



C A N A D I A N
Mennonite

December 22, 2003
Volume 7, Number 24

Signs of Christmas

As I write this editorial, I am looking forward to having my youngest child come home for Christmas. My other children, meanwhile, are spending Christmas elsewhere this year, and my parents and siblings are many miles away.

This fractured family Christmas reminds me that the joys of the season are inevitably tinged with loss or regret. And with a considerable amount of guilt for our holiday excesses.

If we find it difficult to see signs of hope amidst the endless warfare and human degradation of our time, it's probably because we're not looking for them.

(A Christmas card we received this year from a distant family member came with a bizarre message: "All your possessions will seem grossly and wonderfully enjoyable." Gross and wonderful at the same time? I suppose that's one way to express the contradictions of the season!)

Many of us find our Christmas joy tempered by absence, illness and stress...but we manage to celebrate anyway!

That goes for our larger family as well, within our church and beyond. In this issue, you can

read family stories from China (pages 4 and 6), and see glimmers of "Christmas cheer" emerging in the most unlikely places: Afghanistan (page 17), Iraq (page 19) and Ukraine (page 22). It's not surprising that these stories focus on children, so often the bearers of hope.

Closer to home, look for signs of new birth in unusual places, from a maximum-security prison (page 19) to the police force (page 18).

"The rare moment is not the moment when there is

something worth looking at, but the moment when we are capable of seeing," said Joseph Wood Krutch in *The Desert Year*. If we find it difficult to see signs of hope amidst the endless warfare and human degradation of our time, it's probably because we're not looking for them.

We need the annual angel visitation. We need each year to hear their incredible message—that God is with us, in this world, at this very moment, against all the odds. Don't take our word for it, say the angels to the astounded shepherds. Go and see for yourselves.—**Margaret Loewen Reimer**

Index 2003

This being the last issue of the year, you will find the index taking up a lot of space (pages 31-43). To look up references, note that the first number refers to the issue, and the number after the colon is the page number in that issue. For example, authors and subjects from page 7 of this issue (number 24) are listed as 24:7.

Browsing through this index can reveal some interesting trends. This year, the subjects that got a lot of coverage include "Financial crisis" (of Mennonite Church Canada), AIDS and Iraq (almost every issue). It's no surprise that Mennonite Church conferences and agencies have long lists of entries. For specifics, check subjects under other headings as well. (In other words, if you can't find what you're looking for under one subject, try another one.)

This may be the last time we print the index in the magazine (unless our readers protest). Its use is primarily for research and record-keeping, and we will continue to make it available to those who request it.

Currently, we have a cumulative electronic index for *Canadian Mennonite* since the magazine's beginning in 1997. We hope that it will eventually become available through our web site (www.canadianmennonite.org).

Mission statement: Published by Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service, *Canadian Mennonite* serves primarily the people and churches of Mennonite Church Canada and its five area conferences. *Canadian Mennonite* is a bi-weekly Anabaptist/ Mennonite periodical which seeks to promote covenantal relationships within the church (Hebrews 10:23-25). It provides channels for sharing accurate and fair information, faith profiles, inspirational/educational materials, news and analysis of issues facing the church.

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Website: www.canadianmennonite.org

PAP Registration No. 09613. Contact head office for subscriptions and address changes. See order form on inside back cover. ISSN 1480-042X
 We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing cost.

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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 Jan. 12 issue by Jan. 8.

Cover: Icicles.
Photo by Jane Grunau



Nanchong, China

Nanchong is home to Hanson family

Todd and Jeanette Hanson from Saskatchewan are Mennonite Church Canada workers with China Educational Exchange in Nanchong. A Nanchong newspaper recently did the following story on the Hansons (translated by MC Canada staff Jane Zheng).

A young Canadian couple, Todd and Jeanette Hanson, locally known as Han Son and Zhang Lin, have lived and worked in Nanchong for the past 10 years. Like many locally born residents, Todd, Jeanette and their two daughters have treated this beautiful city in south-western China as their home.

Todd and Jeanette first came to China in 1991. In 1992, Todd had a chance to come to Nanchong to visit a friend. The beauty of the city, decency of the local people and the delicious Sichuan dishes attracted this young fellow. In 1994, Todd began teaching at XiHuan College in Nanchong.

Like the city itself, Todd and Jeanette's lives have experienced significant change. They have made a lot of friends and have become attached to Nanchong's local foods, especially a Sichuan fondue dish. In 1997, they had their first daughter Su-Yin (Claire), and five years later, a second daughter, Su-Lin (Kate). Both Su-Yin and Su-Lin were born in Nanchong. Both speak fluent English and Mandarin.

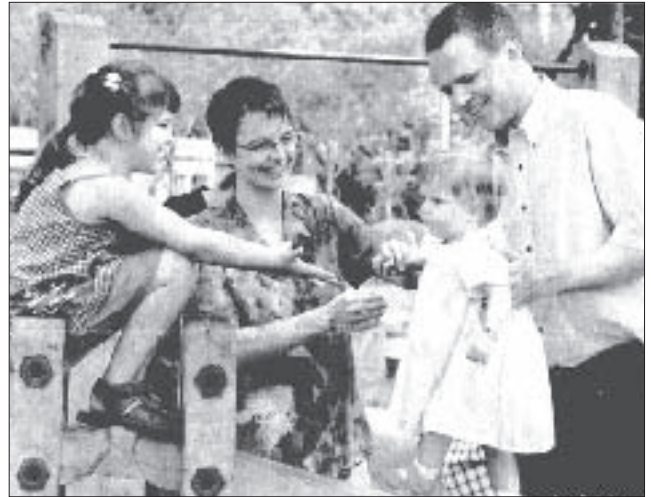
Todd and Jeanette have had their Chinese names since the day they landed in China. Few people even remember their English names. When asked why they named their two girls Su-Yin and Su-Lin, Jeanette, who speaks fluent Mandarin, explained that both Yin and Lin in Chinese mean "beautiful jade"—the girls are their treasures.

In the past 10 years, many foreign teachers have come and gone. Normally, a foreign teacher stays for about

two years.

Todd and Jeanette, however, have developed a strong attachment to this small city. They cannot even bear a long vacation back home in Canada, where there are also beautiful mountains and lakes. In their mind, Nanchong has begun to be home.

—Wu Xiao Rong



Jeanette and Todd Hanson, with daughters Claire and Kate. A Nanchong television station recently produced a five-minute documentary about the Hansons' work.

Anren, China

Christians struggle in isolated setting

The town of Anren is nestled between two mountain ridges on the northeastern edge of the Sichuan Basin. In the 1980s, a migrant worker returned with a Bible and some family members became followers of Christ. They met and copied portions from their one treasured Bible.

Shi Chufen became a Christian in 1992 and began leading the growing group of believers. She worked as a tailor to support herself. With no outside contact, the group thought they were the only Christian body in existence.

Local government officials connected them with a church in Dazhou City, a two-hour bus ride away. Pastor Duan from



Shi Chufen and her husband host the growing church in their home.

Dazhou City came to visit Anren. Communication, however, was difficult, because the believers here speak their own dialect. Pastor Duan encouraged Shi Chufen to pastor the new church full-time.

In obedience to that call, Shi and her husband moved from their farm into town, and built a house and garage for the husband's business. The church began meeting in their home.

From 1997 to 1999, Shi Chufen studied at Sichuan Theological Seminary in Chengdu, the provincial capital. There she developed an awareness of other Christian groups around the world.

At present more than 300 baptized Christians in Anren meet in Shi's home. Sometimes up to 1,000 people gather for special occasions. Officials say the facility is inadequate and a threat to safety. The congregation is searching for a new meeting place or it will be prohibited from gathering. Officials will support the project, once funds and land are available.

Many are desperately poor. Their dialect has no written form so there is a high rate of illiteracy. To facilitate learning the Bible, scripture verses have been put to music. Bibles and hymnbooks are now available.

China Educational Exchange has provided some funds to begin the building project, and is looking for contributions from North America. Jeanette Hanson, Mennonite Church Canada worker, recently visited the Anren community.—**Marietta Sawatzky and Jeanette Hanson**

New Hamburg, Ont.

Two worlds come together in Harms family

In 1960, Harry Harms of Canada married Ae Une (Anna) Lee in Korea. He had met Anna while serving there with Pax, a Mennonite Central Committee post-war rebuilding program. In September 2003, Harry and Anna visited South Korea, which Harry had not seen in 41 years.

Harry kept a journal of their trip. From his October 7 entry:

We have no trouble finding Suh Moon market where we know the mission hospital should be nearby. What we recall as open space between market and hospital is now jammed with buildings... The hospital is now Dong San Medical Center, a huge bulging complex of gleaming steel and glass.

Back in the late 1950s, the MCC Korea unit headquarters moved from its crowded location near downtown Daegu to this more spacious and secure setting.... One of the old brown residences is tucked away in a secluded section, across from a little cemetery. It now serves as a museum.

Curiously, it is a glimpse of the big, old bathtub that triggers a surge of emotions. My mind goes back to mid-August, 1962. Anna had just given birth to our first son, Paul, at this mission hospital. I had stayed with her since there was no way I would leave, the way I had been asked to when my first wife Clara gave birth—only to return to find both her and our daughter lifeless. After Anna and Paul were both in recovery wards I was offered a warm bath in one of their huge tubs.

Harry was born on the Manitoba prairies and moved to British Columbia when he was 10. In the early 1950s, he did a six-month voluntary service term at Bethesda Home in Vineland, Ontario. He served with Pax in Korea from 1954-57 where he met Clara Eschleman, secretary for MCC. In 1959, Clara died in childbirth in a Winnipeg hospital.

In fall 1959, Harry returned to Korea for a second term. MCC's work now shifted from mass relief to help in leper colonies, baby homes and orphanages. There were several thousand war orphans in that province alone.

MCC opened Mennonite Vocational School, a secondary school at Kyung San, outside the city of Daegu. The school graduated over 400 orphaned boys. Some were helped by MCC to continue on to college.

At Daegu, Harry met Ae Une (Anna) Lee (Ae means love, and Une, grace). Her paternal grandparents were first-generation Korean Christians.

In 1948, Anna's family joined the many others moving to South Korea as refugees.

As a teenager, Anna taught Sunday school in the Daegu Presbyterian church. While attending university, she worked as an interpreter—and later director—of the MCC widows' sewing project that operated from 1956 to 1962. Anna's mother took over the project when Anna left.

Harry and Anna were married in 1960 in the Presbyterian church, with Anna's minister and C.N. Hostettler from MCC officiating. Anna's relatives asked, "How could you allow your daughter to marry a barbarian?" One of Anna's uncles, however, had been educated in the United States in the 1930s, and many in her family were aware of MCC's work.

The couple came to Waterloo, Ontario, in 1962, where Anna completed a master's degree in social work. She worked with Family and Children's Services for over 27 years. Harry taught school and then worked as an electrician.

Anna has recently been in touch with Koreans who have discovered Anabaptism.

In 1962, Anna was the second Korean in permanent residence in the Kitchener-Waterloo area—the first wave of Korean immigrants arrived in the late 1960s. She sponsored her brother in that immigration and her

parents came in 1971.

There were some personal adjustments. Harry could never get used to stumbling over shoes that Anna, in Asian fashion, would leave at the door. Anna had to adjust to being a house-

keeper since in Korea it is customary to have servants cook and clean.

The couple considered not having children but, as they put it: "Life happens, so we make the best of it." Son Paul struggled with being "a mixed up kid" but now lives happily in Toronto. Daughter Susan, an optometrist, lives with her German husband in Vancouver.

They agreed that it helps to have a shared faith and the support of the church community.—**Maurice Martin**



Harry and Anna Harms



Harry Harms and Anna (back right) with members of the widows' sewing project that MCC operated in Korea from 1956 to 1962. Anna's mother, Mrs. Yi, is at Harry's right.

Advent gifts

So he came and proclaimed peace! *Glory to God in the highest heaven,*

Christmas reflections from China

In Christ Jesus you who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has...broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us.... So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father (Ephesians 2).

China is a country of impressive walls. Besides the obvious example of the Great Wall, every school, hospital and courtyard has walls.

Building a wall was the first item on the list of construction guidelines received by the Nanchong church regarding their new property. City planning officials were puzzled

when the pastor said, "But we don't want walls. We want the church property to be completely open to the street."

Imposing walls give the impression of power and authority. Perhaps this is why the Ephesians 2 passage above has had such an impact upon us—especially at Christmas, as we celebrate Christ's coming to break down the dividing walls of hostility.

While we may not erect physical walls, there are other kinds of walls not easily broken down: walls of language and culture, of distance, of misunderstanding, of assumptions and expectations, of fear and mistrust, of history and privilege, of superiority and inferiority, of thoughtlessness, ignorance and apathy.

How are these walls broken down? It is, indeed, a mystery (see Ephesians 3:1-6).

It is a mystery that Brother Wang, a mentally challenged Chinese man who makes his living picking through garbage looking for recyclables, can greet a Canadian college teacher on the street and ask about her children. It is a mystery that he can befriend a Canadian toddler and share a smile with her.

