

CANADIAN Mennonite

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Look outward as well as inward

At least once a year, many of our churches send delegates to their area church meetings and to the national church assembly. There they learn, discuss, discern and decide what these bodies should do on behalf of the people in the whole church—us.

However, looking back, I'm concerned about the inward focus of the issues that have dominated discernment and decision-making time over the last number of years. (I'll just look at the national level here, but this has been true at the area church level as well.)

Our next national assembly is in Abbotsford in July. The last time the national church met in B.C., in 2001, the focus was on understanding and approving the huge structural changes involved in merging two Mennonite denominations and then dividing again along national lines to create Mennonite Church Canada and MC USA.

The following year included an important two-day agriculture and food conference, "Making peace with the land." Unfortunately, delegates were also faced with a financial crisis that year at Mennonite Publishing House—our church's book publisher—and a revised national church budget revealing a \$450,000 budgeting error.

In 2003, church finances were again the biggest issue, after more problems in the national church financial plan were found, requiring significant lay-offs and other spending cuts to many areas.

In 2004, delegates considered, among other items, what umbrella church organizations Mennonite Church Canada should join, whether the denomination should adopt one foundational Scripture verse, the role of the national church and how often assemblies should happen.

Delegates approved a Faith and Life Committee in 2005, established a national church Identity and Purpose Statement, set direction on whether churches could be members of their area church but not the national church, and worked on general priority areas for the national church.

Last year, delegates selected a foundational verse of I Corinthians 3:11, voted to allow congregations to have area church membership only (thus going back to closer to how membership used to work in pre-Mennonite Church Canada days), and voted on bylaw changes. It was only in the last hour or so of the last session that a new resolution came forward from the floor, asking the church to push again for a way to redirect taxes away from military use.

When a new church comes into being, there's much organizational work that just needs to get done. Moreover, delegate sessions also include worship, Biblical teaching, fellowship and service, all vital to overall church health.

However, the major focus of the delegate decision-making portion of assemblies has been internal structural issues for several years now. As necessary as this might be at times, it also saps energy away from our calling to proclaim and engage the world with the reconciling gospel of Jesus Christ, and to equip our local congregations for stronger ministry. There's so much God is calling us to do!

I am excited and glad about what's coming this July. While there will still be some work remaining around area church only membership, there will also be new topics on the table, particularly speaking out for peace to our government, caring for our physical world, and encouraging participation by youths and young adults in the church. I'm glad to anticipate this. It's time to turn the corner on re-organization and look outward again.

—Tim Miller Dyck

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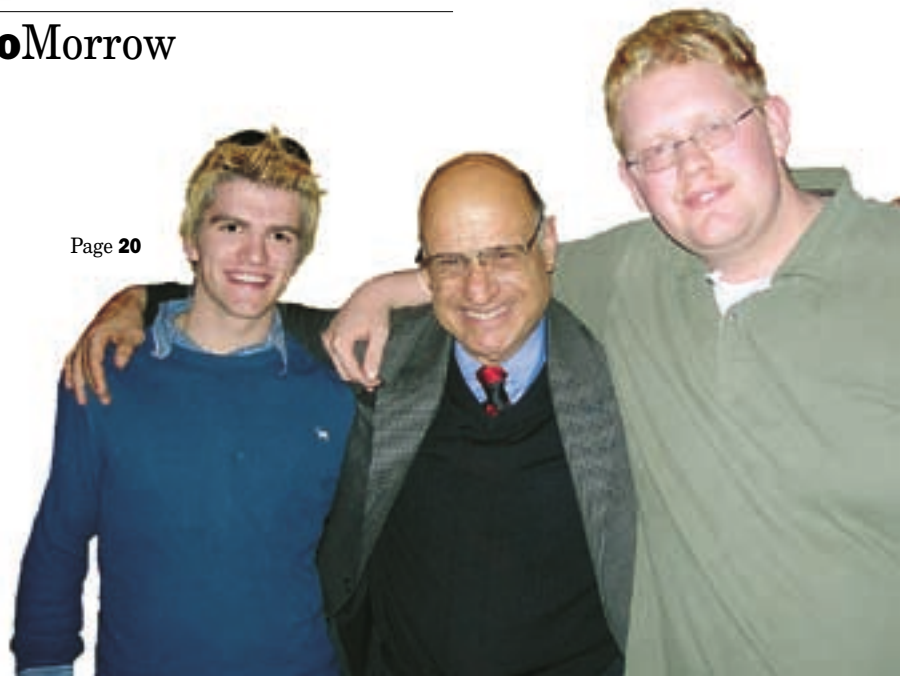
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Cover: Aaron Dawson, a member of Emmanuel Mennonite youth group, holds a handful of ash-coated pennies recovered from a fire in Barriere, B.C., and donated to Mennonite Central Committee for health kits. —MCC photo by Anna-Marie Janzen

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Winnipeg

Neil Young, gardening and faith: A conversation with Dave Bergen

There are few things that give Dave Bergen more pleasure than digging his fingers into the freshly tilled soil of his gardens after a long winter.

This expression of nurturing and coaxing new life out of recently thawed ground is an annual pilgrimage for Bergen, executive secretary of Formation ministries for Mennonite Church Canada. But his work of overseeing a national ministry described as “fostering faith in homes and congregations” frequently needs more than one agricultural season to take root. “Much of my work is intangible and progress is hard to measure,” he admits.

Originally on a career track in the sciences or engineering, Bergen discovered something refreshing as a young adult at Elim Bible Institute in Altona, Man. “Bible school is one of the strongest expressions of church as a nurturing supportive community that I’ve encountered,” he says. Subsequent experiences at Canadian Mennonite Bible College (now Canadian Mennonite University), a directorship at a church camp, and studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., significantly shaped his faith journey.

As a pastor for 18 years, Bergen says he found energy in “working along with people to create life-giving and redemptive experiences within their church and faith communities.” A strong believer in helping people contextualize their spiritual instincts, he often sees intersections in the spiritual desires of people and popular culture.

To some people, seeing a movie (*Heart of Gold*) about the popular musician Neil Young would have nothing to do with church work. “For me, that kind of thing makes all kinds of connections,” he counters. “Wherever



Photo by Dan Dyck

“Is Neil Young actually a Christian? Is he writing from a Christian perspective? Perhaps the question we should ask is, ‘Is the love of God getting through to him somehow?’” says Dave Bergen as he reflects on the nature of his Christian Formation ministry.

truth and goodness and life affirmation are evident, God is at work, whether it is affirmed or named or not.

“Some might ask, ‘Is Neil Young actually a Christian? Is he writing from a Christian perspective?’ Perhaps the question we should ask is, ‘Is the love of God getting through to him somehow?’ whether through vestiges of past experience or cracks that open in current experiences.”

It is precisely the “cracks in current experiences” this father of two young adult daughters seeks out to help connect them and their peers with the perceptually unexciting ministry of the wider church.

“I see an incredibly intense passion for faith that’s meaningful [for youths and young adults] in their world,” Bergen says. “There are huge gifts in that population. Some of them have the courage to stick with it even though there are few entry points in a church that is so neatly tied together with structures and process and programs.”

Bergen recalls a young pastor he has mentored since age 14. “I have you to blame for answered prayer,” the young man said in response to Bergen’s earlier wish that “I hope that God leads you into a challenge that pushes you really hard.”

His voice catches slightly, and eyes soften as he continues to reflect on a deeply meaningful moment. “It sometimes takes years, but it’s very satisfying to see someone think and learn and stick with the process and grow into that gift to the church,” Bergen says about watching a young person

mature in faith.

Constant reading and close observation of good communicators have developed in Bergen a strong appreciation for the value of language, a significant deficit he sees in the wider church today.

Language can easily become a lightning rod for hurt, says the soft-spoken Bergen. A significant contributor to disunity in the church is that people “talk past one another,” not recognizing that while the words they choose to express themselves are different, their message is often essentially the same. Bergen advocates that Christians work hard at overcoming language differences and seek commonality instead.

“When you read Paul and the part about the body needing many members [I Corinthians 12:12-31], the situation was similar,” Bergen suggests. “The church was on the verge of falling apart.... Paul was saying that there is unity here and that we don’t all need to talk the same way.”

In his position, Bergen observes a “high level of desire” by people to be nourished spiritually. “One can strike up a conversation about spirituality or about being a spiritual person with almost anybody. You can meet a complete stranger and find that they are deeply nurtured by certain kinds of things within their spirit, but they won’t connect it with a spiritual tradition.” There is ample opportunity to tap into that desire, to understand what drives that desire and nurture the appetite, he believes.

—MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**

St. Jacobs, Ont.

What's so different about Benin?

St Jacobs Mennonite has had a long relationship with Benin and with the Benin Bible Institute. From Feb. 9 to 19, a delegation of five church members was in Benin to sign an official covenant with the institute. After their return, pastor Mark Diller Harder reflected on the experience.

Impermanent nature of Benin

Nothing seems permanent in Benin. Buildings are either under construction or are deteriorating. Everything feels temporary.

Communal versus individual

In Benin, they are always making decisions based on the communal good. We contrasted how children are raised. We try to raise children to be independent, think for themselves, raise questions and know their rights. We saw children there much better behaved and respectful, and also doing everything to help the communal good of their families.

Difference in family patterns

Families are so different there. We saw that especially in our visits to homes, where we ate alone and were served by the family members. The male head of the household did most of the talking with us and children were mostly silent. The wives had cooked the wonderful food.

Most interesting was our discussion on marriage, and the total involvement of the two families and the pastor in deciding and approving any kind of marriage relationship. Dating is non-existent. They simply could not believe how we do things here in North America! This was one of our biggest cross-cultural differences, and yet we each value family relationships so much.

Importance of roles and responsibilities

We observed a clear hierarchy of roles and status. The role of "pastor" is held up in significant ways that was some-



St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church pastor Mark Diller Harder, centre, signs a covenant of cooperation between the church and Benin Bible Institute. Looking on are Dave Carr-Pries, vice-chair of St. Jacobs' leadership council, left, and Bonaventure Akowanou, institute administrator.

Benin Bible Institute photo

times uncomfortable for me. You are set apart more than in Canada, and it comes with many expectations. After the covenant-signing service, I had one student I had never met before come up to me, kneel on the ground and ask me to pray for healing for his hypertension.

World of the Bible

I was awakened again to various biblical stories that seemed much more real in a setting like Benin: Jesus calling the fishermen to follow, crowds in the street and teaching about families.

In sharing about the Good Samaritan, institute administrator Bonaventure Akowanou talked about the story of a Beninois pastor who did stop to help someone on the side of the road and was robbed himself. It was a very real story.

Awareness of God

One of the biggest things we learned from our friends in Benin was the constant awareness of God that permeates their lives. There is a perspective on life that simply takes for granted that God is close and active in everyday living. You would be reminded that things happened "by God's grace" or "as God wills it."

There was much prayer before and after meals, and before we travelled. Often Akowanou would simply point to one of us and ask us to pray.

In worship, too, there was an immediacy of God's presence felt in the singing, the long praying, the dancing and the use of Scripture.

Our friends were also very willing to share their faith with others. Several times Akowanou, in a very gentle way, asked the people we met directly about their faith and relationship with God. This could be a driver, a guide or a person on the street. All of life is lived out of a faith perspective.

There is a confidence shown in Christian faith—you know you are Christian! Part of this is a sharp reaction to voodoo—an ever-present reality in Benin. You cannot be wishy-washy. You must claim your identity.

What can we learn from this as we express Christian faith here in North America?

Loaves and fishes

I end with one of the images that kept repeating during our time there: the story of the loaves and fishes. We kept seeing projects and dreams that started very small and then, through the power of God, have grown into thriving ministries.

Both the Benin Bible Institute, which started with only a class or two and is now wondering about a whole new campus on land it has bought in the country, and Casa Grande, that began with a few children in a small house in Cotonou and is now starting the first phase of a new building project that someday may house up to 100 orphan children, are examples of loaves and fishes offered in prayer to God that have grown and multiplied as part of God's kingdom.

—Mark Diller Harder

Finding *new life* in the Spirit

Pentecost was a time of mighty movement by God's spirit to bring new life into the church. It was not new wine, as some thought, that led the apostles to speak out. It was the Holy Spirit's leading the church in fresh and unexpected ways. Canadian Mennonite's Eastern Canada correspondent, Dave Rogalsky, uses Paul's letter to Philemon to reflect on how the Holy Spirit has moved in the church, then and now, in a number of areas. (In the New Testament book, Paul asks Philemon to welcome back his runaway slave, Onesimus.) Ed.

Imagine yourselves members of Philemon's household the morning the letter from Paul arrives. Listen to what might have been Philemon's rant in response:

"The gall of that man! Telling me how to run my own household. And that good-for-nothing Onesimus.

Comes waltzing in here as if nothing was wrong!

"Onesimus has been gone for months. A good slave he was. But he got ideas of freedom beyond his station in life. And he ran off, taking my money and possessions with him! I should have had that thief beaten and then locked in chains! I should sell him to a pig farmer for labour. I should put him on privy cleaning duty for a year! But no, not if I want to stay in Paul's good books.

"The gall of that man! He recognized Onesimus in Rome. Remembered him from one of the many times he stayed here. 'He was useful to me.' That's a play on his name. Onesimus means 'useful.' He should have sent him right back. But no, he used him, talked with him, was gentle with him, convinced him to become a follower of Jesus. If Paul

would have just sent him straight back to me, or sold him at market and sent me the money, then I wouldn't be in this quandary now.

