

C A N A D I A N  
**Mennonite**

**March 19, 2007**  
Vol. 11, No. 6



# In memoriam

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## Church snapshots

One of the joys of working in the church is the welcome I receive when I visit our congregations across the country. I want to share some moments from three of the congregations I've been to in the past month.

I'm always interested in how our congregations worship together. At Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite, one thing that struck me was the use of a display projector. It was used throughout the service to display Scripture as well as hymn lyrics, both for choruses and Hymnal hymns.

The part that was unusual was that the visuals also included a variety of photos to match words from the hymns. While we sang "Thy justice like mountains high soaring above, Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love" from "Immortal, Invisible, God," a picture of a soaring mountain was the backdrop to the words. When singing, "Praise, I Will Praise You Lord," a picture of a young man with his arms outstretched in praise accompanied the text.

Darlene Derksen, who operated the computer, told me that this later picture was actually of one of the church's youths, and had been taken by Karl Enns, the youth pastor. She told me that a number of their photos used for worship backdrops were of their own members or of areas around Winkler. This is a creative and worship-enhancing choice, and much more engaging than photos from, say, a clipart file or a computer download.

I also joined Covenant Mennonite, also in Winkler, for Sunday school. They were currently in a six-part adult Sunday school series studying and reflecting on the connection between Christianity and caring for the environment. (Their source material was the Second Mile adult Sunday school material sponsored by MC Canada and Mennonite

Central Committee.) I'm finding this subject shows up as a topic of interest and concern in many churches across the country.

A week later, I was at Sargent Avenue Mennonite in Winnipeg, worshipping with the church there and learning about Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

Just in January, we published an article promoting the use of worship music written by those in our own church. We are "happy to sing the best of everyone else's worship music, but we aren't singing enough of our own," said Phil Campbell-Enns, a youth pastor at Grace Mennonite in Steinbach, Man.

We've made a bit of progress on this front as one of his compositions, "Fill Us With Your Feast," was sung that Sunday at Sargent. (It was distributed as a resource for the Lenten worship series published in our church's *Leader* magazine.) If your congregation has written some of its own music or would like to see and listen to what others in our churches have written, visit [mennonchurch.mb.ca](http://mennonchurch.mb.ca) and follow the "Resources" link to "Worship."

Sargent has also collected children's Sunday school offering in a way I had never seen before. During the offering time, the children go around and collect coins in their cupped hands. They then bring them to the front and give them to God. It's something the church has started doing recently to involve children in worship.

"It gets them out of the pew and gives them permission to run around," said Michelle Stoesz, a mother of two young children. "It's such a joyful thing. They just love it." Andrew, their young son, confirmed that "it's fun."

Every one of our churches is beloved by God and I am privileged to briefly be a part of them as often as I can.

—Tim Miller Dyck

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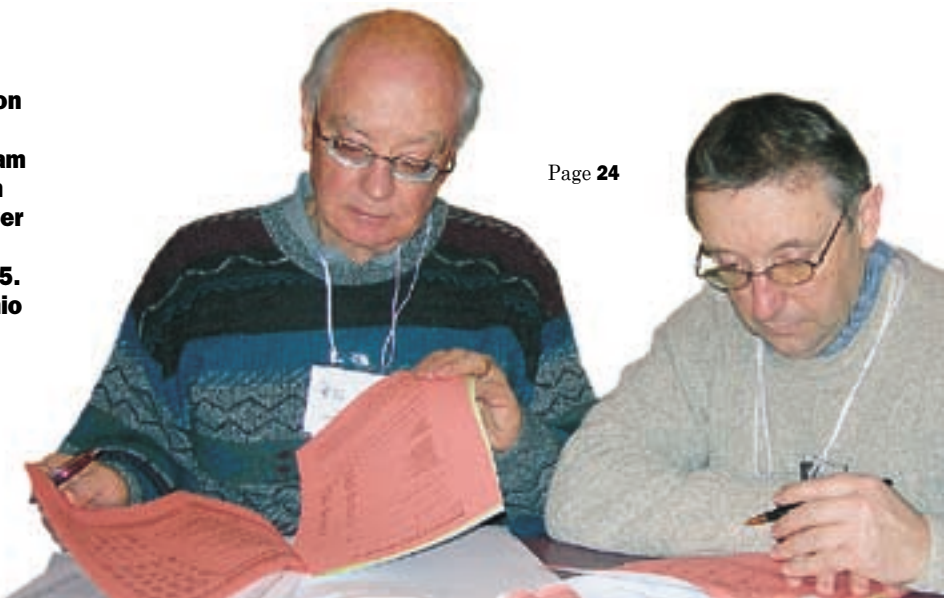


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## Electronic delivery

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**Cover: A memorial of four signed baseballs and a single red rose was created at Bluffton (Ohio) University to remember the four members of the school's men's baseball team who died in a bus crash in Atlanta on March 2. Also killed in the crash were the bus driver and his wife. A fifth teammate died of his injuries a week later. See story, see page 15. —Photo by Kelli Cardinal, *The Lima News*, Ohio**



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Christ on the cross:

# victim + victor

*The following Good Friday meditation on the cross according to the Passion narrative of John was written and preached by John D. Rempel, assistant professor of theology and Anabaptist studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.*

**T**oday is the day Christ died. We gather in awe and wonder, in sorrow and pity. We come in heartfelt gratitude. We flinch as we imagine Jesus pleading with his Father in the garden, being mocked by the soldiers, carrying his own cross.

Yet instinctively we know this is it: The salvation of the world is unfolding before our inward eye. The force of the world's evil and the weight of the world's sin are poised to pin Jesus down, nail him to a tree and let him die. We imagine that we are there, torn by uncertainty at what we would do—join Jesus with the Marys and John in his abandonment or desert him with the rest of the disciples?

We meet Jesus in the midst of accusation and betrayal. Pilate orders Jesus to be flogged in the hope of satisfying his accusers that this blasphemer has been rightly punished. But nothing will satisfy those who want him dead! He is a marked man. As Jesus awaits his fate, he is made the plaything of soldiers; they weave a crown of thorns which pierces his brow. "Hail, King of the Jews!" they shout in mock reverence.

It is a pathetic sight, but in the eyes of those convinced that Jesus is the No. 1 enemy of God and country, no torture can be cruel enough. The prisoner is sent out to the people, bloodied and beaten. Still the crowds shriek, "Crucify him; crucify him!"

At noon Pilate relents and hands Jesus over to the soldiers and the mob. The timing of Jesus' condemnation is not lost on the Gospel writer. Noon hour on the Day of Passover was the time when lambs were slaughtered for the feast. Jesus goes forth as the final lamb, the last sacrifice. Once and for all he bears sin away and breaks its power to condemn.

One of the most astonishing and overwhelming portrayals of the crucifixion is by the 16th century artist, Matthias Grunewald. His painting was part of an altarpiece he created for the chapel of a hospital for people suffering from syphilis. When we look closely at his depiction (*see*

*reproduction page 5*), we see that Jesus' whole body is covered with open lesions.

It's hard to resist the suggestion that Jesus is being portrayed as a syphilitic. In doing so, he bears the marks of the most dreaded disease of that age. It is like the AIDS sufferer today, "one from whom others hide their face" (*Isaiah 53:3*). The message is unmistakable: no infirmity is beyond the compassion of Jesus, no affliction unredeemed by his sacrifice or uncleansed by his blood.

Matthew, Mark and Luke place the full weight of the passion story on Jesus' anguish, on his willing victimhood. Indeed, who could remain unmoved by Jesus' sweat-drops of blood in the garden, begging the Father to remove this cup of suffering? Who does not want to cry out on his behalf when judge and crowd alike scream condemnation—and Jesus is silent? Who does not groan at the sight of Jesus' helplessness under the weight of the cross and heave a sigh of relief when Simon of Cyrene lifts the crushing burden from the condemned man's shoulders? Finally, who is not drawn into the helplessness of Jesus' mother and friends as they watch him being tortured from a distance?

### Jesus' dying confidence

It is not hard for us to believe in Jesus on the cross as a victim. But it is almost impossible to believe in Jesus on the cross as a victor. The special contribution of John's Gospel to the Passion drama is the insight that, in the midst of his suffering, Jesus still seizes the initiative. About Jesus' prayer in the garden, John wants believers to remember not only his sweat-drops of blood, but also his

*Amazing love,  
how can it be,  
that thou, O God,  
shouldst die  
for me!*

CHARLES WESLEY

burning resolve.

The Gospel writer recalls not only Jesus' silence before Pilate, but also his unflinching rebuttal of the accusations against him. On the way to Golgotha, nothing is said in the Fourth Gospel about Simon of Cyrene; what is seared into the memory is that Jesus carries his own cross. When he is hanging on the cross, Jesus does not leave his mother and friends helpless at a distance, but beckons them to within hearing distance to see to it that Mary is cared for by the Beloved Disciple. Finally, before Jesus breathes his last, he declares, *"It is finished!"* What he came to do is accomplished.

From the other passion accounts we remember Jesus' dread that the God of heaven and earth might—like Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac—be forsaking his only begotten Son, delivering him on our behalf over to the power of evil. This dread was surely a part of Jesus' dying dread.

But John insists that his readers remember something more—Jesus' dying confidence. The cry of anguish in the Fourth Gospel is at the same time a cry of conquest. In being pursued to the cross by the powers of destruction and death, Jesus becomes their pursuer. He casts himself on the goodness of God with relentless trust; he lets himself be God's lightning rod. All the trespasses and woes of creation crack like fire through the cosmic sky and strike Jesus dead.

Christian depictions of Jesus' crucifixion in the West are largely inspired by the Passion story as it is told by Matthew, Mark and Luke. Jesus is overwhelmingly portrayed as the victim—the prey of sin, evil and death—as we see so hauntingly in Grunewald's altarpiece.

By contrast, John inspires the icon painters of the Eastern Church where Jesus is depicted as a victor: he stoops to conquer. A common subject for portrayals of the crucifixion in the East shows Jesus reaching down from the cross, bending low to reach the hand of Adam in hell. Jesus stretches down into the pit to lift the first sinner, and all who came after him, to freedom. The message is clear: the power of everything that imprisons us—fear, revenge, greed, lust (everyone has



**Matthias Grunewald, "The Crucifixion"—panel from the Isenheim altarpiece (oil on wood), 1515.**

their own list) is broken on the cross and we are free!

This is the reason why John wrote a unique account of the Passion, so the church would never forget that Jesus' derision is at the same time his glorification. It is in his death that the power of love is most fully known. Yet we huddle in our prisons of fear because we refuse to believe that love can have the last word.

When we do so, we mock the claim that no corner of time and space—or of our own lives—is outside the redeeming reach of God's love. When we hoard possessions, power and friendship, rather than risk being generous with them, we belittle the victory of the cross. When we put our confidence in wealth and military might, rather than trusting in God's provision, we belittle the victory of the cross.

On this most solemn day of the year, words fail us, so we turn to the awesomely simple gesture Jesus shared with his disciples on the night he offered himself up.

Paul asks in his first letter to the Corinthians, *"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ?"*

When we break the bread and bless the cup we participate in the very life of Jesus laid down for us. We observe Good Friday as the most sacred day of the year—because on it we re-enter that event, above all others, which rescues the world from despair. On it, Jesus became the last sacrifice, the final scapegoat, breaking the vicious circle of an eye for an eye, making forgiveness possible.

*"It is finished."* The work of love is done. Now the work of love can begin.

—**John D. Rempel**



# A CHRISTUS VICTOR SERMON

*One of the earliest extant sermons of the church—  
preached at Easter by Melito of Sardis  
(A.D. 195)—concludes with these words:*

*But he rose from the dead  
and mounted up to the heights of heaven.  
When the Lord had clothed him with humanity,  
and had suffered for the sake of the sufferer,  
and had been bound for the sake of the imprisoned,  
and had been judged for the sake of the condemned,  
and buried for the sake of the one who was buried,  
he rose up from the dead,  
and cried with a loud voice:  
Who is he that contends with me?  
Let him stand in opposition to me.*

I set the condemned man free.  
I gave the dead man life;  
I raised up one who had been entombed.  
Who is my opponent?

I, he says, am the Christ.  
I am the one who destroyed death,  
and triumphed over the enemy,  
and trampled Hades underfoot,  
and bound the strong one,  
and carried off man  
to the heights of heaven.

I, he says, am the Christ.

*Quoted in Ancient-Future Faith  
by Robert Webber, Baker Books, 2000.*



Ross W. Muir, "A Crown of Thorns Can't Hold Him Down," photo illustration, 2007.