It is a mystery that "Little Yan," a girl raised in an atheistic school system, can play with a girl raised by Western mission workers. It is a mystery that they interact with acceptance and love, and not suspicion and fear.

Some walls are not broken down so



"Little Yan" and Claire Hanson have many things in common besides the flowers hanging from their ears.

Tinsel town in China

It's never too early to begin practising for the Christmas extravaganza in the Nanchong church, so I wasn't terribly surprised to find myself working on a bilingual version of "Silent Night" with several church members last November.

They were struggling with words and timing, so I played a recording of it sung by Bing Crosby.

After listening with rapt attention, a young woman said, "He must be a Christian to sing it like that." An older woman who had visited relatives in North America over Christmas pointed out that many North Americans make Christmas albums—even those who are not Christians. This seemed incomprehensible to the others.

Christmas in China is becoming a commercial celebration, like in other parts of the world. A pastor recently told me about Christmas celebrations in hotels and restaurants, especially in big cities. I expressed my sympathy, knowing how it feels to have something precious commercialized.

But I was wrong—he was happy about it.

"You really don't understand our position here," he said. "The church is so very small in our society. Most people have never heard of Christianity. How could you understand that, coming from the West?"

Christmas celebrations can be a signpost to the church, he said. Perhaps the celebrations will prompt people to ask questions about where they originated.

I thought about this as I took my daughter Claire out for french fries. The only Western fast food outlet in town was decorating for

Christmas. I couldn't imagine anyone there being moved to ask questions about the meaning of Christmas because of plastic tinsel and inflatable Santas.

I remember a student's shocked response when she learned that North American and Chinese churches support my work here. She said, "I thought the church was just a place people in the West went on Sunday, where you celebrated holidays." She was sure Christianity was irrelevant to the life of Chinese people.

This discouraged me. The Chinese church has long had to deal with the perception of Christianity as a Western religion. I've even heard a saying, "One more Christian means one less Chinese."

I listened to Bing Crosby again and wondered: What fake sentiments do Western musicians pass along? But then I realized that the Christmas message doesn't originate with Western, or Chinese, celebrations. It isn't a fake sentiment brought out with the tinsel.

It is the original message: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace!—**Jeanette Hanson**

*and on earth
peace,
goodwill among people.*



Brother Wang and Kate Hanson enjoy each other's company.

easily. Many are buttressed by years of distrust, hurt and anger.

At times, we are like the walls we have erected. They define who we are, and show how impressive and powerful we are. But Christ has come to break down the dividing wall, the hostility between us. We can all think of examples of this mystery that surrounds us, examples that encourage us to live this message of peace.

"So he came and proclaimed peace! Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace, goodwill among people" (Ephesians 2:17; Luke 2:14).

—**Todd and Jeanette Hanson**

The writers, from Saskatchewan, are Mennonite Church Canada workers in Nanchong, China.

Christmas celebrations can be a signpost to the church. Perhaps the celebrations will prompt people to ask questions about where they originated.

*So he came and
proclaimed peace!*

So he came and proclaimed peace!

Glory to God

in the highest heaven, and on earth peace, goodwill

Giving the perfect gift

I'm not a cynic about gift-giving. I enjoy finding the perfect gift for those on my list. Even so, I always have that niggling feeling that most people on my list don't really need another sweater, or book, or CD.

So this year, my extended family decided to give one another one perfect gift. It is a gift that will bring joy to all who receive it. It is a gift we will collectively give to someone we don't know.

Around the world, 40 million people are now living with HIV/AIDS, which is placing generations—grandparents, parents, and their children—at risk. Nowhere is this truer than in Africa. In response to requests from churches there, Mennonite Central Committee has begun a 10-year initiative called Generations at Risk. It provides home care for the sick, support for children, supplies for hospitals, training for pastors, and education to prevent the spread of this devastating disease.

A component of the Generations at Risk project is an AIDS Care Kit for home care volunteers.

Shelene Poetker, an MCC worker in Uganda, writes: "Every Friday I climb into a faded, brown pickup truck.... I squeeze into the two seats with a doctor, two nurses, a pastor and the driver. We bounce along the

rutted dirt roads outside Kampala, visiting and treating bedridden AIDS patients.

Our first client is a 20-year-old woman, racked with coughing in the late stages of TB. Her worried mother looks

on as we set up an IV; she has already lost seven children to AIDS.... We visit a middle-aged woman for whom AIDS has opened the door for a rare platelet disease. She has dry skin. Her parents and grandparents died of AIDS. She shows all the signs of being HIV-positive. *This is truly a war zone...yet hope and humanity are also present through tireless family members supporting their loved ones, through doctors and nurses who continue to make these weekly visits. The lessons in suffering are also lessons in grace.*"

It is volunteers like Shelene and the doctors, nurses, and family members serving those suffering with AIDS who will receive the AIDS Care Kit that my family puts together. The contents of the kit are practical: soap, bed sheets, rubber gloves and other items, and \$100 to purchase Bibles, train volunteers, and provide travel allowances for them. It's a perfect gift which says, "We have more than we need; we want to share with you out of the blessings we have received."

Even though there will be no wrapped boxes underneath the tree for us this year, it will be a special moment when we gather as a family to place our items into the fabric bag that will hold the kit items and serve as a back pack for the person receiving it.

If you are feeling saddened by the commercialization of Christmas, this project is one way to respond. For more information, visit the MCC website at www.mcc.org/aids/index.html or call the MCC office at 1-888-622-6337.—MCC B.C. release by **Angelika Dawson**

among people.

among people.

and on earth peace,

Glory to God in the highest heaven,



Angelika Dawson (left), her son Aaron and mother Susan Wiebe pack an AIDS Care Kit which will take the place of Christmas gifts this year.

Imaginative look at basic Christian doctrines

A. James Reimer, *The Dogmatic Imagination: The Dynamics of Christian Belief*, Herald Press, 2003.

I have to admit I hesitated before agreeing to review this book. It sounded like a thick book with a dark cover and small print, the kind of book that might be good for serious study, but would take more time than I could give it.

To my happy surprise, Reimer's book is a slim paperback of just 105 pages. It's not at all "dogmatic" in the sense of being overly rigid or narrow. Instead, it covers the central dogmas of the Christian faith: the Bible, the Spirit, God the Father, Jesus, salvation, the church, baptism, prayer. In all, Reimer covers 21 different topics, followed by 3 additional meditations.

Each short essay is certainly imaginative, as Reimer plays with

various metaphors like faith as a Scrabble game and God as symphony conductor and concertmaster. He relates personal stories of growing up in Manitoba and makes reference to movies like *Hero* and *Schindler's List*, and to writers such as Armin Wiebe and Patrick Friesen. Even Canadian musician Leonard Cohen receives a mention. All this is woven into Reimer's discussion of Scripture and the great themes of the Christian faith.

Reimer's book is clearly written and engaging for those already familiar with the Christian faith and the Mennonite church. But I wouldn't use it for cat-



echism instruction as some might suggest. While Reimer covers "the basics," he doesn't cover them in a basic way. His book is more exploration than exposition, more provocative than definitive answer.

But for those looking for a discussion of Christian belief with a Mennonite twist, this is a concise and interesting treatment. Most of these essays have been previously published in the *Mennonite Reporter* and *Canadian Mennonite*, and work well together in this volume.—April Yamasaki

The reviewer is pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Abbotsford, B.C.

Arts note

Cool in the furnace performed at Waterloo North

Forty-three children—junior kindergarten to grade eight—participated in *It's Cool in the Furnace*, a musical about Daniel and his friends, at Waterloo North Mennonite Church in Ontario on November 8 and 9. The performance was directed by Ann L. Schultz, Cheryl Brubacher-Cressman and Julie Snyder-Penner. Schultz, who still recalls a production she saw at Elmira Mennonite Church in the 1970s, is passionate about presenting solid church music through biblical story and instilling enthusiasm in children, "the future of the church." Rehearsals began in late September after Sunday church services. An excellent pit band (adults from the congregation) accompanied the singing. Children wore T-shirts of flames that they painted themselves, with the assistance of Jan Fretz and Fabienne Tosi.—Betti Erb



Internationally acclaimed baritone Russell Braun, second from left, appeared with the Soli Deo Gloria singers for a benefit concert at the Leamington United Mennonite Church in Ontario on November 30. Paul Dueck, left, conducts the choir. The concert raised \$10,000 for Project Home Rebuild, an expansion of the Leamington Mennonite Home. Braun's Mennonite family has its roots in Harrow, Ontario. A dinner and silent auction on November 7 raised \$35,500 for the rebuilding project. Speaker at that event was Gordon Thiessen, former Governor of the Bank of Canada. So far, \$960,000 of the \$1.79 million goal has been raised. (See November 3, page 23 for details of the expansion.) Total cost of the project is \$9.5 million.—From reports

And when I read their titles clear

Ah yes, Christmas! That time of year when a special spirit dominates our society—the spirit of entrepreneurship. This is the time when almost every store claims to have that “new gift idea that says it all.”

If it's catering to the Christian marketplace, they call it “an exciting new ministry tool in kingdom development.”

This is the time of year when long-forgotten singers release albums of Christmas carols, in a shallow attempt to revive their careers. Or when your dentist, whom you've been ignoring, sends you a card with his/her “sincere best wishes of this special season.”

I have received unreliable information from an uninformed source that Forced Choice Books, not to be outdone by

the secular world, released a new spread-load of books just in time for Christmas. Here are the titles:

- *Why I am a Mennonite—But Nobody Believes Me.* This is a collection of essays written by “non-ethnic Mennonites.” (How someone can be born without belonging to an ethnic group is a miracle in itself!) The book argues that the important thing these days is not how you define yourself, but how others define you.
- *When Good People Fleece Each Other.* This book explains why congregationalists might have to take advantage of each other in the marketplace and why that is okay, and even necessary, if we are to further the kingdom. (I'm not sure which kingdom....)
- *The Deterioration of the American Home.* This essay chronicles the shoddy carpentry and substandard materials that are now being used in

home construction. Includes suggestions for increasing the re-sale value of your home.

- *Healing Help for Heterosexuals.* A much needed book, especially for those who sincerely wish to change. Sure to be condemned by “Letters to the Editor” writers everywhere.
- *Low English Songs Among the Mennonites.* A collection of recent songs with simplistic lyrics, most of which will probably make it into the new *Sing and Re-hash* songbook (now in preparation).
- *Mennonite Tour Guide to Winnipeg.*

A unique travel guide with maps and tips on how to find Mennonites in any of the best restaurants and doughnut shops of this modern, western city.

- *Still More Amish Quilts.* Yup, it's another glossy, full-colour coffee-table

book about simple people who don't believe in either glossy photography or coffee tables.

- *New Strategies in Peacemaking.* This book argues that the best way to keep the peace is to refuse to allow certain points of view to be heard.
- *The State of the World to Come: A Commentary on Current Events in Light of Biblical Prophecy and My Own Personal Biases.* Still another in the endless series of books about the end time. These books prove that Revelation is paying more mortgages on Christian authors' homes than all parts of the Bible combined.
- *Mixed Marriages Among Mennonites.* A discussion of the delicate issue of inter-conference marriages. Once almost taboo, such unions are now increasingly commonplace. Written by Martin and Edith Martin-Toews, one of the first inter-conference couples to go public.—January 8, 1990

Emke Retro

Ivan Emke



Letters

Letters express the opinion of the writer, not necessarily those of Canadian Mennonite or the church. We publish as many as space permits, unless they attack individuals or become too repetitious. Letters are edited for length and style. See page 2 for address information.

What if the world is of us?

Both Sven Eriksson's “Toward a theology of leadership” (Oct. 6) and his pastoral letter on same-sex marriage (Aug. 4) got me thinking about faith and political correctness.

Eriksson names Old Testament leaders' faith (“believing what God has said”) and obedience (including “audacious things that were out of sync with prevailing values and political correctness”) as elements of kingdom leadership. Church leaders of today, unlike the leaders cited, benefit from the model of Christ as a leader and theologian.

The pastoral letter suggests, “We need to discern together how we can be faithful to our confession.” True, but only if we continue to discern how our confession reflects our faith.

Just as our faith in and obedience to God were changed through Christ, so too were societal values. Some values within the “prevailing empire” may be at odds with kingdom values, but there are other ideals that contain something of Christ, such as the essential worth of every person and human rights for all. Some of these mainstream principles could illuminate for the world what gives our faith a claim to truth.

I agree with Eriksson that Christians are called beyond political correctness, but not because it is of the “prevailing empire.” We are called beyond it because it is used to diminish those who violate its code, halting engagement around issues. To expose its false justice, we must see that each of us is a transgressor, and by sitting in judgement of the other, each of us is

a hypocrite.

This self-revelation could replace political correctness with real empathy. From there, the fruits of conflict could be mutual commitment rather than violence in word or deed.

We usually cling to political correctness in church conflicts, so it is no surprise that Mennonites often see conflict as violence. Both sides in a polarized church conflict marginalize the other. We declare that until deluded minds and incorrect behaviours have changed with regard to some scriptural directive, discussion is pointless.