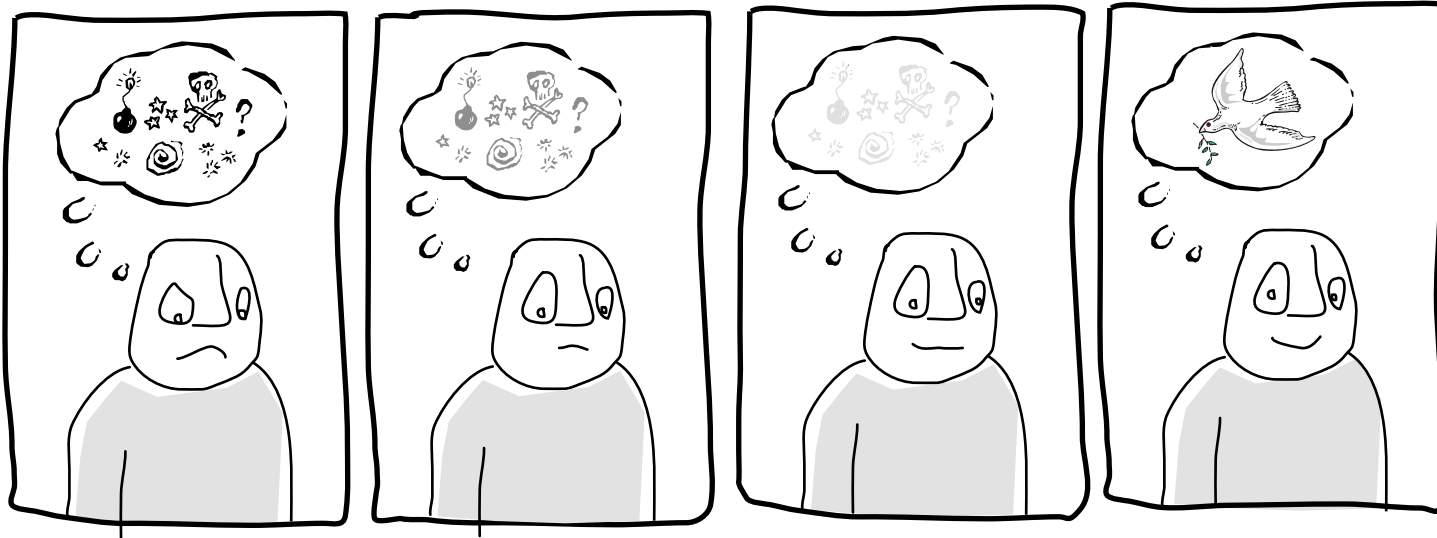
"Do your duty, no longer treat him like a slave, but as a brother in Christ.' Bah! Thirty pieces of silver, that's what Onesimus means to me. I'd like to treat him like the possession he is. But Paul said he wanted to come visit here or he might learn what I've done from afar.

"Treat him like a 'beloved brother,' not a slave. Give him his freedom—that's his basic idea. He's your brother in Christ now. Welcome him like you would welcome me, Paul writes.

"That Jewish meddler! He doesn't understand our culture. We can't just go freeing anyone who becomes a Christian. Then we'd have all the slaves becoming Christians, just to get their freedom. And that would be a wholesale departure from our customs and culture. That would demand a re-organization of our thoughts and ways of doing things. That would change everything!

"We Greeks need the slaves to keep our economy and our households go-

'I should put him on privy cleaning duty for a year!'



ing. Those Jews have rules about not keeping each other slaves more than six years. But non-Jews, they treat just as we treat our slaves.

“Doesn’t Paul understand the depth of change he’s demanding? It’s almost as great a change as the church accepting Greeks as equals to the Jews in Christ. And he went through that change himself, learning that God was accepting us Greeks if we would accept Christ. He must understand how great a change he’s demanding of me!

“Paul says, ‘So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me.’ What will I do? Paul gave me the good news of Jesus Christ. I don’t want to snub Paul, but I don’t want to free Onesimus. Maybe I should write him back and work this Greek-Jew angle. Maybe if I remind him how hard it was for him and the Jews to accept us Greeks, then he will relent.

“Right. He would probably agree with me completely and then turn the tables. I can hear what he might say now. ‘If God directed us, the Jews, the chosen people, to give up our 2,000 years of seclusion and separateness, and accept you Greeks as brothers and sisters in Christ—as members of our own families—then shouldn’t you do the same, accepting as sisters and brothers and equals those of your slaves who are believers in Christ? Even if it means giving up your long-held traditions, your laws, customs and culture? God called us to do it. Why would God not call you to do it?’

“Bah! I’m convinced by my own words! But I don’t have to like it.”

A radical thing to do

We actually don’t know if Philemon ever freed Onesimus, or what Onesimus did later in his life after leaving Paul. What we do know is that in the area where Philemon probably lived—around Colossae in Asia Minor—that there was an early bishop in the church named Onesimus, who could have been the same person. But it was a common name for slaves—“Useful.”

Philemon, the recipient of grace through one major decision that challenged a long-held belief, was himself challenged in his long-held belief. Freeing Onesimus would have been a

radical thing for Philemon to do. It was a radical thing for Paul to demand or request. Paul was asking Philemon to do something outside of a literal interpretation of the Jewish Scriptures. Yet it was Paul’s experience that, before God, all people who named Jesus as Lord were his sisters and brothers in Christ (Galatians 3:26-29).

Paul had already overseen just such a radical change. It was in no small part due to his call and preaching that gentiles began to become followers of Jesus Christ. And then Paul argued for their full inclusion in the church as gentiles. He argued that they did not need to become Jews first and then Christians. They could remain socially and culturally non-Jewish and be full followers of Jesus Christ.

This was a radical change for the early church. Did not the law, prophets and writings demand that to be a follower of God—one of God’s people—one needed to become a Jew? Yet Peter’s experience with Cornelius, the Roman centurion, made him back Paul in the acceptance of gentiles as full believers, full followers in the church of Christ (Acts 10-11).

Hearing God in new ways

Even those who are already God’s people sometimes need experience and prodding to hear God in new ways. Paul’s letter to Philemon was in the Bible all those years while Christians held slaves. Even some of the quiet and sincere Quakers in the U.S. held slaves—until John Woolman in the 1750s travelled from one Quaker group to another, speaking persuasively but also waiting to see if there would be unity in the Spirit on the matter. In this case, the Quakers did achieve unity that slavery was sin, and in 1790 the church wrote to the U.S. congress to publicly call for the abolition of slavery. It took another 75 years before there was full emancipation of slaves in the United States. And now we wouldn’t think of owning another person created by God.

When I began my studies in the 1970s I came with the long-held Christian views that ministry was the exclusive prerogative of men. It was not until I sat with a good friend who was working as a chaplain in a university that my assumptions were challenged.

Her call to ministry was not much different than mine. She had gifts to share. She had a faith in God. What made me eligible to be a pastor and her not? I went back to Scripture and found the parts that support women as active in church life and leadership changing how I understood the verses that reserve church leadership for men. And as I studied, I discovered that, instead of limiting women, these passages could be seen as radical openings of possibilities for women in that culture.

Continued on page 8

Even those who are already God’s people sometimes need experience and prodding to hear God in new ways.

New life *From page 7*

Paul's comment, "let a women learn in silence" (I Timothy 2:11) was radical in a society that thought women could not learn.

Peter stated in his Pentecost sermon in Acts 2:17-18: "*In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.*"

I came to believe that God had sent the Spirit to both men and women to prophesy, preach and do ministry. The same spiritual gifts were given by God to women as to men. I confessed my sin and began to teach otherwise, encouraging women in their ministry and doing what I could to promote equality in all relationships between men and women.

We must treat seriously that the Bible is not unanimous in this regard. There are passages that promote male supremacy, just as there are those that allow for slavery, and there are passages that argue the position our church holds now.

Determining which passages God calls us to follow is a difficult but vital job of spiritual discernment for the whole community of faith. We need to keep working at this. Where would the church be if Peter and the other early Christians had not preached what many thought were just drunken ravings: "*Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.*"

As the Mennonite Church, we have faced other serious issues where Scripture is not unanimous:

- What about peace, with all the war in the Old Testament and Paul's New Testament call to obey the government?
- What about our belief that capital punishment is too final a punishment for us as humans to inflict on another human being, even though the Bible commands such punishment in places?
- What about our belief in the priesthood of all believers in spite of the New Testament call for bishops and pastors to be established?
- What about the use of interest, paid and gained, when the Bible tells us that believers are not to take interest from each other?
- How do we relate to caring for the Earth, or the kinds of things we eat, when we have images of both subduing the Earth and caring for it in Scripture?
- Or what about the tithe?

In these situations we need to rely on the movement of God's Spirit in our midst to help us search the Scriptures

and discern together what is right. Is our understanding truly shaped by God's teaching in Word and Spirit, or are we mistakenly following what are actually human sinful impulses or secular culture?

The *Confession of Faith* states, "In making decisions, whether to choose leaders or resolve issues, members of the church listen and speak in a spirit of prayerful openness, with the Scriptures as the constant guide. Persons shall expect not only affirmation, but also correction. In a process of discernment, it is better to wait patiently for a word from the Lord leading toward consensus, than to make hasty decisions."

Let me also suggest some ways forward:

- Pray that God will open us to the truth that God wants to teach us. Along with the novel teachings that the church has accepted through the years, remember there are also those that the church has rejected.
- Do not pray that you or your side will be able to convince others or the other side. We are fellow believers, on the same path, seeking God's truth and the application of God's love.
- Listen to others who believe differently. Read materials prayerfully.
- Prayerfully share what you believe, your conclusions and your questions.
- Study both with those whom you disagree and with those whom you agree.
- Worship God without worrying about whom you are worshipping with. Worship is about God. We are creatures; God is the creator.
- Don't rush the process to a decision. God has been working for thousands of years.
- Don't stand in the way of the process. God has always been moving things. Believe that God, who has led the church through many waters in the past, will do so again.
- Look forward to God intervening in our midst in marvellous ways. The church is God's. God is our foundation, our past, present and future. God is at work in this time and in this process.

And I am convinced that God will continue to lead us into whatever the future holds.

—**Dave Rogalsky**

Determining which passages God calls us to follow is a difficult but vital job of spiritual discernment for the whole community of faith.

Letters

Empowering Egyptians a naïve concept

Re: “Pen’sive in Egypt” article, Feb. 5, page 11.

I was struck by the strong emotional appeal presented, but on further consideration I realized that the single statistic relating the cost of a pen to a teacher’s daily wage left me with more questions than answers. So I discussed the article with a Coptic Christian friend from Egypt from a prestigious university there.

It quickly became clear that the article only dealt with a segment of Egyptian society and did not speak to a much larger and more complex situation.

First, there is no shortage of pens in Egypt. The problem is the tremendous difference in income between and within various professions. Teachers may make as little as \$187 Cdn a month or up to 10 times that amount and more. There likely are teachers who would have difficulty buying two pens with a day’s wages, as Plett notes, but there are also teachers who drive Mercedes. It is legal for a teacher to do private tutoring that could multiply a meagre government teaching income many times over. Then there are private schools, where salaries may even be comparable to those in North America.

The government of Egypt is not short of funds, as it is in partnership with large international oil companies operating in the Red Sea. It is the strategy of the government to ensure that the people all have means sufficient for subsistence, but no more. In many ways, this strategy is the same as that used by the Egyptian pharaohs.

To speak of “empowering” the common people to improve life in their country in the face of a system that has existed there for more than 6,000 years, seems rather naïve, which the people themselves clearly recognize, if the Pletts do not.

—Clyde Owens, Calgary, Alta.

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

Climate change evidence convincing

In his letter, Clyde Owens criticizes *Canadian Mennonite* for supporting efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (“Better to cope with climate changes than try to reverse it,” April 2, page 13).

In particular, he bases his scepticism about the role of carbon dioxide as the culprit in the warming problem on the argument that “climate is just not that simple.” Well, to any atmospheric scientist, this aspect of climate is, in fact, that simple. There is the same amount of solar energy coming into the atmosphere as previously, and less of it is leaving now because of the carbon dioxide build-up, so the temperature increases. The amount of temperature increase is the same as that predicted for such a carbon dioxide increase by the world’s best simulation models, and in the atmospheric science I’ve worked on as a professional researcher for the past 40 years, that’s pretty convincing evidence.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change trumpets the warning against carbon dioxide emissions because all the scientific community—except the geologists working for oil interests—have been begging them

to do so. The American Geophysical Union has seen fit to editorialize this warning as good science adamantly for years, and I’m grateful to them for it.

I’m all the more grateful that *Canadian Mennonite* has seen fit to editorialize the warning in the name of Christ, to avert even further oppression of the world’s poor.

—Rudy Wiens, Toronto

‘The real...truth’ arguments a farce

I read Phil Wagler’s article, “The real inconvenient truth,” April 16, page 13, and I can only conclude, from both the tone and the content, that this is intended as farce, since it has neither serious biblical nor scientific bases.

Does he mean that we can change the content of the air by, well, changing the content of the air (adding CO2 etc)? That we can drive species to extinction by destroying their homes? Surely Not!

