

# CANADIAN Mennonite

July 9, 2007  
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**Choosing daily  
the Bread of Life**  
page 5

**Saskatchewan  
News 'n Notes**  
page 15

## A legacy of injustice

There's a Mennonite joke about how this country got its name. A (German-speaking) Christopher Columbus sees land ahead. He gets out his telescope, looks around, and then announces, "Keina da" (nobody over there). Ouch.

Last year, we reported on a plan to try to reclaim Ukrainian lands forcibly taken from Mennonites around the time of the Bolshevik Revolution. Many of these Mennonites fled to Canada. There was a strong negative reaction among Canadian Mennonites to the idea of Ukrainian land claims, and not just in concern over what would happen to the people that now own and live on those lands. One Mennonite wrote me: "Here in southern Manitoba, we get nervous tics over that because if we would ever set that precedent, we have a lot of farmers, my family included, who would have to hide the arrowheads they found in the furrows a hundred years ago."

Another example has a close connection to many Ontario Mennonites. In 1784, Frederick Haldimand, the British governor-general, granted almost 405,000 hectares of land (roughly, a 9.6-kilometre strip on both sides of the Grand River for its entire length) to the Six Nations people as compensation for land they lost in the U.S. War of Independence after siding with the British. The Crown agreed to hold these lands in trust "for the use and benefit of the Six Nations, and their posterity...forever."

More than 24,000 of those hectares surrounding Kitchener-Waterloo were sold through non-native intermediaries to a group of Pennsylvania Mennonites in 1805. Revenue from the deal "was intended to provide a fixed annuity to the Six Nations for one thousand years, without touching the princi-

pal," writes Reginald Good, a Mennonite historian who has researched this case extensively. Mennonites paid 10,000 pounds as their portion of a larger land transaction.

William Claus, deputy superintendent-general of the Indian Department and one of the Six Nations trustees, assured the Mennonites that they had clear title. He gave 513 pounds to chiefs of the Six Nations, kept 1,998 pounds for himself as expenses (in direct violation of his instructions as trustee) and took the rest to England.

Where did that and similar Haldimand revenue go? Besides "expenses," it went into general government coffers and is long since spent. What was going in one pocket was coming out of another just as fast. What a fraud!

This is just one case out of almost 1,000 aboriginal land claims that are unsettled nationwide. "Canada has a huge problem," Adrian Jacobs, a Six Nations pastor and Mennonite Central Committee Ontario Aboriginal Neighbours aboriginal liaison, told me. "Canada has squatted on land and laid claim to it against the whole legal system."

According to the Ipperwash inquiry report, "The single biggest source of frustration, distrust and ill-feeling among aboriginal people in Ontario is our failure to deal in a just and expeditious way with breaches of treaty and other legal obligations to First Nations."

Then there is the sorry history of residential schools, forced moves, being kept out of decisions affecting them (especially with big industrial projects), and substandard living conditions. The many injustices suffered by—and the legitimate grievances of—First Nations peoples should make all of us sad and angry. Non-native Mennonites need to listen and learn more on these issues, even when they are hard to hear or hit close to home.

—Tim Miller Dyck

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Canada

July 9, 2007  
Vol. 11, No. 14



Page 4

- 
- 4**      **UpClose**  
Blindness no limitation **4**
- 
- 5**      **Faith&Life**  
Choosing daily the Bread of Life **5**
- 
- 7**      **Arts&Culture**  
From the 'fringes' to the 'fringe' **7**
- 
- 8**      **InConversation**  
Letters **8**  
Sex in the pews **9**  
Conscription of your tax dollars **10**
- 
- 12**     **WiderChurch**  
Theft raises fears in Colombia **12**  
Recommitting to native justice **12**
- 
- 17**     **LocalChurch**  
Letting God's light shine in **17**  
Alberta women 'called to serve' **18**  
Transitions **27**
- 
- 28**     **TheChurches**  
A wealth of experience **29**
- 
- 30**     **ToMorrow**



Page 7

## Web site preview

Get a preview of the next *Canadian Mennonite* before it comes in the mail. Selections are posted on our web site at [www.canadianmennonite.org](http://www.canadianmennonite.org) on the Thursday before the issue date. So you can check out the July 30 issue by July 26.



Page 5

**Cover: Founders of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) network of thrift stores—Linie Friesen, left, Selma Loewen, Susan Giesbrecht and Sara Stoesz—were feted at a celebration in Winnipeg recently to recognize their contributions. Thirty-five years ago, the four women coordinated the opening of the first MCC thrift shop, starting a movement that has since raised more than \$100 million for MCC (a zero is missing on the cake). These thrift shops provided the perfect solution to the now legendary statement made by John Hostetler in the early 1970s: "What we need is a machine that will turn clothing into cash." —MCC photo by Gladys Terichow**

Calgary

## Blindness no limitation for church musician

It's Thursday evening. I arrive at church for another worship band practice, and I'm actually a bit early for once. I walk up to the front of the Foothills Mennonite Church sanctuary and, I should have known, Caprina Wiebe, our pianist, is sitting on the front pew, all ready to go.

We chat a bit, and I decide that I should introduce her to a new song we'll be doing on Sunday. I take the music up to the piano and start plunking out the notes, trying to give her the feel of the song. After only two

**'Some music seems to tap into your soul.'**

lines, she patiently walks up behind me, probably not too impressed by my Grade 4 piano skills, and says, "Yeah, I think I've got it."

She's right; she does have it, no problem. As usual, I'm amazed by her musical ability. Why? Because she can't read music. Actually, she can't even see it—because she is blind.

Caprina Wiebe was born in 1966, two months premature and an only surviving twin. She weighed less than a kilogram, and the doctors—unsure of exactly how much oxygen premature babies needed to stay alive—erred on the side of too much, risking blindness, as opposed to deafness or mental disability with too little.

After a few months in the hospi-



Photo by Fonda Wiebe

**Despite her blindness, pianist Caprina Wiebe has been an integral part of the worship team ministry at Calgary's Foothills Mennonite Church for the past five years. She has also been accompanying students at a local dance studio since her high school graduation.**

tal and three foster homes, she met her new family: parents Ben and Eva Wiebe, and three older siblings, Elaine, Audrey and Marvin. Growing up, she was encouraged to participate in regular activities despite being blind, and thus she didn't find her lack of sight limiting.

Wiebe says her musical abilities were happened upon quite by accident. As a preschooler, she would listen to records as well as to her siblings practicing various instruments. One evening at the supper table, her brother was tapping a glass with his fork. Caprina recognized the pitch, and said, "That's an A." Her family was

taken aback and quickly ran to the piano to check if she was correct. Sure enough, she was, and her perfect pitch was discovered.

The year she started elementary school, Wiebe also began piano lessons. By her mid-teens, she had acquired a great appreciation for classical music. Two pieces in particular—the second movement of Beethoven's "Pathétique Sonata," and "Nadia's Theme"—influenced her decision to become a musician herself.

With determination and God-given talent, Wiebe got her first job as a pianist for a dance school right after graduating from high school. She continues to play for a dance school to this day.

Wiebe began playing piano for one of Foothills' three worship teams five years ago. "I had wanted to be a part of this since it started in our church," she says. "I've always liked collaborating with people when it comes to making music."

Although she enjoys the old hymns, she finds that this newer worship connects with her spirit at a deeper level. "Some music seems to tap into your soul," she says.

Wiebe is always happy to learn new songs. "I enjoy the whole atmosphere at practices," she says. "Even if I have to learn something on short notice, I just bring along my player to record it, and try to find the music on the Internet."

Having had the pleasure of being on a worship team with her for three of the past five years, I can attest that Wiebe's gift for music is clearly no accident, and she is using it to glorify God who gave it to her.

And, yes, I have given up trying to "teach" her how to play new songs.

—**Fonda Wiebe**

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# Choosing daily the Bread of Life

*Julia Thiessen is a member at Altona (Man.) Mennonite Church, but she has been attending Charleswood Mennonite Church in Winnipeg regularly since Sept. 2005 and is actively involved as a youth sponsor. She presented this sermon at Charleswood on Aug. 6, 2006, as part of a summer series on the theme of “bread.”*

*“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever” (John 6:56-59).*

The text is rich with imagery and loaded with generations of meaning. Jesus gives himself many meaningful names in the Gospel of John, and Bread of Life has made it into enough of our songs and speech that it has become one of the central images of the fourth gospel. It is difficult to know what to say about Jesus as the bread that brings everlasting life, so I will instead begin with the first word in my title.

