

CANADIAN
Mennonite

April 3, 2006
Volume 10, Number 7



Reversal:
the long wait is over
pages 8, 19-21

Lenten Reversals

Marv Thiessen, lead pastor at First Mennonite Church in Calgary, asked if I would preach there while in Alberta for the MC Alberta delegate sessions in a few weeks. As a result, I've been reflecting on the gospel text for that Sunday, Mark 11:1-11 (the Palm Sunday entrance).

Jesus' instructions about riding the colt fascinate me. Growing up, I heard that Jesus rode in on a humble donkey to tell the crowd that he is really not arriving as the earthly king they think he is. In studying this passage, I now believe that's the wrong interpretation.

Donkeys aren't signs of humbleness in Jewish history. They are a sign of wealth. Job, the archetypal successful man, had his wealth described in donkeys and oxen. Jacob was rich in camels and donkeys.

There's also another event in Jewish history that Jesus is duplicating. When Solomon was to be crowned, David instructed that Solomon ride David's own donkey to the coronation ceremony as a sign of his authority.

Matthew and John reference a prophecy in Zechariah 9:9. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." It was very important to Jesus that he enter Jerusalem this way.

The disciples get a lot of criticism for not understanding Jesus' plans but they got the colt immediately. Their response was to shout, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord." The people all got it too. They recreated a Roman emperor's *Adventus*, his ceremonial entry into a city, where people would honour the emperor by throwing their cloaks down before him.

And who else is watching? Some Pharisees. They got the message too. John's Gospel tells us that this is the event that pushes them over the edge. Jesus can't just be arrested any longer, he now has to be killed. Jesus' reception as an Emperor by the crowds could be the start of a revolt, and a reason for the Romans to destroy their nation.

That's why the colt was so important to Jesus. Just as with the Academy Awards, your arrival is everything. He was setting up a vital chain of events that would lead to his arrest and death a handful of days later. Jesus could have easily avoided being killed. Instead, he forced the hand of those with political power to act in response to him. His sacrifice on the cross, the grave and the reversal of his resurrection were soon to follow.

New CM Features: On page 4 we are starting a series called "The Young Prophets" where we are seeking out accounts of Mennonite youth and young adults passionate about their faith. To the younger parts of the church, submissions are very welcome! In 500 words, answer, "Who or what has inspired and shaped your faith?"

On page 6, Jung Hoon Han, of the Korean Mennonite Ministry in Winnipeg, continues our series in Faith and Life on teaching from "new edges" of the Mennonite church. Teaching from Argentinean and Colombian Mennonites is coming in future issues.

Third, many thanks to Matthew Bailey-Dick for his "Shoes for your feet" columns calling us to the ministry of peacemaking. This issue we are starting "God, money and me," a column written by staff at Mennonite Foundation of Canada. On page 11, Erwin Warkentin launches these monthly reflections on using our resources in Christ's service.

—Tim Miller Dyck

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.

Head office: 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, ON, N2L 6H7
Phone: 519-884-3810 **Toll-free:** 1-800-378-2524 **Fax:** 519-884-3331
Web site: canadianmennonite.org

Please send all material to be considered for publication as follows:

General submission address: submit@canadianmennonite.org
Letters to the Editor: letters@canadianmennonite.org
Calendar announcements: calendar@canadianmennonite.org
Transitions announcements: transitions@canadianmennonite.org
 Material can also be sent "Attn: Submissions/Letter to the Editor/Calendar/Transitions" by postal mail or fax to our head office.

Editorial Staff: Tim Miller Dyck, Editor/Publisher, editor@canadianmennonite.org;

Please contact Lisa Jacky at office@canadianmennonite.org or x221 for subscriptions and address changes. A mail-in subscription order form is in the Tomorrow section. **Postmaster:** Send returns to head office. We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Government of Canada through the Publications Assistance Program toward our mailing costs (PAP Reg. No. 09613, Agreement No. 40063104). ISSN 1480-042X

CANADIAN
Mennonite

Ross W. Muir, Managing Editor, managinged@canadianmennonite.org;
Barb Draper, Editorial Assistant, edassist@canadianmennonite.org;

Tim R. Dyck, Graphic Designer, artdirector@canadianmennonite.org

Correspondents: **Leona Dueck Penner**, National Correspondent, dueck-penner@mennonitechurch.ca, 204-888-6781 x178;
Amy Dueckman, B.C. Correspondent, bc@canadianmennonite.org, 604-854-3735; **Donita Wiebe-Neufeld**, Alberta Correspondent, timanddonita@attglobal.net, 780-436-3431; **Karin Fehderau**, Saskatchewan Correspondent, k.fehderau@sasktel.net, 306-933-4209;
Evelyn Rempel Petkau, Manitoba Correspondent, erpetkau@cici.mb.ca, 204-745-2208; **Maurice Martin**, Eastern Canada Correspondent, mauricem@sympatico.ca, 519-662-1031

Circulation/Finance: **Lisa Jacky**, office@canadianmennonite.org
Advertising: **Barbara Burkholder**, advert@canadianmennonite.org, toll-free: 1-800-316-4052, fax: 519-884-3331

Board of Directors: British Columbia: Henry Neufeld, John W. Goossen. Alberta: Brenda Tiessen-Wiens, Jan Wilhelm. Saskatchewan: Bernie Thiessen. Manitoba: Aiden S. Enns, Bernie Wiebe, Paul Krahn. Eastern Canada: Mary Lymburner, Brice Balmer, Ester Neufeldt, Larry Cornies.

Canadā

April 3, 2006
Volume 10, Number 7



Page 4

Cover: Nina Bailey-Dick bundled up her young daughter, Mona, for the vigil at Kitchener (Ont.) city hall celebrating the rescue of the three remaining CPTers abducted in Iraq last November. See coverage on pages 19-21. —Photo by Ross W. Muir

- 4** **UpClose**
First of 'the young prophets' **4**
A Top 40 Under 40 **5**
-
- 6** **Faith&Life**
Our great ancestors were pilgrims **6**
Easter reversal **8**
-
- 9** **Arts&Culture**
Sound in the land **9**
-
- 10** **InConversation**
Thank you for sharing **10**
Letters **11**
A four-letter word **11**
Speaking of death **12**
-
- 14** **WiderChurch**
Leadership assembly **14-16**
Nonviolence addressed by WCC **17**
CPT hostages rescued **19-21**
-
- 22** **LocalChurch**
Alberta snow camps **22**
Speaking up for peace **28**
Transitions **33**
-
- 34** **TheChurches**
Being God's people now **35**
-
- 36** **ToMorrow**



Page 17

Web site 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 April 17 issue by April 13.



Page 34

Winnipeg

Giving young Colombians a voice

With this story by Rebecca Bartel, the first-ever international volunteer for Mennonite Church Canada Witness—who serves Colombian youths through the Mennonite Development Foundation of Colombia (MENCOLDES), Canadian Mennonite begins a series of articles by our “young prophets”—reflective, thoughtful and vibrant young writers who are passionate about their Anabaptist faith.

As a student studying theology and learning about conflict resolution and international development at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, the “call” to work in the church was undeniable for me. There was also the difficulty of reconciling the politics of the world and the politics of Jesus. As an Anabaptist, there was the question of war and the absolute conviction that it’s not necessary, that it’s not acceptable. How could I put my politics, my peace position, my pacifism, all together?

Graduate study was the only thing I could think of—that and going to a country where they’re experiencing that exact same struggle. The Mennonite Church in Colombia experiences this every day. It’s a church that has a very outspoken political voice while, at same time, it has a ministry very much in keeping with Anabaptist theology. I wanted to learn from the people who are doing it.

Working for MENCOLDES, I’m part of a pilot project to educate and train Colombian youths in church leadership, social organization, development and human rights, and to respond peacefully to the violent context they live in. We do this through Bible studies offering grassroots biblical interpretation as well as socio-political analysis and conflict resolution workshops, among other things.

In the Bible studies, we often speak of Jesus, who said, “Let the young children come to me,” showing people who are young that they are recognized as



Bartel

voices that need to be heard.

We have also found the prophet Jeremiah helpful. He’s one of the youngest prophets and from a smaller tribe, the tribe of Benjamin. Colombia has a bad rap—drug traffickers, cocaine addicts, guerrillas—and so Colombians have this idea that this is how the world sees them. This prophet from the smallest tribe gives them hope. Not-so-important people can have a prophetic voice—like Jeremiah.

We young people get easily frustrated that the world especially—and the church—don’t change as quickly as we’d like it to. Another challenge is understanding hierarchy and authority. I hear a lot about that in my work. There exists an understanding that other people are more important than us. Getting out of that vertical way of thinking is a big challenge.

To be quite honest, the organized church is in dire need of reform. I

think young adults—as future leaders—need to think about that now. I think we’re in the process of change. I don’t put a lot of faith in institutions, but in people and in community. We are not called to live in institutions; rather, we are called to live in community and work together in that understanding.

It’s an exciting time to be a young person who is part of the church. But one thing I’ve learned is: I can’t change the world alone—or overnight. I can, however, live my life in a way that speaks to the belief that change can happen. So I pick my battles carefully.

We’re at a time in North America when we need to be rethinking service in a globalized world. It’s not about going overseas and doing the service thing somewhere else. You can get caught up in that.

All the decisions we make should be informed by our neighbours, by our understanding of the upside-down kingdom of God, and by our faith. We are part of a body. We all have gifts; it’s most important how we contribute.

I’ve learned from Colombians to appreciate the gifts of “every day.” For a long time, I was thinking only of the future, forgetting that life is now. It’s very challenging at times. War and violence and poverty exist in Colombia, and lots of praying and lots of crying need to happen.

At the same time, “every day” is life. This is what we have. We don’t know about tomorrow. That is where I find hope in people who, despite everything—the seemingly impossible situation around them where they can’t go to school, they don’t have jobs, and someone threatens their lives—keep smiling.

Colombians can still dance for two hours at church services! That’s hope; that’s life.

—**Rebecca Bartel**, as told to **Leona Dueck Penner** and **Dan Dyck**

As she returns to Colombia after a recent visit with her family, Bartel continues work on her master of arts in political science thesis on the relationship between trade and armed conflict.

the young prophets

Altona, Man.

Corporate executive exemplifies business, faith, community life

Altona's Curwin Friesen is the quintessential example of "hometown boy makes good," following his being named one of Canada's Top 40 Under 40 last year by Caldwell Partners. The national program honours Canadians in various fields who have reached a significant level of success before their 40th birthday.

The current president and chief operating officer (COO) of Altona's Friesens Corporation left his hometown of 3,800 back in the 1980s to attend the University of Waterloo, Ont., where he graduated with an honours degree in economics and trade; he was awarded the Governor-General's medal award for high academic achievement on graduation.

At the same time, he also learned about the interconnectedness of business and faith at Conrad Grebel University College that is attached to the university. During this time he explored and struggled with the tensions that exist between the two disciplines.

"My faith too is part of what I am, and I'm not alone in that," he says. "A basic belief in God, and all that it entails, influences me, and I see it as a requirement of people to be who they really are."

After graduation, Friesen worked for a finance company in Toronto for five years.

Eventually he missed some of Altona's small town joys. Having stayed in touch with David Friesen, Friesen Corporation's CEO, over the years, Friesen received an offer in 1995 to join the company as special projects manager. He and his wife Jill, a teacher, jumped at the opportunity to return home.

Friesen, one of about 30 unrelated Friesens among the 600 people who work for the company started in 1907 by David Friesen's grandfather, says

he was honoured by the Top 40 Under 40 award, but feels it is more than a personal accomplishment. "Friesens is a great company, and I'm part of it, so I sort of see it as a team award," he says.

Friesens Corporation is the largest independent book manufacturer in Canada, with sales offices throughout Canada and the United States. It produces 25 million books annually. It is also one of the largest employee-owned enterprises in Canada, with more than 90 per cent of the employees doubling as business owners.

One of his first responsibilities was to build a management team for the future.

"When I first started here, most of the senior management were in their 50s," Friesen says, "but in order for the company to succeed in the future, there has been a transition, so that now there are management people in their 50s, 40s, 30s and 20s. In 2007, it will be the company's 100th anniversary. We want to be around for another 100 years as well," he says of the need for a change.

Friesen has personally concentrated on the company's U.S. growth (which now accounts for 45 percent of its printing business), negotiated deals to produce yearbooks for more than 150 schools in the United Kingdom, and led in the company's move into digital printing.

Friesens Corporation has received many Gold Management Plus awards from the National Association of Printing Leadership (NAPL) over the past 10 years since Friesen joined the firm, becoming the first Canadian company to be inducted into the NAPL Hall of Fame. As well, Friesens has been named one of the 50 best-managed companies in Canada during the past decade.

But there is more to the man than



Friesen

just business, according to Douglas Caldwell, chairman and founder of Caldwell Partners. "We recognize people who also remember to give back to the community," Caldwell says. "Curwin and his wife are excellent examples of that."

Friesen is keenly involved in his community. He led a fundraising team that collected pledges and borrowed \$6.5-million for a millennium community centre in Altona.

At the same time, he and his wife became involved in the founding of the Seeds of Life Community Church, developing a style of worship and structure to appeal to non-churchgoers. It includes inspirational worship and drama, a form of worship that until now wasn't available in the community.

"It was an exciting time to try something new," says Friesen. "The church is different. It meets in an old jeans factory—and it's known as 'The Exchange.' It's also used for community activities and as a coffee shop. And while 'Mennonite' is not part of the formal name, the church is part of Mennonite Church Canada."

Friesen heads up the church's resource team, and sits on a seven-member leadership team, providing broad leadership to the church. The couple also lead a small group on a weekly basis.

—Elmer Heinrichs

'A basic belief in God, and all that it entails, influences me, and I see it as a requirement of people to be who they really are.'

Our great ancestors who left their homeland were pilgrims

The following sermon was preached at Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, by Jung Hoon Han, chair of the congregation's Korean Ministry, at the joint Korean-English service on Memorial Sunday, Nov. 13, 2005. It is based on Genesis 12:1-4, Exodus 3:10-12, and Mark 1:16-20.



Today we are celebrating Remembrance Day. Instead of remembering the veterans of the world wars, I suggest we remember some good Christians who have affected our Christian faith.

I remember my two grandmothers. My grandmother on my father's side was born in 1904, and she passed away in 1996. She met an American missionary when she was a teenage girl and heard about Jesus Christ; however, she did not believe in Christianity and was a Buddhist until she was 80 years old. When she was 80, all the members of my father's family had become Christians, and she became a Christian too. After she became a Christian she went to early-morning prayer meetings at her church and she prayed for our family until she died.

I also remember my grandmother on my mother's side. She went to a Sunday school when she was young, and she is still a member of her church. She is now 88 years old and attends every prayer meeting.

Both of my grandmothers are very important persons for me to remember. They are great ancestors of mine who remembered all the names of their grandchildren and prayed for them every morning. I am very proud of them, and thank God for having these great Christian ancestors.

Who do you remember as your great Christian ancestor?

I would like to remember our great Mennonite ancestors. They tried to build up a new paradigm of church—one that was like the early church, with a more biblically based Christian life. They were even called radical.

They left their hometown and built a new community. They were persecuted, but endured the difficulties. They tried to live as they believed. Due to their hard lives, we are now able to worship God freely without any hard problems in our very comfortable environments.

They are our great Christian ancestors who kept their faith with their lives. We must remember them proudly. They did many important and significant things, such as disaster relief and human rights recovery. However, we don't remember them as good human beings; we remember them

as faithful instruments of God.

In Genesis, God asked Abraham to leave his homeland. His homeland was the place of his comfortable and easy life. He was rich enough to support many of his family members. But he left his homeland and started his suffering life. His future was unsure, but Abraham trusted God and followed God's leading. So God blessed Abraham—and even more, God called him a blessing. Abraham is a great ancestor of ours whom we should respect and remember today.

God also ordered Moses to go to Pharaoh and rescue Israel. This was too amazing a project, and initially Moses hesitated to answer God's call. But God continued to seek to persuade him, and Moses left his personal hiding place, went to Pharaoh and finally rescued God's people. Moses fully trusted God, and so he became a great ancestor of all Christians, and he is someone we must remember today.

When Jesus came back from the desert after defeating the devil, he asked Peter and his brother Andrew to follow him. Peter and Andrew left their nets and followed Jesus. Their nets were the most important instruments of their lives. They were fishermen. But when invited by Jesus, they gave up their business. There was no way for any fisherman to make money without nets. But they left their job and their homeland, and they followed Jesus. They became great men of Christ and our great ancestors whom we must remember today.

There are similarities between Abraham, Moses, and Peter and Andrew. They found God's important mission from outside of themselves. They did not search God's business from their families, their jobs, or their immediate environments. We should learn this from them.

We should not be Christians who are going to church because of our families and ourselves. We should not use our gifts for our families and ourselves. We

should not stay in this church happily and joyfully, and exhaust our spiritual energy inside this church. The Bible teaches us to love our neighbours like ourselves.

As Christians who hold eternal life through God's great grace, we must be alive as missionaries for our neighbours. We are also missionaries for our communities. We are not to be people who survive for our families or ourselves. Any churchgoers whose lives are focused only on themselves and their families are the persons who do not understand, or even remember, Abraham, Moses, Peter and Andrew.

I have one simple question: How much are your lives oriented toward God's mission? If you are mission-oriented Christians, you will work for God and live with God at your office, your business and your neighbourhood. You will preach God's words and teach anyone you meet about Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ gave a great commission, which is to go and make disciples. We should conduct his holy mission of salvation, which is the most important God business in the world. We must pay more attention to our neighbours and communities. We must leave our church for this mission, because there is more interest of God outside our church than inside our church.

There is one more common similarity between Abraham, Moses, Peter and Andrew, and also the early Mennonites—they were pilgrims who left their homeland and comfort zone.

They were pilgrims. We should make our church a headquarters of worship, Christian education, fellowship and mission of Christ. And we should train ourselves in this church and leave this church in outreach for Christianity.

Pilgrims do not have their desks, chairs or offices in the church. Pilgrims are not interested in any belongings, property or positions in the church. Pilgrims always have their interests outside of the church. They have one primary interest, and that is the salvation of non-Christians. They are searching for lost children of God and preparing themselves to be faithful instruments of God. Pilgrims are godly persons who devote themselves to God's world.