Or that seven billion people on the planet have more impact than seven million? Laughable! Dirty water, bad air, more severe storms and climate change are merely punishments from a nasty God to teach us all lessons! We have no responsibility! Hurray!

—David Waltner-Toews, Kitchener, Ont.

Pontius’ Puddle



The 'real inconvenient truth' divisive, not uniting

I was saddened and disappointed to read Phil Wagler's latest "Outside the box" column ("The real inconvenient truth," April 16, page 13). In it, he presents Al Gore and those involved with—or supporting—the documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* as being proponents of a "renewed paganism that places humanity at the centre of all things."

Wagler goes on to suggest clearly that those of us who would want to encourage Gore for his efforts, or be thankful for the documentary (which Wagler feels the need to refer to as "Al Gore's claim to Oscar fame"), must

"believe we are weather gods" who have "dismissed a sovereign Creator God from our worldview."

I feel the need to ask Wagler: Is it really necessary to portray Al Gore (an avowed Christian), the documentary and its supporters in such a light? Is that the way to be bridge-building, so that together we can all learn to become better stewards of the beautiful creation that God has given us?

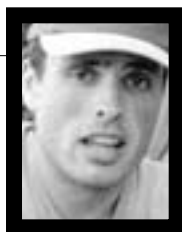
Please don't misunderstand me: I'm not at all certain that Gore and company are entirely right in their positions—or as right as they may think they are. However, I certainly do suspect that the approach Wagler takes in presenting his own position

tends to be more a part of what may be our greatest problem—disunity and division, fuelled by inflammatory comments—than the solution that will get the job done.

Finally, with regard to our common environmental predicament and the shortcomings of both Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* and the "business as usual" position, Wagler maintains that "the solution to all this is deeply spiritual." Here, I'd like to encourage Brother Wagler as being on the right track. Let's all look more deeply as to how the Spirit would have us relate to others with whom we may disagree, be it on this or any other important issue.

—Ron Hiller, Waterloo, Ont.

WILL BRAUN



New Order voice

My Anabaptist sensitivities took a hit when I heard Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) charged \$500 a plate for an April fundraiser. It struck me as elitist, given our community-mindedness and inclination toward simplicity. I think of the biblical widow putting her last small coins in the temple offering and Jesus counting that as more than the "large amounts" of others. I can't imagine that story being told at the CMU banquet.

Likewise, I was alarmed to see that the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) annual report uses 18 of its 24 pages to list donors, with an asterisk for each donor who gave more than \$1,000 to the seminary. I thought we Mennonites didn't let our left hand know what our right hand was doing! And the story of the widow seems to warn against asterisks. What happened to the idea of passing up earthly recognition in favour of a later reward?

The message these actions send is that wealth will be honoured: Blessed are those who can give much. Immersed as we are in a society choking on its own affluence, I think a more creative message is possible.

But for CMU president Gerald Gerbrandt, issues of wealth are trickier than the simple Bible passages I cite. When I asked whether the "big bucks" dinner contradicts Mennonite teachings about simplicity, he told me life is complicated. If we question \$500 dinners, he said, we would need to question nearly all aspects of our lives. As for the widow's mite and the discretion of the right hand, he believes we should stop seeing money and wealth as dirty, and actually be more open about how much we give. He says CMU is teaching generosity, not glorifying wealth.

"It all boils down to what our motivation is," said

A complicated wealth

Either we climb way down the ladder of global wealth or we find a way to justify our lofty position on it.

AMBS vice-president Ron Ringenberg. "The gift of creating wealth is a spiritual gift," he said, citing Deuteronomy 8. When asked about the Matthew 6 passage about the right hand not informing the world of its good deeds, he was

quick to go back to Matthew 5, in which we are told to let our light so shine that people may see our good works and glorify God. As for the asterisks, he said, "the Bible talks about us not all getting the same reward."

One of the main challenges facing the North American church is the justification of our wealth. We (myself included) are much richer than the majority of our fellow humans and we need some way to make that seem acceptable. Either we climb way down the ladder of global wealth or we find a way to justify our lofty position on it.

While the reasoning presented by Gerbrandt or Ringenberg could encourage stewardship and generosity, it can also be used to justify and sanction North American affluence. We must ask whether it is okay to use far more than our share of the world's resources and participate in a degree of affluence that is corroding the Earth—just as long as we are generous and our motivation is pure.

We can certainly find verses to support conspicuous wealth—and I have no doubt that God's grace extends even to us rich North Americans—but our world needs a different kind of witness. There are enough voices blessing wealth. Our heritage of modesty, simplicity and not raising some above others is just what society needs. I hope our centres of higher learning can help us hang on to these characteristics and graciously become a community in which the best banquets are saved for the proverbial widows.

Will Braun attends Hope Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

A baseball metaphor: three strikes, we're out

The April 16 issue of *Canadian Mennonite* gave me the poignant image of a batter in a softball game. Three balls were thrown, right over the plate, all in the strike zone. Not once was the ball hit.

The first pitch was Ross W. Muir's editorial (page 2), with the question, "Are we ready to die...are we ready to live" to the Anabaptist call? Ron Sider threw the second pitch (page 15), challenging our Mennonite lifestyle of conformity and comfort. The third pitch—from Walter Klaassen (page 7)—gave us batter angst. His straight

pitch showed our "affluence, conformity" and compliance with the tainted "capitalistic economic system." In this image, the Canadian Mennonite Church team stood paralyzed.

Klaassen says that living faithfully is hard because there is no cost. It is confusing because we are not sure of our faith. The basis of our faith keeps shifting.

But we are at the plate. Let's pick up the bat and boldly hit that ball. God will honour a bunt or even a base hit. The crowd of Vietnamese, Colombian and Ethiopian Anabaptists are all cheering.

—**John Peters, Waterloo, Ont.**

Tourists need to visit real Palestinian villages

How nice of Nazareth Village to shill for Israeli tourism ("Nazareth Village ready for its close-up," April 2, page 16)! But if we want to know what village life in occupied Palestine was really like for Jesus, tourists need to go to Palestinian villages today, where the realities of brutal occupation forces give a clearer picture of life than cutesy close-ups of woolly lambs and docile donkeys.

—**Vern Ratzlaff, Saskatoon**

PHIL WAGLER



Outside the box

I am currently on a day retreat with two friends. Time with them gets my motor running—causing me to think more deeply, honestly, confessionally and prayerfully—and they always uncover a question or two that begins to gnaw away at my wiring.

So, here is the question du jour: How do we build a church that thrives in a cultural empire imploding upon itself?

That is a loaded question and perhaps far too negative for your liking. But do you not know, have you not seen, the culture we inhabit is akin to a Northern Pikes' song that states, "She ain't pretty, she just looks that way." While there is much to be thankful for and celebrate within the current cultural milieu, there is also something clearly out of sorts. Like most empires after a long season of success, the one we know is like a Ukrainian Easter egg—stunning on the surface but internally empty and susceptible to a swift and complete collapse.

Economically, we are built on the premise of high wages and low prices. We do not value work as a means of mutual survival that barter gift and blessing, but we endure work as the unfortunate requirement to satisfy our unquenchable thirst for pleasure. Hence, we are increasingly dependent on the service, technology and amusement sectors. Our solution to woe is to shop or amuse ourselves out of it. Careers are increasingly valued for their rewards, rather than the offering of our individual strengths for the common good. And so we laud the celebrity and chastise the farmer.

Institutionally, we are built upon bureaucracies that control and dominate, rather than serve, people. The intention to help is there, but the systems make such assistance a red-tape nightmare consisting of indecipherable documentation and impersonal phone mazes. We are slaves to bureaucracies and policies that prevent good

Church of the Holy Binocular

How will we be the church that thrives in this shaky and crumbling empire?

from happening speedily and are squeamish and suspicious of anything with a human touch.

Relationally, we are built on tolerance that sounds nice but actually avoids depth of knowing. We apparently celebrate differences, but unconsciously find that philosophy disengaging us from one another into indifference, regionalization and confusion that leave us uneasy around conviction. All the while we hunger and thirst for meaning and to be known, which is difficult when we do not know ourselves. We are even

uncomfortable defining ourselves relationally. "Partner" has replaced "husband" or "wife," and our career title gets championed over "mother" or "uncle."

How will we be the church that thrives in this shaky and crumbling empire? Will a market-driven gospel transform consumer culture? Will building more new church buildings only be visited as the museums of a previous institutional age? Will running our programs as disconnected generational enclaves bring reconciliation and maturity? Will parroting the culture's philosophical conclusions change anything? Will continuing on with business as usual—as if it were 1957 or '77—miraculously inspire a great retro-revival?

We are not the first Christian generation to ponder such questions, so there may be much to learn about going forward by looking back. The church has previously survived the fall of cultural frameworks because of her rest on one foundation—Jesus Christ. The time has arrived for a more historical vision—to be the Church of the Holy Binocular—so that as culture crumbles again we learn from the successes and avoid the pitfalls of times when the foundations were revealed for what they really were.

Phil Wagler is lead pastor of Zurich Mennonite in Zurich, Ont. Throw your own questions his way at phil_wagler@yahoo.ca.

Saskatoon

Menonite rancher finds country music rewarding

Country singer Larry Krause's latest recording—*The Gate is Open*—was named Country Gospel Album of the Year during the 18th annual Saskatchewan Country Music Association awards show last month.

Krause, who was raised in the Eigenheim (Sask.) Mennonite Church, released *The Gate is Open* last June. The album was also nominated for Country Album of the Year.

This was the first gospel album for the country singer, who performs in small centres around Saskatchewan with his band Timberline. His previous CD was released in 2004.

A graduate of Rosthern Junior College, Krause was involved in the music program there. He farmed and raised cattle in the Eigenheim area until eight years ago, when he moved

to Paddockwood, Sask., to further his musical career.

Since the release of his initial album, which launched his career on a larger scale, Krause has donated his voice and songwriting skills to the Prairie Women on Snowmobiles, a group of cancer survivors in Paddockwood who have used his commissioned piece, "This Pink Ribbon," as a fundraiser.



He was also asked to write and perform a song about the Montreal Lake Trail. This trail was a merchant route from Paddockwood to the tip of Montreal Lake. A group of local historians requested the song to use at a commemoration of the trail in July 2005, when a stone cairn was erected in memory of the people who used the trail and the contributions they made to the community.

—Karin Fehderau

Arts note

Rhubarb seeks submissions

Rhubarb: The Magazine of New Mennonite Art and Writing is planning an Ontario issue for this fall, edited by Hildi Froese Tiessen and Margaret Loewen Reimer. Ontario Mennonite writers and artists are invited to submit their works for consideration: poems (no more than six), creative prose (maximum 2,000 words) or visual art (on slides, transparencies or high resolution digital files on CD). Send submissions by July 1 to Hildi Froese Tiessen at Conrad Grebel University College, 140 Westmount Road North, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6. Please include a 100-word biographical statement as well. Direct inquiries to Margaret Loewen Reimer at margaret.reimer@sympatico.ca.

—*Rhubarb* release

What Shall We Do With the Family Farm?, a new play by Barb Draper, was performed over three nights at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church over the March 30 weekend. The play was a project of the entire congregation, with a cast of 25 and many volunteers who served dinner to more than 550 guests over the first two nights. The play and dinner were very well received in this farming community and raised \$17,800 for Floradale's new building. Pictured, Grandpa Martin (Richard Bauman) tells the children (Maddy Greenwood, Reg Martin and Carmen Read) what farm life was like in the old days.



Photo by Barb Draper

Book provides insight into hospital chaplaincy

Spiritual Caregiving in the Hospital: Windows to Chaplaincy Ministry.

Leah Dawn Bueckert and Daniel S. Schipani, eds. Pandora Press, 2006, 263 pages.

After reading this book, I have a renewed respect for the work of chaplains in hospitals. I wish I had been given this book to read before taking on a short-term volunteer position as on-call chaplain at a local hospital, as it includes a variety of voices from people who understand the unique role of the hospital chaplain.

The Canadian and American authors explore the delicate balance needed when chaplains work within a maze of relationships. While always caring for the well-being of their patients, chaplains support and connect medical staff with each patient's family. They are the bridge between patients and their congregation, if they have one, and they work among volunteers and teams of professionals. Chaplains need to be aware of the legal and ethical issues related to patient care, as well as administrative policy and the culture of scarcity that exists in the health care system in both Canada and the U.S.

This book highlights the importance of collaboration in the spiritual care of hospital patients. The chaplain must work closely with health care professionals, hospital policy, volunteers, patients and their families, as well



Photo by Dave Rogalsky

Timothy Corlis, left, conducted *In Paradisum (In Paradise)* during an Earth Day concert on April 20 at Waterloo (Ont.) Mennonite Brethren Church. Corlis, a Conrad Grebel University College instructor and composer, chose co-instructor saxophonist Willem Moolenbeek, pianist Boyd McDonald, and tenor Brandon Leis, music director of Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont., along with a hand-picked choir of musicians from the Waterloo Region, to perform music that, along with projected photographs, brought to mind and heart walks in the woods, sailing on the lake and contemplating God's Earth.

as the pastor or priest related to the patient, since a climate of competition does not serve anyone.

As I began reading, I could identify some of the similarities and differences that chaplaincy shares with pastoral ministry and the ministry of spiritual direction. Similarities include skills training, the capacity to listen deeply, the need to walk with others experiencing pain and fear, and the importance of self-care. Like pastors and spiritual directors, chaplains are accountable to their employer as well as an outside organization, either a professional association, a congregation or denomination. Differences include the numerous

times the chaplain deals with tragedy and trauma in a given day or week, and the number of relationships the chaplain has to manage.