# 'Globaleyes': What's up?

*Globaleyes is a series of articles sponsored by the Peace Ministries program of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada that explores the reality of economic globalization through the eyes of Christian faith. There are two tracks: International and Canadian. The International track includes articles written by international partners or MCC staff persons around the world, while the Canadian track articles are written by young adults who are studying globalization or have first-hand experience observing its impact. This is the first of the Canadian articles, written by Peace Ministries coordinator Esther Epp-Tiessen. The perspectives included in Globaleyes ([mcc.org/globaleyes](http://mcc.org/globaleyes)) do not necessarily reflect MCC opinion. Canadian Mennonite will publish subsequent articles in future issues.*

*"Is not this the fast I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?" (Isaiah 58:6)*

In the spring of 2003 my family and I made a trip to the Philippines. It was our first visit since my husband and I had served there with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in the mid-1980s. We were amazed at the changes in the town of Malaybalay, where we had lived. Instead of muddy and rutted roads, there were now paved streets. Instead of daily "brown-outs," there was now steady electricity all day long. Instead of a telegraph office, there was now

an Internet cafe. It was evident that integration into the global economy had brought significant gains to the Philippines.

Then we visited Charing, a friend who had lived with us in Malaybalay. Charing, her husband Nario, and six children now lived in a remote hilly region far from paved roads, electricity and Internet cafes. Here, they tried to eke out a living on the steep hills by growing corn and bananas. They had a small one-room wooden shack which housed their few possessions: sleeping mats and pillows, some cooking pots and utensils, a few school supplies, and one or two changes of clothing for each family member. A horse and water buffalo were their prized pos-

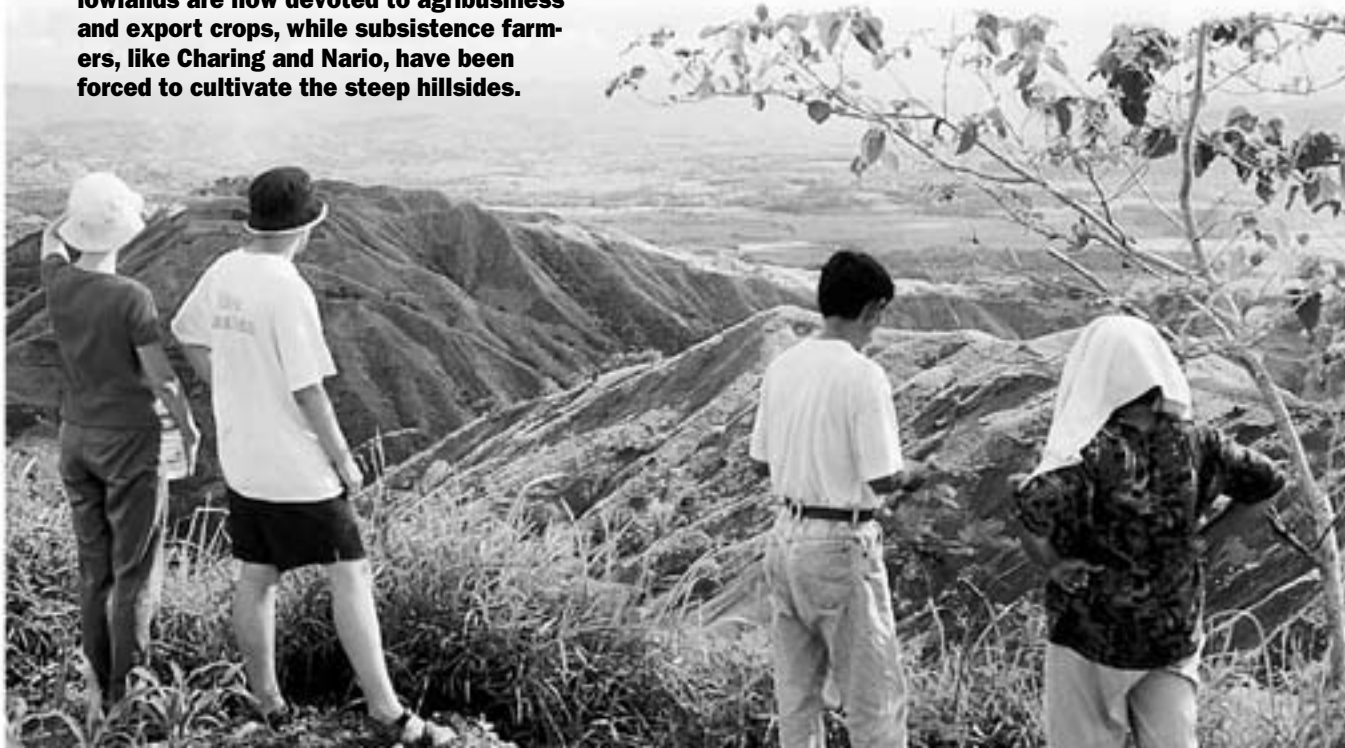
sessions, enabling them to work their small bit of land and get their produce to market.

As we visited with Charing and Nario, we learned that small farmers like them were missing out on the benefits of the global economy. The value of their produce was less than what it had been two decades earlier. Like other poor countries joining the World Trade Organization, the Philippines was required to lower its tariffs against foreign agricultural imports. The result was that cheap corn imports flooded the market, lowering the price for locally grown corn.

Not only did Nario and Charing receive less for their produce but,

**Continued on page 8**

**In Bukidnon province, most of the flat lowlands are now devoted to agribusiness and export crops, while subsistence farmers, like Charing and Nario, have been forced to cultivate the steep hillsides.**





**The author's family enjoys corn on the cob with Charing, Nario and their children.**

because of the Philippines' devalued currency, they had to spend more for imported items like fertilizer. Their income was dwindling, and a sudden medical emergency could mean disaster for their family. It was clear that the global economy was leaving Charing and Nario far behind.

#### **Economic globalization—a reality or ideology?**

When we think of globalization we often think of a world more interconnected due to advances in communication and transportation.

Distinguishing economic globalization is more complicated because what is usually equated with globalization is actually an economic ideology called neo-liberalism. This ideology espouses small government, market-driven growth, and the removal of barriers to trade and investment. Everyone benefits from this kind of globalization, so the argument goes. But, in truth, it is primarily the corporations and capital investors who call the shots and make the gains. Some people therefore use the terms "corporate globalization" or "unregulated globalization" to indicate that other models of globalization are possible.

Most of us are beneficiaries of neo-liberal economic globalization. We can eat mangoes and strawberries in the middle of winter, buy T-shirts from Burma for a few dollars, replace last year's laptop with a better and

cheaper model this year, and invest in mutual funds that will ensure us a cozy retirement. Life looks pretty rosy from our perspective.

#### **Disparity in income is only one aspect of the shadow side of the global economy.**

But the benefits of economic globalization are uneven. According to the United Nations Development Program, the disparity between the rich and poor is widening both within countries and between them. While the number of people living on less than \$1 per day has fallen in the last decade, almost all of this improvement has happened

in one country—China. Elsewhere, the number of people living in abject poverty has risen sharply. Globally, the richest 10 percent of the population accounts for 59 percent of the world's wealth, whereas the poorest 40 percent, those who live on less than \$2 a day, account for only 5 percent of global income.

Disparity in income is only one aspect of the shadow side of the global economy. Despite the benefits it provides, globalization contributes to the homogenization of culture, as Coca-Cola, McDonalds and Britney Spears replace the foods, music and traditions of local cultures. Globalization means increased harm for the natural environment, as natural resources are plundered and increasing amounts of fuel are used to transport goods around the world. Globalization undermines democracy as economic

power is concentrated in the hands of corporations that are accountable only to their shareholders.

#### **Another way**

An old proverb says that if you give people a fish you feed them for a day; whereas if you teach them to fish you feed them for a lifetime. For many decades MCC, a Christian organization engaged in meeting human need, has sought to teach people to fish, among other things. But the realities of economic globalization demonstrate forcefully that the real problem is lack of access to the sea. The global poor know how to fish—but they need to be able to sell their fish and make a decent living. How can global and national economies be restructured in ways that the benefits are truly shared and that the "least of these"—as Jesus identified the poor in Matthew 25—are served?

Over a two-year period, MCC held a series of consultations with global partners on economic globalization. A key realization was that a major force driving the globalization system is the greed and unsustainable consumption patterns of those who already have too much. Our lifestyles support the systems that impoverish other members of our human community and desecrate God's good creation.

Christians are called to practise justice and to live in ways that make God's abundance available to everyone.

—**Esther Epp-Tiessen**



## Catechism as confession and witness

*Encountering the Eternal One: A Guide for Mennonite Churches.* Gerke van Hiele. Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press, 2006.

North American Mennonites have generally assumed that Christian catechism—study usually leading to baptism and church membership—is primarily a way to pass on the faith to children of the church. It assumes some basic familiarity with the biblical narrative and an acceptance of core Christian beliefs.

However, the catechism *Encountering the Eternal One*, recently published by the Mennonite Church in the Netherlands, focuses largely on adults who come into the church from other denominations or faith traditions. According to the preface of the Dutch edition, this book offers an apologetic for Christian belief that stems from the Mennonite tradition to people “who are from an entirely different tradition, with a different ideology—often members who only recently joined the church” (page 7).

Anabaptist scholar and publisher Arnold Snyder published an English version, believing that it may point the way to sharing faith in a society that is increasingly secular, a trend that the church in Europe had to face earlier than North America did, but which is fast becoming our reality.

How does one bear witness to faith

in such a society? The title of the book itself indicates the approach of the author, who sometimes uses more generic “faith” language, rather than explicitly “religious” or even Christian language, as he attempts to build bridges of understanding to non-Christians or to Christians whose beliefs are tentative.

The book is an apologetic for Christian faith, but the author’s desire is to move the endeavour of catechism from monologue to dialogue. The book offers clear statements affirming what might be identifiable as core tenets of faith, but always casts these in the context that the reader may have doubts or may even be offended by the ideas expressed. Thus it is truly “apologetic” in the popular sense of the word.

At points, the style and content reflect a kind of Christian agnosticism: “What is left is an uncertain voice searching to express things that cannot really be given a name. We can only speak in images when we try to express the secrets of God” (page 103).

The book concludes with a Confession of Faith simply entitled “Credo.” The credo, which is dated, does not purport to express truth for all time; it simply expresses what its authors are prepared to hold—perhaps lightly—as truth at this time. In the credo, as in the book as a whole, the contributors consciously avoid declaring “truth” in a propositional way, but offer truths expressed as confession and witness.



The writers dance carefully around topics such as holding one another accountable. While being totally sensitive to the right of the individuals to hold their separate beliefs, they nonetheless gently but insistently suggest that there would be much to be gained by regaining a sense of church as community.

How might we receive this gift from the Dutch Mennonite Church? It could be used by pastors and other church leaders in catechism class, in Sunday school or other study groups. It is designed for use with young adults or adults, not children or youth.

—Maurice Martin

*The reviewer is one of three Mennonite Church Eastern Canada regional ministers.*

### Arts note

#### Wiebe wins Taylor Prize

The 2007 Taylor Prize for Literary Non-fiction was awarded to Rudy Wiebe on Feb. 26 for his memoir *Of This Earth: A Mennonite Boyhood in the Boreal Forest*, published by Knopf Canada in 2006. The prize, which comes with \$25,000, is open to books in the English language written by Canadians. The three-person jury considered 98 books and chose *Of This Earth*, declaring it to be “an evocative and moving memoir of his childhood in rural Saskatchewan,” using “prose that is both spare and eloquent.” Wiebe has also won two Governor-General’s Awards for English-language fiction: *The Temptations of Big Bear* in 1974 and *A Discovery of Strangers* in 1994. The other short-listed books for 2007 were *Citizen of the World: The Life of Pierre Elliot Trudeau, Volume One: 1919-1968* by John English and *The Judgment of Paris: The Revolutionary Decade that Gave the World Impressionism* by Ross King.

—Barb Draper

#### Pontius' Puddle



Baden, Ont.

## From the smell of death to a sense of wholeness

**M**any of us cannot imagine the horrors of war. But not Morio Ogasawara, a member of Shantz Mennonite Church, who was psychologically scarred during World War II in his native Japan.

Tokyo had been the target of massive incendiary bombings by the Allied Air Force from early 1945 to the end of war later that year. On March 9 and 10, B-29 bombers dropped nearly a half-million M-69 incendiary cylinders, which created intense fires. This bombing—the largest air raid in history—reduced 17 square miles of the city core to ashes.

Morio was eight years old then, and although his family was living in a suburb that was not bombed on those two days, he watched as the whole sky turned red from huge fires burning in the city. He doesn't remember being afraid, but was more awestruck by the sheer scale of the catastrophe.

A couple days later, when he returned to school (students went to school every day except when actual bombing was going on—then they had a “bomb day” much like a “snow day” in Canada), Morio learned that a stray bomb had killed a friend with whom he went to Kindergarten. Morio was told that Mitchan (the girl's nickname) and her mother, with her youngest daughter strapped on her back, were hit by one of the incendiary cluster bombs that had discharged high above them.

A few weeks later, as bombing spread to the suburbs, Morio's parents decided to evacuate the family from Tokyo. In order to get to the train station, they had to go through the downtown area. Fearing what the three children might see, their mother blindfolded the children until they reached the station.

As they were waiting to board the evacuation train, Morio smelled a strange smell. He put that smell and the story of Mitchan together and instantly fainted. He later learned that a couple of days earlier, a few platforms

away from where they stood, a passenger train had received a direct hit, and hundreds of people had perished. The smell had lingered.

