into the building and also build a retaining wall," but the sewer system wasn't necessary and the retaining wall was financed in part by the adjoining business, reducing the cost by approximately \$40,000.

An MCC fundraiser in mid-September at the 45th Street office brought in \$20,000.

"We still need more volunteers," he pointed out. "It's slower going with volunteers but more cost-effective." Cost effective is what people in Saskatchewan want to hear.

Renovations reflect the vision approved at the delegate meeting in March: "...that we become a stronger, more effective witness in our community."—

Karin Fehderau

Coaldale, Alta.

MCC Alberta hears plea from Uganda

As head of a girls school in northern Uganda, Gladys Oyat lives with the knowledge that any of her 550 students could disappear against their will and never come back.

Oyat spoke to the 150 people gathered in the Coaldale Mennonite Church on October 24-25 for the 36th sessions of Mennonite Central Committee Alberta. She spoke about the 17-year conflict in Uganda where more than 26,000 children have been abducted, including about 5,000 in the past year.

About 800,000 of the 1.2 million people in the Ochoi region have been left homeless and live in refugee camps.

"Keep praying for us," said Oyat. Her visit to increase awareness and to muster international pressure for an end to the fighting in northern Uganda has been sponsored by MCC and MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates).

Rachel and Everest, who are working in a prison ministry in Uganda, delighted the crowd with a lively rendition of the song, "Jesus set me free." Who wouldn't be enthused about their Jesus, when hearing the joy that emanated from them.

During the Friday evening service, Esther Epp-Tiessen of MCC Canada Peace Ministries brought an update on Iraq.

"The soul of Iraq is suffering, and the future is uncertain," she said. However, they are a people of dignity, great hospitality, resilience and strength. The relief buckets and school kits that MCC sent showed the people that someone cared.

Nathaniel Bimba spoke on Liberia, Yayumi Uyeno on the Summerbridge program of MCC Canada, and John Hubert on his recent trip to Iran.

MCC is for everyone—there is always room for one more at God's table. This invitation was extended over and over as people gathered for the meeting.

Mennonite Mutual Insurance reported growth in premium income, in the number of policyholders and participating churches, and in commercial insurance policies. Twenty percent of the organization's net income is contributed to MCC Alberta.



Photo by Karin Fehderau

Students from MCC's International Visitor Exchange Program lead worship during the MCC Saskatchewan meeting.

As soon as the building permit is in place, the work on a new office building for MCC Alberta, attached to the existing thrift store, will begin at 2946 32 St. NE in Calgary. This \$1.5 million project will also house Mennonite Mutual Insurance, Mennonite Church Alberta, and the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta.

Two new thrift stores were opened in the past year, in addition to the Calgary and Lethbridge stores. The Edmonton store opened on May 3 and an outlet store opened in southeast Calgary.

The Kanadier Concerns office changed its name to Services for Low German Mennonites. The office moved in July from Lethbridge to Taber, where it shares a building with the school division and the Lethbridge Community College. Video clips introduced us to two success stories of Low German Mennonites—a welding business and a family greenhouse project.

The MCC relief sale in Didsbury in June raised \$114,000. Coaldale will host the 2004 sale on June 18-19. A silent auction was entertaining as well as income generating. The 2004 budget of \$2.77 million (a 4 percent increase) was accepted.

Other reports included the MCC women's network, refugee sponsorship and peace ministries. Erwin Braun, who has chaired the MCC Alberta board for the past five years, handed the reins over to Phil Klassen.

The grace for meals reminded us that around God's table hunger ends and freedom, peace, justice and mercy reign.
—Anne Neufeld

News brief

World church leaders meet

Secretaries of Christian World Communions met in Cyprus on October 20-26 with Larry Miller, executive secretary of Mennonite World Conference, as moderator. Miller was elected chair for 2003 and 2004. Representatives of 18 denominations, including evangelical and reform Protestant churches, Anglican, Catholic, Orthodox and interchurch bodies, attended. Each day began with prayers. Like every year, much of the meeting was devoted to reports from each communion. Among the presentations was a history of Cyprus and the roots of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus. Bishop Nikiforos, abbot of the Monastery of Kykkos, hosted the event.—From MWC release



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FOCUS

Mission & Service

SALTERs begin assignments

Akron, Pa.—Fifteen Canadians participated in a SALT orientation at Mennonite Central Committee headquarters August 23-29. SALT (Serving And Learning Together) is a one-year overseas program for young adults.

From British Columbia: Lynn Carlson of Hanceville, Community church, teacher in Uganda; Miriam Maxcy of Port Coquitlam, English teacher in Laos; Jonathan Tomm of Vernon, Baptist church, AIDS coordinator in Lesotho.

From Alberta: Sara Laflamme of Grand Prairie, English tutor in Indonesia; Bonnie Mikalson of Calgary, Foothills Mennonite Church, English tutor in Germany; Laura Paetkau of Gem, Rosemary Mennonite Church, daycare worker in Egypt.

From Saskatchewan: Casadi Weber of Guernsey, Mennonite Brethren church, day-care assistant in Bolivia.

From Manitoba: Stacey Dyck of Starbuck, Springstein Mennonite Church, children's shelter in Ukraine; Tristan Isaak of Winnipeg, Jubilee Mennonite Church, development worker in Philippines; Angela Reimer of Winnipeg, Fort Garry Evangelical Mennonite Church, nursery school teacher in Tanzania.

From Ontario: Anita Streicher of Heidelberg; Hawkesville Mennonite Church, teacher in South Korea; Duncan Taylor of Barrie, Harvest Bible Chapel, teacher in Zambia; Paul Sauder of Waterloo, Erb Street Mennonite Church, tutor in Indonesia. Sharon Schroeder of Stratford, Avon Mennonite Church, documentation for Asia action groups in Hong Kong.

From Quebec: Emily Houweling of Terrasse-Vaudreuil, Christian Reformed, English tutor in Haiti.—From MCC release

Sampling life in Albania

A sabbatical leave and an invitation from friends working in Albania led Leon and Naomi Zimmerman and their four children to spend August to October in Lezhe, Albania, under Eastern Mennonite Missions.

The family lived in a one-bedroom flat



Called to Care...



Liliana is a 37-yr-old Colombian Mennonite Church leader. She has been nurtured by the Colombian Mennonite Church, a ministry supported in part through the gifts of generous donors to Mennonite Church Canada's work in a country torn apart by civil war for over 50 years.

She has nurtured souls in small villages, led Bible studies, worked in an orphanage, rebuilt homes, and started micro businesses. She has also endured death threats.

Liliana continues her studies at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Bogotá, a school supported in part by Mennonite Church Canada. She says, "I could never just study theology. For me it has to be made practical.

I have to work with my hands even while I'm thinking theologically."

There are many, many stories like Liliana's in 42 countries around the world where you will find MC Canada supported ministry and workers. We are there because we believe God has called us to care, and to offer Jesus' compassion, reconciliation, and peace.

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and studied language for four weeks. Leon, president of Rosedale Bible College in Ohio, and Naomi taught English, gave seminars on family and worked with kids' clubs. Son Caleb, 11, learned to play soccer and even gave some lessons in baseball.

The Zimmermans, who learned to live with frequent electric and water cuts, worshipped with Albanian believers and had frequent opportunities to preach, teach and travel.

"It was an exciting challenge for us to live out our faith in a setting where there are so few Christian models," said Leon.—From EMM release

Walk for world hunger

George Zondervan, 69, recently completed a seven-month "Food for all" walk across Canada. He raised money for world hunger through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

The walk began on March 29 in Stanley

Park, Vancouver, and ended on October 25 at Pier 21 in Halifax, a significant site to Zondervan and his wife—they first touched Canadian soil here when they emigrated from Holland shortly after World War II.

The 7,700-kilometre walk raised \$75,000.—Foodgrains Bank release

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Coaldale, Alta.

Coaldale church gives thanks for 75 years

Thanksgiving weekend marked the 75th anniversary of Coaldale Mennonite Church. The motto for the celebration was Psalm 78:1: "Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth."

Saturday's program included reminiscing and early history. A power point presentation provided an overview of the many ministers who served without pay, as well as choirs, youth groups and members who served at home and abroad.

Peter Unger, a lay minister from 1947 to 1956, paid tribute to the many servants of the church. The first meetings were held in homes. Sunday School began in 1930. The first Vacation Bible school was held jointly with the United Church, with 225 pupils.

Catechism classes began in 1931. Students sat in the front row and were expected to answer questions. Baptism was held on or near Pentecost, depending on the availability of a bishop. Frank W. Dyck organized the first choir, a tradition we have upheld.

Our first salaried pastor was hired in 1967, when the lot fell on Peter and Helen Retzlaff. In the ensuing years, Norman and Irma Bergen, Peter and Justine Funk, Ed and Agnes Balzer, served us well.

Erna Goertzen presented the work of the three women's organizations. The Taber group, begun in 1930, has disbanded because of the age of its members. The Sunbeam group began in 1945, Goodwill Club in 1968.

Joan Willms reported on mission projects. Church plants were attempted in Purple Springs, Barnwell, Taber and Lethbridge. The first two did not materialize. Taber was active for many years but closed its doors a few years ago. Lethbridge celebrated its 25th anniversary last February.

Helen Willms Bergen served for 33 years in Taiwan. A number of nurses did shorter stints in South America and northern Canada. In the past 15 years our group has sponsored four

refugee families and contributed financial aid to a home for the aged in Zaporizhya. Recently a number of people travelled to El Salvador to teach and help rebuild. Locally, many are involved with the food bank, Handi Bus and hospital.

Many people have devoted time to Mennonite Disaster Service, the MCC store and Ten Thousand Villages. The first MCC sale in Alberta was held in Coaldale in 1975.

Ed Balzer presented a meditation on Sunday morning, and C.L. Dick in the afternoon.

We praise God for the dedication of our ministers, Sunday school teachers and guest speakers who inspired us to serve in the name of Christ. Members of our church have touched the lives of people throughout the world.—From report by

Olga Epp



Bethany Janzen relays greetings from her grandfather, Norman Bergen, a former minister in Coaldale.

Plum Coulee, Man.

Congregation pays tribute to pastor's 40 years

On November 9, Plum Coulee Bergthaler church celebrated a joyous occasion—Henry Neufeld's 40 years of faithful ministry. The celebration began with congregational singing and special music focusing on God's faithfulness.

Allen Funk, lay minister, spoke words of appreciation for Neufeld's four decades of leadership. He highlighted Neufeld's career as a public school teacher, deacon, and lay minister in a duo-language church.

In Funk's words, Neufeld was "always a leader, a spokesperson and a mediator, who always gave honour and glory to God."

A full sanctuary, including members of his family, heard Neufeld speak on "The man named Jesus." Neufeld drew attention to some of Jesus' powerful illustrations. "Make sure you're following Jesus," he said.

Following worship, everyone was invited to a fellowship lunch. Glen Siemens, current pastor, paid tribute to Neufeld. "You have been here for most of

my life and you have modelled retirement in continued service in the kingdom of God," said Siemens. He invited others to honour Neufeld by "speaking words of blessing to a man who has blessed us."

Wayne Rempel referred to Neufeld's inspiring others, especially the youth. Brian Derksen related how Neufeld's interest in young people has shaped his life. Neufeld's daughter Sharon spoke about her father's "solemn and serious commitment to his calling as deacon. When we answer the call to lead, we enable others," she said.

Neufeld's grandson Carl, who grew up in Brazil with missionary parents, related how he is "following in grandpa's footsteps—teacher, public speaking, history, debating."

In response, Neufeld articulated deep appreciation for the support of his wife, Anne. His last word? "Thank you for letting God work in your lives. I want to continue to do the work that is left for me to do. And maybe slow down a bit."

—From report by **Cleo Heinrichs**

Hope, B.C.

Rhythm of seasons inspires B.C. women

As leaves fell outside, women at the B.C. Women in Mission retreat at Camp Squeah experienced not only the beauty of autumn, but that of spring, summer and winter.

The theme for this year's October 17-19 retreat was "The rhythm of the garden," led by sisters Benita Warkentin of Greendale and Angelika Dawson of Abbotsford. In four sessions, the speakers went through the seasonal changes in the garden, comparing them to seasons in the Christian life.

Multi-media presentations introduced each worship service. While a string trio played selections from Vivaldi's "Four seasons," slides of nature, in the appropriate season, were shown.

Dawson opened the Friday evening session on spring against the background of a white picket fence decorated with blossoms, flowerpots and a quilt pieced with spring pictures. Spring, with its flowering plants and beautiful colours, is a time of rebirth, she said. Spring's plantings show us that anything worthwhile takes an investment of time, and that it is not we who produce the results, but God.

A hammock and plants decorated the stage for Saturday's session on summer. "Summer is one big holiday—or is it?" asked Warkentin as she talked about the busiest time of year for a gardener. Reading the parable of sower and seed from Mathew 13, she gave examples of how many who have heard the Word fail to lead productive lives.

The heart must be cultivated, she said, so that the thorns and rocks in our lives don't choke out the good things.

Dawson took the stage, now decorated with a hay bale, colourful leaves and a Thanksgiving quilt, for the segment on fall. This is a bittersweet time for gardeners, she noted, with plants dying and bright colours fading. This season can teach us lessons about life, for in the barren times we must rely on God.

Dawson led the final session on Sunday morning. This time the winter

theme was evident: a freshly cut evergreen tree, Christmas lights, and artificial snow. As the garden must rest in wintertime, so there are times when we must slow down to be rejuvenated.

Love and hurry are incompatible, said Dawson. Jesus knew the value of rest after work and spent time in communion with God. So must we.


