

C A N A D I A N
Mennonite

April 30, 2007
Vol. 11, No. 9

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Women building the church

In this issue, our Faith&Life section highlights the way women express their spirituality (male spirituality was explored in our June 12, 2006 issue). Whether female or male, I think you will find inspiration and insight in these articles—and perhaps may want to share how you “practise the presence of God” in a letter.

The church owes so much to the faithfulness and outreach of women. Evidence leads many Biblical scholars to believe that the majority of early Christians were female and that much of the church growth in the first few hundred years after Christ was due to women. Men did not catch up until Christianity was made a state religion and people were required by law to convert.

The very first to preach the good news that Jesus was risen was Mary Magdalene. Jesus specifically asked her to be his first messenger. In all four gospels, the good news is told first to women and they then tell the men, who think the women are talking nonsense (Luke 24).

In his greetings to the Christian church in Rome, Paul singles out 18 men and 15 women, so we can infer there were large numbers of women in the church right from its earliest days. Second Timothy opens with greetings to Timothy’s grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice, both of whom have passed on their sincere faith to their children. What a gift mothers can give their children in this!

The percentage of women grows as the church spreads, with women around the Roman Empire hosting church meetings in their homes, inviting their friends, and gradually converting their husbands and children.

In 303 A.D., a house church in Cirta, North Africa, was raided by authorities. They found books, communion uten-

sils and clothing, probably for distribution to those in need. Much more of this clothing was female rather than male: 82 female tunics versus 16 male tunics, suggesting that there were more females donating than men. How beautiful it is that our Mennonite Women in Mission groups across Canada who make quilts and comforters for those in need are part of a practice of female spirituality that stretches back 1,700 years!

There were many reasons women had such an important role in the early church. Many more women simply survived because Christians didn’t kill their infant daughters in a preference to sons. “Pagans killed little girls left and right. We’ve unearthed sewers clogged with the bones of newborn girls,” says sociologist of religion Rodney Stark.

Women also found spiritual and social support in Christianity. The church cared for unmarried women and widows; women married as adults, rather than as children, and had choice in whom they married; and the church had much higher moral standards than pagan society (especially in marriage, where fidelity without divorce was expected of every Christian, then as now).

Third, women were very active in evangelism. “Women... were probably the pre-eminent carriers of the gospel. And doing so not so much by public presentation but by representation—quiet evangelization,” says Mennonite early church historian Alan Kreider. “Women took the lead in Christianity’s natural means of propagation...being a neighbour, being a friend, being a help, talking to people, listening to people, influencing husbands. These things are the classic means by which Christianity grows.”

God’s continued blessings on the women among us for their witness and ministry, wherever they find themselves.

—**Tim Miller Dyck**

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

Head office: 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, ON, N2L 6H7
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Please send all material to be considered for publication as follows:

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

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

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

CANADIAN
Mennonite

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Electronic delivery

All subscribers can get the complete contents of *Canadian Mennonite* delivered free by e-mail or view selected articles online. For either option, visit our website at canadianmennonite.org. The May 14 issue will be ready by May 10.

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Cover: Reading is important in any language. In this issue—which features our spring Books&Resources section (pages 32 to 38)—besides book reviews and title listings, is a story of Mennonite Central Committee's Bolivia Library Program. Pictured, Janeth Rocha shows off her favourite book outside her neighbourhood library in Santa Cruz. —MCC photo by Melissa Engle

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Tanzania

Playing our part in the global symphony of faith

“Aaaaa, Hinke!” yelled Amina as she bounded out to hug my brother and me during a recent visit to her home. Amina and I had last seen each other 13 years ago, but for much of our childhood we grew up together in Tanzania. Her father, Juma, had worked for my family and had been like a second father to me.

Quickly the entire family gathered and we caught up on 13 years of family news. Several hours later we were all sitting down to a meal of *ugali* (a paste made of maize meal and water) and *mchicha* (Tanzanian greens), as well as a few celebratory bottles of pop. We sat on wooden stools in the dirt yard and ate from a communal dish.

“Hinke, my sister, why aren’t you eating?” asked Juma’s son, Athumani, in Swahili, after I had eaten a few handfuls of food.

I grinned at him and answered, “I am eating, but I’m also listening.” It was the same response I had given to the same question when I was a child. I gave him a look of mock annoyance and we both felt a distinct sense of home.

Like that of most transient, world-traveling young adults, my faith has been shaped by numerous voices. It is only when I consciously stop and listen, that I hear each cultural melodic strain that together compose the symphony of my faith.

My experience of revisiting Tanzania makes me realize that the voice of Africa has silently influenced my decision-making, principles and faith. Hardship and daily struggle for the most basic of needs in Africa makes simplicity a reality that cannot be avoided and should not be romanticized.

Anabaptism tells me to live simply and with honesty, but Mennonites today have yet to honestly face the



Photo courtesy of Hinke Loewen-Rudgers

On a recent trip back to Tanzania, Hinke Loewen-Rudgers reunited with her childhood friend, Amina, and got to hold Amina’s daughter.

reality of a cultural and global paradigm that is already silently informing future Mennonite generations. The church often pays the price in youths and young adults who leave as the gap between church and their culture leaves them feeling apathetic or frustrated.

Because of Christ, I can see the examples of his life and the stories of the Anabaptists and Africa come together to

form a terrible and beautiful symphony of faith. The end goal must be to live out our faith in a way that is meaningful as a community that owes its existence and purpose to God.

At last year’s North American Young Adult Fellowship, I met others who find themselves similarly inundated by a diverse collection of faith melodies. These young adults spoke about how their faith interacts with the church. In essence, they described church as living out our Christian faith every day, leaving no room for a dichotomy between faith and social action, finances and work.

In the summer of 2006, North American young adults took part in

a bike tour that visited more than 19 congregations across the northern part of the United States. It sought to transform those many voices into one unified experience of intentional community while initiating and inviting conversation about the church.

Experiences like these empower us to listen intentionally to those individual melodies that inform our faith, to take ownership of them, celebrate them, and, with God’s help, to weave them into an integrated whole.

In today’s world we are not all raised in one geographic location or by a distinct faith community. As Mennonites, we cannot assume that other Mennonites have been shaped in the same cultural or faith environment. My generation—and the generations following me—receive information and values from a rich variety of geographic, philosophical and theological sources, and our culture expects that we listen to each source with respect.

To a large extent, the stories of previous generations still define our current Mennonite Church and faith culture in Canada. But we have new stories and new beautiful melodies that must be written into the greater story of our Anabaptist faith history. With God’s guidance, we can filter through the many voices informing us. Slowly and carefully we form an understanding of Anabaptism and what it means to be Mennonite in our world today. We may not be of the world, but we are definitely in it. I have faith that we—as a young generation of Anabaptists—will, by the grace of God, realize our own communal symphony of faith and give this as a gift to a world that is crying out for us to play our part.

—**Hinke Loewen-Rudgers**

The author is MC Canada’s Congregational Partnership facilitator. Born in Winnipeg, she moved to Tanzania when she was five, spending the next 13 years in East Africa.

the young prophets

Stewardship stories for the generous life (Part III): Retirement no barrier to service

Stewardship means putting your finances, time, skill and ability into action. That is Leigh Steckley's definition. It is not just language he pulls out of a file; it is his guide to living.

Steckley, 57, a retired elementary school teacher from the Waterloo Region of Ontario, acts on each part of his statement.

Stewardship begins with tithing the family income. There is no wavering on regular giving to The Gathering, a recent church plant in Kitchener, Ont., the wider Mennonite Church, the community and beyond. In addition, the Steckleys sponsor three children in India through Mennonite Global Family program and they pay their own expenses—without strict accounting—when doing service projects.

It is the projects that call up the full spectrum of stewardship.

Steckley has put his training, experience, natural ability, time and energy to work in organizing and implementing numerous projects within his own community, in the U.S. and abroad.

A project he organized took him, his wife Lois (also a newly retired teacher), and six others from Shantz, Wilmot and Crosshill Mennonite churches in southwestern Ontario, on a trip to Africa in 2002.

One stop was a refugee camp at Kakuma, about a two-day drive north of Nairobi, Kenya, to help expedite the immigration process for some Sudanese women and their children whose documents were caught in a bureaucratic tangle. These families have since arrived and live in the Kitchener-Waterloo region.

The group also raised funds from Ontario churches to buy beans and maize for desert Turkana villagers and to purchase 100 NIV study Bibles for the African Christian Mission Bible Institute that trains Sudanese refugees to go back home as pastors.

In Kenya, the group met the Nairobi Mennonite Knights, a basketball team comprised of Christian and Muslim players from the Eastleigh slums. The

team was good enough to make the top senior division in the country, but they had poor uniforms. From his teaching experience, Steckley knew how important a smart uniform is to the spirit of a team. He thought of businesspeople in churches back home who loved sports and, upon his return, he challenged them to make donations. It took him two weeks to raise the \$1,100 to equip the team with professional-looking red and white reversible uniforms.

Steckley's daughter, Jill Steckley Leis, initiated Global Youth Network when she was a student at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ont., and has travelled to many parts of the world. Another daughter, Jenee Gowing, was born in Jos, Nigeria, when her parents were on a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment; she has travelled in mission assignments to Kenya and Peru. Son Joshua, who has a masters degree from Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, in political studies, has taught English in Taiwan and conducted research assignments in Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam; he and his wife are currently serving a three-year assignment with MCC in Haiti as policy analysts.

Is it simply wanderlust that has sent all three children globe-trotting? Or has the lifestyle they observed at home led them to invest time and talent in less privileged parts of the world? Like their dad.

Steckley spent the 2001 March break cleaning up and repairing houses after Hurricane Floyd ripped a swath along the eastern seaboard of the U.S. However, he did not go alone. He used his organizational skills to put together an intergenerational work team of 39 people who travelled by bus. One team member said it was "the best vacation ever."

In 2004, Steckley visited Desmond Tully, a pastor from Jamshedpur, India, a city about two hours west of Calcutta, and offered refresher courses to teachers from impoverished villages in northern India. He also assisted Tully in his many ministries among



Photo courtesy of Leigh Steckley

Committed to global issues and causes around the world, Lois and Leigh Steckley, back row, left, have raised three children—Josh (back row, second from right); Jenee Gowing (front row, left); and Jill Steckley Leis (front row, second from right)—who, along with their spouses, have become globe-trotting servants as well.

the poor.

A year later, Steckley was invited by the California-based Chinese Christian Mission to teach English to university students at the University of Chaing Mai in Thailand. Most of his students were children of AIDS victims.

Steckley does not simply pick a place he would like to visit and create a response to a real or imagined need. Each service venture responds to an invitation and the work done is what the people doing the inviting want done. Listening before doing is most important, he says.

With stewardship as a core value, Leigh Steckley heads into each year with his sleeves rolled up, his organizational and other skills on call, and his calendar and chequebook at the ready. Stewardship continues to shape his life.

Anyone interested in joining him in Haiti in 2008?

—**Ferne Burkhardt**

Updated from an MC Eastern Canada Stewardship Commission series in 2004-05.



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Intentional living: Women and spirituality

Women today are forging new paths as they seek to integrate their physical, emotional, mental and spiritual lives. We live in a culture that demands our time and energy with lots of opportunity to grow and change.

As a result, women are responsible to create their own intentional spaces for spiritual nurture.

Much of what is written here is for women. This is not because it doesn't apply to men, but rather it might be described differently for men. In my work as a spiritual director, I encounter far more women who are longing for a deeper connection with God, so I speak out of that context.

Then: Struggling for survival

My mother's generation struggled with issues of survival. Women born before the 1920s had to physically work hard to provide food and clothes for their families. Their spirituality—the lived experience of their Christian faith—was focused on family and their lives were isolated from world events. My mother relied on hard physical work to keep her mind occupied and her faith to see her through the difficult times. She lived in a relatively stable and established community of faith. She offered hospitality in her home and was a guest in many of her friends' homes for both Sunday lunch

and women's domestic activities. She didn't have to seek a faith community because it was built into the structure of her family and church life.

My mother didn't talk much about her faith or prayer life. Rather, she lived her faith in her relationships. She probably prayed often when she was hanging out baskets full of laundry or when she was digging potatoes. There were times when she was required to carry her burdens alone and at other times she could share her experiences with women in similar circumstances.

Now: Lamenting a lack of time

Most of my friends live in a different world today. We travel and move households more often than our mothers ever dreamed of doing. Working outside the home brings with it new challenges and blessings. Our technical world has expanded our understanding of global issues and we are in touch with other faiths and ideologies. We are allowed to enter into dialogue with men on almost any subject. If we are not moving from one relationship

to another, we are moving from one exciting job or vacation to another. The pendulum has swung from a stable, predictable world for my mother to a less predictable, ever-changing life for me. Consequently, our spirituality will be expressed differently.

In my work I often hear women lament that they have little time to nurture their spiritual lives. In addition to running the household, caring for family members, volunteering at the church and working outside the home, they also find themselves longing for the peace God promises. I am aware that I need to work more intentionally than my mother did to find the time and friendships required to ground me in my faith.

How to be intentionally spiritual

Outlined below are four specific suggestions for how women can create an intentional environment for their spiritual growth.

• **First, Scripture tells us that taking a Sabbath rest is essential to the Christian life.**

Working both inside and outside the home takes a toll on women and they need to be given permission to do absolutely nothing for a day. Taking time for a retreat is an excellent way for women to get away from their daily routine and devote time to God. My mother never went to a retreat centre to spend time with God, but she was allowed Sabbath rest once a week. Here, she could spend time with other women or spend the afternoon reading or sleeping. I assume my mother spent time reflecting on her inner life on Sundays because she certainly lived a life of compassion and integrity.

• **Second, spiritual friendships are natural for women.**

This is when two women agree to meet on a regular basis to talk specifically about where they see God in their daily life. It is a mutual relationship where each person is given a period of time to share what is on her heart. The listener will not necessarily say much, and if she does it will be to make an observation or brief comment.

Spiritual friendships allow women to be attentive to their spirituality by sharing with a friend, either in person or over the phone. What makes this

different from a regular friendship is that they intentionally talk about their spirituality and give each other the same amount of time to share.

For more information on spiritual friendships, read Wendy Miller's book, *Learning to Listen: A Guide for Spiritual Friends* (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1993).

• **Third, spirituality groups can take many forms.**

Women often start a group gathering because they want to pray or study together. These groups allow women to meet and verbalize their faith in ways that can validate their experiences. In mid-life my mother longed for such a group of women and eventually helped form a neighbourhood Bible study. Personally, I prefer a more contemplative form of prayer in which silence is the focus.

The key components in group spiritual direction are silence and sharing where God is present in everyday life. In this process it is essential to invite friends with whom you feel safe to talk about your deepest questions and longings. Silent prayer begins and ends all sharing. Each person gets the same amount of time for personal sharing and then response from the group. In the gatherings, which are natural communities for discernment and prayer, ordinary experiences are used to explore where God is evident in daily life.

Rose Mary Dougherty describes a group spiritual direction process in her book, *Group Spiritual Direction: Community for Discernment* (New York: Paulist Press, 1995).

• **Fourth, women today will seek one-on-one spiritual direction as a way to explore their spirituality.**

My mother did not have this option, since spiritual direction has only entered the Protestant Church in the last 20 years. She probably would have appreciated a listening ear and a prayer partner when she bore children that did not live. Today, women are blessed with emotional and spiritual resources that women struggled to find even 30 years ago.