Ogasawara believes that a part of him was frozen in terror on that spot and was left there as an eight-year-old boy. Since that day he has experienced fainting spells, which have always been accompanied—or triggered—by the sense of smell.

The fainting spells have been a physical response to his history, but it has been the emotional part that has been the greatest struggle.

A prayer vigil at Hillcrest Mennonite Church in New Hamburg, Ont., kick-started his incredible journey of healing. Then, on Nov. 20, 2001, he attended a Steve Bell concert. Bell, a popular Christian musician, told the audience of a dream that dealt with hurt, violence, frustration and, ultimately, healing. It was a powerful, even provocative, testimony at a time when many still reeled from the 9/11 attack and the war in Afghanistan.

Ogasawara also attended a lecture at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church by Koko Kondo, an atomic bomb survivor. She expressed her hatred for the crew of the B-29 bombers for all their destruction. Ogasawara had never blamed or hated the crew of the bombers, but at eight he already knew that the enemy was not the flight crew, nor America, nor Japan—but war itself.

“How much easier would it be if I hated someone in particular?” he wondered. “Then the moment I forgive someone, hard though it may be, I would also be freed and healed, as it had happened for Koko. How much heavier a burden could there be for anyone, let alone a child, to carry? It was a sense of the ‘fallen-ness’ of humankind which manifested [itself] in the horrible war. Whom could I forgive and how?”



Ogasawara

Ogasawara reflected on the humble advice that Kondo had given him about his anger: “Tell your story, no matter how painful it is to do so and

how unresolved your troubles are, and by doing so you are helping to heal yourself.” As he hugged tiny Kondo—her growth stunted by nuclear radiation—he knew that God had led her to him.

He was finally ready to reveal his scars. While singing “Silent Night” at the 2001 Christmas Eve service at Shantz, he felt that God had carried him back 56 years in

time to reunite him with the little boy who was left on the platform of the Tokyo train terminal. When the hymn came to the end, Ogasawara found himself completely whole for the first time in many years.

He was finally ready to tell his story.

*Originally appeared in the Nov. 15, 2006 edition of the Baden (Ont.) Outlook; reprinted by permission.*

### News brief

#### CMU athletes, coach honoured

Five members of the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) men's and women's Blazers basketball teams were honoured at the annual Association of Christian College Athletics (ACCA) national basketball awards banquet in Oklahoma City, Okla., last month. Receiving awards were: Charlie Brake of Winnipeg: 1st Team All-American; Chris Thompson of Stonewall, Man.: Honourable Mention All-American; Christie Anne McCullough of Outlook, Sask.: Honourable Mention All-American; Rachel Parsons of Winnipeg: Honourable Mention All-American; and Curt Warkentin of Winnipeg: Men's Coach of the Year. —CMU release by **John Longhurst**

## Letters

### Regehr clarifies use of 'force' statements

Thank you for your report on the panel at the World Social Forum in Nairobi, Kenya, in which I was quoted as supporting the resort to force in extraordinary circumstances ("Project Ploughshares founder accepts international 'force' as last ditch option," Feb. 5, page 14). Your readers should be aware that I was on the panel to

**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.**

elaborate on a statement on intervention approved by the World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly in 2006, a statement that has the support of

European Mennonites and Quaker groups that are members of the WCC.

The statement reads in part: "In

**Continued on page 12**

PHIL WAGLER



### Outside the box

I was privileged to be the guest of United Mennonite Educational Institute (UMEI) in Leamington, Ont., in February. The world of youth is one I am a foreigner in, and I needed a reality check of life seen through newer eyes, so I asked these fine students to school me. Here's what I learned listening to teens in Grades 9 to 12:

- **Entertainment:** Our youths are saturated in a world designed to amuse. Almost all have music at the ready through iPods and MP3s, and their tastes are diverse, from opera and classical to country, rock and heavy metal. New and old tunes of the church do get some play between Sundays.

The screen dominates their world. Animated films, horror flicks and everything in between were recent views, and most watch at least two movies weekly. Some read books, but none mentioned their Bibles; few read newspapers. The Internet and video games are constant, and much of this is made in the U.S.

- **World and community:** Most knew of Iraq and were convinced "we" shouldn't be there, but I had to point out Canada is not in Iraq. None remembered Afghanistan, but when I mentioned it, they were sure we were unjust in being there.

Other issues like global warming, AIDS, the Pickton trial, job lay-offs and Brittany Spears shaving her head stirred the pot. I was encouraged by their awareness of international and local concerns, but equally alarmed by a lack of critical and biblical thought given to the issues. They generally accept what media says about who is right and wrong.

Interestingly, they are quite anti-American, yet spend much time happily amused by U.S. culture.

- **Leadership:** Politicians are "liars" and "crooks." Youths don't trust the system, but look with favour upon parents, grandparents, teachers, pastors and any who really engage the world for their model, care and courage. They are seeking to be led, for opportunity to learn and fail,

## A foot in both worlds

**They see life through secular eyes, which bespeaks enormous missional possibilities and disturbing discipleship problems.**

and are looking for action in facing the world as it really is.

- **Church:** There was awareness they live two different lives; they have a foot in both worlds—and they see this in the church too. They are not sure the church is relevant, are ironically

bothered by money spent only on the church itself, and are confused by what the church believes and thereby what they believe. They

want faith to relate to all areas of life, but see this lacking both personally and corporately. Church, culture and their amused lives seem schizophrenically separated.

- **Food for thought:** Culture is overwhelmingly technological—an innate skill and language for teens; perpetually youth-centred—a pipe-dream we pay billions to cling to; and "glocal" (global and local)—a source of information-overload, entertainment, and concern, indifference and confusion for youths.

Secular western culture, with its values and belief system, is their homeland and provides them with their primary worldview. They see life through secular eyes, which bespeaks enormous missional possibilities and disturbing discipleship problems.

The church is a source of hope and security, but feeds a disconnect they are weary of as they

ping-pong between two worlds. Faith seems a goulash of humanism, secular liberalism, Oprahisms, and Hollywoodisms, with a dash of Sunday school clichés thrown in.

Does it matter what they believe so long as they are nice and successful? How can they lead an engaged, Christ-centred life in this world? How are they challenging the rest of us with a foot in both worlds?

*Phil Wagler is lead pastor of Zurich (Ont.) Mennonite Church and is thankful for the openness and honesty of the great students at UMEI (Go Lightning!). You can connect to his world at phil\_wagler@yahoo.ca.*

**Regehr** *From page 11*

calling on the international community to come to the aid of vulnerable people in extraordinary suffering and peril, the fellowship of churches is not prepared to say that it is never appropriate or never necessary to resort to the use of force for the protection of the vulnerable.... [T]he objective must be the welfare of people, especially those in situations of extreme vulnerability and who are utterly abandoned to the whims and prerogatives of their tormentors.... The resort to force is first and foremost the result of the failure to prevent what could have been prevented with appropriate foresight

and actions, but having failed, and having acknowledged such failure, the world needs to do what it can to limit the burden and peril that is experienced by people as a consequence.”

I participated in drafting the statement, and at the assembly Mennonites and Quakers were actively engaged in the debate and, in the end, added their support to it. The context for the discussion was [as the article stated] the scandalous failure of the international community to come effectively to the aid of the people of Rwanda in the 1990s and the children of northern Uganda who, my fellow panelist—ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat of Kenya—pointed out, have been victims of the

most heinous crimes for more than two decades.

In our own moments of crisis in Canada we all have the opportunity to dial 911 and can expect someone to respond. The people of Darfur and northern Uganda have been going to their phones to dial 911, only to find that the line is dead.

—**Ernie Regehr, Waterloo, Ont.**

*The writer is currently a senior policy advisor with Project Ploughshares. He is a former director and co-founder of the organization. For more information on the concept of the “responsibility to protect” from a Mennonite perspective, visit [mcc.org](http://mcc.org) and do a search for “responsibility to protect newsletter.”*

AIDEN ENNS



**New Order voice**

**F**irst, a few words about Starbucks coffee and why I oppose it. Then, an explanation of why I drank some at a church office.

I'll keep it to four reasons.

First, as I move in a world of symbols, Starbucks coffee represents corporate greed. The company has managed to grow from 165 outlets in 1992 to 12,338 last year. According to an announcement last October, president Jim Donald hopes to expand that to 40,000 worldwide.

In my own life, I'm trying to foster a sense of “enough.” And with my consumer spending I prefer to patronize companies with modest ambitions.

Second, Starbucks is not a leader in the movement toward fairly traded coffee. While they claim to be the largest single purchaser of fairly traded coffee, such coffee still only accounts for 3.7 per cent of all their coffee.

I prefer to brew my own coffee, made with beans from Chris, a guy down the street who bulk orders from a friend, who gets the beans from a B.C. roaster, who buys directly from producers in Colombia for higher-than-market prices. Large corporations use their buying power to force producers to lower their prices. This is unfair. And I want to support companies that lead the way in promoting fairly traded products.

Third, the growth of Starbucks—and its incursion into so many city centres—homogenizes local culture. I suppose a benefit is that you can go to Toronto, Vancouver or China's Forbidden City and get the same coffee, with predictable floor plans and dainties. This generic dimension is perversely comforting. We feel a sense of the familiar in a strange town. On the other hand, regional diversity is replaced with meticulously crafted corporate character, packaged with the personal charm of a barista and consolation of upscale elevator music.

## A drink-hate relationship with Starbucks

This comfy retail facade is replicated by other retail giants, including Best Buy, Future Shop, Home Depot, Wal-Mart and Esso. These stores

are physical extensions of the reality created by advertising, the false world conveyed by Hollywood and *People* magazine. From the number of cars in the parking lots, most people

seem to like this reality.

I find it highly problematic. And counter to Jesus' words: “Store up for yourselves treasures that moth and rust cannot destroy.”

And fourth, it reinforces an identity I need to shun. People use consumer purchases and logos as a way of forming their identity. I do it too. That's why I prefer to buy things used and enjoy peeling off labels. I'm going for the “no brand” brand. When I buy coffee, I want my purchase to reflect my identity as a justice-seeking, generous, community-minded citizen. Hence I usually make coffee at home or visit small coffee shops.

### I joined a national Mennonite Church meeting and they offered me Starbucks coffee.

So, given my strong feelings about Starbucks coffee, I was faced with a dilemma one recent Saturday morning. I joined a national Mennonite Church meeting and they offered me Starbucks coffee. It was in a cardboard

“coffee pot” (it must have had a plastic liner), along with cardboard cups, all with appropriate branding. I could have—should have?—declined.

Instead, I said “sure” and drank it black. I considered that encounter as a “cross-cultural experience,” even though I was with fellow Mennonites. That is, they offered me the brands and symbols of disposable, consumer culture. Meanwhile, I'm trying to embody a counter-culture. But still, I need to be gracious.

*Aiden Enns can be reached at [aiden@geezmagazine.org](mailto:aiden@geezmagazine.org). He is a member of Hope Mennonite Church in Winnipeg and sits on the Canadian Mennonite board.*

## Students conscious of treatment of pastors

I would like to thank Gerald Gerbrandt (“Answering the call to church leadership formation,” Jan. 22, page 10) and Muriel Bechtel (“God’s work in progress,” Jan. 22, page 29) for their words about the relationship between congregations and pastors.

I agree with Gerbrandt that “our ‘crisis in leadership’...may really be a ‘crisis in membership,’” as so often our congregations, whether consciously or not, hold pastors to a much higher and harsher ethical standard than other members of our congregations.

I am studying at Canadian Mennonite University right now and can report one unforeseen consequence of these situations. When this kind of news reaches students currently attending Mennonite post-secondary institutions, including the next generation of pastors, it can cause students to change their minds about entering the ministry.

As congregations, we need to remember, as Bechtel writes, that “pastor and people are in ministry together,” and that the questionable treatment of pastors in some congregations today may have devastating effects for the future of the church. While pastors should not be treated any better than other members of the congregation, neither should they be treated any worse. Otherwise, there may not be a next generation of pastors.

—**Susanne Guenther, Winnipeg**

*We received a considerable number of letters responding to Jim Suderman’s Feb. 19 letter. Every one received by press time is printed below in shortened form. So as to not dominate the Letters section with this subject, I’m drawing responses on this subject to a close for a while. -Ed.*

## Fearful for gays, not of them

Re: “Church must catch up to government on gay rights,” Feb. 19, page 13.

The church must never catch up to the government. The church is governed by Christ and Christ alone, and is an alien colony on this Earth. Its principles are so far ahead of this country’s government that it is laugh-

able for the church to catch up to an earthly government.

To quickly change one’s attitudes from the timeless precepts of Christ to the earthly flavour of the day seems foolish, as this flavour too will pass away. Anabaptist martyrs seemed to have very little concern for the legal and political realities as they chose to follow Christ, even unto death.

In response to Jim Suderman’s last point about fear, I must admit that, as part of a minority, I do fear. It is not a fear of the gay person, but for the gay person—just as I fear for all people who seek their fulfillment in the treasures and pleasures of this world. I fear that when the sick, guilt-ridden and disillusioned come to the organized church, they will only find voices of affirmation telling them that they are really all right and on the right road.

