

C A N A D I A N
Mennonite

April 2, 2007
Vol. 11, No. 7

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of God**
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Working out our faith together

As I look back over what was in this magazine in the past year, two events we reported upon stand out for me as especially powerful witnesses on how Jesus calls us to live.

The first was brought about by the killing of five little Amish girls and the severe wounding of five more in Pennsylvania. “Despite the horror, the locals almost unbelievably spoke of forgiveness and redemption,” reported a BBC interviewer who was on the scene. When Enos Miller, the grandfather of two of the girls who died, was asked whether he had forgiven the gunman, he replied, “In my heart, yes,” he said, explaining it was “through God’s help.” There was no better teaching moment for all the world—and us—to the power of Christ’s call to love and forgive.

The second was the example of the four Christian Peacemaker Teams members who showed with their actions that working for peace was important enough to die for. The man who did exactly that, Tom Fox, quoted Jesus the day before he was kidnapped: “Again, if I understand the message of God, how we take part in the creation of this [peaceable realm of God] is to love God with all our heart, our mind and our strength, and to love our neighbours and enemies as we love God and ourselves.”

The 24 issues of *Canadian Mennonite* delivered to you in the last 12 months contained this reporting, along with a wealth of articles on the many other things that shaped our lives together in the church. In these pages, you read the extraordinary stories of those in our churches, took part in the ongoing theological reflection and teaching published in the magazine, and stayed informed on the life of congregations and church happenings here and around the world. Already

this year, we’ve had a number of significant feature articles, including a series on seniors and the future of the church, young adults and leadership, Mennonite worship and, now in this issue, the very serious issue of domestic violence. Much more is already in the works for future issues.

As Mennonites, the most important spiritual rite in our faith is that of adult baptism. When we are baptized, we make an explicit promise before God that we are willing to give and receive counsel from each other. This magazine is the primary way for those in our church to do this beyond the local congregational level. *Canadian Mennonite* enables us to **work out our faith together**, learn how to live out our spiritual values with each other, and testify to the work of God in our lives and our world.

Once a year, I approach our readers to ask for your financial support for this important ministry. (Last year, we did this at the end of the year, but are doing it in the spring this year.) The magazine only charges the denomination just over half the actual cost of subscriptions, to keep it as affordable as possible and to reach as many as possible. In fact, we’ve steadily lowered the cost of the church list subscription rates to ease pressures on denominational budgets. Despite this, we’ve had the resources to not only maintain—but improve—this publication by making up the difference through your generosity and frugal spending on our part.

In this issue, you’ll find an envelope with a donation and comment card in it. Your tax-deductible gift helps ensure this ministry continues to be strong and effective. You’ve continued to support *Canadian Mennonite* as the one publication all our church households have in common. Thank you so much for the many ways you have helped enrich all of us through this magazine!

—**Tim Miller Dyck**

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Cover: "Femme touchant Jésus" by Swiss artist Corinne Vonaesch, 60 x 80 cm, 2001 (c-vonaesch.ch). The painting is based on the Mark 5 story of Jesus healing the women with a haemorrhage, which pastor Ruth Preston Schilk uses as a metaphor for the church and how it should respond to those who are victims of domestic violence (see page 5).



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Waterloo, Ont.

American duo makes their mark

At every end-of-term banquet, the Conrad Grebel University College Student Council in Waterloo presents several Student Life Awards. Winners of this non-monetary—fame only—award are nominated by their peers because they have shown outstanding leadership despite not holding a formal leadership role at the college. It is intended for students who stand out in the crowd by getting involved in the community in an exceptional way.

This past fall term, five students were presented with this award. Two recipients introduced together were Rosabeth Koehn and Angela Hostetler, both first-year English majors from Goshen, Ind.

Student council president Justus Zimmerly described how these two women enrich the Grebel community simply by their glowing presence. “Whether it’s the creation of foreign film night or a lovely hymn sing or just a piece of pie for American Thanksgiving, they always warm our hearts,” he said.

“Both are very involved in Peace Society, working toward bettering the lives of refugees in the [Kitchener-Waterloo] area,” he continued. “Both individuals are unique: one more athletic, one more artistic; one a flaming redhead, the other an earthy brown; one can play the accordion, the other doesn’t; one mellow, the other bubbly; but are united by many similarities: hometowns, love of subtitles, adoration of the Stratford [Ont.] area, their constant desire to look in every Salvation Army thrift shop possible, their intelligence, their accents, and their uncommon compassion and empathy.”

“Angie and I may appear very similar if you are simply reading our bios,” said Koehn, “but we actually have very different personalities and are



Conrad Grebel photo by Jennifer Konkle

Angie Hostetler and Rosabeth Koehn show off their Conrad Grebel University College Student Life Award treasure chests.

interested in different types of activities.... We were good friends in high school but made the decision to come to Grebel separately.”

Hostetler added that while they do a lot together and often reach the same conclusions, they think differently and approach things in different ways.

Active in Peace Society, FLOW (Grebel’s women’s group), the University of Waterloo women’s centre, writing for *GrebelSpeaks* and helping organize a weekly Grebel foreign film night, Koehn is motivated by her desire to better herself and better the world around her. Her goal is to improve her life and, by doing so, improve the rest of creation—the lives of other people as well as the Earth. At this point in her life, she is working at this mainly through education. In the future, Koehn hopes to have a writing career of some sort, possibly in

journalism or public relations.

Coming to Conrad Grebel to make her world bigger, Hostetler wanted to “challenge myself to be who I wanted to be and not who people expected me to be.” She is involved in Peace Society, volunteers at the Kitchener-Waterloo Reception Centre for Refugees, and helped organize the weekly foreign film night and several hymn sings. This term she is involved in the college’s One-Act Festival.

Motivated by “a desire to contribute something worthwhile to the lives of the people I know, living as compassionately and conscientiously as I can, and experiencing, understanding and feeling as much as I can in order to live life as fully as possible,” Hostetler eventually wants to be a university professor. However,

she hopes to first have many incredible life experiences, such as travelling and accomplishing extraordinary feats in order to build her eclectic professor identity. She plans to do a lot of volunteer work after university with Mennonite Central Committee or a similar organization, as well as possibly teach English as a new language.

Dean of students Mary Brubaker-Zehr described Koehn and Hostetler together: “They are both wonderful, creative, alternative in their thinking, passionate about issues of social justice and social change, and motivators within the Grebel community. They have made their mark at Grebel already.”

—Conrad Grebel release
by **Jennifer Konkle**



Photo by Ashley Armstrong, Designpics

Domestic violence:

What the church can do about it

The following sermon on domestic violence was preached by pastor Ruth Preston Schilk at Lethbridge (Alta.) Mennonite Church on July 2, 2006. The scripture text for the sermon was Mark 5:21-43.

She was so low on the social ladder that Scripture makes no mention of her name. History calls this anonymous person only by her medical condition—"the haemorrhaging woman." Yet her story is of such importance that it is recorded in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

To say that she had been suffering from haemorrhages is an understatement. Joyce Hollyday says in her book *Clothed With the Sun: Biblical Women, Social Justice and Us*, "Constantly losing blood, she would have been chronically weak and weary, anaemic even. Much of her time would have been spent taking care of her personal needs, washing out garments, dealing with a flow of blood from her body that had not slowed in twelve long years."

But her problems go far beyond the physical. Mark's Gospel says:

- *"she had endured much*
- *under many physicians,*
- *and had spent all she had;*
- *and she was no better, but rather grew worse" (Mark 5:26).*

Not only was treatment counter-productive, so that she was physically "broken," but her desperate search for a cure had left her "broke" financially.

Her most serious problem, however, was social isolation. Jewish purity laws indicated that because of her constant bleeding, she was continually unclean.

It was a particularly grave risk for

Continued on page 6

It was a particularly grave risk for her to deliberately touch another person—especially a holy man.



Violence *From page 5*

her to deliberately touch another person—especially a holy man. But she had come this far and had nothing to lose. She snuck up behind Jesus and secretly touched his cloak, for she said to herself, *“If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well”* (Mark 5:28). And indeed, *“immediately her bleeding stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease”* (Mark 5:29).

Jesus bears the cost

While Jesus himself was passive in this miracle—that is, he did not initiate the encounter with the one in need—he nonetheless was aware that power had gone out of him. This tells us that there is a cost to the help that Jesus gives, a cost that Jesus himself bears, a cost that was ultimately paid for all of us with his life on the cross.

In this situation Jesus wants to put a face on the one who received his costly grace so surreptitiously. And so he asks, *“Who touched my clothes?”* In spite of the disciples who, limited by common sense, found such a question ludicrous (given the crowds pressing in from all sides), Jesus kept looking all around to see who had done it. Then he waited.

“Frightened, yet astounded at her sudden recovery, the woman came forward,” Hollyday writes. “Trembling, she fell down before him and told him ‘the whole truth.’ To this stranger, she made a very public confession of what should have been a very private agony. She recounted the endless days of bleeding and isolation.”

Yet Jesus—whom we could picture with a gentle face at this pivotal moment—called her “daughter” and commended her for her faith.

Why would the early church have remembered and recorded this story?

For one reason, this story provides a model of faith and courage. The woman takes great risks. She throws her whole destiny on Jesus. She trusts him to rescue her from her past and to renew her future.

The early church also offers this story as a window into the radical life of Jesus. Prior to this story in Mark’s Gospel, the narrative features unclean spirits (Legion), an unclean place (the graveyard), and unclean animals (pigs) in an unclean land (Decapolis). Jesus was not at all reluctant to minister there. Nor will he hesitate to touch an unclean corpse when he arrives at Jairus’ house. In this case, Jesus affirms the faith of an “unclean” woman who expresses her faith by touching him. Jesus freely crosses religious boundaries offering healing and wholeness.

So what’s the ‘take-away’?

All good stuff, but what’s the “take-away” for the modern church? Why is this story important to us?

In this passage, this nameless woman could well be “Everywoman” from a medieval morality play: “Everywoman” who for years has endured violation and isolation, and who finally attempts to break the cycle of physical, emotional and financial torment of domestic violence. This time, she makes a plan, and carries it out.

But as is often the case, nay-sayers come to the fore. Liz Leibold McCloskey, writing in a 1989 *The Christian Century*, states, “The disciples’ impatient and incredulous tone and words, ‘You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, who touched me?’ is echoed in the contemporary attitude toward women who are in or who stay in abusive relationships. Many of us assume that we are not responsible for healing battered women. How can we possibly be expected to discern who they are, to recognize that they need help? What can we do?... The question, ‘Why does she stay?’ receives more attention than, ‘How have we failed to respond adequately to her touch?’”

Why is this important to the church today? Because, from the statistics, abusive situations are happening next door and even in our congregations.

This story and this issue are also important because, as Mennonites, we are a Peace Church. We are concerned when physical, psychological, sexual and financial abuse occurs because these are peace and justice issues.

But because we are a Peace Church there is also a shadow side that lurks around this issue for us. The silence about abuse is harder to break when it occurs in Christian homes and in churches. The stigma of not being in the perfect family is heightened when it becomes obvious to one or more family members that “ours is not the perfect Christian family.” Sadly, the admonition to turn the other cheek has been taken by some Mennonites to mean passively accepting violence from one’s spouse, that passive non-resistance is a godly response to abuse. But biblical forgiveness does not include or intend repeated submission

to violence.

Being Christian, being Mennonite, being well educated or even married for a long time, gives no immunity from abuse. Abuse crosses all spectrums of culture.

“Widely quoted conservative estimates indicate that one in 10 Canadian women is battered,” an MCC Domestic Violence Task Force said 20 years ago. In 2004-05, the Alberta Council of Women’s Shelters announced, “Alberta’s women’s shelters accommodated 5,998 women and 5,488 children. That same year, the shelters were unable to accommodate 5,150 women and their 3,710 children because they were full.”

When a woman, child or man reaches out to “touch” us because they have hope we can help in achieving their safety and healing, our response needs to be like Jesus, not like the disciples. After all, God became incarnate in Jesus, and now the church is the incarnate body of Christ. As the body of Christ, we must learn to recognize when someone is in need of healing.

If a person has the fortitude to reach out, we must believe their need. Most victims of domestic violence are assaulted 35 times before a formal complaint is filed. For many children, they have told about their situation six or seven times before they are believed.

No one deserves to be beaten or threatened. To fully provide for the needs of victims and abusers, as a congregation we need to be aware and make use of the resources for shelter in our community, be it the local women’s shelter or the YWCA.

A proper congregational response

As a congregation, we also have a pastoral role to play. The congregation that responds with genuine concern and compassion when a family loses a loved one often has difficulty when a family faces violence within. Yet friends in the congregation often can provide the needed ongoing community support. In one study, more than half of the abused women who had left abusive relationships did so with the aid of family and friends—including people whom they know through their church—rather than traditional counselling resources.

Mary Kauffmann-Kennel wrote in an issue of *Women’s Concerns*, “Perhaps, most of all, abused people need to encounter a God who is not only a judge, but a loving, compassionate God who cares about their suffering. This God does not will anyone to suffer. Suffering happens because of evil in the world. God is present with the sufferer, but in no way does this mean that God wants one to continue to suffer.”

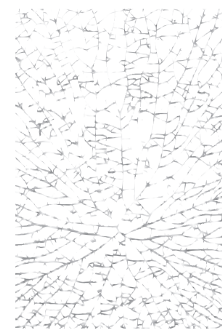
In closing, I quote again from Liz Leibold McCloskey: “Jesus’ response to the haemorrhaging woman...provide[s] a model for a response from the church to domestic violence. As more and more abused people tell their stories...we must respond with the gospel mandate to care for the suffering and to proclaim a resurrection image, a new household of freedom and justice.”

I invite us to enter into a prayer to God written by Teresa of Avila, a 16th century Spanish nun:

“Christ has no body now on earth but yours; yours are the only hands with which Christ can do his work, yours are the only feet with which Christ can go about the world, yours are the only eyes through which Christ’s compassion can shine forth upon a troubled world. Christ has no body on Earth now but yours. Amen.”

—Ruth Preston Schilk

The silence about abuse is harder to break when it occurs in Christian homes and in churches.



Home shouldn't be a place that hurts

“My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, in quiet resting places” (Isaiah 32:18).

As Christians, we value good healthy relationships with God and with each other. In our friendships, families and homes we care for one another, nurture children and experience God’s love. Yet, also in these close relationships, many among us experience intense personal violence.

In response to requests from pastors, caregivers and those affected by violence, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) provides training, support, free

online resources and referral services for increased safety and abuse prevention.

A packet—including a holder, with sticky tabs and brochures—entitled “Home Shouldn’t Be A Place That Hurts” is a new MCC resource. These free brochures offer information about abuse prevention, what to do if you have been abused, and what to do if you know someone who has been abused.

These packets are designed to be placed inside a washroom stall in your church or organization, for privacy and safety. Brochures and posters with this message are also available for use in foyers and other public areas.

Visit mcc.org for this resource and other information on abuse response and prevention.

—From MCC B.C. website



One woman's hell... and salvation

Growing up Mennonite, I was taught early in life that we were called to be peacemakers in the world. I came to believe that in following Jesus' steps, with God's love flowing through me, I could be a peacemaker and be instrumental in calming strife and conflict. As a woman-child, I learned to be nurturing, to help the unfortunate, to always think of my husband as the head of the house and the ultimate authority in our home.

I will not tell you that cruel reality has changed all my beliefs. However, they have been tested and I have learned more about violence than I ever wanted to know.

Whenever people share a living space they run into little problems—things you can talk about, problems you can solve together. But in our house the problems would not be solved.

Subconsciously I believed that, as wife, it was my job to smooth out the wrinkles in life. So I would give in, but he would not be satisfied. His anger and his criticism of me would grow. I would try harder to please him, but he would not be soothed. I was blamed for just about everything and I got so that I accepted that blame. Once he threw his brush at me in anger and accused me of breaking it. He threw his plate when he didn't like what I had fixed for dinner. I started to feel, through the physical and verbal bombardment, that maybe he was right and that his anger was justified.

Physical and verbal abuse became a regular pattern. He would grab me or push me if he thought I wasn't listening to him. He would throw things and tell me that I was a lousy wife or mother or housekeeper. And I kept trying to do everything right, willing to do anything for peace in my home, still believing that I could make it all come out all right. But the tension would continue to build and I'd be walking on eggshells. Suddenly, the violence would explode.

A beating is a hard thing to describe. It's a hard thing to remember, not because the memories have faded, but because they are so clear and painful. I felt an inexpressible fear, my arms pinned immobile to a bed by the knees of the man I loved, his fist coming toward my face. I have looked in the mirror and not recognized myself.

It is like an unbelievable nightmare. It is unbelievable to think that the man who professes to love you—and with whom you vowed to share your life—would actually do this to you. This nightmare quality of the experience is what made it so easy to believe that it would never



Photo by Ashley Armstrong, Designpics

happen again. He promised me that every time, crying and begging for forgiveness.