Warkentin led a communion service that integrated all of the seasons and included a time of sharing and prayer. The two sisters also led singing throughout the weekend, accompanied by piano, guitar and the string ensemble.




Benita Warkentin (left) and Angelika Dawson lead worship at the women's retreat.

Participants affirmed the weekend with comments such as, "Wonderful," "I loved the music," and "Best retreat I've ever attended."—**Amy Dueckman**

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Tips for a fabulous Christmas

Let me make a few things clear right off the top. I am frugal (unless you're talking about dessert or cowboy boots). My best adult Christmases were living on a voluntary service stipend of \$45 a month. So Christmas and its hoopla can be paralyzing for Scrooges like me.

Even so, I recently went to the library to see what popular magazines have to say about the season. I found the following tips to make my holidays fabulous and festive:

- Spray my tinsel with Static Guard to combat static electricity.
- Make a wreath out of toothpicks and eight pounds of cranberries.
- Give miniature shortbread cookies to all my friends.
- Watch *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*.
- Clear out the front closet, prepare party refreshments, get out the Christmas music, and type up recipes on festive paper for a cookie exchange.
- Host a skating party and a potluck dinner, attend a yoga class, do a Christmas crossword, volunteer at a soup kitchen, take an elderly friend shopping, see a doctor about anxiety, read *The Gift of the Magi* aloud, and pen a heartfelt letter to a loved one.
- Decorate theme trees for every room in the house.

Better Homes and Gardens wants me to breathe new life into my holiday greeting card display with playful spiral cording. It also advocates using 100 lights and 40 ornaments for every vertical foot of tree.

Oprah suggests I create my own family, give a goat to the Heifer Project, teach someone to read, donate a cell phone to a victim of domestic violence, take my pet to visit people in the hospital, read to the blind, give away a book I love.

Good Housekeeping suggests I go shopping with a friend, while *Chatelaine* tells me to leave my credit cards at home. Gift ideas include peace of mind with pet insurance, a second computer, hand blown Venetian glass ornaments (\$60 each), silk sachets made of antique Japanese kimonos, and a chic CD case filled with CDs.

To prevent illness during this busy

time, I should have ready pain relievers, cough suppressant, a digital ear thermometer, a humidifier, electrolyte replacement fluid and nasal lubricant.

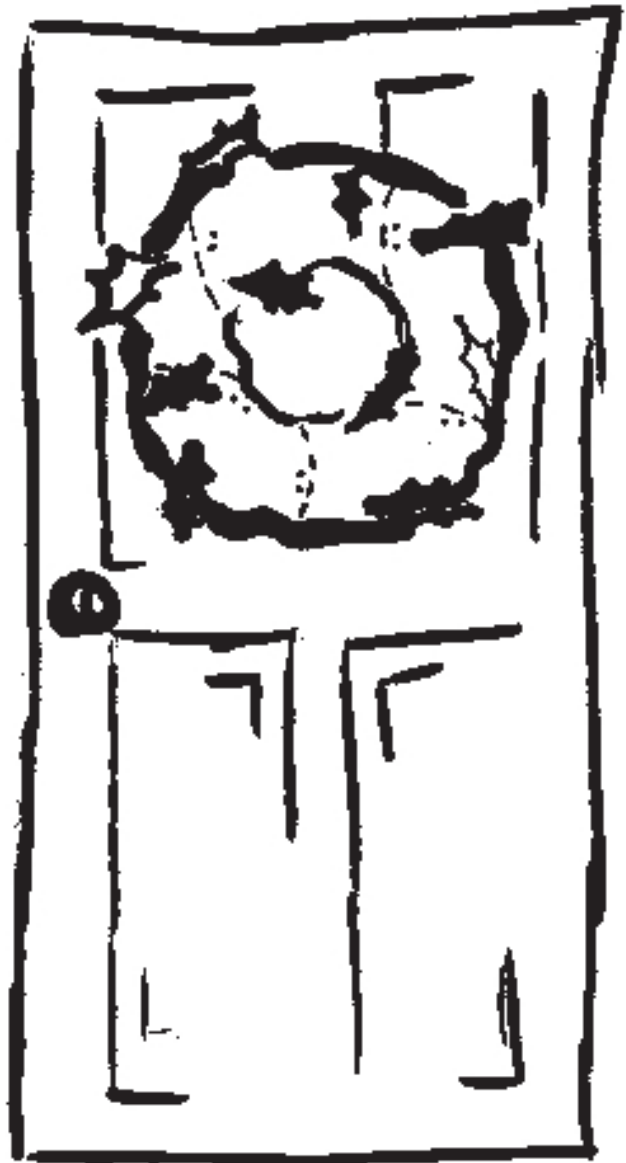
In my spare time, I can make Santa dolls out of two-litre plastic pop bottles, gilded placemats covered with organza and gold trim, cinnamon stick reindeer place cards, and cross-stitched snowflake ornaments. I have step-by-step directions on how to carve a nativity scene out of gourds and turn hay bales into a Santa Village.

Travel and Leisure suggests I spend Christmas bobsledding in the Adirondacks, eating lobster puff pastry at a Swiss Chateau, or enjoying the view atop the Park Hyatt Hotel in Tokyo.

The same magazines that want me to lose 10 pounds before Christmas have recipes for Swiss cheese tarts, Mexican wedding cookies, Portuguese salt cod casserole for Christmas Eve, Cape Breton cranberry loaf, Ukrainian boiled wheat, and chocolate raspberry Yule log decorated with sugared rose petals.

For Boxing Day, they offer exciting new suggestions for turkey pizza, turkey and greens, turkey pilaf, and Asian turkey noodle stir-fry.

I adore the people in my world who take some of this to heart: my mom—a black belt decorator and hostess; my sister—baker of fruitcakes and mincemeat tarts; my husband—tree



shopper and gravy maker. Me—I surrender. Brushing, blushing, wrapping, gluing, shopping, baking, weaving, rushing, frosting, accessorizing, glossing, sparkling—I am defeated.

I will hang a wreath on the door, wrap a few presents, listen to Dylan Thomas reading "A Child's Christmas in Wales," and celebrate on December 25 with the comforting knowledge that Easter is less than four months away.—**Doris Daley**

The above is from "a little piece I wrote for the Trinity Mennonite Church Christmas gathering" in Calgary last year, says the writer.

Ordination unbiblical, declares lecturer

Presenting the 17th annual Benjamin Eby Lecture at Conrad Grebel University College on November 7, John E. Toews declared, "Ordination for church ministry through the laying on of hands as practised in the church is without biblical foundation."

Toews, president of the college from 1996-2003 and a New Testament scholar, began his lecture on a personal note. He comes from a family with a long history of church leaders. He has spent 20 years teaching and training church leaders. He believes in the importance of clearly-defined church leadership.

But for 45 years, Toews has struggled with the concept of ordination.

"It seems to be out of sync with an Anabaptist view of the church," he said. "In most denominations, ordination is viewed as a sacrament, giving lifetime status to those who are ordained. Mennonites have tried to 'desacramentalize' it, but it still is seen by many to confer special privilege and status."

He added that in some places, ordination "has even been strengthened by adding the anointing of oil, normally in biblical thought associated with the special status of kingship...." The early church rejected anointing because it set apart a priesthood.



Toews

Speaking from his Mennonite Brethren background, Toews noted that the MB church was always ambivalent about ordination. He observed that John Howard Yoder and the Concern group were convinced that there is no ground in the New Testament to see ordination for some and not for others.

Two issues have emerged for Toews: 1) The practice of ordination has a weak biblical foundation, and 2) How do we relate ordination to the New Testament emphasis on the spiritual gifting of all Christians for the ministries of the church?

Toews focused particularly on I Timothy 4:14, which could be seen as the only text supporting ordination. The "laying on of hands" in this text, however, is associated with receiving charismatic gifts, not conferring office. Timothy has received a special endowment of the Spirit, associated with prophecy. This is affirmed by the community laying on hands.

Timothy was never called an elder or a pastor. He was simply Paul's assistant. So it is not clear what "laying on of hands" means in this context. It may even refer to Timothy's baptism, Toews concluded.

In exploring similar passages, Toews

did note that sometimes people were commissioned for a particular ministry.

Moving to the historical context, Toews noted that the practice of ordination emerged in the third century as part of the centralization and institutionalization of the church.

He also addressed the matter of "call." Affirmation for ministry should be based on giftedness plus the affirmation of the Christian community, not from an inner sense of call. He noted wryly that he has often dealt with eager seminarians who felt thus "called."

What are his suggestions for the church? He said

Mennonites should discontinue the use of ordination language, and unhook it from special status. Ministry belongs to the whole people of God. Some are gifted to lead, to enable others to use their gifts. These leadership roles can be discerned by the church. The church does need leaders.

He invited the church to develop a creative ceremony to bless and commission people for specific ministries.

Responses to his lecture were varied. What is the nature of sacrament in a world already largely desacralized (i.e. secular)? was one question. Another person asked whether our view of ordination is really concerned with status. He sees it as a functional term—gifts plus responsibility equals ordination. In the New Testament, perhaps baptism itself is an ordination for ministry.

Another respondent asked whether ordination has to be totally biblically based, or whether it has its own historical, ecclesial legitimacy. Toews responded: "Then let's be honest about this."

Toews' lecture will be published in the Spring 2004 issue of the *Conrad Grebel Review*.—**Maurice Martin**

'In most denominations, ordination is viewed as a sacrament, giving lifetime status to those who are ordained. Mennonites have tried to desacramentalize [ordination].'

*And the Grinch, with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow,
stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so?*

*It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came
without packages, boxes or bags.*

*And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore.
Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before.*

*What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a
store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit
more? ~Dr. Seuss*



www.everunder.com/land/thegrinch/

Education in Ukraine: Stories of hardship and hope

In October, six educators from North America visited Ukrainian schools on a Mennonite Central learning tour. Canadian participants were Angelika Dawson and Art Janzen from Abbotsford, B.C. Following are reports on that trip.

Leaves carpeted the pathway to Kiev School #31. Inside, students had decorated the windows and doors with leaves for Teacher's Day, the first weekend in October. Flowers and chocolates covered the tables in the office of Tamara Vasilievna Vecherkovskaya, director of the school.

The day was an appropriate beginning for Mennonite Central Committee's learning tour for educators. The group visited schools in Kiev, Tokmak region (former Molotschna Mennonite colony) and the city of Melitopol. The North Americans met with teachers and students from pre-school to secondary school, and visited a teachers' college and two *internats*—residential schools for children from difficult situations.

At each school, the guests were given a cultural presentation and observed classes in session. Although uniforms were not required, the dress code was conservative and formal. Along with the usual courses—math, geography, physics, literature, art and music—a school in Molochansk taught children traditional Ukrainian embroidery and its relevance for today.

Although the set-up of the classroom was more formal than in North America, interaction between teacher and student was familiar, something that has been changing since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

"Compared with when I went to school, what I saw today is very progressive," said Olga Novikova, a curriculum writer who toured a Kiev school with the MCC group. "Allowing kids to make choices and even differ with the teacher—this helps because our kids feel listened to."

It was evident that resources are minimal. Most teachers in Ukraine seek other means of income to supplement their meagre salaries. Schools, hallways were dark and most classrooms dimly lit to save money. Potted



Photo by Angelika Dawson

Art Janzen from British Columbia presents flowers in honour of Teacher's Day to Tamara Vecherkovskaya, director of School #31 in Kiev. Mary Raber (right) translates.

plants, however, created a cheerful atmosphere.

Ukrainian teachers wanted to know what challenges their North American colleagues face.

"We have many of the same problems that you have," said Rose Malamma, a teacher from California who spoke to a question about discipline. "Having money doesn't mean you don't have any problems." Ukraine teachers sighed when they learned that their visitors live quite comfortably on their salaries.

Despite the difficulties, it was evident that the teachers love their profession.

"It's our calling; we love children," said a teacher from Molochansk. "They also give us a lot—it's a magical thing."

"Our teachers are here because they love their work and they love our students," Vecherkovskaya said.

It was this commitment despite hardships that impressed the learning tour.

MCC provided grants to help schools obtain textbooks and materials. It also gives scholarships for students in the Tokmak region. Students who receive these scholarships return to their villages to teach for a time.—**Angelika Dawson**

Christian ethics replacing Soviet values

Imagine your entire worldview being called into question and having to rebuild from scratch. Where would you turn for new values? After the collapse of the Soviet Union, educators have faced this challenge.

Some teachers have turned to Christian ethics. Ukrainian law forbids teaching of religion, but in 4 provinces out of 24, a subject called "Christian ethics" is being taught. Students study the lives of Bible heroes, the Ten Commandments, and the life and teachings of Christ.

Teachers are expected to be Christians, although not all are, and have special training. Children attend the classes with the written permission of parents.

North American teachers who visited Ukraine in October met people involved in this work at REALIS, a Christian education centre in Kiev. Sergei Timchenko, director, described its mission as working with educators "so that the light of Christ can be seen in this country."

"We have this clear space between the necessity of moral education and

Children given new chance at House of Hope

Sergei is a quiet boy, but not too shy to approach a visitor. "I want to show you something," he says softly, and leads me down the hall to his bedroom at House of Hope in Priazovske, Ukraine. He takes a Lego contraption from the table and puts it into my hand.

"It's an airplane," he explains, adding immediately, "I want to show you something else." This time we go to his classroom where he rummages around in his desk until he finds an album of drawings: trees, fields, another airplane, a building.

"These are good pictures, Sergei," I say. "You must like to draw."

"God makes me do it," he answers.

The 26 children at House of Hope hunger for contact with caring adults. Few parents ever visit.