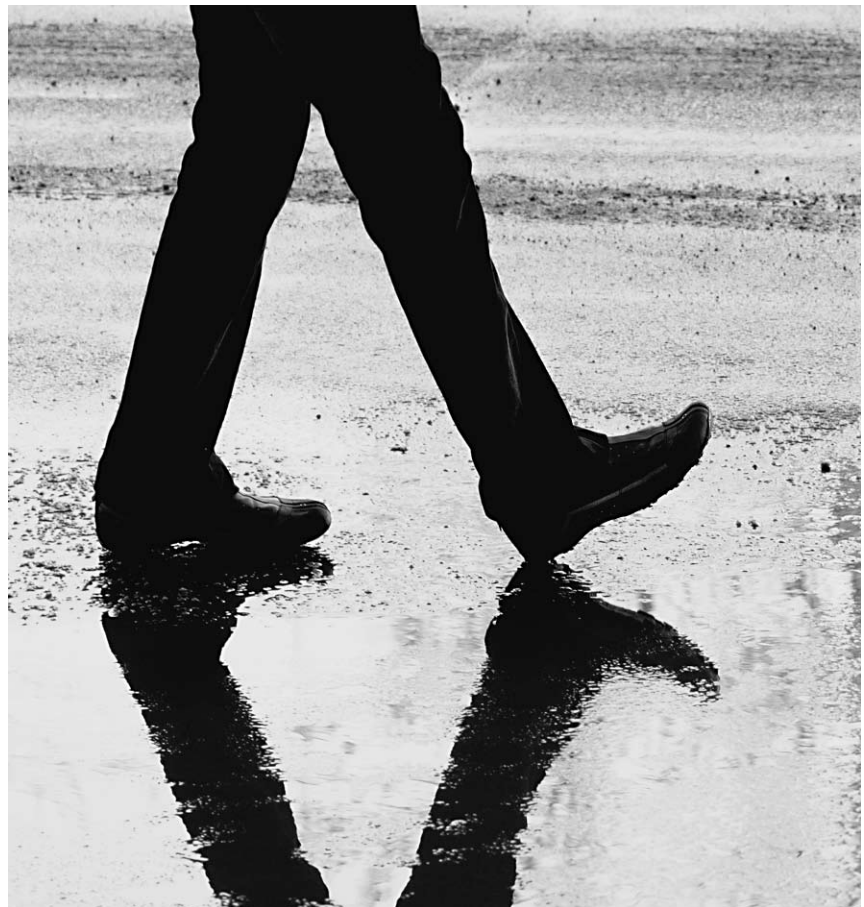
We must come out from our comfort zone, in which we enjoy Christian life easily, become good respected persons, and satisfy our value of Christian lives. Our great ancestors came out of their comfort zones and chose the persecuted life of being God's witnesses. This is the reason that we are remembering them as our great ancestors.

Jesus Christ chose the same life. He could have become a great teacher, philosopher or political leader, but he chose the way of suffering and death. Jesus did not choose to stay in his comfort zone.

All of our great ancestors who received much respect and became remembered persons were the ones who left their comfortable home, comfortable church and comfortable communities. We must remember them and learn from them, following their examples. I strongly encourage all my brothers and sisters in this church to come out of their comfort zone.

In conclusion, I want to make one important point. As they were great persons to be remembered, all of you should also be remembered by your great-grandchildren. We must devote ourselves to God as much as our great ancestors did, and we must become God's pilgrims who pay more attention to God's lost children outside of the church. If we become God's faithful instruments in his great mission, we will be remembered by our great-grandchildren every Remembrance Day.

—**Jung Hoon Han**



Reversal

The cross represents Jesus' ultimate identification with humanity in its self-imposed estrangement and hostility. Execution by crucifixion was considered the most shameful death possible, reserved for slaves, foreigners and people guilty of treason. (Incidentally, all of these characterize the human condition before God....)

[I]n Jesus' death, which was in large part the result of his identification with the "accursed" multitudes, he took upon himself their humiliation as their representative.

Jesus, whom they knew to be innocent, voluntarily became a victim of those powers which degraded and humiliated the masses. He did this in solidarity with them, representing their cause when he might have escaped. In this way he made his cross the liberating symbol for the oppressed. That he died with dignity and compassion even for his tormentors, reversed the meaning of crucifixion. The cross, intended to be a symbol of failure and humiliation, became for believers the symbol of victory and self-identity. Thus Paul gloried in the cross (Galatians 6:14), focused only on the crucified Christ (1 Corinthians 2:2), and proclaimed the cross as "the power of God" for the salvation of humanity (1 Corinthians 1:18, Romans 1:16).

—From *God Our Savior: Theology in a Christological Mode* by C. Norman Kraus, Herald Press, Waterloo, Ont., 1991.

WCC photo

Waterloo, Ont.

Sound in the land

Music and readings liberally salted with anecdotes was the fare served up at the *Sound in the Land* book launch last month in the Conrad Grebel chapel—along with lots of Mennonite food.

Music ranged from “Death Be Not Proud” by John Donne, sung by soprano Stephanie Kramer, to “Aunt Lizzie’s Old Order House,” written and sung by Rebecca Campbell. The latter was contextualized with a set of artifacts that would appear in a typical Old Order Mennonite house, including a marble roller.

The 2004 *Sound in the Land* festival and conference held at Conrad Grebel marked the first time that Mennonites, in their 300-plus years of being in North America, gathered for the expressed purpose of discovering, hearing, studying and celebrating collective voices in music. Some of the essays in the new *Sound in the Land* book from Pandora Press were originally presented at that conference. They examine the wide range of musical styles and practices that make up Mennonite music today, ranging from traditional hymns and concert music, to popular and non-western genres.

Eric Friesen, host of Studio Sparks, said of the book, “Music is the mysticism of Mennonites...our incense, our vestments, our iconography. Music is our soul. But, as with most things Mennonite,...there is rarely agreement on what is sacred or sacrilege.”

Maureen Epp and Anna Janecek read excerpts from several of the essays. Laura Weaver, a self-declared “Mennonite in exile” since 1966, complains in one that where she now attends church she can hardly hear the congregation singing over the organ. “In church, I want to be surrounded by four voices, preferably unaccompanied,” she wrote. “If I don’t hear four-part a cappella singing I shrivel up.”

The book notes that when Victor Davies was asked to write “The



Photo by Maurice Martin

Maureen Epp, left, and Anna Janecek read excerpts from several of the essays in the new Pandora Press book *Sound in the Land*.

Mennonite Concerto” he was given 25 hymns from the General Conference and 25 from the Mennonite Brethren with which to work. He discovered they were largely Victorian English hymns and American gospel songs. “I knew nearly all these hymns from my United Church background,” he is quoted as exclaiming. Thus he discovered that most of Mennonite hymnody is borrowed.

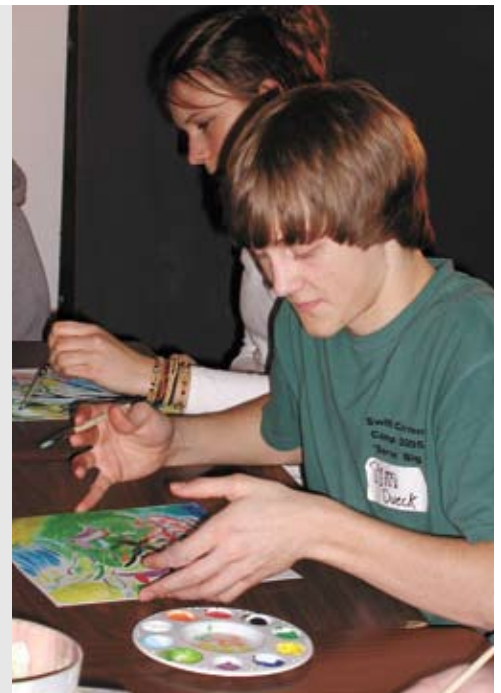
Book launch host Carol Ann Weaver invited the gathered group to listen

to—and identify—the familiar hymn tunes and other songs buried in a medley of sounds that she had created. A copy of the book was the prize for the person who was able to identify the most tunes.

As an invitation to the snacks to follow, someone quipped, “Women in Pennsylvania, when they go crazy they make a lot of food, and when they are sane they do the same!”

—**Maurice Martin**

Tim Dueck of Zion Mennonite Church in Swift Current, Sask., took part in last month’s visual art workshop at the Canadian Mennonite University Peace-it-Together (PIT) conference. The conference brought together more than 250 youths from across Canada for a whirlwind weekend full of worship, thought-provoking and creative workshops, drama, urban and square dancing, karaoke and the annual MennoNITE live concert. The theme for this year’s PIT was “Somebody better say something.” Keynote speaker Brenda Matthews of Chicago explored themes around poetry and protest, peace through the arts and speaking up for change. With her were hip-hop ministers Aaron McCain and Bryan Sanchez, who inspired the audience with their faith and creativity.



CMU photo by John Loughurst

People around the Great Lakes know that zebra mussels came from overseas and wreak ecological havoc. These foreign invaders do not have natural predators here and have become pests, upsetting balances and displacing native species.

“Sharing” is a non-native invader that distorts worship and becomes impossible to dislodge. Our Mennonite practice of it is rooted in Wednesday prayer meetings. As those services dwindled, personal revelations and prayer requests migrated to Sunday.

It is alarming to hear—as I often do—that people’s favourite part of worship is the lifting of joys and concerns. Indeed, churches often skip over, shorten or omit other parts of their services when sharing goes “too long.” We put time limits on duly designated leaders who carefully prepare prayers and sermons, but hesitate to restrict people who speak “off the cuff.”

This invasive worship newcomer outranks, diminishes, and even displaces praising God, singing hymns, listening to God’s Word proclaimed and preached, offering our gifts to God, or receiving God’s blessings. It is treated as the most important part of worship. People leave remembering more about private details and impressions of others’ lives than about the gospel that was preached.

The No. 1 prayer request is for medical ailments, usually someone beyond the congregation and often explained in needlessly graphic and explicit detail.

Or people give one-sided explanations of their position in a conflict or their interpretation of someone else’s problems. Sometimes the people named are present, other times not; either way, it is problematic.

Particularly baffling is when people make information public that ought to be private. Others share ethically questionable decisions. Somehow sharing sanctifies it. People speak of buying luxuries. Or boast of exotic vacations. Or announce decisions about breaking up or blending their family.

Sharing is not about giving a voice

Thank you for sharing

to everyone: A few share a lot and most speak seldom or not at all. This is not true sharing, but the microphone monopoly of a minority.

After a particularly embarrassing sharing time, a friend joked about its “Jerry Springer” quality. The tell-all atmosphere of talk show television shapes an entire generation’s view of worship. The result is that we become overly focused on individual problems, bringing those to centre stage, rather than placing our lives in the context of God’s work.

As personal sharing is relatively new to Christian worship—and even more recent for Mennonites—it is not something the Bible directly addresses. The closest piece of scriptural counsel I can find comes from Paul in I Corinthians 14. He writes: “*When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation.*” It is appropriate that people might be inspired to bring something to the gathering of the body.

But then he suggests elements of discernment, something sorely lacking in how we share. First, Paul says: “*Let all things be done for building up,*” and later notes that prophecies are “*so that all may learn and all be encouraged.*” In other words, what is lifted up should encourage and empower everyone.

Second, Paul suggests that, in the case of tongue-speaking, “*let there be*

only two or at most three....” Could we not suggest such parameters with sharing?

Third, Paul insists that tongues should be interpreted and if there is no interpreter then “*let them be silent in church and speak to themselves and to God.*” Sometimes it is better to hold one’s tongue.

Fourth, all prophecies are to be tested: “*and let the others weigh what is said.*” Church leaders have the right—even the responsibility—to critique and exercise discernment over what is spoken in church. When people misuse sharing, they should be corrected for abusing worship, “*for God is a God not of disorder but of peace.*”

As a former pastor, I take seriously people’s need to be heard and to receive support and prayer.

First, I propose that we remind people that gossip is not holy just because we call it a prayer concern.

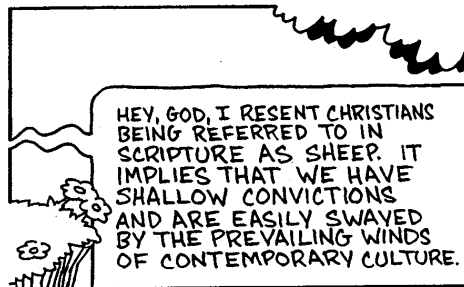
Second, it is good for people to have supportive prayers. But there are many ways to do this. Brief requests during worship can be significant. Or churches could make people and space available, so that those who need prayer can meet with others and be prayed for in private.

But private and personal needs should not dominate the priority of public worship. As William Orr and James Arthur Walther write in their commentary on I Corinthians 14: “The life of the church is more important than the religious development or expression of a single person.”

—**Arthur Paul Boers**

The author teaches pastoral theology at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and is a former MC Eastern Canada pastor.

Pontius’ Puddle



Letters

Transcending disagreements needed in B.C. debate

I read with mixed emotions the WiderChurch article “Membership baggage, homosexuality fuel ‘provincially active only’ desires” on page 19 of the Jan. 23 issue. I feel at times that I am a prisoner held captive by our provincial community whose majority advocates for supporting a “provincially active only” concept because of a democratic decision made several years ago.

We may not have arrived at this place if we could have considered the guidelines expressed under Article 16 of our *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* and the commentary. I continue to struggle as I learn what it is to be an individual living in community.

This section is a forum for discussion and discernment. Letters express the opinion of the writer only, not necessarily the position of Canadian Mennonite, the five area churches or Mennonite Church Canada. Letters should address issues rather than criticizing individuals and include contact information. We will send copies of letters referring to other parties to them to provide an opportunity to respond in a future issue if their views have not already been printed in an earlier letter. Please send letters to be considered for publication to letters@canadianmennonite.org or to Canadian Mennonite, 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, ON, N2L 6H7, “Attn: Letter to the Editor.” Letters may be edited for length, style and adherence to editorial guidelines.

The sections of the article on “membership baggage” and “a deeper disillusionment” leave me again wondering why more voices were not consulted—or quoted—within the B.C. community to determine other sides of the discussion. The listening meetings that were hosted by MC B.C. were helpful, as each community was able to speak to the subjects that were on the table, and they revealed we do not have consensus. I respect that the committee needs to begin its work, but being a bit more investigative could

bring a balance to dialogue, instead of them offering their ideas before the whole body is heard or quoted.

It is good to read that the journey we will embark on is to apply “theological rigour” to the questions that the article brings to the table. My prayer goal is that we all line up with the idea expressed in the last sentence—“that the task is to find ways of working with one another that transcend our disagreements....”

It does beg the question of how we do listening and hearing so that we

ERWIN WARKENTIN

**God, money and me**

It seems few people in the church get excited about stewardship these days. Preachers tend to roll their eyes when it's time for the annual stewardship sermon, and parishioners tend to roll their eyes when they hear what the topic will be. The assumption is that stewardship will be a “guilt” topic, designed to pry more money out of unwilling pockets and into a starving church treasury.

And...oh yes, there has to be that mandatory mantra, that “stewardship is about much more than just money,” and the passing references to using our time responsibly, paying attention to the sustainability of God's creation, and other noble sentiments. But the bottom line, whether stated or not, is always about money. *Tithing*. Is this really what stewardship is all about?

I have friends who have scrimped and saved all their working lives so that their children, once they are of age, may go to good universities through to a doctoral program without incurring any debt. I have other friends whose homes illustrate their hospitable nature: large diningroom tables, comfortable livingroom furnishings—easy and inviting places to visit. Other friends are sometimes hard to contact because they are so busy with committee meetings at church or at other community organizations.

These friends are expressing their values. A good education is important. Hospitality is important. Volunteering at church or for the good of the larger community is important. We hear a lot about “family

Is ‘stewardship’ a four-letter word?

There is nothing wrong with spending money on worthwhile values.

values,” and we try to promote wholesome and faith-based values. But there is another meaning to “values” that also applies to each of these examples.

In some way, they are all tied to money. A good education costs a lot of money. Being hospitable involves the cost of a comfortable home and furnishings, as well as the cost of entertaining. Volunteering takes away from the time that a person might otherwise be working for gain. All of these costs are good, if held in balance.

There is nothing wrong with spending money on worthwhile values. In essence, that is what personal stewardship is all about. We identify the values we cherish, and work towards implementing those values. The first part is the most important: identifying our values. The rest follows naturally, without too much more thought.

If the word “stewardship” grates on your over-churched nerves, try ignoring it and focus instead on “discipleship.” What has God done for you lately, and how do you respond to God? How does your response reflect your personal values? How do you express your values? How are you a disciple?

This series of reflections on discipleship (stewardship) under the general theme of “God, money and me” has been prepared by the staff of Mennonite Foundation of Canada, and will run every other issue. We pray that God will add value to our words.

Erwin Warkentin is general manager of Mennonite Foundation of Canada. For more information about stewardship education, estate and charitable gift planning, visit www.mennofoundation.ca.

actually consider the interests of the other before our own. If we move forward, when we look back, whom will we have left behind?

—Ken Kehler, Richmond, B.C.

Conservative militarism deserves critique

I was disappointed that the Feb. 6 *Canadian Mennonite* editorial entitled “New government’s agenda” failed to mention the Conservative government’s focus on aggressive militarism and deeper integration with the United States’ “security” agenda. Mennonites have a long, biblically based tradition of opposing militarism and war. We now live in an age of hyper-militarism and imperial wars waged by American leaders who say they are Christians. Because

Stephen Harper plans to move Canada in a similar direction, I think a clear, faith-based critique by Canadian Mennonites of our new government’s military agenda is sorely needed.

—Sarah Buhler, Toronto

World Vision bashing needs to stop

Congratulations, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), on your partnership endeavours with World Vision (*Canadian Mennonite*, Jan. 23, page 30). While Andre Pekovich has concerns about MCC’s association with World Vision, I have concerns about his letter (March 6, page 12) that perpetuates a much-loved Mennonite myth.

Along with a partner, I run a marketing/consulting agency that works extensively with World Vision in

Canada, the U.S. and internationally. I’ve visited World Vision field projects in Africa, and I know the people that make World Vision tick. My wife and I have also spent three years with MCC in Egypt.

World Vision’s primary marketing focus—child sponsorship—reduces real issues to the impact on a single child, but its mandate is sustainable community-based transformational development. They simplify the issues to a level Canadians are willing to be engaged at—the impact of poverty, famine and disease on children. Their enormously successful fundraising efforts help all development organizations, including MCC.