There are expectations from the patient, the family, the patient's religious community, medical staff, and the hospital's administration, legal department and ethics committee. Chaplains share spiritual care with other ministers, but they have a unique place in the health care system supporting the patient, the family and medical professionals.

In the middle section of the book the authors describe their own experiences in the emergency room, working with patients who are terminally or mentally ill, parents who have lost a child, and the many crises faced alongside medical staff and patients' families. The stories are compelling and yet always hopeful.

This book is an important resource for anyone working in spiritual caregiving, and especially those working in chaplaincy ministry. While this book is published in collaboration with the Institute of Mennonite Studies in Elkhart, Ind., it is relevant to all spiritual caregivers of any religious affiliation.

—**Miriam Frey**

The writer is a spiritual director in Waterloo, Ont.



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Help build a fabric house for MCC

Attention, quilters and non-quilters alike: Build a fabric house for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and help improve the quality of life for people around the world.

Through a new project this year, MCC is collecting house blocks or quilt squares depicting houses. The house blocks will be incorporated into quilts, wall hangings and comforters, and auctioned at MCC relief sales to raise money for MCC projects.

Throughout 2007, MCC's quilting coordinators—Bev Patkau in Canada and Marlys Wiens in the United States—are calling for house blocks or quilt squares of 8 or 10 inches finished or 8.5 or 10.5 inches unfinished. Each block should contain a house of some kind.

It can look like the maker's home. It can look like a home from somewhere else around the world.

Wiens and Patkau urge participants to use their imaginations. "All we say is that we're not going to give you a pattern because that cuts off your creativity," Wiens says.

This project follows a popular 2006 "heart block" project that has brought in more than \$61,000 for MCC; auctions of heart block quilts and wall hangings will continue to raise funds through 2008.

The effort to collect quilt squares with hearts on them began as a way to involve people who might not be able to sew an entire quilt or comforter for MCC—and the outpouring of support for the project was enormous. Hundreds of heart blocks came in from throughout the United States and Canada, as well as from Cambodia, Indonesia, Bolivia and Germany.

Wiens and Patkau want to continue to harness the energy and excitement the heart blocks had sparked. She and Patkau both noted this is an intergenerational project that grandparents can do with grandchildren. It doesn't

require sophisticated sewing skills.

It's also a project that can be large or small. "You can make one block. You can make dozens of blocks," Patkau says. "We are always thrilled to get each block."

And homes are something that everyone knows well. "It doesn't matter where you're from—everyone can make a block that looks like their home," Patkau says.

In Canada, house blocks should be sent to: Bev Patkau, 227 Valhalla Crescent NW, Calgary AB T3A 1Z8. She can be contacted by e-mail at lpatkau@shaw.ca.

—MCC release

Mongkol Borei, Cambodia

HIV now treated as chronic health issue

Cambodia has made dramatic progress in preventing and treating AIDS in recent years, according to Arlys Herem, a nurse practitioner with a Cambodian AIDS care organization that is supported by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

The organization, Dhammayietra Mongkol Borei, provides home-based medical care to people with AIDS in this rural district in northwestern Cambodia. Since 2001, when the organization started its work, life has fundamentally changed for local people with AIDS, Herem says. "Seventy percent of our patients died in less than a year after we met them," she says, recalling their first year. "Now, it's very, very different."

In 2001, people in Mongkol Borei did not have access to HIV tests to determine whether they needed treatment before serious symptoms appeared. Most did not have access to basic treatments, such as antibiotics, until Dhammayietra Mongkol Borei provided them.

Today, a government-run AIDS clinic in Mongkol Borei District provides life-saving AIDS medica-



Photo by Brenda Burkholder

A new Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) project calls for quilt squares with houses on them. The squares will become part of quilts and wall hangings that will be sold at relief sales to raise money for MCC.

tions at no cost to patients, while the MCC-sponsored organization continues to provide other health services to 468 AIDS patients; most are healthy enough to work as rice farmers or in other local jobs.

According to Herem, these dramatic changes have come about through a government-led public health program that is supported by many international organizations. What has helped the most, Herem says, is an international campaign to lower the cost of AIDS medications in Cambodia and other poor countries. "Those battles go on and they need to go on because the second-line drugs are still extremely expensive," Herem says.

Now that patients are able to live for decades with HIV, Dhammayietra Mongkol Borei is helping them manage what is essentially a chronic health condition. In order to stay healthy, they need to eat a nutritious diet, take their medications correctly and take steps to avoid infections.

"We still see them at home, primarily to expand on the education they provide in the clinic," Herem says.

—MCC release by **Tim Shenk**

Winnipeg

MC Canada hears about young adult issues

The second Global Youth Summit—to be held in conjunction with the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) gathering in Asuncion, Paraguay, in 2009—is all about helping Mennonite-Anabaptist young people who are passionate about their faith make worldwide connections, share their stories, and “find their space” within the global church.

That’s the word from Sarah Thompson, North American representative on Amigos, the MWC global youth committee, who visited various Mennonite institutions and schools here recently.

Defining young people as a group between the ages of 15 to 30, single or married, many of whom are “just catching the [global church] vision,” Thompson—from Goshen, Ind., but presently living in Argentina—spoke animatedly about how MWC had recognized the need to nurture this vision at the first summit in Zimbabwe in 2003.

To that end, Amigos is taking the lead in networking, planning and implementing the next summit, and raising more than \$100,000 in travel funds to enable greater participation from the global south. The aim is to attract 45 to 50 delegates and up to 800 young adult participants. To date, about \$35,000 has been raised through special donations and initiatives, such as last summer’s Bikemovement American tour and the Asia tour this year.

Reflecting on youth responses to church involvement today, Thompson noted three tendencies:

- They feel it slows them down so they decide it’s not for them.
- They recognize the “gifts and stuff” of being raised in the church and may plan to send their own kids to Sunday school, but are personally confused and ambivalent about it overall.
- They become “passionate about it, looking for where the spaces are for them.”

She sees her role with Amigos as an opportunity to stoke that passion by helping identify those spaces. During her stop at the MC Canada offices, Thompson was impressed with the

“real people” working there and all the resources available at the Resource Centre. “Youths would gladly get involved if [they knew about these things],” she said. “As it is now, youths are growing up in the Mennonite Church without that history of what it took to get these structures that we have now. They don’t understand how these structures relate to the theological reality.”

Thompson also noted that people are presently suffering from “CNN syndrome.” They have surface understandings of what’s happening all over the world, but they’re not really connected to people in those settings. “That’s why there is a need for global meetings...to get to know each other and deal with the misperceptions.”

As for the future, Thompson suggested that the global church is probably going to become more divided on such issues as structure, economics, women in leadership, and peace and justice issues. Already, about



MC Canada photo by Dan Dyck

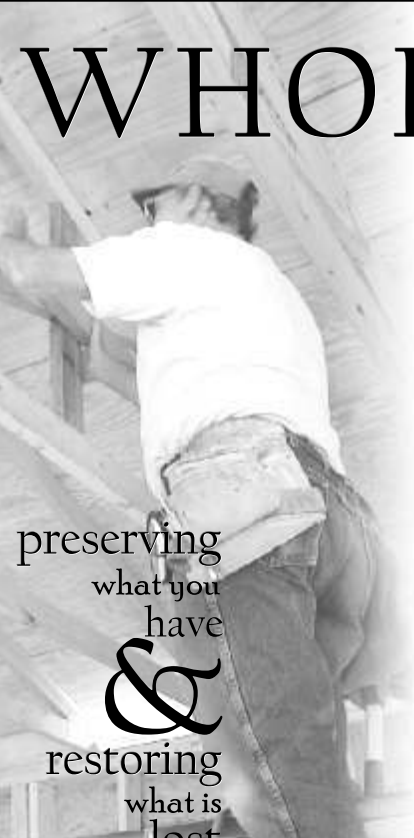
Sarah Thompson, the North American representative of Amigos, the Mennonite World Conference youth committee, was in Winnipeg recently.

half of Mennonite/Brethren in Christ churches in the U.S. are self-declared non-peace churches, which means that traditional Anabaptist beliefs are no longer the connecting identity point.

But discipleship is, she concluded. “Youths are concerned what it means to be Christian and what a walk with Jesus means. That’s the common ground.”

—**Leona Dueck Penner,**
with files from **Dan Dyck**

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Winnipeg

Church leaders send military letter, debate financing

The Mennonite Church Canada governing board has formally asked Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government to support an upcoming private member's bill that creates a peace tax alternative. The request—made during meetings last month in Winnipeg—leads off a comprehensive letter to the

government on concerns about increasing militarization in Canada. (See excerpts below.)

This action by the church is in response to a delegate resolution at the Edmonton 2006 assembly, specifically to “allow conscientious objectors to redirect the military portion of their taxes to activities of development and

peace.” The letter was broadened to serve as a teaching tool for “multiple audiences beyond government circles,” reported MC Canada general secretary Robert J. Suderman. It can be used “in our own church, in ecumenical dialogue, in global relations, and in public testimony.” Plans are to make the letter available in template form

Letter to the Prime Minister

Last month, MC Canada officials—moderator Henry Krause, general secretary Robert J. Suderman, and Witness executive secretary Janet Plenert—sent a letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper and other MPs, including the leaders of the other three opposition parties, calling for support of a private member's bill that would allow for conscientious objection to the payment of those taxes designated for military purposes. Excerpts from that letter are printed below. Ed.

THIS IS AN HISTORIC INITIATIVE, and we urge you to support this bill when it is introduced. But more than that, we urge you to mobilize your government and members of parliament of both sides of the house to support this bill.

The “pursuit of” and the “search for” peace are...at the heart of our sacred Scripture. The Psalmist exhorts us to “seek peace and pursue it” (Psalm 34:14). The Apostle Paul instructs us to “pursue what makes for peace” (Romans 14:19). The Apostle Peter teaches us to “seek peace and pursue it” (I Peter 3:11). And Jesus the Christ taught us that the best way to deal with enemies is to “love them” and to “pray” for them (Matthew 5:44).

Mennonite Church Canada is a Christian denomination that has

Many Canadians have noticed an increase in recruiting efforts by the Canadian military under the theme of “Fight...” on TV ads, in magazines and on billboards.

had the “search for and pursuit of peace” in our heart and soul since our inception in Canada in the early 1800s, and before that in the birth of the Anabaptist movement in Europe in the 16th century, and before that in the words and life of Jesus of Nazareth, the foundation of our church.

WE ARE CONCERNED about what appears to be a multi-faceted and intentional escalation of public advocacy, decisions and actions that foster the increasing militarization of the Canadian mind, psyche, soul and imagination....

In July 2006, the delegates of our congregations, meeting in our annual assembly in Edmonton, expressed their concern in a tangible way. They went beyond affirming our historic conviction that conscientious objection status needs to be available for those who cannot in good conscience serve the military purposes of our nation, to express their reluctance to pay those taxes that finance the capacity of others to do so. The delegates asked that these concerns be brought to the attention of our government together with some suggestions about how the tax question could be addressed.

THE LOGIC FOR THIS BILL is clear. The end-use and impact of our money are as important as are the end-use and impact of our actions. If conscience is a legitimate cause for exemption to what we oppose,

namely military service, conscience must also be a legitimate cause for exemption to pay for what we oppose, namely military action.

Allowing taxpayers to designate their taxes to non-violent strategies is only one small step in our “search for” and “pursuit of” peace. We also urge you to become a world spokesperson and statesman in the promotion of a peace that is gained through peaceful (and not violent) means.

[I]T IS NOT CONVINCING to us that the Canadian military forces should be seen and promoted as being the front line of “rebuilding the infrastructure” and engaging in “development” work in Afghanistan, as we hear your officials and military spokespersons argue so often.... [I]t is not logical that our military forces should be the vehicle for social development and re-construction there. Again, we would call you to an alternative imagination in how the same level of budget could be used for the social and economic development of Afghanistan, but via development organizations that have a solid reputation for using non-violent strategies for social development.

Photo by Al Rempel



to congregations so they can take it to their own MP, added Janet Plenert, executive secretary of Christian Witness.

Revenue expected to decline

The board received audited financial statements for the church fiscal year ending January 2007. Financial results show revenue was just about at budget and expenses were under budget, resulting in an operating surplus of \$184,000 before transfers to and from reserves, and a surplus of \$88,000 after transfers. Donation revenue was just about at budget projections, but is down slightly from the previous fiscal year, continuing a larger trend of gradually declining donation revenue.

The board also had extensive discussions about future revenue projections that anticipate flat expense budgets and declining donation revenue. This “means we have to plan for a steady decrease in what we are able to do,” reported Suderman, although “our analysis of denominational health points to the need to do more...”

In response, the church’s Support Services Council presented two “test” recommendations, “deliberately prepared for discussion and feedback, not approval at this time,” said Pam Peters-Pries, Support Services executive secretary.

The recommendations propose that

revenue projections “take into account our experience with, and expectations of, our constituency,” which may lead to considering the possibility of “a deficit budget in one year as long as it is resolved in three years.” A second recommendation proposes that the Resource Development department be allowed “to respond to unforeseen challenges and opportunities by spending beyond budget, provided that there is reasonable expectation of return” in some circumstances.