The children all play and have fun

"and it looks as though they're enjoying a wonderful, happy childhood," noted Ivan Demyanenko, the pastor of the tiny church that founded House of Hope. But at night he once heard nine-year-old Sergei crying.

"Why are you crying?" Ivan asked him.

"I have a little sister and I want her to live with me," Sergei replied. Sergei's father left his family and disappeared and his mother has rejected him. "We try to do everything possible so that our children would be well and have all they need," explains Ivan. "But inside every one of them has a feeling of worthlessness, of frustration. These children show feelings of grief and a sense of having been injured by life."

The goal of the staff at House of Hope is that each child will come to know Christ.

"Not all of these children will finish higher education," says director Svyetlana Chervonchenko. "But if they find peace with God, they will know how to live."

Besides daily prayer, the children regularly attend worship and visit the homes of church members. Konstantin (Kostya) Borodin, a Baptist member who works at the home, drives the children to church on Sundays, piling far more than the legal limit into a small car.

"I tell the kids, 'If the cops stop us, tell them we don't have room to give them a lift,'" he jokes.

Over time the staff do see positive changes in the children. For example, a boy who joined House of Hope earlier in the year could not stop stealing. He would creep about the rooms at night...once making off with the possessions of 13 sleeping people!

"We tried everything," remembers Kostya. "We lectured him. We punished him. We had the other children talk to him. Nothing worked. Finally we asked, 'What is it that you want?'"

"He said, 'I want everything. As soon as I see that someone else has something, my hands stretch out to take it.'"

At their wits' end, the staff told the boy to make a list of everything he wanted. He worked on it for several days, filling three sheets on both sides. When he was finished, everyone set about giving the boy as much as they could from the list.

"That went on for a couple of days," says Kostya, "And then he started giving the things back!"

Does he still steal?

"Well," Kostya grins, "maybe only once every couple of months, and then only from one person at a time. And he prays that God would help him stop stealing!"—**Mary Raber**

The writer works with MCC in Ukraine.

nobody knowing how this is done," Sergei says. "The highest value now is survival, making a living."

Sergei is afraid that Christian ethics will become another ideology rather than an encounter with the living God. Others do not share his caution.

Hope to People, an evangelical mission, creates curriculum and information about Christian ethics for teachers.

Elena Obednikova and Olga Novikova work with Hope to People in the city of Rovno, where they meet with teachers weekly. Because of good teachers in Christian ethics, Christian clubs have developed in some schools.

"Children go to Christian club and invite their friends," says Obednikova. "Here the kids say, 'Before Christian ethics my life was totally different; I didn't understand my parents, for example.' Then they tell other children what their teachers have taught them."

The ethics classes are also addressing social concerns, and school directors have noted changes in the lives of students who take part.

MCC supports weekly discussion groups for teachers and scholarships for students at the Ostrog Academy National University, an institution that grants teachers' certificates in Christian ethics. MCC has also funded curriculum materials, developed by Hope to People and the Ostrog Academy.—**Angelika Dawson**

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Photo by Jake Olfert

Planners for Assembly 2004 met at the Winkler Bergthaler Church in September to view the facilities and begin planning for the July 7-11 event. The theme will be “Enough for all,” based on the feeding of the five thousand. Back row, from left: Dan Dyck (staff, Program Committee), George H. Ens (Local Hosting chair), Craig Friesen (Program Committee chair), Pam Peters-Pries (staff, Program Committee), Mildred Roth (Program Committee). Front row: Karen Peters (staff, Program Committee), Viola Enns Woelk (Children’s Assembly coordinator), Pam Driedger (Worship coordinator), and Karen Schellenberg (Program Committee).

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Report on vision and identity process

In August, MC Eastern Canada hired Marianne Mellinger and Maurice Martin to develop a renewed vision, identity and ministry model for the conference. They conducted over 20 interviews with staff, commission members and ministerial cluster groups.

At a November 19 meeting, they identified three key issues that need attention as MC Eastern Canada shapes its future.

1. *Identity* (Who are we? What holds us together?) The conference is in its 15th year since the integration of three former conferences. In addition to a common Germanic “ethnicity,” those three groups had common historical

and theological roots. Now there is an emerging multiculturalism and greater theological diversity.

In this large conference of 14,000 people, there has been a loss of “family feeling.” How might we generate a sense of identity and belonging within our present realities? asks the report.

Many members appreciate that MC Eastern Canada has been able to live with diversity. At the same time, people desire something that “holds us together,” and makes us “mutually accountable in some fashion.” While there is little desire for a centralized authority, there is recognition that on some issues the conference may wish to express more authority.

2. *Leadership* (What does it mean to lead? What kind of leadership do we need?) Most people resonate with the phrase “leading as wise guides.” Many spoke with

appreciation for the wisdom of past leaders who seemed to “lead by muddling through,” avoiding the two “ditches” on the side of the road: authority-as-uniformity on one side and diversity-as-individualism on the other.

Integration in 1988 brought together two polity structures—one focused more on centralized authority, the other on congregational authority. Authority and autonomy issues add to the complexity of the discussion on leadership.

Mellinger and Martin suggest: “While we need to come to greater clarity on our understanding of leadership, we believe that some components of this discussion will include being ‘wise guides,’ ‘expressing the heart of MCEC,’ and ‘passionately holding up and articulating the larger vision of MCEC.’”

3. *Purpose/Mission* (What are we about? Why do we exist?)

People spoke with appreciation of two things: support for pastoral leaders, and resources for congregations.

There is much affirmation for the conference policies on calling, training, placement, evaluation and nurture of pastors. Congregations have benefited from conference assistance in their relationship with their pastors.

MC Eastern Canada is a “resource-rich” conference. Congregations frequently consult with conference staff on a variety of concerns. It is not clear whether conference should continue to provide centralized programming, or primarily assist congregations to work locally. However, “doing together what we cannot do alone” is still important in mission and service, as well as youth and young adult work.

Is there an emerging vision? The image of a tree suggests a conference rooted in Scripture, Anabaptism and the larger

Mennonite church; the trunk is the conference providing essential nutrients to the thriving branches, the congregations.

“Renewed congregationalism” might describe an emerging vision. It suggests that the congregation is still “the core unit of the church” and its ministries need to be supported by conference, not the other way around. Worship is central to who we are, yet the conference does not provide resources for it. Is a larger role required?

In summary, the report urges the conference 1) to address its identity during the next year, 2) take a stronger leadership role, and 3) see its essential purpose to resource congregations, call and nurture pastors, and provide a missional vision for congregations.

More specific suggestions will be reported in an upcoming issue.

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Young adult offers to be travelling preacher

The Young Adult Council of MC Manitoba, which facilitates fellowship and service opportunities, has approached John Klassen, director of Leadership Ministries, with an exciting proposal.

One of their group, James Peters, is willing to visit congregations on Sunday morning to offer a message on the role of young adults in the church. He is willing to be a “travelling young adult preacher.”

Peters comes with Klassen’s strong endorsement. “He preached his first sermon at the age of 17 in the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church where I served as pastor,” said Klassen. Peters has continued

to preach since then. "James is a good communicator, a creative preacher and has a deep love for Christ and the church." Peters is in his final year of Bachelor of Theology studies at Canadian Mennonite University.

Peters is willing to visit up to eight congregations between January and April on a first come, first served basis. Call him at (204) 786-6781.

MC Manitoba is blessed to have a healthy number of young adults who are passionate about their faith, their discipleship and the church, said Klassen. "It's exciting to witness their ministry at our camps, in service assignments and in our congregations. They not only wish to be part of congregational life but to contribute their numerous gifts in a wide variety of ways."

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

Seven taking missional church training

Seven people from Saskatchewan are taking part in a Missional Church training course in Winnipeg.

Over four weekends, these

individuals from various parts of the province are travelling to Winnipeg to learn, together with people from other provinces, about the Mennonite Church Canada vision.

"The hope is that we can be a resource for local churches," said Margaret Ewen Peters, co-pastor of Hanley Mennonite and one of the participants.

Each person, or his or her church, has put up the cost of tuition. The rest of the cost is absorbed by MC Canada.

Other trainees are Ray Friesen, pastor of Zion Mennonite in Swift Current; Ed Olfert, pastor of Grace Mennonite in Prince Albert; Eileen Wiebe from Mount Royal Mennonite in Saskatoon; Bruno Baerg of MCC Saskatchewan; Ken Bechtel, conference minister; and Eric Olfert, Missional Formation Facilitator for MC Saskatchewan.

Mennonite Church Alberta

Saying goodbye to church building

On August 17, Tofield Mennonite Church had a

decommissioning service for its old church building. Investigations into alternative uses for the building all met with dead ends, so plans were reluctantly made to tear it down.

When the Tofield historical society heard about the proposed demolition, however, they quickly requested a postponement. The society has dreams of building a historic village, and expressed interest in the old sanctuary.

Demolition of the building has been postponed until spring while the society explores its idea. Bob Crosland, Tofield pastor, said that the congregation feels good about this possibility for its old building.

"Our decommissioning service was very meaningful," he said. "Of course, there are feelings of sadness, but there is also a good feeling of moving on. If the building could be used like this, it would be ideal."

The Tofield congregation is now worshipping in a multi-purpose facility just across the yard from the old church. With the recent installation of a better speaker system, worship services are working well in the gymnasium.

Crosland remarked, "On Sunday we worship; on Monday we floor curl!"

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Christmas gift suggestion

Looking for the perfect Christmas gift? Why not consider sending a child to camp?

For many campers, the camp experience is possible only because of Camp Squeah's Campership Fund. The generosity of donors has made it possible for children from low-income families to attend. Those who receive these funds are grateful for the opportunity it grants their children.

A mother of four children, all of whom received campership assistance to attend Squeah, writes, "Our family thanks you very much for the wonderful gift of allowing our children to attend camp. It's become a very important event in their lives."

If you would like to contribute to the Campership Fund, phone Camp Squeah at 1-800-380-2267, or check the web site at www.campsqueah.bc.ca.

Aligning ourselves with healing and hope

As we move into the Advent season, I've been reflecting on our Vision: Healing and Hope statement. The statement assumes a world in which many are unhealthy, broken and hurting, and filled with despair. I thought about this at the November General Board meetings as we worked through a number of difficult issues.

As a national church we continue to face challenges financially, theologically and culturally. In the midst of these difficulties we are called to be communities of healing and hope through the power of the resurrected Christ.

Sometimes the issues blind me to the larger picture of what we are about—aligning ourselves with what God is already doing in our world—bringing new life and forgiveness into situations that need the redemptive touch of Christ and of Christ's church.

I've been reminded of the many ways

we are bearers of hope and healing through the power of God's spirit, despite our own shortcomings.

Financial restraints don't allow us to do all that we long to do. But in spite of theological concerns about how best to be faithful, and wrestling to discern God's desire for us, I still see God at work in us and through us. God continues to bring hope for a new way of living and healing that comes from the one who can even resurrect the dead.

As I'm writing this, an MC Canada learning tour is travelling through Colombia, learning how Colombian Mennonites are living out this vision in a country ravaged by violence and despair. They are proclaiming the redemptive love of Christ which changes individuals and challenges structural evil.

I'm thinking about the Missional Training which will be taking place in December, helping leaders from across

From our leaders

Canada to engage congregations in redemptive activities "across the street and around the world."

I'm reminded of the many we met at Mennonite World Conference in Zimbabwe who are being faithful in very difficult situations, living out the hope that we have in Christ, challenging us to work alongside them.

As I think about all these, I am encouraged to continue to work with our congregations and area conferences through Mennonite Church Canada, believing that God is at work in our lives, just as God has been through the centuries and through our sisters and brothers around the world.

Henry Krause, moderator of Mennonite Church Canada



Employment opportunities

Welcome Inn Mennonite Church - Hamilton, Ontario

FULL-TIME PASTOR

The Welcome Inn Mennonite Church and Community Centre is inviting applications for a full-time pastor beginning in the summer of 2004. We are a growing urban congregation of about 140 members with an average Sunday attendance of 50, worshipping in the north end of Hamilton. With its origins in inner-city outreach, the Welcome Inn draws together a diverse and dynamic group of people to worship, and to experience and extend the community of faith.

We seek an enthusiastic individual to provide spiritual leadership and guidance and who is committed to an Anabaptist understanding of faith. This position includes 1/4 time work with the Welcome Inn Community Centre.

For more information, please contact

Timothy Epp, Search Committee Chair
Phone: (905) 648-2131, ext.4247

Applications will be accepted until January 31, 2004.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Winkler Grace Mennonite Church invites applications for the position of Associate Pastor. We are a congregation of 400 members located in a rapidly growing rural community in southern Manitoba. Primary responsibilities include visitation, care-group coordination and "Inreach/Outreach" ministry.

Please send letter of application, resume, and three references to:

Steve Zacharias, c/o Grace Mennonite Church
Box 1616 Winkler, MB R6W 4B5
Phone: (204) 325-7428; Fax: (204) 325-0091
E-mail: szacharias@rocketmail.com



TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES

Ten Thousand Villages is accepting applications for the following position

INTERIM PURCHASING ASSISTANT

The Interim Purchasing Assistant will be part of the Merchandising Team; and work approximately 30 hours per week. The candidate should demonstrate excellent communication skills in English and Spanish; a working knowledge of Microsoft Office; and good work organization skills. Resumes will be accepted until December 15, 2003.