Spiritual direction is a ministry of listening, discernment and prayer in a confidential setting. The trained director sets aside his or her concerns to listen and attend to the experience of God in the life of the other. Through this ministry one is encouraged to draw closer to God and recognize God's presence and grace in daily life. Although we believe God is always leading us, sometimes we need a "soul friend" to help us become our best selves before God and through Christ.

—**Miriam Frey**

The author is a member of Waterloo North Mennonite Church. She lives in Waterloo, Ont., serving as a spiritual director and teacher. She received her spiritual direction training at both the Toronto-Jubilee Program and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkart, Ind., and completed a doctor of ministry degree in spiritual direction through the Mennonite Church at the Toronto School of Theology.



Spiritual friendships allow women to be attentive to their spirituality by sharing with a friend, either in person or over the phone.

A mother's spirituality

Spiritual growth and nurture in the years of mothering young children and juggling a career can be difficult. How does one go about growing in relationship with Christ when running at breakneck speed from one commitment to another? Perhaps the key to allowing God to nurture us lies in the runner's pace.

In I Corinthians 9:24-27, Paul compares our Christian lives with that of a trained athlete running a race. The quandary is that this race fills our lifetime and influences those around us deeply. If we run at a full-out sprint the entire race, our race will be much shorter because we will burn out and be ineffective. Running a marathon is no sprint. Running this marathon means running at a pace that can be kept up for life.

Motherhood is a series of seasons where one can choose to grow in Christ or become burned out and stagnant.

By nature, I am a sprinter. I love to run full out and feel the wind in my hair, yet I cannot possibly hope to keep up that kind of pace for a lifetime of running. So how does a sprinter keep a sane, comfortable pace that promotes growth in Christ and fills up the ever-emptying cup? By

giving each day, each moment, each breath, to my God who leads me and, in fact, most days carries me.

Throughout each day being able to consciously "practise the presence of God," as Brother Lawrence so aptly coined it, is a perfect way to allow God to carry me and fill me with his strength and joy, no matter what.

One thing I've learned is to stop often throughout each day and simply breathe deeply of all the goodness that God offers. Practically speaking, this means getting daily fresh air and

exercise. As I walk I am reminded of God's goodness through the budding leaves, or the wonder of monsoon rains for weeks that flood my beloved park followed by a day of breathtaking sunshine. Catching a breath of air that reminds me of my childhood prairie home in spring or the fall harvest carries back a cache of memories that fills me with contentment.

I treasure moments with my children, such as my youngest telling me that he will always "remember how you hold me," and my oldest (not to be outdone) saying, "how you read to us." Grabbing a break mid-afternoon to sit and hear about my boys' day while drinking a cup of tea adds to the nurture that I feel from God.

Having a quick chat with a friend adds wonders to the love that I feel from God.

Having my husband wrap his arms around me at the end of each day as we pray together unites us in purpose and consciously invites God to be our centre.

Purposefully sitting in my "prayer closet" and asking Jesus to take me to his "valley" so that I can hear his voice clearly in meditation is the biggest nurture of my day. It is here, with Jesus, that I can let all the day's busyness and worries go, and rest in the arms of my Lord.

Motherhood is a series of seasons where one can choose to grow in Christ or become burned out and stagnant. I choose to grow through allowing Christ to nurture and feed me, through communing with other friends who support and cheer me on, through a loving relationship with my husband, and through learning more about the attributes of Christ through my children—direct gifts from God.

—**Laurel Hildebrandt**

The author is a counselor in private practice in Abbotsford, B.C. She has held various workshops on issues such as self-esteem, anger management, marriage, eating disorders and spiritual warfare. She is an active member of Wellspring Christian Fellowship in Abbotsford.



Feminine spirituality: What do you notice?

I dreamt the broken communion loaf was broken open before me; the nourishing bread gone, only the crust remained.

The image painfully spoke of the absence of God.

Not understanding, I stopped taking communion.

Did God notice?

After a time I chose the risk of trust and in the womb-like wooden chapel at the monastery

I swallowed the sacraments.

Did God notice?

I returned to my place

and the only beam of sunlight bathed my chair with a warm welcome.

I sat in its strong embrace.

Later, at supper, Father Jude exclaimed, "Did you notice the light on your chair?"

The sermon at the Cincinnati Mennonite Arts Weekend in 2006 was given by six people consecutively relaying an encounter with God in a hundred words. The result was a compelling and startling picture of God simply and profoundly at work in the lives of ordinary people.

Setting my long and deeply moving encounter with God into a hundred words was a lesson in risk and trust. I discovered I had to pay attention to the core moments in order to tell the story. Noticing the moments where God's presence comes through in our daily life comprises the essence of spirituality.

It becomes "feminine spirituality" when the expression of those moments are embodied in a woman. Not long ago I would have discounted the experiences around the communion dream as a valid spiritual experience. Female perspectives have taught me to take seriously all of life's experiences as places where God is present and accessible. Seeing God in this way reminds me that I am entering God's story, shifting the emphasis from me and my relationship to God and God's relationship with me.

Feminine spirituality searches out names and images of God in Scripture, continually looking for ways to breathe life into the long-standing images and adding new images from the text into worship. What do we notice about the women in Scripture and how they express their spirituality? We engage women's voices through scholarly study, discussion and prayer.

Feminine spirituality incorporates prayer and worship in its many forms. These might include sitting in silence, focusing on one word or phrase, crying out with both anger and sadness, working with symbols, dancing, journalling, reading paraphrases written by women, using our body to express our prayer or discerning dreams.

Feminine spirituality incorporates prayer and worship in its many forms.

Carol Lakey Hess, in *Caretakers of Our Common House* (Nashville, Tenn.:

Abingdon Press, 1987), speaks of spirituality as "prophetic vigour." Many women throughout the centuries—and around the world—have lived with suffering and oppression. Defining, remembering and naming our experiences with—and for—each other in worship and ritual bring God's justice and mercy into our everyday life. We begin to notice our anger and sadness at injustice, which affects our prayer.

Women need other women. We have seen this in the Women Doing Theology and Women in Ministry conferences, among other events. There is a group of women in my new hometown who e-mail each other every night to bring witness to God's work that day, paying attention to God's active, sustaining presence.

What are the core moments of God's work in your life? What do you notice?

—Lois Siemens

The author graduated in 2006 with a master of divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. She is presently the pastor at Superb Mennonite Church in Kerrobert, Sask. When not pastoring or working on worship she can be found trying her hand at calligraphy, painting dishes or watching movies.



Personal journeys

Jessie Kehler, a retired hospital chaplain, shares two stories of people she accompanied during turbulent times in their lives and how this deepened not only their experience of God's mercy and grace, but also her own.



As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God (Psalm 42:1).

God hears our human cry of desperation for forgiveness and acceptance. Deep within each one of us is a yearning for God, yet we often live life in the "fast lane" and miss out on experiencing a deeper relationship with the Holy One.

This was *Elaine's experience until she was confronted with cancer. Her whole world collapsed. But then she found God was there for her.

As I journeyed with her on this lonely and turbulent path, I found we both were drawn into a more intimate relationship with Jesus and with each other. She was discharged after she requested no further aggressive treatment. Reconnecting with spiritual care was a priority for her, and another pastor became her spiritual mentor.

At her memorial service she left a beautiful testimony: two white candles representing both her earthly and her heavenly life. The "earthly" candle burned brightly for part of the service; before it was extinguished, the "heavenly" candle was lit, representing her presence with the Lord.

*Dale, a young adult, experienced

severe depression. He had feelings of abandonment, guilt and shame, which placed a wedge between him and his family and God. He was well-versed in the Bible, but he found little comfort in it.

One day he was asked to share the story of the Prodigal Son. It was amazing how, in the retelling of the story, he became the prodigal, and I believe the Holy Spirit paved the way for him to receive the loving embrace of the Father. In this very act he was able to experience God's forgiveness and acceptance, and apply it to himself—a small but vital step toward recovery.



The Spirit continues to move in our midst, inviting us into a closer walk with God. Augustine has said, "My God thirsts to be thirsted after." What an awesome and amazing God we have with whom we can be in communion. Thanks be to God.

—Jessie Kehler

* Elaine and Dale are pseudonyms.

Letters

Military recruiters must be countered

It was with great interest that we read the “Mennonite pastors oppose military co-op program” article by Barry Bergen (March 5, page 25). We realize many of the teens and young adults of our country are very interested in war games and other forms of violence because of all the video games that they play.

We should not be surprised that the Canadian and American military are able to attract many of these same people to come and dream about playing war games with real “toys.” They will have a uniform, belong to an elite group and be paid to perform duties that will be acclaimed by the government as heroic. They will receive medals and march in parades. They will learn to salute the flag with pride.

As we read the article we wondered why Mennonite pastors are not more active in promoting organizations—both Mennonite and non-Mennonite—that equip people to resolve conflict in non-violent ways.

Also, nowhere in the article did the pastors say that they were prepared to present information to the school board about the total picture of war and what it is doing to our economy. Surely, with all that is known about the information that is given out to get men and women to enlist, can we not do something to help our school boards promote other programs? Why could they not set up a booth showing videos of those who have gone to help

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, “Att: Letter to the Editor.” Letters may be edited for length, style and adherence to editorial guidelines.

with Mennonite Disaster Service and Christian Peacemaker Teams?

If we really do not have anything to say other than that the school board is wrong, then what has Mennonite Central Committee and Conrad Grebel University College done with all the money that they have been given to promote the message of peace and conflict resolution?

We look forward to reading that our church is putting a plan into action to help local school boards educate young people about the alternatives that are just as exciting as any program offered to them by the military.

—**Susannah and David Shantz, Blainville, Que.**

CO2 emissions can be curtailed

Re: “Better to cope with climate change than try to reverse it,” April 2, page 13.

Thank you to those who don’t care and or do nothing about carbon dioxide emissions.

One effect of carbon dioxide emissions, however, is climate change. Carbon dioxide, along with other greenhouse gases, makes it harder for infrared radiation, which heats up the

planet, to escape from the Earth.

Climate change, or global warming, results in severe weather—like hurricanes Katrina and Rita, droughts and floods, and the melting of the poles and glaciers. The melting of the poles means higher sea levels, which means more displaced people and refugees.

It is estimated that the full effects of climate change—provided that we keep putting carbon dioxide in the atmosphere at our current rate—will happen in about 50 years. This is the time when I will be looking at retiring. I would appreciate it if I could have a fairly relaxed retirement, instead of having to deal with climate change and its effects.

Another effect of carbon dioxide emissions is smog. Smog causes many health problems. These problems include asthma and cancer, and can lead to health complications.

For those in despair over these problems, there are ways to cut down on carbon dioxide emissions, which may even save money. Such ways include using compact fluorescent light bulbs, driving a car with lower carbon dioxide emission levels, eating less processed foods, eating food grown closer to home, buying things with less packaging, re-using stuff, investing in green energy options (such as solar and wind), turning off the car when you know you are going to be stopped for more than 10 seconds, or going into a restaurant instead of taking the drive through.

These things will not change the amount of carbon dioxide already in the atmosphere, but they will reduce the amount we are putting in the atmosphere.

—**Katrina Matthies, Kitchener, Ont.**

Pontius’ Puddle



Climate change: Beyond coping

Re: "Better to cope with climate change than try to reverse it," April 2, page 13.

A position that advocates coping with climate change is rather self-serving. The cost of reversing climate change falls heavily on North Americans, especially Albertans, while the cost of our merely coping falls primarily on lower-income people living in the extreme north and in the tropics.

Regardless of what one chooses to believe on the issue of human activity as a contributing cause of current changes in climate, the environmental issues involved are much larger than attempts to conserve finite supplies of fossil fuel.

An emerging middle class in China and India aspiring to own cars, like we do, is driving up the price of fossil fuel. This is merely one little indicator of what the future holds.

Given current technology, it is estimated we will require the equivalent of three Earths to provide the raw materials and absorb the pollutants that will be required to enable the rest

of the world to attain our material standard of living.

Therefore, we are well beyond merely coping. We need to find ways to discover "enough," to curtail our consumption of non-renewable resources and to reduce the volume of pollutants we unload into the air, water and land. A failure to do so will subject all of us to rising inflation and, likely, the fascist-like governments Clyde Ovens fears.
—**Henry Rempel, Winnipeg**

'Thinking Canadian' supports carbon tax

In the spirit of discussion and discernment, I would like to respond to Clyde Ovens' letter, "Better to cope with climate change than try to reverse it," April 2, page 13.

I do not appreciate being excluded from the company of "thinking Canadians" because I support a carbon tax. The approach suggested by the Green Party of Canada is to place taxes on carbon as well as other resources we consume, and lower personal

income taxes for an overall tax-neutral policy. This would encourage us to go out and work and contribute to our society while discouraging us from doing it in a wasteful and inefficient way. Why would a thinking Canadian not support this idea?

As a people of faith, we are called to be good stewards of God's creation. To me, that definitely implies living in a way that is sustainable. I find it unfortunate that the environmental debate has become so focused on global warming lately, and that our action or inaction is linked to our personal estimation of the credibility of the theory.

I believe that we are causing global warming, but even if we aren't, we still need to take action on our carbon emissions. Oil will run out. It is irresponsible both economically and spiritually to propagate an economic model that is based on any non-renewable resource.

We can't change our economy overnight, but we need to work toward "placing limits on how much fossil fuel a person can consume in a year"—and

Continued on page 12

JIM BROWN



God, money and me

One Sunday morning as I was leading an adult Sunday school class on the topic of estate planning a woman made the observation, "A lot of what you're saying keeps going back to the importance of good communication."

Her observation was exactly right. So much of estate planning involves effective and timely communication. I recall the story of a U.S. president who wished to have a quiet family funeral when he died. He took the time to write out his instructions so that his wishes would be honoured. The paper was found two weeks after a huge state funeral had been held for him. He had made plans but had not effectively communicated them in time.

Do your family or loved ones clearly understand your wishes and plans? Even with written estate or funeral plans, our intentions are not always understood by others. So I encourage people to talk about their plans. Talk with your spouse, children or beneficiaries. Many people are very private about their financial and estate plans, and there is a place for privacy. However, there is a need to balance this with clear and timely communication so that your estate goals are achieved.

There can be difficult or sensitive issues when it comes

Nothing like good communication

Even with written estate or funeral plans, our intentions are not always understood by others.

to dividing your estate among family members. This can especially be true where farms or other businesses are involved. If the family farm is a major asset in an estate, it can be difficult to leave the farm to one child and still make a fair distribution to the rest of the family. What can make the situation even more stressful for adult children is if parents don't talk with their children about what they intend to do.

Then, for example, a son helping work the family farm may not know how to plan for his own family's future. He may finally buy his own land or choose another career because he cannot wait any longer to find out whether dad will bequeath or sell the farm to him or not. This can increase tension in the extended family and strain relationships.

The good news is that a lot of misunderstanding and stress can be minimized by practising good communication. Regular and open communication is a great way to prevent future problems, misunderstandings or hurt with estate planning and in family relationships.

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

Thinking *From page 11*

eventually make that limit zero. I don't call a world in which this is mandated a "fascist dictatorship." I would call it learning to accept the collective wisdom and accountability of our community—a long-standing, radical Anabaptist tradition.