And me? Well, I was raised on forgiveness. How many times did Jesus tell us to forgive? Did he say to forgive only if it was a minor offence? Of course not! So I would forgive, wanting desperately to believe that he wouldn't strike me again. I would try again to be a better Christian, to be a better wife.

And so, after the tears and the pleading and the forgiving, long before the black eyes and bruises were healed, we would be trapped again in the days of wine and roses. He would be kind and loving. I would be forgiving. He would nurse my wounds. He would be considerate and helpful and gentle. He'd do the dishes! He would take me out to dinner, he'd buy me flowers and gifts. He tried to make me feel safe in my own home. Although I wanted out the first time there was violence, I was hooked on the promises and my own hopes for the future.

He needed to feel that he was taking steps in the right direction. He sought counselling but wanted me to go with him. Once he told me that he thought I must be an angel sent from God to teach him about peace. This is powerful stuff!

Next he would suggest marital counselling since the problem belonged to both of us and it was here that I began

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I believed that,
as wife, it
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to gain the strength that I personally needed to finally reach out for help. But it did nothing for our marriage; the things I said in a counselling session were often cause for verbal abuse later.

Around and around and around, always spiralling downward. I felt hopelessly trapped. I lost all self-esteem. With my “missionary complex” I had thought that I could help him. But I had failed again and again. I couldn’t stop the violence.

My husband tried to alienate me from my family, my friends and my church. Going to church was such a struggle that it was easier and sometimes safer to not even try. The church only made me feel more inadequate because of its emphasis on family stability. My pride would not allow me to admit or speak of the problem in my home.

I finally realized that I was living in a kind of hell, and that it surely couldn’t be God’s will for anyone to live like this. So I ran away—to the crisis intervention centre in my town. That’s where I began to learn to be alive again.

I began to pull the shreds of my life around me, the beginning of a long process of education and recovery. I learned that I was not alone, that it was not my fault, that thousands of other women like myself have been—and are being—beaten by someone they love, that the victim cannot help the abuser.

I have learned so very much. I know now that I could have called the police the very first time and that that might have done some good. No one deserves to be abused, and submitting to such abuse is not the way for us to be God’s peacemakers.

There were times when I wished I were dead. But I’m alive and I’m grateful for that. Some women do die, killed by the man who promised to cherish them. Some women kill. Sometimes it seems that death is the only way out. But today I know that there is a strong network of caring, loving people who will listen when I need to talk. These people have helped me to live again.

—Anonymous

Reprinted from “The Purple Packet” by MCC.

Are you or someone you know being abused?

Emotional or verbal abuse

Emotional or verbal abuse is the most difficult form of abuse to identify and is very hurtful to the person being abused.

It may include:

- Personal put-downs: criticisms, name calling, yelling, screaming, swearing, public embarrassment, “silent treatment.”
- Threatening gestures: driving dangerously, harming pets or property, smashing things, verbal threats.
- Controlling activities: isolating, pressuring, insulting, blaming.
- Other expressions of anger, jealousy and possessiveness.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse involves any unwanted physical contact, including:

- Restraining, pushing, spitting, grabbing, choking, pinching, kicking, slapping, punching, biting, or use of a weapon.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when any sexual behaviour is unwanted.

It includes:

- Rape/date rape, legally defined as sexual assault. Threats are often used to gain the compliance of the victim. It does not matter if there has been consenting sexual behaviour prior to the abuse.
- Any unwanted sexual touching.
- Coercing sex with anger or guilt.
- Using sexual words to humiliate you.
- Age-inappropriate exposure to sexual information or imagery.

Financial abuse

Financial abuse is when your money or property is used without your knowledge or consent. It may include:

- Mismanaging finances to neglect the needs of the household.
- Withholding access to household finances.

Spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- Breaking down your belief system (cultural or religious).
- Being punished or ridiculed for your belief.
- Preventing you from practising your belief.
- Abuse by a religious leader or abuse done in the name of, brought on by, or attributed to the belief system of the abuser.

—mcc.org/abuse/abused.html

The church only made me feel more inadequate because of its emphasis on family stability.



In the image of God: Women and children around the world



Located in the Church Center for the United Nations, New York City, the Tillman Chapel was built in 1963 as a sacred space where various faith traditions represented at the UN might practise their liturgies, traditions and rites within a common commitment to seek peace. The photo display, “In the image of God: Women and children around the world,” was mounted in the chapel, where worship services were held every day during the 51st session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, which coincided with International Women’s Day on March 8. The photos in the display were taken by Doug Hostetter, director of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) United Nations Liaison Office, over a 40-year period of service with MCC.



Tam Ky, Quang Tin Province, Vietnam—1967. High school students from the Girls School in Tam Ky were photographed in the midst of the Vietnam War.

Paghman, Afghanistan—2002.

Sisters on a weekend picnic. With the collapse of the Taliban government—which had greatly restricted women from public spaces—families from Kabul were travelling to the cooler mountains of Paghman District, where they could enjoy picnics in public for the first time in many years.



Tang Binh, Vietnam—1968.

Students in an MCC-organized literacy program. When the U.S. lost control of most of Quang Tin Province to the National Liberation Front during the Vietnam War in 1965, American military planes destroyed the infrastructure, including schools, markets and other large buildings.



Kabul, Afghanistan—2002.

This photo of an Afghan woman and her child was taken nine months after the Taliban government had collapsed.



Gulu, Uganda—2006.

Abducted as a girl by the Lord's Resistance Army, this young woman escaped about a year ago with her infant daughter after many years in captivity. The photograph was taken at St. Monica's Tailoring School for Girls in Gulu, where she is studying tailoring and her child is cared for in St. Monica's nursery school.

Should I stay or should I go?

If I had to describe a significant moment in my life that has helped me to see God more clearly, the first thing that jumps into my head is my decision to come to Bible school. To be honest, I didn't even want to come to Steinbach Bible College. I thought it was going to be really lame. I know it sounds really clichéd. Like, isn't that what everyone who goes to Bible school says?

By the middle of first semester I still couldn't decide if I should stay or go back home. For about a week I had one song running through my head, thanks to that '80s band The Clash:

*"Should I stay or should I go now?
If I stay there will be trouble
but if I go there will be double.
So now you've got to let me know,
should I stay or should I go?"*

Finally I just decided to stay, since I couldn't think of any real reason not to, and I'm not one who likes to give up very easily. Right after making that decision I prayed that I would be at peace with it, because I still didn't know what I wanted.

The next morning I woke up knowing that it was the right choice. That was weird for me, in a surprisingly good way. I expected to second-guess myself, but it never happened. Somewhere along the way my thoughts changed, and I began to enjoy Bible school.

Before Christmas, I took an introduction to the Old Testament course, where I learned amazing things about how God worked in the lives of people so long ago. Until then, the Old Testament had always seemed to me like a bunch of disconnected stories. But learning how they all fit together—and how God can be seen in each one—was really incredible for me!

This semester, it's different. Something really cool that I've noticed is I've been able to see—maybe more clearly than ever—how God is working in my life. It's like the first half of the year I could see the big picture, how

God was working in the world and in the lives of others. Now, in the second half, I can see how God is working in even the small details of my life.

Even though I grew up in a Christian home, I attended an almost completely non-Christian school and so I figured I wouldn't be able to relate to anyone at Bible school. I really didn't have very many Christian friends, so I didn't realize how big of an impact they could make on my faith journey.

The first day I decided that I was only going to stay until Christmas and by then I would have learned a bit more about God—which is what I came for, after all—and after that I could return to the "real world." But I

met friends who actually encouraged my walk with the God I was learning about in class.

For the first time in my life I am constantly surrounded by people who encourage me to live out my faith. It's not just through one person that God has shown himself clearly to me, but through a whole community of people.

One thing that's really stressed at Steinbach is "community," to the point where it's almost become an annoying word. But I've learned so much from some of my friends here.

One friend in particular was telling me about her struggle with prayer. As she started to get excited about praying again, I realized I was also learning new things about prayer and I was getting excited too.

There are a lot of things God has wanted to teach me this year—about himself, relationships, and how to live like a Christian in a society where lots of people reject Christianity.

As I write this, I'm looking forward to putting what I've learned into practice during my upcoming Mission X trip to Winnipeg's inner city. I'm a little bit nervous, but also excited; and I'm sure that God will continue to teach me

new things through this experience.

I'm glad I decided to stay.

—Rachel Bueckert



Bueckert

the young prophets

Pontius' Puddle



Letters

Better to cope with climate change than try to reverse it

I was interested to see yet another editorial on the seriousness of climate change in the Feb. 5 issue (“Hurting the least of these,” page 2).

Despite our protestations, I have not noticed any reaction from my Mennonite friends who continue to drive their SUVs and oversized trucks just as they always have, visiting relatives distributed far and wide all over western Canada with the same regularity.

Please do not dismiss me as one who does not believe that there have been some very unusual changes in climate in recent years, but I do have considerable doubts about the increase in carbon dioxide in our atmosphere being the principal factor in these changes. Climate is just not that simple.

There is really no experimental evidence that can be repeated by different scientists that would confirm the overarching effects of carbon dioxide repeatedly trumpeted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and that, after all, is the standard litmus test expected of most scientific research.

Personally, I believe that we would be much better advised to develop ways to best cope with the climate changes that are happening rather than devoting a large portion of our efforts to trying to reverse the trend.

No thinking Canadian would support carbon taxes because, like other governments before them, this one would take the taxes and put the money into the general revenue.

As for more expensive and “efficient” technologies, it takes more ethanol by weight than regular gas to produce the same amount of energy and just as much carbon dioxide is produced. And there have been recent food riots in Mexico because the poor are finding their largely corn-based food staples are rising in price which, they believe, is the result of increased ethanol production north of the border.

And it requires more energy to produce hydrogen fuel cells than the energy that can be obtained from the

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.

cells, even at 100 percent efficiency.

And as for “placing limits on how much fossil fuel a person could use in a year,” we do not need “energy police” in Canada. I don’t want to live in a fascist dictatorship, thank you.

—**Clyde Ovens, Calgary, Alta.**

Worship conference coverage ‘refreshing’

Thank you for the coverage of the Refreshing Winds worship conference at Canadian Mennonite University in the Feb. 19 issue of *Canadian Mennonite*. As a first-time attendee, the report (“Christian work flows out of Christian worship,” page 32), meditative poem (“When our dancing turns to mourning,” page 6), and pictures reminded me anew of the positive influence the weekend had on me.

I would like to add a note about Irma Fast Dueck’s involvement. Her “Symbol, sign and ritual” workshop was powerful and her work as master of ceremonies for the sessions added much to the spirit of the conference.

Thanks for inspiring reading.
—**Peggy Hiebert, Kelowna, B.C.**

Vietnamese pastor abusing his freedom

On page 33 of the Feb. 19 issue, there was another story on the continuing saga of the Mennonite Church’s conflict in Ho Chi Minh City, District 2 (“Congregation continues to meet after yet another conflict with authorities”).

Since we have many non-Christian Vietnamese friends in Vietnam, we have been following this story with interest and despair. Our friends believe that Nguyen Hong Quang is abusing his political and religious freedoms, and is deliberately taunting the authorities.

The Vietnamese press has described

Nguyen as a “hooligan” and trouble-maker. It ignored the religious context of the conflict and focused on the political and legal issues Nguyen is reported to have violated.

Also, we think it is time that the American author of these stories is identified along with his relationship to the so-called “Vietnamese Ministries” organization. If he objects to being identified, then *Canadian Mennonite* should not print his stories.

The story contains a repeated call for “the worldwide church to pray for the churches and authorities in Vietnam.” We would urge people to pray specifically that Nguyen finds the right balance between assertion/confrontation and negotiation/peacemaking.

—**Joanne and Doug Durst, Regina**

Seeing Christ in St. Kevin

St. Kevin of Glendalough was a sixth century Irish hermit who lived in a hole more or less in the rock wall of a cliff, emerging in winter to stand for hours stark naked in the icy waters or in the summer to hurl himself—naked again—into poisonous nettle bushes.

He eventually allowed a monastic community to form around him. They were not all able to fit into the hole in the cliff face, which was about a metre wide and high and two metres deep, so St. Kevin agreed reluctantly to move to the shore of the lake, where his disciples built a tiny church for their master—a wonder of Irish engineering that stands to this day—and small huts for themselves that have long since disappeared.

Although they lived singly, they gathered together to chant the Psalms at the appointed monastic hours, which caused them to rise twice each night and walk to the chapel in the

Continued on page 14



Photo courtesy of Bill J. Heavener

St. Kevin's monastery in Ireland.

cold dark to sing their office.

Soon enough, even the level shore of the lake proved to be inadequate to St. Kevin's community, for people began to come from all over Ireland to sit at the feet of the monks and to learn all they had to teach.

This is of great interest to me because I only lived a short walk from this holy place. To walk in the place of a saint and monks who kept alive the Christian faith is something that sends a shiver up my back. I have climbed the face of that cliff many a

time and to think that St. Kevin had stayed in such a gloomy place for so many years had a profound effect on me as young lad growing up.

Can anybody dare tell me that there is no Christ when I have seen things of this nature? Without Christian people of that time, who can tell what kind of a God we might be worshipping today. —**Bill J. Heavener, Cochrane, Ont.**

Stories bode well for church's future

I just want to let you know I enjoy and appreciate reading *Canadian Mennonite*. It seems to become more interesting and helpful as time goes on. "Seniors and the future of the church" by Robert J. Suderman, "Pensive in Egypt" by Barrette Plett, "Berries, 'cold gravy' and generosity" by Mike Strathdee and more in the Feb. 5 issue give hope for the future generations.

And DeskTop reading makes for a good start. Thanks to the writers.

—**Mary J. Mireau, Saskatoon**

High Church worship meaningful for many

Thank you for your fine articles on High Church worship (March 5, pages 4 to 9).

From my observation, the so-called High Church worship phenomenon already has deep roots in the Mennonite community. The only mystery is why it had been left unaddressed in the Mennonite media for so long. Instead, the frequent focus of most worship discussion has been on the more "spontaneous" forms of worship making inroads into the community. Many in our Mennonite communion, however, continue to experience spiritual vitality in the more ritualized forms of worship.

While spontaneity connotes spiritual energy to some, others find deep meaning and spiritual fulfillment in

SHERRI GROSZ



God, money and me

"Death stinks" were the pastor's opening words at this funeral. My heart wholly agreed with his sentiment. This funeral was to celebrate the life of a vivacious 29-year-old woman, married for three years to a wonderful man, who had been one of my employees and had become one of my friends. It seemed terribly unfair that she had been killed in a car accident only 13 days before Christmas.

So there we were, mourners packed to standing-room only in a church one week before Christmas Eve trying to put this death into perspective. We should have been rejoicing the coming celebration of Christ's birth, and instead were weeping at the injustice of her death.

Following the funeral, I wondered what if it had been my husband or me in that car accident? As much as possible, we are prepared for that event because shortly after we were married we prepared our wills.

Everyone knows they will die someday. None of us know the hour or the day, but we still put off making plans for our death. Nearly 50 percent of Canadians don't have a will. If they were to die tomorrow, their families would be left with a long, expensive process to settle their estates that would involve lawyers and courts. Assets would be frozen, inheritances delayed and costs greatly increased. I'm sure they don't want that to be their final legacy to their loved ones.

In our marriage counselling, we were encouraged to contact Mennonite Foundation of Canada for help creat-

ing our wills. We obtained the Foundation's Estate Planning Guide and began to work our way through it.

Rob and I considered the "what ifs" that make up a good will. What if we both died together?

What if his children died with us? Who would raise them if they survived us?

We also thought about what charities we would want to bless.

Finally, we contacted the Foundation and arranged for a stewardship consultant to meet us in our home. Our consultant created a memo to take to our lawyer to assist in drafting the wills. We signed our new wills a few weeks later and we were done.

Now that I am employed with the Foundation, I can assist and encourage others to make sure their wills are complete and up to date.

But why does the Foundation care if you have a will? We believe that all Christians are called to be respon-

sible for what God has entrusted into their care. Part of careful stewardship involves making plans for the future.

The Mennonite Foundation of Canada is also a public foundation that encourages generosity among our clients. We will ask if you have given any thought to a charitable bequest in your will, and can help you explore the options you

have. The Foundation also offers many services to assist you in your generosity now.

Sherrie Grosz is a stewardship consultant at the Kitchener, Ont., office of Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For stewardship education, and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit mennofoundation.ca.

Death stinks

Following the funeral, I wondered what if it had been my husband or me in that car accident?

services that are thoroughly planned. Indeed, the planning process itself should be a deeply meaningful spiritual exercise. The Spirit is present in the preparatory writing, praying and, yes, thinking. Similarly, the music is seen as deeply integrated with the Scripture readings, the sermon, the prayers and every other aspect of the service. Words are still the dominant means by which we communicate and express our faith—whether in prayer, hymn, anthem or sermon. It is incumbent upon us, therefore, to choose each word carefully and deliberately in order to allow our language to communicate as effectively as possible what it is we wish to say to God and to each other.