I fear that the good news of redemption from this world and its desires may never reach those whose lives have found nothing but emptiness in this world. I fear for the parents who will be tempted to abandon praying for their children.

I fear the reality of my own human weakness that seeks to be fulfilled by its desires, which, apart from the constant support, forgiveness, love and power of Jesus Christ, I could never resist.

I fear that, although God created us to be like him and that he provided the way through to his glorious, righteous, everlasting kingdom, this news will be drowned out by bold advocates of the glories of this present age.

Please, church, don’t close the road to Jesus. At the very least, continue to point hurting earthbound humanity to the Bible and to its Jesus. I am so thankful that someone did this for me.

—**Gerhard Luitjens, Rosthern, Sask.**

## Was gay rights letter tongue-in-cheek?

I read Jim Suderman’s letter, “Church must catch up to government on gay rights,” Feb. 19, page 13, several times to try to understand where he is coming from. I believe he must have written with “tongue in cheek” and did not mean to be taken too literally.

Did he really mean that anything our Canadian government passes is

the final word on moral issues, with his reference to same-sex marriage? Surely, he must know numerous biblical teachings that instruct true believers in Christ to obey God rather than mere mortal man?

We do need to thank Suderman for giving us a prime example of what many people do with Scripture to support the lifestyle they want to live. With his addition to Galatians 3:27-28—“there is neither gay nor straight”—perhaps a new version of the Bible is coming out!

We need to read the whole Bible, Genesis to Revelation, carefully and prayerfully. It is a comfort to know that God loves us sinners and hates sin for what it does to us.

—**Reynold Kipfer, Kitchener, Ont.**

## Bible, not government, the church’s proper guide

I write regarding Jim Suderman’s letter, “Church must catch up to government on gay rights,” Feb. 19, page 13.

While I do have a personal opinion on the topic, my comments are related to the rationale presented—namely, the church must follow the lead of the government. My understanding of Anabaptist history and my personal conviction lead me to believe that the church should take its cues from the Bible, church history and church counsel, rather than look to our government for leadership in issues of moral conduct—who we love, and how we relate to and how we accept one another.

I believe we are to honour those in authority, and respect and pray for our government, but to look to them for moral and spiritual leadership would be a major departure from our way of faith. Are we to “catch up” to the government on military issues? Or follow their leadership in loving our neighbours or enemies?

No. Let’s do what is right, be the people of God and if we are on the same side as the government on some issues, so be it. But let it be known we have come to our convictions by a faith process built on the authority of the Bible, not by following the secular government.

—**Charles Byer, Port Rowan, Ont.**

## Christians called to higher standard

Re: “Church must catch up to government on gay rights,” Feb. 19, page 13.

The triumphal spirit of this letter saddens me greatly. To assume that, since the laws of the land have now been changed regarding gay marriage we are no longer under the authority of the Scriptures, suggests we do not understand which king we serve. While there has been much debate, rarely have we seen a good review of Scripture on this subject and I do not presume to provide such.

I do know clearly that loving our neighbour as ourselves—including homosexuals—does not require us to give them membership and ordination. It does require that we love them. When Christ allowed the woman to go free after being caught in adultery, he did say she was not to sin further.

As Anabaptist/Mennonites, we also share a heritage and a membership with a very broad world body that is far larger than our little Canadian body. Let us not get into the difficulty now facing the Anglicans, in which the little remaining western church body may be excommunicated from the now larger southern body.

As followers of Christ we are called to a much higher standard and need to learn to walk in his way; that way is narrow.

—**John Neufeld, Brampton, Ont.**

## Church must not follow the lead of society

I would beg to differ with the view expressed by Jim Suderman’s “Church must catch up to government on gay rights” letter (Feb. 19, page 13). When the church follows the lead of society it has lost its God-given purpose and it becomes a case of the blind leading the blind into the pit. The church needs to discern when the decisions of civil authorities are contrary to the redemptive purposes of God and take a positive stand for the truth in humility and love. We do well to remember the trouble Lot got into because of his compromise with the socially accepted practices of Sodom.

—**Walter Dirks, Fort St. John, B.C.**

## Scripture doesn’t let opponents off the hook

In response to Jim Suderman’s Feb. 19 letter, “Church must catch up to government on gay rights” (page 13), I would like him to write and tell us what Scripture he uses to get around these verses—Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13 and Romans 1:26-28. God will render to every man according to his deeds.

—**Peter Rempel, Rosthern, Sask.**

## Personal feelings can cloud biblical truth

I feel most Mennonites across Canada and the U.S. disagree with Jim Suderman (“Church must catch up to government on gay rights,” Feb. 19, page 13). In Jude it says that *“certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you; they are godless men who change the grace of God into a licence for immorality and deny Jesus, our only sovereign and Lord.”* Our obligation as church congregations is to share Jesus’ compassion and care for those that are hurting. We pray that they will realize that their lifestyle, which they have chosen, is wrong and does not adhere to biblical values as set forth by Jesus Christ and the Bible. My concern for these people is found in John 3:16. Finally, one can’t use personal feelings to change the Bible; otherwise, it becomes valueless and is no longer a standard for truth.

—**Hans G. Nickel, Rosthern, Sask.**

## Stand by the Bible against government

Concerning Jim Suderman’s letter, “Church must catch up to government on gay rights,” in the Feb. 19 issue (page 13), Mennonites always stood by the Bible and not by the government if it is contrary to the Word of God. Where will it lead us if we give up more and more of the contents of the Bible? Homosexuality is considered an abomination by God (Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13, I Kings 14:24 and Romans 1:26-27).

—**Maria Naiser-Gutzeif, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.**

## Morality is from God and Scripture

In response to Jim Suderman’s “Church must catch up to government on gay rights” letter (Feb. 19, page 13), it is a totally foreign concept to me to accept such a statement. It is a fact of history that the Mennonite Church has taught that there are instances when we must *“obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29)*. Our discussions on morality should come from God and Scripture, and not from government or pressure groups. He quotes Galatians 3:27-28 to justify his position, but to me it is quite evident that the apostle does not want us to believe that baptism wipes out gender and nationality, but rather that God is not a *“respector of persons” (Acts 10:34)*, who welcomes into his family every person who repents and believes in Jesus. I strongly agree that we should love our neighbour; however, this does not mean that we must always approve of what our neighbour does.

—**Cornie Martens, Rabbit Lake, Sask.**

## Church and state are separate

It was with a great deal of concern that I read Jim Suderman’s letter, “Church must catch up to government on gay rights,” Feb. 19, page 13.

Our forefathers suffered and died because of their belief in the separation of church and state. The fact that our government has twice ruled in favour of gay rights does in no way overrule what the Bible says (Romans 1:24-28).

There does not seem to be any distinction made in the letter between orientation and practice of homosexual behaviour. We are all born with a sinful nature and must battle with right and wrong daily. How can we confess Jesus as Lord and continue on in sin?

And to say that if we do not accept homosexual behavior then we are fearful of them as people, is not correct. True Christians are willing to accept any person who has recognized that we all have sinful tendencies and are willing to confess and repent of them. To say that only a “small minority” is still “fearful” of gays and lesbians without an exhaustive polling is totally unfounded and potentially misleading.

—**Murray A. Gerber, Brunner, Ont.**

Bluffton, Ohio

## Five Bluffton ball players die in Atlanta bus crash

In the chaos and terror of the moments after the March 2 pre-dawn crash in Atlanta, Ga., members of the Bluffton University baseball team actually tried to lift their toppled bus from the shattered bodies of their teammates.

“We had guys stuck under the bus—legs, arms—and we had guys trying to pick the bus up,” shortstop Ryan Baightel, 21, told the *Toledo Blade* newspaper. “You are not going to pick a bus up, but yet they were still trying to pick the bus up.”

The crash occurred around 5:30 a.m., when a chartered bus carrying the Bluffton Beavers men’s baseball team plunged 10 metres from an overpass onto Interstate 75 near downtown Atlanta. The team was on its way to play Eastern Mennonite University in Sarasota, Fla., before playing in a spring break tournament in Gainesville, Fla.

Killed at the scene were Bluffton players Tyler Williams, 19, of Lima, Ohio; Cody Holp, 19, of Arcanum, Ohio; David Betts, 20, of Bryan, Ohio, a member of Zion Mennonite Church in Archbold, Ohio; and Scott Harmon, 19, of Lima; and bus driver Jerome Niemeyer, 65, of Columbus Grove, Ohio, and his wife, Jean, 61. Zachary Arend of Oakwood, Ohio, died in hospital a week after the crash.

Nearly a dozen of the 35 people on the bus were seriously injured in the crash, including Bluffton coach James Grandey, 29, who underwent facial surgery.

The bus had left Bluffton the previous night. Authorities said the charter, operated by Executive Coach Luxury Travel in Ottawa, Ohio, plunged from the overpass after the driver apparently mistook an exit ramp for a regular lane.

In the predawn darkness, the bus, travelling nearly 100 kph, collided with a metre-high concrete barrier and

tore through a fence before hitting the interstate 10 metres below.

The bus came to rest on the driver’s side, spilling diesel fuel and scattering luggage and sports equipment.

Injured Bluffton player A.J. Ramthun described the scene after the crash: “With [eight centimetres] of diesel fuel running off onto the highway...they were...trying to lift the bus off of them.”

As news of the crash spread and the injured were taken to several Atlanta medical centres, members of the Atlanta Mennonite community began to respond.

At Grady Memorial Hospital, chaplain Susan Gascho, a former pastor at Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship, worked intensively with the crash survivors and their families.

On March 4, some of the Bluffton players and families of the crash victims returned to Ohio aboard a free AirTran flight, where a tearful welcome awaited them at Toledo’s Express Airport. Also on the plane were caskets carrying the bodies of Betts and Williams, as well as several members of Betts’ family.

“We’re coming home, and he’s coming home,” Betts’ sister Sarah, 23, told the *Toledo* newspaper.

Bluffton president James Harder also was on the flight. On March 2, Harder spoke during a nationally televised news conference held at Bluffton’s Founders Hall before leaving for Atlanta.

At the airport March 4, Harder said, “We were sending a baseball team to a spring break training exercise and tournament. They didn’t make it, but as I reflected on that, I think [the survivors] came together as a team in ways we couldn’t have imagined going down there. They became better individuals because of that.”

Harder said the Bluffton community would have much to deal with when



Williams



Holp



Harmon



Betts

classes were to resume on March 12 after spring break.

“So far we’ve just been dealing with the human tragedy,” Harder said. “We have a lot of healing to do.”

In Atlanta, Bluffton campus pastor Stephen “Tig” Intagliata spent the night of March 4 in a hospital where he was keeping watch with families of some of the crash victims.

Intagliata said six who were on the bus were still hospitalized with varying degrees of injury. “We’ve been back and forth to the different hospitals, just being there for the families,” Intagliata said the next day. “They’re being surrounded by offers of help, food, gifts, clothing.”

Intagliata said he had been working with Atlanta churches and other groups to keep a steady source of counselling, assistance, lodging and other resources available to the families of the injured in the weeks to come.

A fund has been established at Bluffton’s Citizens National Bank to help the baseball players involved in the crash and their families. A memorial service at Bluffton was planned for March 6.

—Robert Rhodes

*The article originally appeared in a slightly altered form on the Mennonite Weekly Review website.*



The trailer of a Hurricane Katrina survivor in New Orleans was destroyed by a tornado that dealt a heavy blow to a part of the city still recovering from the devastating 2005 hurricane season.

# Second wind

## Tornado strikes while students on hurricane clean-up

**Aaron Epp, left, was among a group of 14 CMU students who went to New Orleans, La., during reading week last month to help Mennonite Disaster Service with Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. While there, he was switched to tornado relief after one touched down in the still-recovering city.**



Photo by Cordella Friesen

Just days after returning from New Orleans, La., where they went to help people still affected by 2005's Hurricane Katrina, 14 Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) students are trying to adjust to life back in Winnipeg.

"I'm still trying to process the experience," says Mikaela Villalobos, a first-year youth ministry major from Quarryville, Pa. "You could sense the distress that the people of New Orleans were feeling, but that they were searching for hope."

The distress Villalobos refers to is the result of a tornado that struck New Orleans in the early morning hours of Feb. 13. Although not large, it killed one person and injured others, while damaging dozens of businesses and homes all over the city.

The students had gone to New Orleans during their reading week with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) to rebuild homes damaged by Katrina. They started the week working on flood-damaged homes—painting, putting in floors and demolishing homes and garages that were beyond repair.

But after the tornado struck, they



Neuanlage, Sask.

## First-time RV couple loves the new MDS program

John Braun did not have a recreational vehicle (RV) and he did not want one. He wasn't interested. But he started looking for just such a vehicle after he picked up a leaflet at Neuanlage Grace Mennonite Church in Saskatchewan, where he and his wife Linda attend.

The leaflet described the new Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) RV program, especially designed for seniors with RVs who want to serve but want a shorter work week. Having renewed energy after bouncing back from a heart attack and quadruple bypass surgery, he liked the sound of the program.