Pekovich’s story of World Vision people standing beside a polished new Land Cruiser in their best suits to undertake a token act of food distribu-

MELISSA MILLER



Family Ties

“So, Mom, what do you want done with your remains?” my son asked. It’s not a typical question from a teenager to a parent, I know. He asked the question as we walked away from the vet where we had just completed the sad and necessary task of putting down our dog. Death—of a family member—was very much on our minds.

I was glad he’d asked the question. I think it’s important for families to talk openly about a variety of things, including tough stuff like death and medical interventions. I’ve also learned that individuals and cultural groups vary on their capacity to enter into these conversations. For example, in some cultures, the spoken word has a great deal of power. To speak of death is seen as a statement of causing or wanting the person to die. It is important to be aware of such dynamics.

On the other hand, open communication helps individuals navigate the precarious, holy terrain of medical crises and the end of life. Too many of us find ourselves in the position of facing these sensitive decisions only when they are excruciatingly present—just in front of our faces. The difficulty of the task is one reason we delay writing wills, arranging for a power of attorney, and communicating to family members our thoughts about extreme medical procedures. It forces us to confront our human frailty, the inexorable decline of our bodies, and the death that awaits us. Naming our hopes, fears and desires to our loved ones gives us strength for the ordeal, and knits us closer together.

As we move from the shadows of Lent into the bright joy of Easter, perhaps some energy could be given to

Speaking of death

Open communication helps individuals navigate the precarious, holy terrain of medical crises and the end of life.

considering these questions:

- How will my financial resources be distributed after I die?
- What medical procedures am I open to receiving? (This involves educating oneself to understand things like artificial nutrition, breathing apparatus, and life supports.)
- What preferences do I have for funeral arrangements and the disposal of my body?
- How would I like to be remembered?
- What final words or blessings might I bestow upon those I love?

Elders, given the wisdom they’ve acquired and their proximity to death, are encouraged to lead the way. Any family member can get the ball rolling, though.

Of course, we can have the conversations and think we’ve made arrangements and still be taken by surprise.

My aunt believed she clearly understood her parents’ intentions, and their desire for no extreme medical measures. When my grandfather suffered a heart attack, she called for the ambulance to transport him to the hospital. The ambulance attendant asked about resuscitation, and she replied, as she’d been coached by my grandfather, “Do not resuscitate.” She was quite astonished, and more than a little embarrassed, when my grandfather, conscious at that moment, said, “Yes! Do resuscitate!”

Such a measure was indeed necessary at that time of crisis, and was successful. Pap went on to live—in good harmony with my aunt—another five years.

Melissa Miller is a family life consultant, pastoral counsellor and author from Winnipeg.

tion does not surprise me; they were obviously working to impress thousands of rich western conference-going Mennonites! And it doesn't take many trips on remote African "roads" to know that a Land Cruiser is no luxury in that part of the world.

This story, however, certainly does not say anything about World Vision's development philosophy. Suggesting that World Vision's overseas efforts utilize mainly ex-pat workers and do not generate results is wrong, as is the suggestion that World Vision field staff are not dedicated, do not wear khakis, and are not results-oriented.

The truth is that the aggressive media-based approach World Vision takes allows them to take on projects that smaller organizations like MCC simply can't even contemplate.

I am not suggesting that MCC start running TV programs to raise funds. Mennonites should recognize and embrace the strong MCC brand, but they should also recognize and appreciate the efforts of World Vision.

—**Cam Shapansky, Cambridge, Ont.**

World Vision appointment approved by Witness council

Re: "World Vision 'brand' not for Mennonites" letter, *Canadian Mennonite*, March 6, page 12.

I heartily agree with Mr. Pekovich in his concern that we uphold and live out the Anabaptist principles of "mutuality, respect, stewardship and faith." Mennonite Church Canada Witness upholds and continually tests its activities against these principles and the understanding that God is at work reconciling and healing the world—that God's church is the primary agent through which Christians act.

I want to reassure Mr. Pekovich and other readers that MC Canada's Christian Witness Council tested Willard Metzger's appointment to World Vision through a group discernment process as well as MC Canada's Conflict of Interest Policy. The council's discernment determined that Metzger's appointment would not compromise the Anabaptist principles upon which Witness functions.

Moreover, we believe that such appointments represent opportunities for

spreading Anabaptist values and principles beyond ourselves as we seek to live faithfully to the calling of our Lord Jesus. Our belief is upheld through the positive responses we have received for bringing Anabaptist values and principles to the wider ecumenical table through our membership at both the Canadian Council of Churches and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

We hope and trust that all MC Canada board and council members will carry their call to an Anabaptist understanding of the gospel, and their passion for MC Canada ministries and values, into their diverse workplaces.

—**Janet Plenert, Winnipeg**

The writer is executive secretary, MC Canada Witness.

MCC-World Vision partnership clarified

In the Jan. 23 edition of *Canadian Mennonite* there was a story that mentioned a growing partnership between World Vision Canada and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). This deserves some clarification.

MCC Ontario has been running a successful program in which single women and mother-led families are supported in moving out of shelters and back into the community. The success is measured, in part, by the fact that almost all of the women—women who previously had returned repeatedly to the shelter—are now remaining housed in the community.

World Vision Canada, having recently reviewed its programs in Canada, has decided to focus its domestic work on child poverty issues, and additionally to do that work through partners that are active in effective programs on the ground.

After seeing our program, known as Circle of Friends, World Vision Canada asked us to partner with it by applying to become one of its "Partners to End Child Poverty." We are in the midst of that process now and expect to enter a long-term partnership that allows MCC Ontario to lead and direct this work while receiving strong financial and organizational support from World Vision Canada.

While we understand that the two organizations are different, we see a

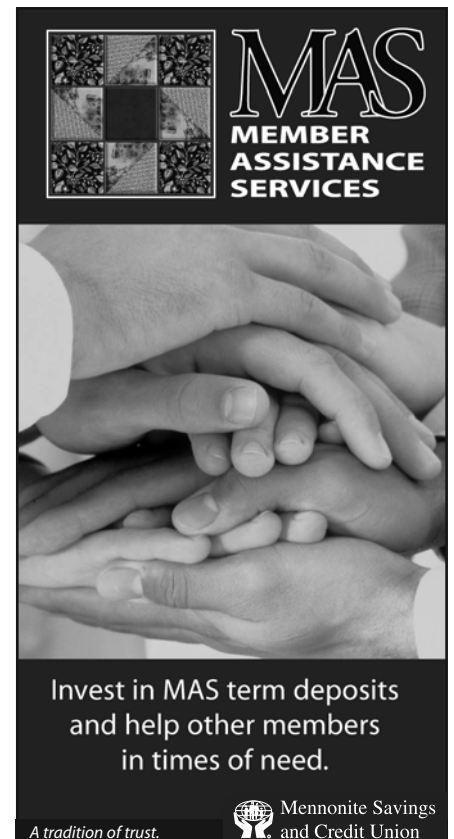
strong joint opportunity to contribute to the wellbeing of women and children seeking to build stable and productive lives in our communities.

—**Rick Cober Bauman, Kitchener, Ont.**

The writer is MCC Ontario's program director.

Corrections

The correct website address for the Shantz reunion in New Hamburg, Ont., this summer is www.christianshantz.ca. Incorrect information was included in the March 6 story "Shantzes celebrating 200 years in Ontario." In the same issue, the top right photograph on page 18 should have been credited to Dan Dyck. Also in the March 6 issue, Abe and Tina Hildebrand, Kristen Kehler, Tracey Kehler, Chrisie Giesbrecht and Jessica Rempel were incorrectly identified as having been baptized on Jan. 22 at Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite Church (page 22); they were, in fact, transfer members. *Canadian Mennonite* apologizes for the errors.



MAS
MEMBER
ASSISTANCE
SERVICES

Invest in MAS term deposits
and help other members
in times of need.

A tradition of trust. Mennonite Savings
and Credit Union

Elmira 669-1529 | Kitchener 576-7220 | New Hamburg 662-3550
Milverton 595-8796 | Waterloo 746-1770 | Leamington 326-8601
MSCU serves members of Mennonite, Amish and Brethren in
Christ churches across Ontario. www.mscu.com

Winnipeg

Leaders consider priorities, membership, money

Finalizing the national church's top three priorities, addressing church requests to disassociate themselves from Mennonite Church Canada, deciding how to allocate a financial surplus, and the 2006-07 budget were four significant areas of discussion at the MC Canada Leadership Assembly in early March.

The annual meeting gathered together the national church's board, all three of its supporting councils, and leadership from all five area churches. Canadian Women in Mission were also meeting as part of the event. (See story, page 15.)

The General Board approved the final three overall priorities for the national church, a process shaped by delegates at Charlotte 2005. These are: "form a people of God," "become a global church," and "grow leaders for the church." Some progress was also made in selecting a theme Scripture verse for the denomination.

Membership was a major discussion topic. As the current Provincially



Photo by Leona Dueck Penner

Pictured at a joint Witness and Formation council meeting at this year's annual MC Canada Leadership Assembly are, from left: Formation Council chair Sue Steiner, Witness chair Willard Metzger, Witness executive secretary Janet Plenert, and MC Canada staff person Nikki Marr.

Active Only option for B.C. churches ends this summer, a number of leadership groups worked on this issue. The newly formed Faith and Life Committee (FLC) has been gathering input for the past several months, and it met with area church moderators and leadership staff in a day-long discussion at the Leadership Assembly.

In its report to the MC Canada General Board at the end of the assembly, FLC came out with a strong recommendation that the national church allow for "area church only"

membership.

"The foundational issue is the nature of unity of Christians in the body of Christ," said FLC chair Rudy Baergen. "The question is, 'Can we divide structurally while still being united in Christ?' We would like to answer that question. We say yes, we can be structurally divided but still be united in Christ. Our unity in Christ is not dependent on our organizational structure. We have already done that with MC USA. We have done that many times. Unity in Christ is sometimes maintained better when you have clear structures.

"We recommend this change to the bylaws...sooner rather than later. We think it might be the pastoral, loving thing at this point, and it might enable us to work at the unity of Christ in new ways."

The FLC also recommended that the Edmonton assembly host a workshop on the polarity between "catholicity and holiness," have confession of our brokenness, and distribute a study document on the subject. Baergen also suggested that the whole church find a way to "bless churches making this decision while recognizing we need some breathing room in our structures."

The General Board did not have time to respond to the FLC report and no decisions were made on the recommendation. The board will be discussing the issue again later this month.

The General Board responded

MC Canada ends year with \$229,000 surplus

Lloyd Plett and Randy Wiebe reported to the Mennonite Church Canada Leadership Assembly that the national church's fiscal year ended well.

Preliminary (un-audited) numbers suggest a happy confluence of higher than budgeted donation revenue of \$3.95 million (\$68,000 higher than the previous fiscal year) and lower than anticipated expenses. This resulted in a surplus of \$229,000 (before reserve transfers) for the fiscal year ending Jan. 31, 2006.

General secretary Jack Suderman said, "MC Canada leadership is particularly grateful to congregations and individuals whom we know gave sacrificially this past year."

Al Rempel, director of resource development, noted that giving from individuals and corporations was particularly strong. This was the first year since 2002

that MC Canada received more than \$1 million from this group of donors. "We can rejoice in the positive results, but at the same time remember to celebrate in the context of recovery," he said. "This year is a huge help in compensating for [MC Canada's] first fiscal year when we had to significantly draw down reserves." Congregational giving was down slightly from 2004, but higher than had been earlier anticipated. Expenses for the year were less because of several factors, including the fact that several staff positions were not filled for a period of time.

The surplus funds will help restore reserves. Celebrating the generosity of many individuals and congregations must be balanced with cautious planning for the future growth of new ministries, cautioned Rempel.

Audited financial statements will be presented to delegates at the annual assembly in Edmonton in July.

—MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**

Visa denials have IMPaCT on pastors

IMPaCT (International Mennonite Pastors Coming Together) is the name given to a brand new initiative of Mennonite Church Canada. The program—announced at last month's Leadership Assembly—is designed to help the denomination grow as a global church, and help pastors to learn from, shape and challenge one another.

IMPaCT's goal is to match six Mennonite pastors from abroad with six Canadian pastors for two weeks. MC Manitoba has offered to sponsor and host the first rotation, scheduled for the first two weeks of June.

However, at this point, two Cuban pastors have been denied entry into Canada. MC Canada Witness executive secretary Janet Plenert is working with the Canadian embassy in Cuba to obtain visas for the pastors, which have been initially denied by the Canadian government. "We need to get the prayer chain going on this issue," says Plenert.

"This isn't a theological or academic course," notes Plenert. "It's a practical endeavour to have pastors reflect together with Anabaptist pastors from different contexts."

Mennonite pastors from Chile, Paraguay, Brazil and Spain, as well as Cuba, have been invited. The national church in each country is responsible

thankfully but cautiously to news of a significant budget surplus, attributed to sacrificial giving by the churches and conservative program spending, due in part to some staff positions being open during the year. Total donations were up from the previous year, with a rise in individual and corporate donations offsetting a slight drop in congregational giving. A larger factor was that spending was lower than anticipated, resulting in an overall surplus of about \$230,000. (See the church's statement, page 14.)

The approved 2006 budget anticipates giving slightly lower than actual figures for 2005-06, with expenses slightly higher than the previous



Photos courtesy of MC Canada



Alexander, one of two Cubans being denied a visa by the Canadian government, is a pastor with the Evangelical Missionary Church in Cuba; he is pictured with his wife Aisha. Madelin, left, pastor of three congregations and vice-president of the Evangelical Missionary Church, has also been denied an entry visa. Their surnames are withheld at their request.

for selecting their respective representative pastors.

So far, participating Mennonite congregations include Sargent Avenue, Charleswood and North Kildonan, all in Winnipeg, and two rural Manitoba congregations, Graysville and Portage. One more rural congregation has yet to be named.

year's expenses, resulting in a deficit of \$17,000, which is to be covered by a transfer from reserves. The budget includes a 2 percent cost-of-living salary increase plus small amounts of new funding for general secretary Jack Suderman's listening tour to all MC Canada congregations, development of e-commerce capabilities for the Resource Centre's website, and purchases of a postage meter and a security system.

The General Board also authorized Mennonite Disaster Service to represent MC Canada in planning for a possible nationwide flu pandemic.

—**Leona Dueck Penner** and
Tim Miller Dyck

MC Manitoba conference minister John Klassen, MC Canada denominational minister Sven Eriksson and Plenert are leading the initiative. A Logistics Committee and a Program Committee of local volunteers have been engaged to help coordinate the Manitoba round of IMPaCT, and Plenert hopes this local involvement will help build ownership of the project and multiply interest in what it means to become a global church.

"We are hoping [another] area conference will step forward and offer to host a 2007 event," says Plenert.

Becoming a global church is one of three priorities that have been identified by MC Canada leadership following delegate discernment sessions at the annual assembly in Charlotte in 2005. The other two priorities are to grow leaders and form a people of God. —MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**

Canadian Women in Mission celebrates vision renewal

After a "near death" experience—due in part to declining membership and the absence of younger women—Canadian Women in Mission (CWM) executive committee meetings bubbled with laughter and renewed energy as they reported on their activities and planned for the future during the recent MC Canada Leadership Assembly.

Their excitement came from a variety of sources:

- Meeting their budget.
- Beginning to implement three priorities identified during last year's visioning process: to work more intentionally at being intergenerational; engaging non-traditional women; and focusing on education, inspiration and nurturing.
- Celebrating "countless hours of service" at local and international levels.
- Providing financial assistance for seminary, university and college students, and for the Latin American Women's Network consultation in Costa Rica.
- Participating in Bible studies, retreats and inspirational/enrichment

Continued on page 16

Photo by Leona Dueck Penner



Shirley Redekop, Canadian Women in Mission (CWM) Ontario president, left, and Betty Anne Hildebrand, CWM Manitoba president, were all smiles during the organization's annual meeting in Winnipeg last month.

Vision *From page 15*

days across Canada, one of which resulted in the birth of a new women's group in southwestern Ontario—Spiritual Sisterhood.

- Contributing finances and articles by Canadian writers to *Timbrel: The Magazine for Mennonite Women*, including an inspirational article by Mary Pries, which emphasized that it is “up to [CWM members]...to pass on the carefully nurtured flame” to the next generation.
- Helping to publish yearly Bible studies, including “My times are in your hands” by Melissa Miller, which is to be available in May/June of this year.

CWM has now found itself the beneficiary of a \$70,000 gift from the past, money that came to CWM when Mennonite Women US and CWM separated a few years ago. This money grew out of a “Two pennies and prayer” project initiated by the Women’s Missionary Society in 1935, when its members decided to fund a missionary pension plan, reported CWM president Erna Neufeldt. “The fund grew, was used for its intention but eventually was not needed. [Those] women had a vision for making a difference in the lives of returning missionaries. Where and how can we make a difference in regard to this money?” she asked CWM members.

Upcoming challenges include participating in a subscription drive for *Timbrel*, necessitated by a serious decline in subscriptions. After a peak of 8,128 in 1998, they are down to 4,440 this year. So the new *Timbrel* editor, Laurie Oswald Robinson, is encouraging members to sign up 20 new subscribers each.

—**Leona Dueck Penner**

New faces at Mennonite Church Canada

Several staff vacancies and one new part-time position have been filled at Mennonite Church Canada.

Hippolyto Tshimanga succeeded Peter Rempel in January as Mission Partnership facilitator for Europe and Africa, after Rempel became director of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba.



Tshimanga

Tshimanga brings pastoral, mission and administrative experience to his role. A Canadian citizen of Congolese descent, he has also lived and worked as a missionary in Cameroon, Dominican Republic, the U.S., Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium. He is fluent in English, French, Spanish, Ciluba and Lingala, and has working knowledge of Swahili, Dutch and Italian. He has authored several books and numerous papers in both English and Spanish. Tshimanga has training in conflict resolution and holds a Ph.D. in theology from the Dominican College of Theology and Philosophy in Ottawa.

Kathy Fast, who held two part-time positions (and also moved to MCC Manitoba) is succeeded by Nikki Marr (part-time Witness executive assistant) and Hinke Loewen-Rudgers (part-time Congregational Partnerships facilitator).



Marr

Marr brings a love of the church to her work, and has “a genuine need to serve God in whatever [she is] doing.” She has worked at the University of Winnipeg bookstore, in retail and as an office manager for a family business. Marr has a B.A. from the University of Winnipeg, where she earned a double major in psychology and conflict resolution.