—**Andrew Cressman, Toronto**

Visitor to Vietnam clarifies issues

I would like to thank Joanne and Doug Durst for their letter in the April 2 issue regarding news stories about the church in Vietnam (Vietnamese pastor abusing his freedom," page 13). They draw attention to Pastor Nguyen Hong Quang, a leader of one part of the

Mennonite Church in Vietnam who has been active in human rights and legal issues in that country.

As the Asia and Middle East Mission Partnership facilitator for Mennonite Church Canada Witness, I was recently able to visit Vietnam to meet members of the Mennonite Church there. This visit came just two months after the incident reported in the Feb. 19 *Canadian Mennonite* ("Congregation continues to meet after yet another conflict with authorities," page 33), so I was eager to learn more about the relationship of the church and the local government authorities.

In our visit we found that some Mennonite Church leaders supported Pastor Quang's activism and others were concerned by it. We heard of

some of the important human rights work that Pastor Quang has done, yet others feel that he should not be involved in such political causes while he has a leadership role in the Mennonite Church.

Many Mennonite churches are now able to register at the local level, but at the same time there are other churches still experiencing continual restrictions by their local authorities.

It is understandable that Pastor Quang's activism may cause some tension and division in the church. As North American Mennonite churches, we want to be supportive of all our brothers and sisters in Mennonite Church Vietnam while they work through these issues as a church.

—**Gordon Janzen, Winnipeg**

MELISSA MILLER



Family Ties

While shopping at the mall, I had an odd moment outside the lingerie store. This particular day I had my head down as usual, trying to avoid the high-impact ad that screams out at passersby. You know the ad—long-legged underwear-clad model selling sex and, I suppose, products inside the store.

On the day in question, the bold lettering offered two bras for \$40. I was quite surprised to overhear a young male say to his female companion, who appeared to be the age of his mother, "That's a pretty good price, isn't it?"

I confess my head involuntarily jerked upwards to see what kind of family had these kinds of conversations. They both looked normal. Perhaps she wasn't his mother; perhaps I misperceived the relationship. Still, it led me to wonder how we can promote healthy sexuality. *The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* states that right sexual union is only within a marriage covenant between a woman and a man for life. How do we pass on Christian values to our young?

Parenting expert Barbara Coloroso advocates that parents give their young people "the talk" as follows. Parent and young teenager get in the car. Parent locks the doors and begins to drive. En route, parent says everything he or she believes the child needs to know before he or she begins to date and engage in intimate encounters. Parent talks about the values and hopes they have for their young person's sexual life. Parent provides factual information that the child may not have picked up elsewhere. In an ideal world, child listens. At the end of an hour, the parent stops the car at a restaurant. "The talk" is over. They go inside and enjoy a really nice meal together.

I wonder how many parents have followed Coloroso's advice. And I wonder what they say. Here are some of the things I would say:

The talk

- **Sex is one of God's greatest gifts.** It's a potent and pleasurable mix of sight and sound and touch, taste and smell. Sex is fun and ridiculous, a source of much good humour. Wholesome sexual union is the physical expression of the lifelong covenant two people make in the presence of the church to each other and to God. In that context, sex is a form of holy play that's invigorating and deeply satisfying.

- **Sex is dangerous.** Many people get hurt badly because they misread sexual power. They engage in sexual activities that damage themselves and others. Like a beautiful, delicate flower, sex needs to be handled with care and appreciated for all the sacred qualities it holds. Sex is also dangerous because it's an act of knowing and being known, to use biblical terminology. Much of our lives and our sexual selves are lived in illusion, and we often prefer the illusion to truly looking at who we are and who our lover is. Sex provides a way to truthfully see ourselves and the other. Risky and rewarding.

- **Sex is communication.** Through sex, we communicate our love and enjoyment for the other. We communicate yearning and desire. We send and receive messages of passion, of giving of oneself, of comfort and fidelity. We also communicate with God, the source of our sexuality. I believe God creates

us as sexual beings so that we might understand our yearning for communion with each other as a parallel to the path of yearning for unity with God.

Blessings to all the brave adults who venture into "the talk" with the young people they cherish.

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

We also communicate with God, the source of our sexuality.

Hokkaido, Japan

Farming like Christ: Menno Village farms with Christian values

Raymond Epp and his wife Akiko Aratani are just trying to farm in a way that makes sense. At Menno Village, a community they're part of, they have learned the wisdom of traditional Japanese agriculture. For one, they make charcoal out of rice hulls. They also have experimented with spreading rice bran and cull soybeans in fields as a form of weed control.

It's not only how they plant and harvest their organic food that's attracted attention in Japan. It's how community, family and church became part of that process. Last November, the Sapporo Consumer's Cooperative awarded them a prize for their work to nurture local food systems. In the past three years, three award-winning Japanese documentaries have helped tell the Menno Village story.

In January, Epp, a member of Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb., and Aratani, a member of Yuai Mennonite Church, Sapporoshi, Japan, along with their four boys, joined Mennonite Mission Network (MMN) as mission associates.

What they do as farmers and Christians are connected.

"There are all kinds of possibilities for the church to be involved in witnessing to Christ in the midst of the political struggles over food, land and the ownership of life," Epp says. "It is around the table that we share food. Practising hospitality is a way to welcome the stranger."

Epp explains that the table around which Christians celebrate the Lord's Supper is significant spiritually, while reminding us that there is enough, but not too much, food for all. "We practise our faith before a watching world. We need to find ways to put flesh to the meaning of gospel," he says.

In 1994, the Epps spent the first summer of their marriage trying to farm in Henderson, where he had

grown up. But Aratani broke her leg in a farm accident that spring. She worked with a broken leg, but mounting medical bills and the challenges of trying to start a small organic farm bankrupted them.

The couple heard of a group of six families from Sapporo, Japan, who wanted to start Menno Village, a farm-based community with a different vision of economics and church. Excited about working with others on new visions for the economy and church, the couple asked to be included.

Menno Village culled pieces from the 4,000-year farming history of Japan. Less than 100 years ago, 70 percent of Japanese were farmers who lived within walking distance of their field. The farmers were called *hyakusho*, which literally means the growers of 100 things.

Epp believes that understanding how one is connected to place is central to working at societal problems. Modernization is about cutting people free from traditional beliefs and practices, but Epp says human beings are created by God to be social beings, discovering who they are in relating to one another in community.

At Menno Village, Epp and Aratani are public critics of technological change and are involved in public discussions on biotechnology and economic and agricultural policy. They are concerned about the impact on human freedom and the possibility of building community. Their public voice carries weight because they are living together in community and seeking to connect urban and rural while doing justice, stewarding the

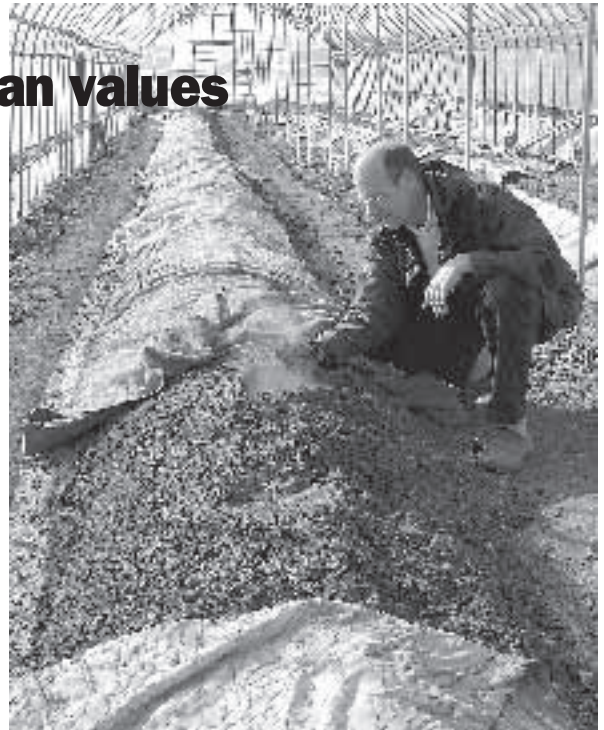


Photo by John F. Lapp

Ray Epp checks on the condition of fertilizer at Menno Village, Hokkaido, Japan.

land and protecting human health.

Restaurants love the potatoes that come from Menno Village. They sell food to about 80 families through a community-supported agriculture project. Epp calls the recipients of vegetables, eggs and rice, "Menno Village People."

Menno Village is helping reconnect urban and rural people by using food and conversation about how it's raised and transported, challenging those who believe that technology and biotechnology will save Japan's agriculture.

"We believe that through Jesus the world has already been saved. We need the faith or the audacity to believe that world into being," Epp says. "Likewise, urbanized people and young people, those who no longer have connections to their traditional communities, are longing to find ways to connect to other people and to place. Menno Village is such a place."

—MMN release by **Marshall V. King**



MCC Saskatchewan photo by Dorothy Bartel

Mandy Neminishen, a student at Bethany College in Hepburn, Sask., was one of four people to have her head shaved by Saskatoon hairstylist Gail Robinson to raise funds and awareness of Mennonite Central Committee projects supporting children orphaned by AIDS. The event raised more than \$6,000. In the weeks following her “dramatic” haircut, Neminishen found that her bald head was a great way to talk to others about AIDS and its impact on children. “God opened a lot of doors to speak to people about what I did, and why I did it,” she said.

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Kinshasa, Democratic Rep. of Congo

Street fighting in the capital: A personal account

Although the people of Democratic Republic of Congo had just provided the country with a new political structure and institutions following last year's elections, Jean Pierre Bemba, a former vice-president who lost the presidential election to Joseph Kabila, has been unwilling to accept his defeat.

Bemba was later elected national senator and decided to lead what he called a republican opposition. While the government and the United Nations called on all the military groups related to different rebel leaders to integrate into the national army, Bemba—with a significant number of soldiers in Kinshasa (the capital city) and elsewhere—asked the government to allow him to keep 500 men to assure his personal security. When the national government gave a deadline for all rebel military groups to be integrated into the regular army, Bemba refused to respect this

deadline.

Three days prior to the confrontation, Bemba delivered a provocative and at times discourteous speech, attacking the president, the prime minister and the chief of staff of the national army on his privately owned television channel.

It was against this background that on the morning of March 22, the head of the Congolese armed forces deployed troops that were already in position for a face-off with Bemba's military. At about 10:45 a.m. the first shots were fired in the middle of the commune of Gombe, located in the middle of Kinshasa and the location of many key institutions. No advance warning was given to the general population to leave the conflict zone.

I was about 20 metres from Mandela Square on the way to the central market when the conflict began. The fighting lasted two days and produced tragic results. Although the number of casualties is contested, it is agreed that there were well over 100 killed and 200 wounded.

Our Mennonite Central Committee colleague, Suzanne Lind, was trapped in her office for two days. When I reached her by telephone, she reported that she still had some water and that a neighbour had brought her an egg to eat. She was not able to return to her apartment from Gombe.

In Kinshasa, where so many people live from hand to mouth, it is essential that the average citizen is able to move around the city in order to find what is needed to survive.

Many among the population who saw Bemba's military as a public danger are satisfied to see it neutralized. While I do not believe that weapons are the best way to find solutions to problems, the lack of acceptance of defeat and lack of openness of the former vice-president was a real problem. Peace in Congo has been constructed at considerable cost by church and civil society workers, but the young democracy is once again threatened.

Our challenge is to continue the peacebuilding process in Congo, and to continue rebuilding our country. The



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Akron, Pa.

Changed beliefs: Veterans talk about their conversion to a way of peace

Through two short online videos, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) highlights the stories of U.S. military veterans sharing why they joined the military and why they subsequently became conscientious objectors.

"At mass, we would pray things like the Magnificat, about the raising up of the poor and the rich getting sent empty away. And I would take the body and blood of Christ into my mouth and then I would go back into the interrogation room and use that exact same mouth to interrogate poor people," says Joshua Casteel, who served as an army interrogator in Iraq.

The videos, entitled "Why We Joined"

and "How Our Beliefs About War Changed," are available at mcc.org/us/co. The veterans featured—Casteel, Mari Villaluna and Conrad Moore—were presenters at a conference that MCC U.S. sponsored on countering the lure of military recruiters late last year.

"The voices of veterans are some of the most effective peace education voices I know. We have those stories and I want to highlight them," says Titus Peachey, director of the MCC U.S. Peace Education Office.

Peachey has spent years offering his testimony of how he chose a path of peace, and lifting up the stories of others, including veterans, who chose that path. In that work, he's realized that youths who consider joining the military might find it tough to trust someone who has never considered military service an option. "But when they hear from somebody who's been in combat and who's had a change of heart, that has an integrity that rings true for young people," he says.

—MCC release by **Marla Pierson Lester**

institutional structures of the country have been put in place, but it will take time for them to fully take control. We will remain vigilant to protect what has been achieved at considerable cost.

I myself have given much energy and effort to building peace in Congo. We must not allow the destruction of these efforts through violence in a country where the population lives in abject misery.

—**Mukambu Ya’Namwisi Eric**

The author is coordinator of the Council for Peace and Reconciliation in Congo and a pastor in the Mennonite Church of Congo. Translation by Tim Lind, Mennonite World Conference church-to-church relations consultant.

Baghdad, Iraq

Displaced Iraqis receiving blankets and supplies

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is responding to the growing humanitarian needs in Iraq, where persistent violence and civil tensions are driving people from their homes.

About 500,000 Iraqis fled their homes for other areas inside the country last year and internal displacement is continuing at a rate of about 50,000 people per month, according to Rick Janzen, director of MCC programs in Iraq.

In response to the growing humanitarian needs, MCC is sending 4,200 relief kits, 11,000 newborn kits, 22,000 school kits and 16,000 blankets to be distributed by local humanitarian agencies working with vulnerable families in Baghdad and surrounding communities.

The first three containers were to leave in early March from MCC warehouses in Canada and the U.S. Four more containers will be sent within the next few months.

“Our supply of relief kits is very low,” says material resources manager David Martin, as a large number of relief kits were sent to Lebanon last

summer and the warehouse stock has not yet been replenished. “We are hoping to raise the needed kits for Iraq as soon as possible.”

MCC is also accepting cash contributions to create relief kits and to cover shipping and distribution costs totalling \$71,000. It costs about \$47 to assemble one relief kit and about \$4.70 to ship and distribute it.

Janzen says the recent movement of people involves residents of all religions and ethnicities; however, many are victims of civil strife between Shia and Sunni communities. “Before, people were living together in mixed areas; now they are moving to areas of the city where they congregate as ethnic and religious communities,” he explains.

This displacement of people amid the ongoing violence in Iraq presents an enormous humanitarian challenge and extreme hardship for the displaced, the host communities and local humanitarian aid agencies.

“These people need urgent assistance,” says Janzen, explaining MCC’s local partners are requesting assistance to help them respond to the needs of people who have lost their homes and sources of income.

The United Nations refugee agency reports the population movements in Iraq show no sign of abating. The agency estimates that the number of internally displaced Iraqis now totals more than 1.7 million and that up to 1.8 million people have fled to neighbouring states, including Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Iran.

Many of those outside the country fled over the past decade or more, but now some 2,000 a day are arriving in Syria and an estimated 1,000 a day in Jordan.

The UN agency also reports that many urban professionals have already fled. Doctors, teachers, computer technicians and other skilled people crucial to the country’s stability and well-being are leaving.

According to Janzen, Patriarch Zakka of the Syrian Orthodox Church reports that about 50 percent of Iraq’s small Christian community has already been displaced, both internally and outside the country.