## ‘Choosing’

As North Americans living in the 21st century, it is important that we use this word carefully. We are surrounded by a culture that values individual choice as a good almost above all others. I noticed the other day that grocery stores now offer a choice between Peanut Butter Oreos, Mint Oreos, Chocolate Oreos, Double Stuff Oreos or just plain old Oreos. As a free agent, you can choose your own favourite.

I would argue that this way of looking at the world permeates all levels of our thinking. Everyone—from the Evangelical preacher to the liberal “free thinker”—seems to put a high premium on choice. Evangelical altar calls and popular politicking both favour a “for us or against us” mentality. The choice is black and white, made once and for all. Each of us is tempted in some situations to be unmerciful and unyielding, polarizing right and wrong, and expecting everyone to pick a side.

On the other hand, I think most of us find ourselves occasionally tempted by a pick-and-choose approach: We want to accept that whatever someone chooses is right for them, and that they are entitled to change their minds at any point.

Both of these pictures idolize the freedom of the individual, and if choice is understood this way it becomes too easy for our choices to be about gaining control.

In Joshua 24 we hear a common Old Testament story—a story of covenant renewal between Yahweh and the tribes of Israel. Verses 14 to 18 narrate Joshua’s first challenge to the people; he challenges them to worship Yahweh, and they consent. What makes this story interesting is its explicit language of choice; verse 15 says, *“But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.”*

The story seems a perfect example of God’s gift of free will and humanity’s apparent religious freedom. But is this an example of individual agents exercising their right to free choice? Hardly.

Choice is not made in a vacuum. Joshua calls the people of Israel to choose right after reminding them of their past relationship with Yahweh and what Yahweh has done for them. To quote one commentary, “The choice is no real choice at all. Yahweh will continue to be what Yahweh has always been, our God.” Israel responds assertively and without hesitation to Joshua’s call to choose.

So we do not have here the choice of people who are radically free, but the choice of a people who are already in relationship with the God who gives life. Nor do we have here the choice of individuals to serve God. The people of Israel respond with one voice, one resounding yes.

I hope we can learn from this and not simply believe it to be outdated. Certainly it is important for each person to respond to the challenge, but this choice is not made alone. When we choose to partake of Jesus—the Bread of Life—we don’t just listen to fellow followers and finally make our own decision. The church is not simply

Continued on page 6



**Choosing** *From page 5*

a cheerleading section. It goes much further than that.

There are times when the individual is not able to choose rightly. We all have times when we don't know what it means to respond to God's choice. Throughout all these times we can allow the greater church body to make that choice for us. We, as a church, reply, "Yes, we will serve and obey God!" or, "Yes, we will feed on the bread that is the body of Christ!"

Rampant western individualism would have us believe that this is somewhat of an insufficient response. For a statement of this kind, one would most likely be asked, "But what do 'you' think?" It takes incredible courage to accept that the choice we make is not at all cheapened by its communal nature.

**Choosing 'daily'**

We come now to the second word in the sermon title; the choice we make is made "daily."

The Old Testament covenant was renewed many times over. The commitment the people of Israel made—to serve Yahweh honestly and faithfully—was an impossible one to follow.

Being the people of Yahweh does not provide security, as is clearly seen in the story arc of the Old Testament. We see that the righteous are not spared from all affliction, but that God cares for the righteous throughout their afflictions.

Throughout our insecurities and afflictions, constant covenant renewal is necessary. Eating of the Bread of Life is about incorporating oneself into the body of Christ. We are what we eat, after all, but this takes time. As we eat of the body of Christ we are incorporated into the body of Christ, but this process is never—at least not in our timeframe—finally complete.

**Choosing daily 'the Bread of Life'**

This leads us to the question of what it is we are choosing. It is our tendency to take metaphors and ask, "Well, what does that mean?" We want concrete examples and stories to tell us "how it works." We want to translate what we consider metaphor into something literal and, therefore, relevant.

## You give them

*"You give them something to eat."*

But eight months of a man's wages could not feed 5,000 families even once:

a lesson in impossibility.

I can't,

no-one can.

Hunger cries out to wealth, trapped in a self-perpetuating system of self-serving, self-centred hoarding where wealth begets more wealth and poverty begets abject poverty.

Where twenty percent of people own eighty percent of the world's goods,

Jesus says again,

*"You give them to eat."*

Give them bread

to give them worth:

bread for the world,

bread with the Word,

bread for thanks and worship,

bread to fight poverty and hunger.

Not eight months' wages

can feed all the hungry for one meal;

but my five loaves and two fishes

set beside your five and two

set beside other fives and twos

may break a perpetuating cycle,

may start a new cycle

of caring, helping, sharing,

to give people bread to eat.

—**Alvin G. Ens**

And while there is great value in powerful personal stories, there is also value in letting such biblical phrases speak on their own. In other words, metaphors do not need translation in order to be true. Jesus' words in John 6:56-59 are truth statements; they are filled with truth that our common striving for the literal could not begin to express.

These truths are most fully realized in the practice of communion. Several years ago, I would not have thought participation in the Eucharist to be as central as it is. I understood the church's practice of communion, as I believe many Mennonites do, as an important—but small—symbol of something that happens much more concretely in other ways: We become the body of Christ through our extra-curricular church involvement; we eat the Bread of Life every time we eat good food in good fellowship. Perhaps this "bread" needs to be grown locally and organically in order for it to truly be the bread of life!

I love that the Mennonite Church has taught me the importance of these things and I strongly believe that choosing the life that Jesus offers does lead to church involvement, feasting, fellowship and social consciousness. And also the other way round—that church involvement, fellowship and social consciousness lead to choosing a life of discipleship.

The danger, however, is to turn the command to feast and live into a command to live a morally upright life. I could have spoken about the hard work ahead of us, how choosing the Bread of Life means putting away our selfish idols, no matter how difficult this might be. But the passage from John does not use language like this, and I think for this reason we Mennonites tend to favour the Synoptic gospels; they are better at giving us something to do. John just tells us to eat and live.

When I lived in Germany for a year, I was often travelling on the weekends, and I spent many a Sunday morning attending mass at whatever cathedral was nearby. This more-liturgical worship—along with a lot of the reading I've done recently—have led me to a new appreciation of the sacraments. We want to call communion "just" a symbol, but "just" does not belong in that sentence. Let the symbol, rather, become our true reality. Through the sacrament of communion—through the Eucharist—we truly become Christ's body.

As the church, we have been chosen and God has acted in our lives. As we choose daily and in communion services to eat of Jesus and become his body, we are given a taste of the kingdom of God. So when Jesus calls his disciples to eat and live forever, he is not speaking only of something that will happen when we have passed on. The kingdom breaks in and becomes our reality, and we learn to live eternally now!

This language is heavy and hasn't accepted our western desire for scientific literalism, but it is true. Let us also bring with us all the many layers of meaning we already attach to these images and we may begin to understand what it means to *choose daily the Bread of Life*.

—**Julia Thiessen**

Toronto

## From northern Ontario to the 'fringe' of Toronto

The Sunshine Players premiered *Reesor*, a production based on the real-life story of a Mennonite ghost town in northern Ontario, as part of the Toronto Fringe Theatre Festival earlier this month.

Writer/actor Erin Brandenburg grew up as part of Harrow Mennonite Church in southwestern Ontario. She remembers hearing elders in the community speak nostalgically about their youth in Reesor, a small northern settlement that existed from 1925-46. The hardships were real, yet they seemed to remember it as a kind of magical place.

The script for *Reesor* was based on information gleaned from interviews

of past Reesor residents, and from reading memoirs and letters from the period. Brandenburg says the production "focuses on the day-to-day experiences of creating a

home in the wilderness." The story is told through the eyes of a 12-year-old Mennonite girl, and "through her eyes we see the growth of the community and its struggles along the way."

The theatrical production weaves together live music, text and on-stage baking for a creative multi-disciplinary presentation. Musicians Andrew Penner, Dave McEthern and Gord Bolan perform on handmade instruments by artist Iner Souster.

The historic settlement of Reesor was named after Thomas Reesor, a Mennonite minister from Markham, Ont., who helped establish the community as a way of assisting Mennonite refugees fleeing the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in the 1920s. For the first decade or so, the settlement did well harvesting pulp wood, but

it slowly went into decline after the most readily available wood was depleted. Families gradually moved to other communities where Russian Mennonite people had settled across Canada.