Despite our talk of conflict resolution and transformation, this is conflict demolition. If we were “audacious” in our obedience to God through Christ, we would instead pursue a loving conflict. Lasting peace and mutual insight come to those who remain in loving commitment to one another in the midst of conflict.

I think of the church as our response to faith. Moved by the Spirit, we reflect on the Bible to discern God’s will. But when we believe the church is the Bible, and that God’s will is

plain text, the discernment ends. This has been both the root of many a church conflict, and a formula for bad conflict.

Over and over, this “easy knowledge” of God’s will has made us self-righteous, and we turn to discernment of one another. We are currently taking one another to task over homosexuality. What is fuelling our conflict cannot be scriptural instruction beyond what can be found on many other abiding sins. I suspect that it is fuelled by the seeming vindication that comes from hitting an easy mark. Whether a sin will be borne by the faith community or prosecuted often hinges on how many of us are implicated, or the nature of the relationships between the accusers and the implicated.

Scripture is static with regard to “sin” topics, but we are not (consider divorce in the church). We know that we all fall short. We can’t let everyone off the hook, so we simmer conflict down to the one sin that we will not bear. Are we drawing a line in the sand for the sake of obedience to God through Christ, or for our own vindication?

Since Christ, the question of where in the Bible to start our appraisal of others is the wrong question. Christ tells us to start with ourselves. We must draw strength from God, and from one another, to see it done.—**Karl Kessler, Waterloo, Ont.**

Volunteers rejected at U.S. border

Two readers from Saskatchewan shared their recent experience of trying to get into the United States to volunteer with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS).

Recently we sat at the Canadian-U.S. border for two and a half hours. Frustration gave way to deep disappointment. We had left home in anticipation to volunteer for two weeks with MDS.

We were not allowed across the U.S. border. The law says that no alien can work on construction, not even as a volunteer in a disaster area. Phone calls resulted in no change to the verdict.

We left with mixed feelings—the

Continued on page 12

Thrift store Santa

In early September, I challenged my students to raise a record amount of money for the MCC sale in Morris, Manitoba. I promised to buy thrift store prizes for the class that raised the most dough.

Two things happened. First, staff and students chipped in \$641 to set an all-time school record. Second, the Grade 11s won the grade prize by contributing nearly half that amount.

For the next six weeks, they politely reminded me that it was my turn to come through. I hemmed and hawed. It hadn’t occurred to me, you see, that I’d be purchasing for at least 50 students. I’d done the unthinkable for a penny-wise Mennonite—given (or at least promised to give) first, and asked questions later.

However, since my answers were becoming more miserly by the day, I decided to accost my problem and buy the gifts. I entered the thrift store on a lovely October afternoon. Before long, my cheapskate-emotions were swept away as I saw what every pack rat can’t resist: cool stuff!

For the guys, I found a raft (which in

thrift store terms means a discriminating handful) of ties—some actually quite nice. My favourite was a lime green, bright yellow, and orange number sure to match any teenager’s ensemble. For the girls, I tossed a pile of ultra-suave handbags into the cart.

Well aware that we live in an age of



equal opportunity, I completed my bulk shopping with a selection of caps, including quite a number with “Canadian Foodgrains Bank” logos. A few other knick-knacks rounded out my purchasing frenzy.

The clerks looked at me kind of funny, but brightened when I explained from whence the money had come. The final price: \$27.95. I was ecstatic. I’d been able

to show generosity and to save money. I’d had a genuine foretaste of Mennonite heaven.

And speaking of Mennonite heaven, my students loved the retro stuff and were soon modelling ties, handbags and caps with humble Anabaptist pride. There was only one item that didn’t “sell”—a Grecian Goddess Bath Salts glass bottle, complete with an elegant stopper. The bath salts had been in the bottle for several years. You could smell them from the other end of the room.

Unwilling to let such a valuable item go unused, however, I dumped the bath salts, rinsed the bottle a couple of dozen times, and now have a lovely change receptacle which sits in one of the coffee-mug slots in our van. I’m always willing to explain where I got it and what the whole Mennonite thing means.

And as for the “give first, ask questions later” philosophy, I’m thinking it might be a good one to implement on a full-time basis. Just don’t ask me to do it right away. After all, like any true child of Menno, I can only handle so much change at one time.

The prospects for peace in Iraq

The capture of Saddam Hussein led some to predict that now Iraqi resistance to the U.S.-led occupation will fade, and new governing structures will be set up more quickly.

The people of Iraq, while jubilant, seem more cautious about making

Volunteers *From page 11*

strongest one that being a friend of the U.S. is not worth the hassle of being honest at the border. (Even our picnic sandwiches were inspected.) Our working vacation was nipped in the bud. It seems that U.S.-Canadian Mennonite ventures, as well as assemblies, may be a thing of the past. Cross-border connections feel more alien with each report.

Our deflation was somewhat buoyed by the knowledge that our help would be accepted in our own country. We headed west and worked with MDS for three weeks.

Now at home, we watch TV, appalled at the devastating wildfires in California. A Canadian reporter follows a burnout victim through the ashes of his home. He points to a bunch of gun barrels sticking up in the debris.

"We had lots of guns, not all of them legal," he states. "We need them to defend ourselves against you Canadians." With jokes like that, maybe Canadians who do make it across the border will need to ask MDS to stock bulletproof vests in the tool trailer.

—**E. Zacharias, Osler, Sask.**

Four able-bodied volunteers from Osler Mennonite Church were rejected at the U.S. border recently. We were headed for Pinedale, Arizona, to volunteer with MDS for a couple of weeks. We had our passports and letter of entry from MDS.

That was not good enough. Border officials said that no aliens can enter the U.S. to do any type of work—even volunteers. We felt like Canadian beef.

We ended up in Barriere, B.C., where we met many wonderful people.

What does this experience say for Mennonite Church Canada and USA relations? Hopefully things will improve.—**Frieda Rempel, Osler, Sask.**

predictions. They have been disappointed in too many ways in the eight months since the coalition took over.

But they too have hopes, some of which I heard in my visit there in September.

- Two men who had left the country early in Hussein's reign were back and have started a newspaper. They talked about nurturing a climate for openly discussing public issues.

- An Iraqi woman, also a returnee, has set up an organization to promote health care and water development, as well as education on human rights.

- A psychologist spoke of his hope that people would overcome the violence and mistrust that they internalized during the decades of dictatorial rule.

- A Christian college (4 percent of Iraq's 25 million people are Christian) was building library shelves and talking about serving the Christian community more effectively.

- Several church leaders said that now they could receive visitors from abroad without having a government official present in every conversation. They hope for more interaction.

- Various leaders expressed their hope that Shia, Sunni, Kurd, Christian and Turkoman will be able to find a way of living together in mutual respect.

- An elderly Christian woman, to whom I brought a gift from her son in Canada, said, "I hope and pray that we will not have war anymore."

These hopes reflect a warm humanity, but also concern about the future. Many talked about kidnappings, thefts, and other acts of violence. They want security so that they could send their children to school, start businesses, and go about their daily lives without fear. They want medicine, dependable water and electricity, and jobs.

Some said the Americans should not leave too soon lest tensions break out with increased violence. But the continuing problems, and the fact that the standard of living for many is going down, is leading many to turn against the U.S.

At one level, this turn of events relates to how the U.S. approached post-war Iraq. The Defence Department had given little thought to

running the country. Indeed, it refused advice, even from other U.S. departments. One result was the looting immediately after the war which caused more destruction than the bombing. That U.S. troops did almost nothing to stop it dealt an enormous blow to the people's confidence in the Americans.

Similarly, U.S. administrators dismissed all 400,000 people in the Iraqi military and some 50,000 senior civil servants. This caused humiliation and economic hardship, and weakened the coalition's capacity.

On the other hand, the U.S. walked into complex and sensitive regional dynamics. Before the 1950s, the Arab world saw the U.S. as its friend. That was when Arabs struggled for independence, first from Ottoman rule and then from European rule. Many schools started by western missionaries were independence hotbeds.

But when the U.S. sought to prevent Soviet expansionism, ensure access to oil, and protect the state of Israel, its pressures on Arab governments led many Arabs to turn against it.

Movements to establish Arab authenticity appeared and political Islam gained ground. In more recent years, some Arabs have begun to call for a more self-critical stance, for a separation of the mosque from the state, for greater openness and basic freedoms. Some U.S. policy makers thought that their invasion would so strengthen these voices that democracy would soon be established.

The capture of Saddam Hussein will not resolve the complexities and problems of the region. But to critique the U.S. should not rationalize inaction. Some Iraqis have also criticized western agencies who, in the 1990s, strongly opposed the United Nations sanctions against Iraq but said little about Saddam Hussein's terrible violations.

Recent reports suggest that the U.S. is "cutting a deal" whereby Iran will have a greater say in Iraqi affairs. This would serve certain interests of both powers but whether it would advance the humane and long-held hopes of the Iraqi people is not sure.

—**Bill Janzen**

The writer is director of the Ottawa Office of Mennonite Central Committee.

Winnipeg, Man.

General Board planning 'promised' review

Revision and review were recurring themes at the Mennonite Church Canada General Board meetings here November 5-8, as members planned for a organizational review, re-visited Assembly 2003, agreed to a joint assembly with MC USA, and heard reports.

A review in 2004 was promised in 1999 when the Conference of Mennonites in Canada was transformed into Mennonite Church Canada. The board appointed three members to work with an outside facilitator to identify procedures and review questions that need to be addressed. These will be brought to the Leadership Assembly for approval next March.

The board did an initial review of the MC Canada vision/mission statement that was drafted just before the new structure went into effect. Board members and staff were asked to highlight what could be enriched and what might be missing. People felt that the wording could be more concise and passionate, with a greater emphasis on peace. Suggestions will be brought to the March meeting for further action.

Concerning Assembly 2003, responses included: not enough time for discussion, lack of interaction with youth, disruptions experienced due to the actions of the BMC (Brethren and Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Interests), and a general sense of heaviness in the aftermath of the financial crisis.

The board gave special attention to a resolution to extend the Service Ministries program (see related story).

Board members approved a proposal that MC USA "buy out" MC Canada's 40 percent of a \$20,000 loan to The Mennonite Press, based in the U.S. Also, they heard an extensive update on Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN). Joy Kroeger reported that a new board is in place, including Canadians Laverne Brubacher, Carrie

Dueck and Abe Bergen.

"Revenues were slightly lower than anticipated" for this year, said Clare Schlegel, General Board treasurer, "and though it's not a major crisis, MPN is not out of the woods yet." A campaign to pay off a \$1.7 million U.S. debt is expected to raise about \$400,000, with operations

contributing another \$500,000, leaving \$800,000 outstanding. The loan has been extended to January 31. MPN is refinancing in a way that will not affect payments on loans with MC Canada and MC USA.

The General Board is confident that MPN "will respond to the situation as it changes, cutting if they need to," noted Marlene Janzen, General Board secretary. While there is reason for "cautious optimism, it's clear that MPN won't survive without the support of the churches."

General Board members also attended an education consultation. A report will follow in the next issue.

—**Leona Dueck Penner**

Tensions and positive reports

The General Board also wrestled with the current disenchantment in some B.C. congregations. In response to a letter of concern from MC British Columbia, the board outlined eight steps it will take. They include re-affirming the Confession of Faith, creating a council to give spiritual



Photo by Leona Dueck Penner

Helen Schellenberg of Charleswood Mennonite Church coordinates lunch for General Board members during their November meetings in Winnipeg. Annie Wiebe works in the background. Charleswood hosted the meetings. Board members noted the generous hospitality extended by Charleswood and many congregations across Canada that provide food and lodging for MC Canada's board members.

direction to the wider church, reviewing its interaction with BMC, and facilitating interaction among area conference leaders.

MC British Columbia was to present this MC Canada response to delegates on November 29.

The board discussed a recommendation from the Joint Executive Committee (leaders of MC USA and Canada) that MC Canada go to Charlotte, North Carolina, for a joint assembly in 2005. The board accepted the invitation from MC USA, but with no commitment to meet jointly beyond 2005.

"The deciding factor for many members was the strong voice from the youth, who are determined to meet together binationally," said general secretary Dan Nighswander. Leaders of MC USA are open in principle to meeting in Canada, he said, adding that "response to 2005 will influence future decisions."

Financial reports were encouraging: of the 55.5 percent of donation revenue

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General Board *From page 13*

anticipated for February 1 to October 31, 55.2 percent (\$2,157,000) has been received. Expenses are about 7 percent under budget.

"We are still facing the mystery fourth quarter," noted Willard Metzger, chair of Christian Witness Council, referring to the uncertainty of the last three months when nearly half of total donations normally come in.

The board also received a positive report of Lloyd Plett's work as Interim Financial Consultant. General Secretary Dan Nighswander said that "finding Lloyd has been a gift," noting the valuable counsel Plett has already provided.