Please submit resumes to:

Lucille Harms Toews
Ten Thousand Villages Canada
65B Heritage Drive
New Hamburg, ON N3A 2J3
Phone: (877) 289-3247
Fax: (519) 662-3755
E-mail: personnel@villages.ca

Ten Thousand Villages provides vital, fair income to artisans around the world by selling their handcrafted products.
www.TenThousandVillages.com

PART TIME OUTREACH WORKER

required at Danforth Mennonite Church in Toronto to promote the congregation in the community and to work with seniors. For a job description check our website

www.torontoareamennonites.ca/danforth
or contact Barb Bryson (416) 467-0260
E-mail: bryson@ica.net

Deadline December 31, 2003. Position available January 2004.



Conrad Grebel University College, a residence and teaching facility affiliated with the University of Waterloo, seeks a married couple for the position of

SENIOR RESIDENTS

beginning approx. June 1, 2004. The role involves living in an apartment in the College's residence building and supervising the College during non-business hours. Rent and utilities are free in exchange for performance of duties. Applicants should be mature, responsible and able to relate to a broad range of people, especially students in residence.

If interested contact:

E. Paul Penner, CGUC Operations Manager
Phone: (519) 885-0220, ext. 231

Application deadline is Jan. 12, 2004.



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.

Transitions

Births

Bender—to Tammy and Jim, Cassel Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., a daughter, Melanie Victoria, Oct. 24.

Brenneman—to Amanda and Mark, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., a son, Drew Kenneth Mark, Nov. 5.

Cornelson—to Shelley and Tim, Bergthaler Mennonite, Rosenfeld, Man., a son, Bowen Timothy, Nov. 7.

Elliot—to Michelle and Shane, Cedar Valley Mennonite, Mission, B.C., a son, Jonathan Douglas Huber, July 19.

Froese—to Sylvia and John, Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., a son, Nicholas Ryan, Nov. 7.

Funk—to Susan (Ens) and James, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., a daughter, Elizabeth (Ella) Marie Ens, Aug. 12.

Grant—to Tina and Ian, Community Mennonite, Drayton, Ont., a son, Jacob Noah, Nov. 5.

Lichti—to Kim and Chris, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., a son, Garrett John, Oct. 30.

Neufeld—to Lori and Cornie, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., a son, Gabriel Noah, Oct. 19.

Reed—to Jodie and Fred, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., a son, Jared Thomas, Oct. 30.

Roth—to Gail and Mike, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden,

Ont., a son, Clayton Michael, Nov. 11.

Scapinello—to Jen and Richard, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Winkler, Man., a daughter, Kaylee Rae Lynn, Nov. 7.

Steinmann Ramer—to Candace Steinmann and Phil Ramer, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., a daughter, Alyson MacKenzie, Oct. 6.

Marriages

Snyder-Stortini—Eric and Cathy, Hanover Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 4

Deaths

Dueck—Lillian, 81, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Nov. 10.

Dyck—Helena (Penner), 100, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Oct. 16.

Janzen—Maria, 77, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., Oct. 23.

Klassen—J. Ronald, 55, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., Sept. 22.

Lichty—Edwin, 83, Hanover Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 22.

Loewen—John P., 95, Bergthal Mennonite, Didsbury, Alta., Sept. 20.

Regehr—Arthur, 90, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Nov. 9.

Baptisms

Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg, Man.—Zachary Entz, Nov. 16.

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.

Board hears from Manitoba leaders

Mennonite Church Manitoba staff and pastors met with MC Canada's General Board over lunch on November 7.

Participants expressed the need for increased communication and ownership of conference programs by the person in the pew, and concern over decision making processes.

"I wonder sometimes if we haven't left behind the average church member in the process of restructuring," said Hermann Dueck of First Mennonite. "Things were complicated as they were.... How do we inform the average church member? How do we create an interest?"

Dueck's comments contrasted with the messages Erin Morash is picking up at her church, North Kildonan Mennonite. She reported that interest in MC Canada is catching among her youth and young adult groups. The young people want to know what it means to be part of MC Canada.

"My young adults especially identify with MC Canada, but they are very worried about its future—and hence their own," she said. People from all perspectives are reading *Canadian Mennonite* "cover to cover," asking for extra copies of news releases, and even discussing conference issues around the dinner table, she noted.

Others said that delegates at assemblies want to be more involved, rather than feeling that they are "rubber-stamping" decisions made by leaders. Planners of the 2004 assembly are planning for table discussion groups to discern issues. Some leaders are recommending that the General Board restructure the assembly agenda so that more delegate involvement occurs.

Pastors also talked about ways their churches are ministering in their contexts.

Dori Zerbe Cornelsen, pastor of an inner city church, said when people ask how Hope Mennonite impacts the inner city, she responds that it's more a question of, "How does the inner city impact us?" It's not unusual for homeless people or substance abusers to wander into a worship service seeking help.

For her congregation, "diversity is just assumed as part of normal human life, and that it's part of the church too...faithful Christian behaviour is not necessarily always what we assumed it was."

Diversity also extends to how people define ministries. Norm Voht, Director of Evangelism and Service in Manitoba, noted the broad definition of "evangelism" that he has encountered. Some definitions "are diametrically opposed to each other."

Voht is particularly encouraged with his connections to "non-Caucasian" congregations. He and conference minister John Klassen are helping to provide leadership training to congregations in the Winnipeg area that include Vietnamese, Chinese, Laotian, Hispanic and Korean groups.

Voht said, "I think we caught a glimpse of eternity when we had our first multi-cultural leadership training event." He noted how the five language groups would process the information provided. "It was encouraging...to see the kind of interest that there is. One of those churches has more than half of its members involved in leadership training."

Klassen added that he sees a lot of passion in the constituency—a sign that shows people care.

—MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**

Invitation to join a social work forum

Normal, Ill.—A social work professor in the United States is working to form a new organization, the Association of Anabaptist-Mennonite Social Work Professionals.

Dan Liechty of Illinois State University perceives a “glaring lack in input from the social work perspective” in recent health care and social issues documents for congregations. Initially, he would like to see discussion of the issues.

He is inviting social work professionals to join a listserv discussion group. To join, e-mail: dliecht@ilstu.edu. The group is a forum for ethical, practical, personal and professional issues (no particular degrees or job descriptions required). Liechty hopes that one of the fruits of

the discussion group will be the formation of an association similar to other Mennonite professional organizations. —From release

Resources for World Fellowship Sunday

Strasbourg, France—Mennonite World Conference is inviting churches to observe World Fellowship Sunday on January 25. It’s a time to celebrate the growing interaction of churches across national and cultural boundaries.

This year, worship materials for World Fellowship Sunday have been prepared by European Mennonites who encourage congregations to be messengers of peace in a troubled world. Mennonite

conferences around the world are being encouraged to translate and distribute materials to local churches.

Worship materials and additional resources are available at www.mwc-cmm.org.—From MWC release

Native Mennonite assembly in Manitoba

Winnipeg, Man.—Next summer, several hundred native Mennonites from across North America are expected to gather for an assembly in Riverton, Manitoba.

To begin planning, representatives of Mennonite Church Canada Native Ministries, United Native Ministries and Mennonite Indian Leaders Council met in Winnipeg and Riverton from November 5-9. The group

enjoyed the hospitality of the Riverton Fellowship Circle, viewed facilities and planned the program, scheduled for July 26-29.

The group also worked on a proposal to organize native Mennonite congregations in Canada and the United States. These meetings, hosted by Home Street Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, led to an invitation to Steve Cheramie Risingsun to speak to the Home Street congregation on Sunday.

Risingsun pastors two congregations and serves on the board of Mennonite Mission Network, the mission agency of Mennonite Church USA.—From MC Canada release

Correction

The list of Mennonite publishers (Nov. 3, page 19) included some telephone numbers that are no longer in use.

All telephone orders for Herald Press and Faith & Life Resources are through the Mennonite Publishing Network toll-free number: 1-800-245-7894.

E-mail for Herald Press: hp@mph.org and for Faith & Life Resources: flr@mph.org.

Calendar

British Columbia

December 13, 14: Christmas banquet (13) and choral worship (14) at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond. Phone (604) 278-0111.

December 14: “Shine your light” musical service with choir, hand-bell choir, children’s group at West Abbotsford Mennonite Church, B.C., 6:30 p.m.



Photo by Dan Dyck

Van Hoa Chau, a member of MC Canada’s Formation Council, presents a plaque to Mennonite Church Canada on behalf of the Mennonite Church in Vietnam. Chau estimates membership to be about 10,000 people, in small congregations throughout the hill country. The plaque, with Psalm 21:2 in Vietnamese calligraphy, recognizes MC Canada support. Staff accepting the gift on behalf of MC Canada are, back row from left: Kirsten Schroeder, Ingrid Miller, Jane Zheng, Gordon Janzen, Pam Peters-Pries; middle row: Peter Rempel, Ingrid Janzen Lamp, Lloyd Plett, Daksha Parshotam, Grant Klassen, Van Hoa Chau, Jack Suderman; front: Elsie Rempel, Justina Heese, Kathy Fast.

December 18: Kids' Christmas Party at First United Spanish Mennonite Church, Vancouver, 6:00 p.m. Phone (604) 325-3407.

December 21: Christmas program and banquet at First United Spanish Mennonite, Vancouver, 4:30 p.m. Phone (604) 325-3407.

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.

March 12-13: Youth workers conference at Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford on worship and discipleship, with Tom and Christine Sine. Phone (604) 853-3567, ext. 323.

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 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 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

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: House of Doc concert, "Christmas at our house," at Franco-Manitoban Centre, Winnipeg, 2:00 and 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 19-21: "Church in Ministry Seminars" on spiritual formation and discipleship ministry with Jim Holm at Canadian Mennonite University. Phone Diane Hiebert at 1-877-231-4570.

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

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 11: Open house at TourMagination office (9 Willow St., Waterloo) with John Ruth, 3:00 to 6:00 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.

Subscriber services Mennonite

How to subscribe:

1. Individuals who are part of Mennonite Church Canada or one of its five area conferences can ask to be placed on their congregation's group subscription list. The subscription is paid by the conferences.
2. Others who wish to order a subscription can use this form. See contact information below.
Rates: \$32.50 for one year (includes \$2.13 GST); \$52.50 (Can.) to U.S.; \$73.00 (Can.) for overseas.

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2. Subscription changes are not considered Transitions notices. (Please send Transitions to the editor.)
3. Changes will be made immediately but may take 4-6 weeks to take effect because of printing schedules.

Contact information:

Canadian Mennonite, 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 6H7
Phone: (519) 884-3810 Toll-free: 1-800-378-2524 ext.221
Fax: (519) 884-3331 E-mail: office@canadianmennonite.org

THIS LITTLE BABE

THIS LITTLE BABE SO FEW
DAYS OLD,
IS COME TO RIFLE SATAN'S
FOLD;
ALL HELL DOTH AT HIS
PRESENCE QUAKE,
THOUGH HE HIMSELF FOR
COLD DO SHAKE;
FOR IN THIS WEAK UNARMED
WISE
THE GATES OF HELL HE WILL
SURPRISE....

MY SOUL WITH CHRIST JOIN
THOU IN FIGHT;
STICK TO THE TENTS THAT
HE HATH PIGHT [PITCHED].
WITHIN HIS CRIB IS SUREST
WARD;
THIS LITTLE BABE WILL BE
THY GUARD.
IF THOU WILT FOIL THY FOES
WITH JOY,
THEN FLIT NOT FROM THIS
HEAVENLY BOY.

~ ROBERT SOUTHWELL
(1561-1595)

*THE POET, A PRIEST AND LEADER OF THE PERSECUTED
CATHOLIC CHURCH IN REFORMATION ENGLAND, WAS
HANGED FOR TREASON AT THE AGE OF 33.
SEE PAGE 2.*



From painting by Correggio.

Langley, B.C.

MCC sessions around 'God's table'

Inspirational and informational" was how one attendee described the annual sessions of Mennonite Central Committee British Columbia, held at South Langley Mennonite Brethren Church on November 1.

The day included storytelling, power point presentations, video and workshops, as well as business meetings for MCC's Supportive Care Services and Social Housing Society.

Keynote speaker Gladys Oyat from Uganda shared her enthusiasm about the theme for the day, "Around God's table."

"'Around God's table' depicts service, like Jesus' last supper with his disciples," she said, adding that the theme verse—Romans 12:4-5 (the body of Christ having many members) also depicts sharing, as we share our gifts with one another.

Oyat described the difficulty of life in Uganda. Even though the war has ended, it is not over, she said. She described those living in camps, and how thousands of children are abducted and forced to fight. But the church is bringing hope.

"It is amazing that many of you recognize the suffering of Ugandans even though you have never met us," she said. "You have given food, in the name of Christ, you have supported religious leaders with training, you have sponsored students through the Global Family project, you have supported us as we have fought AIDS. You are bringing resources around God's table. You don't know us, but you serve those in need."

The day included the official separation of MCC Social Housing Society from MCC B.C., and a change of name to More Than a Roof Mennonite Housing. MTR Mennonite Housing will relate to MCC B.C. much the same way that Mennonite Disaster Service and Ten Thousand Villages do.

Stories and images from Nicaragua and Jamaica brought to life the many ways that voluntary service workers strive for justice among those in need.

Nathan Janz told of weeding a field in Nicaragua because the farmer, Arcadio Artolah, also the pastor of the

local Mennonite church, was fighting to get his stolen cattle back. Artolah was spending weeks in the city—hours away from his farm—negotiating with the police.

"It was the least I could do," Nathan said, "helping ensure that this year's food supply was realized, showing Christ's love to a Nicaraguan brother and his family."

Roger Neill shared his elation as he saw justice done for Ivan Barrows, a man imprisoned for 29 years for breaking a window. Because of the efforts of Neill, a Christian journalist and the church that partnered with MCC, Barrows was restored to his family who thought he was dead.