After the play ends at the Factory Studio Theatre on July 15, the Sunshine Players are considering doing a small tour of southern Ontario later in the year.

—**Joanna Reesor-McDowell**



**Writer/actor Erin Brandenburg performs in *Reesor*, a Sunshine Players production featured as part of this summer's Toronto Fringe Theatre Festival.**

Photo by Tamita Zastansky

**The story is told through the eyes of a 12-year-old Mennonite girl.**



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## Letters

Canadian Mennonite *apologizes for using words that, while factually accurate, also carried negative or judgmental overtones when we ourselves described Sakoieta' Widrick's talk in our recent news report ("Information session turns into angry harangue," June 11, page 24). We will be on alert to avoid this in the future. We regret any hurt that may have been done to him or to Mennonite-First Nations relationships in general.*

—Tim Miller Dyck,  
Editor and Publisher

### Sakoieta' Widrick responds to article

I extend to Mennonite people good thoughts of peace, friendship and mutual respect. May there be peace when we meet.

Regarding the article about my talk, "Information session turns into angry harangue," June 11, page 24, I am sorry to read that the magazine could not extend me respect, friendship and peace, but, instead, denounced me and my work.

First, I was invited to speak to a group of people as a Mohawk man, not as a former MC Canada staffer. I was asked to address an issue and I believe I addressed it well, with truth and honesty. I refused to address the issue using the rhetoric that has been used by the church and church missions, that has caused so much disrespect and disruption of our people and culture.

Second, regarding the statement about not answering questions about how to build relationships directly, in our way as aboriginal people we believe we have to create an accurate context so the answer we give can be understood better. Many times the answer will be in a holistic manner, where we not only speak of how the question affects us as a people, but also politically, spiritually and socially. This is a definite difference between us and the non-native way of communicating. Many times, as in this

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case, it is not respected.

People I spoke to afterwards were more than appreciative of the frank and honest manner in which I not only spoke but did address questions asked of me. I asked for questions or comments several times, so if there were any difficulties that people had with my words, they could have asked them or commented, and we would have been able to create clarification right there, person to person.

Third, I stand by my statement, as reported, that "aboriginals own the land and the Europeans are behind on their rent." It is accurate and truthful. If one were to look at land ownership in Canada, according to the legalities of owning land, one would soon see that Canada only "owns" 25 percent of what it claims to own. The rest is still in aboriginal hands. Yet Canada continues to daily steal the resources from this 75 percent and collect the revenues without sharing these resources with the original occupiers of the land.

In order to right the wrongs, before something can be fixed or repaired, an agreement has to be reached first by the parties involved as to what is actually wrong and how it needs to be "fixed," as well as who should do the work. For too long, the Mennonite Church and other denominations have come to our people offering their answers without being willing to listen to what we believe the problem is and how we should fix it, following the principles of the first treaty of North America, the Two Row Wampum Belt.

When friends treat each other as friends, there is no need for force or coercion. Yet somewhere, the Mennonite Church and other denominations have failed to not only learn this concept, but also to accept it.

I was asked to address an issue and I believe I addressed it well—with truth and honesty. I also tend to get very passionate when I speak and have many times had people accuse me of being angry when I wasn't.

I am sorry I wasn't sent a copy of the article to read before I was denounced so publicly. *[It is not normal practice to provide pre-publication copies of articles other than to check facts and quotes for accuracy if there are any uncertainties about them. Ed.]* But then I am used to being "bush-whacked" when I have offered true history, true facts and honest discussion from an aboriginal (in this case, Mohawk) perspective, instead of feeding into the myths of who Aboriginal Peoples are and how the church can convert them.

At Nairn, I was hosted by some wonderful people and treated very well. I believe when one is invited to speak, they should never insult the host. So I had a very difficult time addressing the topic I was asked to speak about, creating clarity and reaching for understanding, because I realized in addressing it, there would be a chance people would be upset, angry or offended by my words and I would be telling many of the people present that their understanding of our world and situation as Aboriginal Peoples would probably be very inaccurate and even racist. Try doing this without offending the host!

At this time in my life, I no longer identify as Christian, nor do I accept the teachings of the church. The teachings of Jesus are still very near and dear to my heart, but after reading this article, is it any wonder there is so much distrust of the church and church people by aboriginals?



Mennonites, as well as other denominations, should really concentrate on cleaning up their own backyard before they try to clean up ours.

—**Sakioeta' Widrick, Mohawk Wolf Clan, Six Nations of the Grand Iroquois Territory, Ont.**

## Mennonites must listen through the pain

Re: "Information session turns into angry diatribe," June 11, page 24.

Sakioeta' Widrick explained that the reason early missionaries to the Americas were able to convert many aboriginals to Christianity was because the Christian message was so similar to their own beliefs. Many First Nations groups had stories of "the peacemaker" and "the resurrected

one," so it was not hard to accept the story of Jesus.

Those of European descent tend to look at differences and think that we are offering something new, instead of seeing the similarities and asking what we can learn. Widrick made it clear that we need to listen with open minds and with acceptance of how God has been speaking and relating to Aboriginal Peoples long before we showed up on their shores.

One aspect of Christianity that creates difficulty for Aboriginal Peoples is the way it has become institutionalized. Our church institutions have, at times, been very destructive in the way they have treated people, while trying to preserve the institution. Widrick pointed out that if we want to truly relate to aboriginals, our reli-

gious institutions need to change.

His own experiences with Mennonite institutions have been very hurtful, and he knows that he is not alone in that experience. We need to acknowledge and accept responsibility for the hurt that has been done, and continues to be done, often to those who are trying to build bridges of understanding between aboriginals and non-aboriginals. This means being ready to listen with our hearts open to the pain expressed by aboriginals without being offended or defensive.

On behalf of the planning committee for this "bridge-building" event at Nairn Mennonite Church, April 21, our hope is that people did not let Widrick's pain get in the way of hearing what was really being said.

—**Don Procter, Belgrave, Ont.**

PHIL WAGLER



Outside the box

**F**or a view of where culture is heading, watch commercials. They define what is powerful and acceptable enough to make us spend. Advertisers are smart; they know what sells and what will fail quicker than an electric shaver salesman at an Amish wedding.

With this in mind, I declare unofficially that manhood, womanhood, marriage and sex have lost all meaning in western culture. Two current commercials are baring a brave nude world and these sales pitches should not be ignored by the church.

The first of these finds us in a bar packed with women waiting to meet that special guy. Sadly, all the men are pigs—yes, literal pigs. These "pigs" are not getting to first base. After all, what self-respecting woman wants bacon bits? Then a miracle occurs. The pigs become men again in the boys room when a condom falls into their hoof—I mean hand—from that most titillating of vending machines. Only with protection in their pocket are the males in the room perceived as real men.

A second similar 30-second statement begins with a man and woman gazing into each other's eyes over a candlelight dinner. He pulls out a box and nervously slips it across the table. The beautiful, blushing bombshell slowly opens the velvet case and gasps. She sets the box aside and whispers, "I do." We discover, however, that in the box is no engagement ring, but a sexual play toy. It is not marriage this couple hopes for, as sex trumps love and marriage for a new generation.

At this point, my mother is about to pick up the phone and you are wondering what on earth this means for a missional kingdom witness. So here's the point: A new generation who will become—latex unwilling—the

## Sex in the pews

**I declare unofficially that manhood, womanhood, marriage and sex have lost all meaning in western culture.**

parents and grandparents of the future, are not only extremely flippant and even dangerously casual about sex, but, even more disturbing, completely ignorant of what it means to be women and men.

If these ads are any indication of the way in which manhood, womanhood, sexuality and the marriage covenant are being understood, then the body of Christ has not only repenting to do, but an incredible opportunity to propose a different vision to the empty, meaningless and soul-numbing drivel of a culture deceived by the shallow reduction of human beings to grunting swine and desperate damsels.

It's time for sex in the pews. The church must talk about sexuality—not simply as a moral issue, but as a shared human reality that requires Christ-transformation. Afraid and ashamed because all of us are somehow messed up and unwilling to admit it, we have allowed the beautiful divine gift of sex to be seductively defined by pop culture and God-denying doctrines that propose the abuse of dignity, the mockery of reproduction and an inflexible equality that denies uniqueness and neuters, rather than encourages, the dance of mutual submission.

This easy disposability of the self, the other and the vow are aptly symbolized by the condom which, ironically, is advertised as the way to keep us at a safe distance in the most intimate of acts. Sex is so much more. We are so much more. We who know the maker must now give meaning to the way we are made and keep making.