Chairs and executive staff of Formation, Witness, and Support Services councils presented reports. Formation Council is proposing a reference council for the Denominational Minister's office to test ideas and collect discernment from the wider body.

In a related discussion, the General Board noted the need for a channel to "tap the wisdom of the elders." The loss of the Council for Faith of Life (from the old structure) has created a certain vacuum in theological discernment. This agenda will be part of the larger review in 2004.

The Witness Council reported on the success of the Missional Leadership Formation courses. Jack Suderman reported that 50 leaders from across Canada are participating. "It is energizing to hear how each of the participants is making significant efforts to shape and re-shape their ministries from a missional perspective," he said.

Witness also noted that recently announced \$1 million in cutbacks to Mennonite Mission Network in the U.S. will have an impact on Canada's international programs. MMN and MC Canada jointly support a number of international workers and programs.

Support Services reported on plans to develop an overall fundraising strategy for MC Canada, including greater visibility of key staff persons.

The board accepted a recommendation that the theme of the 2004 assembly in Winkler, Manitoba, July 7-11 be: "Enough for all," based on the feeding of the 5,000 described in John 6:1-14.—**Dan Dyck**

Winnipeg, Man.

Education agency talks shift focus

After a 16-month hiatus, discussions about an education agency within Mennonite Church Canada reopened here on November 6.

This meeting indicated a dramatic shift—from sometimes divisive debates on governance and financial support to an emphasis on links between schools, from talk of an agency to proposing a staff person to coordinate educational agenda.

Sponsored by Mennonite Church Canada General Board, the education consultation included representatives from Canadian Mennonite University (CMU), Columbia Bible College, Conrad Grebel University College, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), and the Canadian Association of Mennonite Schools (CAMS)—included for the first time.

Discussion was open and "there was a strong affirmation of common ground," observed Sven Eriksson, MC Canada denominational minister. "There was some very creative grappling of how to address the whole Mennonite education system from kindergarten to grad school."

Several participants noted a stronger spirit of unity in this round of conversations. Perhaps, observed one person, this was because "money is out of the equation" due to budget restraints. Or maybe it was because time has passed, things have changed, and

we understand each other better, noted Gerald Gerbrandt (CMU) and Henry Paetkau (Grebel).

The discussion began with an assessment of Mennonite education and its goals.

"What struck me," said Sue Steiner, chair of Christian Formation and a General Board member, "is how close our responses and desires for outcome are." The common vision for Mennonite education includes a biblically-based Anabaptist faith, discipleship, leadership training, service orientation, and academic skills.

A review of the Assembly 2002 vision statement quickly established that it is more a denominational vision than a statement for an agency. A new statement, with input from the consultation, will be drafted by MC Canada for discussion at the Leadership Assembly in March and at the delegate assembly in July.

Why do we need an education agency? Why don't schools simply get together for networking? asked Jeremy Bergen, General Board member.

Ron Loeppky, principal of Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School, responded that the issue is how schools can be resources to congregations. "It's in the interest of MC Canada to ensure that the schools are contributing to that purpose and that they talk to each other," he said.

Education discussion has long history

The last decade has seen several attempts to form an education agency for post-secondary schools related to Mennonite Church Canada. (Elementary and secondary schools relate to each other through the Canadian Mennonite Association of Mennonite Schools.)

A 1992 proposal called for a higher education commission. A reduced version of this proposal came to delegates at Abbotsford 1994 and was defeated.

In June 2000, talks began again with conference and school representatives at Crieff Hills, Ontario. In September of that year, an Education Task Force began its work. In spring 2001, the task

force was disbanded and the General Board took over the agenda.

In November 2001, the General Board met with presidents and board chairs of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Columbia Bible College and Conrad Grebel University College, and developed a draft recommendation. Draft 4, not fully supported by all the partners, came to delegates for discussion only at Saskatoon 2002.

This year's meeting, on November 6, represented a shift away from an education agency to a broader discussion (see story above).

Photo by Dan Dyck



Discussing education issues during table discussions are, from left: Ernest Epp (General Board), Kerry Enns (CMU), Bernie Thiessen (MC Manitoba), Henry Paetkau (Grebel), Paul Kroecker (CAMS), and Marlene Janzen (General Board).

“What about putting some staff time into this, rather than writing a constitution for an agency?” suggested Dan Nighswander, MC Canada general secretary. Discussion groups agreed that “starting small” with a staff coordinator made sense.

Schools were agreed on their desire for “more linkage, less governance,” that the focus should be to “represent and promote” schools and to build relationships between them. They also agreed to move in the direction of reciprocal board representation between the General

Board and the schools.

“What difference would it make if we would identify ourselves as an ‘educational’ instead of a ‘missional’ church?” asked Paetkau.

“We don’t just want a co-ordinating body,” cautioned Gerbrandt. There should be a structure with a mandate for helping communication and also for helping MC Canada think through education from the churches’ side.

Pastoral leadership training was identified as a central concern. Nelson Kraybill of AMBS noted that without

anyone overseeing education in MC Canada, “we don’t have the place to plug in.” Paetkau urged greater visibility for all schools within MC Canada, encouraging initiatives in recruitment and especially in resource development.

“We’re competing in the same constituency,” he said, and it would be helpful to see MC Canada as a partner/facilitator for all schools.

Nighswander reported that MC Canada continues to contribute to CMU (\$350,000, about 7 percent of its budget). Meanwhile, CMU is having difficulty making ends meet: “We need help to make a safe transition,” said Kerry Enns, CMU board member.

The larger problem, said Gerbrandt, is that “the church invests less and less in schools.”

While there is still much work to be done, the tone of the consultation was positive. Paul Wartman, Columbia Bible College president, said that the discussions on vision and mandate offered “a great model” for Columbia’s conversations with its other partners.

Henry Krause, MC Canada moderator, commented: “We got somewhere today. The meeting felt a lot different than it did two years ago. It was a lot more fun!”—**Leona Dueck Penner**

Winnipeg, Man.

General Board stands by cut of service ministries

The General Board of Mennonite Church Canada has decided to stand by its March decision to cut Christian Service Ministries (CSM) from the budget. But it is also committed to keep alive the ethic of Christian service.

CSM included Mennonite Voluntary Service, as well as newer programs such as Service Adventure and Youth Venture. Delegates at St. Catharines 2003 this summer asked MC Canada to “reaffirm its commitment to an ethic of service” and to explore ways to maintain “congregationally based Christian service ministry in Canada.”

At its November meeting, the General Board heard from the Christian Witness Council, which staffed the Christian Service programs, about research and conversations since the July assembly. This included the work of a task group, results from a survey, and investigations

about giving patterns in MC Canada congregations.

The Witness Council recommended that MC Canada continue the current level of funding until July 2004, and that more research into the viability of service programs be done.

The General Board spent significant time on the recommendation, and in reviewing the St. Catharines resolution. Members also reviewed the March cutbacks and re-affirmed their confidence in the integrity of that decision-making process.

Support Services Council noted that conversation is taking place to resurrect the idea of a Volunteer Coordinator. This “could assist in achieving the goals identified by the resolution...passed at St. Catharines 2003,” said its report. This position would be implemented in 2005 at the earliest.

The General Board considered various options, but did not consider an extension to July to be viable. The board remains committed to encouraging an ethic of Christian service in the constituency and implementing what is possible.

Assistant moderator Joy Kroeger summed up the decision this way: “To re-instate Christian Service Ministries in some form would mean making new cuts elsewhere in the system. General Board members clearly endorsed the ideal of promoting an ethic of service and discipleship, but at this point in the life of MC Canada, committing program dollars to it would mean compromising another ministry.”

In regards to future programs, Kroeger said, “I expect proposals will likely look different from our current program.”—MC release by **Dan Dyck**

Chevy Chase, Md.

Teachers meet to be re-charged

Some 700 teachers from about 40 schools attended the Mennonite Educators Conference here on October 2-4. Every two years, the Mennonite Elementary Education Council (MEEC) and Mennonite Secondary Education Council (MSEC) sponsor a conference to encourage teachers in their calling.

This year for the first time, the Mennonite Education Agency (MEA) of Mennonite Church USA, and Mennonites teaching in public settings, joined the group.

The conference, using the theme "Nourishing the soul of the educator," featured Parker Palmer, a well-known writer on education and spirituality. Palmer, a Quaker, has asked many students what makes great teachers.

"The red thread that wove through all their stories was that the [great] teachers were authentic and passionate in their teaching."

Marlene Kropf, director of the MC USA Office of Congregational Life, and

Kenneth Nafziger, music professor from Eastern Mennonite University, carried the theme of God nurturing whole persons through four worship gatherings.

Educators met in seminars, networking groups and meetings with the MEA board. Storytelling was prominent. Several people shared how Mennonite education has shaped them.

The two councils, MEEC and MSEC, offer member schools advocacy, support and quarterly meetings for administrators. Twenty-three schools (up to grade eight) belong to MEEC. Eighteen schools (high schools and some middle schools) belong to MSEC. A few schools also come from the Church of the Brethren, Brethren in Christ, and Amish and conservative Mennonites.

Two Ontario schools, Rockway Mennonite Collegiate in Kitchener and United Mennonite Educational Institute in Leamington, are long-time members of MSEC.—MC USA release

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Akron, Pa.

Emergency provisions sent to devastated Uganda

With conflict escalating in Uganda and more than a million people displaced, Mennonite Central Committee is preparing a major aid package for two of the most affected areas, as well as to rebels who want to quit fighting.

For nearly 18 years, rebel groups—mainly the Lord's Resistance Army—have been creating devastation in northern Uganda, kidnapping children to sexually abuse them or train them as soldiers, torturing people by chopping off limbs, lips or ears, and killing civilians.

The United Nations estimates that there are perhaps 1.2 million internally displaced people in Uganda, 80 percent of them living in camps.

Dave Klassen, MCC Uganda co-representative, describes how residents in a camp of 8,000 people outside Soroti fled there with only the clothes on their backs. Some return to their fields but when they see footprints they return to the camp in fear. "Others have gone back to get food from their own gardens and have been killed," said Klassen.

In the new camp outside the town of Kitgum, another 8,000 people struggle to find food and water. They also lack medical facilities, schools, decent sanitation and security. Fearing they will be abducted to serve as soldiers, wives or slaves, thousands of people—mostly children and women—walk to urban centres each evening to sleep.

"The effect of this 18-year rebel insurgency is way beyond hunger and insecurity," said Klassen. "Whole generations have grown up in displaced camps. "The effects of the horror that many people have witnessed is seared into their souls.... The questions around things like revenge, retribution, and reconciliation will be agonizing many people throughout their lives."

MCC's first step will be providing money through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to purchase food locally for up to 60,000 people in 6 camps outside Soroti, and for up to 30,000 people in Kitgum and surrounding camps. Supplies such as

seeds and tools may be provided later for the planting season. The distribution, worth a total of \$250,000, will be done by MCC workers and the Church of Uganda (Anglican).

MCC is also providing \$66,000 for religious leaders through the Diocese of Kitgum to begin working with former rebel fighters who take advantage of the government's amnesty program.

Fighters, some recruited against their will and forced to commit atrocities in their home areas, find scant welcome if they return home. MCC funds will give former fighters a chance to rebuild a



Photo by Dave Klassen

Thousands of people—mostly women and children—trek into the town of Kitgum every night because they fear for their lives.

life of peace. They will receive food for six months, cooking pots and bedding, along with counselling and support. Families headed by children will be given food.—From MCC release

Akron, Pa.

School kits aid rebuilding in Afghanistan

After years of war and low school attendance during the Taliban regime, ill-equipped schools in Afghanistan are overwhelmed. Many students meet in tents, under trees and in the entryways of homes. The student to teacher ratio can be as high as 200 to 1. There are few school supplies. Mennonite Central Committee and Help the Afghan Children are providing 7,500 school kits to schools. Already, 1,664 kits have been distributed.

"In Afghanistan's long road to reconstruction we measure our success one child at a time," writes Omar Qargha of Help the Afghan Children. "With your continued support we hope to empower the children of Afghanistan with the most powerful tool—education."

At Abdullah bin Omar Primary School in Paghman, MCC is providing stipends for teachers and staff, and funds for upkeep and supplies. The Global Family Sponsorship program helps students

with tuition and provides funds for teacher training.

The situation in Angola is similar—an educational system in tatters after 27 years of civil war, and half of children never seeing a classroom. The school kits are bringing encouragement beyond pencils and notebooks.

"The schools ... felt that it was a concrete gesture emphasizing the importance of education," said Krista Rigalo, MCC co-representative there.

The war has eroded the nation's infrastructure and displaced a third of the population. The city of Luanda, built for 400,000 people, now has a population of around 6 million.

Mennonite congregations are running schools on their property and have built schools in squatter colonies. Through its Global Family program, MCC supports three Mennonite communities in Angola with building schools and programs.—From MCC releases

Waterloo, Ont.

Police officers focus on peace role

Can you be a Mennonite and a police officer? The eight police officers who met at Conrad Grebel University College on November 29 answered that question with a resounding “yes!”