Furthermore, the richness of Christian tradition is seen as a valuable asset to the worshipping community. Both words and music draw deeply from these historic spiritual

wells. One Mennonite leader, who switched his membership to the Anglican Church, informed me that he did so because in his area of the country the Mennonite churches no longer held to their historic doctrines, while the Anglican congregation in that region was both theologically and liturgically closest to the Saskatchewan Mennonite congregation in which he was raised.

He is not alone. As many seek to abandon the theological heritage of their denomination, others feel they have to leave the Mennonite communion in order to locate their Mennonite theological and liturgical heritage—and to connect their faith with the wider Christian communion. Let us embrace the diversity of worship among us and therein also find Christian unity.

Finally, while I appreciated John Longhurst's review of Vespers at

CMU, it should be noted that monthly Vespers were already a regular feature at Canadian Mennonite Bible College when I was a student there from 1976-79, which means they pre-date even my own experience.
—Edmund Pries, Kitchener, Ont.

Feb. 19 corrections

Jake Froese is not part of an Alberta team writing MC Canada's 2008 Lenten worship materials. Incorrect information appeared in the "On the open road with God" article on page 5.

In the same issue, it was incorrectly reported that Saskatchewan MP Maurice Vellacott was invited to speak at an Osler Mennonite Church study on war and peace (*The Churches*, page 26). He was only asked to respond to a series of questions submitted by the pastor, which he did, in fact, do.

Canadian Mennonite regrets the errors.

MELISSA MILLER



Family Ties

Walking through the garage, my attention is caught once again by the out-of-place cook kit. Our camping cook kit sits in the garage wrapped in a plastic grocery bag. I put it there last summer. I moved it—with some attitude—from the front hallway where my husband had deposited it after he returned from a camping trip with the guys. I've repeatedly asked my dearly beloved to "deal with it," meaning check to see if it was cleaned when it was last used, and put it away. Its normal resting place is in the basement with the camping gear. So far, my requests have gone unheeded.

I could "deal with it" myself. I've often done so, eliciting the energy of the martyr over the discipline of waiting him out. I respect people who are laid back and gracious, who have less stomach for engaging the fight than I can muster. This time, however, I've chosen to be stubbornly annoyed, the cook kit's silent vigil in the garage a frustrating reminder of marital discord.

In the intervening months, I've invested the cook kit with more weight than is warranted. I have pondered my partner's stubbornness, his resistance to my interests. I see in the cook kit a host of marital missteps. Its very presence can represent my husband's lack of love for me! Such is the interpretation I am prone to make.

On this day, my thoughts go in a different direction. I think of the many people I've known who get stuck in precisely such a place. Their desire to fight and to be right has destroyed their marriage. I think of those whose rigidity has pushed their children far from them. I

Grace in the garage

remember people whose bitterness has poisoned their family relationships and weighed heavily on those around them.

Does the neglected cook kit really represent all the negative agenda I attach to it? Do I want to dwell on such minor matters and miss the larger strokes on the canvas of our relationship—over 10,000 days and nights that begin and end with a warm snuggle? the joy of parenting our son and now taking pleasure in his young adult companionship? our shared work and church commitments?

Maybe I could release the burr of resentment I've attached to the cook kit. Maybe such a conscious act would be a small way to participate in the transformation God offers us through Easter—death to what binds, life to what releases.

Something else draws my attention as I exit the garage. On the hood of the car are a scattering of my cat's paw prints, perfect five-toed rosettes which are charming or dirty, depending on your perspective. For my husband, they're an ongoing source of irritation, and I have not heeded his pleas or edicts to prevent such hood ornaments from recurring. The cat's presence in our family and his paw print transgressions are accommodations my spouse makes, part of the price of sharing a home with me. Something like a misplaced cook kit.

Melissa Miller (familyties@mts.net) is a pastor, counsellor and author from Winnipeg. She is currently serving as interim pastor of Arnaud Mennonite Church.

Maybe I could release the burr of resentment I've attached to the cook kit.

Nazareth, Israel

Nazareth Village ready for its close-up: Film producers seek biblical authenticity

A filmmaker 2,000 years ago would have had realistic settings for biblical movie productions, but where can they go now?

Nazareth Village is in the spotlight again as an increasingly popular production locale for film and documentary producers to get the realistic first century look they want for sets and characters.

“Nazareth Village is the only archaeologically accurate ‘recreated town’ in Israel,” says Simcha Jacobovici, president of Associated Producers, based in Toronto. “I couldn’t have wished for a better filming environment.” Jacobovici is the director of the recently released documentary, *The Lost Tomb of Jesus*, which sparked worldwide controversy last month because of its suggestions that Jesus married Mary Magdalene, fathered a child by her and did not physically rise from the dead.

And *The Nativity* (released on DVD on March 20), which was filmed in Italy, benefited from contact a year earlier with Nazareth Village guides on staff.

One of them, Rani Espanioly, reports, “The producer and director came to the village and asked about daily life in Jesus’ time in order to recreate scenes that would be authentic.”

Following this visit, the production team requested three Nazareth Village staffers work with them as consultants regarding daily life in the first century. On the set in Italy, the Nazareth Village personnel taught the actors the practical skills of daily living 2,000 years ago—farming activities, milking goats, using an olive press, baking bread and weaving cloth.



Nazareth Village has become so popular with film and television crews that it has produced a Film and Video Production Handbook touting its services.

Nazareth Village photo

“I guess it’s not surprising,” says Espanioly, smiling, “that the actor who played Joseph in *The Nativity* had no idea how to use carpentry and stone cutting tools.... But by the end of our training period, he came across as a professional first century carpenter!”

Earlier this year, Nazareth Village executives had a booth at the convention of the National Religious

Broadcasters meeting in Orlando, Fla., where they sought to make more accessible to worldwide audiences the biblical setting and stories of the Bible through the life and teachings of Jesus.

Says Nazareth Village executive director Shirley Roth of the reason for attending the Orlando event, “Productions are invaluable to Nazareth Village, letting us showcase

Lebold blazed a new trail for pastors

Strange and Wonderful Paths: The Memoirs of Ralph Lebold. Ralph Lebold. Pandora Press, 2006, 236 pages.

Ralph Lebold’s memoirs contain much more than the personal stories of a feisty Mennonite leader and pastor. The 1960s and ’70s were times of enormous change in the Amish and Mennonite conferences of Ontario, and Lebold was one of the leaders who helped bring about this change.

Lebold grew up in a rural Amish Mennonite congregation that was influenced by the tent revivals of the 1950s. He and several other young people felt called to ministry at a time when leaders were regularly chosen by lot. He was a new type of pastor who heard the call and then acquired education and profes-

sional training before being ordained.

As the first conference minister for the Ontario and Western Ontario Mennonite conferences, Lebold was influential in helping congregations develop healthy relationships with employed pastors, rather than those chosen by lot from within the congregation. As the third president of Conrad Grebel College, he worked to maintain good relationships between the college and the churches, and he fostered strong ties between the different Mennonite conferences.

Lebold has documented many of the changes that came to the Mennonite Church in the second half of the 20th century, including the rise of individualism and urbanization. The great value of this book is that he reflects on how the style and expectations of leadership changed during these years.

—Barb Draper

our authentic reconstructions and providing a living presentation of first century life in Nazareth during the Roman period.”

—Nazareth Village release, with files from **Ross W. Muir**

Amazing Grace not so amazing

Amazing Grace. Roadside Attractions/Samuel Goldwin Films. Directed by Michael Apted; written by Steven Knight. Rated PG.

Few stories are more inspiring than the life of William Wilberforce, the member of the British Parliament who tirelessly fought for years in the 18th century to get England, the world's leading superpower of the day, to abolish the slave trade.

Then why was I disappointed by *Amazing Grace*, a new film that some have compared to classics like *Chariots of Fire* or *Shadowlands*? After all, this film came with good credentials—directed by Michael Apted (*Coal Miner's Daughter*) and based on a screenplay by Academy Award nominee Steven Knight.

Somehow the filmmakers have managed to take the story of an underdog fighting a moral cause against one of the world's great evils—coupled with the story of what is perhaps history's most-loved hymn—and turned it into a dull, didactic and sanctimonious film that runs for nearly two hours.

To be sure, the film does have some bright moments. We see John Newton (Albert Finney), the former slave trader who wrote the hymn “Amazing Grace,” toiling with his demons as a monastic cleric while serving as a mentor to Wilberforce (Ioan Gruffudd from *Fantastic Four*).

We are carried into the close friendship between Wilberforce and William Pitt (Benedict Cumberbatch), who became prime minister at age 24 and who also urges Wilberforce to take on the whole government. “Do you intend to use your beautiful voice to praise the Lord or to change the world?” he



Old Order community insightfully portrayed

Horse-and-Buggy Mennonites. Donald B. Kraybill and James P. Hurd. University Park, Penn.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006.

The title subhead, “hoof beats of humility in a postmodern world,” encapsulates the book's contents. This study of the Groffdale Mennonite Conference, a third of whose population of about 18,000 lives in Lancaster County Penn., vividly portrays the peculiar lifestyle of these horse-and-buggy Mennonites: their clothing, business and farming methods, family, church rule, entertainment, education, youths and values, to name a few.

The book is superbly written, giving an insightful, thorough, detailed portrayal of Old Order Mennonite life. However, the reader receives no assistance from the authors in critiquing this Christian community.

The authors do push readers to go beyond visual appearances, beyond any quick and simple judgment. They show the Old Order rationale of their culture, and subtly appeal to postmoderns to examine where modernity, technology and individualism have possibly impaired them.

The church calendar—including Christmas, Easter and Ascension—are more valid to Groffdale Mennonites than state and labour holidays. The four seasons of the year, night and day, morn-

asks Wilberforce.

And we see Wilberforce wrestling with his own sense of mission and purpose, as he comes to faith while already a successful parliamentarian. He eventually heeds the advice of

some of the leading abolitionists: “We understand you are having problems deciding whether to do the work of God or the work of a political activist,” they tell him. “We humbly suggest you can do both.”

While *Amazing Grace* certainly will be an improvement over most Sunday school videos, it's disappointing that it could have been so much more. So many of the film's decisions seem so calculated.

Notice how the movie posters play up the romance between Wilberforce

and evening, are all central. Work is God-given and pleasurable, enriching their lives.

Parents delight in being with their children throughout the day. A one-room school within two miles of home is preferred over a school bus pick-up to a distant town, where questionable values and behaviour are tolerated. Community and church take precedence over the accumulation of money and conspicuous consumption.

Gelassenheit “captures the deepest value of Old Order life,” the authors assert, pointing to multiple meanings of the word—yieldedness, surrender, submission, humility, calmness. It “stands in contrast to the individualism of American culture,” they write. Members are meek and willing to suffer, rather than defending themselves, leading the authors to frequently refer to a “redemptive” community, because this is the fulcrum of life and meaning.

The adoption of *gelassenheit* impacts their lifestyle in terms of association with the world. It is not a simple question of adopting cell phones, a computer or an automatic washer. Such decisions go beyond whether they can afford, or would profit from, the possession. The clergy readily state that any item may not be sin in itself, but may have a bearing on other community members—a possible shift in an unwanted direction.

—**John Peters**

The reviewer is professor emeritus at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ont.

and Barbara Spooner (Romola Garai). It was almost as if, after an initial reading of the script, a producer said, “Let's get a Kate Winslet type to spice up this film like she did for *Titanic*.” And expect to see several other Hollywood movie clichés.

A film about faith put into action should inspire us in the literal sense of the word; it should breathe the spirit of the divine into all who watch. Any filmgoer gets that sense when watching great inspirational dramas like *Chariots of Fire* or *Schindler's List*. Measured against these standards, what should have been powerful material turns out to be not so amazing after all.

—**Tom Price**

Reprinted from thirdway.com.

Pioneer women pastors were trailblazers

Pioneers in Ministry: Women Pastors in Ontario Mennonite Churches, 1973-2003. Mary Schiedel. Pandora Press and Herald Press, 2003.

This is a warm and informative book about women in ministry in the Mennonite churches of Ontario. Mary Schiedel sets out to give an historical perspective of how women came to be in leadership. She does this by collecting autobiographical stories of women in ministry.

The stories are grouped into five main areas: trailblazers, pioneers, women on teams, sole pastors, and pastors and mothers. These follow the advent of women into ministry from the earliest years until the present, including stories by women who were the first to be ordained in their respective conferences.

There are a number of themes that recur. A sense of call to ministry permeates the book. The pioneers of women's ministry often followed that call in spite of the social norms of their day, or even against their own feelings of inadequacy. Being

true to God's call continues as a theme in the later stories as well—less in the sense of debating “whether” they should be ministers, but rather “how” they should be ministers.

I think this is a valuable book not only for people interested in Ontario Mennonite history, but also as a snapshot for the broader denomination. It can be very easy for young women to forget how difficult and revolutionary it was for women to be in ministry only a few short years ago. This book helps to keep that memory alive.

As a woman in ministry, I found the book very moving. I know some of the women personally, which made their stories even more poignant, particularly as I saw my own journey reflected in theirs. The pioneering work of these women makes my own position in ministry possible.

A challenge in writing the book

must have been in deciding who not to include. For many years women were not allowed to work in ministry positions. They received further education, but were relegated to administrative roles. In these roles they did important ministry, even though they were not officially ministers.

I would recommend this easy-reading book for all Ontario Mennonite Church libraries. In our denomination

today there is a shortage of ministers, but a book like this could serve to inspire some women to consider entering the ministry. They would be following in the footsteps of some remarkable women.

—Carol Penner.

The reviewer is pastor at First Mennonite Church, Vineland, Ont.

Native healing practices credited for sobriety

The Hollow Tree: Fighting Addiction with Traditional Native Healing. Herb Nabigon. Montreal and Kingston, Ont.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006, 113 pages.

When life brings you to its lowest ebb, when self-blame and self-doubt yield only to helplessness and despair, what do you do? Many a story either written or spoken tells of such a crisis as the birth of something new, and often the new beginning resulted from a fresh look inward, upward or forward. Herb Nabigon writes of finding his rescue—his salvation—by looking back.

The Hollow Tree is an autobiography. Nabigon's life story begins with a positive childhood, including the love and security of his parental home in the northern Ontario Ojibwe community of Pic Mobert First Nation. When he turned nine he was taken from his parents and sent to a residential school in Spanish, Ont. There began the education that introduced him to “western culture,” as he calls it, and to “the destroyer.”

In high school, he took his first drink. This was followed by many more, and alcohol quickly became the crutch he used to deal with social pressures, with the painful loss of his mother, the breakdown of his marriage, and a series of unsuccessful jobs, among other problems. Nabigon writes of his loneliness, confusion and anger, which brought him repeatedly to the solution of the whisky bottle.

It was while working as a policy analyst for the Department of Indian and Northern Development that a supervisor presented him with the ultimatum: “Stop drinking or be fired.” In February 1979 he entered a 28-day alcohol treatment program at Poundmakers Lodge, St. Albert, Alta. Nabigon marks this as the beginning of his sobriety journey.

It is here that the book undergoes a subtle change. The transparency and candour continues, but a fresh tone emerges. It is now with enthusi-

asm and energy that Nabigon plunges into the teachings of the native elders who were a part of the alcohol treatment program. Repeatedly they are credited with saving him from the brink of self-destruction. “Elders carry the ancient ways of our people,” he writes. “They are the healers.”

This book contains none of the hype or “literary sound bites” so prevalent in psychological or evangelical self-help books these days. In a very gentle manner, Nabigon addresses some very obvious socio-political, racial and cultural issues while telling his own story.

The author lives in Sudbury, Ont., with his wife, where he is associate professor of native human services at Laurentian University and a respected elder in First Nations communities across North America.

—Jacob Froese

The reviewer is an Alberta-based trucker who filed his review electronically from his rig's sleeper cab while on a long-distance haul.





w i n d o w

A roof with a view

Steve Schweitzer, Ph.D.

“When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof; otherwise you might have bloodguilt on your house, if anyone should fall from it.” (Deut 22:8 NRSV)

I often begin discussion of the relevancy of the Old Testament for Christians with this verse buried in its seemingly endless laws. It provides a clear example of how Christians can bridge the often incomprehensible difference between the Old and New Testaments.

A good first question: “What is a parapet?” The dictionary states: “a short wall designed to provide protection.”

The second question: “So, why do I need one on my roof, especially since no one is ever up there?” The answer comes from ancient Israelite architecture: homes were constructed with *flat* roofs that were covered by a canopy intended as extra living space (see Judges 16:27; Acts 10:9). The wall prevented someone from falling off the roof, thereby being injured or killed.

This historical and cultural knowledge reveals a humanitarian principle: people must maintain their property in such a way as to prevent someone else from getting hurt. In our contemporary society, many communities have a similar ordinance requiring that swimming pools be

surrounded by a fence to prevent accidental drowning. However, at least in North America, we do not have stipulations requiring parapets on rooftops. Why? We don’t typically have flat roofs. Our culture and biblical culture are not the same.