Loewen-Rudgers is passionate about

the church and the vision of MC Canada. She has done a great deal of reflection about Anabaptist principles while in non-Anabaptist contexts, and this has resulted in her enthusiastically embracing her faith perspective. The daughter of missionary parents, she most recently worked in Mozambique on a short-term international development assignment. She has a B.Sc. in biochemistry with a minor in justice, peace and conflict studies, and a master of arts in theology and biblical studies.



Loewen-Rudgers

Earlier, Tim Froese was appointed International Ministries executive director and Mission Partnership facilitator for Latin America, succeeding Janet Plenert, who became Witness executive secretary, a position vacated by Jack Suderman when he was appointed general secretary.



Froese

Froese brings ministry and mission experience in Panama, Brazil and Canada, and more recently, in South Korea, where he was founding director of the Korea Anabaptist Center in Seoul. He has a passion for the church and a compelling understanding and articulation of the missional church. He has a master of divinity degree, and has studied at the University of Manitoba and Briercrest Bible College.

Anita Neufeld has accepted a part-time position as administrative assistant in MC Canada’s Resource Centre. Neufeld brings a broad range of skills and experience to this new role, including 23 years of bookstore ownership and management, as well as congregational youth ministry, including her current position at Glenlea Mennonite Church.



Neufeld

—MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**

Porto Alegre, Brazil

Peace churches address nonviolence issues at WCC assembly

At the halfway point of the Decade to Overcome Violence, Historic Peace Church representatives to the ninth annual World Council of Churches (WCC) assembly in Porto Alegre spoke from the conviction that “nonviolence is essential to Christian identity” when addressing issues involving the use of force.

Of particular concern were assembly statements on terrorism and when the use of force is appropriate for human intervention. Unlike churches that espouse the “just war” theory, the Historic Peace Churches—Mennonites, Brethren and Friends (Quakers)—maintain that any use of violence is inappropriate for Christians.

Stan Noffsinger, general secretary of the U.S. Church of the Brethren, acknowledged that it can be hard for the voice of the Historic Peace Church to be heard, particularly in the current U.S. environment. “We’ve tried to speak out, but the drums of war are pretty loud,” he said at an assembly workshop.

WCC launched the Decade to Overcome Violence five years ago with an emphasis on networking and encouraging peace efforts worldwide, asking the Historic Peace Churches

at that time to give special attention to the initiative and to provide leadership by speaking out of their experiences.

In an effort to coordinate their efforts, an Historic Peace Church conference was organized in Bienenberg, Switzerland, in 2001. Seeking to broaden the discussion, the churches held their next conference in Kenya in 2004, bringing in voices from Africa.

The Kenyan conference has already borne fruit. Filibus Gwama, an assembly delegate from the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, said his denomination began a peace education program following the conference. Last January, a coordinator was called to oversee the network. “The church is working hard to see that there is peace,” Gwama said.

That was one of many stories highlighted during a workshop at the assembly, covering various Historic Peace Church contributions to the Decade.

“The sustainability of...the Decade to Overcome Violence was very much due to the Historic Peace Churches’ engagement,” said Hansuli Gerber, Decade coordinator since 2002. “Otherwise, I don’t know how it could possibly have happened.”

Gerber said such practical service is at the heart of what the Historic Peace Churches represent. “It’s not just talking, it’s not just a matter of what we think,” he said. “It’s what we do.”

At the workshop, Fernando Enns, a German Mennonite originally from



WCC photo by Igor Sperotto

A march to end violence against women and children was one of the many events at the recent WCC assembly in Brazil.

Brazil who initially put forth the motion to make overcoming violence a more central part of the WCC’s mandate in 1998, told the workshop that the need for such an emphasis hasn’t diminished. “All over the world, churches are facing the challenge of violence. The question is always before us: How do we respond?”

He said it is easy for Christians to say, “We’re fed up with turning the other cheek because they’ll slap us again.” But, as Historic Peace Churches, he added, “we stick to the conviction that nonviolence is essential to Christian identity.”

—Walt Wiltschek

The author is editor of Messenger, the denominational magazine of the Church of the Brethren.



WCC photo by Paulino Menezes

Worship was an integral part of the WCC assembly in Brazil.

Uyo, Nigeria

Nigerian uses pedal power for Anabaptist training

Etim Akpan Usen biked 1,800 miles on his Hero one-speed bicycle through shirt-drenching heat and rain to earn his certificate from Mennonite Bible College. On Dec. 3, he joined 11 other exuberant graduates in marching across the makeshift stage at the Summit Hills Hotel complex in Uyo, the first leaders to be trained by Mennonite Church Nigeria.

Over the past two years, Usen made 18 trips from his home in Ibianga Diocese to Uyo for week-long courses in biblical studies, Anabaptist theology, preaching and English. Usen usually pedalled the 50 miles between the Inen Mennonite Church, where he ministers, and the Bible school in five hours.

As an unsalaried church worker, he supports his family through various part-time jobs. Though his absences, a result of his thirst for biblical knowledge, decreased his ability to provide for his wife and four children, he was undeterred.

The graduation marked a historic milestone for the Mennonite Church in Nigeria as well as for the individual church leaders and their families. After an unsuccessful attempt to create an Anabaptist leadership training program in the 1970s, MC Nigeria had no formal program to develop pastoral and lay leaders.

In 2003, the church invited Bruce Yoder, who lives in the neighbouring country of Benin and serves as an itinerant Bible teacher in West Africa, to become the principal of Mennonite Bible College.

Yoder, jointly appointed by Mennonite Church Canada Witness and Mennonite Mission Network, shares administrative and teaching responsibilities of the college with Etim Samson Akpanudo of MC Nigeria.

According to Yoder, African-initiated churches of the Pentecostal variety



Photo by Stanley W. Green

Etim Akpan Usen heads the procession of Mennonite Bible College graduates accompanied by a church choir in Uyo, Nigeria.

have the most influence on Nigerian Christianity. Before the founding of Mennonite Bible College, any training Mennonite pastors may have had came from these churches.

“Without a program that emphasizes Anabaptist history and ways of thinking, Mennonite Church Nigeria will become indistinguishable from the other Pentecostal groups,” Yoder says.

Now, however, the Mennonite Bible College gives pastors an opportunity to learn the principles of Bible study in a systematic way and to develop an Anabaptist identity.

The graduating class included members from all five dioceses of MC Nigeria. Because each diocese acts with substantial autonomy, occasional national conventions provide the only forum for Mennonite church leaders to meet each other. Yoder expects that Mennonite Bible College will increase unity between the dioceses and strengthen the national identity of the Mennonite Church in Nigeria.

—MC Canada release

by **Lynda Hollinger-Janzen**

Newton, Kan.

MC USA begins church member profile study

Mennonite Church USA recently began a two-year study of members from 120 congregations called the Church Member Profile 2006.

The study, which also will evaluate two other Anabaptist denominations—the Church of the Brethren and the Brethren in Christ—will serve as a follow-up to two previous surveys done in 1972 and 1989. The primary goal of the study is to collect data on church members’ beliefs and opinions, and whether or how they have changed in the meantime. Those leading the study also hope to gain insight into MC USA’s increasing number of non-European racial and ethnic members and congregations.

By evaluating how members’ opinions have changed since 1972, churchwide leaders—ranging from the executive director to conference ministers and congregational pastors—will be able to examine what the denomination’s future will or should look like, according to Conrad L. Kanagy, associate professor of sociology at Elizabethtown College and an ordained minister in Lancaster Mennonite Conference, who will direct the study. The study’s findings will be presented at San Jose 2007, and at least

one book is expected to be written on the data collected.

“We can use this to capture 35 years of change,” Kanagy says. “A lot has happened since that last survey in 1989, and this study will give us a sense of where people are, as well as where we are going as a church. This is a significant opportunity to get a picture of the church that we don’t currently have.”

More than 3,000 members from 120 congregations received the questionnaire in mid-February. The sample was randomly selected from congregational membership lists, and between 15 and 30 people were chosen from each congregation, depending on its size. The study includes congregations of various sizes and from each of MC USA’s 21 area conferences. In addition, the project also includes an intentional effort to survey members of Mennonite Church USA’s non-European racial and ethnic congregations; they represent 18 percent of the denomination’s congregations, and members have been underrepresented in previous surveys.

Kanagy is hopeful the study’s results will enable the denomination to understand and hear the stories of God’s work among racial and ethnic congregations, as well as “bring about forums for developing new conversations and strengthening relationships across racial [and] ethnic boundaries that remain in the church.”

—MC USA release

Kitchener, Ont.

No shots fired as three CPT hostages rescued

Three Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) activists kidnapped in Iraq were rescued March 23 by coalition forces in western Baghdad. All three CPTers—Canadians Jim Loney, 41, and Harmeet Singh Sooden, 33, and Briton Norman Kember, 74—were first taken to the British Embassy compound in Baghdad's Green Zone following their release, before flying home to the respective countries.

Canadian government revises Ukrainian land deal alert

Foreign Affairs Canada has revised its "alert" regarding the U.S.-based Caobo Company's land deal activities in Ukraine.

The Canadadeuropa website no longer says that Caobo is "demanding" land from the Ukrainian government "for losses suffered by Mennonites under former Soviet Union authorities." Now, it says that the plan only "involves lobbying the Ukrainian parliament to consider a 'restitution' bill for the return of land confiscated under the former Soviet regime. The company initiating the plan proposes to act as 'corporate owner/steward' of these lands, rather than seeking their full restitution to the previous owners or their successors."

The alert also acknowledges that "the company has provided the names of three Ukrainian officials to validate its activities in Ukraine. Inquiries with these individuals by the Canadian Embassy in Kyiv have found general support for the company's objective of becoming an active investor in Ukraine's economic development, but no support for a restitution bill."

"This fundamental and significant revision of the previous posting verifies the company's claims about its activities within that country," states Paul Willms, Caobo's chief executive officer.

—Ross W. Muir

Within hours, celebratory vigils were planned in many communities, including Kitchener, Ont. "We're going heavy on the celebrating, but with a streak of sadness," said organizer Matthew Bailey-Dick, a CPT volunteer. "It's difficult to comprehend the joy of the hostages' release alongside the death of their colleague."

"It's great to be free," Kember said in a statement issued by the British Embassy. He was later criticized by British media for not being more effusive in his praise of their military rescuers.

Not so Jim Loney. In a prepared statement, he said, "For the British soldiers who risked their lives to rescue us, to the government of Canada who sent a team to Baghdad to help secure our release, for all those who thought about and prayed for us, for all those who spoke for us when we had no voice, I am forever and truly grateful. It's great to be alive."

Of his 118 days in captivity, Loney said, "It was a terrifying, profound, powerful, transformative and excruciatingly boring experience."

He was mindful of those still in captivity in Iraq and around the world. "I'm thinking specifically of prisoners held all over the world, people who have slipped into an abyss of detention without charge, due process, hope of release, some victims of physical and psychological torture, people unknown and forgotten. It is my deepest wish that every forsaken human being should have a hand of solidarity reaching out to them."

When asked what he wants to do first upon his arrival home, Loney replied, "All I really want to do is to love and be loved by the people that I love...."

"I need some time to get reacquainted with my partner Dan, my family, my community and freedom itself."

News reports indicated that the hostages—seized Nov. 26 in Baghdad by a group calling itself the Swords of Righteousness Brigade—had been left unattended by their captors and that



A CPT photo of Harmeet Singh Sooden, left, and Jim Loney following their rescue in Baghdad late last month.

they were freed without any shots being fired.

The rescue of the three comes two weeks after the body of a fourth kidnapped CPTer, American Tom Fox, 54, was discovered March 9 in Baghdad. Fox had been shot to death, but had not been beaten before his death, as had been previously reported.

U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch told CNN that a detainee arrested March 22 had supplied information that led authorities to the hostages' whereabouts only a few hours later. The rescue was carried out at about 8 a.m. Iraqi time, March 23, in an empty house in western Baghdad, the BBC reported. The three were found with their hands tied, but officials said they were in relatively good condition. Unconfirmed reports suggest that Canada's elite Joint Task Force-2 and the RCMP were also involved in the rescue mission.

"We are very glad to hear of their release and waiting to see them," said Maxine Nash, one of three CPT workers remaining in Baghdad among a tiny number of private foreign organizations, shortly after their rescue.

In a statement released March 23, CPT expressed joy tinged with grief.

"Our hearts are filled with joy today as we heard that Harmeet Singh Sooden, Jim Loney and Norman Kember have been safely released in Baghdad," CPT co-directors Doug Pritchard and Carol Rose stated.

Continued on page 20



Matthew Bailey-Dick, right, organized the Kitchener, Ont. vigil to celebrate the rescue of three CPTers in Baghdad, Iraq, and commemorate the life of Tom Fox, who was killed by their abductors. The event was covered by CTV news.

Rescued From page 19

“Christian Peacemaker Teams rejoices with their families and friends at the expectation of their return to their loved ones and community. Together we have endured uncertainty, hope, fear, grief and now joy during the four months since they were abducted in Baghdad....

“Our gladness today is made bitter-sweet by the fact that Tom is not alive to join in the celebration. However, we are confident that his spirit is very much present in each reunion.”

In conclusion, the statement said, “Living through the many emotions of this day, we remain committed to the words of Jim Loney, who wrote, ‘With God’s abiding kindness, we will love even our enemies. With the love of Christ, we will resist all evil. With God’s unending faithfulness, we will work to build the beloved community.’”

Pritchard told a Toronto news conference that he believed the hostages’ “commitment to peace and justice” helped them endure their ordeal. “We had hoped for the day when all four men would be released together,” Pritchard said. “Our gladness today is incomplete.”

In Vancouver, a brother of Loney’s told Canadian Press that his family was overjoyed at news of the rescue. “You could say ‘euphoric’ is the word,” said Matt Loney. “It’s the happiest day I’ve had in 115 days.”

In Auckland, New Zealand, Sooden’s brother-in-law told TV One News that the family was eager to be reunited with the former hostage. “We’re just looking forward to getting hold of him, giving him a big hug,” said Mark Brewer.

—**Ross W. Muir**, with files from **Robert Rhodes**, *Mennonite Weekly Review*

Pasadena, Calif.

MWC leaders mourn death of CPT worker

A gathering of the worldwide Anabaptist group that helped give birth to Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) mourned the death of CPT worker Tom Fox on March 11.

The Mennonite World Conference General Council, composed of about 100 Anabaptist leaders from around the world, expressed “deep grief” at Fox’s death in a letter to CPT. Word was received during the council’s triennial meeting last month that Fox, 54, a Quaker from Clear Brook, Va., had been found dead in Iraq after being held hostage since November.

“We mourn with you the loss of this courageous man, whose life and words testified to the power of the nonviolent love of God in Jesus Christ,” stated the letter to CPT. It was signed by MWC president Nancy R. Heisey of the United States, vice-president Danisa Ndlovu of Zimbabwe, and executive secretary Larry Miller of France.

Amman, Jordan

MCC maintains Iraq program despite war

Three years have passed since the United States military forces invaded Iraq in March 2003. The volatile security situation prevents Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) from placing workers in the country, but it continues to develop and support projects in Iraq, says MCC Iraq program coordinator Peter Dula.

“The war affects all our projects with interruptions, delays and long periods of inactivity, but none of them have completely shut down,” explains Dula, who manages the program from Amman, Jordan.

Working in partnership with Iraqi churches and non-governmental organizations, MCC provides humanitarian aid and supports programs that focus on education, health, vocational training, conflict resolution and peace-building initiatives.

The letter noted MWC’s connection to CPT’s beginning. “We recall that the challenge to begin the work of [CPT] was given at the [MWC] assembly in Strasbourg, France, in 1984,” the MWC officials wrote.

CPT was founded two years later, in 1986, with the support of Mennonites and other peace churches.

The MWC letter to CPT was accompanied by handwritten notes of sympathy and support from General Council members.

Mennonite Church Canada general secretary Jack Suderman and MC USA executive director Jim Schrag prayed during the council’s time of remembering Fox.

“We mourn the death of Tom Fox, your servant,” Suderman prayed. “We pray for the peace and justice he died for.”

Schrag prayed for all in Iraq who suffer due to “the terrorism of the war itself.” He also prayed for Christians who face persecution in many countries, noting that “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.”

—**Paul Schrag**, for Meetinghouse

Fighting between the multi-national forces and various insurgent groups has created a large-scale internal displacement of people. MCC has responded by distributing nearly 4,000 relief kits to displaced families in various parts of Iraq, particularly in and around Fallujah. MCC has also distributed 12,000 school kits to children from low-income families in Baghdad and provided emergency food assistance to low-income families from Iraq living temporarily in Jordan.

Examples of MCC's educational support include structural renovations to schools, construction and furnishing of libraries, literacy and vocational training, and health awareness workshops. It also supported renovations to a church building in northern Iraq that is used as a shelter for women and for sewing workshops.

While the U.S. government sees the nationwide referendum last October and the December 2005 election as signs of progress, personal security for most Iraqis continues to deteriorate, states Dula. Tension among the

country's ethnic and religious groups, kidnappings of Iraqis by Iraqis for ransom, and disruptions in basic services, such as electricity and running water, have resulted in MCC increasing its resources for conflict resolution and peacebuilding programs.

"People in Iraq yearn for stability," Dula stresses. "Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have left the country, with many of them in legal limbo in neigh-

bouring countries such as Syria and Jordan."

MCC peacebuilding initiatives in Iraq focus on teaching conflict resolution skills, strengthening the capacity of Iraqi organizations involved in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and identifying ways to connect Iraqi peacebuilders with regional peacebuilding networks.

—MCC release by **Gladys Terichow**

Third anniversary of Iraq war: Have we learned from our mistakes?

The kidnapping and recent killing of Tom Fox, a Quaker working with Christian Peacemaker Teams in Iraq, have refocused the eyes of the church on the volatile situation in Iraq.

"Almost three years after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime, Iraq is at serious risk of civil war and disintegration," writes Joost Hiltermann, an analyst with the International Crisis Group, in the March 5 *Baltimore Sun*.

Indeed, a recent poll shows that 80 percent of the U.S. public believes civil war in Iraq is likely.

This is not the way it was supposed to be.

When President George W. Bush spoke at the American Enterprise Institute less than a month before launching a war against Iraq in March 2003, he said that a U.S.-led military invasion would bring democracy to Iraq and would be the first step toward bringing peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well.

Three years later, Saddam Hussein is on trial and elections have been held, but Iraq is in shambles. Bombings kill dozens of Iraqis almost daily, as sectarian violence is on the rise. By conservative estimates, between 33,600 and 37,750 Iraq civilians have been killed since the war began.