In fact, these officers, all of whom attend Mennonite or Brethren in Christ churches, see their primary task as peacemaking. The six men and two women talked about their vocation and faith at a Christian Officers’ Peace Seminar, hosted by Mennonite Central Committee Ontario and the Peace and Conflict Studies program at Grebel.

The “fishbowl” format had eight officers sit in a circle to discuss the issues, while 12 persons sat in an outer circle to listen in.

Five questions guided their discussion: 1) Do you feel a conflict between your occupation and faith? 2) Does your faith community feel a conflict between your occupation and faith? 3) Is it necessary to keep your faith and occupation separate? 4) Is the use of force in keeping with the Saviour’s teachings? If so, what level of force? 5) Where do police officers see themselves within the community of Anabaptists?

The officers indicated how they resonate with the Anabaptist vision of peace—they see themselves as “peace officers.” One person commented, “Many Mennonites would be good teachers of future police officers.”

“Keeping the peace” includes intervening in domestic conflicts, landlord-tenant disputes, and neighbourhood feuds. Studies suggest that 85 percent of policing is of a non-criminal nature. Police are called to problem-solve, hold people accountable, and call on social services to help maintain healthy communities.

The group emphasized that police officers, unlike soldiers, are not trained to kill.

“The absolute smallest aspect of police work is the gun,” said one officer.

Someone added: “Most officers would prefer not to wear a gun at all. It is ‘weighty,’ both literally and figuratively.” As police officers contem-

plate situations of real or potential violence, they ask themselves, “What action can I take that will turn out positive?”

Women officers, especially, focus on talking and defusing a situation, rather than a display of force. Men might be more tempted to try to gain a physical upper hand. All agreed, however, that force is the last resort.

All officers take an oath which calls them to bring peace and order, to prevent crime, to make the world a better place—“to keep good guys from hurting good guys,” as one person said. In the criminal code, police are called “peace officers.”

Unlike the military, police officers do not represent government. Police are individual agents (accountable to their chief) with discretion to prevent crime and uphold the law in an impartial manner.

The officers were drawn to passages such as Romans 13 which speaks of the law as God-given for human good.

Morley Lymburner, a former policeman, now edits *Blue Line*, a national law enforcement magazine. In an editorial in the June issue entitled “Whose side is God on anyway?” he says: “Since first reading this [Romans 13] over 25 years ago, I have concluded that it can do much good but also much harm. My first error was to consider it a message to me and all police officers that what we’re doing is divinely inspired. I’ve since realized that although the profession can take some solace from it, there’s no direct support for all police actions.”

He adds that police officers always need to ask how wisely they use the power inherent in their jobs. For him there is a strong sense of “ultimate accountability.”

“In principle, I see no conflict between my police work and what I learned in a Christian home,” said one officer. But filling out reports sometimes makes it easy to lie, and plain-clothes policing makes it easy to misrepresent oneself.

“Can you ever do the wrong thing in a right way?” he asked.

The matter of lethal force came up repeatedly in the November 29 discussion, because that is the aspect of police work most clearly at odds with Anabaptist understandings. Most of these officers were not raised in the Mennonite church where they might have confronted roadblocks to considering this profession.

These officers feel that they have been called of God to do what they are doing.

One said he takes strength from John the Baptist’s words to soldiers who responded to the call to repent: “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your

wages” (Luke 3:14). In other words, Christian police officers, like those soldiers, are called to do their work with integrity.

Those in the “outer circle” were invited in the last hour to respond. They were clearly moved by the sincerity and spiritual integrity of the participants, and were grateful that the conversation could take place.

“Mennonites have valued conflict mediation, but have not seen so clearly how we have this work in common with police officers,” said one observer.

“I appreciated the sense of awareness of context in all you do, and also the awareness of the need for mutual accountability” said another. Today we have broken down boundaries—“they” have become part of “us,” said another.

How do Mennonites think about law and law enforcement in their theology? That is the question that prompted this seminar. Plans are already underway for a similar seminar involving lawyers within Anabaptist churches.—**Maurice Martin**

‘Many Mennonites would be good teachers of future police officers.’

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Winnipeg, Man.

Prison visits have forged sturdy friendships

Ester Wiens felt apprehensive walking past the security guards at Stony Mountain Penitentiary. She and her husband John, recent immigrants from Brazil, were finding it difficult adjusting to a new culture and language. They had agreed, however, to visit Tony Ribeiro, a 49-year-old man from Brazil who was serving a life sentence for murder in Manitoba's maximum-security prison.

"I was scared and fearful [that] I wouldn't be able to...understand or forgive him," said Wiens, who shared her experiences at a 30th anniversary celebration of Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba's Open Circle program here in October.

Wiens need not have worried. She knew after her first meeting with Ribeiro that he would be a friend, despite his criminal record.

Ribeiro had come to Canada in the 1970s in search of work to support a wife and daughter back home. A bad turn of events in northern Ontario landed him in prison.

Shortly after the Wiens' arrival in Canada, a Portuguese-speaking friend from North Kildonan Mennonite Brethren Church asked if they would visit Ribeiro. The friend was returning to Brazil.

"This one fell into our hands; we could not say no," said Ester.

The friendship flourished as their monthly meetings sometimes became weekly.

"Tony and my husband developed a relationship that [you] could well say was one between two brothers.... They got to know each other's sorrows and joys," said Ester.

Prison regulations do not allow visitors to share their faith openly unless prisoners ask. Actions, however, can speak louder than words, and after several years of meetings, Ribeiro talked about how he had become a Christian.

"By attending services in the prison chapel, and by reading the Bible, he came to know Jesus Christ, and that he needed God's forgiveness," said Ester. "He said he saw Jesus in us."

"I could tell you similar stories

about other relationships that have grown just as strong," said Murray Barkman, coordinator of the Open Circle program. The strength of those relationships brought 140 people together for the anniversary event where inmates and volunteers celebrated the connections Open Circle has been making for 30 years.

Ribeiro was twice turned down for parole, his prison term extended by six years. This past spring, after 11 years of visits from the Wienses, Ribeiro

finally qualified for release and returned to Brazil where he was reunited with his wife and daughter, now 22.

Wienses are grateful for Open Circle and the opportunity it gave them to listen to someone in need through the cold of Manitoba winters.

Ribeiro would say: "Thank you for coming to warm my heart," said Ester. "He would take every opportunity to say: 'With God we are everything [but] without him we are nothing.'"—From MCC Canada release

Baghdad, Iraq

Education for a shoeshine boy in Iraq

The plight of a 13-year-old shoeshine boy here has spurred Mennonite Central Committee and a German agency to work at reopening vocational schools here.

Two years ago, Hussein Talib came into the German agency, Architects for People in Need, searching for customers. His father had gone, and he and two brothers were feeding the family. They would probably never be able to go to school.

Hussein's smile captured attention. Soon agency staff asked him to come twice a week to shine everyone's shoes. Hussein often spoke to Intisar Aljubari, education coordinator, about school.

Getting Hussein into a classroom was a challenge—in Iraq, children cannot attend regular classes if they are more than two years older than classmates. Hussein would have to go to an adult school for primary-level material and vocational training. Yet adult programs were suffering from neglect even before the war began.

The search for ways to educate a 13-year-old boy became a project to renovate schools for adults. MCC has committed \$113,907 to the project, beginning with Al Kuraish, where Hussein attends.

These vocational schools started in Iraq in 1977 within regular school buildings to

provide training for those leaving school at a young age. Wars, sanctions and political realities have closed many of them. So far, 59 students have registered for the program at Al Kuraish.

Hussein takes his schooling seriously. He keeps his MCC school kit—one of more than 400 given out at the school—with him.

When Intisar bought him a soccer ball, Hussein said, "I have many things to write and many duties at home. I will only play with this on Fridays for two hours after I have finished my duties." More about MCC's work in Iraq is found at www.mcc.org/iraq.—From MCC reports



Hussein Talib receives his MCC school kit.

Photo by David Pankrat

Markham, Ont.

MCC Ontario launches history book

The newly-published history of Mennonite Central Committee Ontario was introduced at the organization's annual meeting here November 14 and 15. The author, Lucille Marr, read a few stories from *The Transforming Power of a Century* during the weekend.

Arli Klassen, executive director of MCC Ontario, identified the major highlight for the past year as "so many volunteers who care."

This caring is shown in the contributions from the 16 thrift stores and 5 relief sales in Ontario. Donations of material aid also signifies work by volunteers. Material aid contributions this year were estimated at \$484,700, more than double that of last year. Volunteers assembled 3,358 relief kits for Iraq.

Part of the reason for the increase was that the canned meat from 2002 and 2003 was shipped in the same fiscal year. The beef and turkey canned in Ontario was shipped to North Korea and Iraq.

Another project that demonstrated volunteer support was the House Against Hunger built in Port Rowan. The house was recently sold with proceeds of about \$125,000.

In spite of this strong volunteer support, the number of people serving with MCC outside of Ontario has decreased in recent years. Although staff made an effort to appeal to the double cohort (grades 12 and 13 graduated from Ontario high schools in 2003), the number of young people involved in overseas service decreased.

Other volunteers have worked with refugees and in Circles of Support and Accountability. Churches in Ontario supported 19 refugee sponsorships of 58 people, many coming from Afghanistan and Colombia. The Circles worked with 25 male sex offenders returning to the community.

MCC Ontario involves 172 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations from 7 conferences. Each congregation received a copy of the video "Come, Follow Me" which outlines the work of MCC internationally in 2002/03.

A major challenge is that the need is so much greater than the available resources, said Klassen. Local, national and international needs must be carefully balanced. One concern for the coming year is how the limit on beef exports will affect meat canning and the heifer sale. Will other countries accept beef from Canada? Since heifers can't be exported to the U.S. and since Canada has an over-supply, who will buy them at the sale?

Chief Theresa Hall from Attawapiskat on James Bay expressed her thanks for the work MCC has done there. MCC will help as her community negotiates with DeBeer Canada about setting up a diamond mine. The community wants employment opportunities, but not if its culture and identity are threatened.

Danielle Buckwalter from the

Warden Woods Mennonite Church talked about her experience in Indonesia last year with Serving and Learning Together (SALT). She appreciated the opportunity to travel and learn about another culture, but also reflected on the loss of two fellow SALTers, Alana Fife and Hannah Showaker, who were swept away in a flash flood there last year.

During the annual meeting, the youth experienced the "In exile, for a while" refugee simulation. Emily Nigh commented, "It was real when we were so hungry and very cold and very wet." The youth agreed the simulation taught them a new appreciation for people in need.

During the meeting, a silent auction of thrift shop items raised \$815 for HIV/AIDS kits.—**Barb Draper**

Aldergrove, B.C.

B.C. delegates debate relation to national body

Over 250 people representing 32 churches came to a special delegate meeting here November 29 to hear the results of area listening meetings and to respond to a notice of motion by Mennonite Church British Columbia leaders.

The meeting began with worship and prayer for guidance in decision-making. Henry Krause, chair of Mennonite Church Canada, spoke about perspective. Pointing to the door on his right, he declared that the door was on the right. Pointing at a member of the congregation in front of him, he observed that this person would declare the door to be on the left.

"Depending on where we sit, we see absolute truths from different perspectives," he said. He emphasized that the Canadian conference enables congregations to do "together what we cannot do alone," such as schools, periodicals, pastors' pension plans and resources.

The notice of motion, a two-page document, called for a 22-month evaluation, during which MC British Columbia would advocate for stronger action from

MC Canada General Board regarding its stand on homosexuality, commitment to the Confession of Faith, and other "agreed-to policies and statements." The notice of motion also allowed churches to exercise "provincially active only" status during that time, and encouraged congregations to continue to support MC Canada's ministry during the evaluation.

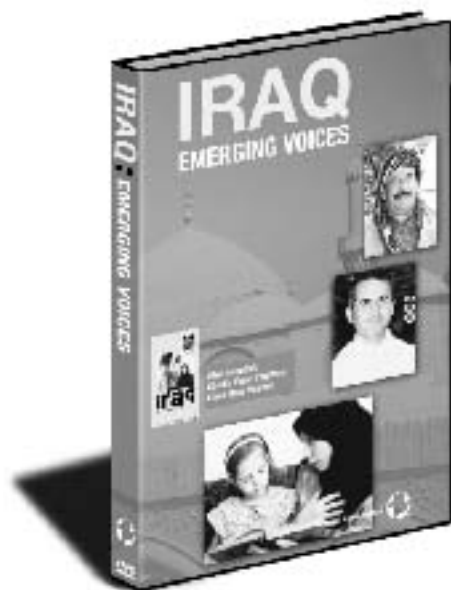
Delegates lined up at the microphones. Many speakers took the B.C. executive to task for insisting that MC Canada General Board "publicly acknowledge and apologize" that they have communicated mixed messages on the issue of homosexuality.

"I don't agree with the word 'apologize,'" said Siegfried Bartel. "Jesus said 'Go and sin no more,' but he didn't ask for an apology. Deal with the sin the way Jesus did, but love the sinner."