—MCC release by **Gladys Terichow**

News brief

‘Jesus loves Osama’ but bishop denigrates Islam

Some Australian churches have triggered a debate among Christians and also invoked the criticism of the prime minister by declaring Jesus’ love for Osama Bin Laden in signs outside places of worship. The signs are an initiative of Outreach Media, an organization that provides posters for church billboards around Australia. Churches from several Protestant denominations have displayed the signs. Halfway around the world, though, a senior bishop in the Church of England (Anglican) has warned that Britain could return to a “kind of barbarism” if the decline of Christianity there continues. The Rev. Michael Nazir-Ali, originally from Karachi, Pakistan, described Islam as the biggest threat facing the West since communism in a newspaper interview, and called on British prime minister Tony Blair to stop being embarrassed to identify with the country’s Christian roots.

—From ENI releases



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A call to solidarity with Colombia

Dear sisters and brothers of Anabaptist churches of Canada:

We wish to greet you with the words of the Apostle Paul to the Roman Christians: *“First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because the whole world is hearing about your faith”* (Romans 1:8). Certainly the forgiving and reconciling witness of our Amish brothers and sisters in the tragic events that struck them has impacted the world, as they modelled an alternative way of responding to undeserved violence.

Paul goes on to say, “for I am a debtor....” We, too, recognize ourselves as debtors, for we have received very much from you—through your missionaries, your generosity and the Anabaptist tradition you hold to. We are also very grateful for the way your society has received thousands of Colombian refugees who have had to flee their country to save their lives. Your churches have welcomed them and helped them in this adjustment. For all these things, we thank you and bless you from the bottom of our hearts.

A person on a recent delegation from Canada and the U.S. visiting Colombia said, “We live with undeserved privilege.” He was recognizing that you folks in North America also are debtors. While your lifestyle has been enabled in part by your creativity, values and entrepreneurial skills, it has also been made possible by the power of your economy, transnational corporations and armies exercising influence around the world. But that lifestyle is harmful to those of us in other less privileged parts of the world. For the environment, for instance, it means that 25 percent of harmful emissions into the atmosphere come from 6 percent of the world’s North American population, which, in turn, brings drought and desertification. So you see, our lives are intertwined in many ways, some of which we wish they weren’t.

In regard to Colombia, there are two issues which should unsettle Canadian citizens and your churches:

- The unconditional support the Canadian government has demon-

strated in the dangerously flawed negotiation process of the Colombian government with paramilitary groups that have been responsible for untold horror in the last 20 years.

- The lack of federal legislation for Canadian multinational firms operating in the resource extraction industry—an industry that has been notorious for employing questionable techniques in land acquisition, including the use of paramilitary forces in the displacement of communities.

These two areas of policy are particularly alarming, given that Colombia is home to the world’s second-largest community of internally displaced persons, surpassed only by Sudan.

How can we work together for a better world for all of us?

- First of all, we ask you to join in the upcoming Days of Prayer and Action for Colombia on May 20 and 21, which are being convened by the Coalition for Peace in Colombia. Please pray for Colombia, for an end to the 60-year-old war here, and for the Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ churches here, so that our witness will be as clear and strong as yours has been.

- Please act by contacting your parliamentary rep-

resentatives, asking them to support bills that promote and enhance life here, and limit weapons and army intervention. We ask you to instruct the Mennonite Central Committee office in Ottawa—in the name of the Anabaptist churches they represent—to lobby in this manner and help the constituent voters to understand the issues at hand.

When elections come up, please vote against all candidates who support policies of warfare anywhere in the world, and back candidates who seek more just and reconciled relationships between countries around the world. After all, that’s what Micah 4:3 says that God desires.

- Please examine the effects your lifestyle have on the rest of the world and work for environmental well-being. Please be generous by considering forgiving the debts that are crushing the countries—and even the churches—of the Southern world.

- Lastly and most importantly, we encourage you to strengthen your local churches with the vision of calling men and women to follow Jesus, to grow together in Anabaptist communities of faith, and to transform the world around you to God’s intention.

Thank you for being with us through

Colombia communic

In preparation for the upcoming Days of Prayer and Action for Colombia on May 20 and 21, which are being convened by the Coalition for Peace in Colombia, Canadian Mennonite—over the next four pages—presents stories of suffering and hope in this South American country that is home to the second largest refugee population in the world. You will read stories and reflections from Mennonite Central Committee, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church and Eigenheim (Sask.) Mennonite Church. Coverage begins at the top of this page with a letter written by the leaders of the three Mennonite denominations in Colombia, as a wake-up call to the North American church. Ed.

these difficult times. We are sure that as God's people unite in seeking the will of the Prince of Peace, a better day for all the world's people will emerge, leading many of them to praise our Lord Jesus Christ for the wisdom, richness and generosity of his saving grace.

May God fill you with wisdom and strength for the necessary tasks God gives you.

—**Peter Stucky**, president, Iglesia Cristiana Menonita de Colombia

—**César García**, president, Iglesia Hermanos Menonitas de Colombia

—**Israel Arturo Orrego**, general secretary, Iglesia Hermandad en Cristo

Bogotá, Colombia

Documenting suffering and hope in Colombian churches

As a coordinator for a project documenting how a long-running armed conflict continues to impact Colombia's Protestant churches, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker Janna Hunter-Bowman spent hours poring through horrific details of deaths and threats, and exploring how Christians are boldly living out their faith in the midst of pervasive violence.

Now she hopes that Christians in the United States and Canada will take to heart the resulting human rights report (found at mcc.org/us/washington) and that it will move them to action.

"More than anything we hope readers of the report will allow themselves to be troubled and challenged by the testimonies provided and join the witness," Hunter-Bowman says. "We hope readers will share the suffering and the hope wherever they have the opportunity to speak..."

The resulting document, "A prophetic call:

Blood on our hands: A Colombian reflection

I have been envisioning a campaign where we connect our use of resources with their effect around the world. Imagine pumping gasoline and, when leaving the gas station, you notice an imprint of blood on your hands. Or purchasing gold, diamonds, plastics, clothing, Coca-Cola, flowers or bananas, and finding your bags emblazoned with red fingerprints and the question, "Do you have blood on your hands?" Would this visible sign keep us from abusing the world so we can live in excess?

This idea took life this Lenten season while I was reading Matthew 27:24: "When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. 'I am innocent of this man's blood,' he said. 'It is your responsibility'" (NRSV).

How often do I deny the bloody impact of my consumer choices? Driving to run errands saves me time while harming the environment and communities affected by the exploitation of petroleum. Cheap clothing fits my budget, my relatives enjoy flowers and my family eats bananas. When I am in North America, my distance from the struggle to protect lives, cultures and land facilitates my hand-washing.

But the communities that suffer cannot forget.

Is our excess worth it? What if we stopped driving everywhere we need to go? In Narino, Colombia, leaders spent

a year-and-a-half walking miles from community to community to start an organizing process. Today, they continue to walk to further strengthen their organization. In the mining zone of the South of Bolivar region, the federation of farmer-miners walks days through mountainous terrain to organize mining communities.

Why walk so far to organize? Because without organizational processes to help protect themselves, the coalition of multinational corporations, the Colombian government, the U.S. government, the Colombian army and paramilitaries will end their livelihoods and their lives. Potentially, despite great efforts to organize, the greediness of the global north will still lead to destruction.

Multinationals are eager for the gold in the mountains of the South of Bolivar and the land in the foothills in Narino, where African palm can be grown as a gasoline substitute. But the communities have a different vision for their land; they live on and cultivate the land so that its wealth of resources can be used without damaging the environment, communities or cultures. They are willing to walk mile upon mile for that vision.

Are we willing to respond with a similar commitment? Will we continue to abuse our power until the damage to the world's people is so great that there is no going back? Or will we choose a new path of solidarity that includes a commitment to deeply look at how we affect the global community?

—**Suzanna Collerd**

From a March 29 reflection on CPTnet.org.

Colombian Protestant churches document their suffering and their hope," is built from testimonies gathered by grassroots church members or leaders. The first report, released last fall, documents details of 29 assassinations of men, women and children linked to congregations, 84 cases of people forced to flee their homes, 21 civilian combat-related injuries, four arbitrary detentions and other human rights violations. It also chronicles how churches are living out their faith with hope and perseverance.

Hunter-Bowman, who works for Justapaz, a Colombian Mennonite

peace and justice organization in Bogotá, notes that while official government statements say the security situation in Colombia is dramatically improving, "church people in the regions are living something different. Through this report, they are telling us this much."

"Despite fear, Christians claim the gospel mandate of being good news, and sow seeds of peace," she says. "In the midst of the threats, forced displacements, forced recruitments, even where pastors' children are being forcibly recruited, people are continuing to live out their faith. And they're doing so in courageous and innovative ways."

—MCC release by **Marla Pierson Lester**



Ibagué, Colombia

From Eigenheim to Ibagué: Sister congregations embrace

Barb Wolfe of Rosthern, Sask., says, “I have always appreciated the hymn ‘For we are strangers no more.’ However, since we were able to visit these brothers and sisters, see them in their homes and worship with them, the hymn means so much more to me. Now we really are strangers no more.”

For 10 days in January, Wolfe, along with Allan and Maryvel Friesen, their son Mikhael, and Leanne Dueck—all from Eigenheim Mennonite Church near Rosthern, Sask.—visited their Colombian sister congregation in Ibagué.

While in Colombia, the delegation visited the Mennonite Centre in Bogotá before travelling the four hours to Ibagué, capital of the Department of Tolima. In Ibagué, the five Canadians were hosted by members of Ibagué Mennonite Church. Being a fact-find-



Photos courtesy of Allan Friesen

Eigenheim (Sask.) Mennonite Church delegates delivered a sermon and skit at Ibagué Mennonite Church in Colombia during a visit to their sister congregation earlier this year.

ing tour, they learned that Ibagué has become a city of refuge for rural people in the Tolima Department fleeing the violence of Colombia’s civil war.

The delegates especially appreciated the opportunity to visit displaced families in the neighbourhood of Modelia, where the Ibagué congregation has been ministering for two years. They learned that during this time a feeding program for school children in Modelia—which serves 80 children three times a week—has blossomed into a nascent church registered by the Colombian Mennonite Conference.

During their last days in Ibagué,

the five from Eigenheim took part in the first meal of the new school year and witnessed the inauguration of a piece of land where the Modelia community—known officially as Seeds of Hope Mennonite Community of

Modelia—dreams of eventually building a church and community centre. —**Ross W. Muir**, from a report by **Allan Friesen**

Colombia communiqué

Colombia fast facts

ECONOMY

Industry: textiles, food processing, oil, clothing and footwear

Agriculture: coffee, cut flowers, bananas, rice, forest products, shrimp

Exports: petroleum, coffee, coal, apparel, bananas, cut flowers

POPULATION: 46 million

CAPITAL: Bogotá—7.6 million

AREA: 1.14 million square kilometres

LANGUAGE: Spanish

RELIGION: Roman Catholic

CURRENCY: Colombian peso

LIFE EXPECTANCY: 71

GDP PER CAPITA: \$6,990

LITERACY: 93 percent

FLAG

Yellow represents the golden land of South America. Blue stands for the ocean separating the country from Spain. Red symbolizes the blood and courage of the people resisting the tyrants. Effective date: Nov. 26, 1861.



Delegates from Eigenheim (Sask.) Mennonite Church saw first-hand the benefits of a local feeding program for children from the Modelia neighbourhood, an initiative of Eigenheim’s Colombian sister congregation in Ibagué.

Madrid, Colombia

Two churches... two struggles... one vision

Dan Kehler, associate pastor at Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Kehler, his wife Crystal, and six other church members participated in a Mennonite Church Canada Learning Tour to Colombia in February that included a visit to Altona's sister congregation in Madrid.

There are many differences between our congregations, but there are similarities that draw us together in a bond so strong it overcomes the many social, economic, cultural and contextual barriers that challenge our relationship.

We both share a desire to be a part of the kingdom of God and a struggle to be a faithful witness in the communities where we are located. We believe that we are called to bring the light of the world, the bread of life and the love of Jesus to a hurting world. But that is where the similarities end.

It is ironic that both churches have undertaken a major renovation of the

building they occupy. When we arrived at the Madrid site, I was surprised that they were still in the middle of their project.

They had previously shared with us that they were in the process of adding a room for their Sunday school, but our idea of “in the process” was quite different. For us, “in the process” involved hiring a contractor, taking a loan and standing aside as the work was done by hired workers. For the Madrid congregation, “in the process” meant buying materials as money became available. It included the hard work of church members once they had accumulated enough material to begin.

When we arrived at the Madrid church, we were expecting to be billeted in the homes of members. However, we were offered the generous hospitality of the upper room over the new Sunday school.

Instead of being immediately grateful, I was uncomfortable with the tight quarters, a single bathroom and only a curtain for privacy. But as I thought about the situation, I was humbled that somewhere in Madrid eight people were sleeping on the floor that

night so that we could sleep in beds.

I was blessed as a pastor that evening. I learned more about my travel companions that evening than in eight years of congregational ministry. What are we missing in our congregation by insisting on our privacy and existing in large homes with much space to be individuals?

Our first meal together also proved to be a struggle. In their desire to host us well, our Madrid brothers and sisters served individual plates for lunch containing a hearty meal. For many of us, it was more food than we could eat. There was some tension after lunch when the plates were cleaned up and there was more than a full plate of food left.

That afternoon, I tried to do some damage control and ask that smaller portions be served for supper. As I struggled to communicate through the interpreter, I knew how much food was in our fridge back home and how much would eventually find its way to the garbage bin. We are surrounded by food and have so much that we think little of throwing food out when we have no need of it.

—Dan Kehler



Kehler

Alicia walks through her neighbourhood in Cazucá, an area on the outskirts of Colombia's capital, Bogotá. She is grateful for the programs of Mencoldes, a Colombian Mennonite relief and development agency and a Mennonite Central Committee partner. Mencoldes has helped her establish a small business and its youth programs have provided a safe haven for her daughter. Fears for her daughter's safety forced Alicia and her family to leave their home in La Palma and flee to this overcrowded, impoverished area on Bogotá's outskirts after one of the many armed groups operating in Colombia told Alicia she needed to give them Claudia Patricia, her then 10-year-old daughter. “We said no, and they gave us 72 hours to leave,” remembers Alicia, whose last name is not used because of safety concerns. As government forces, guerrillas and paramilitary groups are vying for territory and power in the long-running armed conflict, young boys and girls are often at risk of being forcibly recruited into armed groups. The conflict has forced more than 3.5 million people to flee their homes. There are some 12,000 children who are soldiers in the conflict. “I'm really grateful for Mencoldes,” Alicia says. “It's here I learned to laugh.... I still have many problems, but now I laugh and I can talk about things.”



MCC photo by Melissa Engle

Ottawa

MCC urges government to clear refugee backlog

Threats, intimidation, assassinations and massacres have forced about 3.5 million Colombians to flee their homes and relocate to other areas in the country. Many end up in Bogotá, where Mennonite churches and their agencies, in partnership with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), help families find temporary accommodations and provide other emergency assistance.

For some families, settling in Canada under Canada's private refugee sponsorship program is the only answer, says Ed Wiebe, coordinator of the national refugee program for MCC Canada. And although their lives are in danger and private sponsors in Canada are waiting for their arrival, most applicants face unacceptably long processing delays, with waits of two years being routine.