*Phil Wagler is lead pastor of Zurich Mennonite Church in Ontario. He proposed to his wife the old-fashioned way in 1993. You can email him at phil\_wagler@yahoo.ca.*

## Information session not an 'angry harangue'

Re: "Information session turns into angry harangue," June 11, page 24.

As I finished the article, I could hardly believe that the author and I attended the same event. When I left that day, I felt enlightened and positive about the information and experiences shared by Sakoieta' Widrick and not once did I experience his comments as being "angry."

What I heard in any reference that was made regarding the structures

that exist within the Mennonite Church was perhaps some frustration, not unlike frustrations some of us have also experienced from time to time. Not once did I hear him criticize Mennonite pastors, certainly not the ones in attendance.

In my opinion, Widrick gave us a basis for bridge-building by providing a frame of reference from a native perspective around the topics of history, current political situations and theology. I believe one of the best ways to build bridges is to not focus on the things that are different about us, but

to find the things we have in common. I felt blessed to be able to relate to some of our commonalities. The day was a stepping stone towards something positive.

I was astounded by the incredibly negative tone of the article and the potential it has to be hurtful and detrimental to building any bridges, and I would question how such an article fits with the *Canadian Mennonite* mission statement. I do not believe that the article "promoted covenantal relationships within the church" nor "shared accurate and fair information."

WILL BRAUN



New Order voice

**Y**ou and I are citizens of a nation at war. There was no grand declaration or pivotal national debate, just a slow slide towards full-on participation in a distant, dubious war.

We're not peacekeepers this time. In Afghanistan, we're fully armed and, at least some of the time, we're looking for the enemy so we can shoot him. Actually we're not peacekeepers in very many places at all any more. In 1991, Canada had 1,149 soldiers involved in UN peacekeeping missions. In 2006, the number was 56. Now, only 3 percent of our expenditures on international military operations goes towards UN peacekeeping missions.

Although the term "peacebuilding" is used in relation to Afghanistan, the combination of humanitarian efforts and U.S.-aligned search-and-destroy missions is a shift in our country's attitude.

"An enemy-centred mentality is creeping inexorably into the Canadian military psyche," said Walter Dorn, professor at the Royal Military College of Canada, in a 2006 *Globe and Mail* article. "The previous notions of negotiated consent, impartiality and minimum use of force—formerly criteria for Canadian participation in peacekeeping—are being replaced by a more aggressive goal." If Canada would shift the troops it has in Afghanistan to UN missions, it could be a "tremendous boost" to critical UN operations in places like Sudan, Haiti and Congo, he said.

As the war on terror grinds to a violent, ugly standstill, and big guns seem decreasingly capable of making the world a better place, Canada is acting as though this war on terror is the way of the future. History seems headed in one direction—away from the Rumsfeldian shoot-'em-up approach, and Canada is headed in the opposite direction—towards Bush's "stay the course" rut.

I can only speculate about the backroom rationale for Canada's eagerness to fight in Afghanistan, but it feels like we're fighting someone else's battle. In a

## Conscription of your tax dollars

**Three dollars of your tax money buys one bullet for a .50 calibre machine gun....**

world full of conflicts and turbulence, why is Canada's military focused so overwhelmingly on Afghanistan? It's hard to imagine us being there if it weren't for the willingness of Canadian governments—past and present—to take cues and commands from the masters of the largest military ever assembled.

Our military eagerness in Afghanistan contrasts with our record on international aid. Last year, Canada spent \$14.7 billion on the military, four times what it spends on international development. According to DATA, a U.K. and U.S.-based development non-governmental organization, Canada would need to allot \$623 million in aid to Africa to meet the commitments made at the Gleneagles G8 summit in 2005; this year, it earmarked only \$160 million.

And so we Mennonites find ourselves in an awkward situation. We're paying for the war on terror. The only way to pay for war is through taxes. Three dollars of your tax money buys one bullet for a .50 calibre machine gun, and \$21.12 buys one piece of ammunition for the 25mm automatic cannons mounted on the light armoured vehicles our troops use in Afghanistan. In 2007, 7.9 percent of federal tax will go to the military.

In the spirit of conscientious objection to involvement in military endeavours, both Mennonite Central Committee and, to a greater extent, MC Canada have worked with NDP MP Bill Siksay on a recently introduced private members bill that would give taxpayers the option of redirecting the percentage of their taxes that goes to the military to a peace-related fund instead. Conscience Canada gives people the option of taking this step even in the absence of a legal option.

For more information, visit [mcc.org/canadaarmed](http://mcc.org/canadaarmed) and [consciencecanada.ca](http://consciencecanada.ca).

*Will Braun is editor of Geez magazine. Some of the above information is from the Conscience Canada booklet "Take the Bang Out of Your Tax Buck."*

It is my prayer that this article has not undone the positive things that happened that day for the majority of those in attendance.

—**Beth Reiber, London, Ont.**

### Information session first step to healing

In situations where I have been a part of an event that is reported in the secular news, I have been troubled by the disparity between the events and what is reported. After reading the "Information session turns into angry harangue" article (June 11, page 24), I am disappointed to see this happens in our Mennonite magazine as well.

Where the author saw anger, I saw the hurt and frustration that comes from trying to work within a system that tells you your way is wrong. The author's interpretations appear to be clear; however, that is not the perspective of many at this event, which is clearly not reflected. I believe the majority found this event to be a very positive experience and there was a feeling of excitement that steps had been made towards better understanding and restoration.

It seems to me that the purpose of covering such an event would be to give an account of the events for those who weren't there. This event began with a ceremony outside where Sakoieta' Widrick gave thanks to the creator in his native tongue as well as in English. This worshipful experience, which set the mood for the day, wasn't mentioned. I think we can learn something from this spirit of thankfulness.

At the end of the article someone is quoted as saying we were there to right the wrongs, not hear a litany of the wrongs. I believe the first step to righting these wrongs is to listen with an open mind, seek to understand and to acknowledge the wrongs. Only then can we move to the next step of righting the wrongs. Restoring relationships is not a quick fix.

—**Warren Jutzi, Ailsa Craig, Ont.**

### Article was 'angry harangue,' not the speaker

Re: "Information session turns into angry harangue," June 11, page 24.

I was really distressed that a magazine of a professed peacemaking denomination would carry something that was more typical of those we see at the check-out counters in our grocery stores. To me, it was the article that was an angry harangue, rather than Sakoieta' Widrick's vulnerable sharing of his and his people's hurt over the years. Even in his critique of our denominational structures, although he spoke plainly he confessed his comments came from his hurt.

The reaction in the article confirmed his observation that our institution is more focused on preserving itself than listening, understanding and responding in love.

—**Ruth Smith Meyer, Ailsa Craig and Listowel, Ont.**

### Article 'fairly accurately' conveyed information

Re: "Information session turns into angry harangue," June 11, page 24.

The author of this article clearly seems to have heard the information that Sakoieta' Widrick was relating to the Mennonites gathered at Nairn Mennonite Church regarding the relationship between the Haudenosaunee and Mennonites, as he has conveyed it fairly accurately in this article.

He was given an opportunity to learn from someone who has personal experience with the issues and a long history with Mennonites. It is never

easy to embrace anger. It causes discomfort, but I know that I am in a sacred space when someone is willing to risk sharing their true feelings with me.

Aboriginal Peoples have every right to be angry. We Mennonites are known as peacemakers, but we have come up short in our actions to support and speak out for native peoples.

I have found that one of my biggest struggles in the tough work of building and maintaining respectful, authentic relationships with aboriginals is to turn and look inward. Why am I uncomfortable? What is my connection with the harms done? How have I benefited? What is my role in addressing the harms? How do I take the lead from Aboriginal Peoples?

There are no easy answers.

—**Sue Eagle, Winnipeg**

*The writer is co-coordinator of Mennonite Central Committee Canada's Work with Aboriginal Peoples program.*

### Corrections

General Rick Hillier is the Canadian chief of defence staff. He was incorrectly identified in the "Confirmed kills" include Canada's peaceful identity' InConversation piece on page 12 of the June 11 issue. Larry Kehler was incorrectly identified as pastor of Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, in the "United Church congregation considers Peace Church status" article on page 26 of the same issue; he is, in fact, a long-time member of Charleswood and edits its online newsletter, *The Grapevine*. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the errors.