Waldo Neufeld of Emmanuel Mennonite echoed Bartel's thoughts. "There's a 'holier than thou' attitude in this," he said, adding that by focusing on a single issue like homosexuality, MC B.C. is in danger of avoiding deeper

“The people want to live without war.”

— Asma Daoud Homooshi, mother/homemaker



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**Mennonite
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issues that need to be dealt with.

Others felt that an apology didn't go far enough. Chris Teichroeb, chair at Bethel Mennonite, felt that 22 months is too long and that the notice should include consequences, such as withholding funds.

Other churches came with their own motions. Nine individuals from six churches prepared a response that called for a study process led by an ad hoc committee. Emmanuel Mennonite presented a substitute motion that called for an ad hoc committee to study, gather information and come back to delegates with recommendations.

While some voiced their approval for such an approach, others felt it would drag out a process that had already taken too long.

“Please don't go to a committee,” said George Hoepfner, pastor at First Mennonite in Greendale. “Issues, issues...dialogue, dialogue. How can issues lead us so far away from the Bible? You were elected to lead.... Time is short and churches will go.”

The most impassioned speech came

near the end of the meeting. Alan Wiebe, youth pastor at Bethel Mennonite, voiced frustration that “we're not giving our leaders the ability to lead.”

“We constantly have to make judgments—not be judgmental but make choices,” he said. “I'm a youth pastor and teach a generation that already feels we're brainwashing them. God balances holiness and grace perfectly—we have to speak the truth in love....we must make tough choices.”

Delegates decided that another delegate meeting will be held February 21. Prior to the meeting the executive will present a motion that takes into account responses from the November meeting, along with written responses from congregations.

The remainder of the meeting was a presentation by treasurer Don Teichroeb on the 2004 budget. After adjusting contributions to Columbia Bible College to allow for an increase in the youth budget line, delegates passed the budget.—**Angelika Dawson**

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Priazovske, Ukraine

A home for the least of these

Dear God, we have no bread. Amen." "Dear God, thank you that we have no coal.... Thank you that you will give us coal, Amen."

If there is an overarching theme at House of Hope it is, "We pray and God provides." These simple prayers of the "orphans" who live here indicate that even they have experienced God's provision.

"Orphan" is the term given to children who have no parents, or whose parents have abandoned them or had their parental rights taken away. Of the 26 children at House of Hope, only three are truly orphaned. The youngest is a one-and-a-half-year-old boy, left on the side of the road by his mother. His brother is here also.

Ukraine has an extensive system of *internat* schools for children with special needs. Members of the MCC learning tour visited an *internat* for children with learning disabilities, located in the Tokmak region (former Molotschna Mennonite colony). At the school of 180, 25 percent are orphans, and up to 70 percent from difficult home situations.

The *internat* is well run and its director, Victor Ivanovich Dyadya, works hard to ensure that the children's needs are met. Still, it has an institutional feel, and the children seem sombre.

By contrast, the children at House of Hope, which is run by a small Baptist church of about 40 members, are full of laughter and respond eagerly to their teacher's questions in class. The place has a homey feel. Bedrooms are brightly decorated with MCC blankets. Large windows and student artwork on the walls create a cheerful atmosphere in the classrooms.

But perhaps the most notable contrast is the way staff interact with students. At House of Hope, children eagerly hold hands of staff members as they chat with visitors. It is clear that these children are deeply cared for. At the *internat* in Tokmak, chil-

dren frequently try to run away.

"None of our doors are locked," said Konstantin Borodin, the groundskeeper at House of Hope.

Alexi, a 12-year-old boy who has been here since summer, says he's never leaving. "You're going to retire and I'm going to teach here!" he told Svyetlana. When students complete grade six they go to the local school where they are often held up as model students.

"The children are described as kinder, more obedient, they don't talk back, get into fights or cut classes," says Svyetlana proudly.

Resources are a constant concern and staff are often faced with bare cupboards. The Baptist church provides all it can, and churches in Zaporozhye help from time to time. MCC's Global Family program provides the home with basic needs.

—Angelika Dawson



Photo by Angelika Dawson

Andre, a 12-year-old boy at House of Hope, shows off his artwork. For other reports on MCC tour to Ukraine, see December 1, page 33.

Hanover, Ont.

Hanover church celebrates new space

There was much celebration at Hanover Mennonite Church on October 18-19 as the church dedicated an addition and extensive renovations to its building.

The steps into the church have been replaced with a wide ramp which leads into a new foyer. A wheelchair-accessible washroom and a large food preparation area have been added to the main floor.



Photo by Maurice Martin

The renovated Hanover church includes a new entrance and foyer.

Plum Coulee, Man.

Preaching workshops spark enthusiasm

I have been preaching since 1957 and I still get nervous," said John Neufeld, pastor and professor of preaching at Canadian Mennonite University. "Experience doesn't remove the butterflies but it helps them to fly in formation."

Neufeld recently gave three Saturday workshops on "Preaching matters" for seasoned pastors and others in Manitoba. Not only did the Winnipeg, Brandon and Plum Coulee workshops offer help with realigning butterflies, they reactivated an excitement for preaching.

"Leading the church in its ongoing conversation with the Bible" is an exciting and vital part of being a pastor, said Neufeld.

"Churches avoid discussing money, sex and politics," he said. "We must resist speaking on faddish topics and rather ask what are the growth needs at this particular time.... Like the prophets, we need to preach and teach even when we step on people's toes. We don't have the option of always being nice."

Neufeld reminded listeners of Paul's instructions to provide not only the necessary milk for the young in faith, but also meat.

Pastors need to equip believers. "Through preaching we shape the identity of believers and give them a growing sense of who they are in relation to the world, the environment, the community," he said.

"Materialism, sexuality, forgiveness, ecology—that's a huge agenda that has to be dealt with through preaching. We have the challenge of putting our finger on the things that really matter and help people deal with the issues that have to be addressed."

Preaching also needs to enable people to cope. "It requires us to train our people to get over the habit of keeping difficulties close to the vest," said Neufeld. "If we don't open up about these things we won't enable our people to serve each other. We

need to communicate this openness in preaching."

Neufeld encouraged pastors to be gentle but challenging, patient but impassioned. At the points where life is busiest or most difficult, "that's where we sit, work, listen and wait."

Neufeld identified some problems. Many don't read the Bible at home. We have a problem with biblical illiteracy. Too many pastors work in isolation. He offered suggestions, but most of all he communicated a passion and prominence of place for preaching.

Sixty-eight people attended the workshops. John Klassen, organizer and director of Leadership Ministries for Mennonite Church Manitoba, was particularly excited about the interest from those who had never preached.

Given the enthusiasm, Klassen may offer another "Preaching matters" workshop by Neufeld in winter.

—Evelyn Rempel Petkau

The seating arrangement in the sanctuary has been reversed, and the space now also serves as a fellowship area for our popular potluck meals. The original foyer was renovated to provide an enlarged pastor's office, a library and storage space.

Most of the renovations were done by members of the church. Laying bricks, installing drywall, painting, building cupboards and landscaping together fostered a spirit of community.

Neighbours and visitors enjoyed a tour of the new facility. Edwin Falstrem, representing the mayor of Hanover, brought congratulations and presented a plaque. David Brubacher, Minister to Conference of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, was the guest speaker at the dedication service.

He challenged us by asking, "Where is God calling you to make a difference? What's it all about?" He prayed that our renewed facility would not only enhance our worship, but would also strengthen our outreach.

As part of the celebration, we hosted a Ten Thousand Villages sale at the church on November 6-8.—Elsie Martin

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Winnipeg, Man.

Golden anniversary unites choristers

The golden anniversary celebration of Peter and Susie (Peters) Harms on October 17 became the occasion for a reunion of a girls choir that Susie directed in Gnadenthal, Manitoba, from 1946-49.

More than half the members of the *Himmelschluesselchen* choir came to the Harms celebration, planned by Susie's sister, Mary Fehr. The Harmses currently live in British Columbia.

The group enjoyed lunch, sang and reminisced. Harms directed the choir as competently as she had 55 years ago. They sang favourite songs such as, "My God and I," and *Wer Pflanze die Blumen?* and "Those beautiful days." What a joy to sing together again!

Ruth (Sawatsky) Bock organized a trivia quiz about the choir. Most of us didn't know that the choir had been named after a flower, the meaning of which is "keys of heaven." Harms had hoped that the music would open the gates of heaven for listeners.

We recalled special events—a trip to Walhalla where we ran down the sand slides, an outing in Winnipeg to visit the museum, participating in the Winkler Festival, and singing at the 1948 Conference of Mennonites in



Two couples from Rosthern Mennonite Church in Saskatchewan celebrated their 70th wedding anniversaries in the same week in October. On the left is Emma and Henry Pettker. On the right, John and Susie Dyck. (Susie died only two weeks after the celebration.) —From report by Irma Neudorf

Canada assembly in Gnadenthal.

We also remembered a tragic event—the father of three sisters was killed while the girls were on a choir outing. Sharing memories evoked nostalgia as well as a deep appreciation for what remains from that experience.

When Susie and Peter married in 1953, our choir sang at their wedding. Since then the choir has performed on occasion.

After reminiscing about the choir, we focused on the anniversary couple. Evelyn (Kuhl) Bueckert presented Susie with a CD of the Faith and Life Women's Chorus. Mary Fehr received the same CD for her planning.

In closing, choir members joined hands and sang "God be with you till we meet again." Thanks be to God for the gifts of music and friendship.

—Hilda (Peters) Schulz

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Miriam Rempel, a student at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, helps to "team paint" a window in the CMU lobby. Each year the glass gets its Christmas treatment to brighten the day and offer a witness to newcomers. This year, the guiding star of the east adorns the south-facing panes, creating a feast of vivid colour over the lobby.



Hope, B.C.

Youth retreat has decided 'impact'

The annual Impact Youth retreat at Camp Squeah this fall focused on worship and gave youth opportunities to explore different ways to worship God.

Speaker for the weekend was Doug Pankratz, youth pastor at Cedar Valley Mennonite Church in Mission, B.C. Using stories and illustrations, Pankratz encouraged youth to examine their hearts, confess their sin and prepare themselves to worship God.

One of Pankratz' stories was about Victor, a Russian submarine soldier who had declared himself an atheist. During a mission that went wrong, Victor's submarine sank. He and his friends were stranded for five months in almost total darkness. It was Victor's job to remove the bodies of the dead by sending them out to sea through the torpedo tubes.

Victor's experience lead him to examine his life, and eventually he gave his life to God. After being rescued, Victor's first request was for a Bible. He opened it and his hand came to rest on Psalm 139: "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?... even the darkness will not be dark to you." Pankratz reminded the group that we cannot flee from God who is all around us.

Saturday workshops included Stations of the Cross, painting and sculpting, drama, silence and solitude, and a labyrinth experience. In the multi-media workshop, youth were given a digital camera and access to computers that enabled them to create a presentation using scripture, music and images from around the camp.

Participants in the creative movement workshop trained for two hours with Zedek, a dance troupe from Cedar Valley church. They performed during the worship on Sunday.

One of the more creative experiences of the weekend was "DJ worship" led by Joel Defries, youth pastor from West Abbotsford Mennonite Church. The experience included visual images moving to music and moments of silence and sharing. Youth were invited to come forward and



Three participants at the youth retreat from Yarrow United Mennonite Church (clockwise, from left): Jess Hildebrandt, Melissa Thiessen and Melissa Johnson.

share their experience of God.


Music was led by a worship team from Wellspring Christian Fellowship and Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Abbotsford. The youth had fun with crazy comedy acts before each session, including drinking a can of Coke through a neighbour's sock and downing a blended Happy Meal.

The retreat was packed with over 250 participants—so full, in fact, that extra RVs were brought in to house people. One brave soul pitched a tent in the pouring rain.

One thing was certain: the weekend definitely had an impact on all who attended.—**Angelika Dawson**

Peace on Earth

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People & Events

Ailsa Craig, Ont.—Wilfred Schlegel (1910-1978) was posthumously inducted into the North Middlesex Hall of Fame on October 23. In 1948, Schlegel moved here from the Tavistock area and became the founding pastor of the Nairn Mennonite Church. He was recognized for his leadership in beginning many local organizations, including the London Rescue Mission, Ailsa Craig Boys' Farm, Parkhill Girls' Home and Ausable Springs Ranch. He also helped to found a nursing home, a Bible college and the Stratford Sunday School which eventually became Avon Mennonite Church.—From *The Parkhill Gazette*

Kitchener, Ont.—Mark Yantzi has received the fifth annual Ron Wiebe Restorative Justice Award from Correctional Service Canada for his 30 years of service. As a parole officer in 1974, Yantzi, along with Dave Worth, began the first victim-offender mediation program in Canada. Currently interim director of Community Justice Initiatives of Waterloo Region, which he helped found, Yantzi has written a book applying restorative justice to sexual offenders. "A big principle of restorative justice is taking responsibility," said Yantzi. "This is where the system fails." The award is named for a former prison warden in British Columbia known for his commitment to restorative justice.—From *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*

Toronto, Ont.—Faced with thousands of Lao immigrants from a variety of communities, the Toronto United Lao Mennonite Church "is like a beam in a vast darkness," according to pastor Boris Sithideth. The congregation is missional in that all the believers are missionaries in their own culture. They are

starting with "across the street," but one day, with God's blessing, they will share "around the world," says Sithideth. The main challenge is to find a place of worship. Currently, services are held in the offices of a rice warehouse.—From Dec. *Multicultural Ministry Newsletter*

Transitions

Births

Beaudin—to Janet and Chris, First Mennonite, Edmonton, Alta., a daughter, Grace, Aug. 12.