A third question: “Should Christians observe this command?” Or, “Should Christians build parapets on their roofs?” No. This command about parapets is a *culturally-conditioned* regulation.

However, the reason for the law is worth pondering: humanitarian concern for another’s well-being (*shalom*). This *principle* lies behind much of the Old Testament’s obscure rules. From this rooftop view, a *progressive* awareness of responsibility toward the good of those around us is consistent with Jesus’ teachings.

During college, I became interested in the Old Testament as a means to understand Jesus; it was one of many factors contributing to what Jesus said and how those around him filtered his teaching. One important aspect of making the Bible relevant for the church today is to understand

the situation in which it was written. When we notice the points of continuity and discontinuity between then and now, we are able to use the Bible theologically, pastorally and ethically in a more consistent and authentic way.

So, don’t build a parapet on your roof. Instead, live in ways that promote the well-being of others. Jesus (and the Old Testament) would agree.

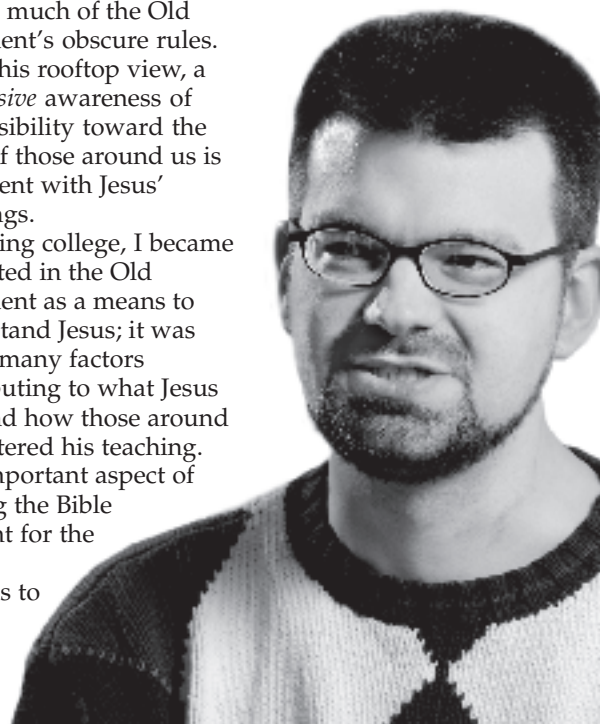
Steve Schweitzer joined the AMBS faculty in 2006 as assistant professor of Old Testament. He is a member of Prince of Peace Church of the Brethren in South Bend, Ind. ●

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J. Tyler Klassen

Festival focuses on telling the Bible's stories

Abraham accepting a new name. Ruth declaring her loyalty. Jesus seeing the heavens torn open after his baptism.

The participants who gathered for AMBS's first biblical storytelling festival experienced all of this and more. The Sunday afternoon event on February 18 brought 120 people together to hear and join in these key stories in our faith heritage.

In the first session of the event, stories were performed in a variety of ways to demonstrate how biblical storytelling has power to communicate the Gospel and how the Bible's stories

can be shared orally. Three workshops followed in the second hour:

- First person biblical storytelling, led by AMBS student Moriah Hurst;
- Biblical storytelling with children in worship, led by Lois Kaufmann, AMBS student and pastor at Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen;
- Storytelling in other kinds of ministry, led by June Alliman Yoder, Jacob Elias, and Daniel Schipani, AMBS faculty members. ●



Pastors and students study Paul together

A mix of six pastors, students in an on-campus course and students in an online course are all exploring the ministry and writings of Paul the Apostle. Jacob Elias, professor of New Testament, is leading the exploration through a course on Romans and a pastor-faculty study group, "Engaging Pastor Paul."

The six pastors met at AMBS in January and are spending the late winter and spring months communicating by e-mail and internet. They will meet again in May or June at the conclusion of the study.

Part of the assignment of these six pastors is to listen in on students in the two classes as they share with each other their responses to study questions on Paul's letter to the Romans. Each pastor has been assigned to a pair of students and they may enter into the digital conversation as they wish. They are invited to share insights from their ministry to help students understand what Paul was saying to first-century house

churches and to the church today.

In this way these pastors become co-teachers for the students. The collaboration is possible through the seminary's Engaging Pastors program, a cluster of ten projects that brings together professors and pastors for sustained conversation and learning. Pastors in the group are (from upper left around the circle in the photo):

- Tyler Hartford, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.;
- Todd Lehman, Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.;
- Mark Schlotterbeck, Germantown Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, Pa.;
- Bryce Miller, Shalom Mennonite Church, Tucson, Ariz.;
- Ed Kauffman, executive conference minister for Central Plains Mennonite Conference, Sioux Falls, S.D.;
- Steve Musselman, Zion Mennonite Church, Birdsboro, Pa.;
- Jacob Elias, professor of New Testament, AMBS. ●



Members of the fall semester Biblical Storytelling class, plus several additional students, performed the entire book of Ruth at the February 18 festival. They used arrays of candles to help the audience identify the characters in the story.



Translator of *The Message* joins pastor-professor study group

“We were marinating in Scripture.” That’s how Alan Kreider, AMBS professor of mission and church history, described a gathering of pastors and professors in late February.

The experiences of the session—Bible study, worship and discussion—focused on teaching the Bible in the congregation. This session of the 2006–07 Pastor-Faculty Colloquy included Eugene Peterson, who has written extensively about pastoral ministry and

who created the translation of the Bible called *The Message*.

Eugene Peterson (center photo) told the group about his first attempts to teach the Bible in the congregation where he was pastor for 29 years. Though there were only three students in that first class, he continues to draw on what he learned in that experience. “I wanted them to get the story and start living it. I wanted them to have those voices reverberating in their lives.”

Pastors who participated

were Tim Kuepfer (in left photo), Rachel Miller Jacobs (right photo), Jennifer Davis Sensenig, Don Rheinheimer, Roy Hange, Carol Penner, Phil Waite and Rudy Baergen who was unable to attend the February session. Professors were Daniel Schipani, Mary Schertz, Alan Kreider and Arthur Paul Boers. To find out more, including which

congregations these pastors serve, see www.ambs.edu/news-and-publications/news/colloquy.

This project is one of ten in the seminary’s Engaging Pastors program, which aims to bring pastors and professors together for collaborative learning and work. ●

Campaign Report



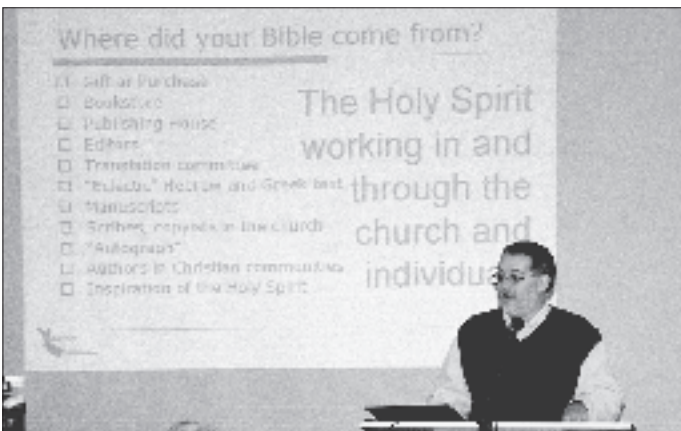
AMBS has concluded its Next Generation fund-raising campaign, reaching the goal of \$20.4 million in cash and letters of intent.

Nelson Kraybill, AMBS president, shared the news with faculty, staff and students on January 23, announcing that the final component—the library and campus center—was fully funded.

The campaign, begun in July 2001, was established to strengthen the seminary as it prepares the next generation of leaders for the church. Components included:

- New library and campus center (\$8.4 million, including \$1.9 endowment for operation and maintenance);
- Annual Fund;
- Scholarships;
- !Explore: A Theological Program for High School Youth (most of this funding was received as a grant from Lilly Endowment for the first four years of the program);
- Endowment for faculty support;
- Church Leadership Center programming and staff;
- Chapel of the Word, a small chapel for teaching worship and preaching.

“We give thanks to God and we owe an enormous debt of gratitude to donors—friends from across Canada and the United States, alumni, employees, board members and students—for generous, even sacrificial giving,” Kraybill said. ●



“I have confidence in the Holy Spirit,” Loren Johns, AMBS academic dean, told participants in the weekend learning event for Journey. “I’m here at the seminary because I believe God was at work in shaping Scripture.”

Journey is a conference-based program of mentoring and undergraduate study that prepares people for ministry. Participants gather two times a year for intensive weekends of workshops and lectures. Loren led the February 23–24 event, focusing on biblical interpretation. To learn more, see www.journeyprogram.net.

Seven years ago, when AMBS Dean Willard Swartley suffered a heart attack, I hurried to the hospital where he was in care. Hospital staff explained that I should only be with my colleague a few minutes. He was in precarious condition, and the next hours would be critical for his survival.

Willard greeting me warmly and weakly. I asked him what he was thinking about. "I'm going through the Psalms," he said, "trying to remember something about each. I think I got all but ten of them." Like putting money into the bank, Willard had invested for decades in learning and praying the Psalms. When crisis came, he had a spiritual reservoir from which to draw.

I resolved to memorize Scripture—especially the Psalms. Almost daily since



then I have memorized at least a verse of Scripture. Whole chapters of the Psalms and a few other books of the Bible gradually take root in my imagination. I pray those passages when I am afraid or angry or exuberant or penitent.

At AMBS, rigorous study of the Bible stretches intellect and feeds imagination. Biblical storytelling draws us into the drama of Scripture. Worship—including a new addition of an Anabaptist prayer book to be published this spring—mines the wealth of God's word. The new AMBS library will have at its center the Studer Bible

Collection—hundreds of Bible translations in scores of languages. AMBS courses; publications from the Institute of Mennonite Studies, such as *Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology*; and commentaries on lectionary Scriptures on the AMBS web site provide rich resources for all who study the Word of God seriously.

By Gods' grace, Willard Swartley survived a serious heart attack and returned to teaching and writing. "You have the words of eternal life," Simon Peter once said to Jesus (John 6:68). Jesus' words—and the whole library of biblical literature—nourish the mind and soul of everyone who takes time to read, study, and memorize. You never know when those texts will become a wellspring of life.

— J. Nelson Kraybill

Mary Etta King (Master of Arts in Christian Formation 2006) and **Linford King** (Master of Divinity 1982) became codirectors of Kairos School of Spiritual Formation, Lancaster, Pa., in October. Mary Etta also has a private practice of spiritual direction. Linford continues as bishop of the Lancaster District of the Lancaster Mennonite Church.

Rachel Nafziger Hartzler (Master of Arts in Christian Formation 2004) has completed a book, *Grief and Sexuality: Life after losing a spouse*, published by Herald Press. She is pastor of Pleasant Oaks Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

James H. Waltner (Bachelor of Divinity 1958) is author of the Psalms commentary published in November by Herald Press. This is volume 20 in the Believers Church Bible Commentary series.

Panorama

Invitation to prayer for AMBS

From noon on May 4 to noon on May 5, AMBS is hosting a strategic planning symposium. Church leaders, business people, young adults, people from ethnic minority groups in the church and the AMBS board will gather to discern where the Spirit of God is leading the seminary. AMBS invites everyone in the church to join in by offering prayers for God's guidance and blessing for this gathering.

Commencement 2007

AMBS expects 40 students to graduate on May 19, 2007. April Yamasaki, pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, BC, will address the graduates in the commencement service. Please pray for these graduates as they seek God's direction for the next steps in their ministry.

Construction progress

Construction of the new library and campus center at AMBS is on schedule with plans to move into the new facility this summer.

See photos of the work and watch progress on the webcam at www.ambs.edu/giving/library-project.

Prayer book offers seasonal resources

Take our moments and our days: An Anabaptist prayer book now includes prayer guides for special seasons of the church year. Daily guides to morning and evening prayers are provided on the AMBS web site: www.ambs.edu/prayerbook. Select the link for *Holy Week* or *Easter*. Prayer guides for Ordinary Time will be published by Herald Press this summer.

Spring 2007 Volume 17 Issue 2

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

Editor and Designer: Mary E. Klassen
Photos pages 2-3: Mary E. Klassen

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Winnipeg

National church gears up for 2007 assembly

Church leaders from across the country met in early March to plan for the upcoming July assembly, evaluate finances and report on church happenings.

Setting priorities for the July national assembly was a major focus for the annual MC Canada Leadership Assembly. The four proposed discernment topics at this point are a broad look at church structure, discussing three or four priority church concerns identified in general secretary Robert J. Suderman's visits to churches last year, militarization in Canada and a session devoted to the Faith and Life Committee.

This committee decided it would focus its delegate discernment session on ecology and the environment. "It would be good for us to do something that is symbolic but also more than symbolic. We are going to be talking about ecology and the environment in a significant way. It would be good to not just talk about it, but have something happen," said committee chair Rudy Baergen. It is also planning a workshop around multi-faith issues, especially the relationship between Christianity and Islam.

The national church ended its fiscal year in January. Unaudited figures reported to the General Board show revenue was just about at budget and expenses were under budget, resulting in an operating surplus of \$136,000 before transfers to and from reserves and a surplus of \$82,000 after transfers.

The General Board also approved a proposed budget for February 2007 to January 2008, to be presented to delegates this summer for their vote. The budget was characterized as a "flat budget" by Randy Wiebe, director of finance, and anticipates similar expenditures but with lower income. It therefore requires a transfer of \$69,000 from reserves to offset the operational deficit. This figure is close to a quarter of the General Board's in-

Sadness and joy mingled at CWM meetings

Change was in the works for Canadian Women in Mission (CWM) executive committee members as they met at the recent MC Canada Leadership Assembly.

They acknowledged their "sadness" over the disbanding of the B.C. organization due to a lack of available leadership to run the program. They then planned how they could celebrate the "history of gifts given" with a "closure" ceremony at the annual MC Canada assembly in Abbotsford, B.C., in July.

The executive also responded "with regret" to the request last fall from Mennonite Women USA to be released from their joint agreement to publish the bi-monthly *Timbrel* magazine. The request was due to a variety of factors, including a history of low Canadian subscriptions and the U.S. organization's plans to redesign and produce a larger magazine on its own, which would still have Canadian content and a Canadian editor.

The executive also:

- Celebrated the "good news story" of surpassing its budget by more than \$9,000, which means that there will again be surplus money available to share with other Mennonite mission programs.
- Worked on a promotional brochure for the newly established Pennies and Prayer Inheritance Fund, which supports women in mission from a \$70,000 inheritance from a project initiated by the Women's Missionary Society in 1935.
- Listened to inspiring stories from three CMU interns who were recipients of the Spiritual Growth Assistance Fund.
- Anticipated the spring release of a new Bible study guide, "Freely You Have Received, Freely Give," by Susan Classen, jointly published with Mennonite Women USA.
- Shared provincial reports that highlighted special spiritual retreats, cross-cultural initiatives, and a response to declining membership in small towns and rural areas by inviting women from other denominations to join them.

—**Leona Dueck Penner**



The seven members of the Canadian Women in Mission group shared laughter and tears at the recent Leadership Assembly meetings in Winnipeg. From left to right: Erna Neufeldt, president; Evelyn Buhr, Alberta president; Ruth Jantzi, secretary treasurer; Betty Anne Hildebrand, Manitoba president; Audrey Mierau-Bechtel, Saskatchewan president; Veronica Thiessen, B.C. president; and Shirley Redekop, Ontario president.

Photo by Dan Dyck

ternally restricted reserve, something that drew cautionary statements from the church's Finance Policy and Audit Committee.

The General Board passed a motion that area churches can send delegates to national assemblies, appoint rep-

resentatives to the General Board or to other national church roles regardless of whether that person's church is in MC Canada or not, but that the national church itself would not solicit delegates from these churches.

—**Tim Miller Dyck**

Makeevka, Ukraine

'Born from the pain of our hearts'

Valentina Lutcenko's first-hand experiences with hunger and neglect motivate her to give other neglected children in Eastern Ukraine hope for a brighter future. Lutcenko, now 17, was only 10 when hunger forced her and a friend to look for food at the Good Shepherd Shelter in Makeevka. They found more than food, clothing and shelter, though.

"Never before had I experienced so much goodness and love," says Lutcenko, who is now studying for a career as an educator at the shelter supported by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

Lutcenko is one of more than a thousand children whose lives have been touched by this Christian ministry started in 1996 by the Light of the Gospel Baptist Church in the province of Donetsk Oblast.

"In the Donetsk Oblast there are officially 15,000 homeless children," says Vladimir Tsupko, director of the Good Shepherd Charitable Fund. "That is

the official statistic, but nobody goes out to the street to count them."

Valentina Chernova, one of the founders of the charity, recalls the events leading to the start of the centre. She was part of a group of 17 people who organized as a church in 1991, the same year that Ukraine ratified its independence from the Soviet Union.

In 1994, when Ukraine was experiencing an economic crisis, the congregation started praying for guidance on how to put its faith into action.