Electricity and oil production have yet to return to pre-war levels.

More than 2,300 U.S. soldiers and another 200 coalition troops have died in Iraq since 2003.

The United States has already spent nearly \$250 billion for the war in Iraq, and Congress has given the green light to spend tens of billions of dollars more.

Congress initially earmarked \$20 billion for rebuilding Iraq's infrastructure, but much of that amount has been re-routed for security. Many reconstruction projects will not be completed.

The situation in Iraq is a powerful reminder that war does not create the space for democracy to flourish.

But even as Iraq crumbles, hostile rhetoric and ominous threats between the United States and Iran are on the rise.

This week, the Bush administration issued an updated version of its three-year-old National Security Strategy of the United States, which set the framework for a pre-emptive war with Iraq. Rather than admitting that the Iraq war was ill-conceived, the revised strategy reaffirms America's right to take "anticipatory action" to defend itself against perceived threats.

It also names Iran as the single greatest challenge to U.S. security.

Meanwhile, the House International Relations Committee voted 37-3 this week for a bill that would cut off economic aid to any country that invests in Iran's energy sector.

For its part, the Iranian government threatens to retaliate with harm if the United States harms Iran.

Peace and justice advocates do well to call upon U.S. policymakers to acknowledge the failure of the war in Iraq and to recommit resources for rebuilding that devastated nation.

It is also a critical time for advocates to urge a more constructive course in the current standoff with Iran.

The only thing worse than making big mistakes is to repeat them.

—**J. Daryl Byler**

The author is director of the MCC Washington Office. His reflections first appeared on www.thirdway.com.



Photo by Ross W. Muir

Ron Mathies, former MCC bi-national executive director, joined Suzanne Bender of Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont., at the vigil in honour of the rescue of CPTers Jim Loney and Harmeet Singh Sooden of Canada and Briton Norman Kember.

Water Valley, Alta.

Snow camps cause youths to enthuse

Annual junior and senior high snow camps are a much anticipated part of Alberta's Mennonite youth scene. These winter weekends at Camp Valaqua provide opportunities for young people to make and renew connections with the larger church, hone leadership skills, grow in faith, and have a lot of fun. The following reports were written by youths who attended this year's retreats.

Junior high camp

From January 20 to 22, a large group of youths congregated at Camp Valaqua for a weekend of fellowship; worship led by Craig Wiens from First Mennonite Church in Calgary; singing led by Kim Thiessen, the singer on the *Hope Is* CD; and fun.

The youths attending mixed well, meeting new friends as well as old while they hung around the lodge or played games around the camp area. During the several worship sessions, Craig delivered a series of talks on how God is in all, linking stories all the way from creation to Revelation, and providing a big picture view of how God affects and acts in everything and everyone.

Youths arrived Friday evening in time for mixer games and snacks, then spent a whole day Saturday worshipping and enjoying the beautiful snow-covered forests of the camp. Late Saturday night, everyone walked up to the field where a rousing game of Mission Impossible took place. For those who don't know, Mission Impossible in its simplest form involves running from a safe area to a parked truck and back without a person in the back of the truck shining a flashlight on you. For many, this was



Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Schowalter

Relaxing over a game of cards was one of many activities for youths at this year's senior high snow camp.

one of the biggest highlights of the weekend, although most of those present were very tired the next morning.

Despite the obvious fatigue, singing during the final worship session was as enthusiastic as was the norm, and there was a general reluctance to leave. As people left, there was a single phrase that, spoken or merely implied, seemed to sum up the general mood: "See you next year."

—**Conrad Hiebert**

The author is a Grade 9 student from Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary.

Senior high camp

On February 24, I left Edmonton in a van full of youths, all eager to arrive at Camp Valaqua. As we made the three-hour trip, we reminisced about past snow camps, getting more and more excited as we talked. After checking in, mixer games provided a super opportunity to get to know youths from other Mennonite churches and catch up with old friends.

Following a delicious snack of brownies and ice cream, we sat down to the first of four worship sessions led by Don Stoesz. Don, who works as chaplain at Bowden Correctional Institution, used Dr. Seuss stories to present a series of talks around the

theme, "Becoming grounded in a sea of liquid." The sessions really gave insight into the transition between youth and adulthood, and how it affects our relationships with those around us. The sessions also included many a camp song, which were led by the new camp director, Jon Olfert.

There were tons of other activities during snow camp, such as classic camp games like Sticks at the top of the hill, and even a special nighttime scavenger hunt. There was a coffee house on Saturday evening featuring skits, songs, many talented youths and even a few talented sponsors. The extra free time was filled with cross-country skiing, ping-pong, foosball, plenty of card games, and just relaxing on the camp couches.

Overall, I would consider the weekend a success, as everyone had a great time getting to know each other better, reflecting on Don's themes and, of course, enjoying delicious food.

—**Elizabeth Schowalter**

The author is a Grade 11 student from First Mennonite Church in Edmonton; she serves on the Youth Leadership team and helps to plan provincial youth events like the snow camps.

FOCUS

Elementary and secondary education

Truth an important part of Christian education

I was enjoying lunch with a school administrator, when our conversation turned to the wonderful role we as educators play. I mentioned that I felt honoured to accompany students along the path to discovering truth. He looked at me with disdain. "Truth," he said. "We can't use that word on our campus. It's divisive."

The search for truth is supposed to unite us. Yet, in today's postmodern society, even the idea of truth can be disruptive. Nowhere is this more evident than in our schools.

At one time, many considered a Christian education a withdrawal from the prevailing culture. Now, however, it is becoming increasingly evident that Christian education is providing the most vigorous and complete instruction for our children. The results are evident: young men and women who know how to think deeply and broadly; and graduates who are energized about the future with a desire to make a positive difference in the world.

How does Christian education accomplish this?

First, Christian education is not indoctrination, but authentic education. Students explore the different ways people seek knowledge—through science, religion, philosophy, literature—and then are equipped to evaluate why people believe and act as they do.

Second, Christian education is not fragmented, but holistic. Education at its best helps students make connections between academic studies and important issues. Unfortunately, fragmentation is characteristic of today's postmodern culture, and much of our children's learning experience reflects this. But Christian education actively explores questions of origin, morality and destiny—questions central to the human experience.

Third, Christian education is not limiting, but empowering.

At the personal level, Christian education holds up the importance of virtue and the development of true character.


Integrity, courage, sacrifice and love are modelled by teachers who are committed to a biblical worldview.

At the public level, students learn to engage the culture with the heart and mind of Christ.

A complete and well-rounded education recognizes that God has revealed truth to us through his creation and his Word (Psalm 19; Romans 1–2). Far from being divisive, the search for truth provides the path to freedom (John 8:32). In these postmodern times, Christian education provides an authentic, holistic and empowering option to the secular, non-sectarian approach of the public school curriculum.

Adapted from an article by William Brown, Ph.D., who writes for the Association of Christian Schools International, of which Mennonite Educational Institute, Clearbrook, B.C., is a member.

Mennonite Collegiate Institute



**Learn... Grow...
...SUCCEED!
Expand YOUR
Horizons
at MCI.
mciblues.net**

**Please CONTACT us at
(204) 327.5891 or
MB Toll Free 1.877.MCI.BLUE
admissions@mciblues.net**



buhlerhall.com

Principal retiring after 18 years at Rosthern

Erwin Tiessen will retire as principal of Rosthern Junior College (RJC) in July, after 18 years of service to the school and the Mennonite conferences of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

“For me, it is humbling and very gratifying to be part of students’ experience when they grasp the bigger picture...to see the eyes open...to see the spiritual aspects and the differences it makes in their lives as the students search to make sense of the world,” he says.

Besides education and math degrees obtained at Waterloo and Windsor universities, Tiessen holds an M.Div. from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. He began his classroom career as a math teacher in the public school system and at United Mennonite Educational Institute in Leamington, Ont., but Tiessen was also able to apply his training in counselling and administration, particularly at RJC.

Tiessen has always been very conscious of the need for adaptation and innovation in education, and during his tenure at RJC he oversaw the introduction of programs designed to prepare students for the communications revolution and the demands of living in a world of ecological concerns and dwindling resources, as well as ensuring the core subjects were taught from a Christian perspective.

Tiessen sees the dialogue between church and school to be crucial, and he was a prime mover in the two Common Ground conferences held at RJC.

“Church school education, and for us, Mennonite education, finds its source and direction in the mission of the church,” Tiessen says. “Our schools need to be a context in which faith, culture and life are brought into harmony.”

Tiessen’s commitment to the mission of the Christian church and to the Anabaptist vision is evident to all who know him. As the public face of RJC for 18 years,



Photo by George Epp

Retiring RJC principal Erwin Tiessen, left, is pictured with Allison Driedger and Lee Warkentin.

he became—and remains—a familiar figure in the pulpits of Saskatchewan and Alberta conference churches.

But his tenure at RJC will be remembered mostly for his deep affection and care for students and staff. According to vice-principal Jim Epp, “Erwin has modelled to staff and students alike the mission of a church school, which is to challenge and nurture growth and learning through authentic relationships grounded in respect, trust, grace and compassion.”

Menno Simons Christian School
Integrating sound academic learning with growth in character, faith, and service to God.
403-531-0745 or www.mennosimons.ab.ca

AN EDUCATION FOR LIFE! 7000 Elkton Drive SW, Calgary, AB

More Than an Education
... equipping students for life and forever.

Preschool - Gr.12 Education that partners with the home and church to nurture the minds, bodies, and souls of our students.

- Education Based on Christian Values
- Academic Excellence
- Award Winning Fine Arts Program
- Cutting Edge Technologies
- Diverse Championship Athletic Program
- Special Needs Program
- Missions / Service Learning Opportunities

Mennonite Educational Institute
4081 Clearbrook Road Abbotsford BC V4X 2M8
(P) 604.859.3700 (F) 604.859.9206
(Campuses in Abbotsford & Chilliwack)
Visit us at www.meisoc.com

Current Grade 11 student Clare Tate-Penna spoke for students generally when she said of her principal, "He's like a friend who is always interested in what is going on in your life. He's accepting and there for anyone who needs to talk. He's one of the best friends I've had."

Tiessen's leadership will be missed by

the RJC constituency. The longest-serving principal in RJC history, his work will long be remembered.

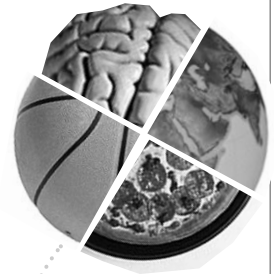
An event to mark Tiessen's retirement is being planned for May 27 at RJC; a similar event will take place in Alberta when a suitable date is found.

—**George Epp**

Mennonite Collegiate Institute students formed a midget team this year to play in the Altona (Man.) Minor Hockey League. They are pictured after a recent tournament in Morden, Man., where they came third.



MCI photo



M
E
N
N
O
N
I
T
E

Westgate

C
O
L
L
E
G
I
A
T
E

Wondering about Rockway?

...teachers know and care for me as an individual!

...I have opportunities in music, drama, sports, leadership and lots more!

...I am learning I can make a difference in the world!

...I'm learning what an "active faith" means!

...I feel a sense of community and that there's a place for me!

Together we shape great lives through learning, opportunity, caring and faith!

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate

For Grades 6 - 12
Spaces available for September 2006
Call 743-5209 admin@rockway.on.ca
www.rockway.on.ca

Westgate Mennonite Collegiate is a Christian school grounded in the Anabaptist tradition. It is the mission of the school to provide a well-rounded education which will inspire and empower students to live as people of God.

**86 WEST GATE, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA
R3C 2E1 TELEPHONE: 204.775.7111
FAX: 204.786.1651 www.westgate.mb.ca**

Mennonite school may go 'public'

The board of Calgary's Menno Simons Christian School (MCSC) is currently considering a proposal to become part of the "Alternative Program" within the Alberta public education system. As an independent school, Menno Simons only receives partial government support for facilities and operations; the remainder is funded through tuition fees, donations and fundraising drives. Joining the Alternative Program would make Menno Simons part of a public school division and eligible for public funding for the majority of operations.

The board is seriously considering this option as a potentially positive way to ensure continued financial viability, accessibility to constituents, and a focus on high quality Christian education. Concerns regarding control over philosophy, program and facilities are being carefully researched and discussed with the school's constituency.

On March 2, a meeting of the Mennonite Educational Society of Calgary and all other interested parties resulted in a general consensus that the idea is worth further investigation. Five days

later, representatives of the Lethbridge-based Palliser School Division came to Menno Simons for a tour and a discussion of possibilities.

Under the Alternative Program, Menno Simons is seeking to retain significant control over its programs, staffing and Christian educational focus, while public money for operations would allow the school to reduce tuition fees. Extra programs outside the scope of public schools would continue to be paid for by fees and fundraising activities.

Public funding would benefit the school's teachers, who are presently at approximately 80 percent of the public

division wage. Teachers would become members of the Alberta Teachers Association and be paid on the salary grid of the school division, a goal the current board has long wanted to reach.

The MSCS board is continuing talks with the Palliser School Division to determine an outline of a potential structure. Once drafted, a proposal summary will be provided to the Mennonite Educational Society and Menno Simons' constituency for consideration. If feedback is positive, a more formal proposal would be advanced to the society for a final binding vote.

—**Donita Wiebe-Neufeld**



United Mennonite Educational Institute

Leamington, Ontario

Study in a friendly, small school atmosphere

Academic: Secondary School Program leading toward OSSD

Spiritual: Daily chapels, courses in religious studies

Extra-Curricular: Vocal & instrumental music courses, sports, drama

For more information and catalogue:

Phone: (519) 326-7448 Fax: (519) 326-0278 E-mail: umei@mnsi.net

Automotive

West Park Motors, Altona, MB
GM Sales-Leasing-Parts-Service
(204) 324-6494; www.westparkgm.com

Bed & Breakfasts

Oakdale B & B, Winnipeg, MB (near CMU)
(204) 896-1354, <wpoetker@mts.net>

Willow Springs Suites Bed & Breakfast
Baden, ON toll-free: (877) 467-2083
www.bbcanada.com/2212.html

Counselling Services

Shalom Counselling Services
(see ad page 27)

Education Resources

MBIC Resource Centre
(see ad page 27)

Financial Services

Eby Financial Group
(see ad page 27)

Gerber Financial Services, Waterloo, ON
(519)746-1900;
mgerber@dundeewealth.com

MAX Canada
(see ad page 27)

Mennonite Savings & Credit Union
(see ad page 27)

IPC Investment Corporation
(see ad page 27)

Roth Nowak Insurance Brokers
(see ad page 27)

Funeral Planning

Friends funeral Service
(see ad page 27)

Legal Services

Russel Snyder-Penner
(see ad page 27)

Real Estate

CITYCORP Realty Ltd. (see ad page 27)

Hunsberger Realty (see ad page 27)

Re/Max Performance Realty (see ad page 27)

Travel

Bonaventure Travel (see ad this page)

Menno Travel, Abbotsford, BC
Specializing in Missionary Travel
1-800-667-5559; info@mennotvl.com
www.mennotvl.com

Mennonite Your Way Tours
1-800-296-1991; www.mywtours.com


Investment Planning Counsel
of Canada
FINANCIAL PLANNING PROFESSIONALS

John Thiessen, BA, BTh, CFP
204.324.9574 john@ipcmanitoba.com
Financial Planning, Investments, and Insurance
in Winnipeg and Southern Manitoba

**Shalom
Counselling
Services**

Helping People Move Toward Peace and Wholeness
Individual, Couple, Family & Group Counselling
for a broad range of concerns.
Accredited Counselling Professionals

(519) 886-9690 — 9 Avondale Ave. S. Waterloo
(519) 326-3778 — 33 Princess St. Suite 212 Leamington


CITYCORP
REALTY LTD / REALTOR

Commercial/Investment/Residential
EDMUND PRIES PhD President/Broker
German Spoken

737 Belmont Ave. W. T: 519-578-0003
Kitchener, ON F: 519-743-6490
N2M 1P3 Canada E: broker@citycorp.ca


Performance Realty
Independantly Owned and Operated

John J. Friesen
Sales Associate

Business: (204) 255-4204 Winnipeg, Manitoba
Toll Free: 1-800-267-0794
E-mail: johnfriesen@remax.net




Roth Nowak
INSURANCE BROKERS

119 UNIVERSITY AVENUE EAST
WATERLOO ONTARIO N2J 2W1
TELEPHONE: (800) 576-7166
EMAIL: service@rothnowak.com

Auto Home Business Insurance
Dennis Roth Ed Nowak

*Serving the Mennonite Community
throughout Ontario*

REPRESENTING
ING NOVEX


**Mennonite & Brethren In Christ
RESOURCE CENTRE**

Your Audiovisual Library


519-745-8458 ext.225 | 50 Kent Ave.
www.mbicresources.org | Kitchener, ON


**Mennonite Savings
and Credit Union**
A tradition of trust.

Elmira	519 669-1529 • 1 800 265-1994
Kitchener	519 576-7220 • 1 800 565-6801
Leamington	519 326-8601 • 1 888 285-5501
Milverton	519 595-8796 • 1 800 952-2217
New Hamburg	519 662-3550 • 1 800 567-4047
Waterloo	519 746-1770 • 1 800 265-4513

Serving members of Mennonite,
Amish and Brethren in Christ
churches across Ontario.

CHEQUING • SAVINGS • LOANS • FINANCIAL PLANNING
ONLINE SERVICES • WWW.MSCU.COM


Russel Snyder-Penner
B.A., LL.B., M.A. Trademark Agent
Corporate/Commercial Law
Charities/Non-profits
Wills/Trusts, Real Estate

**SUTHERLAND
MARK
FLEMMING
SNYDER-PENNER**
PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS

255 King St. N. Suite 300
Waterloo, ON N2J 4V2
519-725-2500
(f) 519-725-2525
russ@solicitors.com

Bonaventure Travel

Lila Hollman
Sherryl Koop
Lori Neufeld
Rose Szczepaniak
Ruth Wiebe
Liz Krohn
Fiona Stafford
Julie Alexiuk

428 Academy Road, Winnipeg, MB
Phone: 1-888-550-8998
(204) 488-6653
bontrav@escape.ca
Fax: (204) 488-6694

It is your goals for the future that matter

Duane L. Eby MBA, CFP, CLU, ChFC

501-1 Blue Springs Drive
Waterloo, Ontario N2J 4M1
e-mail: deby@ebyfinancial.com
tel 519.725.2006 fax 519.886.7169


EBY FINANCIAL GROUP INC.
www.ebyfinancial.com

Friends
FUNERAL SERVICE

2146 Main Street Winnipeg, MB R2V 3S5
Walter Klassen
Harold Koslowsky
Harry Froese

Phone: (204) 339-5555 • E-mail: f_f_s@mts.net


**HUNSBERGER
REALTY LTD.**
"Where integrity, competence and service are assured"

619 Sandringham Dr., Waterloo, ON N2K 3L8
Telephone (519) 746-1714
Toll-Free Pager 1-800-263-1420
Cell (519) 580-5791
Website: www.hunsbergerrealtyltd.com
E-mail: merrillhunsberger@rogers.com

Merrill Hunsberger, Ph.D.
Broker
"CHINESE ALSO SPOKEN" 中文服務



Bear one another's burdens

MAX Canada offers *more than* insurance
protection for the Anabaptist community.
We work with our
members to provide
essential burden bear-
ing support needed
after a serious loss.