Boetto—to Karis (Schmidt) and Jeff, Yorba Linda Friends Church, California (formerly of B.C.), a son, Rylan James, Oct. 29.

Buhr Hergott—to Lisa Buhr and Ross Hergott, Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., a son, Thomas Ross, Oct. 21.

De Ryck—to Charlotte Martens and Trevor De Ryck, Charleswood Mennonite, Winnipeg, a son, Daniel James, Nov. 26.

Pauls—to Helena and Jason, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a son, Adam Daniel, Nov. 10.

Penner—to Amanda and Albert, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., a son, Kyle Derek, Oct. 17.

Penner—to Sheryl and Ryan, Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., a daughter, Kyra Brienne, Nov. 21.

Strempler—to Nichole and

Dave, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., a son, Lukas Gary, received for adoption Oct. 27, born Oct. 26.

Wiebe—to Michelle and Kent, Springstein Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Madeline Shea Nellie, Nov. 22.

Wiens—to Kim and Mathew, First Mennonite, Edmonton, Alta., a son, Jeremy David Friesen, Nov. 10.

Marriages

Baardsnes-Pearce—Jason (Hamilton Mennonite, Ont.) and Rebecca, Montreal Mennonite, Que., at McMaster Divinity Chapel, Hamilton, Ont., Oct. 25.

Blumhagen-Bergen—Craig and Allison, Trinity Mennonite, Calgary, Alta., at First Mennonite, Calgary, Alta., June 28.

Klassen-Neufeld—John and Tammy (Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite Church), at Pembina Crossings, Nov. 15.

Schatti-Reesor—Bernhard and Martha (Wideman Mennonite, Markham, Ont.) at Stone United Church, Rockwood, Ont., Aug. 23.

Teichroeb-Dyck—Joe (Gospel Mission Church, Winkler, Man.) and Jaime, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Nov. 8.

Deaths

Bergen—Helen, 85, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., Dec. 8.

Bowman—Lillian, 86, First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont. Dec. 5.

Brenneman—Helen, 79, First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., Nov. 30.

Epp—Frank, 84, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Nov. 30.

Epp—Margaret (Janzen), 94, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Dec. 4.

Dyck—Susie, 96, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., Oct. 22.

Heinrichs—Agnes, 96, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Nov. 2.

Janzen—Elsa, 88, Zoar Mennonite, Waldheim, Sask., Nov. 16.

Martens—Rita (Klassen), 89, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Nov. 25.

Peters—Aganete, 85, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Aug. 21.

Schellenberg—Henry R., 73, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Nov. 17.

Zacharias—David, 87, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., Nov. 17.

Baptisms

Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.—Melissa Albrecht, Elizabeth Dotzert, Craig Nafziger, Jillian Nafziger, Nov. 2.

Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, B.C.—Amanda Natasha Siebert, Nov. 30.

Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont.—Kaitlyn Lankin, Andrea Paetkau, Sept. 14.

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

When Faith Got Down to Business: MEDA at 50

By normal business standards, the creation of Mennonite Economic Development Associates was foolish. But it was a foolishness rooted in servanthood and sharing that's lasted 50 years. Read all about it in the 96-page special edition of *The Marketplace!*

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Mennonite Church Canada

Finances: Facing the final quarter

Like the final quarter of a Grey Cup football game, Mennonite Church Canada is well into the final quarter of its fiscal year.

The score so far is close: as of November 28, about 64 percent or \$2.5 million of anticipated donation income is in. The fiscal year ends on January 31 with a donation target of \$3.9 million.

Last year, 43.7 percent of donations arrived at MC Canada offices in the final quarter; this year, 36 percent must still come in. An early touchdown this year would set the stage for a field goal—an opportunity to exceed giving targets and help ensure the stability of ministries over the longer term.

Al Rempel, director of Resource Development, is a bit concerned by a trend: congregational giving is going down, while individual and corporate giving is moving slightly upward. “So far, the two are balancing each other out,” he said.

Donors are encouraged to use the Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) which allows donors to pre-set automatic transfers from their account to MC Canada at regular intervals.

“EFT can really help smooth out the year,” says Rempel. “Having access to income earlier in the year or just at regular intervals helps us to reduce our reliance on a line of credit during the early months of the fiscal year, when giving normally subsides.”

Donors can also contribute via the MC Canada web site (www.mennonitechurch.ca/give).

The final score won't be settled until the books are closed in February. The



Eight volunteers from Douglas Mennonite Church in Winnipeg spent a day stuffing over 6,000 envelopes for a Mennonite Church Canada fundraising drive. Around the table are, from left: Tina Wiebe, Anna Funk, Jake Harms, John Penner. Ike Guenther and Anne Klassen are in the background, and Ann Harms is not pictured.

analogy of a football game goes only so far, however—the church is aware that being a part of God's mission is much more compelling than a game.

“The light of God's grace continues to shine through to us in many ways,” says Rempel. “I'm praying that we can abandon ourselves to Christ's message this Christmas like we never have before.”—MC Canada

January ‘Equipping’ out to churches

The latest news and resources from Mennonite Church Canada are available at your church office in the January “Equipping Canada” packet. The packet is distributed about 10 times a year to congregations. The January edition is one of three hard copy issues per year. The remainder are distributed via email and on the web (www.mennonitechurch.ca/equipping).

Highlights of this month's issue include:

- How big is your back-pack? An inspirational article from denominational minister Sven Eriksson,
- Resources for Christian

education and worship, and Prayer Week materials,

- Mission Action Profiles for Burkina Faso and Multi-cultural Ministry (Canada),
- Speakers Bureau,
- Minute Book of St. Catharines 2003,
- Jubilee Update from Faith and Life Resources,
- Summer course list from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.—From MC Canada release

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

New ministry model for conference?

Marianne Mellinger and Maurice Martin are developing a proposal for a new ministry model for Mennonite Church Eastern Canada. After a round of interviews, they are beginning to sense some possibilities for new directions or “style” of leadership.

Many congregations have done their own “envisioning” work in recent years under the direction of Jeff Steckley, the Giving Project Consultant coordinator. It seems clear that at least part of the work of the

conference will be to develop a “renewed congregationalism” in which congregations are supported in their missional witness.

“Doing together what we cannot do alone” is often used to describe programs of the wider church. How might this look in a renewed ministry paradigm for MC Eastern Canada? The word “partnership” suggests various possibilities—twinning congregations, partnerships in clusters of congregations, or conference-wide partnerships.

A preliminary examination of possibilities suggests the following characteristics of a renewed ministry model:

- More regional activities, especially worship and fellowship, to create a greater “family feeling” in the conference;
- Less centralized programming and more support of congregational and regional initiatives;
- Staff who are generalists, not specialists, who could point to resources needed;
- More pastoral care—perhaps Area Senior Pastors designated to offer such care.

In an age when people do not value institutional forms as much, the new focus would generate more flexible and responsive ministry models, with strong focus on relationships and partnerships.

Communications will need to be strengthened in a renewed conference structure.

Finally, Martin and Mellinger are hearing that MC Eastern Canada should develop a more concise and engaging mission statement with an identity symbol. In brief, MC Eastern Canada needs to have a clear sense of identity and spiritual vision, and communicate this to the constituency.

**Mennonite Church
Manitoba**

**Young adults explore
'Beyond passports'**

"Beyond passports" will be the theme for a young adult retreat at Camp Koinonia January 23-25. The sub title is: "Working for the ecclesiastical embassy."

The retreat will examine what it means to risk stepping outside of the embassy walls (church) and seeking to connect with the people one relates to in the world. The speaker will be Norm Voth, director of Evangelism and Service for Mennonite Church Manitoba. He has passion and experience for exploring the intersection of faith and culture.

The retreat is planned by the Young Adult Council. For more information see the MC Manitoba website at www.mennochurch.mb.ca/ events, or call (204) 896-1616.—**Bob Wiebe**

**Mennonite Church
Saskatchewan**

**Camp board will
build new beds**

Children at the Youth Farm Bible Camp in Rosthern will be sleeping more comfortably next summer.

A recent fundraiser for the camp, held at First Mennonite Church in Saskatoon, started the campaign to raise money for safer and more comfortable beds, said camp director, Mark Wurtz. The current bunks are made of metal and few have railings. The new beds will be made of wood and all the top bunks will have railings.

Since board members for the camp have committed themselves to building the beds, all that is needed for the project is the wood and new mattresses.

"We hope to have three or four cabins outfitted by next summer," said Wurtz. The camp needs about \$15,000 for the project.

A huge databank of camp pictures will be accessible on the Youth Farm Bible Camp website in the next few months, with photos going back to the 1960s, said Wurtz.

**Mennonite Church
Alberta**

**New youth worker
for Alberta**

Mary-Anne Oeveren began as quarter-time Youth Worker for Mennonite Church Alberta on December 1. Her duties include working with the youth council to organize and lead province-wide youth events, and to stay in touch with youth groups across the province.

The position has been vacant since Matt Love ended his term in June.

MC Alberta would prefer to hire a youth minister but funds to pay for the increased time and qualification for a minister position are not currently available. The position remains on the province's wish list for the future.

The youth council is looking forward to working with Mary-Anne. Currently, they are planning for the popular Junior and Senior High Snow Camps which take place in January and February.

**Mennonite Church
British Columbia**

**B.C. delegates
approve budget**

On November 29, Mennonite Church British Columbia delegates met to vote on a budget for 2004. At the annual sessions in June, they had agreed to postpone the approval of a budget until listening meetings in the fall on the vision of MC B.C.

The fall listening meetings took on a different focus when several churches questioned their relationship with Mennonite Church Canada.

The budget that was passed on November 29 took into account many changes since the June meeting. One is that Chris Arney, director of Evangelism and Church Development, has resigned and his position has not been filled, pending a review of the position and church planting.

The Evangelism and Church Development Committee has decided to close the church plant in Fort St. John, and MC B.C. office space has been downsized to reduce rent costs. (See page 20 for the rest of the agenda at that meeting.)

That Monday connection

After 30 years in business, Bethlehem Steel Corporation sales manager William Diehl tried to think of what his church had done to support and equip him for the faith challenges he faced in his career.

"Very little" he concluded, as he lamented that his "church really doesn't have the least interest in whether or how I minister in my daily work." When I shared his comment at a recent MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates) breakfast, heads around the table nodded. It sounded all too familiar!

Sunday morning we may sing, "This is my Father's world." Then Monday morning, our work calls upon us to do things that have a powerful impact upon that world. How do Sunday and Monday connect?

Monday means back to the tractor or the assembly line, to the classroom or to

packing lunches and wiping runny noses. That's the world where powerful forces test our conviction "that though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet." Mondays we find new opportunities to remember and work towards God's goal that "earth and heav'n be one."

The "missional church" language is helping us begin to recapture some important truths from the Scriptures and early church. To be a Christian is to join God's mission, seven days a week. God is up to something in our world and in our workplace. Our "real job" is to find out what God is doing and wanting done. The good work begins as we join God in doing that.

William Diehl persuaded his Lutheran congregation to begin "Monday Connection" groups. Once a month, workers and business people gather for breakfast where they ponder the case studies people bring, seeking connections with last Sunday's

worship and with their faith. Sunday morning attention to one of our workplaces, gatherings of Christian professionals such as teachers or nurses, conference-wide workshops on rural issues or inter-church task groups on our relationships with aboriginal neighbours—how might we further connect this faith we celebrate Sunday mornings with the work we begin on Mondays?

As members of Christ's body, we are called to head out into our workplaces and neighbourhoods as ambassadors for the One who "so loved" our world. May we as local congregations and as conferences find ways to equip one another for this high calling.

Ken Bechtel, conference minister for Mennonite Church Saskatchewan



**From our
leaders**

School note


Leadership school to promote preaching

Harrisonburg, Va.—"Preaching: renewing the conversation between pulpit, pew and Bible," is the theme of the 2004 School for Leadership Training at Eastern Mennonite Seminary (EMS) January 21-24. The event will include four worship services reflecting a variety of styles. Resource people include June Alliman Yoder, professor of preaching at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary; Mark Wenger, associate director of the Preaching Institute at EMS and a pastor; and John Kinney, dean of the School of Theology at Virginia Union University. Classes will include topics such as "The ethics of persuasion in preaching," "Dusting off doctrinal preaching," and "Congregational discernment: a spiritual discipline." This year's event has been planned in conjunction with the Preaching Institute, a program of the seminary. For details, call the seminary at (540) 432-4597, or e-mail: semdev@emu.edu.—From EMU release



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 (519) 885-0220 x321
 grebel.uwaterloo.ca/ombs

Employment opportunities

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.