In a presentation to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration in February, Wiebe recommended the Canadian government make the backlog of 14,000 refugee sponsorship cases an immediate priority. He also recommended the government develop additional partnership agreements that recognize the strengths and experiences of churches, church agencies and other sponsoring groups who want to help protect refugees through resettlement to Canada.

MCC Canada, he said, is prepared to find more resources to respond to the desperate situation of refugees and internally displaced people in Colombia and in other countries. One example is the recent placement of an MCC service worker in Bogotá to as-



MCC photo by Melissa Engle

In playful motion, Karen Avendaña, left, Laura Claros and Dina Sosa put their hands together and grin as they lift them. This preschool, supported by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Global Family program, provides safe opportunities for recreation in a neighbourhood on the outskirts of Bogotá that is prone to poverty and violence. MCC also provides canned meat for preschool lunches, allowing the school to conserve its scarce resources for other needs.

sist Mennonite churches and organizations in Colombia with identifying and prioritizing applications that are submitted to the Canadian embassy for private sponsorship.

"However, any of our efforts are going to fail if visa offices continue to be inadequately resourced, if long processing times are not addressed," he said in his presentation. "How can increasing our work and resources overseas be successful in protecting more refugees when processing times are measured in years?"

Wiebe would also like to see the government reinstate a family reunification program. In the early 1990s the government cancelled the Assisted Relative Class, a program that made it possible for Canadians, especially new Canadians, to sponsor relatives who do not meet the criteria of other immigration programs or sponsorship programs.

—MCC release by **Gladys Terichow**

Colombia communiqué

Responding to the call of Colombia's churches

After reading the letter from the leaders of Colombia's Mennonite churches and stories about Colombia and the relationships between the country's believers and various North American Mennonite churches and organizations, here's how you can help:

- **Pray** for the victims, perpetrators and peacemakers in Colombia.
 - **Read** the report, "A prophetic call: Colombian Protestant churches document their suffering and their hope," at mcc.org/us/washington. Also, visit the Justapaz website at justapaz.org.
 - **Share** the stories of suffering and hope in your community and beyond.
 - **Advocate.** Speak to government officials on behalf of those brave souls who, despite the risk of death, continue to give life to seeds of peace.
 - **Participate** in the Days of Prayer and Action for peace in Colombia, May 20 to 21, an invitation from Colombian churches to their North American sisters and brothers.
- MCC release

Photo by Jen Berg



More than 530 people came to Olivet Church in March to attend the open house and dedicatory worship service. On the wall of the sanctuary is a cross constructed of beams recovered from the former church that burned more than two years ago.

Abbotsford, B.C.

Olivet Church dedicates new building

After two years and two fires, once again a church stands along Langdon Street in Abbotsford.

At an opening celebration on March 25, Olivet Church welcomed fellow Mennonite Church B.C. members, former members and adherents, local tradespeople and the wider community to view its recently completed church building. More than 530 attended the afternoon open house and worship service.

The previous building had been razed following an accidental fire in December 2004 that gutted the sanctuary, followed by a smaller arson fire several months later. Construction of the new facility began in May 2006 and was completed earlier this year. The congregation held its first worship service there Feb. 11 after meeting in the Columbia Bible College chapel for two years.

The new building was completed under budget and ahead of schedule. It is designed to be multi-purpose, with the auditorium doubling as a gymnasium, and has level entry access to accommodate seniors and those with limited mobility. Connecting old with new, crosses made from beams from the original building hang inside the front foyer and on the wall of the auditorium.

Four former Olivet pastors were present for the celebration, joining current pastors Randy Thompson and Stacey O'Neill to help dedicate the new facility and ask God's blessing on

it. Special greetings were given by pastor Siegbert Zukowski of Clearbrook Mennonite Church, parent congregation of the original Olivet Mennonite Mission Church in 1960.

Recognizing the former pastors' service, Thompson acknowledged past difficulties the church had experienced and said they wanted to make the new facility a place of new beginnings. "We wanted to focus on the Lord, to tell the

Lord thank you and give glory to him," he said later. "The building is just a tool."

Despite their initial feelings of loss and devastation, many Olivet members have expressed joy and gratitude in how their congregation has bonded together following the fire and in the subsequent building process.

"It has been a fabulous experience," said building committee member Debi Block. "In rebuilding, there was a lot of healing. God was the leader of this whole project."

—**Amy Dueckman**



Springfield Heights Mennonite Church in Winnipeg just completed a soap drive for Mennonite Central Committee. The collection was organized as a contest between those under 40 years old and those over 40. In all, 4,000 bars of soap (450 kilograms worth) were collected, with the younger group—pictured in part—winning by 27 bars (with a little help from some compassionate seniors)!

Photo by Kyle Penner

Kitchener, Ont.

New day dawns for mutual aid

Directors of the Mennonite Aid Union Management Association (MAUMA) voted to end its 140-year history last month. Formerly known as Mennonite Aid Union, the organization has been slowly folding itself into the Mennonite Aid Exchange (MAX) over the past few years. Many mutual aid societies have done this in Canada and the U.S. as the needs of their members have changed, and now the process is complete for MAUMA.

Fred Redekop, pastor of Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church, noted that the romantic view of mutual aid is still the barn-raising—a community gathering together to rebuild after a disaster. But today mutual aid is often expressed through the provision of liability insurance for businesses, farms, homes and churches, many of which contain electronics and other high-priced commodities.

Art Driedger, a MAUMA director originally from Leamington, Ont., and now of Winnipeg, expressed a common thought when asked how this event felt. “It’s staying a mutual aid association,” he noted succinctly.

MAX president David Wine shared in his report that 81 percent of MAX users still identify the organization as a provider of cheap insurance, but that isn’t all it does. Telling the story of a woman who could not be covered for insurance because of a faultily installed wood stove, he noted that while an insurance company would have refused to cover her, MAX found volunteers from her church and community to fix the problem and then covered her.

Nelson Scheifele, vice-president of MAX Canada, told story after story of connecting people in loss situations with their pastors or other caregivers as part of MAX’s Burden Bearing ministries. The goal of MAX is wholeness for individuals and communities, he stressed.

Mutual aid organizations have been



Photo by Dave Rogalsky

Mennonite Aid Union Management Association directors voted to fold the organization into Mennonite Aid Exchange (MAX) last month, ending a 140-year legacy.

much more a part of the Brethren in Christ, Swiss and Amish branches of Mennonites in Canada. On the other hand, funeral societies were the only organized mutual aid that many of the Russian Mennonite directors of MAUMA could remember.

But MAUMA members were excited to be part of this new venture of mutual aid that has spread across Canada with agents and “responders”—people designated to look after

more than insurance needs in a loss situation—in virtually every province. The MAX Share Fund has also been established to help in situations where insurance does not cover the financial costs of a loss.

As the meeting wrapped up, reminiscing took over from business, and grief mixed with hope as members looked from the past to the future of mutual aid.

—**Dave Rogalsky**

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a SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE
(February 27 - March 8)

MEXICO (February 29 - March 9)

EXPERIENCE SOUTH AMERICA (March 28 - April 11)

TULIP TIME CRUISE in HOLLAND and BELGIUM (April 5-13)

MOSCOW and SIBERIA (May 24 - June 4)

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ENGLAND, SCOTLAND and WALES (June 25 - July 7)

EUROPEAN HERITAGE (July 7-22)

CHINA and a YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (October 8-21)

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People&Events

Goshen to become 'climate neutral'

Goshen, Ind.—Goshen College plans to sharply reduce, and eventually eliminate, all of the college's global warming emissions and is supporting more research and educational efforts to help stabilize the Earth's climate. President James E. Brenneman made that pledge on behalf of Goshen College by becoming a charter signatory to the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment. In doing so, Brenneman joined with leaders of 175 other higher education institutions that also have agreed to neutralize greenhouse gas emissions—the point at which carbon dioxide emissions are offset by the use of renewable sources of energy and the oxygen released from trees and other plants on campus. "We are very concerned about life on this planet," Brenneman said. "This is one more way we can heal and care for the world." In addition

tion to many current efforts to conserve resources and reduce pollution, Brenneman said Goshen College is establishing an Ecological Stewardship Committee to ensure the college meets the goals of the climate commitment.

—**Goshen College release**

Transitions

Births/Adoptions

Hortness—Gaelan Xavier Thiessen (b. March 26, 2007), to Sheridan Hortness and Erin Thiessen, Ottawa Mennonite.
Kennel—Parker Laine (b. Feb. 14, 2007), to Adam and Meghan Kennel, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.
Klassen—Alex Joshua (b. Jan. 2, 2007), to Wilfried and Renate (Pries) Klassen, Steinbach Mennonite, Man.
Patkau—Brooke Dylan (b. March 26, 2007), to Robyn Patkau and Tori Rozon, Hanley Mennonite, Sask.
Sutherland—Quinn Carl (b. Feb. 19, 2007), to Brent Sutherland and Chantelle Zehr, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Marriages

Adey-Martens—Vera Adey and Jacob Martens, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., March 2, 2007.
Boschmann-Penner—Vicky Boschmann and Alf Penner, Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, March 10, 2007.
Friesen-Kresta—Sandra Friesen and Gerald Kresta, Toronto United Mennonite, Dec. 29, 2006.

Deaths

Bender—Beatrice, 86 (b. Feb. 21, 1921, d. April 3, 2007), Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.
Braden—Jim, 84 (d. March 28, 2007), Toronto United Mennonite.
Dykstra-Koop—Susan, 84 (d. Sept. 20, 2006), Toronto United Mennonite.
Dyck—Helen, 84 (b. Dec. 1, 1922, d. Jan. 31, 2007), Grace Mennonite, St. Catharines, Ont.
Dyck—Helen, 92 (b. April 2, 1915, d. April 4, 2007), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.
Ens—Frank, 83 (d. March 29, 2007), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.
Friesen—Alice (nee Friesen),

90 (b. July 5, 1916, d. April 1, 2007), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.
Friesen—Mary (nee Peters), 86 (b. April 24, 1920, d. April 10, 2007), Steinbach Mennonite, Man.
Friesen—William (Bill), 48 (d. March 7, 2007), Warman Mennonite, Sask.
Hamm—Vera, 96 (d. March 19, 2007), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.
Horst—Hilda, 84 (b. March 11, 1923, d. April 1, 2007), Wilmot Mennonite, Ont.
Horst—Amon, 86 (b. Sept. 24, 1920, d. April 13, 2007), Wilmot Mennonite, Ont.
Lovejoy—Rayleen, 55 (d. March 25, 2007), Toronto United Mennonite.
Veitch—Bertha, 84 (b. March 17, 1923, d. April 3, 2007), Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.
Wiens—Jacob J., 94 (b. Sept. 5, 1912, d. Jan. 14, 2007), Steinbach Mennonite, Man.

Baptisms

Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver—Daniel Goertzen, Lisa Guptell, Riad Klassen, Gabriella Schmidt, Michael Schmidt, Feb. 18.

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.

Advertising Dates

Issue	Copy Due
May 28	May 15 (Focus on Seniors)
June 11	May 29
June 25	June 12 (Focus on Children's Books)

Contact:
Karen Suderman,
Advertising Representative
1-800 316-4052 x224
advert@candianmennonite.org

CMU photo by John Longhurst



Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) emeriti faculty were honoured at a reception on Feb. 22, and several former Mennonite Brethren Bible College (MBBC)/Concord, Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) and CMU faculty were added to the list of CMU's emeriti faculty. Pictured from left to right, front row: David Schroeder, CMBC; John Regehr, MBBC/Concord; Henry Poettker, CMBC; Waldemar Janzen, CMBC; Peter Fast, CMBC; and George Wiebe, CMBC/CMU; and back row: Bernie Neufeld, CMBC; John Martens, MBBC/Concord and CMU; George Shillington, MBBC/Concord and CMU; Abe Dueck, MBBC/Concord; John Friesen, CMBC and CMU; Gerry Ediger, MBBC/Concord and CMU; John Neufeld, CMBC; and Gerald Gerbrandt, CMU president. Missing: Esther Wiens, MBBC/Concord; Bill Baerg, MBBC/Concord and CMU; Irmgard Baerg, MBBC/Concord and CMU; Sig Polle, MBBC/Concord and CMBC; and Esther Wiebe, CMBC and CMU. Also honoured was the late Isaac Block.

Mennonite Church Canada

Prayer requests

Please pray for:

- The Allison-Jones family, Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers in Botswana, who are concerned about the political and economic situation in Zimbabwe. There are a great number of people who are leaving Zimbabwe to seek refuge in neighbouring countries.

- Samson Lo, director of Multicultural Ministry, Mennonite Church Canada Witness, as he continues to travel and connect with congregations and leaders whose cultures are newer to the Mennonite Church.

- Mennonite Church Canada, as its planners, hosts and volunteers prepare for the MC Canada Children's Assembly in Abbotsford (July 3 to 6).

Pray that this will be an enriching experience for the children, and that there will be an abundance of volunteers with an abundance of energy.

- Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker Glenn Witmer and the MennoJerusalem biblical study and travel program taking place until May 19 in Israel, Palestine and Jordan.

—**Hinke Loewen-Rudgers**

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

No division of word and deed

The poster read, "Pastor Steve Drudge..., speaker at evangelistic meetings in Mabamba, Kenya," and showed good likenesses of Drudge as well as a Christian Church International (CCI) pastor and two evangelists from the same church.

Drudge was part of an 18-member team from Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, which included seven youths.

The trip's goals included Drudge's preaching and the team's singing and testimonies at street evangelistic meetings, assistance in a building project for the Africa Christian Mission International and a trip to Masai Mara Game Park near Thika, west of the Rift Valley. But Drudge says that learning about Christians and the church in a different culture were the most important goals.

CCI, founded by Bishop Henry Mulandi in 1980, has more than 300 congregations in Kenya, Uganda and Sudan. CCI is Anabaptist, although from a Canadian viewpoint it looks charismatic, as do most African churches. Drudge had the opportunity to teach Anabaptist history at the building project. The first floor of the training centre/meeting room/office building is in use while the second is being finished and the third is just begun.

"There's no division between ministry of word and deed," says Drudge. "Evangelism, prayer, orphan ministry, feeding people, planting churches, HIV/AIDS education, and theological/pastoral education are all part of their work." Drudge also notes that they make little differentiation between vision and reality. The orphan ministry takes place on a site where only the footings for a building are begun. "If God has called them to do something, then God will supply the means," he says.

Drudge was impressed by the graciousness of the Kenyan people. They are soft-spoken, respectful and generous. Although many of them will never be able to afford going to the game park themselves, they were excited for the Canadians to go and experience it and the Masai village nearby.

(Watch for a story about the trip by youth participant Christina Steinmann in an upcoming issue. Ed.)

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Area church job vacancies

Mennonite Church Manitoba is looking to fill two full-time positions: director of Leadership Ministries and associate director of Congregational Ministries. The latter is a newly created position accountable to the director of Leadership Ministries.

"We went through a fairly extensive process of looking at, and prioritizing, certain responsibilities," says Edgar Rempel, executive director. "All of the congregational ministries that had been part of Education Ministries have now been given over to Leadership Ministries. This will leave Education Ministries with responsibility for camping ministry only."

"In our prioritizing it seemed that many of the congregational ministries had a stronger affinity to, and overlapped with, the work that Leadership Ministries does," says Rempel.