### Pontius' Puddle



Bogotá, Colombia

## Theft of documentation raises safety fears

A break-in last month at Justapaz, a ministry of the Colombian Mennonite Church and a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) partner, is raising concerns about the safety of church leaders and members involved in human rights and peace work in the South American country.

Two computers with information about programs that are helping document human rights abuses and coordinate peace work within Colombia were stolen. These are joint programs of Justapaz and the Justice and Peace ministry of the Colombian Evangelical Council of Churches. In addition, the desk of a staff member who coordinates a human rights protection program was searched.

Since nine other computers, an office safe and fax machine were untouched, Justapaz staff feel the break-in was aimed specifically at the information the office has been collecting about human rights abuses against members of Colombia's churches.

One of the computers belonged to MCC worker Janna Hunter-Bowman and had a database of testimonies about human rights abuses against members of Colombia's Protestant churches, as well as profiles of the churches' peace ministries. The computer held names of grassroots church leaders and members who were documenting abuses—dangerous work, given the country's ongoing armed conflict. Both stolen computers also contained detailed information on how churches have been working for peace in the country, which can also be controversial and dangerous.

The first report of the documentation project that Hunter-Bowman helps to lead, "A prophetic call: Colombian Protestant churches document their suffering and their hope," documents details of 29 assassinations of men, women and children linked to congregations, 84 cases of people forced to flee their homes, 21 civilian

combat-related injuries, four arbitrary detentions and other human rights violations. It also relates how churches are living out their faith with hope and perseverance (see "Documenting suffering and hope in Colombian churches," April 30, page 19).

Many of the victims whose cases are recounted in the documentation project are identified and the database also includes the names of a number of victims that weren't released publicly,

specific allegations about who committed these documented acts of violence, and documentation of cases where those affected by violence were too frightened to allow their cases to be made public.

"Given the atmosphere in Colombia, these people are at risk," says Daryl Yoder-Bontrager, director of MCC's programs in Latin America.

Justapaz director Jenny Neme is concerned that the information in the

Winnipeg

## Churches recommit to justice for Aboriginal Peoples

Representatives of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada, together with representatives of numerous Canadian church organizations, marked the 20th anniversary of the signing of a document entitled "A New Covenant: Towards the constitutional recognition and protection of aboriginal self-government in Canada" on June 21.

Although MC Canada was not a signatory of the original document, MC Canada general secretary Robert J. Suderman joined MCC Canada director of national programs Lois Coleman Neufeld in making the following statement: "We commit [MCC Canada and MC Canada] to the vision of a new relationship between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples, based on sharing, respect and the recognition of rights and responsibilities." Representatives of other bodies committed themselves with the same statement, substituting the names of their respective organizations.

The invitation to the event came from Kairos: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiative, and the Anglican Church of Canada, and welcomed several aboriginal groups to attend.

The original covenant—which pledged church organizations to support



MC Canada photo by Dan Dyck

**MCC director of national programs Lois Coleman Neufeld, left, and MC Canada general secretary Robert J. Suderman committed their respective organizations "to the vision of a new relationship between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples" as part of a Kairos/Anglican Church of Canada-sponsored event in Winnipeg last month.**

Aboriginal Peoples in Canada in their continued struggle for justice and self-determination—was presented at a special aboriginal summit in Toronto on Feb. 5, 1987.

The signing this month is a renewal of that commitment. Leaders also committed themselves to draft a new covenant by December as a collaboration of churches and aboriginal organizations, guided by Kairos on behalf of its member churches.

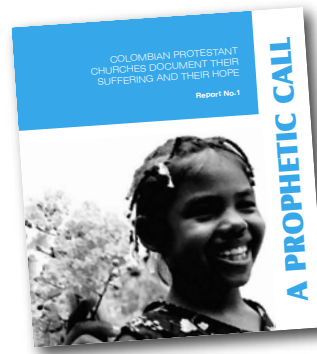
—MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**

computers will be used to intimidate, silence or harm the victims, local churches and people in the regions gathering the information named in the computers' files.

If the project is not a safe space, Hunter-Bowman fears people may feel this avenue too is closed—and more atrocities may be allowed to happen un-noted and unchecked. “This project tells their stories when they feel there are no other avenues,” she says.

At the request of Justapaz, MCC is calling on Anabaptists to pray for peace and safety for those impacted

by violence within Colombia and those involved in the important work of telling their stories. Justapaz also requests prayers that those responsible for the break-in will turn themselves in, repair the damage and change their lives, while MCC is sending letters to Canadian and American governments requesting that they pres-



sure the Colombian authorities to make sure the matter is thoroughly investigated.

This most recent theft is one of six of human rights information from advocates in Bogotá in the past 14 months, but the first targeting church organizations.

Justapaz, a program of the Mennonite Church of Colombia, promotes church initiatives in nonviolence, conflict resolution, peace education and action, as well as documents human rights abuses against church leaders and members, and chronicles how churches are living out their faith boldly in spite of violence.

—MCC release by **Marla Pierson**

### News brief

#### Church leader wonders where the men went

The new moderator of Canada's largest Protestant denomination wonders why there are so few men in his denomination. David Giuliano, elected last year as head of the 600,000-member United Church of Canada, believes liberal religious institutions aren't as welcoming of males as they think they are. Even though Catholic and Evangelical churches, Orthodox Jewish synagogues and Muslim mosques continue to be run almost exclusively by male clergy, he says most liberal religious institutions have in the past few decades experienced a sea change regarding gender. While Giuliano celebrates the empowerment of women in Christianity and other religions, he is concerned that negative views of manhood have almost become institutionalized in liberal Christian circles.

—RNS release

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Belton & Grom Financial Services has been the provider of Group Retirement services to Mennonite Church of Canada for a number of years and integral of the re-vamp of the group retirement plan. This company will now operate under the new name of Ardent Retirement Group Ltd. with Bryan Grom as President. Bryan welcomes all members & constituents of Mennonite Church Canada to Ardent Retirement Group Ltd.

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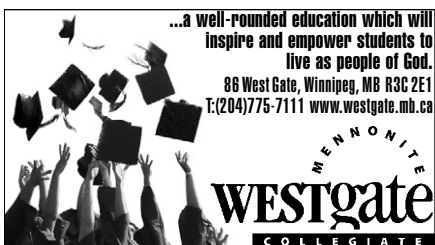
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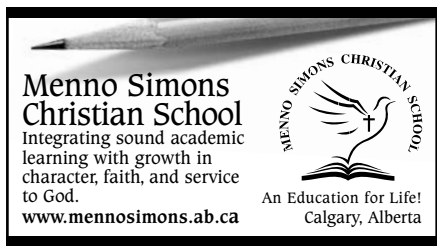
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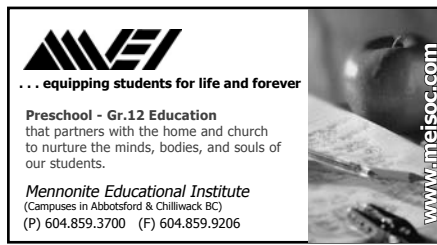
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**News briefs**

**Christian convert must stay Muslim**

A Malaysian woman who converted to Christianity might be jailed for apostasy, or the rejection of her religion, after the Muslim-majority country's highest court ruled that she does not have a constitutional right to convert from Islam to another religion. Lina Joy has battled for seven years to have her conversion recognized as legal. She finally took her case to a Malaysian Federal Court, which decided in a 2-1 majority decision that she could not remove "Islam" from the religion category of her government identity card—despite her conversion to Christianity in 1998.  
 —ENI release

**Church calls on Sony to withdraw video game**

The Church of England (Anglican) has threatened the Sony Corporation with legal action unless it withdraws a violent video game set in Manchester Cathedral. During the game, players are asked to assume the role of an army sergeant whose goal is to shoot and kill enemy combatants in the cathedral. "The video footage of the cathedral battle...has shocked and dismayed us beyond words, and can only be described as virtual desecration," says the cathedral's dean, the Rev. Rogers Govender. Sony has said in a statement that "Resistance: Fall of Man" is a fantasy science fiction game and not based on reality.  
 —ENI release



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# News 'n Notes

The new MC Sask. offices at 10A-301 Pakwa Place. (Just turn off Avenue C onto Pakwa; a large sign will guide you.)