Crossroads Community Church, Chilliwack, British Columbia invites applications for a full time

SENIOR PASTOR

We are a contemporary evangelical Anabaptist church of 120 people located in the heart of the beautiful Fraser Valley. We are looking for a passionate follower of Jesus Christ willing to provide leadership and guidance as we reach out to our community.

Please respond in writing to:

**Crossroads Community Church
Search Committee
c/o 46285 Velma Avenue
Chilliwack, BC V4Z 1A1
E-mail: alan@dowco.com**

Goshen College is accepting applications for a tenure track position in

MUSIC UPPER STRINGS

Responsibilities include applied instruction in violin and viola, chamber music, and strings methods. Related areas of teaching may include, but not be limited to, music theory, music history, and music appreciation. Additional teaching in the Community School of the Arts of Goshen College is available.

A Doctorate is preferred; Masters required. Strong interest in and record of successful recruiting is preferred. Candidate should be an active performer and have evidence of successful teaching at the college level. Candidate needs to have a vision for growing a quality program in a state of the art facility. Applications will be reviewed beginning February 1, 2004. The appointment will begin July 1, 2004.

To apply, visit the specific position announcement on the Goshen College web page www.goshen.edu/employment. Women and minority persons are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Administrative and teaching faculty members are expected to share this commitment.

Mennonite Church Canada invites applicants for a

YOUTH MINISTRIES FACILITATOR

Responsibilities include establishing a network of youth leaders, gathering youth leaders around a vision for the future of youth ministry in MC Canada, and planning of Youth Assemblies.

This is a 0.4 FTE (40%) position, commencing February 1, 2004. Applications close on January 15, 2004.

Contact and send resume to:

**Justina M. Heese
Mennonite Church Canada Formation
Phone: 1-866-888-6785; Fax: (204) 831- 5675
E-mail: jheese@mennonitechurch.ca**

A job profile can be found at www.mennonitechurch.ca/jobs



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.

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**

Educators Required to teach Live-In Caregiver Program in the Philippines and China

Qualifications: BN, RN or LPN with 5+ years of experience; OR Home Economist with 5+ years of practical and/or academic experience; OR Experienced Caregiver with teaching background.

Starting date in Philippines is Feb 1/04 and in China March 1/04. Term is for 3, 6 or ideally 9 months. Top salary plus expenses paid.

Apply to:

**Ken D. Penner, Robertson College
E-mail: careers@RobertsonCollege.com
Fax: (204) 943-7291**

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is accepting applications for the position of

MCC CENTRAL STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The director provides vision and oversight for all MCC programs in Central States. Familiarity with MCC constituency, strong relational administrative skills, and cultural competency required. Experience with budgeting, administration, Spanish language skills preferred. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply. Significant travel time within the United States.

Contact:

Charmayne Brubaker
Phone: (717) 859-1151
E-mail: cdb@mcc.org

Or contact your nearest MCC office for the full job description. Application review begins February 2004. Position available at that time.

CANADIAN PRAIRIES FIELD COORDINATOR Heifer International

Heifer International, a progressive, sustainable development organization with more than 50 years of grassroots success seeks a dynamic professional to provide leadership for our Canadian Prairies Program.

Reporting to the Canadian Prairies Program Manager duties include: meet with current project partners in Saskatchewan and Manitoba to assist with training needs, technical information, community building, and reporting, facilitate new project development, and promote Heifer's work within the region. Bachelor's degree in Agriculture or related field and 3-5 yrs relevant experience. Knowledge and experience in agriculture, community development, and working with limited-resource people including First Nations communities. Experience with the non-governmental approach, participatory management skills, & knowledge of global sustainable development, essential. Fluency (oral & written) in English required.

For more information about our organization please visit www.heifer.org. Send cover letter and resume by January 21 to:

Canadian Prairies Program Manager
Box 370 Osler, SK S0K 3A0

For a full job description e-mail gordon.enns@heifer.org

Announcement

Moving to Montreal? New in Montreal? Looking for a church?

Join us: Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal
 120 Duluth Ave., Montreal, QC, H2W 1H1
 Phone: (514) 849-9039; <http://www.mfmontl.ca>

MCC, VNCS and EMM Vietnam alumni are invited to celebrate **Mennonite Central Committee's 50 years of work in Vietnam** on **July 9-11, 2004** in Hanoi, Vietnam.

For more information or to register, contact Diane Gehman:

E-mail: deg@mcc.org
MCC, Box 500
Akron, PA 17501



DIRECTOR OF CARE

Due to the retirement of the incumbent, Rosthern Mennonite Nursing Homes Inc. has a rewarding and challenging permanent full-time position for a Director of Care.

Rosthern Mennonite Nursing Home is a 68 bed, level 3 & 4 long term care facility. Attached are 36 units of enriched housing for seniors. The mission of the facility is to provide the best emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual care in a secure stimulating Christian atmosphere. The home is located approximately 70 kilometers north of Saskatoon, SK.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor Degree or Diploma in Nursing. Degree is preferred.
- Must be eligible for registration with SRNA.
- Previous long term care experience.
- Minimum two years management experience.
- Must demonstrate strong leadership, written and verbal communication skills.
- Must have a strong commitment to the ideals expressed in the mission statement and a strong desire to work closely with the sponsoring body – Mennonite Church Saskatchewan.

Applications are to be received no later than February 6, 2004 to:

Steering Committee
Mennonite Nursing Home
Box 370 Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0
Phone: (306) 232-4861
Fax: (306) 232-5611
E-mail: fergusont.gshd@shin.sk.ca

Trinity Mennonite Church is inviting applications for a full-time

LEAD PASTOR or CO-PASTOR TEAM

We are part of a rapidly growing community in southwest Calgary and have a congregation of approximately 100 with diverse ages and occupations.

We seek a pastor(s) who will provide strong leadership and focus on the vision, mission, and values defined by our congregation, working together with our members and participants to foster a faith community that is open and welcoming to new participants and is founded upon the Anabaptist understanding of the Christian faith.

Please send resume or inquiries to:

Pamela Fast
234 Everglade Way SW
Calgary, AB T2Y 4N2
E-mail: pamelafast@hotmail.com

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Canadian Mennonite

Advertising deadlines:

Jan. 26 issue: Jan. 13
Feb. 9 issue: Jan. 27
Feb. 23 issue: Feb. 10

1-800-316-4052

Conference on church music

Abbotsford, B.C.—"Sing a New Song," a conference on church music, will be held February 28 at Emmanuel Mennonite Church. Sessions will focus on hymnody and contemporary music, and will explore the role of global music in the church. Workshops will offer practical tips to song leaders and pianists. Mary Oyer from Indiana, a much-loved musician who has taught all over the world, will offer plenary sessions on hymn singing and cross-cultural music-making. The second speaker is Angela Neufeld, a music therapist from Vancouver, who will explore diversity in music and how worship involves the senses. Workshops include "Creative keyboarding in congregational

singing," by Katherine Funk, and "Leading congregational hymn singing," by J. Evan Kreider. For more information, check the website (www.emmanuelmennonite.com) or phone Barbara Nickel at (604) 823-2401.

MCC invites meat for canning project

Kitchener, Ont.—Plans are underway for another year of meat canning in Ontario. The Leamington group plans to can 28,000 pounds of turkey from April 19-23. Volunteers and donations are needed. Direct inquiries to Bill Martens at (519) 839-5126.

At the Guelph site, 50,000 pounds of beef will be canned from April 26-30. Due to low beef prices, some beef has been pre-purchased and frozen.

Donations of beef are still required. Call Earl Martin (519) 664-2528.

The Mennonite Central Committee meat canning unit is travelling to 36 locations in Canada and the U.S. from October to the end of April. —MCC Ontario release

Meeting in Abbotsford. Phone (604) 308-1389, e-mail: mds2004@telus.net.

February 21: MC B.C. delegate meeting.

February 27, 28: MCC Relief Sale banquets: Broadway Mennonite Brethren Church, Chilliwack (27); Frasersview MB Church, Richmond (28).

February 28: Church music workshop with Mary Oyer and Angela Neufeld at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford. More information: www.emmanuelmennonite.com.

March 5: MCC Relief Sale Dessert Evening at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford.

March 6: MCC Relief Sale lunch at Garden Park Towers Abbotsford. Banquet at Bethel Mennonite, Aldergrove.

Calendar

British Columbia

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.

February 7: B.C. Women in Mission business meeting at Bethel Mennonite Church, Aldergrove, 2:00 p.m.

February 13-14: Mennonite Disaster Service All-Unit

Notice of 33rd Annual Meeting of Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service (Canadian Mennonite)

Notice is hereby given that the 33rd Annual Meeting of Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service (the non-profit association that publishes *Canadian Mennonite*) will be held on February 7, 2004 at Douglas Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. The annual meeting is at 4:00 p.m. It will include editorial, circulation and financial reports, elections and reports from the Board, which meets February 5-7 in Winnipeg. A banquet follows at 6:00 p.m. at the church.

Anyone is welcome to attend. Voting will be limited to Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service members. Members are individuals who contribute a minimum of \$25 per year, unless they indicate on the donor card that they want to be financial supporters without being members. Membership also includes representatives from each of the conferences that nominate members to the Board of Directors. (See list of names and nominating bodies below.)

Proxy

As a member of Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service,
I hereby appoint

_____ as my proxy to attend, act and vote on my behalf at the Annual Meeting of Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service on February 7, 2004.

Name: _____

Address: _____

____ Send me a copy of the Annual Meeting reports

Members who are unable to be present for the meeting may complete the proxy form at left and mail it to: Canadian Mennonite, 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 6H7.

Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service Board:

British Columbia: Henry Neufeld, chair (Mennonite Church B.C.).

Alberta: Brenda Tiessen-Wiens (Mennonite Church Alberta),

Jan Wilhelm (Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service).

Saskatchewan: Bernie Thiessen (Mennonite Church Saskatchewan).

Manitoba: Ron Loepky (Mennonite Church Canada),

Bernie Wiebe (Mennonite Church Manitoba),

Paul Krahn (Mennonite Church Canada),

Aiden Schlichting Enns (Mennonite Church Canada).

Ontario: Lloyd Koch (Mennonite Church Eastern Canada),

Mary Lymburner (Mennonite Church Eastern Canada),

Betty Dyck (Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service),

Brice Balmer (Mennonite Church Canada).

Betty Dyck, secretary, Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service

Alberta

January 19-22: Theological Studies Week at Camp Valaqua. Instructor: Tom Yoder Neufeld on Ephesians. Phone Doreen Neufeld at (403) 201-4358.

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

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: Dessert and comedy night for MC Saskatchewan camps at Wildwood Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, 7:00 p.m.

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

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

January 16: Infusion, worship for young people, at Canadian Mennonite University, 7:30 p.m.

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.

January 25: Hymnfest at Sargent Ave. Mennonite Church, sponsored by Canadian Mennonite University, 3:30 p.m.

January 29, 30: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Junior High three one-act plays, at Centre Franco-Manitobain Culturel.

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 Loeppky at (204) 261-4949.

February 9: Open house at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, 7:00 p.m.

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 8: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Board Banquet. Phone (204) 775-7111 for details.

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

March 12-14: Peace-It-Together for high schoolers at Canadian Mennonite University. Speaker: Dave Worth on "Food as a peace issue." Call 1-877-231-4570, e-mail: bgrunau@cmu.ca.

March 31: Open house at Canadian Mennonite University.

Ontario

February 28: Tenth dessert and auction at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.

February 20-22, 27-28: Alumni operetta at United Mennonite Educational Institute.

February 29: Menno Singers concert at St. John the Evangelist Church, Kitchener, 3:00 p.m.

March 26-27: Engaged Workshop at Hawkesville Mennonite Church. Call (519) 656-2256.

April 19-23, 26-30: MCC meat canning in Leamington (19-23) and Guelph (26-30).

June 15-18: Summer Training Institute for church leaders by Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Conciliation Services, at Conrad Grebel University College. Contact Nan

Cressman, phone 1-866-782-0287.

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 22-25: Mennonite Camping Association convention at Drift Creek Camp, Lincoln City, Oregon.

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

Subscriber services CANADIAN 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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- Subscription changes are not considered Transitions notices. (Please send Transitions to the editor.)
- 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

Greetings from the Canadian Mennonite staff...



At the Waterloo office, from left: Tammy Sawatzky (art director), Natasha Krahn (administrative assistant), Betti Erb (associate editor), Barbara Burkholder (advertising), Margaret Loewen Reimer (interim editor/publisher), Barb Draper (editorial assistant).

May all the joys of
Christmas fill your
hearts and homes
with cheer,

And may Christ's
love be with you
now and through
the coming year.



Angelika Dawson
(British Columbia)



Donita Wiebe-Neufeld
(Alberta)



Karin Fehderau
(Saskatchewan)



Evelyn Rempel Petkau
(Manitoba)



Maurice Martin
(Eastern Canada)



Leona Dueck Penner
(National)