"Old people were dying from hunger; homeless children were on the street," Chernova says. "We saw it was not enough to preach the good news; we saw that we had to do something practical as a response to our faith."

The congregation prayed for guidance for two years.

"By 1996 it was clear. We wanted to work with homeless children," she says.

The church started the charitable fund and bought a three-storey



MCC photo

Valentina Lutcenko, 17, found more than food, clothing and shelter at the Good Shepherd Shelter in Makeevka, Ukraine, a Christian ministry supported by Mennonite Central Committee.

building once used as a tuberculosis sanatorium. The first project was a shelter to provide short-term care for 44 children. The official length of stay is three months, but exceptions are made when necessary.

Desarmes, Haiti

Canal improvements vital to community

A warm Saturday afternoon finds hundreds of people along a narrow, mud-walled canal that flows through the town of Desarmes in Haiti's Artibonite Valley. On the banks, women dunk laundry into soapy basins, while their children wade into the grayish blue water and soap themselves down.

About 15,000 people live in and around Desarmes, and they rely on the canal's water for everything except drinking and cooking. They use it for bathing, washing clothes, irrigating fields and watering animals.

While the canal is vital to everyone who lives along it, it is prone to many problems. Several times a year mud clogs the

Madame Matthew Auguste, 75, washes clothes in the town canal in Desarmes, Haiti. Mennonite Central Committee is providing funds to line the canal with concrete in order to improve its flow.

canal and requires a whole week to clean up. Water leaks through its mud walls and diminishes the flow downstream.

This year, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is providing \$35,000 to improve the canal's flow by lining a 750-metre portion with concrete. MCC is one of two organizations that are funding the project through a local partner, Organization for the Development of Desarmes (ODD).

About half of the eight-kilometre canal is already lined in concrete, and local

people hope to see this extended to the whole canal. To build the concrete lining, ODD shuts down the canal for two weeks at a time during the dry season, when fewer crops are growing. Local masons are contracted to build the lining in 35-metre sections.

Last year, ODD lined more than 700 metres of the canal with concrete, and this increased the water flow and decreased the need for maintenance. Since this portion was completed 11 months ago, it has not required any work to clean out mud.

—MCC release by **Tim Shenk**



Photo by Melissa Engle

Montevideo, Uruguay

South American congress addresses role of women in church

The role of women in the life of the church and models for the household of God were the chief topics addressed at the 13th Anabaptist-Mennonite Congress of the Southern Cone earlier this year.

More than 250 delegates from Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, along with fraternal participants from Colombia, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Canada and the United States, gathered to hear teacher, theologian and author John Driver present in-depth biblical studies on women's roles in the church from an Anabaptist perspective. The issue arose out of an urgent concern expressed by women at the congress in Argentina in 2003 and again in 2005 in Brazil.

In 2004, the charitable fund opened a long-term rehabilitation centre in a nearby school that had recently been closed. This facility, named Our Home, provides supportive care in a family-type environment for 32 children under the age of 18.

The charitable fund now employs 50 people and provides round-the-clock support for 76 children. Plans are now underway to amalgamate the short-term shelter and long-term centre in one building.

MCC has supported the Good Shepherd Charitable Fund since its inception. This support includes an annual grant of \$5,700 from the Global Family program to help cover a small amount of the \$182,000 operating budget. MCC also provides about \$8,000 of in-kind support through shipments of material aid, including clothing, canned meat, soap, blankets and school kits.

Three MCC service workers have completed three-year assignments and five young people have completed one-year terms through MCC's Serving and Learning Together (SALT) program, making it the only support agency to provide the charitable fund with staffing.

—MCC release by **Gladys Terichow**

Driver guided participants on a journey that began in the Old Testament and continued into the New Testament with the inspiring song of Jesus' mother, the gospel witness to Jesus' relationship with the women of his time, and a review of Paul and his female collaborators in the spread of the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the Gentile world. He concluded with a study of the participation of women in the early church, a counter-cultural community in the midst of a patriarchal society.

Dennis Byler, a prolific Argentinean author who teaches at the Seminario Evangélico Unido de Teología (SEUT) in El Escorial, Spain, made four presentations on church models.

Byler discussed fraternal relationships, the resolution of conflicts, authority in the church, and the challenge to the church in confronting violence. He concluded by inviting his hearers to embrace the declaration that, "All that is not conformed to the Spirit of Jesus are vain words, pious

lies without any real power to take us from this present cruel and violent world into the new world of peace and justice which all humanity longs wholeheartedly to experience."

Guests from Mennonite Church Canada Witness and MC USA Mission Network provided an opportunity for conversation on themes such as preparation of leaders, mission outreach, mutual encouragement and finding ways of working together within the region.

During the congress, Driver's 60 years of ministry, service and mission in Latin America were celebrated, recognizing his contribution to the articulation of a Latin American Anabaptist theology. A book, *Comunidad y Misión desde la Periferia: Ensayos en celebración de la vida y ministerio de Juan Driver*, containing contributions from theologians from churches in Latin America and Spain who have been his disciples—including Byler—was presented to him.

—MWC release by **Milka Rindzinski**



Women at the Southern Cone Congress in Uruguay grappled with the issue of the role of women in South American Anabaptist congregations.

Santiago, Chile

Emerging churches benefit from visiting prof

A door has opened for seminary students in Chile and their respective congregations, thanks to the teaching of Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) professor Titus Guenther and the commitment of Mennonite Church Canada to the region.

Guenther, on a sabbatical from CMU that coincided with a special assignment from MC Canada Witness, was visiting professor at the Evangelical Faculty of Theology (FET) in Chile from last August until December. He taught missiology and radical reformation theology, and also focused on relating to the emerging Anabaptist Mennonite churches in Chile. Guenther has previous teaching experience at FET, having lived and taught in Chile from 1989-94.

The Chilean seminary has a 42-year history, but its future is in doubt because of reduced funding from international sources. Meanwhile, the school is seeking recognition from Chile's Department of Education. The seminary services students, who range in age from about 20 to 60, from a broad range of denominations.

Most of Guenther's students at

Titus Guenther, left, visiting professor of theology and missions from Canadian Mennonite University, enjoys a moment with three of his Chilean students from Concepción, from left to right, Violeta Foncela, Valentina Elgueta and Victoria Castillo at the Cono Sur Conference of Latin Mennonite Churches. Guenther spent just over three months on a Mennonite Church Canada assignment in Chile during a sabbatical, teaching Anabaptist theology to Evangelical-Protestant seminary students.

Photo by Omar Cortés Jr.



the Santiago campus represented the Christian Alliance and Missionary Church, while the other students in both Santiago and Concepción represented some 12 different faith families, including the Puerta del Rebaño congregation of Concepción, which claims its Anabaptist identity grew out of Guenther's previous work in Chile.

A major highlight for Guenther was the ability to relate to many of Chile's emerging Anabaptist-Mennonite churches. Guenther visited pastors and congregations, occasionally preaching and teaching adult Sunday school classes. He was also able to introduce and distribute printed and audiovisual materials among these churches, which opened windows for them into the wider Mennonite world. "It was remarkable how important it seemed to these church leaders to learn through these audiovisuals about the history and life of the Mennonite settlements and their mission work in the Paraguayan Chaco," Guenther said.

To discover that seeds from his previous teaching time are now growing is both exhilarating and humbling for Guenther. "It indicates to me once more that God is able to use and prosper what we Christians offer up imperfectly and in simplicity," he said, adding, "Students and pastors alike find illuminating that Mennonites/Anabaptists, if they are biblical, do not divide congregations into pastors/leaders and laypeople, do not separate the church's mission work from the rest of what the church does."

Guenther's students praised the work and vision of his materials and message. Guillermo Hernández, commented: "This has been a great blessing and has obliged me to re-vision several things."

The growing interest and enthusiasm in both courses inspires hope that these students will take their knowledge back to their home churches in Chile. Guenther and MC Canada both trust that these new resources and information will

Cyberspace

Anabaptist Network now on Facebook

The Anabaptist Network is a new initiative that seeks to connect Anabaptist-oriented people across social, geographic, economic and generational divides.

The network has debuted as a group on Facebook, an online social networking service. Since many Anabaptist young adults already use Facebook, the community is a strategic starting point for global Anabaptist networking.

Since its debut two months ago, more than 400 members have joined the Facebook group and it continues to grow daily, with members located in the United Kingdom, China, Honduras, Egypt, Spain, Indonesia, Mexico, Germany, Vietnam, Israel and Colombia.

Transient and geographically disconnected young adults, who may feel a distance from the church, often express a need for increased support and relationships with others of similar values. The network hopes to meet that need by connecting Anabaptist-oriented people living in the same geographic areas for anything from Sunday afternoon hiking trips to hymn sings or game nights. It also plans to publish event announcements about conferences and denominational gatherings as a way of inviting a broader audience to participate.

The network began as a conversation at a meeting of the North American Mennonite Young Adult Fellowship in South Bend, Ind., last fall. It was partly inspired by the Anabaptist Network in Britain and Ireland (anabaptistnetwork.com), which brings together Christians from a wide variety of backgrounds who are interested in the insights of the Anabaptist tradition.

To join the new community, go to facebook.com, register an account, and search for the group "Anabaptist Network." For more information, e-mail anabaptistnetwork@gmail.com. —Anabaptist Network release

nudge the churches toward a broader view of discipleship. —MC Canada release by **Krista Allen**

Winnipeg

Meeting the challenge of pastoral training

Mennonite Church Canada has leadership on the brain. In the summer of 2006 delegates to the annual MC Canada assembly were asked to reflect on the leadership development ministry of our church schools and on the needs of the present and future church.

Several clear patterns emerged in response to these questions:

- There is strong affirmation for the leadership training initiatives of our post-secondary schools, for the quality of graduates entering church leadership positions, and for the schools' strong support of emerging leadership gifts in students.
- Similarly, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary received high marks for the quality of pastoral leadership training provided both on the Elkhart campus and through extension programs in partnership with Canadian Mennonite University and Conrad Grebel University College.
- There is a strong call to develop creative options for lay leadership training, similar in some ways to the Bible school training programs of the past. Columbia Bible College occupies a unique position in this respect.
- There is deep appreciation for the efforts being made to connect congregational discernment of leadership gifts with formal training opportunities offered by our church schools.
- There is a broad lament, particularly from rural communities, over the loss of promising young leaders who, because of limited employment opportunities, do not return to their home congregations.
- There is an almost universal call for the development of locally accessible training options geared toward those who cannot afford to move away to pursue leadership training.
- There are widespread concerns about the high cost of leadership education and the need for strong financial assistance to make the pas-

toral vocation an attractive and viable option.

- There is an increasing need to focus more attention and resources on the unique training needs of non-Caucasian congregations.

These are challenging times for the church. We want and need good, strong pastoral leaders. We believe in them. We believe they should be practically and theologically trained, spiritually mature, Anabaptist, flexible, culturally in tune and biblically grounded. It's a tall order. We face hard financial realities. Developing leaders of this calibre takes more than a wish and a prayer—as essential as those may be. It requires clear conviction and unwavering commitment by the whole church to raise up the leaders we need. It also takes a good chunk of cash to produce quality leaders.

No one else can do this for us. We have our work cut out. We'll need to get more creative in how we train our leaders. Our congregations will need to get better at being a supportive proving ground for those testing pastoral gifts and for those just beginning formal ministry. The church will need to become more nimble and flexible in order to provide options for extension education in diverse local settings. We'll need to revise the way we think of the pastoral vocation to include bi-vocational models of ministry. We'll need to become more effective in connecting training opportunities with multicultural leaders seeking training. Are we up to the challenge? With God's help, I believe we are!

—**Dave Bergen**

The author is executive secretary of Formation Ministries for Mennonite Church Canada.

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April 27 & 28, 2007

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, ON

Passionate Anabaptist Mennonites

“Hun Lee [pastor of Vision Mennonite Church] is passionate about being Mennonite. It is inspiring for cultural Mennonites, like me, to hear that passion—there is so much to [our Mennonite] story and history that I take for granted. First generation Anabaptists bring to historic Anabaptists a new appreciation for that history.”

Brian Bauman, MCEC’s Mission Minister, continues to reflect and admits, quite readily, “I like hanging out with new Anabaptist Mennonites because they are passionate about their faith. I would pray that other Mennonites could get a taste of why Vision MC is enthusiastic about being Mennonite.”

The MCEC community of congregations has the opportunity to hear first hand the passion and desire of Vision Mennonite Church at this year’s Annual Church Gathering. Vision MC longs to be a faithful community of followers of Jesus Christ and to invite Korean immigrants to learn about Anabaptist/Mennonite perspectives as they experience genuine Christian love and care.

Vision MC has been worshipping together since September 2000 as part of Valleyview MC in London, ON and more recently, as an independent congregation.

“God who began a good work in us will be faithful to complete it in Jesus Christ,”

**“Equip the saints for
the work of ministry,
for building up the
body of Christ.”**

- Ephesians 4:12



Vision Mennonite Church
Passionate faith seeking a home with
the MCEC community of congregations

states Hun Lee, as he quotes the familiar passage from Philippians 1. The people of Vision MC have seen the faithfulness of God through the nurturing of sisters and brothers within MCEC, and specifically at Valleyview MC.

Vision MC has expressed a desire to belong to and participate with the MCEC community of congregations and with MC Canada. At the Annual Church Gathering, Vision MC is being

welcomed as an emerging congregation within MCEC.

This is a wonderful opportunity for the MCEC community of congregations to taste afresh that passion and hear the stories of our Christian brothers and sisters as they have searched and found fulfillment within the passion filled Anabaptist/Mennonite traditions.

Lisa Williams

Something for Everyone

Equipping workshops are an exciting component of the MCEC Annual Church Gathering. The workshops offered this year have been designed to equip MCEC congregations and to release gifts for ministries of healing and outreach at the local level. The workshop offerings include something for everyone – from the environment to

prayer; from a specific treasurer’s workshop to empowering youth and young adults in leadership within the church.

The Annual Church Gathering will be filled with worship, celebration and fellowship. Don’t miss this day – there truly is something for everyone!



- 10** Improve your *Sudoku* game by adding up the columns in the financial statements.
- 9** To have your cake and eat it too!!
- 8** Worship with MCEC community of congregations.
- 7** Everybody likes a good party!
Meet old friends! Make new ones!
- 6** Pick up a free pen at the display booths.
- 5** Welcome **Vision Mennonite Church** into the MCEC family.
- 4** Hear the financial stories of MCEC.
- 3** To see if you are the youngest person there.
- 2** Opportunity to make bold, prophetic statements on the delegate floor.
- 1** To be inspired by what we are doing together in ministry.

New Format For Discernment

Upon arriving at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate in April, you will find the main meeting area looking quite different than previous years, as attendees will be gathering around round tables. It is the hope of those planning the Annual Church Gathering that this new format will facilitate better discernment and feedback.

There will, of course, be time for open mic and small group discussion as attendees are introduced to the newly launched Generosity Project as well as Ordination Guidelines. The Generosity Project is a new stewardship initiative. David Martin, MCEC Executive Minister, hopes that the initiative “will be a key step in ensuring the long term fiscal health of our congregations and our capacity to respond generously to God’s call to extend the peace of Jesus Christ to our world.”

The Leadership Council is looking for feedback and guidance on the proposed Ordination Guidelines and the educational expectations that are being suggested. They wish to hear what the two or three most important things are that MCEC pastors need to study/learn about in order to equip the saints for ministry and lead our congregations to live out their mission in the world.

Youth Bible quizzing will once again take centre stage as the final match will be held in the main meeting area. Youth have been actively studying the book of *Acts* in preparation for this event. Perhaps a quick read of that book would be in order so you can privately test your skills against those of the quizzers! Friday evening will also feature a youth event, including an overnight experience at First MC (Kitchener) that will feature a live band and great activities.

Please be in prayer for the MCEC Annual Church Gathering as decisions are made and discussions take place. May God be glorified within our community of congregations.

Equipping God’s People For Extending the Peace of Jesus Christ

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FOCUS

Elementary & Secondary Education

More than a musical

The moment had come. Two teachers from school were announcing the musical production that the student body was going to help present this year. Cheers filled the cafeteria when *Les Miserables* was named. Auditions were held immediately and rehearsals began.

We spent hours on end with teachers who taught our classes during the school day and then rehearsed with us after school and into the evening. Other actors in the school would sing songs as they worked during class and it didn't seem odd to practise scenes randomly in the hallways. The reality of the project we had undertaken really hit us during rehearsal weekend, a week before opening night.

If you walked into Mennonite Collegiate Institute (MCI) in Gretna, Man., that weekend, you would have seen more than 65 students dressed to perform, more students managing backstage, sound and lighting crews, hair and make-up crews, and costuming help, all made up of students and teachers. Community had formed over the months of preparation.

Inside jokes were heard often, hugs were seen continuously, and encouragement and constructive criticism were both given and accepted. Stepping onstage was stepping into another world, one in which you were telling the audience a story, living another person's life.