## What's Current at MC Sask?

### **Pakwa Office is Now Officially Open!**

A good crowd was out to the Open House at the new Pakwa Place office of MC Sask on May 9th. They were welcomed by staff members Sheila Wiens-Neufeld, Jerry Buhler, Anna Rehan and Moderator Henry Block. Refreshments were delicious and although the tour was short, visitors agreed that it was a big improvement over the crowded quarters at Bethany Manor.

### **Restructuring**

The MC Sask. Restructuring Committee was appointed following the final report of the Visioning Team and acceptance by the Conference assembly of the "Christ Centered and Sent" document. Its members are Henry Block, Jerry Buhler, Ernest Epp, Claire Ewert Fisher, Jay Hind, Renata Klassen, and Peter Peters.

The committee's goal is to create a structure for MC Sask that will promote and enhance our efforts to follow our vision and work together. We want to assure continued

attention to visioning, goal setting, and evaluation along with effective management of the programs of our conference. We hope to create a structure that will allow us to hear each other, respond to new directions and initiatives, and continue tasks that are deemed important. We hope to make communication and accountability easier and more effective.

At present, our structure involves an executive (chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary) that meets monthly and is the primary body for carrying out the wishes of conference members as expressed at the annual General Assembly. About 4 times a year, a General Council made up of representatives of all the commissions and related organizations (e.g. RJC, Mennonite Nursing Home, P2P, Shekinah) meet to discuss issues put before it by the executive and to report on their activities. The General Council is primarily an advisory body.

What should the structure be like in order to facilitate the reaching of a "Christ Centered and Sent" objective? Please contact any of the committee members with your views.

### **Person to Person Transforming into Restorative Justice Ministries Saskatchewan**

In February 2007, the MC Sask Annual Conference approved in principle a proposal for a restructured Person to Person (P2P) prison ministry.

The new structure being visualized (very recently given the working name Restorative Justice Ministries Saskatchewan - RJMS) aims at three goals:

- To become broadly inter-denominational. We are convinced that Biblical Restorative Justice lies in the overlap or common area that all Christian denominations hold, and that we can create a broad inter-denominational partnership around this RJ agenda.

- To work at a broad range of Restorative Justice Ministries. P2P and other church based Restorative Justice

ministries in Saskatchewan (Including Saskatoon Community Chaplaincy Services and the Regina COSA Committee) have worked extensively with offenders and released offenders. There is much more that needs to be done in work with victims and in mediation.

- To create a province-wide coordinating structure. Strongly rooted regional RJ programs (some of whom are identified above) already exist, but there has been no forum where they can regularly talk to each other, learn from each other and from which they can speak with a common voice. We hope that the new RJMS can provide such a structure.

There is energy and optimism, and a growing 'buzz' around this new vision. Discussions are under way with a number of denominations, with the United Church perhaps being closest to becoming part of this proposal.

*(From the P2P Transition Committee / Restorative Justice Ministries Saskatchewan)*

# Transitions



Dave Feick



Abe and Janet Buhler



Sheila Wiens-Neufeld



Henry and Erna Funk



Bruce and Karen Jantzen

**Dave Feick** was pastor of Hague Mennonite Church for 10 ½ years before making the move to Rosthern Junior College, where he assumes responsibility for Student Recruitment, Fundraising and Constituency Relations. Joanne works at the Mennonite Nursing Home in Rosthern, Jason and Scott are students at RJC and Carissa is enrolled at CMU.

**Abe and Janet Buhler** arrived in Langham in mid-May where Abe will be starting as pastor at Zoar Mennonite on June 1. Abe has most recently been attending Regent College and has been serving as pastor on an interim basis in a Christian Reformed church in New Westminster, B.C. He has previously served in Recife, Brazil under COM and has pastored several MC Canada churches. We welcome Abe and Janet to MC Sask.

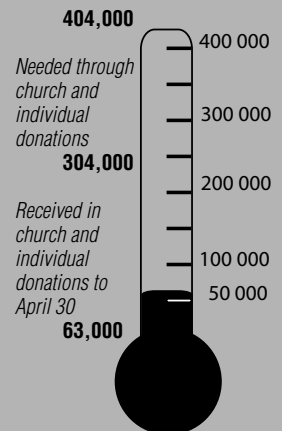
**Sheila Wiens-Neufeld.** "My family and I live on a farm outside of Langham and are members of the Zoar Mennonite Church. My husband Michael and I have 4 children: Jesse (9), Emily (7), Rachel (5), and Derek (almost 3). We love the country life and have a large garden, fruit trees, a greenhouse and raise Black Angus cattle to keep us busy outside. I was previously employed at the College of Commerce with the Health Care Administration Certificate Program for 11 years. I have past involvement with Mennonite Church Saskatchewan when it was known as Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan (CoMoS) as Treasurer for 2 terms. As well, I served on the Support Services Council with Mennonite Church Canada. I am enjoying my new role as Office Administrator, working with the office staff, and look forward to meeting conference constituents."

**Henry Funk** has been appointed vice-chair of the conference. Henry farms in the Hague area with his son Carl. Besides a 3-year term with MCC in Paraguay, Henry has served on the RJC board, on the finance committees of MC Sask and MC Canada and has been a member of Mennonite Foundation. Henry and Erna have held interim co-pastorships at North Battleford, Laird, Prince Albert and Aberdeen, and will begin serving Hanley Mennonite this fall. Henry and Erna have 3 married children and 4 grandchildren.

"For the last two years, my wife **Sandra Sinnavee and I (Ryan Siemens)** have been living in Northern Indiana where Sandra has been doing voluntary service, and I have been studying. Even though we are both originally from the Winnipeg area, prior to seminary we lived in Lethbridge, Alberta where we were active members at the Lethbridge Mennonite Church. We are both very much looking forward to our move to Saskatchewan to serve Grace Mennonite in Prince Albert."

**Bruce and Karen Jantzen** live at Horse Lake, just north of Duck Lake, where Bruce has lived all his life. Bruce was licensed and installed as pastor at Horse Lake in February of 2006 following the retirement of his father, Walter Jantzen. Horse Lake is a small congregation and Bruce continued to work full time after his installation there. Recently, Laird Mennonite Church asked Bruce to an interview with the result that he was installed there in June of '07. The Jantzens are looking forward to a new and exciting opportunity to serve God at Laird Mennonite.

## MC Sask 2007 Budget



## Meet Your New Editor . . .

With this edition of News 'n Notes **George Epp** takes over from Jake Nickel as editor. George is a teacher, past chair of the RJC Board and was a member of MC Sask General Council for seven years. He and Agnes are members of Eigenheim Mennonite Church. You are invited to correspond with George regarding this and future editions of News 'n' Notes by calling 232 4275, or emailing him at [g.epp@sasktel.net](mailto:g.epp@sasktel.net)

## News n' Notes

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Design  
*Lynda Derksen*



Toronto

## Glass doors let in the light of God

The simple, light-filled sanctuary at Toronto United Mennonite Church was enhanced recently by the addition of new etched glass entrance doors, thought to be the first of their kind in a Mennonite church.

The doors—designed by artist Sharon Tiessen and created by Toronto master craftsman Tom Smylie—feature familiar symbols of faith (fish, doves, wheat and joyous human figures) in a contemporary design, with a flowing “ribbon” symbolizing the Holy Spirit unifying the four separate doors.

In her comments accompanying the unveiling ceremony earlier this spring, Tiessen recalled the words of composer Anton Bruckner: “Art had its origin in God and therefore must lead back to God.” Above all, it is my most sincere prayer that this humble offering would in some way lead you to God.”

The doors were made possible by a bequest by the late Anne Peters, part of which was set aside for beautifying the congregation’s meeting space. Some church members wanted to add stained glass, while others remembered the conscious decision to use clear glass in the church’s construction to symbolize openness. Others won-



Photo by Doreen Martens

**Glass craftsman Tom Smylie talks with Toronto United Mennonite Church member Erna Neufeldt in front of two of the church’s newly installed etched glass doors.**

dered whether any such project was good stewardship.

The committee charged with sorting the dilemma out realized that etched glass would create an intriguing parable. Glass itself is invisible; what makes such windows seem alive is the refracted light that pours through them, in this case the light of God.

When it was pointed out that the

thick art glass for the project would be both safer and more soundproof than the old plain glass doors, “it became the memorial project acceptable to both the Marys and the Marthas among us,” church treasurer Tobi Tiessen recalled at the unveiling.

The new doors seemed to delight both adults and youngsters in the congregation, who have enjoyed the tactile side of this work of art almost as much as the subtle beauty of its design. It is hoped the doors will lend a sense of wonder and joy to those entering for worship each Sunday for many years to come.