So the couple found a deal on a "classic" 1975 Itasca RV. John took it for a test drive 100 kilometres down the highway and said, "Let's go!"

Well not quite that quickly. They applied and were accepted into the RV

program through the Winnipeg MDS office. They also talked it over with their church. The congregation was very enthusiastic, offering their prayers and financial support.

"That church is so generous. It's just amazing," enthused Linda of the \$2,000 raised by the congregation for the purchase of a table saw, chop saw, extension cords, air hose, compressor, roofing nailer, shovels, brooms and other equipment and supplies.

The Brauns left Saskatchewan just before New Year's, arriving in Chunchula, Ala., on Jan. 4 after running into a blizzard after they crossed the border. During their time there, John worked on drywall and insulation installation, as well as painting doors and trim. The MDS women volunteers helped clean the church conference centre for a Bible conference, since local church members have jobs and can't take time out to do the cleaning.

The appreciation of homeowners is overwhelming, the Brauns reported. "They can't say enough; they are falling all over us with thanks."

Of their RV experience, John said, "It's



Photo by Bruce Hildebrand

**Linda and John Braun of Neuanlage (Sask.) Mennonite Church just returned from their first Mennonite Disaster Service RV program experience in Chunchula, Ala. They are pictured in front of their 1975 Itasca recreational vehicle.**

awesome. The 1975 Itasca is small and [we] would rather have a bigger unit, but it's been great."

"The RV program is a wonderful idea," John said. "It is a great way to get away from the cold winter in Canada."

—MDS release by **Bruce Hildebrand**

were pulled off their original work assignments to clean up debris.

"It's kind of weird to be in [disaster] areas right after they're hit," says Andrew Richert, a 20-year-old church ministries major from Swift Current, Sask., who was among a group of students sent to the scene of the disaster shortly after the tornado touched down. "You see it on TV at home and you think, 'Well, that's too bad,' and then you go have supper. But actually being there makes it that much more real."

Before the week was out, all of the students had participated in some form of tornado clean-up, picking up debris, demolishing damaged properties, putting tarps over damaged roofs to prevent secondary damage, and helping residents move their belongings out of damaged homes.

Tales abounded of Katrina victims who had just returned to their homes, only to have them destroyed by the tornado. One passerby remarked that perhaps the destruction caused by the two disasters was "karma" for something someone in the city had done, and proceeded to apologize on behalf of that person.

Another tornado victim was quoted

in *The Times-Picayune*, New Orleans' daily newspaper, as saying that the help of CMU students was the only bright spot in her day.

But it was hearing the stories of people affected by the disasters that really affected the students.

"Everyone has a story," says Aisha Entz, a first-year student from



Photo by Cordella Friesen

**Aisha Entz, a first-year CMU student from Burkina Faso, says of her experience in New Orleans, "Being able to hear the stories of people down there is something that really sticks out for me.... I think it impacted a lot of us, including the way we live our daily life."**

Burkina Faso. "Being able to hear the stories of people down there is something that really sticks out for me.... I think it impacted a lot of us, including the way we live our daily life."

Richert agreed, saying it was an experience he won't soon forget. "At one point, we were doing a roofing job in a section of town that was abandoned, with all of the houses gutted. I looked around and thought, wow, no one's living there. You realize the impact of the storm. You realize you're doing some good, and you're glad you came."

Many of the students are interested in serving with MDS again, but right now they're just trying to adjust back to life in Winnipeg.

"The trip was a huge blessing, but I'm having a hard time coming back and getting into the swing of things," says Villalobos. "We live in the wealthy side of town [at CMU], and after coming back from a place where people don't have everything together yet...it's hard."

—**Aaron Epp**

*The author is a CMU student from Winnipeg and a member of Douglas Mennonite Church. He was part of the group that went to New Orleans to do clean-up and repair work there.*

Washington, D.C.

# First lady lauds MEDA at malaria roundtable

It was likely the first time Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) was ever mentioned by an American first lady and “it sent chills up my spine,” said Allon Lefever.

Vice-chair of the MEDA board, Lefever was one of five panelists invited to share “best practices” at a White House conference last month on controlling malaria in Africa. He had just returned from Tanzania, where MEDA distributes insecticide-treated bed nets to pregnant women and infants.

Laura Bush addressed the meeting to encourage wider cooperation among faith-based, business and government efforts to combat malaria, the largest single killer of African children. She referred to the President’s Malaria

Initiative (PMI), a five-year \$1.2 billion US program to combat malaria in 15 of the hardest-hit African nations, which was launched by her husband George W. Bush in June 2005.

MEDA devised and manages a Tanzanian government program that uses commercial channels to make bed nets available throughout the country. New U.S. funding has enabled MEDA to expand the program to include young children.

Bush cited MEDA’s program as an example of public-private coordination. “In Tanzania,” she said, “the government’s malaria program subsidizes bed net vouchers for pregnant women. Now through a partnership between PMI and [MEDA], the programs will be expanded to cover all of Tanzania’s children.”

Since this part of the program was launched in late November, nets have been supplied to nearly 390,000 infants. The program will reach an ad-

ditional 1.5 million babies every year.

“I was thrilled that this reference to MEDA’s program was part of her speech, especially in front of all those other NGO and government policy personnel attendees,” said Lefever, director of the MBA program at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va.


In her remarks, Bush also said, “In many African villages, churches are the only formal institutions that can manage malaria control and prevention. In malaria-prone regions, people look first to their churches, mosques or synagogues for help.”

Bush cited a recent Gallup survey that asked citizens of 18 African nations which social or political organization they trust the most. “Overwhelmingly, people reported the greatest confidence in their religious institutions,” she said.


—MEDA release by **Wally Kroeker**



Lefever


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Akron, Pa.

## U.S., Iranian leaders told to stop 'posturing' and seek peace

In a February visit where U.S. religious leaders were told they were the first American delegation to meet face-to-face with a sitting Iranian president in Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Ed Martin saw the unexpected fruit of nearly two decades of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) work in the country.

"I would have never dreamed that our work in Iran would lead to such a meeting," said Martin, who is director of MCC's Central and Southern Asia programs and who has overseen the Iran program for 17 years. "We usually work at a community level. Yet, through the relationships built up over the years, to be suddenly sitting in the presidential offices was amazing."

The 13-member group of U.S. religious leaders, co-sponsored by MCC and American Friends Service Committee, included representatives from the United Methodist, Episcopal,

Catholic, Mennonite and Quaker churches, as well as representatives of Sojourners/Call to Renewal, Pax Christi and the National Council of Churches.

They were in Iran from Feb. 19 to 25 and were to visit U.S. policymakers in Washington, D.C., on March 6 and 7.

Delegation members from MCC said upon their return that they were encouraged by the conversations they had with leaders in Iran, that they will continue to call U.S. government leaders to meet with Iranian leaders, and that they hope U.S. Christians continue to pray for Iran and its people.

Delegation leader Ron Flaming, MCC's director of international programs, said he was struck by the realization that how Iranians view the country's history differs sharply from how most Americans would view it. For Iranians, the overthrow of a democratically elected government in 1953 and the installation of the shah by the U.S. government was a sore point. The overthrow of the shah in 1979, from their point of view, was a liberation movement. Americans, on the other hand, remember the overthrow of the shah as the hostage crisis, the 444 days that Americans were held hostage.

"I think the delegation was keenly aware we sat between these two narratives and found how difficult it was to make the bridge," Flaming said.

On the other hand, Iranian religious leaders spoke passionately of the need to work for peace. An Armenian Evangelical pastor said even small steps are important.

"It feels like what we need right now is somebody to help start building a bridge," Flaming said. "We've got two governments who are posturing—neither wants to seem weak. If somebody would start a dialogue, there's the possibility of the other responding."



Photo by Mark Beach

**Ron Flaming, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) director of international programs, left, presents a handmade wall hanging to Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Iran. Helen Dueck of Ephrata, Ind., made the wall hanging, which was titled Hydrangeas.**

As the delegation learned about Iran's ancient culture and its emphasis on education, they also found that Iranians—from religious leaders to the president—were well-versed in Christianity.

One of the inequalities that Martin has noticed in years of working at Christian and Muslim relations, is how much Muslims know about Christianity, Jesus and the Bible, and how little most Christians know about the Quran. "If we're going to have serious dialogue, we're going to have to know more about the Quran," Martin said.

The group released a statement calling on the U.S. and Iranian governments to immediately engage in direct, face-to-face talks and to cease using language that defines the other using "enemy" images.

"Our two governments need to find a way to engage each other, and that's critical. If that doesn't happen, the current tensions are not going to get resolved," Flaming said.

Two days after the delegation returned, U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice announced that the U.S. will participate in Iraqi-led talks with Syria and Iran, to seek ways to stabilize Iraq.

"This could be a good first step toward direct bilateral talks with Iran on a range of issues," said J. Daryl Byler, a delegation member and director of the MCC Washington Office.

—MCC release by **Maria Pierson Lester**

### MCC LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

#### Associate Executive Director

Join Mennonite Central Committee, the relief, development, peace and service agency of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Canada and the United States.

For a **job description** go to the urgent openings sidebar at [mcc.org/serve](http://mcc.org/serve). For a printed job description or application, **contact** Kathy Jackson, MCC Human Resources, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, and phone: (717) 859-1151, [kj@dcc.org](mailto:kj@dcc.org).



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Scottsdale, Pa., and Waterloo, Ont.

## Another denomination on board for Gather 'Round

The United Church of Christ (UCC) has signed an agreement to become a cooperative user of Gather 'Round: Hearing and Sharing God's Good News, the new Sunday school curriculum from Mennonite Publishing Network and Brethren Press. UCC is a U.S. denomination in the Reformed, Congregationalist and Evangelical traditions, with about 1.26 million members.

A positive response to Gather 'Round is coming from other Christian groups as well. Denominations recommending the curriculum to their congregations include other Mennonite groups, the Cumberland Presbyterians and the Moravians.

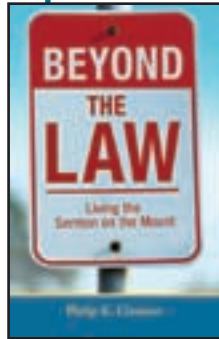
In other Gather 'Round news, celebration, evaluation and planning were the foci of a Feb. 6 to 8 staff summit. The team celebrated successful production and sales of the first three quarters. Many Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations are reporting good experiences with the curriculum.

In evaluating and planning for the future, staff paid special attention to feedback from users. Some enhancements will be made as early as the second year of the curriculum, which is currently in production. Staff received requests for more active options for younger children and more alternatives for readers and non-readers in the Primary unit.

Gather 'Round is jointly produced by Brethren Press and Mennonite Publishing Network, the publishing agency of Mennonite Church Canada and MC USA.

—MC Canada/MPN joint release

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Waterloo, Ont.

## Pastors learn of 'emerging church' phenomenon

Pastors attending the Mennonite Church Eastern Canada School for Ministers last month stepped right into an "emerging worship" experience as they descended the stairs of the Great Hall at Conrad Grebel University College—an experience anything but typical for many of the more than 120 registrants.

Three large video screens located on different walls of the hall simultaneously presented different visual calls to worship—scenes of people from everyday life around the world on one, people of different faiths at worship on another, and a portrayal of the story of creation from Genesis 1 on a third—as participants found their seats in chairs strewn about the room in no discernable order. As if this wasn't enough audiovisual stimuli, the story of Paul at the Areopagus in Acts 17 was shouted over the din of the room.

All this was to emphasize a theme for the first morning: Restlessness is as much a part of the world today (as experienced in the rather chaotic encounter in the Great Hall), as it was at the beginning of creation and in the culture Paul encountered in Athens.

This set the stage for keynote speaker Reginald Bibby, a noted Canadian demographer, who later presented a lecture borne out of his research called "Restless Gods and restless churches." But for the remainder of this first part of the morning, contemporary songs led by a worship band and an adapted form of St. Ignatius' *examen* focused participants on a very personal experience of restlessness.

Over the three days, ministers experienced first-hand the types of innovations many emerging churches are applying to their worship. Skilled musicians on electric instruments

combined popular and secular music with classic hymns to show how a diverse mixture of music can bring many people to common places of worship. Projected images—combining still jpeg files and captured video—were offered as examples of engaging worshippers through the visual senses. And invitations to draw on wall-mounted papers, to come forward to receive ashes (on Ash Wednesday), or to meander about the room to one of several "communion stations" were offered as ways for people to participate physically in literal movements of corporate worship.

Afternoon workshops gave pastors the opportunity to further immerse themselves in various expressions of the emerging church within MC Eastern Canada.

Jim Loepp Thiessen described his recent journey of launching The Gathering, a new church in Kitchener, Ont. His "One direction in religion's renaissance" workshop addressed some of the energies and innovations involved in a church's commitment to being a vital presence in its immediate neighbourhood.

Anne and Dave Campion offered the model of Soulspace, an emerging worshipping community in Stratford, Ont., as a window on how the uses of many forms of imagery and personalized interaction in worship can draw people into fuller awareness of God in the midst.