It was a privilege to be able to sing with passion and conviction, knowing you had the power to make people laugh or move them to tears. One of the last lines of the musical summed the whole story up and I was fortunate to be one of the characters to sing it: "To love another person is to see the face of God." This line not only spoke of the story's meaning, but of the comradeship that had grown in the school during preparations for the performance.

I experienced this in different aspects that weekend. After only the second performance, I was called to Brandon, Man., to see my grandfather, who had rapidly declined in health. Between shows, I drove the three hours there and back, grateful for the community back at school who had helped me pack, given me hugs and who were praying for me.

I came back to many open arms and knew that I belonged to a community of care. The directors of the musical put my situation above the role I was about to




MCI photo

Aran Matsuda as Jean Valjean and Michelle Harms as Fantine had leading roles in the Mennonite Collegiate Institute production of *Les Miserables* last month.

perform and were more concerned about how I was doing between acts than about how my character was going to be portrayed. I saw the love of Christ that weekend, not only in the story that we had worked so long and hard to portray to hundreds of people, but in the group of people who are a part of the school I am proud to attend.

—Michelle Harms

The author is a Grade 12 student at MCI.



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Parental involvement with children matters

A considerable amount of research has been done over the years on why some children experience more difficulty in their path to adulthood than others. A longitudinal study of 5.3 million students across the United States pointed to some interesting data on helping children achieve success in life.

The study found that teenagers who are failing school and “hanging out” unsupervised with friends are at high risk for a number of dangerous behaviours, according to the largest survey ever conducted with adolescents in the U.S. The results contradict the widely held belief that youth problems are connected to race, income and family structure. These are, in fact, very poor indicators of whether teens will participate in risky behaviours.

School failure and substantial time spent “hanging out” are three to eight times more likely to predict risky behaviour among teens than race, income and family structure combined. Risky behaviours were defined as violence with a weapon, thoughts or attempts at suicide, smoking, alcohol consumption and sexual activity.

“If our goal is to understand young people and protect them from harm, we must abandon our focus on demographic factors as determinants of risky behaviour,” said Robert Blum, principal investigator of the study. “Instead, we need to focus

on factors in the environment that have much more to do with whether a young person will have a viable future, and whether he or she is among peers who reinforce positive behaviours or anti-social behaviours.”

The study confirmed, and expanded upon, earlier findings from the Add Health Study, showing that adolescents who report a “connectedness” to their parents were least likely to engage in risky behaviour. A positive parent/family relationship, regardless of whether the family had one or two parents, was the single most consistent factor in reducing the risk of problem behaviour among teens. The authors reported that adolescents from single-parent families are disadvantaged, but “they are far from doomed. The message to single parents is the same as it is to other parents. By involving yourselves in your children’s lives, you will make a difference in them—for the better.”

In view of this study, it is encouraging to see the number of parents at Mennonite Educational Institute in B.C. who are actively involved in the lives of their children, as evidenced by their attendance at sporting events, mission meetings, science fairs, fine arts performances and parent-teacher interviews.


The writer of Proverbs says, “Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not turn from it” (Proverbs 22:6).

We are grateful to our parent community for the caring and “connectedness” they provide for their children.


—MEI release



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Why bother with church schools?

Why a Mennonite church high school in a community where many fine school alternatives already exist?

My answer lies in camera lenses and culture. Like a camera lens, our culture frames what our young people see in the world. It shapes in powerful ways the assumptions that they hold to be normal and true. Our cultural lens opens them selectively to life just as it limits much of what lies beyond the bounds of their viewfinder. Too often we accept that the camera lens provided by our culture is the only—or best—one through which to understand our world. We need our church schools because we need to “bother” with how and what we and our children see.



Schellenberg

Our culture assumes that making lots of money as a life goal will be a young person’s ticket to happiness in life. That’s simply not true. It claims that individual rights—their wants, needs and desires—are among the most important guiding principles for their lives. They ought not to believe this.

The TV, magazines and movies in which they are awash establish many ideals for what they should wear, look and act like, and listen to if they want to fit in, be normal and find themselves. Just keep buying the right stuff and they’ll be better, more complete and beautiful persons. But the ads can lie.

Our culture claims in subtle and overt ways that violence will bring peace, that the way to be secure and happy is to kill enough bad guys and build a really high wall around ourselves. How sad.

In short, we ought to choose with care the lenses through which we view ourselves and our world.

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- In a world where faith is so often an oddity—a place to question, debate, engage and commit themselves to the upside-down way of living that Jesus taught and modelled.

The lens through which our young people choose to see themselves and understand their world really does matter. That's why we need to bother.

—Terry Schellenberg

The author is principal of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ont.

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate in Kitchener, Ont., finished another successful high school winter sports season with four teams competing at the Central Western Ontario Secondary Schools Association championship level. The junior girls volleyball squad (pictured) had a 14-0 record in the regular season and managed to win the local District 8 championship for the first time since 1996. Their only loss of the season was the final game against Chesley at the Central Western level.



The senior girls volleyball team and the senior boys basketball team advanced to the All Ontario A-level championships for schools of under 500 students. The senior boys team captured the provincial silver medal in Belleville, Ont., losing only the final match to a strong Mère Teresa team from Hamilton. The Rockway team is developing something of a dynasty, having been to the provincial championships for four consecutive years, coming away with a gold, two silvers and a fifth-place finish. They also won three golds in tournament play this season and captured the District 8 league championship. The senior girls team also played very well against tough competition throughout the season. At the Ontario championships they were defeated in a close match in the quarter-finals by Jean Vanier of Welland. The junior boys basketball team also had the opportunity to play at the Central Western championship level, losing to Valley Heights in the semi-finals.

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Regina

Budget to be based on 'vision for God's work'

Firm foundation, ongoing construction" was the theme of the 2007 Mennonite Church Saskatchewan annual delegate sessions last month. To set the mood, ushers wore hard hats and there was an unfinished wall on the stage at Western Christian College, where the event was held. Three proposals dominated discussions: a startlingly brave budget, MC Saskatchewan restructuring and an expansion of the Person to Person program.

The financial report was a surprise to some and a concern for others. Finance chair Doyle Wiebe addressed the constant struggle to balance the budget each year. "A long-standing policy of planning for no more income than was received the previous year is being set aside for another model that says, in essence, 'Plan it, promote it and it will be supported,'" wrote Wiebe in his report.

"We should base our budget on our vision for God's work, instead of last year's giving," agreed Claire Ewert Fisher, co-pastor of Fiske and Herschel Mennonite churches. Where there's a need, people will give, she said, citing personal and group donations to bridge a funding shortfall when a government grant for the Education Commission's VBS troupe fell through.

The result was that delegates passed a budget with donations up \$25,000 over 2006.

Delegates were also asked to consider a new MC Saskatchewan structure. The proposal adds new items like a Faith and Life Commission to provide guidance on spiritual matters and an action group focused on peace, non-violence and justice matters. Filling the slate is always a challenge, and a few more people are required than the cur-

rent slate, but the group would meet much less often, a minimum of twice annually. A much smaller leadership council, with nine—instead of 19—members, would continue to meet five or six times per year. The idea of making positions project-oriented, rather than term-oriented, also met with interest. Delegates voted to accept the report and asked that the Structures Taskforce continue its work, taking into account delegate comments.

After much soul searching and third-party evaluations, the Person to Person (P2P) Transition Committee

Youth Farm Bible Camp (\$11,000), and Shekinah Retreat Centre (\$17,000 to help install a wheelchair lift).

Interspersed among the business sessions, reports by various committees encouraged delegates. The highlight of the weekend for many was the report brought by the Ministries Commission regarding new, ethnically-diverse and growing congregations that have come to different Mennonite congregations in Regina (a Laotian group at Grace Mennonite) and Saskatoon (an Hispanic group at Mount Royal Mennonite).



Photo by Karin Fehderau

MC Saskatchewan moderator Henry Block, left, deputy moderator Gary Peters, and conference minister Jerry Buhler finish off the annual delegate session with the theme song, "The Wise Man Built His House Upon the Rock."

also presented an expanded vision to help make the most of restorative justice opportunities in Saskatchewan. Instead of only Mennonites doing the work, the report suggested inviting other denominations to join in, in essence creating a "province-wide, inter-church P2P board." This would give the organization a stronger voice in the province to speak to different issues. It would also enable P2P to go beyond the traditional areas of service done in the past. The proposal was passed and a special delegate session for June is being planned.

Delegates decided that funds from the sale of the Herbert Nursing Home would go to Camp Elim (\$100,000 to update and refurbish its facilities), Rosthern Junior College (\$25,000),

And Ray Dumais spoke of his efforts in Prince Albert to care for street people. His vision, now known as Eagle Wings Ministry, is supported by the conference. "Street people don't have a place where they can go and just rest," he explained. "They're always being kicked out of stores and told to move along." In order to serve them, Dumais, who bought a small building, sees opportunity for more such centres. "I wish all churches had an outreach centre," he said. "You see these people on the street. [An outreach centre] gives you the chance to get to know them."

—Karin Fehderau

Water Valley, Alta.

Youth leaders facilitate senior high snow camp

On Feb. 23, just over 60 youths and adult sponsors from Mennonite congregations across Alberta gathered at Camp Valaqua for the annual senior high snow camp.

The weekend began with mixer games to get the group acquainted with each other and the first of four sessions by Mike Perschon, Holyrood Mennonite Church's youth pastor. Throughout the weekend Perschon used clips from horror movies to illustrate his engaging lectures on our relationships with God, the church and our peers. His sessions were entertaining as well as inspirational, and helped stimulate countless conversations among youths and sponsors. Snow Camp provides a tremendous opportunity for junior and senior high students to explore their Mennonite faith through the topical sessions and opportunities for discussion with other campers.

Between sessions, campers played field games, worked on crafts and enjoyed delicious meals. As usual, snow camp was a great success and was enjoyed by all.

This year's camps were made possible by the hard work of the Alberta Mennonite Church Youth Leadership Team, a group of senior high students who work together each year to plan and orchestrate camps, including finding a speaker and cook, and running mixer games and crafts.

Before the weekend ended, the Grade 12 members of the team welcomed five new youths to the group for the 2007/2008 year: Katie Schmidt, Mark Heinrichs, Josh Dyck, Karis Klassen and Joel Dueck.

—**Jeff Heinrichs**

The author, a Grade 12 student, was part of the Youth Leadership Team that planned this year's snow camps; he attends Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary.



Photo by Donita Wiebe-Neufeld

Outdoor activities at MC Alberta's senior high snow camp included a game of Sticks, a camp favourite.

St. Jacobs, Ont.

Meat canning moving to Elmira

After 10 years of holding its mobile meat canning operation at the University of Guelph, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario is being forced to move.

At a fundraising breakfast in St. Jacobs last month, Trevor Adams of MCC Ontario explained that another location is needed this year because new regulations from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency say that a mobile canner needs to be attached to a permanent building. Fire regulations and other safety concerns mean that the Guelph location is no longer suitable.

MCC Ontario and the meat canning committee are working with the federal agency to develop a new partnership with the Elmira Produce Auction. Because

the produce auction's summer schedule begins on Fridays in late April, meat canning in Elmira will be four days only—April 23 to 26.

The committee has appreciated working with the University of Guelph, and for this year the turkey meat will still be ground there.

The meat canner will also be in Leamington on April 16 to 19.

Because recipients prefer poultry to beef, the Elmira project will can turkey, but beef farmers are encouraged to donate cattle to help cover the costs of the

canning. Steaks and roasts will again be available at the relief sale in New Hamburg on May 26.

The turkey canned in Guelph in 2006

was distributed in Serbia and Bosnia by the Bread of Life organization. The turkey from 2007 may go to Burundi, Africa, where there is a food-for-work program underway to plant trees in areas decimated by warfare in the 1990s.

—**Barb Draper**

The committee has appreciated working with the University of Guelph....

Toronto

New wheels keep Toronto thrift shop dolly on the go

A large “not for sale” sign is posted on a four-wheel dolly in the Global Closet Thrift Shop in East Toronto’s Flemingdon Park. Customers use it about 10 to 20 times a week to move furniture and other large purchases to their homes from the MCC thrift store.

“We’ve had it 18 months—the wheels have been repaired twice and we’ve fixed lots of flat tires,” explains Don, a volunteer who works in the store three days a week.

Each return trip is at least a kilometre, he says, estimating the dolly has been pushed more than 1,000 kilometres along streets and sidewalks in this high-density multicultural neighbourhood.

The majority of people living within a 10-block radius of the shop are newcomers to Canada who live in high-rise apartments and do not own vehicles, notes shop manager Shirley Sherk.

“Sometimes we are their first stop,” she says, explaining that many people in the community are refugees struggling to provide the bare necessities for themselves and their families.

The Global Closet Thrift Shop opened in 2003 to provide affordable clothing and household items. Furniture was added a year later. The demand for furniture resulted in the store designating 50 per cent of the display area for furniture. Most new furniture, however, is sold as soon as it is priced—sales that help the store meet its high rent payments of \$6,000 a month.

Twice a week the MCC thrift shop rents a cube van to pick up furniture—a much-needed service in Toronto, where donors are willing to wait up to six weeks for pick-up service. Customers looking for furniture watch while items are unloaded.

“This is perfect for my 27-inch TV,” says Dave Peart, as he waits for the staff to price an entertainment unit. “This is a blessing, a big time blessing,” he says, as he helps staff strap the entertainment unit to the dolly. “This is a solid piece of furniture; it’s not flimsy—it’s solid.”

This is the fourth time Peart has

used the dolly since he moved into the neighbourhood a year ago. Previous purchases included a television, dresser, phone table and bookcase. “It has taken me a year to furnish my apartment,” says Peart, who is on a disability pension. “My apartment is starting to feel like a home, instead of just an apartment.”

Ki-hyung, 82, moved to Flemingdon Park from South Korea seven years ago. “I told my daughter, when I die please return everything I have to this shop,” he says, explaining that most everything he owns he has purchased at the



Photo by Joanne Peters

A four-wheel dolly provided by the Global Closet Thrift Shop makes it possible for Dave Peart to buy furniture at the MCC-run thrift store without having to incur additional costs for transportation.

MCC shop, using the dolly to bring things home.

—MCC release by Gladys Terichow

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Zoar Mennonite in Waldheim, Sask., hosted a “Colombian gathering” earlier this year to acknowledge the growing number of Colombian families who had moved to the area recently. Many families have immigrated to Saskatoon and the surrounding communities, coming as refugees sponsored by various congregations. Invitations were sent by Zoar to three Saskatoon congregations and churches in Osler and North Battleford; unfortunately, the event occurred during the worst blizzard in many years (Jan. 12), so another gathering is being considered for later in the spring, when it is hoped the weather will be better.



Zoar Mennonite Church photo

Church snapshots

Photo submitted by Leora Bergen



Members of the Carrot River (Sask.) Mennonite Church congregation spent part of January quilting for Mennonite Central Committee. In all, 75 quilts were tied. Pictured during the dedication of the quilts in a Sunday morning worship service are, from left to right, front row: Ken Fast, Angie Dyck, Selma Enns, Amanda Dyck, Judy Nickel, Marie Friesen and Elizabeth Enns; and back row: pastor Edward Cornelson, Frances Holmes, Rebecca Dyck, Maria Harder, Ella Friesen, Elsie Enns, Marj Classen, Mary Price and Herman Enns.



Photo by Irma Neudorf

Lucas Plett, left, was installed as youth pastor at Rosthern (Sask.) Mennonite Church by Anna Rehan, MC Saskatchewan conference youth pastor on Feb. 18. In response to Rehan’s message, “God’s call to his servant,” Plett said that if someone had told him two years ago he would be a youth pastor some day, he would have responded like Sarah in the Bible—he wouldn’t have believed it. He asked for prayer in helping the youths build a lasting relationship with God. A prayer circle that included Rehan, pastors Wilmer and Barb Froese, church chair Ted Janzen, Christian Education chair Jim Epp, Plett’s wife Charlotte, and many young people offered prayer on his behalf.

New Orleans, La.

'Ain't no other way' but God

Adozen people from Wildwood Mennonite Church in Saskatoon took part in a Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) assignment in New Orleans, La., in February. Working with students from Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, the group began the week on clean-up of the devastation that remains from the 2005 hurricane season. However, following an unexpected tornado early in the week, most of the teams were reassigned to go out into the tornado-ravaged areas and begin cleaning up rubble.

Roofs were completely gone, entire walls were blown apart, and, in one case, a tool shed had been lifted from a backyard and blown up into a tree in the next yard. On a lot where only the concrete foundation remained, it was as though there had never been a house in place. But on second glance, the house was in pieces in the next yard.

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Maison de l'Amitié extends a welcome to all those who wish to participate in a weekend of prayer and contemplation with the Taize community's Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth. Following the weekend meeting, participants are invited to enjoy the sights of the city while staying at our student residence free of charge.

For more info on Taize, visit www.TaizeMontreal2007.ca, or the student residence, www.residencema.ca or email Suzanne at: experience@maisondelamitie.ca

Members of Wildwood Mennonite Church in Saskatoon take a lunch break while cleaning a house in New Orleans, La.