Call today for more information or a FREE quote!
HOME FARM CHURCH
877-770-7729 www.maxcanada.org

Products available in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario & Saskatchewan

Cambridge, Ont.

Speaking up for peace

Last month 350 youths, their sponsors and pastors from across Ontario and Quebec gathered at Camp Shalom for the annual Mennonite Church Eastern Canada winter youth retreat. The theme was “Peace: Within ourselves, with others, the world and with God.”

At the retreat, the youths got to engage with dynamic speakers and organizations around the political and biblical issues of peace in various areas of the world. Representatives from Project Ploughshares, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Christian Peacemaker Teams engaged the youths in conversation and motivated them to get involved with peacemaking.

On Friday evening, the youths were given the opportunity to join the Million Faces petition run by Project Ploughshares. The petition recognizes that the “lack of controls on the arms trade is fuelling conflict, poverty and human rights abuses worldwide,” and is asking governments to toughen up controls on the arms trade. The petition is collecting photos and self-



Photo by Tara Gingerich Hiebert

More than 350 MC Eastern Canada youths attended the winter retreat at Camp Shalom last month. Pictured are members of the Floradale Mennonite Church contingent, from left to right, front row: Kaitlyn Martin, Jessica Martin, Melissa Bauman, sponsor Gloria Bauman, and Sarah Weber; and back row: Blair Freeman.

portraits from around the world, with the goal of reaching a million faces by this June, to send a powerful global message of support to the world’s governments for an International Arms Trade Treaty. Those over the age of 16 had their pictures taken with signs reading “No more arms for atrocities.”

Saturday was a day for the youths to think more about how they can serve their neighbours and enemies, with a particular focus on love for their enemies as well as personal involvement in the work of fair trade agreements.

In the closing worship service on Sunday, the youths were given an opportunity to respond by contributing monetary gifts to a special offering project of their choice. They chose an MCC project in Nigeria entitled “Pigs for peace and prosperity.” During the offering, the youths came dancing to the front with their gifts, bringing all they had to give in support of the offering project. Their collection totalled \$448, nearly enough to provide a dozen women with a pig each, plus medication and feed for the animals.

What a positive response from the MC Eastern Canada youths!
—Tara Gingerich Hiebert

The author is MC Eastern Canada winter retreat coordinator and pastor at Breslau Mennonite Church, Ont.



Photo by Karin Fehderau

Outgoing Mennonite Church Saskatchewan conference minister Ken Bechtel stands surrounded by representatives of the General Board, Pastoral Leadership Commission and Envisioning Team as they read a Litany of Blessing at the annual delegate sessions held on Feb. 25 at Osler Mennonite Church. Pictured are: Les Klassen-Hamm, Pauline Steinmann, Karen Martens Zimmerly, Ed Olfert, Bechtel, Henry Block and Sharon Schultz. Bechtel was also honoured at a celebration the next day in Saskatoon at Mount Royal Mennonite.

GET THE CREDIT YOU DESERVE



Open a new MSCU mortgage or add to an existing mortgage and get a credit of up to \$500 on your MSCU MasterCard credit card.*

4-year residential mortgage as low as

5.1%*

Contact your branch today!

*Some conditions apply. Rate subject to change.

A tradition of trust.



Mennonite Savings and Credit Union

Elmira 669-1529 | Kitchener 576-7220 | New Hamburg 662-3550
Milverton 595-8796 | Waterloo 746-1770 | Leamington 326-8601
MSCU serves members of Mennonite, Amish and Brethren in Christ churches across Ontario. www.mscu.com



w i n d o w

What are we learning?

When congregations, conferences and other groups in the church call on AMBS faculty members to preach and teach, the benefit is two-fold: professors learn what issues and experiences are important to others in the church, and the groups learn from the professors. Here are reflections on what three faculty members have learned in recent speaking engagements.

Lois Barrett, Ph.D., assistant professor of theology and Anabaptist studies; director, AMBS–Great Plains

People in our churches are hungry to consider profound theological issues. But they want to talk about these issues in language they can understand. I've learned that it helps to use images, metaphors, and examples. I don't consider this as diluting the truth. In fact, many times we can describe our deepest spiritual experiences only in metaphors—direct description just isn't possible.

The place for doing theology is not just in seminaries, but also in congregations. Theology must remain faithful to the gospel and, at the same time, be context-specific. So congregations are excellent locations for doing theology. Congregations will do theology when they:

- Feel they have permission to do so.
- Are equipped.
- Realize that, because theology must consider the context and the context is often changing, theology is never finished.

Ben C. Ollenburger, Ph.D., professor of biblical theology

The Bible continues to engage congregations and their pastors, and they respond to the gospel. This has been my impression, and a great encouragement, teaching Bible studies, preaching revival sermons, and leading workshops.

At the same time, we face challenges—good ones, I believe. We confront something of a divide between members of our congregations who both retain a store of “biblical knowledge” and a deeply ingrained sense of Scripture’s authority, truth, and efficacy, on one hand, and...those who don't. Regardless of this divide, we have been known, as a

seminary and as a church, for our peace witness and our “ethical” reading of Scripture. In this we have borne good witness. Among our challenges is to root our witness firmly in Scripture and in the gospel, which we must not reduce to ethics. Christian obedience—Christian worship in every dimension—is a response to God’s grace, attested in the election of Israel and at great cost in Jesus Christ.

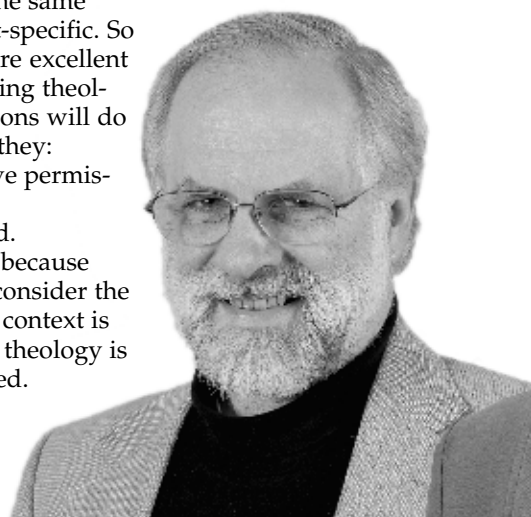
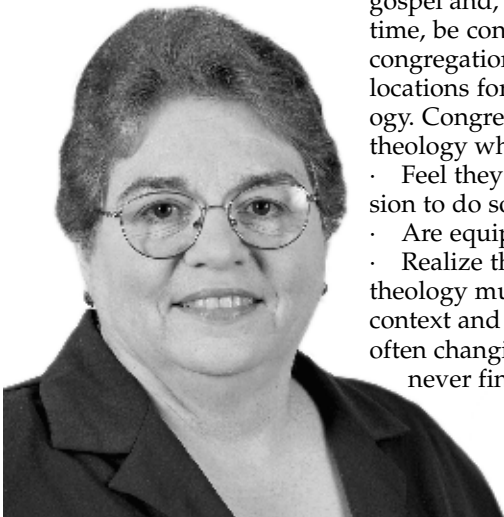
Gayle Gerber Koontz, Ph.D., professor of theology and ethics

I was both sobered and encouraged while interacting with Mennonites and other Christians in

(continued on page 3)

Spring 2006
Volume 16 Issue 2

- 2 **Fostering collaboration and communication**
- 3 **Invite a professor to speak to your group**
- 4 **President's Window Panorama**



Fostering collaboration and communication

“Transform seminary-church connections through sustained interaction between professors and pastors.”

This goal is at the heart of a new program initiated by AMBS in 2005. **Engaging Pastors includes ten projects** which will give seminary professors and pastors opportunities to collaborate in a variety of ways. Engaging Pastors will continue for a five-year period with the intent that through it, both the seminary and the church will be strengthened.

One component which will bring professors into congregations is the **Listening Project**. Any congregation whose pastor is a graduate of AMBS from the last ten years may request a visit from an AMBS professor. The goal is for the faculty member to listen and take the learnings back to the seminary where they will help to shape the curriculum that prepares future pastors.

Clarifying the Call is a program for new pastors—pastors who completed seminary study in the last five years and who are in their first assignment. During a weekend on the AMBS campus, these pastors can reflect on their ministry and get support. Leaders for the event are staff from the Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada ministerial offices and AMBS professors.

Another program is **Seminario Biblico Anabautista**, a Spanish-language ministry program in Dallas, Texas. Designed collaboratively by Mennonite Hispanic pastors and

AMBS faculty, this program brings seminary resources to pastors and congregations who often are not able to participate in the seminary.

Already, as a result of the first offering of several Engaging Pastors programs, faculty are reevaluating the way they teach some courses or are getting affirmation for the ways they bring ministry and scholarship together in their classes.

For a complete list and descriptions of Engaging Pastors programs, see the AMBS web site: www.ambs.edu/php/EngagingPastors/ep_index.php. Several



Mary E. Klassen

Arthur Paul Boers (right), AMBS professor, led a discussion on pastoral imagination during the weekend event, Clarifying the Call, designed specifically for new pastors. Participants were Pieter Niemeyer (left), Stouffville, Ont; Amy Nissley (second from left), Mountain Lake, Minn.; and (not pictured) Allan Friesen, Rosthern,

Sask.; Dick Barrett, West Liberty, Ohio; Rod Miller, Plain City, Ohio; and Tim Kuepfer, Richmond, B.C. The event is an opportunity for pastors to reflect on their experiences and gain new insights for their ministry.

programs have spring deadlines for pastors and congregations to apply, so explore the web pages carefully if you are interested in participating. ●



Mark Shephard

The Pastor-Faculty Colloquies take professors and pastors to a retreat setting for three sessions, each lasting two days. Together the participants focus on issues of leadership in the church. The 2005-2006 Colloquy included (left to right) Arthur Paul Boers, AMBS professor; David Wood, facilitator; Carolyn and Keith Collins, pastors of the Church of the Overcomer, Trainer, Pa.; and Rebecca Slough, AMBS professor. Other members were Samuel Lopez, Lancaster Mennonite Conference, Lancaster, Pa.; Mag Richer Smith and Bob Smith, First Mennonite Church, Iowa City, Iowa; Doug Luginbill, Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan.; and Jacob Elias, AMBS professor. The 2006-2007 Colloquy will explore teaching the Bible in congregations. See more: www.ambs.edu/php/EngagingPastors/ep_news_colloquies_theme.php

Invite a professor to speak to your group

Rediscovering Sabbath ... Psalms ... What do we believe about the Lord's supper ... Toward a gospel of peace for the 21st century ... Ministry and leadership in the New Testament.

Sermons, workshops and discussions on these topics and many more are offered by AMBS professors and staff through the seminary's Speakers Bureau. Any



group—congregation, conference, Sunday school class, retreat center—may invite a speaker to preach, present a workshop or lead a discussion.

Newly established, this effort to link seminary resources with church groups is spelled out in the AMBS web site: www.ambs.edu/SpeakersBureau.

On the web pages you

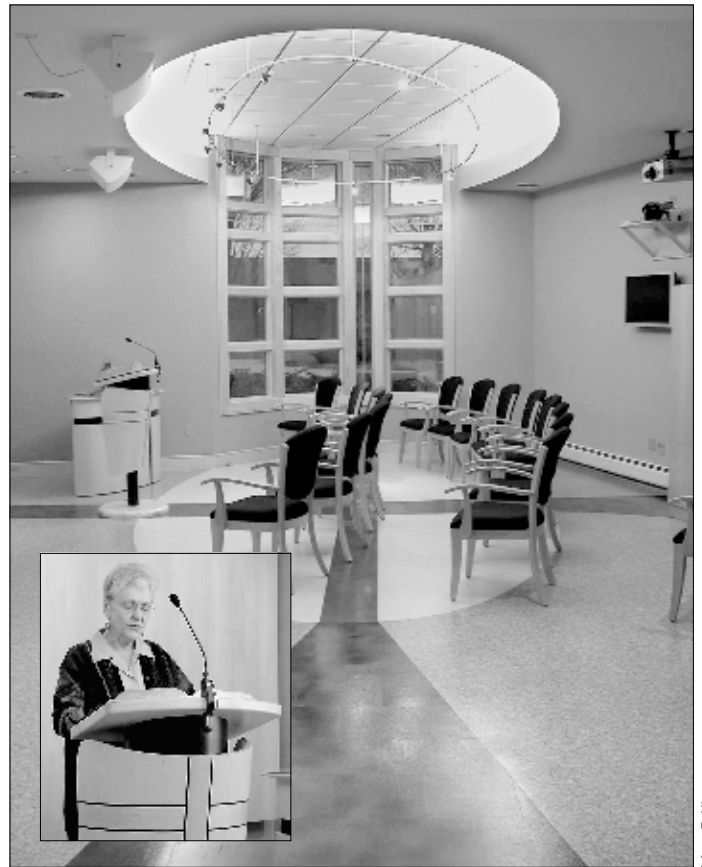
will find all the needed information:

- a list of topics and presenters
- contact information
- financial expectations
- print-quality photos of speakers for use in the group's publicity

Also, "Faculty on the road" web pages report where faculty and administrators are already scheduled to speak. If you can link

your group's request with that of another group in your area, you may save on travel costs for the speaker. See www.ambs.edu/php/speakersbureau/sb_faculty_travel.php for this information.

If you have any questions, you may contact the Church Leadership Center at AMBS, ChurchLeadership@ambs.edu. ●



Mary E. Klassen

Sharon Baker (inset photo), full-time volunteer at AMBS since 2002, was the first reader during three days of reading the Bible in the seminary's new Chapel of the Word. The March 3 dedication service for the small chapel was preceded by three days of Bible reading from its pulpit.

The worship-like space and the small size make the Chapel of the Word ideal for classes in which students learn how to preach, to lead worship and singing and to conduct rituals such as communion and baptism. It is equipped with state-of-the-art technology so students can learn how to use technology in worship and so they can learn from video recordings of themselves in leadership roles.

Funded through the Next Generation campaign, this project extended a classroom into the quadrangle at the center of campus. Major donors were Peter and Helen Redekop and Peter and Charlotte Wall of British Columbia.

What are we learning?

(Continued from page 1)

Gayle Gerber Koontz, Ph.D.,

Manitoba this past semester. I was sobered by the profound pain many in our communities carry because of mental illnesses in our families—and the often inadequate response of congregations. Grief was palpable in groups where families had lost children in death by suicide, where the stress of illness had broken relationships, and where the silence of the church

was deafening. I was encouraged by the perceptiveness and creative responses to this reality of MCC Canada, local volunteers and a number of health service providers and pastors I spoke with. I left with a deeper sense of call to develop aspects of my theological reflection and teaching ministry that can speak with spiritual depth and integrity to those who live with chronic illnesses in the family. ●

Campaign Report



The current emphasis in the Next Generation campaign is to complete funding for the new AMBS library and campus center. To find out more, see www.ambs.edu/NextGeneration.

	Goal	Received (US dollars)
Library and campus center	8,000,000	\$6,100,000

Important as seminaries may be, congregations are the primary setting for theological education. Pastors, Sunday School teachers and caregivers serve as theological educators every week through word and action. Weddings, funerals and life passage events generate deep questions: What really matters in life? Can I know God? What happens when I die?

When I started seminary twenty-six years ago, I declared I was going to be an academic, not a pastor. I thought being a pastor was too modest a goal. But a required pastoral internship threw me into the deep end of life's most persistent questions. I had deathbed conversations with a cancer patient the same week my daughter was born. Spiritual mysteries of life, from



womb to tomb, utterly engaged my imagination.

When I answered a call to pastoral leadership, a friend lamented that I would "waste" my abilities in such a mundane role. What a misunderstanding of pastoral leadership!

I have the "terminal" degree in New Testament studies, have taught and published, and now have been president of a seminary for ten years. But my primary identity remains that of pastor. The biggest and most interesting challenge I can imagine is helping individuals and

congregations deal daily with the joys, doubts and fears of real life.

If most theological education happens in the congregation, how do pastors and other congregational leaders gain depth of knowledge and experience to educate others? It is impossible to provide everything such leaders need in two or three years of seminary study. But if seminary faculty themselves are immersed in the life and mission of the church, they will help a new generation of congregation-based educators develop a life-long pattern of tapping into a vast reservoir of biblical and theological insight—and using that to nurture the people of God.

— J. Nelson Kraybill

Wendy Janzen (Master of Divinity 2002) was ordained on Feb. 19, 2006, at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Theo Odhiambo (Master of Arts: Theological Studies 2002) was ordained Jan. 29, by the Tanzania Mennonite Church.

Fourteen AMBS alumni are writers in the 2005–2008 cycle of the Uniform Series study guides and teacher guides: **Wilma Bailey, Leonard Beechy, James R. Engle, Willmar T. Harder, Sheila Klassen-Wiebe, David M. Morrow, Linda Gehman Peachey, Raymond H. Reimer, Dale E. Shank, Sue C. Steiner, Anne Stuckey, Don Unger, Duane Yoder, Elizabeth Yoder, Perry B. Yoder,** professor emeritus, also is a writer.

Panorama

New book by Jacob Elias

Remember the Future: The Pastoral Theology of Paul the Apostle, by Jacob W. Elias, was released by Herald Press in February. Jake is AMBS professor of New Testament and is co-pastor, with Lillian, his wife, of Parkview Mennonite Church, Kokomo, Ind.

Ground-blessing for AMBS library and campus center

A ground-blessing service is planned for the seminary's new library and campus center on April 21. This project is the major component of the Next

Generation Fund for Church Leadership (see page 3). AMBS still seeks contributions to complete funding for the project. For more information, see www.ambs.edu/NextGeneration.