—Doreen Martens

Coaldale, Alta.

## Alberta women ‘called to serve’

The theme of the 60th annual sessions of Alberta Women in Mission, hosted by Coaldale Mennonite Church’s Goodwill Club early in May, was “Called to serve.”

During the retreat, Lillian Nicolson, Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker from Burkina Faso, spoke about her work from three perspectives: past, present and future.

Growing up in Bluesky, Alta., Nicolson was influenced by missionaries, but originally thought only teachers or doctors could be missionaries. She shared how her many jobs and schooling opportunities led to translation work in Africa.

Currently, Nicolson is developing a written form of Siamou, a tonal

Continued on page 18



Photo by Elmer Heinrichs

**Seeding of a new Canadian Foodgrains Bank crop northeast of Altona, Man., took place last month, when Kroecker Machinery of Winkler began putting in wheat. Agribusinesses such as Agricore United, Simplot and G.J. Chemical Co. contributed seed wheat, fertilizer and chemicals to help start the 61-hectare project on land rented from Herman Penner. The harvest is earmarked for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. The project is the largest of several Coulee feeding Hungry Undernourished Millions (CHUM) efforts in Manitoba, and just one of many Foodgrains projects across Canada.**

**Women** *From page 17*

language in which each word can have up to seven meanings. Written words have been created for five of the tones. To teach the new script, linguists travel to villages and set up learning centres.

Finally, Nicolson spoke of hope. The Bible is being translated in sections. Passages are read in French and local people translate into Siamou. Some concepts—like salvation and angels—have to be explained, and occasionally new words created.

In the last presentation, Dramane and Dieneba Traoré, shared their testimonies about what they faced as new Christians in Burkina Faso. Their families are Muslim, fetish worshippers and sorcerers who deal in black magic. Both have experienced black magic and sorcery used against



Photo by Ev Buhr

**Dramane and Dieneba Traoré shared their testimonies about what they faced as new Christians in Burkina Faso while MC Canada Witness worker Lillian Nicolson, right, spoke about her translation work in the West African country during this year's Alberta Women in Mission annual retreat.**

them—to no effect. They spoke about how hard it was to give up the use of amulets as protection.

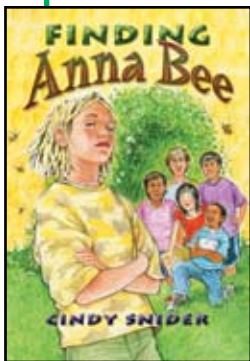
In a morning devotional by Lethbridge pastor Ruth Preston Schilk, the concept of service was visualized using a tea service display. A tea service is only a tea service if it is used, and becomes out-of-service when not in use.

The memorial time, led by the Springridge group, remembered nine women who died in the past year. Linda Dyck brought many shoes the women may have walked in, from baby shoes to work shoes and slippers, representing joyous occasions, creation experiences, church work, careers, home life, nurture and prayer.

During the business session, Melissa Lesser of Springridge Mennonite was elected as Camp Valaqua representative, and Ellie Janz was voted in for a second term as secretary-treasurer.

Ev Buhr continues as president and Anne Martens as vice-president. Offerings and silent auction results totalled \$2,185 and were divided between Camp Valaqua and the work in Burkina Faso.

—Ev Buhr



**Finding Anna Bee**

Cindy Snider

Join the spirited Anna Bee and her five new friends at Camp Amani Ya Juu as they discover a mysterious bridge to the past. Their adventures teach them firsthand about Christian faith heroes—and about themselves, each other, and the way of peace.

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# w i n d o w

## Taking up the whisk

J. Nelson Kraybill, AMBS president

**J**ust before commencement, AMBS graduate Fred Lesakale of Kenya presented me with a wildebeest-tail fly whisk, a symbol of authority among his Samburu people. "A fly whisk ordinarily is owned by senior (male) members of our community," an attached note said. "Seniority in this case is defined by age (usually old enough to be a grandfather), successful family, and a large number of livestock."

Do chiefs carry the whisk? "We do not have chiefs," Fred said, "we have elders. They share authority, and each carries a whisk."

Fred's comments about shared leadership resonated in my mind as 39 gifted men and women received diplomas. A seminary, in effect, receives a fly whisk to educate and mentor those who lead.

But a seminary cannot prepare leaders alone. Every conference and congregation must make certain that those with the gift and call for leadership have mentors, education and opportunity to grow. Pastors, elders, conference ministers and denominational leaders each carry a whisk.

Recently a room full of such people from across the church gathered at a "Follow the Fire" event to imagine scenarios for the

role of AMBS in years ahead. We pondered big challenges. The Mennonite church is more culturally and theologically diverse than ever. Except for the burgeoning racial/ethnic sector, the denomination is in numerical decline. More potential students want seminary training that allows them to live at home. The world yearns for

the hope, reconciliation and community Mennonites enjoy.

We called the scenario-planning "Follow the Fire," because the God of Exodus and Pentecost will need to lead the way. Renewal for seminary and denomination will issue from repentance, worship and a deep sense of call.

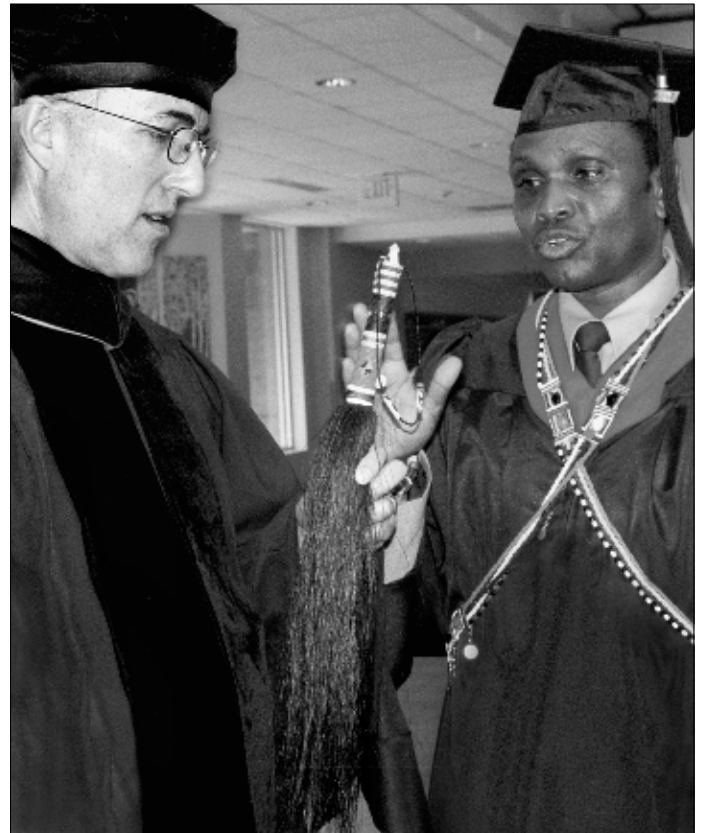
*(continued on page 3)*

Summer 2007  
Volume 17 Issue 3

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Thirty-nine receive  
degrees and certificates

5 \_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty honor graduates

7 \_\_\_\_\_  
Commencement



**Fred Lesakale, who received a Master of Arts: Peace Studies degree on May 19, gave Nelson Kraybill a fly whisk, a symbol of authority among his Samburu people in Kenya.**

Mary E. Klassen

# Thirty-nine earn degrees and certificates

**T**hirty-nine students graduated from AMBS on May 19, 2007.

Graduates completed these programs of study to receive degrees or certificates:

- MDiv** Master of Divinity
- MAPS** Master of Arts: Peace Studies
- MATS** Master of Arts: Theological Studies
- MACF** Master of Arts in Christian Formation
- Cert** Certificate in Theological Studies

Find out more about the graduates here and at the AMBS web site: [www.ambs.edu](http://www.ambs.edu).

**Andy Alexis-Baker** (not pictured) MATS with a concentration in Theology and Ethics. Will pursue a Ph.D. and work with Ted Koontz, editing John Howard Yoder's lectures on Christian attitudes to war, peace and revolution. Andy is a member of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, New York, N.Y. Andy is married to Nekeisha Alexis-Baker.

**Kate Becker** MATS with a concentration in Theology and Ethics. Will pursue graduate work in the sciences. Kate is a member of Faith Mennonite Church in Newton, Kan. She is the daughter of Bob and Donna Becker, who reside in Newton, Kan.