Brice Balmer, chaplaincy director with the House of Friendship and author of *Meeting our Multifaith Neighbors*, challenged participants to seek out opportunities for interfaith connections and cross-cultural relationships as Canada's urban centres become increasingly diversified with people of all faiths and ethnicities.

Bev Suderman-Gladwell and Margaret Andres showed partici-



Photo by Jennifer Konkle

**Hawkesville (Ont.) Mennonite Church pastor Perry Bartel, foreground right with Ash Wednesday ashes on his forehead, joined other MC Eastern Canada pastors for the annual School for Ministers, where they learned about the 'emerging church' phenomenon.**

pants how Waterloo North Mennonite Church implemented a Logos program, a weekly retreat experience to build relationships between generations of the congregation.

—**Perry Bartel**

*The author is pastor of Hawkesville (Ont.) Mennonite Church.*



**Bibby**

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Chilliwack, B.C.

## Area church hears 'call to covenant'

**M**utual relationships and covenants were the overarching theme when Mennonite Church B.C. delegates met last month at Eden Mennonite Church for their annual meeting. With an eye to the upcoming provincial joint covenant signing later this spring, "Call to covenant" was the theme chosen for the sessions.

"In any covenant relationship, it's not about 'my way.' Covenant today is about God's will for us," said moderator Gerd Bartel in his opening remarks.

Conference minister Henry Kliever also talked about the importance of covenant. "The concept of covenant is as old as the Bible itself," he said. "It comes with both a vertical and horizontal dimension. Keep on thinking about your part in covenant-making with your God and also in your church."

The LEAD (Leaders, Elders and

Deacons) conference the previous day also focused on the meaning of covenant. MC Canada conference minister Sven Eriksson and Eben-Ezer Mennonite pastor Artur Bergen led the sessions and gave opportunity for individuals to share how they respond to the call of God in their lives.

The main agenda item for the annual delegate session was the Steering Committee report regarding the MC B.C. covenant. The covenant had been through several drafts and even on Feb. 24 generated more discussion. But by a vote of 148-12, the delegates approved the wording of the covenant as presented, which is to be signed and celebrated at a May 27 worship service. The covenant involves local



Photo by Amy Dueckman

**MC B.C. chair Gerd Bartel, left, confers with vice-chair Karen Heidebrecht Thiessen at the annual general assembly last month.**

congregations' mutual relationship within MC B.C. and covers six areas of commitment to:

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“The 93 percent approval was an answer to prayer and a movement of the Holy Spirit among us,” Bartel commented later. “The tone set by the worship team at the start of the meeting moved the congregation to a spirit of unity.”

The organizational chart that is to govern a renewed MC B.C., which outlines relationships between congregations, leadership and committees, was also approved, as was a motion on priority actions in the mission of MC B.C.

Delegates also approved the financial statement and budget, and held roundtable discussions about the vision for Camp Squeah’s future and how the camp can best serve its constituents of all ages. As well, they heard input from the Evangelism and Church Development Committee on its latest programs, including Wellspring Christian Fellowship’s new coffee-house ministry.

A motion to include only pastors on the Faith and Life Committee was defeated.

One highlight for many was hearing the church mini-reports interspersed throughout the business sessions. Individuals from several congregations, including First Mennonite of Greendale, Crossroads Community Church of Chilliwack and First Mennonite of Kelowna, shared how God is working in their congregations, then they were prayed for by a member of another congregation. Some ministries mentioned include the Alpha program, overseas mission trips or practical help to local people in need.

Prior to beginning morning and afternoon business sessions, Eden youth pastor Rob Brown and a team of musicians led the group in turning their thoughts toward God through hymn and chorus singing.

The day concluded with a commissioning service led by Kliewer for those beginning or continuing service on committees, while recognizing those who have completed their terms of service.

—Amy Dueckman

## Winnipeg

# Manitoba delegates speak on church survey and camp concerns

“Living on the edge” is what many of the 172 delegates—out of a possible 361—may have felt as they braved the unpredictability of a Manitoba winter to attend the 60th annual delegate sessions on Feb. 23 and 24 at Bethel Mennonite Church. They represented 42 out of Mennonite Church Manitoba’s 49 congregations.

Guest speaker Len Hjalmarson, a writer from Kelowna, B.C., said churches too often are rigid and hard around the edges while being uncertain about what is their centre. He used the illustration of a visitor to the Australian outback asking a rancher how he kept track of his cattle. “Out here, we dig wells instead of building fences,” was the reply. “Instead of building walls or fences, [churches] need to sink wells,” Hjalmarson said.

Over the past year MC Manitoba conducted a survey of its congregations, to learn more about their health and to discern issues for the future. Delegates spent their largest block of time discussing the four major issues the survey identified: dealing with conflict and change; youths and the church; leadership development; and responding to our cultural context.

Lively discussion among breakout groups indicated that these issues are major concerns for MC Manitoba congregations, but delegates had a difficult time turning their discussions into a single action item to report back to the group—the statements that

resulted were quite general as a result.

At the end of the day, delegates approved a motion to “continue these discussions as an MC Manitoba body to positively and creatively respond to the dynamic changes that are impacting our culture and the church. We affirm the direction statements as presented at the 2007 [annual delegate sessions] and that they be referred to the MC Manitoba board for further discussion and development.”

Morning roundtable discussions about increased honorariums for summer camp staff and regional camp committee accountability structures resulted in the delegates handing these issues back to the board. “I don’t think we are well enough informed,” said Albert Bergen of Crystal City Mennonite Church. Some expressed frustration at being asked to decide on specifics of camp management. “We are dealing with much bigger issues in our churches and here we spent a morning talking about camp management,” said one delegate.

Delegates also attended four morning workshops on evangelism, pastoral reviews, art in the church and the congregational life cycle.

At the end of the gathering, two youth pastors stayed back to reflect on the sessions. Kyle Penner



Hjalmarson

Continued on page 24

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*Josiane Pelletier, Burlington, Ontario*

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**Survey** *From page 23*

of Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, and Dale Friesen of Morden Mennonite Church puzzled over the perennial question of how to attract young people.

"I have too many young people who want to use their holiday time to serve on Matheson Island, but they don't want to come here," said Penner. "We like conferences because of the opportunity to meet people and to talk about ideas, but I struggle with what is the role and the meaning of this, who this is for and what this accomplishes. The conference should be a place where we can do things together that we can't do alone."

*(For more annual delegate session news, see the MC Manitoba report in The Churches on page 27. Ed.)*

—Evelyn Rempel Petkau



Photo by Evelyn Rempel Petkau

**Delegates Henry Dueck, left, and Keith Rogers study a proposal to increase the summer camp volunteer honorarium. "Camp should be a priority," Rogers, a first-time delegate, said. He has seen young people return from camp excited about their faith and church involvement, and believes it is one way to keep youths in the church.**

**News briefs****Episcopalians hold key to Anglican communion**

Anglican Archbishop Peter Akinola of Nigeria says the U.S. Episcopal Church will be asked to leave the worldwide grouping of Anglican churches if it refuses to promise that no one living in a same-sex relationship will be made a bishop. "If they agree to stop, there will be a huge celebration of the [Anglican] communion," Akinola told journalists in Nairobi following a meeting last month of Anglican leaders from around the world in Tanzania. "But if they chose to continue with it as a way of life, then they will be told to walk away from the communion." But supporters of the inclusion of gays and lesbians in the Episcopal Church say they are angered by the demand. "It's a very challenging time for gay and lesbian people to believe that the Episcopal Church has room for them," said Susan Russell, president of Integrity, the Episcopal Church's principal advocacy group for gays and lesbians.

—ENI release

**British Airways backs down over crucifix ban**

A British Airways check-in counter clerk, who has been on unpaid leave since being told last September that she could not wear a cross on a chain around her neck outside her uniform, is to return to work wearing the emblem of her Christian faith. The airline backed down on its policy of not allowing workers to wear visible symbols of Christianity—while permitting Muslim hijabs and Sikh turbans—after protests from religious leaders and politicians, as well as investors and customers threatening boycotts.

—ENI release

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## Transitions

### Births/Adoptions

**Delorme**—Drew Nathaniel, Feb. 23, to Lea Delorme, Avon Mennonite, Stratford, Ont.

**Dueck**—Brooklyn Darlene, Dec. 2, to Jim and Donna Davidson Dueck, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont.

**Edmonds**—Hayden Malachi, Feb. 20, to Shane and Leila

Edmonds, Warman Mennonite, Sask.

**Friesen**—Ivan Hunter, Feb. 26, to Chris and Heidi Friesen, Jubilee Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Gader**—Julaine May, Feb. 15, to Tracy and Grace Gader, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

**Janzen**—Brodie Garrett, Feb. 22, to Steven and Diane Janzen, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Pipper**—Sam Vernon, Dec. 2, to Bruce and Tina Wiens

Pipper, Avon Mennonite, Stratford, Ont.

**Neufeld**—Kalum River Rain, Nov. 13, to Sheldon and Christy Neufeld, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., in Vancouver.

**Rempel**—Rebecca Grace, Dec. 1, to Timothy and Linda Rempel, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont.

**Southorn**—Isabel Anne, Dec. 7, to Michael and Brigitta Southorn, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont.

**Toews**—Zoe Noelle Hawkins, Feb. 21, to Jim and Tania Toews, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

### Marriages

**Scott-Wideman**—Mike and Amy, St. Jacobs Mennonite, at Jackson's Pt., Ont., March 3.

### Deaths

**Kroeker**—Agathe, 94 (b. Feb. 27, 1912), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., Jan. 28.

**Langfield**—Clarence, 71, Cassel Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., Feb. 5.

**Martens**—William, 81, First Mennonite, Winnipeg, Dec. 27.

**Rempel**—Maria, 96 (b. July 30, 1911), Waterloo-Kitchener

United Mennonite, Ont., Jan. 28.  
**Sawatzky**—Gerhard, 99, Sargent Mennonite, Winnipeg, Feb. 17.

**Sawatzky**—Tina, 99, Morden Mennonite, Man., Jan. 30.

**Siemens**—Anne, 83 (b. March 8, 1923), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., Nov. 1.

**Snyder**—Lena, 94, Bloomingdale Mennonite, Ont., Feb. 21.

**Stobbe**—Ewald, 79 (b. July 2, 1927), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., Jan. 11.

**Thiessen**—Abe P., 80, Morden Mennonite, Man., Jan. 1.

**Unrau**—Abram, 83, Morden Mennonite, Man., Jan. 22.

**Unrau**—David, 96 (b. Jan. 20, 1911), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., Feb. 8.

**Wurtz**—Annie (nee Waldner), 87 (b. Sept. 11, 1919), Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask., Feb. 16.

**Yantzi**—Mahlon, 85 (b. Jan. 4, 1922), Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., Feb. 14.

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

Kitchener, Ont.

## Mennonites not immune to money problems

Pastors are generally not seen as good financial advisors or guides. They head an organization whose finances stagger from year to year, begging for funds from their members. Preaching about money is often reserved for the annual “stewardship challenge” at the end of the congregation’s fiscal year, preaching that wouldn’t be necessary if members were really stewards and not reactive givers. Pastors’ own lives are based—not on financial knowledge—but on the good will of generous people donating to the cause.

Such were the findings of a Mennonite Foundation of Canada seminar in Kitchener recently. That the seminar—which was held to “help people overcome financial crises; to prevent crises by developing financial health within the congregation; and to work against the cultural forces that weaken financial health”—had to be moved to a larger venue showed the extent of congregational interest in the topics related to finances.

The mandate of Mennonite Foundation is to provide pastors with good resources for counselling and pre-marital counselling, and to equip “lay leaders to see financial literacy as a ministry issue, and getting them to walk with people in their congregations who are struggling with issues around overspending, debt or related financial difficulties.”

Both the lay leaders who had been asked to share about their experiences walking with folks in financial crises and the stories around the tables underlined the fact that Mennonites are not immune to gambling, overspending and immature dependence on the good will of family and friends.

Although the top three reasons for personal bankruptcy are loss of job, death of a spouse or chronic illness—issues often out of the realm of personal choice or management—Mennonites are still reticent to talk about money needs openly. Somehow there is still a stigma of shame connected to “going broke,” a stigma of bad management, poor choices or perhaps even sin.

Clips from a video shown at the seminar revealed the disconnect between values and spending patterns in a group of children who excitedly spent an imaginary \$200 on luxury items for themselves, and then calmly enunciated that the most important “thing” in their lives was their family or friends.

—Dave Rogalsky




Photo by Joani Goerzen

**Another year, another piece of pie, another “rock” concert! The annual Alberta Mennonite Men’s Curling Bonspiel in Didsbury has come and gone in a flash of glory! Twenty-two rinks came together to fellowship, eat pie and throw rocks at each other! “A” division was won by the rink of Dick Sawatzky (skip), John Sawatzky, Henry Janzen and Tony Funk. “B”, “C” and “D” division winners, respectively, were rinks skipped by Bruce Baergen, Emil Look and Arnie Miller. This year, participants and spectators were treated to a photo display of the finalists from 1984 to 2006, thanks to the Epps from Bergthal Mennonite Church in Didsbury.**

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**Why a Bible college?**

In 1945, C.S. Lewis wrote an article that examined the difference between looking at something and looking along something. He used a ray of light coming into a dark tool shed as an example to illustrate his point. On the one hand, looking at the light Lewis could only see the ray itself as it caught the floating dust particles. On the other hand, looking along the light he could see everything else in the shed.