Clare Schlegel, Financial Policy and Audit Committee chair, suggested that, at this stage anyway, the recommendations seemed premature and cautioned against being “overly optimistic” during a time when “revenue is still going down. Don’t risk this organization to go through what it went through before,” he urged.

Others, too, had difficulty with the possibility of deficit budgeting and suggested alternatives such as “special projects which people love” or “entrepreneurial initiatives” as ways to generate income.

No action was taken and Support Services Council will take the General Board’s counsel and further discuss this issue at its fall planning meeting, said Peters-Pries.

Assembly speakers chosen

In Abbotsford national assembly updates, the three main speakers will be Siaka Traore, Mennonite Church leader from Burkina Faso; Jorge Hoajaca, pastor of First United Spanish Mennonite Church, Vancouver; and Plenert. There is still an urgent need to find children’s program volunteers.

Global outreach

The board also approved a church-to-church relationship with the Union of Evangelical Baptists in Chile, a 225,000 member denomination that is eager to learn more about Anabaptism and the peace witness after benefiting from Mennonite teaching at its seminary, and requested more information about a recommendation for a similar relationship with Meserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia, the largest Mennonite denomination in the world.

Investment policy updated

A new investment policy for the church’s retirement fund was accepted, which more clearly articulates the attempt to avoid investment in companies that benefit directly or indirectly from weapons and military production, and other socially or ethically harmful products and behaviours, such as tobacco, alcohol and gaming.

—Leona Dueck Penner

During meetings of the Joint Executive Committee of Mennonite Church Canada and MC USA in Chicago last month, MC USA moderator Roy Williams, left, and MC Canada moderator Henry Krause celebrated the signing of a partnership covenant that their two boards had already approved. The covenant recognizes that the two distinct national denominations have a strong and intentional partnership in areas of mutual interest. Foundational documents—including the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* and *Vision: Healing & Hope*—continue to reflect a unified body of believers. “We move forward in ministry, exploring and defining new ways of relating, sharing and serving, even as each national body continues to mature in its separate identity and mission,” states the covenant.



MC Canada/MC USA photo

Winnipeg

Telling a 'better' story

According to Joe Boot, "The Christian faith is our key...as we face the mood of our time." The evangelist, apologist, author and executive director of Ravi Zacharias Ministries in Canada brought his message to Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) students, staff and faculty earlier this year during a three-part chapel series entitled "Believing is seeing: Knowing and defending the faith."

"Our contention is that unbelief is ultimately blindness," Boot said at the beginning of the first chapel, citing Hebrews 11:1,6: *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.... And without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him."*

Boot explained that the kingdom of God is not an abstract concept, but rather something that is supposed to be taking place right now—and that it is the task of apologetics to bring the kingdom of God into the world today.

Key to bringing about this kingdom, Boot suggested, is recognizing the conflict between the "myth of the secular and the sacred." Since God created everything, he stated that there is no such thing as the secular. If there were, he contended, evangelism and apologetics would be reduced "to an utter waste of time." But if Christians are to share their faith, Boot said they must begin by recognizing that they are dependent on God "for his sustaining presence."

In his second chapel, Boot said that in order to do evangelism Christians "have to tell a better story than everyone else." Christ needs to be the starting point of that story, he added, or else it is no different than any other story.

"As faith has to do with reason, so reason has to do with faith," Boot continued, noting that there is a problem when the two are separated—as though faith only speaks to a certain level of ethical problems. Theology and philosophy belong together, he said, because "when we believe, we think,

and when we think, we believe."

Boot concluded his chapel series by suggesting how Christians can help non-believers take the first step toward faith. "The message is a call for people to reorient their lives," he said. "It's not, 'Add Jesus like it's a gym membership.'" Boot argued that Christians ultimately should point people toward Jesus Christ.

He also counselled against attacking the arguments of others. Since people are emotionally attached to their beliefs, a direct attack is counterproductive, he said. Instead, Boot argued that belief in Christ leads to revelation from God.

"He who seeks, finds," Boot quoted from Matthew. "To truly know God, the way and the goal are both one in Jesus Christ. Christ is both the road and the destination. Christ is the lens through which we can see reality for what it is.

Without God, there is only...despair." Christians should invite unbelievers to



CMU photo by John Longhurst

CMU student Lucas Redekop of Floradale, Ont., talks to evangelist Joe Boot after one of his chapel talks on presenting the Christian faith to unbelievers.

"try our lenses on and see if the world doesn't make sense," Boot urged his listeners.

Of Boot's presentation, academic dean Gordon Zerbe said that he "left a mark on our community, and I hope that the reverberations will continue for some time."

—Aaron Epp

The author is a CMU student doing his practicum in the communications department.

**CMU
Winnipeg**

Is the church and the world calling you?

Opportunity: MCC Executive Director

Mennonite Central Committee is seeking a person with strong leadership skills to build understanding and support for its mission among an increasingly diverse constituency and growing worldwide program.

Letters of intent and resumes are now being accepted. The application review begins June 5, 2007 and continues until a suitable candidate is found. The anticipated start date is Jan. 1, 2008.



For a job description and information on the application process please contact Lowell Detweiler via email at lcd@mcc.org, send a letter of inquiry to P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; or call 717-859-2806.

In 2007 the MCC budget is \$44 million USD, with more than 700 staff in more than 50 countries.

Elkhart, Ind.

Gospel about 'good news to the poor'

The evangelization of the world, including the West, "is inseparable from the rediscovery of the gospel as 'good news to the poor.'" This core message in the Theological Lectureship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary came from C. René Padilla, who sees the U.S. and its economic and political policies from a perspective in the Two-thirds World.

Padilla lives in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and works with organizations that help Christians meet the physical, social and spiritual needs of poor communities. He is the son of a tailor-evangelist and, after coming to faith in Christ at the age of 15, became an evangelist in jail ministry and street preaching.

In his series of three lectures at AMBS earlier this year, he outlined first the impact that the West, and particularly the United States, has in controlling resources and power throughout the world. This domination is imperial globalization, he said at the beginning of his presentations, entitled "Imperial globalization and Christian mission."

Padilla pointed out numerous effects of this domination through the last 500 years, including the growing disparity between the countries, companies and individuals who are becoming wealthier and the 1.3 billion people who live on less than a dollar a day.

"Characterized by greed, ethnocentrism and religious justification, imperial globalization has become the greatest threat to life on...Earth and, as such, the greatest challenge to the Christian mission around the world," Padilla said.

Padilla, president of the Micah Network, a worldwide group of organizations aimed at mobilizing Christians against poverty, challenged the seminary community of mostly western Christians to counter the influence of wealth and greed in their culture and government.

He outlined three responses for the church: global citizenship, global community and global mission. Christians must see themselves as members

of the body of Christ, people whose identity is not dependent on race or nationality, social or economic position, status or gender.

"Today's challenge for all Christians everywhere, in the East and in the West, in the North and in the South, is to rediscover the transforming power of the kingdom of God's justice in the midst of the kingdoms of this world," he said.

Following each lecture, several members of the seminary community were invited to respond.

Fred Lesakale, a student from Kenya, pointed out that where he comes from it is violence—and not only

poverty—that has had a significant impact on people's lives. "Violence has robbed people of their dignity and their very sense of being human," he said.

However, he added, "There are always things I can do as an individual that will make a difference. We can do a lot if what we do is founded on the Word of God."

Padilla, who holds a Ph.D. in New Testament from the University of Manchester, England, has written extensively on mission, evangelism and social ethics. He has been

general secretary for Latin America of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students and of the Latin American Theological Fraternity.

—AMBS release by **Mary E. Klassen**



Padilla

**AMBS
Elkhart**

Fresno, Calif.

Participation in government crucial to all Christians

John H. Redekop is a man on a mission: To convince everyone to participate in politics. In some circles, this may be an easy task, but at the talk he gave at Fresno (Calif.) Pacific University (FPU) earlier this year, "converting" his audience was more difficult.

Redekop, professor emeritus of political science at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ont., was talking to the very audience targeted in his most recent book, *Politics Under God*—those in his own Anabaptist faith tradition. A quote from Chuck Colson on the back of the book warns that the message will "surprise readers who expect a conventional Anabaptist perspective."

Redekop unveiled that surprise during a presentation sponsored by the FPU Council of Senior Professionals.

What exactly is the "conventional Anabaptist perspective?" In his book, Redekop outlines some of the Anabaptist beliefs taken from the Schleitheim Confession of 1527, a declaration of Anabaptist theology written during a time of intense persecution. "The drafters of the document referred to the politi-

cal order as "the kingdom of 'darkness,'" Redekop notes. Because of this belief, Anabaptists have historically avoided military service as well as political office.

It is this latter avoidance that Redekop takes issue with. "I can understand [the refusal to participate in politics when the early Anabaptists were being persecuted]," Redekop said. "But not in the U.S. today."

In Redekop's view, Scripture refers to three kingdoms: the heavenly kingdom; the worldly kingdom, which includes government; and the kingdom of darkness. Too often in Anabaptist circles the worldly kingdom and the kingdom of darkness have been fused, and this troubles Redekop.

The state was created by God because of sin, and is affirmed repeatedly throughout Scripture, according to Redekop. "It can be corrupted," he said. "I believe I heard of a pastor down in Colorado who was corrupted too." Despite the state's corruption, he feels it is essential to have Christians in its midst. "Affirm when you can, so you can critique when you must," he urged.

Redekop has always questioned the status quo in religion and politics, according to Richard Unruh, now an FPU political science professor who was once Redekop's student at FPU. "[A]s I recall, it was a perspective that John began to critique way back then."

—Fresno Pacific University release

**FPU
Fresno**

Winkler, Man.

Campolo stirs Passion Week crowds

Tony Campolo concluded his Passion Week message by dramatically reminding listeners that “we live in a Good Friday world, a world of pain and suffering and darkness. But Sunday is coming and we are an Easter people!”

Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church, which seats 1,100, nearly reached its capacity, with people coming from as far as Regina to hear Campolo, well-known Baptist preacher and professor emeritus at Eastern College in Philadelphia, Pa., for three evenings last month. Campolo invited listeners to a life of compassion and service that comes from being centred in Christ.

When he left Winkler, he took with him a list of names and addresses of young people who responded to his invitation to give a year of their lives to service.

Bergthaler pastor Peter Penner said, “They responded with enthusiasm to his spiritedness and to his challenge to become involved in mission and service.”

For the past decade, five churches—Winkler Bergthaler, Grace, Covenant, Emmanuel and Winkler Mennonite—have joined together for Passion Week services. This year, they invited Campolo to speak on the theme, “The life you’ve always wanted.”

Campolo used stories from his books to illustrate the importance of small single acts of compassion and love that are possible only through the power of the Holy Spirit working in and through Christians.

“You have to get into prayer. It’s the only way to the cross,” Campolo said the first evening. “Begin the day with centred prayer.... Fill with his

presence so that the energy of God is in you and can flow through you into others.”

End the day with a prayer of examining, he said. “Remember everything you have done that has been a blessing to others, where you have been an instrument of Jesus. Go over these one by one. This increases your faith, rather than dumping on yourselves.”

Monday evening focused on the young people who filled the front of the church. Youths who caused the floors of the balcony to quake with music and movement during praise songs at the start of the evening, sat in attentive silence as Campolo told them, “Your parents say to you, ‘Get a good education so you can get a good job so you can earn good money so you can get stuff.’ Well, we’ve got too much stuff! Don’t sell out on the vision to be the body of Christ. The cost of discipleship is like the red letters in the Bible.”

On the third evening, Campolo explained what happens when the Holy Spirit invades a person’s life. “The world will change. Jesus looked at people differently and it will cause you to look at people differently. You will see Jesus in them. While we slept last night, 35,000 kids under the age of 12 died from malnutrition and preventable diseases. No one takes note, but Jesus says, *‘Whatever you do to the least of these, you do to me....’*”

Campolo’s message stirred the hearts of many. He suggested World Vision and his own organization’s work with street children in Haiti as opportunities for service. Penner

Tony Campolo delivered a series of Passion Week messages at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church, including one that was addressed specifically towards youths, two of whom are pictured with the renowned speaker.

School note

Peace institute gets grant

Winnipeg— A \$120,000 three-year grant from the Winnipeg Foundation will allow the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) Institute for Community Peacebuilding to work with newcomers to Winnipeg and address issues related to young offenders. For newcomers, the funds will enable the institute to help them in three areas where they experience conflict: within their communities, with the dominant culture they find themselves in, and between themselves and others in the city. For its work with young offenders, the institute will use the funds to promote ways to restore youths who commit crimes to the community. The goal of the institute, opened in 2005 at Menno Simons College, CMU’s campus at the University of Winnipeg, is to create strong, peaceful communities by promoting just and non-violent relationships and practices through research, public education, informed dialogue and long-term projects.

—CMU release

expressed hope that the service projects of Mennonite Central Committee and other Mennonite organizations will also be channels through which discipleship can be lived out.

—**Evelyn Rempel Petkau**



Photo by Evelyn Rempel Petkau

Abbotsford, B.C.

Compass points new business operator in the right direction

After 26 years of work as a medical office assistant and receptionist, Barb Konrad found herself without a job. But rather than viewing this as a loss, she chose to see it as an opportunity to pursue a dream—one that came true with a little direction from Compass.