Most meaningful moments were spent talking with the local people and hearing their stories of living through Hurricane Katrina and now dealing with the tornado that left their homes in ruin again. One woman told of how she had only spent one night in her home that had been restored from the hurricane damage before the tornado flattened it once again.

Where is hope to be found in all of this? With no insurance and no extra money, people wondered what would

happen next. What would they do? But the message that often came through was that they knew they had to go on one way or another. The resiliency of the people who were determined to rebuild their homes for a second time was astounding.

From what or whom do they draw their strength? The answer was clear: From God—because, as spoken by a woman surveying the damage, “There ain't no other way.”

—**Alison Jantz**

CMU CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) invites applications and nominations for the position of **Vice President Academic**, effective January 1, 2008. The VP Academic is responsible for providing overall leadership for academic projects and programs, academic policies, and academic personnel for all of CMU, and is a key member of the CMU leadership team.

In addition to normal academic credentials, it is anticipated that the successful candidate will have:

- Academic administrative experience
- Strong inter-personal skills
- A creative, entrepreneurial bent
- A personal commitment to the church and the mission of CMU.

CMU is a dynamic Christian university with two campuses—a “stand alone” campus offering full university degree programs, and a program centre (Menno Simons College) located at and affiliated with the University of Winnipeg. For more information on CMU or the position visit www.cmu.ca or contact the President at ggerbrandt@cmu.ca.

Processing of applications and nominations will begin immediately, and continue until the position is filled. Please reply via mail or e-mail to: **Canadian Mennonite University; Susan Warkentin, Director of Human Resources; 500 Shaftesbury Blvd.; Winnipeg, MB R3P 2N2**, or swarkentin@cmu.ca

Toronto

Divergent paths unite in a common confession

Toronto United Mennonite Church (TUMC) observed the first Sunday in Lent (Feb. 25) with a powerful membership service. The traditional Lenten emphasis on confession took on new depths of meaning in the context of hearing faith stories by people with immense differences of experience. Yet it was evident that the joy of being sought and welcomed home by a loving God was shared by each of the six people who joined the congregation that day.

There were members with familiar last names involved in the service:

- Aldred and Erna Neufeldt returned to the congregation after living and working in Calgary for a number of years, having served both the local and wider church.
- Brad Lepp moved his membership from Vineland United Mennonite Church after many years of living in Toronto. His work in the theatre made

him realize how much he needed the accountability of a faith community where he was living and working.

But there were also three new members embracing the Mennonite Church for the first time:

- Aya Pa Oryem, a Ugandan immigrant, told of growing up in northern Uganda. She moved to Canada in 1995; her life was hard and often lonely, and she stopped going to church. When she became sick in 2003, pastor Gary Harder visited her in hospital. She said those visits helped her recover and were her first introduction to the Mennonite Church.
- Florence Latabu was also born in Uganda. Her life growing up gave little cause for celebration—some of her family members were killed during wars there and her two sisters died of AIDS. She told the congregation that the turning point in her life came when she became pregnant in Uganda and was abandoned by her fiancé. But an uncle who had taken her in, told her to trust in God. Florence felt she was also taken in once she moved to Canada. “I was homeless and you welcomed me,” she told the congregation.
- Pepper Parr also feels this is the



Photo by Lydia Neufeld Harder

Toronto United Mennonite Church pastor Gary Harder, back row left, welcomed six newcomers to the congregation on the first Sunday of Lent: Aldred Neufeldt, Aya Pa Oryem and Brad Lepp (back row); and Florence Latabu, Erna Neufeldt and Pepper Parr (front row).

home he never had. He told of a long journey that included being raised by a single mother, but also his many moves from foster home to foster home. He first entered a Mennonite church a few years ago to attend a meeting on restorative justice. It did not take him long to engage many in the congregation in conversations about justice, peacemaking and faith commitments. Today, he challenges the congregation to engage the many justice issues in the city. He concluded his faith story, paraphrasing Martin Luther King Jr.: “Home at last, home at last. Thank God Almighty, I’m home at last.”

—**Lorenda Reddekopp**
and **Lydia Neufeld Harder**

News brief

Churches invited to ‘generous living’

“The Generosity Project: An invitation to generous living” is a new initiative to help Mennonite Church Eastern Canada congregations strengthen their capacity to extend the peace of Jesus Christ. Congregational leaders are invited to explore how they can effectively engage individuals and congregations in generous participation in the mission of Christ’s church. Congregations will identify challenges and opportunities in cultivating a spirituality of generosity, and develop strategic responses. The Generosity Project begins with a series of regional meetings leading up to a church-wide consultation in the fall. MC Eastern Canada executive minister David Martin sees this as an opportunity for individuals and congregations to reaffirm their commitment to generously respond to God’s call to engage the world.

—MC Eastern Canada release

Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure

Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure seeks to live out servanthood ministry as modelled by Jesus Christ.

www.mvsa.net



Lethbridge Winnipeg
Toronto Montreal

People&Events

Ottawa—Once again, a Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) student won an award at the annual Canadian International Model United Nations conference, held earlier this year in Ottawa. Amanda Thorsteinsson, a second-year international development studies major from Winnipeg, won a Best Delegate Award for her work on the International Press Forum; she was the only person on that committee to receive an award. "Representing a media outlet at the model UN was an excellent challenge in applying much of what I have learned in my international development studies courses to life-like situations," said Thorsteinsson, who was attending her second model UN conference. Also honoured was Nikole Poirier, a first-year international development studies major from Banff, Alta., who received a commendation for her work representing Rwanda on issues of globalization and the eradication of poverty. Twelve CMU students attended the event, where they represented

the countries of Rwanda and Indonesia and served on various committees. CMU was the only Manitoba university at the conference.
—CMU release

Steinbach, Man.—Rob Reimer has been appointed as the new president of Steinbach Bible College effective June 1. Reimer currently lives in Calgary, where he is pastor of Highland Mennonite Brethren Church. Before this, he held pastoral positions in Winnipeg, California and Kansas, and was executive director of Winkler Bible Camp for a number of years. Reimer's educational background includes studies at Winkler Bible Institute, a B.A. from the University of Winnipeg and an M.Div. from Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary. He has candidate status for a D.Min. from Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.
—Steinbach Bible College release



Reimer



Ed Janzen of Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont., front row second from right, joined campus pastors, ministers and chaplains from several Mennonite colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Va., last month for mutual support and sharing on such topics as spirituality, apathy, alcohol use and abuse, sexuality, diversity and hospitality. Also pictured are, from left to right, front row: Kevin Wilder, Hesston; Byron Peachey, EMU; and Sarah Straks, Bluffton; and back row: Brian Martin Burkholder, EMU; Stephen "Tig" Intagliata, Bluffton; Janeen Bertsche Johnson, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary; Bob Yoder, Goshen; and Julie Haushalter, Eastern Mennonite Seminary.

EMU photo by Jim Bishop

Transitions

Births/Adoptions

Barg—Ryan, Nov. 23, to Duane and Mary Barg, Eden Mennonite, Chilliwack, B.C.
Billings—Carter Ronald, March 7, to Chris and Rochelle Billings, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.
Boonstra—Samantha Lynn, March 8, to Albert and Kristy Boonstra, Schoenfelder Mennonite, St. Francois Xavier, Man.
Dyck—Amy Louise, March 9, to Kevin and Karen Dyck, Sargent Ave. Mennonite, Winnipeg.
Klassen—Alyssa Danae, Feb. 13, to Glen and Christina Klassen, Winkler Berghthaler Mennonite, Man.
Klassen—Kaylee Elisabeth, Feb. 13, to Angela and Dallas Klassen, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.
Regier Sawatzky—Mikayla Rachele, Feb. 27 in Findly, Ohio, to David and Tracy Regier Sawatzky, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.
Theurer—Alexander Hans, Feb. 16, to Jon and Julie Theurer, Valleyview Mennonite, London, Ont.

Marriages

Scott/Voth—Jill Scott and Christopher Voth, Schoenfelder Mennonite, St. Francois Xavier, Man., March 10.

Deaths

Bartel—Gerhard Cornelius, 77, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Feb. 26.
Bishop—Jonathan, 21 (b. Feb. 23, 1985), River of Life Fellowship, Kitchener, Ont., Feb. 12.
Dyck—Elsie (nee Janzen), 81 (b. Oct. 10, 1925), Eden Mennonite, Chilliwack, B.C., Dec. 1.
Dyck—William (Bill), 80, Winkler Berghthaler Mennonite, Man., Feb. 2.
Epp—Rudy, 69, Sargent Ave. Mennonite, Winnipeg, March 9.
Froese—Helen (nee Harder), 69 (b. May 14, 1937), Nutana

Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Dec. 13.

Goerzen—Emma (nee Klassen), 76 (b. Nov. 7, 1930), Eden Mennonite, Chilliwack, B.C., Dec. 15.
Hammer—Walter, 83 (b. Aug. 12, 1923), Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., March 15.
Hildebrandt—Isaac, 88 (b. Feb. 8, 1919), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., March 6.
Hunsberger—Katherine, 74, St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont., March 8.
Janzen—Florence, 88 (b. March 1, 1918), Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Dec. 24.
King—Leonard, 84 (b. June 26, 1922), Holyrood Mennonite, Feb. 4.
Klassen—Frank, 92, Winkler Berghthaler Mennonite, Feb. 27.
Krahn—Helen (nee Grunau), 78 (b. Aug. 17, 1928), Eden Mennonite, Chilliwack, B.C., Dec. 19.
Lauber—Katie, 93 (b. Aug. 7, 1913), Holyrood Mennonite, Edmonton, Oct. 27.
Martin—Mary, 89 (b. Aug. 29, 1917), Holyrood Mennonite, Edmonton, Nov. 6.
Neufeld—Henry, 99, Winkler Berghthaler Mennonite, Man., Feb. 4.
Neufeldt—Agatha (nee Olfert), 87 (b. Dec. 19, 1919), Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, March 6.
Penner—Elizabeth, 87, Winkler Berghthaler Mennonite, Man., Feb. 7.
Thiessen—Ike, 77 (b. Dec. 17, 1928), Eden Mennonite, Chilliwack, B.C., Dec. 2.

Baptisms

Schoenfelder Mennonite, St. Francois Xavier, Man.—Matthew Abrahams, Jory Janzen, Jill Scott, Curtis Toews, Kevin Voth, Charmaine Voth, Feb. 25.

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

Mennonite Church Canada

Requests for prayer and praise

- Pray for Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker Glenn Witmer and the MennoJerusalem Biblical Study and Travel Program taking place from April 28 to May 19 in Israel, Palestine and Jordan. Please pray that his work will continue to bring people together, increase their understanding of one another, and lead to lasting change in the Middle East.
- Thank God for a great response to the need for international workers in Korea. MC Canada is excited that several new workers have accepted positions for service in Korea and, because of this, Connexus, the English teaching ministry associated with the Korea Anabaptist Center, might have more teachers this year than ever before.
- Cliff and Natasha Dueck, Witness workers in Ukraine, wrote that they recently obtained the use of an old day care as a site for a new church. Thank God that the new Sunday school program has already been running for a month. Pray for them as they prepare for their first worship service on Easter Sunday.

—MC Canada release

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

'Grace 180s: God will transform you'

In between awesome outdoor games, a mystery meal in which we ate spaghetti with everything from toothpicks to clothespins, and an energetic worship band, the youths who went on the 2007 MC Eastern Canada winter retreat learned about God's grace in a variety of interactive sessions—making it a fun way to learn about

the Bible and also an unforgettable experience!

The focus text was from Acts 2, and the different speakers we had went in depth about God's Spirit being actively present in youths, God's grace giving us hope, and the need to be a part of the broader church family.

Although I enjoyed all of the sessions and learned very much from the different organizations represented, there was one activity that struck me very personally and this was the worship service led by Canadian Mennonite University rep Karin Kliever. We all started with a blank canvas, Kliever read us a Bible verse and from that we drew a picture symbolizing what we had just heard. Then we handed our canvas to the next person who also drew a symbol, and so on until everyone in our circle had drawn something. When we got our canvas back it was amazing to see how those who were stronger in the arts were able to carry their weaker brothers and sisters, and yet everyone had contributed to it in some way. It was a very effective way of showing that all of us can be part of ministry.

Looking back at the weekend, I realize that the "will" in the title was a definite. God's grace really did transform me and the 250 youths and youth leaders who came.

—**D. Ruth Ferber**, North Leamington United Mennonite Church

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Author to speak to Partnership Circles

Anita L. Keith will be the keynote speaker at the spring meeting of the Partnership Circles on April 13 and 14 at Grunthal Berghaler Mennonite Church. All are invited to the April 13 evening

session at 7p.m., when Keith will give her major presentation. Author of *For Our Child: Understanding the Impact of Generational Trauma on our Aboriginal Youth*, Keith has worked with the Manitoba Department of Education to ensure an aboriginal perspective is brought to the curriculum.

Keith is also an ordained minister with the Winnipeg Centre Vineyard and an administrator for the North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies. She is also a member of the Aboriginal Circle of Educators.

Norm Voth, director of MC Manitoba's Evangelism and Service Ministries, says the spring Partnership Circle meetings are focused more on raising awareness of aboriginal issues, while the fall meetings are more business-oriented. On April 14, representatives from the Partnership Circles will have opportunity to engage Keith in further discussion of the issues they are encountering.

"We cannot escape culture just as we cannot escape our bodies," Keith says. "Understanding culture is an imperative for the missionary endeavour."

Keith encourages an "appreciative enquiry" approach, which focuses on creating new ideas and understandings that are rooted in the "best of the past," rather than identifying all that is wrong and taking a "fix-it" approach.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

Seven churches meet for revival

An enormous undertaking of more than two weeks of renewal meetings was the effort of seven North Battleford churches. From Feb. 10 to 28, Ralph and Lou Sutura led sessions for church workers and

for other specialized ministries.

"It's not like a Billy Graham crusade," said Henry Patkau, who helped with hospitality during the event. The Sutaseras "work on reviving the church."

Calling it "loosely organized," Patkau explained that the idea for the renewal meetings began with people in the Baptist churches, then spread to the Evangelical congregations, and then Mennonites were invited to join in.

"We invited all the churches in the area; but only seven came," he said.

There are 23 churches in North Battleford.

Responses to the meetings were positive.

"The spiritual principles of the Bible that reveal...how to live victorious lives made a deep impact on the hearers. The testimonies gave evidence that hearts had been touched by God," related the former pastor of Hope Mennonite.

And one man claimed he received more during the sessions than in his entire seminary education.

Although the event was not a big drawing card for the Mennonite community, there were some who came from as far away as Glenbush, where both MC Saskatchewan and the Mennonite Brethren have congregations.

Mennonite Church Alberta

New speaker for men's retreat

There has been a change in plans for the annual Mennonite men's retreat at Camp Valaqua. Harold Schilk of Lethbridge, Alta., will replace Mike Perschon of Edmonton as the main speaker. The new theme for the weekend is "Kingdom carving in the Alpha-male milieu." Time constraints forced Perschon, associate pastor at Holyrood Mennonite,

to withdraw from the engagement. To register, or to receive information pamphlets for the weekend, call Marvin Baergen at 403-256-2894.

MCC tour raises \$40,000

A recent Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) fundraising tour in the province raised approximately \$40,000 for its Global Family, Material Resources and water projects. Of note is the fact that \$33,000 of this total came from the La Crete area.

The tour began March 1 at Foothills Mennonite Church with a House of Doc concert. Subsequent concerts in Edmonton at River West Christian Church, La Crete's Heritage Centre and Grande Prairie's Mission Heights

Evangelical Mennonite Church featured local talent plus Kim Thiessen and Darryl Neustaedter Barg. MCC staff spoke about the organization's work and manned information displays after the events.

Thiessen said of the tour, "It was fun, really worth it. At the end, we all thought we need to keep doing this. Apart from the raised awareness [of MCC and its projects], it raised awareness of the local talent in the churches."

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Covenant service planned for Pentecost

Plans are underway for a service of celebration and covenanting for Mennonite Church B.C. congregations on

Pentecost Sunday, May 27.

The joint worship service will take place at the MEI gymnasium in Abbotsford beginning at 10 a.m. Lorin Bergen, pastor of Living Hope Christian Fellowship in Surrey, will be the keynote speaker.

All MC B.C. congregations are invited to this special worship service, at which individual churches are invited to symbolically sign the new MC B.C. covenant approved at the annual delegate sessions in February. The covenant agreed upon involves local congregations' mutual relationship to—and commitment within—the MC B.C. body.

"At this conference-wide worship service we will celebrate our unity and commitment to work together as congregations of Mennonite Church B.C.," say the MC B.C.

executive members. "It is the Leadership Board's hope that all MC B.C. congregations will close their doors [that Sunday] and encourage all of their membership to attend this event."

Following the service, everyone is invited to stay for a fellowship lunch on the MEI grounds.

The MC B.C. administrative office is arranging for bus transportation for those from areas outside Abbotsford. For more information, call the MC B.C. office at 604-850-6658 or e-mail admin@mcbc.ca.