Consultation set for Confession of Faith

How well has *Confession of Faith in Mennonite Perspective* served the church over the last ten years? That question is the focus of a three-day consultation at AMBS, June 8–10. Leaders and scholars in the church

will gather to reflect on the impact of this confession on the church and its members. See more at www.ambs.edu/php/ims/ims_confession_consultation.php.

Pastors Week 2007

Rodney Clapp, author, speaker and editor, will be the featured presenter at Pastors Week 2007, January 22–25. His recent books are *Tortured Wonders: Christian Spirituality for People, Not Angels* and *Peculiar People: The Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society*.

Spring 2006 Volume 16 Issue 2

The purpose of *AMBS Window* is to invite readers to call people to leadership ministries, and to provide ways for readers to become involved with AMBS through financial support, prayer support and student recruiting.

Editor and Designer: Mary E. Klassen

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to *Canadian Mennonite* and *The Mennonite*.



Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, IN 46517-1999
574 295-3726
www.ambs.edu

People&Events

Winnipeg—On Dec. 31, Nettie Nikkel celebrated her 100th birthday together with some 80 nieces, nephews and friends. “Aunt Nettie” is a charter member of Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg; Pastor Baergen brought greetings from the church and gave a brief meditation. Nephew Don Janzen shared the many greetings sent from Queen Elizabeth and Canadian government officials. Nettie was remembered as a classy lady, always dressing graciously, with her hair styled. She worked at Perth’s Cleaners for many years and in the evenings would help her sister Eva, who was a seamstress; Eva died in 2002. They sewed for the Winnipeg Winter Club and weddings; Nettie did much of the fine bead work on the skating dresses and wedding gowns. Never married, Nettie took great interest in her nieces and nephews. She and her sister enjoyed picking strawberries; at age 92 they would still drive out to the strawberry field and crawl along the rows to pick berries. Nettie is currently a resident at Donwood Manor in Winnipeg.

—Phyllis Friesen

The author is a niece of Nettie Nikkel.

Harrow, Ont.—Sue (Nikkel) Goerzen, a longtime member of Harrow (Ont.) Mennonite Church, died on Jan. 14, at the age of 80. Born in 1925 in Corn, Kan., she married Gerhard Goerzen on July 23, 1960, and the couple moved to Harrow, where they have lived ever since. Holding a B.Sc. in home economics from San Jose College and an M.Sc. in home economics from Kansas State University, Goerzen taught high school in Kansas and at Tabor College before she got married. After her marriage, she taught high school for seven years in the very challenging environment of the inner city of Detroit before moving

to the University of Windsor, Ont., where she taught for another 21 years. At her retirement in 1990, Goerzen was given a University Teaching Excellence Award in recognition of her distinguished career and her outstanding contribution to education. She also sat on the Conrad Grebel University College Board from 1992-99. Goerzen’s involvement in church life reached far beyond the local congregation. On several occasions she served as parliamentarian for conference sessions and she also served on various committees throughout the 1980s and 1990s, one of which helped establish Windsor Mennonite Fellowship. In 1990, the General Boards of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) mandated the formation of a Listening Committee for Homosexual Concerns, on which she served as co-chair. At the time, she had just completed an eight-year stint as co-chair of a General Conference committee on human sexuality that helped draft the position paper “Human sexuality in the Christian life.”

—From reflections by **Henry Paetkau** and **Greg Yantzi**

Abbotsford, B.C.—Henry Hildebrand, first principal of Briercrest Family of Schools, died on Feb. 7 in Abbotsford, B.C. Born in 1911, Hildebrand migrated to Canada with his family in 1925 to escape the growing Communist tyranny in southern Russia (Ukraine). In 1935, he accepted an invitation to come to the small town of Briercrest, Sask., to lead the Briercrest Gospel Assembly. That same year Briercrest Bible Institute was founded; over the years, the institute grew to become one of Canada’s largest Christian post-secondary schools (now known as Briercrest College and Seminary). Throughout his life, Hildebrand was closely tied to the activities of Briercrest, having served as president for 42 years,

and then as chancellor and chancellor emeritus until his death. In 1979, Hildebrand was invested with the Order of Canada for his leadership in Christian education through Briercrest and the impact of his life upon Canadian youth and society.

—Briercrest release

Transitions

Births/Adoptions

Buhr-Bach—to Crista Buhr and Phillip Bach, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, a daughter, Julia Melissa, Feb. 28.
Dau—to Audrey and Joachim, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., a son, Elias Henry, Dec. 25.
Ebner—to Leanne and Steven, Emmaus Mennonite, Wymark, Sask., a son, Logan Lee, Feb. 13.
Healy—to Jayne and David, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., a daughter, Grace Eva Marie, Jan. 8.
Hendriks—to Carrie and Ken, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., a daughter, Isabelle Maria Anne, Dec. 19.
Klassen—to Suzanne and Reinhold, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., a son, Ty Alexander, Jan. 4.
Krahn—to Cecilia and David (Fiske Mennonite, Sask.), of Belo Horizonte, Brazil, a son, David Araujo de Almeida, Jan. 27.
Maddigan—to Carolyn Sherk Maddigan and Brad, Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Madeline Elizabeth, Dec. 21.
Nickel—to Jessica and Erik, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., a son, Wesley Grant, Jan. 25.
Romano—to Tamara and Jamie, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., a son, Matthew James, March 6.

Marriages

Driedger-Tissen—Jake and Justine, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., Jan. 14.
Edwards-Blank—Scott

and Anne, First Mennonite, Edmonton, Oct. 9.

Prychak-Fehr—Darcy and Jennifer, Emmaus Mennonite, Wymark, Sask., at Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask., Feb. 11.

Deaths

Andres—Henry, 79, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., Oct. 12.
Boldt—Helmut, 70, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., Jan. 17.
Burgetz—Erma, 74, Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., Feb. 2.
Burgetz—Roy, 87, Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., Jan. 26.
Dyck—Peter, 85, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., Nov. 27.
Dyck—Willie, 55, Morden Mennonite, Man., March 3.
Ewert—Siegfried, 77, Grace Mennonite, Regina, Dec. 21.
Grundy—Sylvia, 71, Warden Woods Mennonite, Scarborough, Ont., Dec. 17.
Harder—Ted, 89, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., Oct. 17.
Janzen—Elma (nee Regier), 93, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, March 17.
Penner—Allan, 44, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Jan. 27.
Roth—Wilmer (Bill), 67 (b. July 11, 1938), East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., March 7.
Schiedel—Adeline, 82 (b. Sept. 9, 1923), Preston Mennonite, Cambridge, Ont., Feb. 26.
Weber—Ethel, 96, Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., Feb. 23.
Wiens—Herman, 91, Morden Mennonite, Man., March 14.

Baptisms

Waters Mennonite, Lively, Ont.—Bonnie Junkala, Dec. 11.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes *Transitions* announcements within four months of the event. Please send *Transitions* announcements by e-mail to transitions@canadianmennonite.org, including the congregation name and location. When sending death notices, please include birth date and last name at birth if available.

Mennonite Church Canada

Prayer and praise

Please pray for:

- The processing of visas for attendees of IMPaCT (International Mennonite Pastors Coming Together), which hopes to bring together six international Anabaptist pastors and pair them with six Manitoba pastors. Two pastors from Cuba have recently been denied their visas by the Canadian embassy in Havana.

The MC Canada/MC Manitoba/CMU-sponsored event, which also includes pastors from Chile, Paraguay, Brazil and Spain, is a two-week period of reflection on pastoral ministry, learning together, sharing, prayer, worship and getting to know the broader Anabaptist global family.

Please pray that this time may be one of fruitful sharing and learning as the pastors come together in June.

- Witness workers Jake and Dorothy Unrau, as they returned to their work in Germany on Feb. 19 after a six-week North American ministry. Pray for their smooth

transition as they catch up with congregational visits and correspondence, and as they begin their evangelization services.

Also pray for the wellbeing of their congregation in Niedergörsdorf, as several members suffer from poor health.

- Give thanks for the early March release of evangelist Pham Ngoc Thach, the sixth Vietnamese church leader who had been imprisoned since 2004. (See photo below.) Please pray for continued healing and restoration for the church leader, his family, and for the congregation involved.

—Compiled by

Hinke Loewen-Rudgers

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Youths invited to be 'represented'

MC Eastern Canada is inviting youths to "Represent," a special youth event being held in conjunction with the conference delegate assembly on April 28, 9.30 p.m., at Vineland United Mennonite Church. The evening will feature

games and socializing. After a "night lunch," there will be a sleepover at the church, followed by breakfast before the delegate sessions.

Youths don't need adults to talk at them, they don't even always need adults to talk to them, and especially not to speak for them. This year, they are encouraged to be at the assembly to "represent" themselves. They will represent who they are as individuals. They will represent who they are from all regions of the conference. And they will represent that they, too, are people of faith and an integral part of the church.

This event is planned by Mennonite Youth Council of Eastern Canada, an eager group of young people working with Tara Gingerich Hiebert to plan conference-wide events. Represent is for youths, youth groups, youth sponsors and pastors. The purpose is to learn together about the work of the church, and to represent the younger voices around such issues as Christian formation and Christian witness.

Also featured at the assembly will be youth Bible quizzing on the book of Joshua. From the higher-than-usual 13 teams entered in the preliminary round at Breslau on April 22, six finalists will do a round robin quiz-off at the St. Catharines Laotian church on the morning of April 29, to establish the two finalists. The final match will be held at St. Catharines United Mennonite Church at 12.50 p.m., so delegates can see this exciting completion of weeks of diligent study and good fun over lunch.

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Delegate session results in two motions

At the February annual delegate sessions, held Feb. 24 to

25 in Gretna, delegates passed two motions:

- Given the policy of the present federal government to increased military activity, given the commitment of this government to significant increases in budgetary spending on defence, and given the interest in the aggressive recruiting of more military personnel, much of it impacting our young people, be it resolved that MC Manitoba work with other Mennonite churches and Christian agencies to address this issue with the government and the churches.

- Whereas we are united in a desire to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, inviting people to lives of faith and Christian discipleship; we are united in a conviction that the gospel is incompatible with war and other forms of violence; we are committed to good relations with people of other religious convictions; we live in the tension of faithfully abiding with our convictions and also supporting the upcoming Franklin Graham Festival; and since we have experienced in our midst the value of honest and humble dialogue, we resolve that: we will share our convictions and struggles with our local ecumenical partners in the festival organizing committee, inviting them or groups among them to join us in discussing these matters, and we will continue efforts to engage in dialogue (either on our own behalf or together with other festival sponsors) with Franklin Graham and with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, and give witness to our concerns regarding statements made by Franklin Graham advocating unrestrained violence and denigrating Islam and its adherents; and we will hold our leaders in prayer on these matters.

Meetinghouse photo



The six Vietnamese Mennonites who were imprisoned for various lengths of time over the past two years pose for a photo March 8 in Ho Chi Minh City. The photo—shown to the Mennonite World Conference General Council meeting, March 11 in Pasadena, Calif.—was described as an expression of thanks for the prayers and support of Mennonites around the world. From left are church worker Le Thi Hong Lien, evangelist Nguyen Thanh Nhan, evangelist Nguyen Van Phuong, pastor Nguyen Hong Quang, evangelist Pham Ngoc Thach, and church worker Nguyen Hieu Nghia. Thach was the last to be released, after two years in prison, on March 2.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

RJC hires new principal

Rosthern Junior College has announced that Gail Schellenberg has been hired to replace Erwin Tiessen as principal of the Grade 10 to 12 Mennonite school.

Schellenberg, who has worked as an educator in Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta, will begin at the college in August. She has been principal of Westgate Mennonite Collegiate in Winnipeg for the last five years. This will be her first foray into working in a residential school setting.

Mennonite Church Alberta

Tofield church to build new sanctuary

Tofield Mennonite Church is building a new sanctuary. They have reached their fundraising goal to begin, and a building committee has already spent

much time with sound technicians, architectural drawings and other plans. The congregation currently meets in the multi-purpose room of its facility. A sod turning ceremony is being planned for the end of April, details to be announced.

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Songs of the past to benefit seniors

First United Mennonite Church of Vancouver will host "Songs My Grandmother Loved," a fundraising concert on April 23 to benefit the Aging in Place program of Mennonite Central Committee Supportive Care Services. The concert begins at 2 p.m. Solos, duets and musical numbers are planned that, according to organizers, "will bring back memories of when you were young." Following the concert there will be a time of tea and dessert around tables in the church basement, served by church youths.

Aging in Place is a program

that gives seniors the support they need to remain in their homes.

For more information, call 604-321-2131.

Youth pastor change at West Abbotsford

Joel Defries, youth pastor at West Abbotsford Mennonite, is completing his service there as of March 31, to take on the youth ministry at an Alliance church in White Rock. The church planned a farewell fasha for him and his family on March 26.

Taking over West Abbotsford youth responsibilities for the next five months is Erik Olson, a Columbia Bible College student who has been working with Defries for the past year.

A search committee has now been formed to discern a candidate for the position of associate pastor at West Abbotsford.

Joint Good Friday services announced

Mennonite Church B.C. congregations are planning joint

services in both Vancouver and Abbotsford for Good Friday, April 14.

Sherbrooke Mennonite and First United Mennonite, along with Culloden and Vancouver Mennonite Brethren churches, will hold services at John Oliver High School auditorium beginning at 10:30 a.m. The service will feature choir music and some drama.

In Abbotsford, the rotating service this year for English congregations will be held at Emmanuel Mennonite, also beginning at 10:30 a.m. Other participating churches include West Abbotsford, Eben-Ezer, Wellspring, Olivet, East Abbotsford Community and Abbotsford Mennonite Fellowship.

Unless otherwise credited, the articles in TheChurches pages were written by: Leona Dueck Penner (MC Canada), Maurice Martin (Eastern Canada), Evelyn Rempel Petkau (Manitoba), Karin Fehderau (Saskatchewan), Donita Wiebe-Neufeld (Alberta) and Amy Dueckman (British Columbia). See page 2 for contact information.

PAM PETERS-PRIES



From our leaders

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." I Peter 2:9-10 NRSV

As I write this column, Jack Suderman, Mennonite Church Canada's general secretary, has just begun the God's People Now! listening tour. By the time this magazine arrives in your home, he will have visited every congregation in Mennonite Church Saskatchewan and many of the congregations in Mennonite Church Alberta. By late fall, he will have visited every one of MC Canada's 225 congregations, to listen to the joys and challenges of being God's people in their communities.

This ambitious tour shares its theme with the upcoming MC Canada assembly in Edmonton, July 4 to 7. In Edmonton, we will worship, discern and share together around the theme, "God's People Now!" based on I Peter 2:9-10.

Being 'God's people now'

**We are chosen to
proclaim the mighty acts
of the one who makes
light out of darkness.**

Why is being God's people now so important? The Bible emphasizes the creation of a "people" as central to God's purpose in our world. I Peter 2:9-10 captures this "peoplehood" idea vividly and concisely. We are a people chosen by God, but that is not the end of the story. We are

chosen to proclaim the mighty acts of the one who makes light out of darkness. God has made us a people by reconciling us to him and to each other, and God has made us a people so that we may engage others with the reconciling gospel of Jesus Christ. Being a people of God is both the goal of God's design for the world and the strategy to get us there. Being a people of God is so central to our purpose as a

church that we can hardly over-emphasize it or dedicate too much energy to it.

Please pray with me that the Holy Spirit will guide the listening, discerning, and relationship-building that will take place during Jack Suderman's tour to each of our congregations and during our gathering as a church at Edmonton 2006, so that we may grow

as God's people now.

Pam Peters-Pries is MC Canada Support Services executive secretary.

Calendar

British Columbia

April 22: Columbia Bible College graduation ceremony. 7:30 p.m. (28); Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, 7 p.m. (29); Langley Mennonite Fellowship, 11 a.m. (30); First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, 7:30 p.m. (30); Saanich Community Church, Victoria, 7 p.m. (2); Christian Life Assembly, Barriere, 7 p.m. (3); Nechako Community Church, Vanderhoof, 7 p.m. (4); Northgate Mennonite Brethren Church, Dawson Creek, 7:30 p.m. (5).
April 28-30: Jr. Youth IMPACT retreat at Camp Squeah.
April 29-30: Bethel Mennonite Church 70th anniversary.
May 2: Columbia Bible College 2006 Open golf tournament.
May 7: B.C. Mennonite Women in Mission Inspirational Day, First Mennonite Church, Vancouver.
May 26-27: "Come to the table: A conference on the arts in worship" explores the theme of collaborative worship (dance, drama, visual arts, writing for worship, storytelling and more). Keynote speakers from AMBS: June Alliman Yoder, Marlene Kropf and Rebecca Slough. For more information, e-mail Angelika Dawson at music@emmanuelmennonite.com.
June 1: MEI graduation ceremony.
June 3: MC B.C. special delegate sessions. Location TBA.

Alberta

April 21: MCC's third annual fine arts festival, Master's Academy, Calgary. Theme: "What does peace look like to your neighbour?"
April 21-23: Strengthening

Family Ties men's retreat at Camp Valaqua. Guest speaker: Gordon Houser, associate editor of *The Mennonite*. For more information, call Marvin Baergen at 403-256-2894.

April 27, May 7: CMU Chamber Choir tour—Rosemary Mennonite Church, 7 p.m. (27); Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church, Edmonton, 10 a.m. (7); First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, 2 p.m. (7).

May 6-7: Songfest hosted by Edmonton First Mennonite Church. Theme: "God's people now." CMU Chamber Choir will be the featured guests.

May 12: Youth night at Camp Valaqua. Call 403-637-2510 for more information.

May 13: Spring work day at Camp Valaqua. A camp contact meeting will be held in the afternoon. Call 403-637-2510 to register or for more information.

May 26-28: Women in Mission annual retreat at Camp Valaqua. Theme: "Women in conversation: Celebrating women's lives."

May 28: "Glimmers of Hope" with Brian Stewart and Anna Maria Tremonti, Boyce Theatre, Calgary. Fundraising/awareness-raising event for MCC AIDS projects.

May 29-June 1: Theological studies week at Camp Valaqua. Guest speaker: Dan Epp-Thiessen.

June 2: Camp Valaqua fellowship banquet fundraiser. RSVP by calling 403-637-2510 or e-mailing manager@campvalaqua.com.

June 3: Annual Camp Valaqua hike-a-thon to raise funds for a new lodge roof and a future staff residence. Hike the Nihahi Ridge near Elbow Falls. Call 403-637-2510 to register.