“God said, ‘This chapter is closed. I’m going to send you somewhere new.’ So here I was without a job and decided that this was a chance to pursue a home-based business,” says Konrad, who lives in Aldergrove, B.C.

Compass is a career-planning program offered through the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) B.C. Employment and Community Development Department with financial support from the Government of Canada.

“Our two-week program provides ample opportunity to follow each person’s discoveries of what their skills are, where they want to use those skills, and how to market them,” explains Marion Tansey, manager of the Compass program. “It is very exciting! I remember the match between Barb’s interests in design and her values of creativity, beauty and autonomy.”

“Compass got me on track,” Konrad says. “It affirmed my idea to start a home-based business and to go into floral design.” She found the MCC program online when she was looking for an employment counsellor. After some

discussion, she decided that Compass was the program for her.

Konrad was approved for funding less than one week before classes began in the floral design course at the University College of the Fraser Valley in Abbotsford, something that she admits “certainly tested my faith!” The course provided her with both training and a practicum at a floral shop, where she gained some hands-on experience in the field. After completing the course and receiving her certificate, she stayed on at the shop to continue building her experience.

But after a while, she decided to take the leap and complete the dream of working from home. Thus, Blooms & Beyond (bloomsandbeyond.ca) was born.

“Compass really helped me get to

the point in the journey where I could see this dream come true,” Konrad says. “I am excited about this new opportunity. I love my new business.”

—MCC B.C. release
by **Angelika Dawson**



Barb Konrad works on a floral arrangement in her home-based business, Blooms & Beyond. She participated in Mennonite Central Committee’s employment and community development program called Compass.

Photo by Angelika Dawson

Electronic delivery

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Nine members of Leamington United Mennonite Church travelled to Guatemala City in March, where they helped build the fourth floor of the Central American Seminary and Guest House as part of a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Work and Learn Team. They also visited the MCC project in Santiago, which was in response to mudslides in 2005. Pictured from left to right, back row: Chris Omstead, Ron Tiessen and Darren Tiessen; and front row: Sandra Dyck, Paul and Linda Dueck, Lisa Fehr, Karen Repko and John Wiens.



Photo courtesy of Linda Dueck

Finding healing and God

at Eagle's Wings

Prince Albert, Sask.



Photo by Gordon Nesdoly

The Eagle's Wings Ministry Fellowship Centre in Prince Albert, Sask., provides a place for street people to find both healing and God.

It's two o'clock on a Friday afternoon and, between getting his own vehicle fixed and helping someone at the Fellowship Centre, Ray Dumais has a few minutes to squeeze in a phone call. Even though it's been a breathless day for the new director of the four-month-old venture, Dumais is patient and calm on the phone.

Together with Mennonite Church Saskatchewan and MC Canada, Dumais opened the building late last fall because of a generation of need in his hometown of Prince Albert.

"Street people need a place to go where they can rest," he explains. His dream is to offer a haven where people will find both healing and God. He hopes the centre, which has a phone line and Internet access—a luxury for many transients—will be a help as people try to bring stability to their structure-less lives. They come in, he says, and work on their resumes or make calls about possible employment.

Open each day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., the Fellowship Centre acts as a base of operations for some. "It is meeting a legitimate need," he says, while acknowledging some want to abuse the opportunity.

As an itinerant minister, Dumais has been involved off and on with

Mennonites for the past 20 years. Before that, he spent two years living on the streets and knows the pain driving the addictions of drifters. Embracing the Christian faith came for him through a Mennonite Brethren pastor in Saskatoon. Later, he spent some time working in a Mennonite Central Committee thrift store in North Battleford, Sask., where he first got the idea for a much-needed place of rest. "They had a couch in there and coffee, and people would just come in and sit," says Dumais. "I thought this is pretty neat."

Last year, he began working with the MC Saskatchewan Ministries Commission, which hired him for three days a week to begin a house church in inner-city Saskatoon. After the six-month position ended, Dumais eventually began planning for the Fellowship Centre, now known as Eagle's Wings Ministry. Exodus 19:4 was the inspiration for the name he chose, particularly the second part. "...and how I carried you on eagle's wings."

Although initially funding the concept from his own pocket, Dumais now has support from MC Saskatchewan and MC Canada via Native Ministry. And while acknowledging that money

is a constant worry, the soft-spoken Métis minister knows he has enough to pay the bills and draw a small monthly stipend. When that runs out, he looks for short-term work in the construction industry and also helps manage a small moving business for the less fortunate.

Neill and Edith von Gunten, co-directors of MC Canada Witness's Native Ministry, have worked with Dumais on the project. "There is such a need [in Prince Albert] for a drop-in centre," says Edith, pointing to a funding proposal written by Eric Olfert, which states that Prince Albert boasts four prisons and, when convicts are released, they often stay in the city of 43,000. Neill also worked extensively with Dumais and others to clarify the vision put into the proposal.

Not surprisingly, Dumais himself experiences moments of doubt. "Sometimes I question whether I do anything good," he admits, but will continue to come for the regulars who find a place of safety in Prince Albert's downtown core at Eagle's Wings.

—Karin Fehderau



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Abbotsford, B.C.

Youth groups 'launder money' for MCC

It was late at night last month that youths from Emmanuel Mennonite and Olivet Mennonite churches met for an unusual activity. Neither the youth pastors nor the youths had ever been involved with something like this before. They were going to launder money. There was hesitation. Some asked, "Isn't this illegal?" But in the end it turned out to be an activity that had nothing to do with organized crime, but was something that would benefit people in need.

This story really begins four years ago in Barriere, B.C., where forest fires left many homes destroyed. Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) worked in this small, forestry-centred town for nearly a year and built relationships with many of its residents. One resident was a penny collector, whose significant collection was ruined by the fire. Some of the coins were fused together from the heat of the fire and all the coins were filthy, nearly unrecognizable as money.

From there the story moves to Abbotsford, where MDS volunteer Waldo Neufeld attends Emmanuel Mennonite Church. That church is running a coin drive to raise funds for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) health kits, and Neufeld, who was in possession of the coins, felt this was a perfect opportunity to put that "dirty money" to good use.

He contacted Jon Nofziger, who also attends Emmanuel and is helping coordinate the MCC health kit fundraiser there. Nofziger was happy to receive the donation, but didn't relish the fact that he'd have to clean and roll all those coins. This, he thought, was a job for many hands. So he contacted Rod Wiebe, youth pastor at Emmanuel.

"We were planning to participate in World Vision's 30-hour Famine [together with Olivet's youths] and it is meaningful to include a service project

during the famine in order to remind youths that we are not just meeting to have fun, but also to help others around the globe," Wiebe said.

He also felt that it was meaningful to support both World Vision and MCC. "[It drives] home the point that there are a number of ways and a number of people that are working towards these common goals. It was nice to combine the 30-hour Famine with an opportunity to serve MCC."

Olivet youth pastor Stacey O'Neil agreed, adding that it's important for youths to have opportunities for practical expressions of their faith. "Our group really believes in the practical help that MCC offers around the world and it was a blessing to be a part of [its] work," he said.

Once the youths found out what was really involved in "laundering" the money and that they would be contributing to a fundraiser for MCC, they were really excited. "I felt that this

There was hesitation. Some asked, "Isn't this illegal?"

was a worthwhile project, although I really did not understand why somebody would collect this many pennies!" said James Dueckman, a member of the Emmanuel youth group. "I could not think of a better use for them than MCC."

The operation took place at Olivet, where four stations were set up. In total, the youths separated, cleaned, dried, counted and rolled \$128 worth of pennies in two hours, enough for nearly 13 health kits.

For Nofziger, it was an incredible story of connections.

"After being involved in making this story a reality, I will translate the word Emmanuel [which means 'God with us'] as 'God connections,'" he said. "It really is amazing to see how the devastating impacts of a forest fire in B.C. can alleviate impacts of poverty around the world."

—MCC B.C. release
by **Angelika Dawson**

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as a rain location

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New Hamburg, Ont.

New MCC Thrift Store opens

It's so new it doesn't even smell like an old-fashioned thrift store.

On April 13 the ribbon was cut on a new MCC Thrift Store in New Hamburg, replacing the former Furniture and More and Clothing and More outlets that were across town from each other.

Daily trips to move donations to the right store are no longer necessary. The new building, owned by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario and financed by Mennonite Foundation, is next door to the Clothing and More's former location.

While the grand opening was recent, the store has actually been in operation since January. Current goals are to gross \$2,500 per day—about \$750,000 a year, with surpluses remitted to MCC Ontario. For many thrift stores across the country, this seems an unreachable goal, but the managers are already wondering if they dreamed too small.

The new space was designed to be energy efficient, garnering grants for equipment like light level sensors that turn off banks of lights when sunlight streams in through skylights. With high ceilings and lots of windows, the store is bright and looks professional.

On entering an area set aside for silent auction items, the thrift store looks like an antique shop, with fine furniture and dishes on display. More than 400 bidders are currently registered. A table that was refinished by volunteers—"probably only worth \$75 the way it came in," noted backroom manager Chris Gerber—was already bid up to \$425.

The more than 200 volunteers—including some from Aldaview, a sheltered home and workshop for challenged adults—are spread over the retail, receiving, sorting, recycling and reusing departments. A garden arbour in the silent auction area was built out of lumber from donated waterbeds. Floor mats are woven from denim reclaimed from damaged jeans, and are shipped to other stores and sold in a variety of settings.

The store attracts a great variety of people as customers and volun-

teers—recyclers, low wage earners, thrifty Mennonites and anyone else with an interest. As Patti Ollies, MCC Ontario Thrift Store co-ordinator, puts it, "Thrift is for everyone."

—**Dave Rogalsky**



Christa Gerber and Terry Jutzi stand in the silent auction portion of the newly opened New Hamburg MCC Thrift Centre.

Photo by Dave Rogalsky



A Thousand and One Egyptian Nights

Jennifer Drago and her family heard a radical call, one that would uproot them from their life and work with refugees in the United States and plant them among conservative Muslims in Egypt. Jennifer recounts the challenges and rewards of this eye-opening journey into the heart of the Islamic world, where she and her family lived not as Americans in Egypt, but as Christians among Muslims.

Paper, 200 pages, \$16.29

Forgiveness

A Legacy of the West Nickel Mines Amish School

This meditation by John L. Ruth on the horrific events October 2, 2006, reflects on the response of the Amish community of Nickel Mines in Lancaster County, Pa.

Paper, 100 pages, \$12.49

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People&Events

Winnipeg—Jolene Frattinger has been named the 2007 winner of the Spirit of Generosity Award at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU). The award, given by Mennonite Foundation of Canada, is awarded annually to students from Mennonite schools in Canada who have demonstrated a spirit of generosity in their personal lives.

The students are nominated by staff at each participating school. Since 2005,

Frattinger has volunteered one day a week listening to people in distress on a crisis phone line. Originally from Steinbach, Man., but now living in Winnipeg, Frattinger graduated from CMU with a bachelor of arts degree at the spring commencement last month. Each Spirit of Generosity award winner receives \$400 from the Foundation, \$200 of which is to be given to a charity of the recipient's choice.

—CMU release
by **John Longhurst**



Frattinger

Abbotsford, B.C.—Wayne Bremner will take over the position of executive director of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) B.C. effective

July 1. He succeeds Laura Loewen, whose resignation takes effect June 30.

Bremner has served MCC B.C. for the last 10 years, both as director of employment and community development for three years and as program and personnel director for the last seven. He has also served



Bremner

overseas with Mennonite Economic Development Associates and with Mission Aviation Fellowship. He holds a bachelor of arts degree in business administration from Trinity Western University and a master of arts degree in international development from the University of Toronto.
—MCC B.C. release by
Angelika Dawson

Transitions

Births/Adoptions

Derksen—Brooke

Elfrieda (b. April 2, 2007), to Ryan and Cindy Derksen, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Fischer—Alex Josef

(b. Feb. 21, 2007), to Aaron and Jennifer Fischer, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Gascho—Kadence Mae (b. March 29, 2007), to Adam and Stephanie Gascho, Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

Gingerich—Nolan Craig

(b. March 6, 2007), to Cory and Sarah Gingerich, Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

Grainger—Kaylan Avery

(b. April 4, 2007), to Shawn and Christine Grainger, Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

Hartman—Cassie Makaela

(b. April 16, 2007), to Adrian and Lori Hartman, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary.

Hildebrand—Sean Everett

(b. April 19, 2007), to Karey and Andrea Hildebrand, Altona Mennonite, Man.

Keys—Alyssa Jennifer

(b. April 6, 2007), to Greg and Charlene Keys, Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

Krueger—Daniel Jeremy

Steven (b. Feb. 15, 2007), to Jeremy and Marsha Krueger, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Martens-Koop—Adam

Daniel Alfred (b. April 6, 2007), to Jeff and Dawn Martens-Koop, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon.

Montgomery—Wesley

James (b. April 9, 2007), to Greg and Lara Montgomery,

Foothills Mennonite, Calgary.

Ramer—Jaidyn Camryn

(b. Jan. 18, 2007), to Chad and Jenn Ramer, Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

VanderMeer—Colin

(b. April 8, 2007), to Matthew and Stacey VanderMeer, Breslau Mennonite, Ont.

Woolcott—Ashley Elizabeth

(b. April 17, 2007), to Derek Woolcott and Lisa Martin, Shantz Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Marriages

Bell/Knechtel—Russell Bell and Maebelle Knechtel, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., April 20.