Nine months later, Barrows was awarded \$9 million Jamaican for the illegal incarceration, Neill said, describing the outcome as a miracle from God. "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor," he said.

The day concluded with prayer and song, and participants feeling that they had been nourished "around God's table."—From MCC B.C. release

Congregational Partnerships in Mission



Are you looking for opportunities to connect with another congregation? God's missional Spirit is moving in Québec but we need help NOW to develop these new and exciting opportunities. Explore the possibility to partner with one or more ministries or projects (church planting) in Montréal!

For further information, please contact the
CONSEIL MENNONITE QUÉBÉCOIS
Daniel Gamst, Co-ordinator
(514) 844-5458
cmq@vlnadecomm.ca

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Laird, Sask.

MCC Centre for Saskatchewan on its way

Over 200 people attended the opening session of the Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan annual meeting at Laird Mennonite Church on October 31 and November 1.

Over the course of two days, delegates chose a new chair for the board, reflected on MCC Saskatchewan's new vision, and heard from several speakers, including Ron Mathies, director of MCC, and Rick and Jan Janzen, Middle East directors. They marvelled at the against-all-odds advancements achieved by MCC Saskatchewan during the past year.

To start the weekend, MCC auctioned off a *kilim*, a 40-year-old hand-woven rug from Iraq. Brought back by George and Pearl Richert who worked on an MCC assessment team in Iraq, the rug was sold for \$2,000 to a group from Osler Mennonite Church. The *kilim* will be on display in the church.

On Saturday, the emphasis was on reports and elections. John Elias of Saskatoon replaces Lucille Wall as board chair. Elias has been connected to MCC over 24 years, mainly in the field of mental health. He has also worked with Ten Thousand Villages as a consultant.

The reporting was upbeat. Dennis Heinrichs talked about Ten Thousand Villages' mission to create work for people in developing countries. Plans to open a new store in Saskatoon are on the way.

In Regina, a remarkable turnaround in leadership has occurred. For a long time, two different groups ran the Villages program, one in Saskatoon and the other in Regina. After struggling through persistent revenue losses this past year, the independent board in Regina stepped down. The Saskatchewan board has opened a new store in Regina, bringing the total number of Village stores in Saskatchewan to four.

A controversial topic that has brought delegates to their feet on numerous occasions has seemingly cooled down. After a series of meetings in March, the redevelopment of the Saskatoon office has gone ahead. Construction began in spring and Phase 1 of the MCC Centre should be finished by Christmas.

Peter Schroeder, project manager, is excited about the progress being made.

"A lot of the constituency was concerned about the cost," he noted, but money is being saved. "We thought we would need a water and sewer system coming into the building and also build a retaining wall," but the sewer system wasn't necessary and the retaining wall was financed in part by the adjoining business, reducing the cost by approximately \$40,000.

An MCC fundraiser in mid-September at the 45th Street office brought in \$20,000.

"We still need more volunteers," he pointed out. "It's slower going with volunteers but more cost-effective." Cost effective is what people in Saskatchewan want to hear.

Renovations reflect the vision approved at the delegate meeting in March: "...that we become a stronger, more effective witness in our community."—

Karin Fehderau

Coaldale, Alta.

MCC Alberta hears plea from Uganda

As head of a girls school in northern Uganda, Gladys Oyat lives with the knowledge that any of her 550 students could disappear against their will and never come back.

Oyat spoke to the 150 people gathered in the Coaldale Mennonite Church on October 24-25 for the 36th sessions of Mennonite Central Committee Alberta. She spoke about the 17-year conflict in Uganda where more than 26,000 children have been abducted, including about 5,000 in the past year.

About 800,000 of the 1.2 million people in the Ochoi region have been left homeless and live in refugee camps.

"Keep praying for us," said Oyat. Her visit to increase awareness and to muster international pressure for an end to the fighting in northern Uganda has been sponsored by MCC and MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates).

Rachel and Everest, who are working in a prison ministry in Uganda, delighted the crowd with a lively rendition of the song, "Jesus set me free." Who wouldn't be enthused about their Jesus, when hearing the joy that emanated from them.

During the Friday evening service, Esther Epp-Tiessen of MCC Canada Peace Ministries brought an update on Iraq.

"The soul of Iraq is suffering, and the future is uncertain," she said. However, they are a people of dignity, great hospitality, resilience and strength. The relief buckets and school kits that MCC sent showed the people that someone cared.

Nathaniel Bimba spoke on Liberia, Yayumi Uyeno on the Summerbridge program of MCC Canada, and John Hubert on his recent trip to Iran.

MCC is for everyone—there is always room for one more at God's table. This invitation was extended over and over as people gathered for the meeting.

Mennonite Mutual Insurance reported growth in premium income, in the number of policyholders and participating churches, and in commercial insurance policies. Twenty percent of the organization's net income is contributed to MCC Alberta.



Photo by Karin Fehderau

Students from MCC's International Visitor Exchange Program lead worship during the MCC Saskatchewan meeting.

As soon as the building permit is in place, the work on a new office building for MCC Alberta, attached to the existing thrift store, will begin at 2946 32 St. NE in Calgary. This \$1.5 million project will also house Mennonite Mutual Insurance, Mennonite Church Alberta, and the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta.

Two new thrift stores were opened in the past year, in addition to the Calgary and Lethbridge stores. The Edmonton store opened on May 3 and an outlet store opened in southeast Calgary.

The Kanadier Concerns office changed its name to Services for Low German Mennonites. The office moved in July from Lethbridge to Taber, where it shares a building with the school division and the Lethbridge Community College. Video clips introduced us to two success stories of Low German Mennonites—a welding business and a family greenhouse project.

The MCC relief sale in Didsbury in June raised \$114,000. Coaldale will host the 2004 sale on June 18-19. A silent auction was entertaining as well as income generating. The 2004 budget of \$2.77 million (a 4 percent increase) was accepted.

Other reports included the MCC women's network, refugee sponsorship and peace ministries. Erwin Braun, who has chaired the MCC Alberta board for the past five years, handed the reins over to Phil Klassen.

The grace for meals reminded us that around God's table hunger ends and freedom, peace, justice and mercy reign.
—Anne Neufeld

News brief

World church leaders meet

Secretaries of Christian World Communions met in Cyprus on October 20-26 with Larry Miller, executive secretary of Mennonite World Conference, as moderator. Miller was elected chair for 2003 and 2004. Representatives of 18 denominations, including evangelical and reform Protestant churches, Anglican, Catholic, Orthodox and interchurch bodies, attended. Each day began with prayers. Like every year, much of the meeting was devoted to reports from each communion. Among the presentations was a history of Cyprus and the roots of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus. Bishop Nikiforos, abbot of the Monastery of Kykkos, hosted the event.—From MWC release



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FOCUS

Mission & Service

SALTERs begin assignments

Akron, Pa.—Fifteen Canadians participated in a SALT orientation at Mennonite Central Committee headquarters August 23-29. SALT (Serving And Learning Together) is a one-year overseas program for young adults.

From British Columbia: Lynn Carlson of Hanceville, Community church, teacher in Uganda; Miriam Maxcy of Port Coquitlam, English teacher in Laos; Jonathan Tomm of Vernon, Baptist church, AIDS coordinator in Lesotho.

From Alberta: Sara Laflamme of Grand Prairie, English tutor in Indonesia; Bonnie Mikalson of Calgary, Foothills Mennonite Church, English tutor in Germany; Laura Paetkau of Gem, Rosemary Mennonite Church, daycare worker in Egypt.

From Saskatchewan: Casadi Weber of Guernsey, Mennonite Brethren church, day-care assistant in Bolivia.

From Manitoba: Stacey Dyck of Starbuck, Springstein Mennonite Church, children's shelter in Ukraine; Tristan Isaak of Winnipeg, Jubilee Mennonite Church, development worker in Philippines; Angela Reimer of Winnipeg, Fort Garry Evangelical Mennonite Church, nursery school teacher in Tanzania.

From Ontario: Anita Streicher of Heidelberg; Hawkesville Mennonite Church, teacher in South Korea; Duncan Taylor of Barrie, Harvest Bible Chapel, teacher in Zambia; Paul Sauder of Waterloo, Erb Street Mennonite Church, tutor in Indonesia. Sharon Schroeder of Stratford, Avon Mennonite Church, documentation for Asia action groups in Hong Kong.

From Quebec: Emily Houweling of Terrasse-Vaudreuil, Christian Reformed, English tutor in Haiti.—From MCC release

Sampling life in Albania

A sabbatical leave and an invitation from friends working in Albania led Leon and Naomi Zimmerman and their four children to spend August to October in Lezhe, Albania, under Eastern Mennonite Missions.

The family lived in a one-bedroom flat



Called to Care...



Liliana is a 37-yr-old Colombian Mennonite Church leader. She has been nurtured by the Colombian Mennonite Church, a ministry supported in part through the gifts of generous donors to Mennonite Church Canada's work in a country torn apart by civil war for over 50 years.

She has nurtured souls in small villages, led Bible studies, worked in an orphanage, rebuilt homes, and started micro businesses. She has also endured death threats.

Liliana continues her studies at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Bogotá, a school supported in part by Mennonite Church Canada. She says, "I could never just study theology. For me it has to be made practical.

I have to work with my hands even while I'm thinking theologically."

There are many, many stories like Liliana's in 42 countries around the world where you will find MC Canada supported ministry and workers. We are there because we believe God has called us to care, and to offer Jesus' compassion, reconciliation, and peace.

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and studied language for four weeks. Leon, president of Rosedale Bible College in Ohio, and Naomi taught English, gave seminars on family and worked with kids' clubs. Son Caleb, 11, learned to play soccer and even gave some lessons in baseball.

The Zimmermans, who learned to live with frequent electric and water cuts, worshipped with Albanian believers and had frequent opportunities to preach, teach and travel.

"It was an exciting challenge for us to live out our faith in a setting where there are so few Christian models," said Leon.—From EMM release

Walk for world hunger

George Zondervan, 69, recently completed a seven-month "Food for all" walk across Canada. He raised money for world hunger through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

The walk began on March 29 in Stanley

Park, Vancouver, and ended on October 25 at Pier 21 in Halifax, a significant site to Zondervan and his wife—they first touched Canadian soil here when they emigrated from Holland shortly after World War II.

The 7,700-kilometre walk raised \$75,000.—Foodgrains Bank release

•China Educational Exchange, an inter-Mennonite program, is offering a five-week teaching experience in China from **July 10 to August 15, 2004.**

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Coaldale, Alta.

Coaldale church gives thanks for 75 years

Thanksgiving weekend marked the 75th anniversary of Coaldale Mennonite Church. The motto for the celebration was Psalm 78:1: "Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth."

Saturday's program included reminiscing and early history. A power point presentation provided an overview of the many ministers who served without pay, as well as choirs, youth groups and members who served at home and abroad.

Peter Unger, a lay minister from 1947 to 1956, paid tribute to the many servants of the church. The first meetings were held in homes. Sunday School began in 1930. The first Vacation Bible school was held jointly with the United Church, with 225 pupils.

Catechism classes began in 1931. Students sat in the front row and were expected to answer questions. Baptism was held on or near Pentecost, depending on the availability of a bishop. Frank W. Dyck organized the first choir, a tradition we have upheld.

Our first salaried pastor was hired in 1967, when the lot fell on Peter and Helen Retzlaff. In the ensuing years, Norman and Irma Bergen, Peter and Justine Funk, Ed and Agnes Balzer, served us well.

Erna Goertzen presented the work of the three women's organizations. The Taber group, begun in 1930, has disbanded because of the age of its members. The Sunbeam group began in 1945, Goodwill Club in 1968.

Joan Willms reported on mission projects. Church plants were attempted in Purple Springs, Barnwell, Taber and Lethbridge. The first two did not materialize. Taber was active for many years but closed its doors a few years ago. Lethbridge celebrated its 25th anniversary last February.

Helen Willms Bergen served for 33 years in Taiwan. A number of nurses did shorter stints in South America and northern Canada. In the past 15 years our group has sponsored four

refugee families and contributed financial aid to a home for the aged in Zaporizhya. Recently a number of people travelled to El Salvador to teach and help rebuild. Locally, many are involved with the food bank, Handi Bus and hospital.

Many people have devoted time to Mennonite Disaster Service, the MCC store and Ten Thousand Villages. The first MCC sale in Alberta was held in Coaldale in 1975.

Ed Balzer presented a meditation on Sunday morning, and C.L. Dick in the afternoon.

We praise God for the dedication of our ministers, Sunday school teachers and guest speakers who inspired us to serve in the name of Christ. Members of our church have touched the lives of people throughout the world.—From report by

Olga Epp



Bethany Janzen relays greetings from her grandfather, Norman Bergen, a former minister in Coaldale.

Plum Coulee, Man.

Congregation pays tribute to pastor's 40 years

On November 9, Plum Coulee Bergthaler church celebrated a joyous occasion—Henry Neufeld's 40 years of faithful ministry. The celebration began with congregational singing and special music focusing on God's faithfulness.

Allen Funk, lay minister, spoke words of appreciation for Neufeld's four decades of leadership. He highlighted Neufeld's career as a public school teacher, deacon, and lay minister in a duo-language church.

In Funk's words, Neufeld was "always a leader, a spokesperson and a mediator, who always gave honour and glory to God."

A full sanctuary, including members of his family, heard Neufeld speak on "The man named Jesus." Neufeld drew attention to some of Jesus' powerful illustrations. "Make sure you're following Jesus," he said.

Following worship, everyone was invited to a fellowship lunch. Glen Siemens, current pastor, paid tribute to Neufeld. "You have been here for most of

my life and you have modelled retirement in continued service in the kingdom of God," said Siemens. He invited others to honour Neufeld by "speaking words of blessing to a man who has blessed us."