A similar point can be applied to the Bible college. If we looked at our Bible college campus, we would see buildings, classrooms, parking lots, a chapel, dining hall, gymnasium, library and dorms.

If, however, we looked closely we would see 70 years of God's faithfulness at Columbia Bible College. We would remark at the great number of students who have graduated and whose lives have made a difference at home, work and on the mission field. We would notice students being educated and mentored by caring and competent professors who help shape the lives and outlook of the students through modelling an integrated Christian worldview.

We would be encouraged by the lifelong relationships that are made and maintained long after college life is over. We would hear of the internships where students put into practice the values and teaching they learned in the classroom and chapel.

In many ways, Bible college focuses on the whole person—head, heart, hands. It is an educational system that stresses personal disciplines, academically challenging classes and practical experience.

Why a Bible college? Its existence—or, more precisely, the reason for its existence—only can be seen by looking along it, for in the end it is the people, the faculty, staff and students, who make our college what it is.

—Michael A. Szuk

The author is registrar of Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, B.C.

## Mennonite Church Canada

### Prayer requests, praise items

Please remember to give thanks and pray for:

- An energizing three days of Mennonite Church Canada Leadership Assembly that took place March 1 to 3. General secretary Robert J. Suderman notes that we can thank God for “the elected and appointed leaders from across Mennonite Church Canada who carefully examined all aspects of MC Canada’s program and ministry in a spirit of covenant, cooperation and mutual support. This assembly was again a model about being the church, the Body of Christ; facing tough questions of faithfulness; and fine-tuning details of being the church together.”

- The Bluffton University community and the friends and family of those who were victims of the tragic bus accident that occurred on March 2. The Bluffton baseball team bus was involved in an accident as it was on its way to a tournament in Florida. Please continue to uphold in prayer those who have suffered loss.

- Church leaders from across Canada who will meet at Grace Mennonite Church, Regina, from March 30 to April 1, to learn and experience how worship is transforming God’s People Now. These leaders will explore how worship can be a transformational part of congregational life as it reflects new visions of faithfulness that emerge from God’s Spirit at work in congregations. Pray that those involved will respond faithfully to God’s will for the church and be empowered by the Holy Spirit during this weekend together.

– **Hinke Loewen-Rudgers**

## Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

### Three-minute prayers for church

MC Eastern Canada is excited to see how God will move and speak as its Circle of Prayer ministry grows. As a community of congregations, each of which is made up of individuals, the area church has given substance to executive minister David Martin’s challenge of a “three-minute prayer.”

A new initiative this year, people can make the following commitment to the Circle of Prayer: “I will prayerfully support our community of congregations in ‘Extending the peace of Jesus Christ’ by committing myself to three minutes of prayer three times a week for the ministry of MC Eastern Canada. In addition to Sunday morning prayer, I will commit to a minimum of another two days of prayer, such as Wednesdays and Fridays.

“During these three minutes of prayer, I will pray for my congregation and its leaders, our community of congregations in MC Eastern Canada, and for our staff and ministry councils. I am also open to receiving special prayer requests to add to these prayer times. “Trusting in God’s support, I offer this commitment.”

The MC Eastern Canada office will forward monthly prayer requests by e-mail or hard copy. This is a two-way street, as staff look forward to hearing what God may speak to those who commit to the Circle of Prayer. Also welcome is communication from congregations that have prayer concerns they would like to share with this group of individuals. These can be e-mailed to Martin at david@mcec.ca or Lisa Williams at lisa@mcec.ca.

At present, people can sign up for the Circle of Prayer when an MC Eastern Canada

staff person comes to their congregation, but individuals or groups can also subscribe on the web as well by visiting mcec.ca.

## Mennonite Church Manitoba

### Annual delegate session happenings

At the recent annual delegate sessions held at Bethel Mennonite Church, Hans Werner, a member of Bethel, was elected as moderator. He is a professor of history at the University of Winnipeg. He replaces Bernie Tiessen, who served as moderator for the past four years.

Two positions remain vacant on the board of directors as well as positions on the Camping Ministries and Leadership Ministries reference groups.

The three ministry areas of MC Manitoba gave reports on Feb. 23.

Harold Peters-Fransen of Leadership Ministries reported that his challenge is the recruitment of future pastors. “Please pray and help the church discern who this next generation of leaders are,” he requested.

Camping Ministries director Bob Wiebe reported that one of the challenges he sees in Christian parents is their tendency not to view camp work as a “real job” for their youths and young adults. Among the new initiatives is a new leadership program replacing counsellors-in-training.

Norm Voth, director of Evangelism and Service Ministries, reported that 10 language groups are found in MC Manitoba’s 49 churches. He noted that there are geographical areas where there is need for new congregations or perhaps a network of house churches, and talked of the possibility of a church for First Nations people in Winnipeg

for those who come to the city for employment, education or medical treatment.

The offering went toward the Jake and Dorothy Pauls Pastoral Leadership Training Fund. The fund grew out of a vision of Pauls’ that the training of pastors was a high priority in the Mennonite Church. The purpose of the fund is to support leadership training for those called to pastoral ministry and in a program of studies with an Anabaptist/Mennonite focus. The support will be in the form of bursaries of up to \$2,500 per year.

## Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

### Congregations send volunteers south

While some Saskatchewan Mennonites enjoy a regular habit of driving south each winter to get some warmth and sunshine, and a break from cold winter conditions, two churches here decided to go south for a different reason.

Wildwood Mennonite sent a group of volunteers with Mennonite Disaster Service to help with continuing clean-up in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. The group of 11, along with pastor Pauline Steinmann, left Feb. 11 and returned two weeks later.

Some Eigenheim Mennonite Church members also went to warmer climes, but with a different goal in mind. As part of the church’s three-year mission partnership program, five members of the congregation spent 11 days in Colombia visiting a church that they are supporting. The Ibague Mennonite Church works with refugees.

More detailed reports of both trips will be appearing in upcoming issues.

**Continued on page 28**

The Churches From page 27

**Mennonite Church Alberta**

**Donors give Camp Valaqua \$55,000**

Two fundraising banquets for Camp Valaqua building and recreation projects have netted approximately \$55,000, thanks in part to one \$50,000 cheque from an unnamed donor. The Edmonton event, held at First Mennonite Church on Jan. 27, netted about \$2,600; the Calgary event, held at Trinity Mennonite Church, would have netted approximately \$2,400 if not for the single large donation.

"I couldn't believe it when I opened that cheque" said Valaqua director Jon Olfert.

The donation gives a boost to the long dreamed of second residence on the camp property.



**Camp Valaqua board chair Paul Neufeldt was all decked out in his makeshift life preserver during the cruise ship-themed camp fundraising banquet in Edmonton in January. He is pictured with camp counsellor and out-trip leader Amanda Morris.**

**Mennonite Church British Columbia**

**Program director named for Squeah**

Camp Squeah has announced the appointment of Tim Larson of Hope as the new camp program director. He began his duties on March 5.

Larson comes to Camp Squeah already well immersed in the Christian camping community, having served as full-time director of Camp Kawkawa in Hope and in various roles at Pioneer Pacific Camp, Camp Homewood and Camp Imadene.

Larson's personal journey with Christ at camp began at age nine. He and his wife Kari, who say they have a "strong passion for sharing God's great news through the avenue of camping ministry," anticipate the opportunity for serving at Squeah.

"Camping ministry is the



**Kari and Tim Larson**

single most whole encompassing way of sharing God's story with others that I have experienced," says Larson. "In terms of providing an environment where people can experience Christ, nowhere else in North America has one avenue been so dedicated to allowing Christ to save the lost."

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

ADOLPHE KOMUESA

From our leaders



I would like to share with you some of the situation of our community. I'm inviting you to read attentively.

Our projects are succeeding according to the outline in our three-year plan. Transportation is a major issue in Congo, where drivable roads are rare. To respond to our need to maintain contact with the far-flung rural churches which constitute the heartland of the Congolese Mennonite community, we have purchased three motorbikes and two used but quite functional four-wheel-drive vehicles.

Our team has also repaired and re-equipped houses and offices at our headquarters with funds received from our Mennonite sisters and brothers from the U.S. and Canada.

Our agricultural development organization has increased our cattle herd from 12 to 32. We raise many rabbits and some hogs, despite some management problems that we have experienced in the past.

We are assisting our retired pastors with gifts to each of 2,500 Congolese francs (around \$6) per month. These pastors are unable to work any more, and our national committee is helping them.

We have also reopened our bookstore, located at our headquarters.

**Congo update**

**The activities in our community continue in a good way despite leadership and financial challenges.**

At our first general assembly held in the Dibumba area of Tshikapa, we declared that 2006 would be a Great Year of Evangelism for our entire church community. We said it, and we did it. We took the *Jesus* film for the first time to Kanzala, Nyanga, Malanga, Banga and Mashashana. The film attracted entire villages to the showings. An interesting event happened at Mashashana, where the entire village transferred its church loyalty to us following the film. Now

they are worshipping with us in the Congo Mennonite Church. This film, which we have in three Congolese languages, helps us to share the information about the life of

our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ, in such a way as to move people to commitment.

The activities in our community continue in a good way despite leadership and financial challenges. Please pray for us. We have faith in Jesus Christ that these difficulties will diminish, above all because of

the new and better political atmosphere in our country. We encourage you to multiply your visits to Congo because your counsel and observations are very useful for us.

*Adolphe Komuesa is president of the Mennonite Church of Congo. The above message was excerpted from a longer pastoral letter highlighting church efforts since the 2004 General Assembly held in Kikwit, Congo.*

## Children's choir seeks past choristers

**Kitchener, Ont.**—Alumni of the Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir are invited to participate in a 40th anniversary event on May 5 and 6 at St. Matthews Lutheran Church.

The alumni choir, conducted by Jane Schultz-Janzen (pending availability), will rehearse on Saturday and perform Sunday at 3 p.m.

As well as the concert, the celebration will involve lunch, photo displays and sharing of memories since 1967.

To participate, contact Deanna Wiebe at [imccalumni@hotmail.com](mailto:imccalumni@hotmail.com) or call 519-742-3416.

—Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir release

## Monologues re-enact Passion of the Christ

**K-W Region, Ont.**—Winnipeg actor/writer Arlyn Friesen Epp will present a series of dramatic monologues on the Passion of Christ to three southwestern Ontario congregations during Holy Week.

On Maundy Thursday, April 5, he will present "At the supper: Choosing time" at St. Jacobs Mennonite at 7 p.m. At 10 a.m. on Good Friday, April 6, he will present "In the between: Choosing..." at Bloomingdale Mennonite. Youths and young adults are especially invited to Breslau Mennonite on April 7 at 7 p.m. to witness "At the crossroads: Choosing truth."

—**Mary Mae Schwartzentruber**

## Calendar

### British Columbia

**April 6:** Good Friday service with communion for South Vancouver Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren churches, at Culloden Mennonite Brethren Church, Vancouver; 10 a.m.

**April 6:** Joint Good Friday service for Abbotsford area MC B.C. churches at Olivet Mennonite Church; 10 a.m.

**April 20-21, 26-28:** MEI spring musical presentation of *Beauty and the Beast*. Evening performances all evenings, 7 p.m.; April 21 matinee, 2 p.m. For more information, call 604-859-3700.

**April 27-29:** Junior youth retreat at Camp Squeah. Theme: "Project U: The evolution of a hero."

**May 3:** MCC Supportive Care Services annual spring fundraiser, at Bakerview Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, 7 p.m. For tickets, call 604-850-6608.

**May 6:** B.C. Women in Mission inspirational day at Eden Mennonite Church, Chilliwack.

**May 27:** Covenanting celebration for MC B.C., at MEI, Abbotsford.

### Alberta

**April 15:** Langham Low German Drama Team will present two plays at Trinity Mennonite, Calgary; 4 p.m..

To reserve tickets, call Anna Marie Boyes at 403-273-1854.

**May 11:** Youth night at Camp Valaqua. For more information, call 403-637-2510.

**May 12:** Spring work day at Camp Valaqua.

**May 28-31:** Theological Studies Week at Camp Valaqua. Theme: "The role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church."

**May 4-5:** Alberta Women in Mission 60th annual Enrichment Days in Coaldale.

**May 27:** Glimmers of Hope 3: AIDS and its impact on women, at the University of Calgary, 2 p.m.

### Saskatchewan

**March 31:** Shekinah Retreat Centre fundraising banquet and silent auction at Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon; dinner at 6:30 p.m.

**April 14:** Saskatchewan Women in Mission Enrichment Day, at Zion Mennonite, Swift Current. Theme: "Healthy relationships."