Driedger/Linke—Peter Driedger and Jennifer Linke, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., March 3.

Deaths

Andres—Tena (nee Miller), 95 (b. Jan. 10, 1912; d. April 10, 2007), Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon.

Fast—Anganeta (Neti)

(b. 77 (d. April 20, 2007), First Mennonite, Calgary.

Gingerich—Curtis, 86 (b. April 2, 1921; d. April 4, 2007), Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

Goetzke—Otto Ernest

(b. d. Jan. 31, 2007), Bethel Mennonite, Langley, B.C.

Janzen—Jacob J., 103 (b. Sept. 15, 1903; d. March 12, 2007), Emmanuel Mennonite, Winkler, Man.

Rempel—Helmut

(b. d. April 17, 2007), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Warkentin—John

(b. d. March 12, 2007), Glenlea Mennonite, Man.

Wilhelm—Clayton

(b. d. April 9, 1932; d. April 22, 2007), Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont.

Willms—Art

(b. d. March 25, 1949; d. April 23, 2007), Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont.

Baptisms

Bloomington Mennonite, Ont.

—Kim Snyder, Jerry Snyder, Sally Warrington, Les Warrington, April 8.

Emmanuel Mennonite,

Winkler, Man.—Karl Unrau, Kimberley Goertzen, Eric Berg, April 15.

Rosenfeld Bergthaler

Mennonite, Man.—Val Schellenberg, April 6.

Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.—David Epp, Chelsea Nickel, Alysha Pealo, Kirsten Rahier, Lauren Rahier, April 29.

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.

School note

New MA at CMU

Winnipeg—People who want to do graduate work in theology in a Mennonite and evangelical setting will have a new option this fall when Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) launches its new master of arts in theological studies degree. The new program will begin with courses in the New and Old Testaments, ethics, theology and a history of confessions and creeds. A unique aspect of the program is that students will be able to take courses at other local schools through the Winnipeg Theological Cooperative, of which CMU is a member. These include the University of Winnipeg's Faculty of Theology, the Salvation Army's Booth College, the Winnipeg Centre for Ministry Studies at CMU (affiliated with Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif., and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.), and the Anglican Church of Canada's St. John's College. Students can also take courses at Providence Seminary. In addition to usual theological courses, the program will also focus on the interface between Christianity and the arts, film, politics, international development and economics.
—CMU release

Mennonite Church Canada

Prayer and praise requests

Pray for International Mennonite Pastors Coming Together (IMPACT) Alberta 2007, as invitations have been extended to pastors and church leaders with Mennonite Church Canada Witness partners in Bolivia, Brazil, South Africa and South Korea.

Thank God for the Evangelical Missionary Church in Cuba. During a recent visit to Cuba, MC Canada Witness staff Janet Plenert and Tim Froese heard passionate stories of the church seeking to faithfully live out Christianity from an Anabaptist perspective. The church sends its thanks to Mennonite Church Canada for books, visits of encouragement, and for formative teaching.

Please pray for several international Witness workers who have recently lost parents. Tobia Veith, Witness worker in Macau, lost her mother; Rad Houmphan, Witness worker in Thailand, is grieving the loss of her father; and Vic Thiessen, Witness worker in England, is mourning the death of his father.

May Equipping available now

Mennonite Church Canada's *May Equipping* is now available at mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/128. Highlights include:

- Assembly Sunday worship materials for congregations.
- The 2006 Minute Book summarizing motions, discussion, resolutions, and actions arising for the 2006 assembly in Edmonton.
- Online registration info for Abbotsford 2007
- CMU's *Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology: Reconciling*.

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Youths, young adults to be consulted

What might we, as a community of MC Eastern Canada congregations and partner ministries, do together to invite youths and young adults to lead lives "*worthy of the calling to which they've been called*" (Ephesians 4:1)?

This question will be the focus of an area church youth and young adult consultation to be held on June 9 at Conrad Grebel University College. Youths, young adults, parents, pastors, educators and mentors, along with school, camp, service and mission agency personnel, are invited to meet to reflect on the current strengths and challenges of youth and young adult ministry in MC Eastern Canada.

Given the identified strengths and challenges, we will explore the potential of an emerging youth and young adult strategy that will cultivate a new generation of leaders who will engage the church in extending the peace of Jesus Christ.

This consultation will provide opportunity for all represented to explore the ways in which their unique contributions to the lives of young people might connect with the offerings of others, thus enabling those youths and young adults among us to better appreciate who God is in their lives and who they are in God's world.

Abe Bergen, assistant professor of practical theology at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, will serve as the resource person for this event.

Register with Joan Schooley; e-mail joan@mceec.ca or call 519-650-3806 by June 1. Lunch is provided.

—Jeff Steckley

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Summer camp staffing updates

New and returning staff are preparing for a busy season at Camps with Meaning this summer. Some of the leadership positions that have been filled are:

- Camp Assiniboia: Gabrielle Plenert, youth camp director; and Kira Friesen, day camp director. Chrissy Friesen will be returning this summer to head up the horsemanship program with the assistance of Zach Peters.
- Camp Moose Lake: Megan Klassen Wiebe, nature instructor.
- Camp Koinonia: Christine Plett, head cook.

"We are also pleased that Marla Langelotz will serve as "shepherd" for our three Bible teachers—Richard Toews at Assiniboia, Stephanie Kaethler at Koinonia, and Thomas Epp at Moose Lake," says MC Manitoba Camping Ministries director Bob Wiebe. "This year we are preparing the Bible curriculum in a new way, with all three Bible teachers being intimately involved in the curriculum preparation process."

"Come, follow me" is the theme for this summer's camp program.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

First Mennonite hosts health fair

Saskatoon's First Mennonite Church recently hosted a health fair on May 16, giving seniors and other interested people a chance to learn more about various age-related ailments.

Presentations and displays on the topics of arthritis, diabetes, mental health, Alzheimer's disease and multiple sclerosis were included.

The event was organized by parish nurse Heidi Bartsch and the church's Congregational Health Ministries.

"It is in response to the health survey that was sent out to church members," said Bartsch of the health fair.

According to Statistics Canada, Saskatchewan has the highest concentration of seniors in the country—14.8 percent.

Dealing with conflict in congregations

"Making peace in the household of God" is the theme of an upcoming ecumenical conference in Saskatoon, where speaker David Brubaker from Eastern Mennonite University's Center for Justice and Peacebuilding in Virginia will address the topic. Rev. Dale Lang, who is known for speaking on forgiveness after losing his son in the Taber, Alta., shootings, will also be speaking.

The topic chosen for the Summer Ecumenical Institute, being held June 26 to 29, deals with change and conflict in congregations.

For more information or to register, visit ecumenism.net.

Mennonite Church Alberta

Lively discussions as committees meet

"They were the liveliest discussions we've had for a few years," said conference minister Jim Shantz, referring to the MC Alberta all committees meetings in Calgary on April 28.

Cancellation of the annual Songfest this year generated much discussion after delegates at the annual conference in Lethbridge affirmed the need for communal worship and fellowship in the province. A number of ideas

were discussed, including one for an annual worship event hosted by churches on a rotating basis. The event would vary according to the host congregation.

On the theme of inter-church relationships, there was also support for the idea of reviving the practice of pulpit/congregational exchanges. The Congregational Leadership Committee will look at this idea.

Plans for an independently funded young adult church plant are underway in the Calgary area. The vision for the new venture, according to organizer Walter Wiebe, is, "to provide a Christian community for young adults who are currently not active in any church environment." MC Alberta has agreed to provide charitable status for the venture, and has set up an advisory board. The next step, according to Wiebe, is to hire a

leader. Ads have been placed at several Mennonite schools. "We have no idea how it will develop; that's what the person who is hired for the position will determine. Anything from a regular church service to a 3 night a week coffee house...it's a complete experiment."

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Jesus is ultimate hero youths hear

What does it mean to be a "hero"?

This was the question that 150 MC B.C. middle school aged youths and sponsors explored when they came together for the third annual Junior Impact retreat, from April 27 to 29 at Camp Squeah.

The theme for the weekend was "Project U: The evolution of a hero." Reece Friesen, associate pastor of Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church

in Abbotsford, was resource person; he told a superhero version of the story of Peter and Jesus. The challenge was—and is—to accept Jesus' offer to be his sidekick and be trained by him, the only way to become a hero.

Using original cartoon drawings, Friesen illustrated true heroism from the Bible. Just as comic book superheroes and their trusty sidekicks always succeed in saving those in trouble, so Jesus also succeeded in saving humanity through his sacrifice on the cross; he completely gave himself up as the ultimate hero.

Women's network group forming

A new B.C. inter-Mennonite women's network group is forming, with the first breakfast meeting scheduled for June 2, 9:30 a.m., at the

Village Tea and Coffee House in Fort Langley.

The Mennonite Women's Network in B.C. was established at a gathering in March, following the demise of the Mennonite Central Committee Women's Concerns last year. Organizers say the purpose of the newly formed group is to be a resource of friendship, encouragement and networking for B.C. Mennonite women. The hope is to have meetings every other month.

All interested women are welcome. For more information, contact Elsie Goerzen at 604-858-9679.

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.

HENRY KLIEWER



From our leaders

Seven years in Mennonite Church British Columbia as conference minister are coming to an end. A time to reflect. A time to celebrate.

The late Catholic author and contemplative Henri Nouwen says this about celebration: "Celebration in the Christian sense has little to do with frivolous song and dance. Celebration is only possible through the deep realization that life and death are never found completely separate. Celebration can only really come about where fear and love, joy and sorrow, tears and smiles can exist together. Celebration is the acceptance of life in a constantly increasing awareness of its preciousness. And life is precious not only because it can be seen, touched and tasted, but also because it will be gone one day. When we celebrate a wedding, we celebrate a union as well as a departure; when we celebrate death, we celebrate lost friendship as well as gained liberty...."

When we celebrate the beginning of a call, we at once are aware that one day it will end.

From the beginning of this ministry, including an encounter with cancer, to its completion with an all-conference celebration of covenant renewal, congregations and area church leadership almost unanimously have been willing to stay involved through all the different experiences and phases of the journey. What a gift!

From the beginning I prayed for a heart big enough to

Sacred transitions

I came to see it as a passing of the baton to a successor, while discerning whose baton God is now calling me to take up.

embrace our congregations with their various theologies and polities. I wanted the area church to be known to have a face and a heart. The journey has been one of wonderful growth into that prayer, as God answered it in many different ways.

Signs for a time of transition emerged over the last year as our area church went through a revisioning and restructuring process. That came to include a change in our staffing needs. While this required a personal journey of letting go, I came to see it as a passing of the baton to a successor, while discerning whose baton God is now calling me to take up.

I am grateful to our area church leadership, who caringly walked through the transition with its staff. Never was there a sense of being slighted, sidelined or otherwise discouraged. That also enabled blessing on my part to the process and the changes.

The race is not done. True, we are human and our motives need constant checking and refining. Nevertheless, we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who has set our course on this journey and will see it to completion.

Looking back on these seven years, I celebrate a sense of sacred journey.

I trust it will carry on here as well as in my future ministry. The Lord is faithful and he will do it.

Henry Kliewer has been the MC B.C. conference minister for the past seven years.

Meeting called to change name

Abbotsford, B.C.—Mennonite Central Committee Supportive Care Services Society invites its voting members to attend an extraordinary general meeting at its main Abbotsford office on June 9, from 9 to 11 a.m. The purpose of the meeting is to ratify a recommendation from the board of directors to incorporate a new name for the organization. The recommendation to be presented will, if approved, change the name to *Communitas Supportive Care Society*. For more information, call Steve Thiessen at 604-850-6608 or Ken Kehler at 604-273-3292. —MCC release

Shaped note singers take note

Roseville, Ont.—The Detweiler Meetinghouse Board is sponsoring an all-day shaped note singing event on June 10, with lunch on the grounds. Singing begins at 10:30 a.m.

Participants will sing from the *Harmonia Sacra* singing school and hymn book first printed 1832. This is the book that first introduced the currently popular hymn, "Praise God From Whom all Blessings Flow," to Mennonite communities.

The tradition of shaped note hymn singing was learned by many people in North American Mennonite churches and a significant number still appreciate this method of singing.

Books will be provided, but bring lunch to share with others.

The event is funded by a grant from the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation. —Detweiler Meetinghouse 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 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. Theme: "Joyous Christian living." Corpus Christi Male Choir will sing on June 6. Call Dave Neufeld at 403-335-8649 for more information.

June 8-10: Third annual men's retreat at Camp Valaqua. Theme: "Kingdom carving in the Alpha-male milieu." Speaker: Harold

Schilk. For more information, contact Marvin Baergen at 403-256-2894.

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

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

Saskatchewan

May 22-25: Continuing education classes for pastors at Lutheran Seminary, Saskatoon. Speaker: Walter Sawatzky from AMBS. Theme: "Exploring Eastern Christianity."

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

June 3-5: Pastor-spouse retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

June 9: MC Saskatchewan special delegate session for Person to Person, at Carrot River Mennonite; 2 p.m.

June 10: Soup and pie lunch fundraiser for Camp Elim at Zion Mennonite Church, Swift Current.

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 28: Shekinah Retreat Centre Adventure Challenge.

Sept. 7-9: SMYO junior high retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

Oct. 12-13: Saskatchewan Women in Mission fall retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

Oct. 26-28: Quilting and scrapbooking retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

Oct. 27: MC Saskatchewan Equipping Day.