Wayne Rempel referred to Neufeld's inspiring others, especially the youth. Brian Derksen related how Neufeld's interest in young people has shaped his life. Neufeld's daughter Sharon spoke about her father's "solemn and serious commitment to his calling as deacon. When we answer the call to lead, we enable others," she said.

Neufeld's grandson Carl, who grew up in Brazil with missionary parents, related how he is "following in grandpa's footsteps—teacher, public speaking, history, debating."

In response, Neufeld articulated deep appreciation for the support of his wife, Anne. His last word? "Thank you for letting God work in your lives. I want to continue to do the work that is left for me to do. And maybe slow down a bit."

—From report by **Cleo Heinrichs**

Hope, B.C.

Rhythm of seasons inspires B.C. women

As leaves fell outside, women at the B.C. Women in Mission retreat at Camp Squeah experienced not only the beauty of autumn, but that of spring, summer and winter.

The theme for this year's October 17-19 retreat was "The rhythm of the garden," led by sisters Benita Warkentin of Greendale and Angelika Dawson of Abbotsford. In four sessions, the speakers went through the seasonal changes in the garden, comparing them to seasons in the Christian life.

Multi-media presentations introduced each worship service. While a string trio played selections from Vivaldi's "Four seasons," slides of nature, in the appropriate season, were shown.

Dawson opened the Friday evening session on spring against the background of a white picket fence decorated with blossoms, flowerpots and a quilt pieced with spring pictures. Spring, with its flowering plants and beautiful colours, is a time of rebirth, she said. Spring's plantings show us that anything worthwhile takes an investment of time, and that it is not we who produce the results, but God.

A hammock and plants decorated the stage for Saturday's session on summer. "Summer is one big holiday—or is it?" asked Warkentin as she talked about the busiest time of year for a gardener. Reading the parable of sower and seed from Mathew 13, she gave examples of how many who have heard the Word fail to lead productive lives.

The heart must be cultivated, she said, so that the thorns and rocks in our lives don't choke out the good things.

Dawson took the stage, now decorated with a hay bale, colourful leaves and a Thanksgiving quilt, for the segment on fall. This is a bittersweet time for gardeners, she noted, with plants dying and bright colours fading. This season can teach us lessons about life, for in the barren times we must rely on God.

Dawson led the final session on Sunday morning. This time the winter

theme was evident: a freshly cut evergreen tree, Christmas lights, and artificial snow. As the garden must rest in wintertime, so there are times when we must slow down to be rejuvenated.

Love and hurry are incompatible, said Dawson. Jesus knew the value of rest after work and spent time in communion with God. So must we.


Warkentin led a communion service that integrated all of the seasons and included a time of sharing and prayer. The two sisters also led singing throughout the weekend, accompanied by piano, guitar and the string ensemble.




Benita Warkentin (left) and Angelika Dawson lead worship at the women's retreat.

Participants affirmed the weekend with comments such as, "Wonderful," "I loved the music," and "Best retreat I've ever attended."—**Amy Dueckman**

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Tips for a fabulous Christmas

Let me make a few things clear right off the top. I am frugal (unless you're talking about dessert or cowboy boots). My best adult Christmases were living on a voluntary service stipend of \$45 a month. So Christmas and its hoopla can be paralyzing for Scrooges like me.

Even so, I recently went to the library to see what popular magazines have to say about the season. I found the following tips to make my holidays fabulous and festive:

- Spray my tinsel with Static Guard to combat static electricity.
- Make a wreath out of toothpicks and eight pounds of cranberries.
- Give miniature shortbread cookies to all my friends.
- Watch *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*.
- Clear out the front closet, prepare party refreshments, get out the Christmas music, and type up recipes on festive paper for a cookie exchange.
- Host a skating party and a potluck dinner, attend a yoga class, do a Christmas crossword, volunteer at a soup kitchen, take an elderly friend shopping, see a doctor about anxiety, read *The Gift of the Magi* aloud, and pen a heartfelt letter to a loved one.
- Decorate theme trees for every room in the house.

Better Homes and Gardens wants me to breathe new life into my holiday greeting card display with playful spiral cording. It also advocates using 100 lights and 40 ornaments for every vertical foot of tree.

Oprah suggests I create my own family, give a goat to the Heifer Project, teach someone to read, donate a cell phone to a victim of domestic violence, take my pet to visit people in the hospital, read to the blind, give away a book I love.

Good Housekeeping suggests I go shopping with a friend, while *Chatelaine* tells me to leave my credit cards at home. Gift ideas include peace of mind with pet insurance, a second computer, hand blown Venetian glass ornaments (\$60 each), silk sachets made of antique Japanese kimonos, and a chic CD case filled with CDs.

To prevent illness during this busy

time, I should have ready pain relievers, cough suppressant, a digital ear thermometer, a humidifier, electrolyte replacement fluid and nasal lubricant.

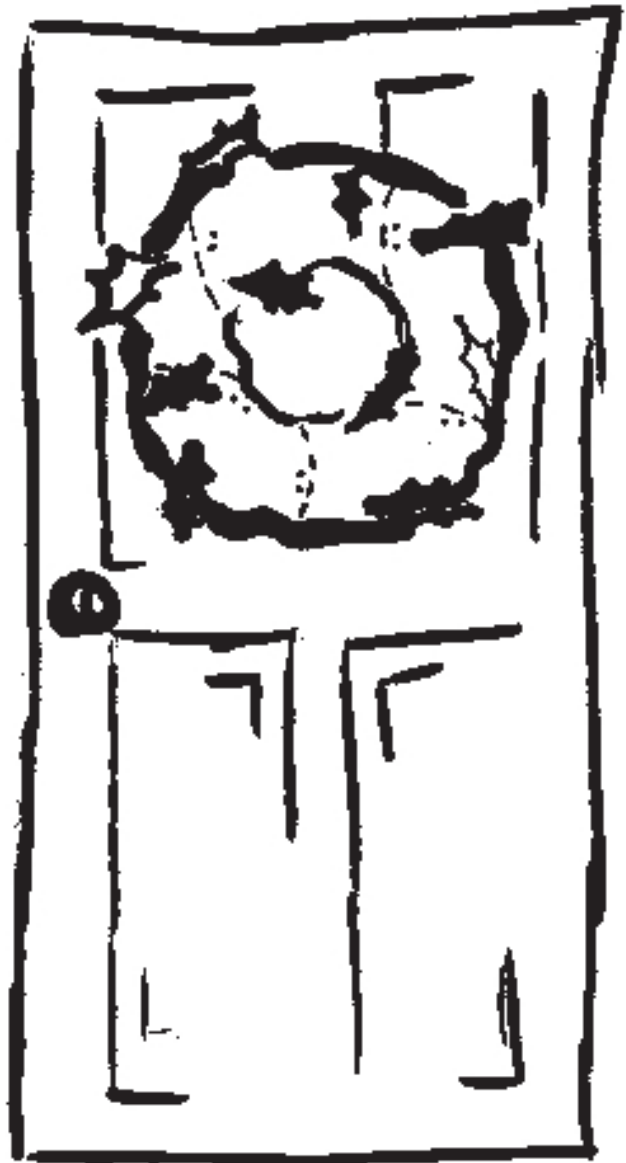
In my spare time, I can make Santa dolls out of two-litre plastic pop bottles, gilded placemats covered with organza and gold trim, cinnamon stick reindeer place cards, and cross-stitched snowflake ornaments. I have step-by-step directions on how to carve a nativity scene out of gourds and turn hay bales into a Santa Village.

Travel and Leisure suggests I spend Christmas bobsledding in the Adirondacks, eating lobster puff pastry at a Swiss Chateau, or enjoying the view atop the Park Hyatt Hotel in Tokyo.

The same magazines that want me to lose 10 pounds before Christmas have recipes for Swiss cheese tarts, Mexican wedding cookies, Portuguese salt cod casserole for Christmas Eve, Cape Breton cranberry loaf, Ukrainian boiled wheat, and chocolate raspberry Yule log decorated with sugared rose petals.

For Boxing Day, they offer exciting new suggestions for turkey pizza, turkey and greens, turkey pilaf, and Asian turkey noodle stir-fry.

I adore the people in my world who take some of this to heart: my mom—a black belt decorator and hostess; my sister—baker of fruitcakes and mincemeat tarts; my husband—tree



shopper and gravy maker. Me—I surrender. Brushing, blushing, wrapping, gluing, shopping, baking, weaving, rushing, frosting, accessorizing, glossing, sparkling—I am defeated.

I will hang a wreath on the door, wrap a few presents, listen to Dylan Thomas reading "A Child's Christmas in Wales," and celebrate on December 25 with the comforting knowledge that Easter is less than four months away.—**Doris Daley**

The above is from "a little piece I wrote for the Trinity Mennonite Church Christmas gathering" in Calgary last year, says the writer.

Ordination unbiblical, declares lecturer

Presenting the 17th annual Benjamin Eby Lecture at Conrad Grebel University College on November 7, John E. Toews declared, "Ordination for church ministry through the laying on of hands as practised in the church is without biblical foundation."

Toews, president of the college from 1996-2003 and a New Testament scholar, began his lecture on a personal note. He comes from a family with a long history of church leaders. He has spent 20 years teaching and training church leaders. He believes in the importance of clearly-defined church leadership.

But for 45 years, Toews has struggled with the concept of ordination.

"It seems to be out of sync with an Anabaptist view of the church," he said. "In most denominations, ordination is viewed as a sacrament, giving lifetime status to those who are ordained. Mennonites have tried to 'desacramentalize' it, but it still is seen by many to confer special privilege and status."

He added that in some places, ordination "has even been strengthened by adding the anointing of oil, normally in biblical thought associated with the special status of kingship...." The early church rejected anointing because it set apart a priesthood.



Toews

Speaking from his Mennonite Brethren background, Toews noted that the MB church was always ambivalent about ordination. He observed that John Howard Yoder and the Concern group were convinced that there is no ground in the New Testament to see ordination for some and not for others.

Two issues have emerged for Toews: 1) The practice of ordination has a weak biblical foundation, and 2) How do we relate ordination to the New Testament emphasis on the spiritual gifting of all Christians for the ministries of the church?

Toews focused particularly on I Timothy 4:14, which could be seen as the only text supporting ordination. The "laying on of hands" in this text, however, is associated with receiving charismatic gifts, not conferring office. Timothy has received a special endowment of the Spirit, associated with prophecy. This is affirmed by the community laying on hands.

Timothy was never called an elder or a pastor. He was simply Paul's assistant. So it is not clear what "laying on of hands" means in this context. It may even refer to Timothy's baptism, Toews concluded.

In exploring similar passages, Toews

did note that sometimes people were commissioned for a particular ministry.

Moving to the historical context, Toews noted that the practice of ordination emerged in the third century as part of the centralization and institutionalization of the church.

He also addressed the matter of "call." Affirmation for ministry should be based on giftedness plus the affirmation of the Christian community, not from an inner sense of call. He noted wryly that he has often dealt with eager seminarians who felt thus "called."

What are his suggestions for the church? He said

Mennonites should discontinue the use of ordination language, and unhook it from special status. Ministry belongs to the whole people of God. Some are gifted to lead, to enable others to use their gifts. These leadership roles can be discerned by the church. The church does need leaders.

He invited the church to develop a creative ceremony to bless and commission people for specific ministries.

Responses to his lecture were varied. What is the nature of sacrament in a world already largely desacralized (i.e. secular)? was one question. Another person asked whether our view of ordination is really concerned with status. He sees it as a functional term—gifts plus responsibility equals ordination. In the New Testament, perhaps baptism itself is an ordination for ministry.

Another respondent asked whether ordination has to be totally biblically based, or whether it has its own historical, ecclesial legitimacy. Toews responded: "Then let's be honest about this."

Toews' lecture will be published in the Spring 2004 issue of the *Conrad Grebel Review*.—**Maurice Martin**

'In most denominations, ordination is viewed as a sacrament, giving lifetime status to those who are ordained. Mennonites have tried to desacramentalize [ordination].'

*And the Grinch, with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow,
stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so?*

*It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came
without packages, boxes or bags.*

*And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore.
Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before.*

*What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a
store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit
more? ~Dr. Seuss*



www.everunder.com/land/thegrinch/

Education in Ukraine: Stories of hardship and hope

In October, six educators from North America visited Ukrainian schools on a Mennonite Central learning tour. Canadian participants were Angelika Dawson and Art Janzen from Abbotsford, B.C. Following are reports on that trip.

Leaves carpeted the pathway to Kiev School #31. Inside, students had decorated the windows and doors with leaves for Teacher's Day, the first weekend in October. Flowers and chocolates covered the tables in the office of Tamara Vasilievna Vecherkovskaya, director of the school.

The day was an appropriate beginning for Mennonite Central Committee's learning tour for educators. The group visited schools in Kiev, Tokmak region (former Molotschna Mennonite colony) and the city of Melitopol. The North Americans met with teachers and students from pre-school to secondary school, and visited a teachers' college and two *internats*—residential schools for children from difficult situations.

At each school, the guests were given a cultural presentation and observed classes in session. Although uniforms were not required, the dress code was conservative and formal. Along with the usual courses—math, geography, physics, literature, art and music—a school in Molochansk taught children traditional Ukrainian embroidery and its relevance for today.

Although the set-up of the classroom was more formal than in North America, interaction between teacher and student was familiar, something that has been changing since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

"Compared with when I went to school, what I saw today is very progressive," said Olga Novikova, a curriculum writer who toured a Kiev school with the MCC group. "Allowing kids to make choices and even differ with the teacher—this helps because our kids feel listened to."