**April 15-21:** MCC Volunteer Appreciation Week.

**May 5:** RJC alumni golf tournament.

**May 6:** RJC spring concert.

**May 22-26:** Continuing education classes for pastors; speaker: Walter Sawatzky from AMBS.

### Manitoba

**April 6:** Winnipeg First Mennonite Church Choir presents selections from Handel's *Messiah* on Good Friday, at 7 p.m. Featured soloists: Marni Enns, Kirsten Schellenberg, Elmer Kehler and Victor Engbrecht.

**April 13-14:** Meeting of Partnership Circle members at Grunthal Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

**April 13-15:** Manitoba Mennonite Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend, in Winnipeg. For more information, visit [marriageencounter.org](http://marriageencounter.org).

**April 14:** Manitoba MDS annual spring banquet, at North Kildonan Mennonite Brethren Church, Winnipeg, at 6 p.m. To reserve tickets, call 204-261-1274.

**April 19-21:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate senior high musical.

**April 21:** CMU spring concert.

**April 21:** North Kildonan Mennonite Church Quartet spring concert at North Kildonan Mennonite Church, Winnipeg; 7 p.m.

**May 5:** Manitoba Women in Mission annual Enrichment Day, at Grace Mennonite Church, Steinbach; at 8:30 a.m. Theme: "Streams in the desert—Psalm 42."

**May 7-9:** "Talking about the tough stuff: Dealing with controversial subjects in the church" seminar. Sponsored by CMU Institute for Community

Peacebuilding. Visit [cmu.ca](http://cmu.ca) for more information.

**May 16:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate work day.

**May 18-20:** Camp Moose Lake work days.

**May 24:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Grade 10 to 12 spring concert at Bethel Mennonite Church.

**May 25-27:** Birding retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

**May 26, 27:** Faith and Life Choirs spring concerts; Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg (26); MCI, Gretna (27).

**May 28-30:** Plus 55 retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

**May 31:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Grade 7 to 9 spring concert at Bethel Mennonite Church.

### Ontario

**March 26:** MSCU 43rd annual general meeting, at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church; 7 p.m. Theme: "Making a difference." Speaker: Doug Pritchard, Christian Peacemaker Teams co-director.

**March 30-31:** "Seeds of Encouragement" conference for the farm community, at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock; 7:30 p.m. (30), 9:30 a.m. (31). Speaker: Elaine Froese, farmer and motivational speaker from Manitoba.

**March 30-April 1:** Floradale Mennonite Church presents *What Shall We Do With the Family Farm?* by Barb Draper as dinner theatre, 6:30 p.m. (30, 31), and as a 2 p.m. matinee (1). Visit [floramc.org](http://floramc.org) or call 519-638-3624 for more information.

**March 31:** Menno Singers fourth hymn sing fundraiser at Waterloo-Kitchener Mennonite Church. This full day of congregational singing (from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) will include selections from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, the new *Sing the Journey* supplement and the *Sing the Story* supplement to be released this summer.

Continued on page 30

**ToMorrow** From page 29

**March 31:** MCC Relief sale promotion dinner at Niagara United Mennonite Church; 6 p.m. For tickets, call 905-934-4595.

**April 14:** MC Eastern Canada Youth Bible Quizzing preliminary rounds at Floradale Mennonite Church.

**April 14:** Silver Lake Mennonite Camp 34th annual "Smorg" fundraiser at Grace Mennonite Church, St. Catharines. Annual meeting at 3:30 p.m.; "smorg" from 4 to 8 p.m.

**April 16:** New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale promotion dinner, Bingeman Park Lodge, Kitchener. Call 519-745-8458 for more information.

**April 20:** Bryan Moyer Suderman and Friends concert, at Bethany Missionary Church, Kitchener, at 7:30 p.m. (Part of Mennonite Foundation of Canada annual meeting.)

**April 20-21:** Engaged workshop at Riverdale Mennonite, Millbank. For more information, e-mail [denise\\_bender@yahoo.com](mailto:denise_bender@yahoo.com).

**April 25:** MC Eastern Canada Day of Quiet Prayer at Cedar Springs Retreat, Shakespeare, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**April 27-28:** MC Eastern Canada spring annual confer-

ence session at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.  
**April 27-29:** Taizé young adult weekend of reflection and prayer in Montreal. Theme: "Leaving discouragement behind, finding new hope." For more information, visit [taizemontreal2007.ca](http://taizemontreal2007.ca).

**April 28:** MC Eastern Canada Youth Bible Quizzing finals at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.

**April 28, 29:** Pax Christi Chorale's 20th anniversary gala concert, "The Music Makers: Elgar, Handel, Ager," 7:30 p.m. (28), 3 p.m. (29), at Grace Church-on-the-Hill, Toronto. To order tickets, visit [paxchristichorale.org](http://paxchristichorale.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](mailto:calendar@canadianmennonite.org)**

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We seek a pastor who has gifts in the areas of: team leadership, preaching, developing lay ministry, mission/evangelism, church growth.

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Reply in confidence to:  
 Muriel Bechtel  
 Conference Minister  
 Mennonite Church Eastern Canada  
 4489 King St. E.  
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The ability to work flexible hours, valid Ontario driver's licence, criminal reference check, CPI training and means of transportation are required.

Please forward resume by March 30, 2007, to:

Heather DeBruyn, Executive Director  
 c/o C.M.H.A., Elgin Branch  
 110 Centre Street  
 St. Thomas, ON  
 N5R 2Z9

Fax: (519) 631-8273  
[admin@cmhaelgin.ca](mailto:admin@cmhaelgin.ca)

## Employment opportunities

### Position for Leading Pastor

Gretna Bergthaler Mennonite Church, located in Gretna, Man., is welcoming applications for the position of Leading Minister. We are a congregation of about 100 members located in a family-friendly small town setting. Ministry in our congregation is defined by its multi-generational character and by the fact that we are the only church in our community. By God's grace we have enjoyed long-lasting, positive relationships with previous pastors and look forward to establishing such a relationship in the future. The successful candidate will have an Anabaptist/Mennonite faith orientation and be gifted in preaching, teaching and visitation ministries. Seminary-level education will be considered an asset. We are a member of Mennonite Church Canada and follow MC Canada salary guidelines. Our preferred starting date is July 1, 2007. Please direct your inquiries to Kerry Enns, Congregational Chair, at 204-327-5891 (work), 204-327-6666 (home), or write to me at [kgenns@mts.net](mailto:kgenns@mts.net) if you prefer e-mail. Further information is on file with MC Manitoba.

Camp Assiniboia, Headingley Man., has the following openings for September 2007:

**Camp Manager  
Guest Group Coordinator (.5FTE)**

Camp Assiniboia is part of Camps with Meaning, the year-round camping ministry of MC Manitoba. Inquiries may be directed to Bob Wiebe, Director of Camping Ministries, MC Manitoba, 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2J1, e-mail camps@mennochurch.mb.ca, phone: 204-895-2267.

Peace Mennonite Church in Richmond, British Columbia, is seeking a full-time **Associate Pastor of Youth and Young Adults**. This person will serve in a leadership team under the direction of the lead pastor. Although the primary responsibility will be to work with the youths and the youth leaders, an interest in providing leadership for the young adult small group would be considered a definite asset. The successful candidate will have a theological education, will agree with our church's vision statement and statement of faith, and will have a passion for youth ministry.

Starting Date: July 2007  
Application Deadline: March 31, 2007

Interested persons are invited to visit our website for a complete job description, and to submit a cover letter and resume to:

Youth Pastor Search Committee  
Peace Mennonite Church  
11571 Daniels Road  
Richmond, BC V6X 1M7  
Phone: 604-278-0111  
E-mail: office@peacemennonite.ca  
Website: www.peacemennonite.ca

**Position for full-time pastor**

Arnaud Mennonite Church of Arnaud Man. is currently accepting applications for the position of full-time pastor. We are a multi-generational congregation of about 90 members located about 50 miles south of Winnipeg. This position could be either one person or a couple and will become available summer 2007. The successful candidate would be of Anabaptist/ Mennonite faith orientation and possess strong leadership qualities. Interested applicants are asked to direct inquiries and/or resumes to: Pastoral Search Committee, c/o Ewald Boschmann, Box 12, Stuartburn, MB, R0A 2B0, phone: 204-425-3554 or e-mail: boschma5@mts.net.



**YOUTH PASTOR**

Living Hope Christian Fellowship, located in Surrey, BC, is a growing, multi-ethnic, cell-church of 250 attendees. With the departure of our present youth pastor for European ministries, we are seeking someone to help us continue to build on the foundation that has been laid for student ministries at Living Hope.

**Full Time Position:**

- Continuing a ministry to our multi-ethnic, junior/senior high and young adults
- Organizing student cell groups
- Organizing service projects, worship, sociale, retreats, and developing leadership
- One-on-one discipleship and prayer

Contact - Ewald Renner - 12246 - 100th Ave, Surrey, BC, V3V 2X1,  
Fax: (604) 893-0901, E-mail: thynk@lhcwfc.com  
For more information visit: www.lhcwfc.ca

**Full-time pastor**

who enjoys working with and discipling children, youths, and young adults is sought by Calgary Chinese Mennonite Church for our English-speaking Ministry.

An applicant is desired who feels called to a cross-cultural setting (Chinese language not required), and to a 25-year-old Evangelical Anabaptist congregation who seeks to be faithful.

Please respond to Sandy Chuong, Search Committee Chair, at schuong2000@yahoo.ca or 403-829-9080.

Canadian Mennonite University is accepting applications for a position in our Facilities Department as **Assistant Host**. If you have a commitment to the church and the mission of CMU, like working with people, and love to multi-task, this may be the position for you. Strong organizational and office skills are needed, as well as the ability and willingness to assist wherever needed in the preparation of guest rooms and other custodial duties as required. Processing of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Please reply via mail to Susan Warkentin, Director of Human Resources, 500 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2N2, or e-mail swarkentin@cmu.ca. For more details, visit, www.cmu.ca.

**Seeking a dynamic and creative educator!**

Affiliated with the Mennonite Church and located in Stouffville, Ont., Willowgrove Primary School is looking for a JK/SK teacher beginning in September 2007. The successful candidate will be creative, resourceful and able to work independently as part of a small staff. He/she will demonstrate a strong Christian faith and preferably possess a Bachelor of Education degree and Primary Certification. For more information, visit willowgrove.ca or contact Ron de Roo at ron@willowgrove.ca.

**Choir announcements**



The Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir and Alumni Choir, with special guests Menno Youth Singers, will present their 40th anniversary concert "Joyful Celebration" on Sunday, May 6, at 3 pm, at St. Matthews Lutheran Church, 54 Benton St., Kitchener. Tickets are \$10 each, \$5 for children under 12, and \$25 per family. Tickets can be purchased in advance by calling 519-664-2116. Be sure

to get your tickets soon! Everyone is invited to the reception following the concert for a time of refreshment and fellowship.

**Join the Alumni Choir!**

Calling all former members of the Inter-Mennonite Children's choir, from 1967 to present, to join an Alumni Choir for the Celebration of IMCC's 40th anniversary. Under the direction of Jane Schultz-Janzen (pending availability), with accompaniment by Ann Schultz, the choir will perform during the celebratory weekend of May 5 and 6, 2007, at St. Matthews Lutheran Church in Kitchener. If you would like more information, please e-mail imccalumni@hotmail.com or call Deanna Wiebe at 519-742-3416. Early indication of alumni interest will greatly assist in our planning. Hope to see you there!



Photo by Dave Klassen

**John Torrance Perks, left, and Ralph Lebold burn the mortgage at Waterloo North Mennonite Church, Ont., at a special service on Jan. 14. Perks is the church's current Finance and Stewardship Committee chair and Lebold chaired the original building committee.**

LOOK, THE PROPHET SAYS: "The stone shall cry out of the wall."\*  
What do our stones cry out? Warning and wonder?

We are people of earth, all sizes and strengths:  
small, large  
light, dark  
smooth, rough  
individual, universal.

Rocks with messages bearing life from former worlds.  
We brought these stones from farmlands of southern Ontario:  
from Wellington, Waterloo, Wilmot  
(from beyond these boundaries, from Appalachia, even from  
East Jerusalem).

They once impeded our plowing...  
now they are lifted as a lesson in memory.  
Founded on a Rock, on many rocks,  
like fieldstone altars of covenant,  
we live in confession and communion.

Seamless we are not, but lovingly trowelled, we touch each other  
with promises to be bedrock to any who need us.

We are material of Art:  
fabrics, like wall hangings, covering cold stone,  
heralding seasons of Advent, Passion, and Easter—  
the stone rolled away.

We celebrate and rejoice,  
honouring a milestone of art and edifice.  
Thanks be to God!

#### —Miriam Maust

*( Habakkuk 2:11) The poet is a member of Waterloo North Mennonite Church. Her poem was read at a "milestones" worship service and mortgage-burning celebration on Jan. 14 to commemorate 20 years of ministry in Waterloo, Ont. The final payment of a \$220,000 debt-reduction campaign begun in 2004 was made in December. "It was truly a day of celebrating God's guiding and leading over these past 20 years," says Henry Pauls, chair of the Debt Elimination Task Force.*

A meditation on  
**stones**