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

PAM PETERS-PRIES



From our leaders

Delegates and guests at Abbotsford 2007, Mennonite Church Canada's annual assembly, can look forward to discernment on three issues facing the church as it engages the world in ministry and witness: creation care, increasing militarization in Canada and the place of young adults in the church.

The assembly agenda of the last few years has focused on the internal workings of MC Canada, such as approving our Statement of Identity and Purpose and selecting a foundational scripture. While this agenda was important to build a strong base for MC Canada, delegates have been itching for an agenda that grapples more directly with the challenges of our world and the responses that God calls for from the church.

A more outward-focused agenda will help us accomplish at least three things:

- **Engage the world with the reconciling gospel of Jesus Christ.** To do this effectively, our church needs to be engaged with the world. We need to be obsessed with the terrain in which our ministry occurs, whether that terrain is local, national or global in scope. How is God at work in our surroundings? What challenges do our communities face, and what challenges can we expect to face in engaging them with the gospel? Giving the world a prominent place on our agenda will help us to engage it with the gospel more effectively.
- **Share our gifts with each other.** We saw in a striking way throughout the God's People Now! tour what a tre-

mendous store of gifts we have in our congregations, area churches and related organizations. The assembly gathers these parts of the church and creates an opportunity for them to share their needs with each other and to receive gifts in return. For example, a congregation struggling to minister effectively to the young adults in its community can hear from a congregation that has

learned to do this well. We hope that putting on the front burner of the assembly agenda what is on the front burner of our members' minds will facilitate a rich exchange of gifts and ideas around these important issues.

• **Speak with the gathered wisdom and authority of the national church.** All three of these discussions will be based on statements that delegates will be asked to work with. Approving these statements would serve to put up road signs on our journey as a church, indicating key values to each other and to a watching world. For example, a statement on militarization could be used to communicate MC Canada's position to our government, or to the Canadian Council of Churches or Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

The statements that will focus each of these agenda items will be available in the MC Canada annual report book. We encourage congregations and area churches to prepare their delegates to represent them by discussing these statements with them in advance.

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

Outward-looking agenda

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

Calendar

British Columbia

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 6: Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. Sangerfest choir festival; 3 p.m. at Central Heights Church.

May 27: Covenanting celebration for MC B.C., at MEI, Abbotsford; 10 a.m. Lunch to follow.

Alberta

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.

June 2: Annual hike-a-thon fundraiser for Camp Valaqua in Kananaskis Country. For more information, call 403-637-2510.

June 5-7: Heritage retreat for seniors at Camp Valaqua. Speaker: Rev. Jake Wiebe.

Corpus Christi Male Choir will sing on June 6. Call Dave Neufeld at 403-335-8649 for more information.

June 8-10: Third annual men's retreat at Camp Valaqua. Theme: "Kingdom carving in the Alpha-male milieu." Speaker: Harold Schilk. For more information, contact Marvin Baergen at 403-256-2894.

June 15-16: MCC Relief Sale and bike-a-thon at the Coaldale Sportsplex.

Sept. 15-16: Holyrood Mennonite Church 50th anniversary celebration. Details to follow.

Saskatchewan

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

April 15-21: MCC Volunteer Appreciation Week.

April 22: Mennonite Heritage Museum fundraiser at Rosthern Station Arts Centre, featuring Take Note.

May 5: RJC alumni golf tournament.

May 6: RJC spring concert.

May 7: RJC Chorale at Grace Mennonite Church, Regina.

May 14: RJC Chorale at Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite Church.

May 19-Sept. 2: Visit the Mennonite Heritage Museum in Rosthern; formerly the original German English Academy building. Call 306-223-4324 to arrange a tour.

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

June 15-16: MCC Relief Sale.

June 22-23: RJC musical.

June 26-29: Ecumenical "Making peace in the household of God" conference, Saskatoon.

July 29: Shekinah Retreat Centre Adventure Challenge.

Oct. 26-28: Quilting and

scrapbooking retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

Manitoba

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.

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 22: North Kildonan Mennonite Church Quartet spring concert at the church, Winnipeg; 3 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 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.

July 2-9: International Rural Church Conference at the University of Brandon. For more information, e-mail ruralmail@canadianruralchurch.net.

June 9-10: Bike the Interlake event for MCC (from Bird's Hill to Hecla Island). For more information, or to register, call Paul Friesen at 204-261-6381.

June 10: MCI *Sängerfest*; worship at 10:30 a.m. and concert at 2 p.m.

June 11-14: 16th annual Believers Church Conference at CMU. Theme: "Congregationalism, denominationalism and the body of Christ."

June 23: Camp Koinonia golf tournament.

July 3-10: International Rural Church Association/Canadian Rural Church Network "How can we find hope in the rural landscape" conference, in Brandon.

Sept. 28-30: Camp Moose Lake work days.

Oct. 12-13: Women in Mission retreat at Camp Assiniboia.

Oct. 26-28: Scrapbooking retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

Oct. 27: Work day and camps celebration banquet at Camp Koinonia.

Nov. 2-4: Quilting retreats at Camp Koinonia and Camp Moose Lake.

Nov. 3, 4: Camps celebration banquets at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church (3); Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg (4).

Nov. 9-11: Quilting retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

Nov. 9-11: Scrapbooking retreat at Camp Koinonia.

Nov. 10-11: Home Street Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 50th anniversary homecoming and celebration.

Feb. 22-23: MC Manitoba annual delegate sessions at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Ontario

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: Hamilton Mennonite Church annual ham dinner fundraiser for MCC meat canning in Elmira. Music by Hope Rising. For more information or tickets, e-mail edjess@sympatico.ca.

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: Into Paradise—choral music directed by Timothy Corlis; featuring William Moolenbeek, sax; Brandon Leis, tenor; Boyd McDonald, piano. Waterloo MB Church; 8 p.m.

April 20-21: Engaged workshop at Riverdale Mennonite, Millbank. For more information, e-mail denise_bender@yahoo.com.

April 21: MEDA spring banquet at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo; 6:30 p.m. Speaker: Wally Kroeker, editor of *Marketplace*.

April 21: "Building bridges with our aboriginal neighbours" event with Sakoieta' Widrick, at Nairn Mennonite Church, Ailsa Craig; 9:30 am to 3:30 p.m. For more information, call Jennie Jutzi at 519-294-0313 (evenings).

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 conference session at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.

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.

May 5-6: Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir 40th anniversary celebration, at St. Matthews Lutheran Church, Kitchener. For more information or to join the Alumni Mass Choir for the weekend, call Deanna Wiebe at 519-742-3416 or e-mail imccalumni@hotmail.com.

May 6: Shalom Counselling Services Waterloo fundraising breakfast and annual meeting. Speaker: Henry Paetkau. Theme: "When a child has cancer." Waterloo North Mennonite Church; 8:30 to 11 a.m.

May 11,12,17-19: *The Shadows of Grossmunster*, a musical; at the Church Theatre, St. Jacobs. Curtain time: 7:30 p.m.

May 12: Menno Singers present "Spring Fling" with soloist Brandon Leis, at Zion United Church, Kitchener, at 8 p.m.

May 22-25: Quilts for the World at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church. 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. (22-24), 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (25). Featuring Keeping You In Stitches and Vera Frey.

May 25-26: TMTC presents "Inheriting John Howard Yoder: A new generation examines his thought" conference and a forum on "Teaching Yoder." Registration deadline: May 15. For more information, visit grebel.uwaterloo.ca/tmtc.

May 25-26: New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale at the New Hamburg fairgrounds and arena. Visit nhmrs.com for more information.

June 2: 37th annual Leamington Mennonite Festival, at UMEI; from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Quilt auction, Mennonite food, farmers market and more. Visit mennonite-sale.ca for more information.

June 19: Lebold fundraising banquet at Conrad Grebel University College.

June 15-16: Maison de l'amitié and Mennonite Central Committee Quebec's fifth annual peace festival.

June 15-17: Toronto United Mennonite Church celebrates the retirement of pastor Gary Harder and his wife Lydia after 19 years of ministry.

June 30: Joseph and Barbara Schneider reunion and 200th anniversary at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, and the Schneider Haus Museum. Visit timetocome-home.ca or call 519-893-3075 for more information.

Nov. 1-4: MEDA's annual "Business as a calling" convention: "Trust in a world of

change," in Toronto. For more information, visit busines-sasacalling.org or call toll-free 1-800-665-7026.

U.S.A.

April 19-22: Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College nature tour of Highlands Nature Sanctuary in southern Ohio. To register or for more information, e-mail jenniferhs@goshen.edu.

May 18-21: Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College nature tour of a popular birding spot near Necedah, Wis. To register or for more information, e-mail jenniferhs@goshen.edu.

Subscriber services 

How to subscribe:

1. Individuals who attend churches that are part of Mennonite Church Canada or one of its five area churches can subscribe through our Every Home Plan (paid for by your church giving and CM's own fundraising). Please contact your church office to be added to the list.
2. Personal subscriptions are also available to anyone. A one-year subscription (24 issues) is \$36.00 plus \$2.16 GST in Canada, \$53.50 (Can.) to the USA, and \$73.00 (Can.) for elsewhere. Two-year and group subscriptions are also available.

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

Contact information:

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

Employment opportunities

Full-time Pastoral Team Leader

Milverton Mennonite Fellowship is a rural congregation on the edge of Milverton, approximately 40 minutes west of Kitchener/Waterloo. We are a congregation of varying ages, with an average attendance of 120 people. Our congregation places high value on: worship, being Spirit led, prayer, missions (local and foreign).

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

Position is available early summer.

Reply in confidence to:
 Muriel Bechtel
 Conference Minister
 Mennonite Church Eastern Canada
 4489 King St. E.
 Kitchener, ON
 N2P 2G2

Music Director and Missions, Peace & Justice, and Outreach Worker

Stirling Ave. Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ontario, welcomes creative mission-minded team players to apply for these half-time positions on our Ministry Leadership Team:

- The **Half-time Music Director** will serve as a primary resource for the music activities of the congregation, will encourage congregational participation in music-making, and will help to utilize congregational music talents in outreach activities.
- The **Half-time Missions, Peace & Justice, and Outreach Worker** will serve as a primary resource for the outreach activities of the congregation and will nurture a holistic vision of missions, peace, justice and outreach activities within the congregation. This person will also support the work of the congregation's Peace and Justice Centre.

Application deadline is May 7, 2007. Starting dates are negotiable. Further details for both positions are available at stirlingmennonite.ca, or by contacting the Search Committee Chair at the address below or through the church office at 519-745-4769.

Interested persons are invited to forward their resume to:
 Louise Murray Gorvett, Chair, Search Committee,
 c/o Stirling Ave. Mennonite Church, 57 Stirling Ave. North,
 Kitchener, ON N2H 3G4
 E-mail: gorvettl@hotmail.com



Mennonite Church Manitoba (MCM) is inviting nominations and applications for the full-time position of **Director of Leadership Ministries** for fall 2007.

The Director is responsible for addressing congregational leadership and ministry needs through: developing and nurturing pastoral leaders, developing congregational leaders, and resourcing congregations in nurturing other areas of leadership and ministry. The Director also gives oversight in the development and functioning of the Associate Director of Congregational Ministries position. The Director works on a team of ministry directors under the guidance of the Executive Director to further the vision and mission of MCM. For more details, visit www.mennochurch.mb.ca/mcm.

The person we seek has the following qualifications: a mature commitment to Jesus Christ; knowledge of and commitment to the Mennonite Church and to the Anabaptist/Mennonite faith; seminary education (M. Div. minimum); pastoral leadership experience; excellent communications skills, the ability to lead a multi-faceted ministry; willingness to work in a collegial manner with other staff, congregations and related organizations.

Suggestions and resumes should be sent in confidence to:
 Edgar Rempel, Executive Director
 Mennonite Church Manitoba
 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd.
 Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 2J1
 Email: erempel@mennochurch.mb.ca
 Phone: 204-896-1616



Mennonite Church Manitoba (MCM) is inviting applications for the full-time position of **Associate Director of Congregational Ministries**. Processing of applications will begin as soon as they are received and continue until

the position is filled.

The Associate Director is accountable to the Director of Leadership Ministries and is responsible for addressing congregational ministry needs through: developing and nurturing youth & young adult pastoral leaders, resourcing youth and young adult workers and volunteers, and resourcing congregations in nurturing other areas of leadership and ministry. For more details visit www.mennochurch.mb.ca/mcm.

The person we seek has the following qualifications: a mature commitment to Jesus Christ; knowledge of and commitment to the Mennonite Church and to the Anabaptist/Mennonite faith; a minimum of an undergraduate degree (preferably in Church Ministry); experience in youth ministry; excellent communications skills; and willingness to work in a collegial manner with other staff, congregations and related organizations.

Resumes should be sent in confidence to:
 Edgar Rempel, Executive Director
 Mennonite Church Manitoba
 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd.
 Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 2J1
 E-mail: erempel@mennochurch.mb.ca
 Phone: 204-896-1616

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

1. **Camp Manager:** a person with a combination of energy, knowledge and enthusiasm, eager to apply lessons learned in business or career and able to form staff and volunteers into a community with the task of building up the operational side of Camp Assiniboia. This person communicates effectively and has the ability to deal with a variety of relational situations. This person is committed to the Mennonite Church and dedicated to our mission of "inviting persons to life."
2. **Guest Group Coordinator** (.5 FTE: preparing for and hosting guest groups).

Direct inquiries to Director of Camping Ministries, MC Manitoba, 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2J1, camps@mennochurch.mb.ca, 204-895-2267.

Pastor of Worship Arts

Fort Garry MB Church is seeking a part-time Pastor of Worship Arts. For further information and a complete position description, please see our website, www.fgmb.ca. Responses may be directed to:

Search Committee, Worship Arts
Fort Garry MB Church
1771 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2G6
E-mail: info@fgmb.ca

Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church in Abbotsford, British Columbia, is seeking a full-time **Associate Pastor**. This person will serve in a leadership team under the direction of the lead pastor. The successful candidate will have a theological education, will agree with our church's vision statement and confession of faith, and will have a passion for serving Christ and the church.

Starting date: July 2007. Application deadline: April 30, 2007. Interested persons are invited to submit a cover letter and resume to:

Search Committee, Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church
2051 Windsor Street, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6L9
Phone: 604-850-8422
Fax: 604-850-8455
E-mail: eemc@telus.net

For rent

Room in three-bedroom apartment in family house. Common area, kitchen, high speed, TV etc., inclusive. Walk to University of Waterloo. Lovely area. j.sauder@sympatico.ca.

Apartment, central Winnipeg. Self-contained kitchen, bedroom, living room with shared entrance and bathrooms. Avail. May 1. \$400/month includes: utilities, laundry, internet; parking available. 204-478-1134 or mnrighswander@gmail.com.

Home away from home. Two rooms to rent, one 4-month and one long-term starting April 29. Close to Conrad Grebel University College. Energy Smart house. Phone 519-883-0252.

Wanted

Farm Wanted: Looking to buy 50+ acre farm with house, workable land, woodlot. Within commuting distance to Waterloo. Contact: kbryson@gmail.com or 416-690-5352.

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 if you prefer e-mail. Further information is on file with MC Manitoba.



Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary Schools Inc. Chief Executive Officer

The Organization:

Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary Schools Inc. (WMES) is looking for a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). WMES is an independent Mennonite-based Christian school with two locations in Winnipeg, educating students in grades K-8. Although grounded in the Mennonite-Anabaptist faith, WMES is supported by a broad-based constituency. Our mission is to provide quality Christ-centred education, integrating faith and life within a caring school community.

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Description:

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO is responsible for the overall leadership of the organization. The preferred candidate is looking for an opportunity to use their experience to lead an educational organization in its continued growth and development as it pursues excellence as a faith-based school. This person has a passion for visioning and long-range strategic planning, and an ability to convert plans into results. Strong business skills and an entrepreneurial mindset are well developed as a result of the candidate's professional and volunteer experience.

The preferred candidate has demonstrated leadership ability within education and a commitment to excellence in teaching. Proven experience in coaching, motivating and empowering other professionals to achieve common goals is required. Priority will be given to those candidates who have built a strong network in the Mennonite community and are able to support the faith-based vision, mission and mandate of WMES.

Please send your resume in confidence to:

WMES, 250 Bedson Street,
Winnipeg, MB R3K 1R7
Attention: Search Committee
or e-mail to searchcommittee@wmes.ca

LORD, WE CONFESS that even in these days of horror and sadness,
we find ourselves caught up in the wonder of life.

We take joy in the way the winter sky melts
from darkness into dawn,
the navy shades of night easing
into lighter shades of day.
We giggle with our children
and take satisfaction in hard work and good food.

O Lord, help us find authentic ways
to live with sadness and with joy,
with tears and with laughter.
Help us find our way to the beauty and the pain
of the man of Galilee,
who healed the sick
and sat with friends at table. Amen.

Mary H. Schertz

A prayer to the one who healed the sick