It was evident that resources are minimal. Most teachers in Ukraine seek other means of income to supplement their meagre salaries. Schools, hallways were dark and most classrooms dimly lit to save money. Potted



Photo by Angelika Dawson

Art Janzen from British Columbia presents flowers in honour of Teacher's Day to Tamara Vecherkovskaya, director of School #31 in Kiev. Mary Raber (right) translates.

plants, however, created a cheerful atmosphere.

Ukrainian teachers wanted to know what challenges their North American colleagues face.

"We have many of the same problems that you have," said Rose Malamma, a teacher from California who spoke to a question about discipline. "Having money doesn't mean you don't have any problems." Ukraine teachers sighed when they learned that their visitors live quite comfortably on their salaries.

Despite the difficulties, it was evident that the teachers love their profession.

"It's our calling; we love children," said a teacher from Molochansk. "They also give us a lot—it's a magical thing."

"Our teachers are here because they love their work and they love our students," Vecherkovskaya said.

It was this commitment despite hardships that impressed the learning tour.

MCC provided grants to help schools obtain textbooks and materials. It also gives scholarships for students in the Tokmak region. Students who receive these scholarships return to their villages to teach for a time.—**Angelika Dawson**

Christian ethics replacing Soviet values

Imagine your entire worldview being called into question and having to rebuild from scratch. Where would you turn for new values? After the collapse of the Soviet Union, educators have faced this challenge.

Some teachers have turned to Christian ethics. Ukrainian law forbids teaching of religion, but in 4 provinces out of 24, a subject called "Christian ethics" is being taught. Students study the lives of Bible heroes, the Ten Commandments, and the life and teachings of Christ.

Teachers are expected to be Christians, although not all are, and have special training. Children attend the classes with the written permission of parents.

North American teachers who visited Ukraine in October met people involved in this work at REALIS, a Christian education centre in Kiev. Sergei Timchenko, director, described its mission as working with educators "so that the light of Christ can be seen in this country."

"We have this clear space between the necessity of moral education and

Children given new chance at House of Hope

Sergei is a quiet boy, but not too shy to approach a visitor. "I want to show you something," he says softly, and leads me down the hall to his bedroom at House of Hope in Priazovske, Ukraine. He takes a Lego contraption from the table and puts it into my hand.

"It's an airplane," he explains, adding immediately, "I want to show you something else." This time we go to his classroom where he rummages around in his desk until he finds an album of drawings: trees, fields, another airplane, a building.

"These are good pictures, Sergei," I say. "You must like to draw."

"God makes me do it," he answers.

The 26 children at House of Hope hunger for contact with caring adults. Few parents ever visit.

The children all play and have fun

"and it looks as though they're enjoying a wonderful, happy childhood," noted Ivan Demyanenko, the pastor of the tiny church that founded House of Hope. But at night he once heard nine-year-old Sergei crying.

"Why are you crying?" Ivan asked him.

"I have a little sister and I want her to live with me," Sergei replied. Sergei's father left his family and disappeared and his mother has rejected him. "We try to do everything possible so that our children would be well and have all they need," explains Ivan. "But inside every one of them has a feeling of worthlessness, of frustration. These children show feelings of grief and a sense of having been injured by life."

The goal of the staff at House of Hope is that each child will come to know Christ.

"Not all of these children will finish higher education," says director Svyetlana Chervonchenko. "But if they find peace with God, they will know how to live."

Besides daily prayer, the children regularly attend worship and visit the homes of church members. Konstantin (Kostya) Borodin, a Baptist member who works at the home, drives the children to church on Sundays, piling far more than the legal limit into a small car.

"I tell the kids, 'If the cops stop us, tell them we don't have room to give them a lift,'" he jokes.

Over time the staff do see positive changes in the children. For example, a boy who joined House of Hope earlier in the year could not stop stealing. He would creep about the rooms at night...once making off with the possessions of 13 sleeping people!

"We tried everything," remembers Kostya. "We lectured him. We punished him. We had the other children talk to him. Nothing worked. Finally we asked, 'What is it that you want?'"

"He said, 'I want everything. As soon as I see that someone else has something, my hands stretch out to take it.'"

At their wits' end, the staff told the boy to make a list of everything he wanted. He worked on it for several days, filling three sheets on both sides. When he was finished, everyone set about giving the boy as much as they could from the list.

"That went on for a couple of days," says Kostya, "And then he started giving the things back!"

Does he still steal?

"Well," Kostya grins, "maybe only once every couple of months, and then only from one person at a time. And he prays that God would help him stop stealing!"—**Mary Raber**

The writer works with MCC in Ukraine.

nobody knowing how this is done," Sergei says. "The highest value now is survival, making a living."

Sergei is afraid that Christian ethics will become another ideology rather than an encounter with the living God. Others do not share his caution.

Hope to People, an evangelical mission, creates curriculum and information about Christian ethics for teachers.

Elena Obednikova and Olga Novikova work with Hope to People in the city of Rovno, where they meet with teachers weekly. Because of good teachers in Christian ethics, Christian clubs have developed in some schools.

"Children go to Christian club and invite their friends," says Obednikova. "Here the kids say, 'Before Christian ethics my life was totally different; I didn't understand my parents, for example.' Then they tell other children what their teachers have taught them."

The ethics classes are also addressing social concerns, and school directors have noted changes in the lives of students who take part.

MCC supports weekly discussion groups for teachers and scholarships for students at the Ostrog Academy National University, an institution that grants teachers' certificates in Christian ethics. MCC has also funded curriculum materials, developed by Hope to People and the Ostrog Academy.—**Angelika Dawson**

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Photo by Jake Olfert

Planners for Assembly 2004 met at the Winkler Bergthaler Church in September to view the facilities and begin planning for the July 7-11 event. The theme will be “Enough for all,” based on the feeding of the five thousand. Back row, from left: Dan Dyck (staff, Program Committee), George H. Ens (Local Hosting chair), Craig Friesen (Program Committee chair), Pam Peters-Pries (staff, Program Committee), Mildred Roth (Program Committee). Front row: Karen Peters (staff, Program Committee), Viola Enns Woelk (Children’s Assembly coordinator), Pam Driedger (Worship coordinator), and Karen Schellenberg (Program Committee).

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Report on vision and identity process

In August, MC Eastern Canada hired Marianne Mellinger and Maurice Martin to develop a renewed vision, identity and ministry model for the conference. They conducted over 20 interviews with staff, commission members and ministerial cluster groups.

At a November 19 meeting, they identified three key issues that need attention as MC Eastern Canada shapes its future.

1. *Identity* (Who are we? What holds us together?) The conference is in its 15th year since the integration of three former conferences. In addition to a common Germanic “ethnicity,” those three groups had common historical

and theological roots. Now there is an emerging multiculturalism and greater theological diversity.

In this large conference of 14,000 people, there has been a loss of “family feeling.” How might we generate a sense of identity and belonging within our present realities? asks the report.

Many members appreciate that MC Eastern Canada has been able to live with diversity. At the same time, people desire something that “holds us together,” and makes us “mutually accountable in some fashion.” While there is little desire for a centralized authority, there is recognition that on some issues the conference may wish to express more authority.

2. *Leadership* (What does it mean to lead? What kind of leadership do we need?) Most people resonate with the phrase “leading as wise guides.” Many spoke with

appreciation for the wisdom of past leaders who seemed to “lead by muddling through,” avoiding the two “ditches” on the side of the road: authority-as-uniformity on one side and diversity-as-individualism on the other.

Integration in 1988 brought together two polity structures—one focused more on centralized authority, the other on congregational authority. Authority and autonomy issues add to the complexity of the discussion on leadership.

Mellinger and Martin suggest: “While we need to come to greater clarity on our understanding of leadership, we believe that some components of this discussion will include being ‘wise guides,’ ‘expressing the heart of MCEC,’ and ‘passionately holding up and articulating the larger vision of MCEC.’”

3. *Purpose/Mission* (What are we about? Why do we exist?)

People spoke with appreciation of two things: support for pastoral leaders, and resources for congregations.

There is much affirmation for the conference policies on calling, training, placement, evaluation and nurture of pastors. Congregations have benefited from conference assistance in their relationship with their pastors.

MC Eastern Canada is a “resource-rich” conference. Congregations frequently consult with conference staff on a variety of concerns. It is not clear whether conference should continue to provide centralized programming, or primarily assist congregations to work locally. However, “doing together what we cannot do alone” is still important in mission and service, as well as youth and young adult work.

Is there an emerging vision? The image of a tree suggests a conference rooted in Scripture, Anabaptism and the larger

Mennonite church; the trunk is the conference providing essential nutrients to the thriving branches, the congregations.

“Renewed congregationalism” might describe an emerging vision. It suggests that the congregation is still “the core unit of the church” and its ministries need to be supported by conference, not the other way around. Worship is central to who we are, yet the conference does not provide resources for it. Is a larger role required?

In summary, the report urges the conference 1) to address its identity during the next year, 2) take a stronger leadership role, and 3) see its essential purpose to resource congregations, call and nurture pastors, and provide a missional vision for congregations.

More specific suggestions will be reported in an upcoming issue.

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Young adult offers to be travelling preacher

The Young Adult Council of MC Manitoba, which facilitates fellowship and service opportunities, has approached John Klassen, director of Leadership Ministries, with an exciting proposal.

One of their group, James Peters, is willing to visit congregations on Sunday morning to offer a message on the role of young adults in the church. He is willing to be a “travelling young adult preacher.”

Peters comes with Klassen’s strong endorsement. “He preached his first sermon at the age of 17 in the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church where I served as pastor,” said Klassen. Peters has continued

to preach since then. "James is a good communicator, a creative preacher and has a deep love for Christ and the church." Peters is in his final year of Bachelor of Theology studies at Canadian Mennonite University.

Peters is willing to visit up to eight congregations between January and April on a first come, first served basis. Call him at (204) 786-6781.

MC Manitoba is blessed to have a healthy number of young adults who are passionate about their faith, their discipleship and the church, said Klassen. "It's exciting to witness their ministry at our camps, in service assignments and in our congregations. They not only wish to be part of congregational life but to contribute their numerous gifts in a wide variety of ways."

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

Seven taking missional church training

Seven people from Saskatchewan are taking part in a Missional Church training course in Winnipeg.

Over four weekends, these

individuals from various parts of the province are travelling to Winnipeg to learn, together with people from other provinces, about the Mennonite Church Canada vision.

"The hope is that we can be a resource for local churches," said Margaret Ewen Peters, co-pastor of Hanley Mennonite and one of the participants.

Each person, or his or her church, has put up the cost of tuition. The rest of the cost is absorbed by MC Canada.

Other trainees are Ray Friesen, pastor of Zion Mennonite in Swift Current; Ed Olfert, pastor of Grace Mennonite in Prince Albert; Eileen Wiebe from Mount Royal Mennonite in Saskatoon; Bruno Baerg of MCC Saskatchewan; Ken Bechtel, conference minister; and Eric Olfert, Missional Formation Facilitator for MC Saskatchewan.

Mennonite Church Alberta

Saying goodbye to church building

On August 17, Tofield Mennonite Church had a

decommissioning service for its old church building. Investigations into alternative uses for the building all met with dead ends, so plans were reluctantly made to tear it down.

When the Tofield historical society heard about the proposed demolition, however, they quickly requested a postponement. The society has dreams of building a historic village, and expressed interest in the old sanctuary.

Demolition of the building has been postponed until spring while the society explores its idea. Bob Crosland, Tofield pastor, said that the congregation feels good about this possibility for its old building.

"Our decommissioning service was very meaningful," he said. "Of course, there are feelings of sadness, but there is also a good feeling of moving on. If the building could be used like this, it would be ideal."

The Tofield congregation is now worshipping in a multi-purpose facility just across the yard from the old church. With the recent installation of a better speaker system, worship services are working well in the gymnasium.

Crosland remarked, "On Sunday we worship; on Monday we floor curl!"

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Christmas gift suggestion

Looking for the perfect Christmas gift? Why not consider sending a child to camp?

For many campers, the camp experience is possible only because of Camp Squeah's Campership Fund. The generosity of donors has made it possible for children from low-income families to attend. Those who receive these funds are grateful for the opportunity it grants their children.

A mother of four children, all of whom received campership assistance to attend Squeah, writes, "Our family thanks you very much for the wonderful gift of allowing our children to attend camp. It's become a very important event in their lives."

If you would like to contribute to the Campership Fund, phone Camp Squeah at 1-800-380-2267, or check the web site at www.campsqueah.bc.ca.

Aligning ourselves with healing and hope

As we move into the Advent season, I've been reflecting on our Vision: Healing and Hope statement. The statement assumes a world in which many are unhealthy, broken and hurting, and filled with despair. I thought about this at the November General Board meetings as we worked through a number of difficult issues.

As a national church we continue to face challenges financially, theologically and culturally. In the midst of these difficulties we are called to be communities of healing and hope through the power of the resurrected Christ.

Sometimes the issues blind me to the larger picture of what we are about—aligning ourselves with what God is already doing in our world—bringing new life and forgiveness into situations that need the redemptive touch of Christ and of Christ's church.

I've been reminded of the many ways

we are bearers of hope and healing through the power of God's spirit, despite our own shortcomings.

Financial restraints don't allow us to do all that we long to do. But in spite of theological concerns about how best to be faithful, and wrestling to discern God's desire for us, I still see God at work in us and through us. God continues to bring hope for a new way of living and healing that comes from the one who can even resurrect the dead.

As I'm writing this, an MC Canada learning tour is travelling through Colombia, learning how Colombian Mennonites are living out this vision in a country ravaged by violence and despair. They are proclaiming the redemptive love of Christ which changes individuals and challenges structural evil.