The new associate director of Congregational Ministries will assume responsibility for developing and nurturing youth and young adult pastoral leaders, and for providing resources for youth and young adult workers, and congregations in nurturing other areas of leadership and ministry.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

New executive director at Bethany

Bethany Seniors Housing, run by Saskatoon Mennonite Care Services Inc., has hired a new executive director.

Teresa Isaac has worked with the Saskatoon Health Region in management, and lives in Saskatoon. She replaces the present director,

David Ratzlaff, who will retire at the end of the year after five years in his position.

Although his replacement begins in April, Ratzlaff will stay on to oversee construction of the new addition for assisted living quarters and to supervise repairs to an existing building.

Residents of the housing complex were invited to meet the new director on April 2 in the fellowship centre, a large room used for many gatherings at Bethany Manor.

Mennonite Church Alberta

Tofield happenings

The finishing work is finally done and Tofield Mennonite Church is able to use its new sanctuary.

A dedication service is planned for 2 p.m. on May 27. All are welcome to join the congregation in praising God and dedicating this new worship space. A lunch will follow the service. For more information, contact pastor Bob Crosland at 780-662-3166.

The 20 people from Tofield—including a member of Tofield Mennonite Church—who were on the Greek cruise ship, the Sea Diamond, when it sank in the Mediterranean on April 5, safely returned to Tofield on April 9. The group was part of a high school travel group. All luggage—except for what passengers were holding when they were evacuated—was lost. "In a small community, this affects everyone," says Irene Crosland, the wife of the pastor. "There has been a wide range of response to it."

**Mennonite Church
British Columbia**
**Pastoral retreat looks
at the 'other side'**

The spring pastor-spouse retreat, scheduled for May 28 to 30 at Cedar Spring in Sumas, Wash., will have the theme, "The other side."

The focus for this time will be on pastoral life from the viewpoint of the pastoral spouse. Several MC B.C. spouses will share vignettes about how family life and church balance out—or not!

To register, contact the MC B.C. office at 604-859-6658 or e-mail admin@mcbc.ca.

**Easter baptism
for Japanese senior**

A year ago, Shigeko Aoki, 82, knew very little about the Christian faith. A Christian from Surrey Mennonite Church befriended her and invited her to worship services. One day she heard God speaking to her, "Go to church!" She came, and has been coming faithfully for over a year.

At first, she was sceptical of the Bible and Christ. Then God told her, "Go to Sunday school!" And she came. Gradually her eyes and heart were opened as she studied the Bible with Christians in the adult class. How the church rejoiced when the day came

that she confessed faith in Christ and in his death on the cross for her!

Resurrection joy bubbled over when Aoki shared her testimony at her baptism on Easter Sunday. Again and again she told of her love for the Lord and for each one attending this small church. She brought four friends along, one of whom had never been to a Christian church before.

Surrey Mennonite Church,



Aoki

which has all its meetings in Japanese, rejoices with the angels in heaven that another senior has found the Lord!

Aoki is experiencing Christ's words in John 5:11: "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."

—**Mary Derksen**

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

SVEN ERIKSSON

From our leaders

Article 15 of the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* states, "The church calls, trains and appoints gifted men and women to a variety of leadership ministries on its behalf. These may include such offices as pastor, deacon and elder, as well as evangelists, missionaries, teachers, conference ministers and overseers."

In keeping with our *Confession of Faith*, Mennonite Church Canada has policies that affirm women for all levels of pastoral leadership. But how welcoming are we to gifted women who are either exploring or pursuing a call to ministry? Are we practising what we preach?

The 2005-06 Women in Ministry Survey by Pamela Nath of Bluffton University has addressed these questions concerning the practices of both Mennonite Church USA and MC Canada. This survey followed up on the findings in Renee Sauder's Women in Ministry Survey in 1992.

As we check our history, we see that the number of women in ministry has increased over recent decades. At present, 26 percent (92) of the pastors listed in the current Mennonite Church Canada directory are women. This represents an impressive improvement since 1986, when the Conference of Mennonites in Canada reported 16 women in pastoral ministry.

In keeping with this positive trend, the recent Women in Ministry Survey reported some good news:

- Over the last 14 years, the report of pastoral satisfaction among women in ministry has gone from 59 percent to 82 percent.
- It is just as easy for women to find second pastoral

placements as for men. This contrasted with the perception registered among these women that it will take longer for them to find a second placement than their male counterparts.

- There are clearly fewer roadblocks to women in ministry in 2005-06 than in 1992.

But roadblocks there still are. Here are some not so encouraging findings:

- When asked, "What do you see as the three major challenges facing women in ministry today," 64 percent of the women surveyed cited "structural or attitudinal gender inequalities faced by women."

- Attitude indicators of the male pastors participating in the survey showed that 25 percent held "neutral" or "very negative" attitudes towards women in pastoral ministry.

- One in four male pastors surveyed indicated that knowing the lead pastor was a woman would make a potential associate pastoral role either "somewhat" or "significantly" less attractive.

How can we further live out our *Confession of Faith* when it comes to women in ministry?

- We need to recognize that we continue to have a gap between confession and practice, and move to fix it.
- Church leaders on every level need to offer leadership in modelling the affirmation of pastoral leaders on the basis of gifting rather than gender.
- Search committees need to offer leadership by presenting women candidates to congregations on the basis of their ministry-giftedness.

Sven Eriksson is Mennonite Church Canada's denominational minister.

Practising what we preach

**We need to recognize
that we continue to
have a gap between
confession and practice,
and move to fix it.**

Reunion planned for Schneider family

Kitchener, Ont.—To celebrate the 200 years since Joseph and Barbara (Eby) Schneider came to Ontario, descendants are invited to a reunion on June 30 at First Mennonite Church and the Schneider Haus Museum. The Schneider home, built in 1820 and one of the oldest buildings in Kitchener, is now a museum.



Peter Etril Snyder has done a special painting for the 200th anniversary celebrations.

The Schneider (Snyder/Snyder) children married into the Shantz, Martin, Shoemaker, Weber and Wideman families, among many others.

Information about the reunion can be found at timetocomehome.ca or by calling reunion committee chair Vern Sherk at 519-893-3075. The ezraeb.com website is a good place to search out a family connection.

—Barb Draper

Conference seeking scholarly papers

Winnipeg—Since 1967, Mennonites, Church of the Brethren, Brethren in Christ, Baptists, Pentecostals and others favouring “adult” or “believer’s” baptism have met 15 times for the purpose of exploring the distinctives of a Believers Church perspective and preserving and enlivening the Believers Church heritage. In 2008, the Institute for Theology and the Church of Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) is sponsoring and planning the next conference, June 11 to 14, at CMU.

The conference theme is “Congregationalism, denominationalism, and the body of Christ.” At this time the planning committee invites proposals for papers. Proposals that fall within the broad scope of the conference theme are welcome from a variety of disciplines within theological studies, the social sciences and the humanities. The theme implies that both congregationalism and denominationalism pose temptations for Believers Churches as they seek to be the faithful body of Christ.

Proposals should be about 200 words in length and should be sent to conference coordinator Helmut Harder at hharder@cmu.ca. Deadline for submissions is Sept. 1.

—CMU release

Mobile meat canner turns 60 this year

Syracuse, Ind.—On Aug. 11 and 12, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is inviting anyone who has ever participated in its meat canning efforts in any way to come to Syracuse’s Oakwood Retreat and Conference Center to celebrate 60 years of work “in the name of Christ.”

MCC’s mobile meat canner first went on the road in the fall of 1946. Today, canning crews travel from October through April, canning in 34 sites in 13 U.S. states and two Canadian provinces. Over the last six years, a joint effort of onsite volunteers and canners has resulted in nearly three million cans of meat for people in need around the world.

For more information about the reunion, visit mcc.org/canning or e-mail canning coordinator Tim Friesen at tf@mcc.org. An online registration form will be available by April 25. The event will be preceded by a two-day workshop for current canning committee members.

—MCC release

Calendar

British Columbia

May 26: MCC World Relief Fair at Black Creek community hall on Vancouver Island.

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

July 3-6: MC Canada annual assembly, at MEI, Abbotsford.

July 13-15: First Mennonite Church, Kelowna, 60th anniversary celebrations. For more information, call Ann Wiebe at 250-763-4638 or e-mail hawiebe@shaw.ca.

July 14-21: “Connecting People and Place,” an MCC camping tour on Vancouver Island. For more information, contact Darryl Klassen at abneighbours@mccbc.com or Jon Nofziger at peace@mccbc.com.

Alberta

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

May 12: Spring work day at Camp Valaqua.

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

May 27: Tofield Mennonite Church sanctuary dedication, 2 p.m. Lunch to follow. For more information, call Bob Crosland at 780-662-3166.

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

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 an-

nual 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

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. Theme: “Eastern Christianity.”

May 26: Prairie Falcon Motorcycle Rally. MCC fundraiser for Appleby Drive Kids Club.

June 9: MC Saskatchewan special delegate session for Person to Person; 2 p.m.

June 15-16: MCC Relief Sale at Prairieland Park, Saskatoon.

June 22-23: RJC musical.

June 23: Canadian Foodgrains Bank sale in Hague/Osler.

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

May 6: Open house at the three Camps with Meaning; 2 to 4 p.m.

May 6: Open Circle art show at CMU, in the Great Hall; 2

to 5 p.m. The show features visual and performing arts by current and former inmates.

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 18-20: Homesteading retreat at Camp Assiniboia.

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: MCC fetal alcohol spectrum disorder program Fundraiser Feast for the Senses at McIvor MB Church, Winnipeg; 7 p.m. For more information, call 204-783-0897.

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

May 28-31: MCC is screening *The Great Granny Revolution* and talking about its Global Family program: Park Theatre, Winnipeg (28); Winkler (30); Steinbach (31).

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

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

Ontario

May 5: DaCapo Chamber Choir presents "Daybreak: Sounds of a New Day," at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener; 8 p.m.

May 6: Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir and Alumni Choir presents "Joyful Celebration," a 40th anniversary concert, at St. Matthews Lutheran Church, Kitchener; 3 p.m.

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 8-31: MC Eastern Canada Generosity Project meetings: K-W Perimeter cluster at Wanner Mennonite (8); Wilmot cluster at Living Water Mennonite (9); Essex cluster at Faith Mennonite (10); Markham cluster at Hagerman Mennonite (15); Stratford cluster at Tavistock Mennonite (16); Niagara cluster at The First Mennonite (22); Wellesley cluster at Crosshill Mennonite (23); K-W cluster at Waterloo North Mennonite (29); GTA south cluster at Danforth Mennonite (30); Woolwich Grey cluster at Community Mennonite, Drayton (31).

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 12: Niagara United Mennonite Church Springfest, Niagara-on-the-Lake; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Silent auction, barbecue, home-baked goods, live entertainment, children's activities.

May 14-15: Seniors spring retreat at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp. Resource people: Hugo and Doreen Neufeld. For more information, call 519-625-8602 or e-mail info@hiddenacres.ca.

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 24: MEDA Waterloo chapter breakfast meeting, at the Stone Crock, St. Jacobs; 7:30 a.m. Speaker: Wally Regier of Wally's Mowers.

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.

May 26: Open the Circle peace and justice coffeehouse, at First Unitarian Church, Hamilton; 7:30 p.m. Proceeds support Student Open Circles (studentopencircles.com).

May 30: MC Eastern Canada retired and retirement age pastors and spouses retreat at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp; 9:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Theme: "Life is a gift." Bring a bag lunch.

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. .

June 12: Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp annual

chicken barbecue and pie auction to support building project; 5:30 to 8 p.m. To reserve a ticket, call 519-625-8602.

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

Subscriber services Mennonite

How to subscribe:

- Individuals who attend churches that are part of Mennonite Church Canada or one of its five area churches can subscribe through our Every Home Plan (paid for by your church giving and CM's own fundraising). Please contact your church office to be added to the list.
- Personal subscriptions are also available to anyone. A one-year subscription (24 issues) is \$36.00 plus \$2.16 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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- Subscription changes are not considered Transitions notices (these go to transitions@canadianmennonite.org).
- Changes will be made immediately but may take four to six weeks to take effect because of printing schedules.

Contact information:

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

Employment opportunities

Goshen College seeks a three-quarter time **Assistant Campus Minister** to begin in August 2007. For more information and to apply, visit the specific position announcement on the Goshen College web page: <http://www.goshen.edu/employment/>.

Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church
Abbotsford, British Columbia

... is seeking a half-time **Youth Worker**. This person will serve in a leadership team under the direction of the lead pastor. The successful candidate will have appropriate 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: Summer 2007
Application Deadline: May 31, 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

Director of Care

Mennonite Nursing Homes Inc. in Rosthern, Sask., is inviting applications for a permanent full-time Director of Care.

The Mennonite Nursing Home is a 68-bed, level 3 & 4 long-term care facility with 32 attached assisted living units. The mission of the Home is dedicated to provide the best emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual care for its residents within a secure stimulating Christian atmosphere, regardless of ethnic, religious or national backgrounds, caring for the whole person.

Qualifications:

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

Please forward resume in confidence by May 15, 2007, to:

Mennonite Nursing Homes Inc.
Box 370
Rosthern, SK
S0K 3R0
Attention: Board of Directors Committee
or e-mail:
joan.lemauviel@saskatoonhealthregion.ca



Full- and Part-Time Teaching Positions

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate is seeking to fill full- and part-time teaching positions in Grade 9-12 Mathematics, English, Biology/Chemistry and French for the 2007-08 school year.

Interested applicants should forward questions and resumes to:

Terry Schellenberg, Principal
principal@rockway.on.ca
Fax 519-743-5935
Phone 519-743-5209
110 Doon Road
Kitchener, ON N2G 3C8



Rosthern Junior College invites applications for the following positions:

- **Teachers** with training and experience in Chemistry, Physics, Art, Mennonite History, Phys Ed, Agriculture (two positions available: 1 full-time, 1 part-time)
- **Women's Residence Dean** (full-time)

Information about RJC is available on our website at www.rjc.sk.ca.

Qualified applicants should forward resumes to:

Principal
Rosthern Junior College
410 – 6th Avenue
Rosthern, SK
S0K 3R0
Phone: 306-232-4222
Fax: 306-232- 5250
E-mail: administration@rjc.sk.ca



Mennonite Central Committee Ontario invites applications for the position of

Poverty Advocate
Toronto, Ontario

The position requires a person with a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and non-violent peacemaking.

This person requires strong communication skills with knowledge of issues of marginalization and poverty as they are impacted by government policies. In consultation with MCCO staff, this person will advocate to the Ontario provincial government primarily on issues around housing, living wage, and social assistance, along with poverty issues related to the justice system.

This half-time salaried position is available June 1, 2007.
Application deadline: May 15th.

Complete job description available on MCC's website at www.mcc.org. To apply, send cover letter and resume, or for more information, contact Cath Woolner, 50 Kent Ave., Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1, call 519-745-8458 or e-mail cathw@mennonitecc.on.ca.

Full-time Lead Pastor

Sterling Mennonite Fellowship is located in the south end of Winnipeg. We are a congregation of 139 members. The ministry of our congregation is characterized by family programs and missions. The successful candidate will profess an Anabaptist Mennonite faith and be gifted in preaching, teaching and relate well to all ages, as well as work with our ministry teams to provide spiritual leadership to the congregation. We are a member of Mennonite Church Manitoba and MC Canada, and follow MC Canada salary guidelines. Please apply to:

Pastoral Search Committee, c/o Corinne Friesen Loewen
1046 Dorchester Ave.
Winnipeg, MB, R3M 0S2
E-mail rcfloewen@shaw.ca

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.