June 2-4: Foothills Mennonite Church 50th anniversary celebrations.

June 16-17: MCC Alberta Relief Sale and bikeathon, Didsbury.

July 5-9: MC Canada annual

assembly in Edmonton.

Aug. 26-27: Bluesky Mennonite Church 50th anniversary celebrations.

Saskatchewan

April 18-20: Saskatchewan Mennonite Youth "Chalo" experience in Saskatoon and Regina.

April 22: MHSS fundraising banquet and retirement celebration for Dick Epp, editor of *The Historian*, at Bethany Manor.

April 22-23: North Star Mennonite Church 100th anniversary weekend. To register for meals or billets, or for more information, call 306-363-2125 or e-mail ld.balon@sasktel.net.

April 25-26: CMU Chamber Choir tour—Parkland Community Church, Yorkton, 7:30 p.m. (25); RJC, 11 a.m. (26); Knox United Church, Saskatoon, 7:30 p.m. (26).

April 29: Ministries Commission second annual Touring Mission Fest.

May 6: RJC alumni golf tournament. To enter, visit www.rjc.sk.ca.

May 7: RJC spring concert.

May 15-18: Anabaptist spirituality continuing education course with Arnold Snyder at First Mennonite, Saskatoon.

May 27-28: Three-camp retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

June 3: Prairie Falcon motorcycle rally fundraiser for MCC, Saskatoon.

June 4: Shekinah Retreat Centre triathlon.

June 9-10: MCC Relief Sale and quilt auction in Saskatoon.

June 17: Ultimate Adventure seniors retreat, banquet and carnival at Youth Farm Bible Camp.

Manitoba

April 14: First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, presents a Good Friday evening worship service with the church choir and Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Concert Choir, 7

p.m., at the church.

April 21: "Of this earth." Author Rudy Wiebe will speak on writing, faith and a Mennonite boyhood in Saskatchewan at CMU, 1 p.m.
April 22: CMU annual spring concert, 7:30 p.m.

April 23: Spring concert Winnipeg's North Kildonan Mennonite Church, at the church, 3 p.m.

April 28-29: Manitoba Mennonite spring curling funspiel, Winnipeg. For more information, call Gerald Warkentin at 204-487-2972 or Dave Zacharias at 204-477-4714.

April 28-30: Manitoba Mennonite and Brethren Marriage Encounter weekend in Winnipeg. For more information, call Peter and Rose Dick at 204-757-4705.
May 2: Winnipeg Youth Orchestra presents "The Sounds of Spring Concert" at Winnipeg's Centennial Concert Hall, 7 p.m.

May 4-6: Institute for Leaders: Part 1, sponsored by CMU's Centre for Leadership and Management. For more information, visit www.cmu.ca.

May 6: Manitoba Women in Mission annual Worship and Enrichment Day at First Mennonite, Winnipeg. Registration at 8:30 a.m.

Theme: "Stewardship in time." Guest speaker: Melissa Miller.

May 6: Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society spring history workshop in Gretna, focusing on Bruce Wiebe's research on Mennonites who settled around Maple River in Cass County, N.D.

May 17: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate work day.

May 25: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Senior 2 to 4 spring concert, at Bethel, 7:30 p.m.

May 29-31: Plus 55 retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

June 1: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Grade 7 to Senior 1 spring concert, at Bethel, 7:30 p.m.

June 5-7: Plus 55 retreat at

Camp Koinonia.

June 11: MCI *Saengerfest*. Worship, 10:30 a.m.; concert, 2 p.m.

June 15-17: Institute for Leaders: Part 2, sponsored by CMU's Centre for Leadership and Management. For more information, visit www.cmu.ca.

June 16-17: MCC Winnipeg Festival and Relief Sale at CMU.

June 20: CMU President's Golf Tournament, Kingswood Golf and Country Club, LaSalle. Visit www.cmu.ca for more information.

Aug. 21-25: CMU Blazers multi-sport overnight camp. For more information, visit www.cmu.ca.

Aug. 28-Sept. 1: CMU Blazers multi-sport day camp. For more information, visit www.cmu.ca

Sept. 10: Covenant Mennonite Church, Winkler, 25th anniversary celebration. For further information, call 204-325-4374 or e-mail covenant@mts.net.

Sept. 16: Morris MCC Relief Sale.

Sept. 16-17: Brandon MCC Relief Sale.

Oct. 9: Morden Mennonite Church 75th anniversary celebration.

Oct. 15-16: CMU J.J. Thiessen Lectures with Ellen Davis, professor of Bible and practical theology, Duke Divinity School.

Nov. 17-18: MCC Manitoba annual general meeting, Winnipeg.

Jan. 18-20: CMU Refreshing Winds conference on worship and music. Keynote speaker: Marva Dawn, author of *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship For This Urgent Time*.

Feb. 20-21: CMU winter lectures with Robert Russell, professor of theology, Graduate Theological Union. Topic: "Science and theology."

Ontario

April 18-20: MCC meat canning in Leamington at the Heinz tomato grading station.

April 21: Guelph MCC meat canning fundraising ham dinner at Hamilton Mennonite

Church, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Music by Hope Rising. For tickets, call 905-679-6506.

April 21: Menno Youth Singers coffee house at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, Kitchener. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.

April 22: MEDA Waterloo chapter annual banquet at Conrad Grebel University College, 6:30 p.m. Speaker: Sarah Smith.

April 22: Women in MC Eastern Canada Enrichment Day at UMEI, Leamington. Theme: "Nurturing our souls with spiritual disciplines." Speaker: Pauline Schlegel Shank. To register, call 519-356-2387.

April 24-28: MCC meat canning at the University of Guelph.

April 28-29: Engaged workshop at Living Water Fellowship, New Hamburg. To register, call Delmar and Mary Bender at 519-656-2256.

April 28-29: MC Eastern Canada spring conference, St. Catharines.

May 5-7: Women's retreat at Hidden Acres Camp. Open to all MC Eastern Canada women and their friends.

May 13: Menno Singers present "Psalms and Hymns" with Marilyn Houser Hamm, Zion United Church, Kitchener; 8 p.m.

May 15,16: Annual seniors spring retreat at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp. Choose to attend either day. Resource people: Randy and Anita Lebold, missionaries to Indonesia with Wycliffe Bible Translators. To register, e-mail info@hiddenacres.ca.

May 20: Hamilton Welcome Inn Community Centre garage/plant/bake sale and open house, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, call 905-525-5824.

July 14-16: Shantz family reunion in New Hamburg. Activities include local tours, storytelling, a pie and ice cream social, and a thanksgiving worship service. For more information, visit www.christianrshantz.ca or e-mail Ralph Shantz at rdshantz@golden.net.

U.S.A.

June 8-10: "Holding fast to our faith: Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective 10 years later" conference, AMBS, Elkhart, Ind.

Oct. 26: Mennonite/s Writing: Beyond Borders conference, Bluffton University, Ohio. Keynote speaker: Kathleen Norris. Submissions of Mennonite writing sought. For details, visit: www.bluffton.edu/eng/conference/.

Nov. 2-5: MEDA convention—"Business as a calling: Set the pace." Tampa, Fla. For more information, visit www.businessasacalling.org.

To ensure timely publication of upcoming events, please send Calendar announcements EIGHT WEEKS in advance of the event date by e-mail to: calendar@canadianmennonite.org

Subscriber services Mennonite

How to subscribe:

- Individuals who attend churches that are part of Mennonite Church Canada or one of its five area churches can subscribe through our Every Home Plan (paid for by your church giving and CM's own fundraising). Please contact your church office to be added to the list.
- Personal subscriptions are also available to anyone. A one-year subscription (24 issues) is \$36.00 plus \$2.52 GST in Canada, \$53.50 (Can.) to the USA, and \$73.00 (Can.) for elsewhere. Two-year and group subscriptions are also available.

Name _____

Address _____

Postal Code _____

Payment enclosed

Charge my VISA Mastercard

card number _____

expiry date _____

Subscription changes:

- When submitting a change of address or cancellation, please include your subscription number:

Subscription number **Expiry date**

A999999	00/00/00
Kathy Mennonite	
999 Menno St.	
WINNIPEG MB X0X 0X0	

- Subscription changes are not considered Transitions notices (these go to transitions@canadianmennonite.org).
- Changes will be made immediately but may take four to six weeks to take effect because of printing schedules.

Contact information:

Canadian Mennonite, 490 Dutton Dr., Unit C5,
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 6H7

Phone: 519-884-3810 Toll-free: 1-800-378-2524 ext. 221

Fax: 519-884-3331 E-mail: office@canadianmennonite.org

News briefs

Young people work for peace in Lebanon

During a tumultuous year in Lebanon, young people came together to turn a symbol of conflict into a sign of peace. Children from across the country gathered to decorate a wall that divided the capital city, Beirut, during the Lebanese civil war from 1975 to 1990. They hung brightly painted banners depicting reconciliation between people of different ethnicities and faiths. "We want to show that we can live together, that we can build a Lebanon we will be proud to pass on to our kids," said Thouraya al-Bouz, 19, who helped organize the event. Al-Bouz is a volunteer working with Development for People and Nature Association, a Lebanese organization promoting peacemaking among children and youths. MCC supports this work by sponsoring training in conflict resolution for the organization's staff. —MCC release

MCC response to Gulf hurricanes grows

Donors have given more than \$2.3 million to help Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) respond to hurricanes along the U.S. Gulf Coast. In addition, more than \$800,000 worth of material resources has been distributed in response to hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma. MCC continues to work through local churches in hurricane-affected areas and in sites where evacuees are still living, including Houston, Tex., and Meridian, Miss. In

addition to meeting the current needs of families affected by the storm, MCC is working to formulate long-term plans to help restore families and communities. —MCC release

Road improvements help disabled girl

Noor Hamdeh, a five-year-old Palestinian girl in Silwad Village, West Bank, was born with spina bifida and cannot walk. When Noor started Kindergarten, her mother had to carry her to school because the unpaved road in front of their house was too rough for her to use a wheelchair. Last year, the East Jerusalem YMCA paved the road, and Noor can now ride safely to and from school in her wheelchair. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) financially supported the work as part of a project to provide medical services or home improvements for 20 people with physical disabilities in the West Bank. —MCC release

Advertising Due Dates

Issue	Copy Due
May 15	May 2
May 29	May 16

(Focus on Seniors)

Contact: **Barbara Burkholder**
1-800-316-4052 / advert@canadianmennonite.org

Employment opportunities

Connexus (Korea Anabaptist Center ministry) seeks **ENGLISH CONVERSATION TEACHERS**

Opportunity for Christians with university degrees to learn, serve, teach, travel, earn and make friends! For more information, visit www.connexus.co.kr/english.

Home Street Mennonite Church in Winnipeg is seeking a **HALF-TIME ASSOCIATE PASTOR**

The Associate Pastor will serve in a leadership team under the direction of the senior pastor. Ministries include: fostering intergenerational/family relationships and events, equipping and guiding program sponsors, assisting in facilitating youth and young adult programs, coordinating program planning, working with worship teams to involve youth in worship services, community outreach, as well as occasional preaching and worship leading. Previous work experience in church ministry would be considered a definite asset.

Home Street Mennonite Church is a vibrant urban congregation with a typical Sunday attendance of 250. Anabaptist convictions are important to the congregation. Home Street is a member of Mennonite Church Canada.

Interested persons are encouraged to submit a covering letter and resume by April 18, 2006, to:

Pastoral Search Team
Home Street Mennonite Church
318 Home Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 1X4
E-mail: hsmc@mts.net; Fax: 204-783-1721

MCC URGENT OPENING in Akron, PA:

RESOURCE GENERATION NETWORK COORDINATOR

Needed June 1, 2006. Coordinates resource generation network for MCC offices across Canada and the United States. Coordinates the establishment of standards in fundraising, setting goals, and building network capacities. Experience in non-profit fundraising preferred, with excellent skills in communication and management.

For job description and further information, contact:

Lowell Detweiler
E-mail: lcd@mcc.org; Phone: 717-859-1151

STEINBACH BIBLE COLLEGE

invites applications for the position of

PRESIDENT

Steinbach Bible College is an evangelical-anabaptist school drawing students from across North and Central America and overseas.

We are seeking a candidate who has a passion for equipping leaders for ministry and can help our institution move to the next level of excellence in post-secondary Christian education.

The successful candidate will have a...

- Demonstrated excellence in educational or ministry leadership
- Graduate degree in a relevant ministry, theological, or educational field
- Strong commitment to an evangelical-anabaptist understanding
- Mature faith and excellent spiritual character
- Exceptional communication and organizational skills
- Proven ability in effective teamwork

Position to begin prior to 2006-2007 school year.

Please send your résumé to:

Presidential Search Committee
c/o Steinbach Bible College
50 PTH 12 N, Steinbach, Manitoba R5G 1T4



more information on the SBC website: www.sbcollege.ca

**GENERAL MANAGER**

The Mennonite Mutual Insurance Co. Alberta (MMI) is seeking a General Manager who is an experienced insurance professional and who will report directly to the Board of Directors.

MMI is a growing and financially healthy church-based mutual aid insurance organization located in Calgary, Alberta, with over \$3 million in GWP. MMI serves Mennonites throughout the province with church-appointed representatives, and offers policyholders a broad range of products, including property and liability coverage for dwellings, farms, churches and commercial properties.

The successful applicant needs to be an inclusive communicator who can effectively involve a broad segment of voices. He/she will be a decisive and strategic thinking leader with strong analytical skills and financial knowledge. It would be an asset to have worked with the "Mutual" insurance system and a Board of Directors, and have 5 years of proven management experience within the insurance industry. Candidates will preferably possess a CIP or FCIP designation and/or appropriate education in a relevant discipline. Those interested should also have personal values that support an understanding of the beliefs and values of Mennonite communities and Anabaptist Christians.

All applicants will receive a written response explaining the hiring process timing. Those interested in this excellent opportunity with a competitive salary and benefits package should in confidence forward a resume outlining their background and experience by April 15, 2005 to:

General Manager Competition
c/o Harry T. Vlachos, Consultant
Vlachos Human Resource Services Inc.
60 A Victoria Ave., Belleville, ON K8N 1Z7
E-mail: hvlachos@cogeco.ca; Fax 613-966-0535

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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

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

For a thorough job description, please visit our website at www.slmc.on.ca. Applications will be accepted until May 15, 2006:

c/o Jill Sauer
21 Maynard Ave., Kitchener, ON N2H 4Z6
E-mail: konrad@sauerandsteiner.com

The congregation of the Evangelical Mennonite Church at 422 Main St. in Steinbach, Man., is inviting applications for our

Lead Pastor

position. This opportunity includes ministering alongside a passionate youth pastor and a creative minister of music and worship in a "team caring" environment and is available immediately. Our church offers active programming for all ages and supports a blended style of worship service. If you have a passion for God and His people, are self-motivated with administrative skills, are gifted in preaching and teaching, desire to lead a strong ministry team, and are willing to embrace our church vision and direction, then we invite you to consider this opportunity.

For a detailed job description and/or to forward your resume, contact:

Henry Klassen
63 Donald Ave., Steinbach, MB R5G 2B5
Phone: 204-326-6068; E-mail: henryk2@mts.net

THOMPSON UNITED MENNONITE CHURCH REUNION

We'll be hosting a come-home weekend on July 1, 2 and 3, 2006, in Thompson, Manitoba. We invite former members to attend. For info, contact:

Dale Shantz
Phone: 204-679-5210; E-mail: shantz@mts.net
E-mail: wrana@mts.net
 We will e-mail you the agenda.

Westgate Mennonite Collegiate invites applications for the half-time position of

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Responsibilities: to lead in the development of a fundraising network that strengthens the relationship between the school and its community of supporters. The Director will establish a solid funding base, allowing the school to finance its building project and ensure future sustainability of its program.

For further details, check our website: www.westgate.mb.ca

Application Deadline: April 21, 2006.

Qualified applicants should forward resumes:

c/o Principal
Westgate Mennonite Collegiate
86 West Gate, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2E1
Fax: 204-786-1651
Email: westgate@westgate.mb.ca

For rent

Student housing in **Montreal**, located within walking distance of McGill and an easy commute to Concordia. Experience community living and social action in a Christian & Peace church context. www.residencema.ca; experience@maisondelamitie.ca; 514-843-4356.

Bachelor flat in downtown Toronto available mid-April to August. \$525/month including high-speed Internet. Contact Lynne Martens at asamadi@sympatico.ca or 416-534-3424.

Bachelor apartment for rent. Includes private entrance, stove, fridge and private bath. Rexdale area. Available immediately. Phone 416-746-1730.

Message

Kashechewan, Ont.

On March 22, nations around the globe recognized World Water Day. Over the next month, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario wants Canadians to “drink from the well of justice,” and join it, the Kashechewan First Nation (on the remote western shore of James Bay) and Mushkegowuk Council in working toward clean water solutions for aboriginal communities across Canada.

Until April 22, Canadians are being asked to send the federal government a message in a bottle—literally.

The process is simple:

1. Take a dry, empty No. 1 recyclable bottle.
2. Insert your “message” about World Water Day—in the form of a story, poem, reflection or picture about your community and its struggle for fresh water—in the bottle. Messages may also want to remind the government that:

- 97 percent of the earth’s water is too salty to drink, 2 percent is frozen, and only 1 percent is available for drinking.

- A billion people around the world do not have access to clean drinking water.

- In Articles 11 and 12 of the United Nations’ 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, “the human right to water is indispensable for leading a life in human dignity. It is a prerequisite for the realization of other human rights.”

- As of February 2006, there were 76 First Nations across Canada on a boil water advisory.

- Two-thirds of First Nations in Ontario living with contaminated water are fly-in communities in the far north.

- The 1,700 community members of



MCC Ontario photo

Canadians are being urged to support MCC Ontario’s “Message in a bottle” campaign that seeks to find clean water solutions for aboriginal communities across the country.

Kashechewan First Nation continue to live with recurring skin abrasions.

3. Address a label to either Tony Clement, Minister of Health, Health Canada, Minister’s Office, Tunney’s Pasture, Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9, or Rona Ambrose, Minister of the Environment, Minister’s Office, 10 Wellington St., Gatineau, QC K1A 0H3. In place of a stamp in the top right corner, write clearly “Member of Parliament,” to indicate a stamp is not necessary. Tape the label firmly around the middle of the bottle.
4. Mail the bottle.

—MCC Ontario release