Manitoba

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.

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

June 10: Eden Foundation's Big Brothers/Sisters 15th annual charity golf tournament at Winkler Golf Course. Texas scramble format. For more information, call 1-866-895-2919.

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

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

June 15-16: Winnipeg MCC Relief Sale and Festival, CMU.

June 23: Camp Koinonia golf tournament.

June 28: Eden Foundation's "Iron Man" golf marathon at Winkler Golf Course. Raise pledges and play 100 holes of golf in one day. For more information, call 1-866-895-2919.

June 30: Cycle Clear Lake fundraiser for MCC Relief Sale

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

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

Aug. 25-26: Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church 125th anniversary celebrations.

Sept. 8: Morris MCC Relief Sale, Stampede Grounds. Huge farmers market.

Sept. 21-22: Brandon MCC Relief Sale.

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

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

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

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

Ontario

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 22-31: MC Eastern Canada Generosity Project meetings: 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 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 27: UMEI spring concert in Leamington; 3 p.m.

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. Visit mennonite-sale.ca for more information.

June 10: Tavistock Mennonite Church's 65th anniversary celebration; 10 a.m. A potluck meal will follow the service.

June 10: "All-day shaped note singing from the *Harmonia*

For rent

Two-bedroom retreat cottage for rent on the Little Mississippi River near Bancroft, Ont. Wood stove, hydro, running hot and cold water, shower and flush toilet. Call 519-471-3309 or contact kaecee@rogers.com.

FOR RENT: 2 bdrm apartment in quiet triplex. No smoking, no pets. 519-656-2983.

For sale

Cute 1½ storey home in old Niagara-on-the-Lake. Listed with Niagara Realty; agents welcome. Could be a great investment. Rental opportunities. Contact Rob at 905.380.3851, 1.866.545.8006 or robw@notirealty.com. Priced to sell.

For Sale/Trade: Antique cook stove made in 1881 by Home Comfort. 6' long x 4' deep complete with warming tray. Needs some work but beautiful unit. Asking \$250. Want to see it go to someone who will appreciate its value. Photos available. 705-653-1317.

Sacra" event at Detweiler Meetinghouse, Roseville; from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Bring lunch to share.

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.

June 12: UMEI strawberry social, Leamington.

June 14-16: Write! Canada Christian Writers' Conference, at the Guelph Bible Conference Centre. Keynote speaker: Rudy Wiebe. Theme: "Writing Canada: Telling stories with soul." Register online at thewordguild.com.

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

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

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

June 21: MEDA Waterloo chapter breakfast meeting, at the Stone Crock, St. Jacobs; 7:30 a.m. Speaker: Marcus

Shantz, Mercedes Corp. vice-president.

June 23: Strawberry social at Nithview Home, New Hamburg; 2 to 4 p.m. and 7 to 8:30 p.m. Ticket available at the door. Sponsored by Nithview Auxiliary.

June 30: Aylmer Auction for Relief at the curling club.

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

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

Employment opportunities

Toronto United Mennonite Church is seeking an **interim pastor** to work with the congregation for approximately one year. This person will guide the congregation through a process of transition and grief following the retirement of a long-serving pastor. This person will also guide the congregation through a clear process of discernment as we attempt to identify our vision and mission for the future.

The position is available Sept. 1, 2007. Applications will be accepted until June 14, 2007.

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



SUMMER HEAD COOK required for **Silver Lake Mennonite Camp**, Sauble Beach, Ontario. This position runs full-time for 11 weeks from June 11 - August 26. \$375/week. Send resume to SLMC, R.R.#1, Hepworth, ON N0H 1P0. Job description and details at www.slmc.on.ca.

Employment opportunities

Mennonite Collegiate Institute
 Box 250
 Gretna, MB R0G 0V0



MCI is a Christian high school operated by a society of Mennonite churches throughout Manitoba, which seeks to develop God-given gifts in young people through the delivery of Manitoba and faith curricula, extensive arts, athletics and discipleship programming and a residence program for approximately half the student body.

MCI invites applicants for the following:

Residence Staff: Persons seeking full-time positions working within a team of six residence life directors with a passion for ministry to young people. Skills and experience in youth ministry with interests in sports, coaching, music and drama are assets. Post-secondary biblical study is also an asset.

- **Two positions (male) to begin in fall 2007 (or immediately if possible)**

Teaching Staff:

- **One teaching position in English, Bible and Religious Studies**

Contact Darryl Loewen, Principal, at 204-327-5891 or e-mail at principal@mciblues.net.

First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man., invites applications for the position of **LEADING MINISTER** to provide leadership to a pastoral team of five and a large congregation. First Mennonite is a diverse community of believers with Russian-German Mennonite roots, a strong musical tradition, and three distinct Sunday services.

The successful candidate will have a M. Div. or equivalent, a commitment to Anabaptist/Mennonite theology, and pastoral leadership experience.

Specifically, the church is looking for a spiritual leader with a profound understanding of the Christian faith who is:

- Gifted in preaching, interpersonal relations, and administration.
- Energetic and positive, a catalyst and a synergist.
- Capable of working with church members to clarify a vision for the future of the church.
- Able to embrace and inspire the many gifts and talents of this congregation.

Start date and administrative allowance to be negotiated.

Apply in confidence to:

Mr. Richard Klassen, Chair
 Ministerial Search Committee
 First Mennonite Church
 320 Kingsway Avenue
 Winnipeg, MB
 R3M 0H4
 Phone: 204-474-1368
 Email: richard.k@enduron.net

For more information contact Richard Klassen.



Mennonite Economic Development Associates seeks a
Communication and Media Relations Manager

The Communications and Media Relations Manager will be responsible to expand MEDA's image and exposure in the North American public at large. The goal of this exposure is to reach a wider audience and enhance MEDA's influence in both the US and Canada on key issues. This will include, but not be limited to: developing media contacts in print, radio and TV; preparing quick releases; monitoring MEDA's activities for press opportunities; and providing support to MEDA staff on preparing press kits and incorporating media links in their work. This job is based in Waterloo, Ont., and starts in July 2007.

Qualifications

- Minimum 5 years public relations, journalism, and/or TV/radio broadcast experience.
- Degree (ideally master's) in public relations, journalism or related field.
- Understanding of MEDA's constituency.
- Appreciation and support of MEDA's faith, values and goals.

To apply, send resume to jobs@meda.org
www.meda.org

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.

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

Nutana Park Mennonite Church is inviting an application for a position of **Co-pastor**

to provide full-time leadership within a pastoral team and to a multi-generational membership of approximately 250. The pastor we are looking for will be well schooled in and committed to Anabaptist/Mennonite theology, gifted in preaching, pastoral care, discipleship and visitation. Our pastors, together with the congregation, will seek ways in which we can participate in ecumenism, engaging the community and larger world in which we live with the reconciling gospel of Jesus Christ. Support for the Mennonite Church at the provincial and Canadian levels is viewed as important. Preferred starting time is in the fall of 2007. Remuneration guided by Mennonite Church Canada guidelines. Applicants are to respond to: NPMC Pastoral Selection Committee, c/o Nutana Park Mennonite Church, 1701 Ruth St., Saskatoon, SK S7J 0L7.



Accepting resumes for full-time
**Intermediate
Software Consultant**

Winnipeg, MB., & Waterloo, ON.
www.peaceworks.ca

River East MB Church is seeking a **Pastor of Worship** (0.3 FTE) and a **Children's Ministries Coordinator** (0.2 FTE). Positions may be combined. For position descriptions, see our web site: www.remb.ca.

Please send resume with references to:
Search Committee
755 McLeod Avenue
River East MB Church
Winnipeg, MB R2K 0B8
Email: office@remb.ca

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



Columbia Bible College invites applications for **Academic Dean**.

This Administrative Faculty post is a full-time Senior Administrative position which provides leadership to the academic programs of the College. Major areas of oversight include: curriculum, faculty, student academic records, assessment and accreditation liaison.

For further information, please see the job descriptions and qualifications on the Employment section of the website, www.columbiabc.edu.

Applications will be considered beginning June 11, 2007, but applications will be accepted until position is filled.

Please mail resume to:
President's Office
Columbia Bible College
2940 Clearbrook Road
Abbotsford, BC V2T 2Z8
Tel: 604-853-3358
E-mail: Presidentsoffice@columbiabc.edu



Menno Simons Christian School has **Junior High teaching** positions available for the 2007-08 school year. Please visit our website at www.mennosimons.ab.ca for detailed job descriptions.

Canadian Mennonite

National Correspondent

If you want a front row seat on what God is doing in our church, this is a great opportunity! *Canadian Mennonite* is seeking a part-time (40 percent time) National Correspondent for the bi-weekly Mennonite periodical. Resumes will be accepted until the position is filled, with the plan that work start in late June.

This position is based in Winnipeg with flexible arrangements around work schedules and location. Some travel is required and pay is salary (including retirement benefits) plus expenses. We will provide a work space and equipment. Responsibilities include filing bi-weekly reports and features on news, subjects and people of interest to our readers; covering church events and organizations; developing story features; and assigning articles to freelance writers.

Applicants should have strong knowledge of, commitment to, and a passion for the Mennonite faith community and for *Canadian Mennonite's* ministry and mission; a commitment to our Confession of Faith; skills in interviewing, news and feature writing, and photography; a creative and curious spirit; and the ability to work independently. Come and serve the wider church in this exciting way!

Please send questions and applications to:

Tim Miller Dyck, Editor and Publisher, Canadian Mennonite
490 Dutton Dr., Unit C5, Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7
Phone: 1-800-378-2524, x225
E-mail: editor@canadianmennonite.org

Christian *University* Education

"My time at CMU helped build a framework for my studies in medicine. It helped me discover what I believed, thought and valued, and pointed me in the direction of a helping profession."

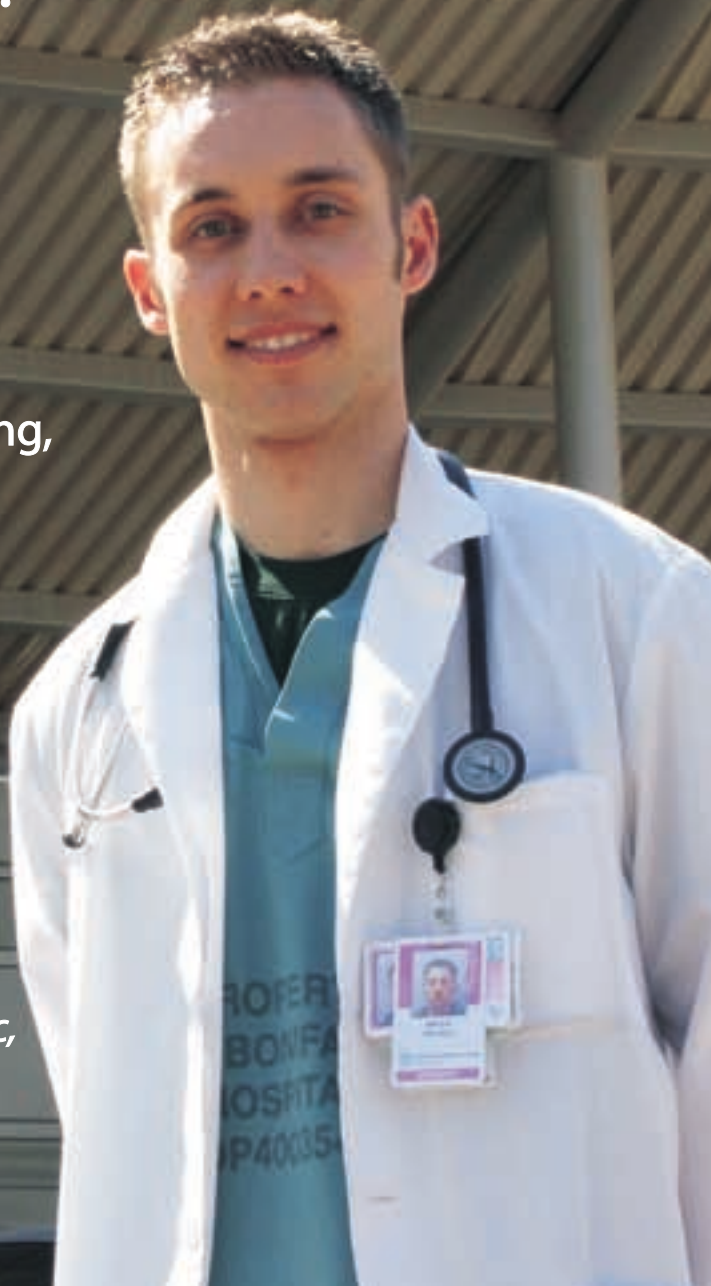
Brian Grunau, 2003 graduate, now studying medicine at the University of Manitoba.

Brian is just one of many students who come to CMU to build a foundation for further studies in medicine, law, education, occupational therapy, nursing, social work and other professions.

What do you want to do with your life? *Start your journey at CMU!*

Programs: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Music Therapy, Bachelor of Theology, Bachelor of Church Ministries.

Coming Soon: Majors in Communications & Media and Business & Organizational Studies.



CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

www.cmu.ca

500 Shaftesbury Blvd. | Winnipeg, MB | R3P 2N2 | 204.487.3300 or toll-free 1.877.231.4570 | cu@cmu.ca