CMU has openings for the following three positions:

- **Hosting Coordinator**
- **Assistant Host**
- **Custodian**

If you are interested in these employment opportunities, and are committed to the church and the mission of CMU, contact Susan Warkentin, Director of Human Resources, at swarkentin@cmu.ca or 204.487.3300, or visit www.cmu.ca for more information.

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).

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E-mail: editor@canadianmennonite.org



Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary seeks volunteers willing to work one or two weeks between July 30 and Aug. 17 to assist in moving into the seminary's new library. Work will include cleaning, setting up and/or moving shelving and materials. Lodging will be provided; breakfasts and lunches on weekdays will be provided. For more information or to indicate interest, contact Sharon Baker, AMBS volunteer coordinator; sbaker@ambs.edu; 574.296.6234.

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Santa Cruz, Bolivia

Changing a neighbourhood—one page at a time

By a display of children's books two boys lean over a chessboard, pondering their next moves. Nearby, six-year-old Hugo Gatica picks through a book of puzzles, completing one and moving on to the next. Librarian Eva Baspineiro keeps an eye out, working to balance children's appetites for games with doses of picture books or stories.

This community library, a busy but peaceful haven, overflows from the front room of a modest home on an unpaved street in an area of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, that is called Plan 3000. An underdeveloped neighbourhood that has no city sewer services, it is home to people working low-paying jobs, often only earning enough to cover their needs for the next day. Some families resort to sending their children out to sell gum or other items in the busy streets to help make ends meet.

Five years ago, a group of university students from Plan 3000—passionate about doing something to better their community—established this library, dreaming they could both inspire students to learn more and offer the books children need to do well in school.

They collected newspapers and gathered their old school books. One member's family gave over a front room of their home for students to read and study, and then another half-room to store books.

This community library is one of 41 that Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has supported over the past 20 years. MCC workers typically visit libraries nearly every week for a library's first three years and continue to provide information afterward. MCC matches funds raised by local communities to help provide books, atlases or dictionaries.

The library in Plan 3000 can be spotted from a distance—its front yard is an oasis of green next to a sandy dirt road strewn with torn

plastic bags. Founding member Abel Almendras carefully tends its welcome mat of grass. Plants thrive in the borders alongside shrubs cut into the shapes of cones and ovals.

But the new growth he and other library leaders treasure is inside.

Mistica Ortiz, a fourth grader who



MCC photo by Melissa Engle

Einar Aguilar Chavez, 13, reads a book in the Santa Cruz library. Community libraries are a valuable resource for Bolivian families that can't afford to buy the books their children need for classes or school projects.

had long struggled with reading, sits at a desk immersed in a story, relishing the twists and turns of the plot.

"I like to read. All kids like to read stories," the nine-year-old says confidently, brightening as she talks about such favourites as *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Three Little Pigs*.

"This library is really good for the neighbourhood," says Eva Avendaño, Mistica's mother. She is glad that her older children had a chance to come here, too, despite the fact that they now have to spend their after-school hours selling items downtown.

Poverty is only one dynamic in this neighborhood. Fourteen-year-old Carmelo Rocha, who comes to the library nearly every day, does not have

a parent at home. His mother left for Spain three years ago and his father a year later, for economic reasons. His uncle is his legal guardian and his older sister runs the household.

Carmelo learned to play chess at the library. He comes in to play with puzzles and memory games, and to search for books he's been assigned at school.

"It's a good space for me to do my homework. It's quiet. I can concentrate," he says, thumbing through atlases of animals.

Hugo has been in the library almost the entire time it has been open on this day and now it is past closing time. Baspineiro gently dislodges him from the puzzle. "They don't want to leave," the librarian says of many of the children.

It is a sign of success, but Almendras—whose parents sold land and scrimped to send him and his sisters to university, and who now works in the governor's office—is dreaming bigger. The 32-year-old delights in showing students that they, too, can succeed. "In the future," he says, "the library is going to be an agent of social change."

In a way, it already is.

Here, Mistica, a year shy of joining her sisters selling items in Santa Cruz's busy streets, loses herself in a story. Sometimes Carmelo, whether through books or the help of Baspineiro, untangles a problem he couldn't figure out in school.

And as Almendras stops by after work, helping students polish their chess moves or teaching them how to nurture his cherished plants, he sets the stage for new growth: a blooming of young lives that can take root, changing the neighbourhood one person—one page—at a time.

—**Marla Pierson Lester**

The article originally appeared in a longer format in the Jan./Feb. 2007 issue of A Common Place, MCC's magazine.

Theology, Spirituality



Blessed are the Pacifists: The Beatitudes and Just War Theory. Thomas Trzyna. Herald Press, 2006, 136 pages. This book examines the beatitudes and just war theory in light of recent conflicts and attitudes toward warfare.

Brotherly Faithfulness by Jakob Hutter, *Love is Like Fire* by Peter Riedemann, and *Brotherly Community: The Highest Command of Love* by Andreas Ehrenpreis and Claus Felbinger.

Pandora Press has reprinted these writings by early Hutterite leaders as part of the Anabaptist Texts in Translation series.

Caspar Schwenckfeld: Eight Writings on Christian Beliefs. Translated by H. H. Drake Williams III. Pandora Press, 2006, 200 pages.

A radical reformer from the 16th century reflects on Christian faith.

Confessions of Faith in the Anabaptist Tradition, 1527-1660. Karl Koop, ed. Pandora Press and Herald Press, 2006, 366 pages.

Part of the Classics of the Radical Reformation series, this is a collection of early Anabaptist confessions of faith. Each of these confessions comes with an introduction.

Consider Jesus. Donald R. Jacobs. Herald Press, 2006, 376 pages.

These daily reflections, based on the book of Hebrews, cover a one-year period.

Embodying the Way of Jesus:

SPRING LISTING OF

books & resources

Anabaptist Convictions for the Twenty-First Century. Ted Grimsrud. Wipf & Stock Publishers, Eugene, Ore., 2007, 254 pages.

Grimsrud, a professor at Eastern Mennonite University, explores what it means to be a Mennonite in today's world. He writes from a theological perspective.

Encountering the Eternal One: A Guide for Mennonite Churches. Gerke van Hiele. Pandora Press, 2006, 120 pages.

Dutch Mennonite leaders published this book in 2001 to help churches lead discussions about the meaning of membership. This English translation could be used for faith exploration classes, as it provides a confession of faith using a different vocabulary.

Grief and Sexuality: Life After Losing a Spouse. Rachel Nafziger Hartzler. Herald Press, 2006, 240 pages.

While studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, the author researched widows and widowers. This book includes her own experiences of grief as well responses from her research.

Living Today With an Eye for Eternity: Studies in 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus. Raymond O. Bytstrom, Kindred Productions, 2007, 306 pages.

This Bible commentary is part of the Luminaire series.

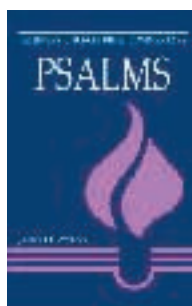
Martyrdom in an Ecumenical Perspective: A Mennonite-Catholic Dialogue. Peter Erb, ed. Pandora Press, 2007, 210 pages.

Mennonites and Catholics explore the implications of historical martyrdom for ecumeni-

cal dialogue in the present.

Politics Under God. John H. Redekop. Herald Press, 2007, 224 pages.

In tackling the question of whether Christians should get involved in politics, Redekop affirms government as an institution established by God, and suggests it is an appropriate area of Christian service.



Psalms. James H. Waltner. Herald Press, 2006, 835 pages.

This volume of the Believers Church Bible Commentary series provides an in-depth look at each of the Psalms.

Stewardship for All? Bedru Hussein and Lynn Miller. Good Books, 2006, 105 pages.

Published in cooperation with Mennonite World Conference, this is the 2006 selection for the Anabaptist-Mennonite Shelf of Literature. Hussein, from Ethiopia, and Miller, from the U.S., reflect on the meaning of stewardship. It includes 25 discussion questions.



The Time of Our Lives: Journeying With the Bible. Veronica Zundel. Bible Reading Fellowship, Oxford, England, 2006, 304 pages.

Zundel, a columnist and member of Wood Green Mennonite Church in London, England, reflects on various Bible passages and issues from everyday life.

The Vice of Curiosity: An Essay on Intellectual Appetite. Paul J. Griffiths. CMU Press, 2006, 96 pages.

In the 2005 J. J. Thiessen Lectures given at Canadian Mennonite University, the author explores the modern attitude towards knowledge and what it means to be a Christian post-secondary institution.



Wrestling with the Text: Young Adult Perspectives on Scripture. Keith Graber Miller and Melinda E. Berry, eds. Cascadia Publishing and Herald Press, 2007, 192 pages.

A variety of young people explore their personal experience with the Bible.

History and Biography

Anabaptist Songs in African Hearts, Global Mennonite History Series: Africa. John A. Lapp and C. Arnold Snyder, eds. Good Books and Pandora Press, 2006, 268 pages.

This overview of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Africa was first published in 2003 under the title, *A Global Mennonite History, Volume One: Africa*. The writers are African church leaders.

Continued on page 34

Spring From page 33



Colonial Germantown Mennonites. Leonard Gross and Jan Gleysteen. Cascadia Publishing and Herald Press, 2007, 80 pages.

This little book with many full-colour photos provides a brief history and guided tour of Germantown, Pa.

Crossing Frontiers. Helmut Lemke. Self-published, 2006, German edition 2004, 186 pages. Available at hblemke@shaw.ca.

Lemke describes growing up Mennonite in Nazi Germany, serving in the German army and searching for his mother in Russian-occupied Germany.

The Danzig Mennonite Church: Its Origins and History from 1569-1919. H. G. Mannhardt, translated by Victor G. Doerksen. Pandora Press, 2007, 286 pages.

Mannhardt's history bridges the gap from 16th century Anabaptists to the Mennonite communities in Russia.

Design of my Journey. Hans Kasdorf, Kindred Productions, 2006, 360 pages.

This autobiography describes Kasdorf's journey from Russia to Brazil to North America.

Hope is Our Deliverance. Alexander Rempel and Amalie Enns. Privately published, 2005, 321 pages. Available

at the Mennonite Heritage Centre or the Bookshop at Pandora Press.

Alexander Rempel promised his father, Jakob A. Rempel, that the story of his torture and imprisonment in Stalin's Russia would not be forgotten. The book chronicles the life of this Mennonite leader and his family.

Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Churches of New York City. Richard MacMaster. Pandora Press, 2006, 366 pages.

There are many Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in New York City today as a result of mission outreach. MacMaster describes the trials as well as the successes.

Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia: Volume I. Helmut Huebert, Kindred Productions, 2006, 456 pages.

This volume gives an in-depth look at eight cities providing maps, pictures and lists of Mennonites who lived there.

None But Saints. James Urry. Pandora Press, 2007, 370 pages.

Urry's study of the first century of Mennonite settlement in Russia has been corrected and re-issued with a new introduction.



Nurturing Spirit Through Song: The Life of Mary Oyer. Rebecca Slough and Shirley Sprunger King, eds. Cascadia Publishing, Institute of

Mennonite Studies and Herald Press, 2007, 272 pages.

This collection of stories about, and writings by, Mary Oyer highlights the significant role she played in teaching music and in sustaining the choral music tradition in the Mennonite Church.

Peter Riedemann: Shaper of the Hutterite Tradition. Werner O. Packull. Pandora Press, 2007, 252 pages.

This biographical account of Riedemann's life provides an analysis of his literary legacy.



Searching for Sacred Ground: The Journey of Chief Lawrence Hart, Mennonite. Raylene Hinz-Penner. Cascadia Publishing and Herald Press, 2007, 205 pages.

Lawrence Hart is a peace chief of the Cheyenne First Nation and a Mennonite pastor. His story is published in cooperation with Bluffton University and the Mennonite Historical Society.

Sheer Survival: From Brazil to Kyrgyzstan. Erica Jantzen. Privately published, 2007, 321 pages. Available at jantzen@golden.net.

Born in Brazil, Jantzen traces her life in Germany and then in Canada after World War II. She has travelled to many places, including Kyrgyzstan, where her parents originated.

Stories: How Mennonites Came to Be. John D. Roth. Herald

Press, 2006, 246 pages.

Roth, a professor of history at Goshen College, presents a concise and easy-to-read history of the Christian Church and the Mennonite Church. This overview includes Mennonites around the world today.

Whatever You Did for One... You Did For Me: Reflections of Forty Years of Service. George Epp, ed. M2/W2 Association, Abbotsford, B.C., 2006, 193 pages.

This collection of stories, written by volunteers, provides insight into this prison visitation ministry.

Windows to a Village: Life Studies of Yarrow Pioneers. R. Martens, M. Jantzen and H. Neufeldt. Pandora Press, 2007, 444 pages.

These biographies are from the early years of the Yarrow community.

Literature

Half in the Sun: Anthology of Mennonite Writing. Elsie K. Neufeld, ed., Ronsdale Press, Vancouver, B.C., 2006, 254 pages.

This collection of work from 25 B.C. writers includes fiction, poetry and non-fiction.

Many Are the Voices of Home. Ilse Schreiber, translated by Sarah Dyck. Privately published, 2006, 360 pages. Available at 514-141 Father David Bauer Dr., Waterloo, ON, N2L 6N9.

This historical novel, set in rural Saskatchewan in the 1930s, describes the struggles of Mennonite refugees from Russia. The story was originally written in German in 1949.

The Sewing Room. Carla Funk. Turnstone Press, 2006, 111 pages.

Funk's third collection of

The Bookshop at PANDORA PRESS

We attempt to stock all books written by Mennonites as well as books by Mennonite publishers:

Pandora Press, Cascadia Publishing House, Good Books, Herald Press, and Faith & Life.

poetry explores issues of childhood, family and faith. The author teaches writing at the University of Victoria, B.C.

Other Books

The Five Languages of Apology: How to Experience Healing in All Your Relationships. Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas. Northfield Publishing, Chicago, 2006, 280 pages.

The authors describe five elements of an apology and how apologies are vital to good relationships.

Internet Protect Your Kids. Stephen Arterburn and Roger Marsh. Thomas Nelson, Nashville, Tenn., 2007, 173 pages.

This book provides lots of information about how young people use the Internet and where the dangers lie.



Me, Myself, & Bob: A True Story About Dreams, God, and Talking Vegetables. Phil Vischer. Nelson Books, Nashville, Tenn., 2006, 260 pages.

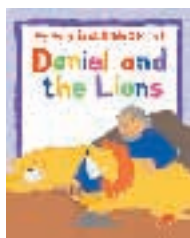
The creator of *VeggieTales* tells his personal story of the success and ultimate failure of Big Idea Productions, the corporation that began *Veggie-Tales*.

Children's Books

Baby Bible. Sarah Toulim; Kristina Stephenson, illustra-

tor. Good Books, 2007, 160 pages.

Twenty Bible stories are told simply, with large illustrations.



Daniel and the Lions; Jesus and His Friends; Jonah and the Whale; The Good Samaritan. Lois Rock; Alex Ayliffe, illustrator. Good Books, 2007.

These little board books of Bible stories are from the picture book, *My Very First Bible Stories*.

I'm Not Going Out There. Paul Bright; Ben Cort, illustrator. Good Books, 2006.

A read-aloud picture book with a rhyming story about something scary.