I'm thinking about the Missional Training which will be taking place in December, helping leaders from across

From our leaders

Canada to engage congregations in redemptive activities "across the street and around the world."

I'm reminded of the many we met at Mennonite World Conference in Zimbabwe who are being faithful in very difficult situations, living out the hope that we have in Christ, challenging us to work alongside them.

As I think about all these, I am encouraged to continue to work with our congregations and area conferences through Mennonite Church Canada, believing that God is at work in our lives, just as God has been through the centuries and through our sisters and brothers around the world.

Henry Krause, moderator of Mennonite Church Canada



Employment opportunities

Welcome Inn Mennonite Church - Hamilton, Ontario

FULL-TIME PASTOR

The Welcome Inn Mennonite Church and Community Centre is inviting applications for a full-time pastor beginning in the summer of 2004. We are a growing urban congregation of about 140 members with an average Sunday attendance of 50, worshipping in the north end of Hamilton. With its origins in inner-city outreach, the Welcome Inn draws together a diverse and dynamic group of people to worship, and to experience and extend the community of faith.

We seek an enthusiastic individual to provide spiritual leadership and guidance and who is committed to an Anabaptist understanding of faith. This position includes 1/4 time work with the Welcome Inn Community Centre.

For more information, please contact

Timothy Epp, Search Committee Chair
Phone: (905) 648-2131, ext.4247

Applications will be accepted until January 31, 2004.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Winkler Grace Mennonite Church invites applications for the position of Associate Pastor. We are a congregation of 400 members located in a rapidly growing rural community in southern Manitoba. Primary responsibilities include visitation, care-group coordination and "Inreach/Outreach" ministry.

Please send letter of application, resume, and three references to:

Steve Zacharias, c/o Grace Mennonite Church
Box 1616 Winkler, MB R6W 4B5
Phone: (204) 325-7428; Fax: (204) 325-0091
E-mail: szacharias@rocketmail.com



TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES

Ten Thousand Villages is accepting applications for the following position

INTERIM PURCHASING ASSISTANT

The Interim Purchasing Assistant will be part of the Merchandising Team; and work approximately 30 hours per week. The candidate should demonstrate excellent communication skills in English and Spanish; a working knowledge of Microsoft Office; and good work organization skills. Resumes will be accepted until December 15, 2003.

Please submit resumes to:

Lucille Harms Toews
Ten Thousand Villages Canada
65B Heritage Drive
New Hamburg, ON N3A 2J3
Phone: (877) 289-3247
Fax: (519) 662-3755
E-mail: personnel@villages.ca

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PART TIME OUTREACH WORKER

required at Danforth Mennonite Church in Toronto to promote the congregation in the community and to work with seniors. For a job description check our website

www.torontoareamennonites.ca/danforth
or contact Barb Bryson (416) 467-0260
E-mail: bryson@ica.net

Deadline December 31, 2003. Position available January 2004.



Conrad Grebel University College, a residence and teaching facility affiliated with the University of Waterloo, seeks a married couple for the position of

SENIOR RESIDENTS

beginning approx. June 1, 2004. The role involves living in an apartment in the College's residence building and supervising the College during non-business hours. Rent and utilities are free in exchange for performance of duties. Applicants should be mature, responsible and able to relate to a broad range of people, especially students in residence.

If interested contact:

E. Paul Penner, CGUC Operations Manager
Phone: (519) 885-0220, ext. 231

Application deadline is Jan. 12, 2004.



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.

Transitions

Births

Bender—to Tammy and Jim, Cassel Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., a daughter, Melanie Victoria, Oct. 24.

Brenneman—to Amanda and Mark, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., a son, Drew Kenneth Mark, Nov. 5.

Cornelson—to Shelley and Tim, Bergthaler Mennonite, Rosenfeld, Man., a son, Bowen Timothy, Nov. 7.

Elliot—to Michelle and Shane, Cedar Valley Mennonite, Mission, B.C., a son, Jonathan Douglas Huber, July 19.

Froese—to Sylvia and John, Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., a son, Nicholas Ryan, Nov. 7.

Funk—to Susan (Ens) and James, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., a daughter, Elizabeth (Ella) Marie Ens, Aug. 12.

Grant—to Tina and Ian, Community Mennonite, Drayton, Ont., a son, Jacob Noah, Nov. 5.

Lichti—to Kim and Chris, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., a son, Garrett John, Oct. 30.

Neufeld—to Lori and Cornie, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., a son, Gabriel Noah, Oct. 19.

Reed—to Jodie and Fred, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., a son, Jared Thomas, Oct. 30.

Roth—to Gail and Mike, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden,

Ont., a son, Clayton Michael, Nov. 11.

Scapinello—to Jen and Richard, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Winkler, Man., a daughter, Kaylee Rae Lynn, Nov. 7.

Steinmann Ramer—to Candace Steinmann and Phil Ramer, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., a daughter, Alyson MacKenzie, Oct. 6.

Marriages

Snyder-Stortini—Eric and Cathy, Hanover Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 4

Deaths

Dueck—Lillian, 81, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Nov. 10.

Dyck—Helena (Penner), 100, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Oct. 16.

Janzen—Maria, 77, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., Oct. 23.

Klassen—J. Ronald, 55, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta., Sept. 22.

Lichty—Edwin, 83, Hanover Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 22.

Loewen—John P., 95, Bergthal Mennonite, Didsbury, Alta., Sept. 20.

Regehr—Arthur, 90, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Nov. 9.

Baptisms

Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg, Man.—Zachary Entz, Nov. 16.

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.

Board hears from Manitoba leaders

Mennonite Church Manitoba staff and pastors met with MC Canada's General Board over lunch on November 7.

Participants expressed the need for increased communication and ownership of conference programs by the person in the pew, and concern over decision making processes.

"I wonder sometimes if we haven't left behind the average church member in the process of restructuring," said Hermann Dueck of First Mennonite. "Things were complicated as they were.... How do we inform the average church member? How do we create an interest?"

Dueck's comments contrasted with the messages Erin Morash is picking up at her church, North Kildonan Mennonite. She reported that interest in MC Canada is catching among her youth and young adult groups. The young people want to know what it means to be part of MC Canada.

"My young adults especially identify with MC Canada, but they are very worried about its future—and hence their own," she said. People from all perspectives are reading *Canadian Mennonite* "cover to cover," asking for extra copies of news releases, and even discussing conference issues around the dinner table, she noted.

Others said that delegates at assemblies want to be more involved, rather than feeling that they are "rubber-stamping" decisions made by leaders. Planners of the 2004 assembly are planning for table discussion groups to discern issues. Some leaders are recommending that the General Board restructure the assembly agenda so that more delegate involvement occurs.

Pastors also talked about ways their churches are ministering in their contexts.

Dori Zerbe Cornelsen, pastor of an inner city church, said when people ask how Hope Mennonite impacts the inner city, she responds that it's more a question of, "How does the inner city impact us?" It's not unusual for homeless people or substance abusers to wander into a worship service seeking help.

For her congregation, "diversity is just assumed as part of normal human life, and that it's part of the church too...faithful Christian behaviour is not necessarily always what we assumed it was."

Diversity also extends to how people define ministries. Norm Voth, Director of Evangelism and Service in Manitoba, noted the broad definition of "evangelism" that he has encountered. Some definitions "are diametrically opposed to each other."

Voth is particularly encouraged with his connections to "non-Caucasian" congregations. He and conference minister John Klassen are helping to provide leadership training to congregations in the Winnipeg area that include Vietnamese, Chinese, Laotian, Hispanic and Korean groups.

Voth said, "I think we caught a glimpse of eternity when we had our first multi-cultural leadership training event." He noted how the five language groups would process the information provided. "It was encouraging...to see the kind of interest that there is. One of those churches has more than half of its members involved in leadership training."

Klassen added that he sees a lot of passion in the constituency—a sign that shows people care.

—MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**

Invitation to join a social work forum

Normal, Ill.—A social work professor in the United States is working to form a new organization, the Association of Anabaptist-Mennonite Social Work Professionals.

Dan Liechty of Illinois State University perceives a “glaring lack in input from the social work perspective” in recent health care and social issues documents for congregations. Initially, he would like to see discussion of the issues.

He is inviting social work professionals to join a listserv discussion group. To join, e-mail: dliecht@ilstu.edu. The group is a forum for ethical, practical, personal and professional issues (no particular degrees or job descriptions required). Liechty hopes that one of the fruits of

the discussion group will be the formation of an association similar to other Mennonite professional organizations. —From release

Resources for World Fellowship Sunday

Strasbourg, France—Mennonite World Conference is inviting churches to observe World Fellowship Sunday on January 25. It’s a time to celebrate the growing interaction of churches across national and cultural boundaries.

This year, worship materials for World Fellowship Sunday have been prepared by European Mennonites who encourage congregations to be messengers of peace in a troubled world. Mennonite

conferences around the world are being encouraged to translate and distribute materials to local churches.

Worship materials and additional resources are available at www.mwc-cmm.org.—From MWC release

Native Mennonite assembly in Manitoba

Winnipeg, Man.—Next summer, several hundred native Mennonites from across North America are expected to gather for an assembly in Riverton, Manitoba.

To begin planning, representatives of Mennonite Church Canada Native Ministries, United Native Ministries and Mennonite Indian Leaders Council met in Winnipeg and Riverton from November 5-9. The group

enjoyed the hospitality of the Riverton Fellowship Circle, viewed facilities and planned the program, scheduled for July 26-29.

The group also worked on a proposal to organize native Mennonite congregations in Canada and the United States. These meetings, hosted by Home Street Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, led to an invitation to Steve Cheramie Risingsun to speak to the Home Street congregation on Sunday.

Risingsun pastors two congregations and serves on the board of Mennonite Mission Network, the mission agency of Mennonite Church USA.—From MC Canada release

Correction

The list of Mennonite publishers (Nov. 3, page 19) included some telephone numbers that are no longer in use.

All telephone orders for Herald Press and Faith & Life Resources are through the Mennonite Publishing Network toll-free number: 1-800-245-7894.

E-mail for Herald Press: hp@mph.org and for Faith & Life Resources: flr@mph.org.

Calendar

British Columbia

December 13, 14: Christmas banquet (13) and choral worship (14) at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond. Phone (604) 278-0111.

December 14: “Shine your light” musical service with choir, hand-bell choir, children’s group at West Abbotsford Mennonite Church, B.C., 6:30 p.m.



Photo by Dan Dyck

Van Hoa Chau, a member of MC Canada’s Formation Council, presents a plaque to Mennonite Church Canada on behalf of the Mennonite Church in Vietnam. Chau estimates membership to be about 10,000 people, in small congregations throughout the hill country. The plaque, with Psalm 21:2 in Vietnamese calligraphy, recognizes MC Canada support. Staff accepting the gift on behalf of MC Canada are, back row from left: Kirsten Schroeder, Ingrid Miller, Jane Zheng, Gordon Janzen, Pam Peters-Pries; middle row: Peter Rempel, Ingrid Janzen Lamp, Lloyd Plett, Daksha Parshotam, Grant Klassen, Van Hoa Chau, Jack Suderman; front: Elsie Rempel, Justina Heese, Kathy Fast.

December 18: Kids' Christmas Party at First United Spanish Mennonite Church, Vancouver, 6:00 p.m. Phone (604) 325-3407.

December 21: Christmas program and banquet at First United Spanish Mennonite, Vancouver, 4:30 p.m. Phone (604) 325-3407.

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.

March 12-13: Youth workers conference at Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford on worship and discipleship, with Tom and Christine Sine. Phone (604) 853-3567, ext. 323.

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 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 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

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: House of Doc concert, "Christmas at our house," at Franco-Manitoban Centre, Winnipeg, 2:00 and 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 19-21: "Church in Ministry Seminars" on spiritual formation and discipleship ministry with Jim Holm at Canadian Mennonite University. Phone Diane Hiebert at 1-877-231-4570.

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

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 11: Open house at TourMagination office (9 Willow St., Waterloo) with John Ruth, 3:00 to 6:00 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.

Subscriber services **Mennonite**

How to subscribe:

- Individuals who are part of Mennonite Church Canada or one of its five area conferences can ask to be placed on their congregation's group subscription list. The subscription is paid by the conferences.
- Others who wish to order a subscription can use this form. See contact information below.
Rates: \$32.50 for one year (includes \$2.13 GST); \$52.50 (Can.) to U.S.; \$73.00 (Can.) for overseas.

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

THIS LITTLE BABE

THIS LITTLE BABE SO FEW
DAYS OLD,
IS COME TO RIFLE SATAN'S
FOLD;
ALL HELL DOTH AT HIS
PRESENCE QUAKE,
THOUGH HE HIMSELF FOR
COLD DO SHAKE;
FOR IN THIS WEAK UNARMED
WISE
THE GATES OF HELL HE WILL
SURPRISE....

MY SOUL WITH CHRIST JOIN
THOU IN FIGHT;
STICK TO THE TENTS THAT
HE HATH PIGHT [PITCHED].
WITHIN HIS CRIB IS SUREST
WARD;
THIS LITTLE BABE WILL BE
THY GUARD.
IF THOU WILT FOIL THY FOES
WITH JOY,
THEN FLIT NOT FROM THIS
HEAVENLY BOY.

~ ROBERT SOUTHWELL
(1561-1595)

*THE POET, A PRIEST AND LEADER OF THE PERSECUTED
CATHOLIC CHURCH IN REFORMATION ENGLAND, WAS
HANGED FOR TREASON AT THE AGE OF 33.
SEE PAGE 2.*



From painting by Correggio.