Sidney & Norman, A Tale of Two Pigs. Phil Vischer; illustrated by Justin Gerard. Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, Tenn., 2006.

This illustrated tale of two pigs reminds children—and adults—that God's love and acceptance do not depend on performance.

Resources

Creative Craft Corner. Sadie Stobbe, Kindred Productions, 2006.

This book of low-cost crafts is designed for camp and club leaders.

Cultivating Peace: Courage, Conscience and Resistance to War. MCC Ontario, 2006.

This Peace Sunday packet

explores Canadian Anabaptist opposition to war.

Everybody Wants to Change the World: Practical Ideas for Social Justice. Tony Campolo and Gordon Aeschliman. Regal Books, Ventura, Calif., 2006, 224 pages.

The 10 chapters of this book provide concrete suggestions for promoting peace and justice. A discussion guide is included.

The Little Book of "Cool Tools for Hot Topics": Group Tools to Facilitate Meetings When Things are Hot. Ron Kraybill and Evelyn Wright. Good Books, 2006, 80 pages.

From the Little Books of Justice and Peacemaking series, this booklet provides how-to suggestions for group decision-making.

Mission Focus: Annual Review, Vol. 14 (2006). Walter Sawatsky, ed. Mission Studies Center at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology, Vol. 8, No. 1, Spring 2007: Reconciling. Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Canadian Mennonite University.

DVD Resources

Bug Rangers: Submarine Sandwich. Wacky World Studios, 2007.

The roaches learn about obedience in this 40-minute children's DVD based on the story of Jonah.

Child's View Series. MCC, 2006.

MCC now offers this series of 12 videos on DVD, appropriate for children in Kindergarten to Grade 6. The segments give children a glimpse of life in another country.

The Hands and Feet of Jesus: Mennonite Disaster Service. MDS, 2006.

This 15-minute DVD outlines 50 years of MDS work, including rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina.

Power of Trading Fairly. Ten Thousand Villages, 2006.

This 17-minute DVD gives a brief overview of TTV's 60 years of work in fair trade. Grade 9 to adult.

Remembering Russia 1914 to 1927. MCC/Otto Klassen Productions, 2006.

This 43-minute DVD recounts the suffering of Mennonites in Russia in the 1920s. Grade 9 to adult.

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Kindred Productions
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kindred@mbconf.ca

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FOCUS

Books & Resources

History of prison ministry recounted

Whatever You Did For One... You Did For Me: Reflections from Forty Years of Service. George Epp, compiler, and Dave Roels, photographer. Abbotsford, B.C.: M2/W2 Association—Restorative Christian Ministries, 2006.

To celebrate its 40th anniversary, the M2/W2 Association compiled a book of stories and pictures that illustrate its mandate: “I was in prison and you came to visit me” (Matthew 25:34).

George Epp tracked down stories from many volunteers, board members, former and present staff, a parole officer, a chaplain and leaders of parent mentorship programs. David Roels’ portrait photography enhances the book.

The book begins with a brief history. In 1966, Dick Simmons, who had established a fledgling work among prisoners in the U.S., came to New Westminster, B.C., to find ministers who would spearhead this prison visitation program. From the beginning, M2/W2 was interdenominational, as Simmons met with a Pentecostal, a Presbyterian and a Mennonite. It was also a place where “evangelism and social action were brought together for both the spiritual and temporal sides of life.”

Initially, gaining entry into prisons and establishing credibility were hurdles. In 1966, two prisons received volunteer visitors. By 1990, more than 500 volunteers were

welcomed in 25 prisons. In 1974, W2, a ministry to women prisoners, was begun.

John Friesen, community resources coordinator from 1976-98, recruited volunteers and raised funds for the program. “I have learned to appreciate God’s overriding concern for reconciliation,” he writes. “I might think that I had all my theological ducks in order, but if I failed to treat others in a just and caring manner, I missed the essence of what Jesus was all about.” He writes of true justice being based on reconciliation, restoration and transformation, rather than punishment and revenge.

Funds for the program still come from faith communities, some government grants, fundraising dinners and the proceeds of the Hidden Treasures Thrift Store in downtown Abbotsford, B.C.

Many of the volunteers write of learning to be a listener or a Good Samaritan, people who love their neighbours as themselves, befriending those who have lost family, friends and all trust in others. Sometimes mentors were able to help prisoners make the transition to the outside world upon release, where they continued their friendships. Others saw their friends become repeat offenders, but still loved them unconditionally and with sacrificial concern.

“Does Jesus not love us unconditionally?” asks volunteer Hilda Barg. “Are we not called to do the same?”

Many tell of how loving those in prison has changed their lives.

“Cultural opposites can relate if even a modicum of respect and care is present,” says Wayne Northey, currently on staff with M2/W2.

“Faith, hope and love, these three remain, but the greatest of these is love,” writes one volunteer, while another adds, “Divine love always has, and always will, meet every human need.”

Reading these stories may well inspire others to become involved with “the least of these” through M2/W2.

To order copies of *Whatever You Did For One... You Did For Me*, e-mail info@m2w2.com.

—Helen Rose Pauls



Changing Lenses now available in six languages

A Brazilian request to translate Howard Zehr’s seminal book, *Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice*, into Portuguese, will bring the title to six language editions. Used in college and university classes as a foundational text for the study of restorative justice, other language editions had been published in Japanese, Ukrainian, Arabic, Russian and Korean.

Nearly two decades after *Changing Lenses* first appeared, restorative justice is well established internationally as a movement and as a field of study and practice.

Changing Lenses was first published in 1990, and a third edition was published in 2005 with a new afterword by the author. Zehr, of Harrisonburg, Va., is a writer and consultant on criminal justice issues. He is co-director of the Conflict Transformation Program and a professor of restorative justice at Eastern Mennonite University.

Publisher Herald Press—a division of Mennonite Publishing Network—is planning to release a related title this fall, entitled *Changing Paradigms: Punishment and Restorative Discipline*, by Paul Redekop of Winnipeg.

Mennonite Publishing Network is the publishing ministry of Mennonite Church Canada and MC USA.

—MPN/MC Canada joint release

Swartley reveals how peace went missing in New Testament scholarship

Covenant of Peace: The Missing Peace in New Testament Theology and Ethics. Willard M. Swartley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006, 542 pages.

It was my good fortune to spend a little time with Willard Swartley, Mennonite New Testament theologian, at the June, 2006 Colloquium on Violence and Religion in Ottawa. Although he has written and edited more than 20 books during his career as professor (now emeritus) at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., this surely is his magnum opus.

The author informs us that this book has been “brewing for [20] years” and that the focus is “to show how we are to seek peace, the motivations that guide such actions, and what ‘habits of the heart’ or practices lead to peacemaking.”

He asks how it is that major volumes on New Testament or Pauline theology have only one or two references to peace: “Put simply, why have peace and peacemaking been topically marginalized in the [New Testament] academic guild?”

Appendix I analyzes 25 major works of theology over the last half-century and finds that peace is neglected or missing in almost all. That deficiency extends to major works in missiology as well.

Swartley laments Christians who promote peace from general notions of justice and fairness, and not from Scripture. He also wonders at Christians who stress biblical authority “and then put peace and peacemaking on discount, regarding it secondary, perhaps even unimportant, to the evangelistic mission of the church.”

While historical Jesus studies do emphasize the peace of Jesus, Swartley wonders at the gap between such research and ethics and theology studies. Studies of the historical Jesus tend to view New Testament writings through the postmodernist lens, seeing them as texts of power.

Swartley convincingly points out that the “way” of Jesus was hardly one of power,

but rather one of persecution and death. He draws on studies that show a vital relationship between the early church selection of the New Testament canon and martyrdom—hardly the way of power posited by postmodernists.

Swartley quotes Richard Hays at length, commenting, “I affirm Hays’ non-violence manifesto and call for the complement of positive peacemaking teaching and action as revealed to us by [New Testament] Scripture.”

I once asked George F.R. Ellis, cosmologist and winner of the 2004 Templeton Prize for Progress Toward Research or Discoveries about Spiritual Realities, why Christians through the ages so rarely lived out this dominant New Testament “covenant of peace.” He replied quietly, “I guess it’s just too difficult.”

Swartley’s book is an outstanding clarion call to embrace the unthinkable—peace

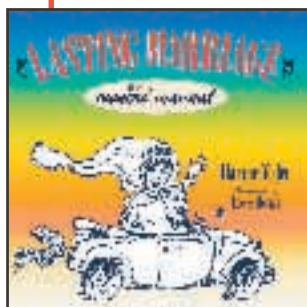
for this world, and living a life of peace, knowing that “with God all things are possible.” One can scarcely imagine the revolutionary impact of a worldwide shift in the church towards the New Testament vision for peace and peacemaking.

—Wayne Northey

The writer is co-director of M2W2 Association—Restorative Christian Ministries in B.C.

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Lasting Marriage: The Owner's Manual

By Harvey Yoder. Lee Eshleman, illustrator.

Lasting Marriage is based on the premise that relationships need the same kind of care and maintenance we give any other valued possession, such as a motor vehicle. While we naturally assume our cars will require more, not less, care as they age, we have often not applied that same reasoning to marriage. Yoder looks at pre-

marital preparation, relationship maintenance, and sustaining a healthy marriage during the child-rearing years.

Paper, 160 pages, \$14.99

Politics Under God

Author **John H. Redekop** will be appearing on 100 Huntley Street on May 23 to discuss *Politics Under God*.

“A good addition to the bookshelves.”—*Chuck Colson*

Paper, 224 pages, \$14.99

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Top-down aid schemes miss the mark

The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good. William Easterly. Penguin, 2006, 436 pages.

This book is sure to warm the hearts of “development entrepreneurs,” but annoy bureaucrats addicted to charity-based programs.

William Easterly, professor of economics at New York University and a senior fellow at the Center for Global Development, has blistering words on the tragedy of foreign aid—so little to show for the \$2.3 trillion spent in the last 50 years.

How is it possible that all this money cannot get 12-cent medicines to children to prevent half of all malaria deaths? How is it possible that all this spending cannot get \$4 insecticide-treated mosquito nets to poor families?

Meanwhile, he notes, British and North American retailers had no trouble moving nine million copies of the sixth Harry Potter book on a single day in 2005.

What was the difference? According to Easterly, it came down to planning. Grand top-down schemes miss the mark because they indulge in too much planning.

He divides the world into two groups—traditional Planners with noble schemes, and Searchers who seek nimble smaller-scale alternatives. Foreign aid, he says, has been dominated by Planners, whose programs are in his view largely ineffective. “Poor people die not only because of the world’s indifference to their poverty, but also because of ineffective efforts by those who do care,” he writes.

Searchers, meanwhile, who bear a striking resemblance to businesspeople, are not afraid to commercialize an item to

speed its distribution. “Searchers have better incentives and better results,” Easterly writes. “When a high willingness to pay for a thing coincides with low costs for that thing, Searchers will find a way to get it to the customer.”

Not only that, but Searchers have a built-in accountability mechanism called market feedback, something lacking in aid agencies who live in “accountability-free zones.”

In foreign aid, writes Easterly, “Planners announce good intentions but don’t motivate anyone to carry them out; Search-



ers find things that work and get some reward.... Planners determine what to supply; Searchers find out what is in demand. Planners apply global blueprints; Searchers adapt to local conditions. Planners at the top lack knowledge of the bottom; Searchers find out what the reality is at the bottom. Planners never hear whether the planned got what it needed; Searchers find out if the customer is satisfied.”

The current structure of foreign aid cannot achieve the end of poverty, Easterly insists. “Only home-grown development based on the dynamism of individuals and firms in free markets can do that.”

Some will accuse Easterly of being too hard on current aid and too enthusiastic about the free market—and they may be right. Nonetheless, it is refreshing to see some sustained attention given to the potential role that a business model can play in reducing worldwide suffering.

—Wally Kroeker

The reviewer is editor of the Mennonite Economic Development Associates magazine, The Marketplace. Reprinted with permission from the Jan./Feb. 2007 issue of The Marketplace.

Charismatic young adults seek out ‘upside down’ theology

Almost three decades after its release in 1978, Donald B. Kraybill’s *The Upside-Down Kingdom* continues to influence a new generation of Christians in unusual places.

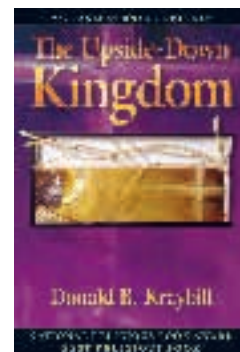
Kris Miller, who works in young adult ministries at the national office of Vineyard USA, in Sugar Land, Tex., gives leadership to a group of about 60 young adults studying the book at his local Vineyard congregation. In talking with Kraybill, Miller noted that the Vineyard’s young adults are asking for some exemplary practices of churches that are actively participating in “upside-down kingdom” ministry today.

The Vineyard Movement is probably best known for the early ‘90s charismatic “Toronto Blessing” period and the leadership of founder John Wimber. As the movement spread across North America, Miller noted that “a narrow-yet-expanding theology of the kingdom of God, accenting the charismatic dimension...is waking up to further social and ecological dimensions of kingdom theology.”

Miller, a doctoral student, told Kraybill that his research led him to “the intersection of ethics and spirituality,” including *The Upside Down Kingdom*, “and for that I am grateful.”

The Upside Down Kingdom was published by Herald Press in 1978, and has travelled around the world in six language editions.

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Natasha Bogaya, William Harder and Adrien Leis play xylophones donated by the Kuhl Foundation of Winkler, Man., to the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) Community School of Music and the Arts. The joyful noise made by the xylophones, cymbals, drums and wood-blocks is music to the ears of Arlene Kroecker, who directs the school. "Their [Kuhl's] contribution enabled us to provide quality instruments for our Music for Kids program," she says.

CMU photo by John Loughurst

Kitchener, Ont.

On March 24, a diverse group comprised mostly of Salvadorians gathered at First Mennonite Church to commemorate the 27th anniversary of the 1980 assassination of Roman Catholic Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero in El Salvador.

Organized by the Salvadorian Canadian community of Waterloo Region, the ecumenical celebration included leaders from Iglesia San Lorenzo de Toronto (Anglicans), Iglesia Luterana de Niagara Falls, the Hispanic ministry of First Mennonite, and, although not in an official way, local Salvadorian Catholics.

Music and messages reaffirmed a vision of communal solidarity, a legacy from Romero's life. A visiting leader from La Iglesia Luterana Popular del Salvador brought testimony of some of the fruit of seeds planted by the life and example of Romero in the lives of his people.

The program included the reading of biblical passages, music, poems and special prayers. A highlight was

the celebration of the Eucharist using traditional Central American *tortillas*, instead of bread, as a way of reaffirming the profound sense of identity Romero had with his people during the last years of his ministry.

The last part of the celebration event included a fundraising meal to sponsor the activities of the Salvadorian association.

The Hispanic group from First Mennonite, which still has strong leadership from the Salvadorian community, considered it an honour to host this ecumenical celebration.

—**Noé Gonzalía**

The author is pastor of the Hispanic congregation at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Romero remembered by Salvadorian community



The folk group “NODICE” (No to Discrimination, Injustice, Cruelty, Evil), comprising children from Iglesia San Esteban in Hamilton, Ont., performed at the 27th anniversary service commemorating the assassination of Roman Catholic Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero in El Salvador in 1980. The anniversary service was hosted by First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont., on March 24.