**Alissa Bender** MDiv. Will be a pastoral intern at Emmanuel Mennonite

Church, Abbotsford, B.C., then pursue a pastoral ministry assignment. She is a member of Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden, Ont., and is the daughter of Robert and Gladys Bender, Baden.

**Barbara Cross** MACF. Will continue as pastor of South Milford (Ind.) United Methodist Church. Barbara is married to Donald L. Cross.

**Randy Detweiler** MDiv. Will continue as a member of the pastoral team of Howard-Miami Mennonite Church, Kokomo, Ind. Randy and Joy, his wife, have two children.

**Brianne Donaldson** MATS with a concentration in Theology and

Ethics. Will continue working in the field of muscle therapy and pursue post-graduate work while researching and writing for an associate fellowship at Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics.

**LeNora Duerksen** MDiv. Pursuing a ministry assignment in pastoral care, visitation and counseling. LeNora is a member of Tabor Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan. She and Londell J. Duerksen, her husband, have three grown children.

**Jenifer Eriksen-Morales** MDiv. Began working as Minister of Transitional Ministries for Franconia Mennonite Conference on June 1. Jenifer and Victor Morales, her husband, have two children. She is a



Kate Becker, Alissa Bender, Barbara Cross, Randy Detweiler, Brianne Donaldson, LeNora Duerksen

## Taking up the whisk

(continued  
from page 1)

“Fire” participants—including those not Mennonite—encouraged AMBS to foster a clear Anabaptist identity. The Christian church in North America does not need another generic evangelical seminary. The strength of Anabaptism issues from our commitment both to know Jesus as Savior and Lord *and* to follow Jesus in service and peacemaking.

God is calling AMBS to strengthen new avenues of education—extension sites, courses on location

in Spanish, online classes and a denominationally diverse student body. Opportunities abound. But in order to sustain this broad vision, we also must sustain a vibrant worshiping community of face-to-face learning at Elkhart. This summer we thank God for the gift of a new library. We believe God is strengthening the core so AMBS continues to have stamina to serve a diverse, scattered and rapidly-changing church. ●

member of Alpha Mennonite Church in Alpha, N.J.

**Janet Funk** (not pictured) Cert. Lives and works in Fort Wayne, Ind.

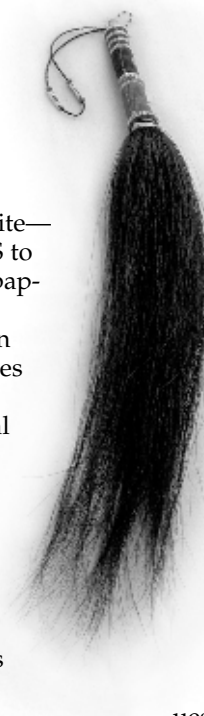
**Joyce Gackler** MDiv. Will continue as pastor of Plainfield United Methodist Church, Grand Rapids, Mich. She and Kenneth Gackler, her husband, have three grown daughters.

**Christine Guth** MDiv. Will continue as an associate with the Anabaptist Disabilities Network, working on advocacy and education in the areas of disabilities and mental illness. She and Bob, her husband, have two children and are members of Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind. This fall Christine will teach at Goshen College as an adjunct professor in the Bible department.

**Ruth Harder** MDiv. Will begin in August as associate pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan. Ruth is a member of Hillsboro Mennonite Church in Hillsboro, Kan, and is married to Jesse Graber. She is the daughter of alumnus Keith Harder and Judy Harder, Hillsboro, Kan.

**Virginia Hartman** Cert. Will continue to work as a chaplain and registered nurse at St. Rita's Hospital, Lima, Ohio. Ginny is married to Dwight Hartman and they live in Elida, Ohio.

(continued on page 4)



Jenifer Eriksen-Morales, Joyce Gackler, Christine Guth, Ruth Harder, Virginia Hartman

## 2007 Graduates

**Charleen Jongejan Harder** MDiv. Will be pastor of Valleyview Mennonite Church in London, Ont., with Kendall, her husband, also a 2007 AMBS graduate. She is a member of Toronto United Mennonite Church in Toronto, Ont.

**Kendall Jongejan Harder** MDiv. Will be pastor of Valleyview Mennonite Church in London, Ont., with Charleen, his wife, also a 2007 AMBS graduate. He is a member of Toronto United Mennonite Church in Toronto, Ont. Kendall is the son of AMBS alumnus Gary Harder and Lydia Harder of Scarborough, Ont.

**Lois Kaufmann** MACF. Will continue on the pastoral team of Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen,

Ind., with responsibilities focused toward Christian formation and administration. Lois is married to Jim Kaufmann and they have four children.

**Gene Kennard** (not pictured) MATS with a concentration in Biblical Studies. Will pursue ordination in the Free Methodist Church. Gene is a member of Winona Lake (Ind.) Free Methodist Church.

**Juanita Laverty** MDiv. Will begin as pastor of Hanover Mennonite Church in Hanover, Ont. Juanita currently is a member of Pioneer Park Christian Fellowship in Kitchener, Ont. She is married to David Sararus, also a 2007 AMBS graduate and they have one son.

**Sara Leaman** MDiv. Seeking a position as a hospital chaplain. Sara is a member of Church Without Walls, Elkhart, Ind.

**Aaron Lehman** MATS with a concentration in Biblical Studies. Aaron is a member of Waterford Mennonite Church, Ind. He is the son of Chris and Marilyn Lehman, who reside in Albuquerque, N.M., and his fiancée is Anne Albrecht.

**Fred Lesakale** MAPS. Will return to Kenya and continue working with Wamba Community Development Program, a development agency that focuses on giving children improved health service, suitable education and healthy social interaction. Fred is married to Franca Lesakale.

**David Marty** MDiv. Will be commissioned as a Probationary Elder in the United Methodist Church and will be pastor of Faith Chapel United Methodist Church near Huntington, Ind. He is married to Mary Marty.

**Priscillah Metekai** MAPS. Will work for Church World Service in Elkhart, Ind. She is a member of Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, Goshen, Ind. She is married to Elijah Metekai and they have one daughter. Priscillah came to the U.S. from Kenya, where she previously studied at Daystar University.



**Kendall Jongejan Harder, Charleen Jongejan Harder, Sara Leaman, Juanita Laverty, Lois Kaufmann, Aaron Lehman**

## Faculty honor graduates

**Mirawati Moeljono** MATS with a concentration in Biblical Studies. Will begin a mission service assignment through West Coast Mennonite Central Committee as a Church Community Worker at Kristus Evangelical Church of Christ in Pomona, Calif. Mirna is a member of Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia in Jepara, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia.

**Jean Ness** MDiv. Will continue as pastor of the church she is serving, Ligonier United Methodist Church. She is married to Pete Ness and they have three children.

*(continued on page 6)*

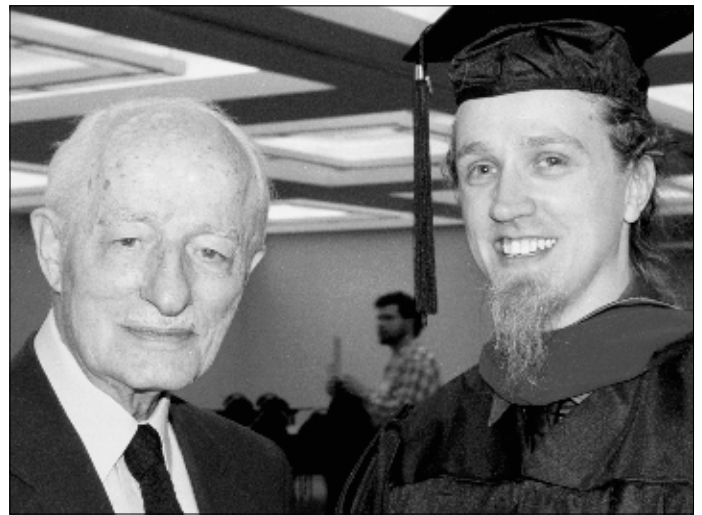
Recipients of the 2007 faculty awards are:

### History and Theology department awards:

Andy Alexis-Baker—C.J. Dyck Church History  
Fred Lesakale—J.H. Yoder MAPS  
Diane Stone—J.C. Wenger MDiv Theological Studies

### Church and Ministry department awards:

Jane Roeschley—MACF  
Julie Stegelmann—MACF  
Alissa Bender—MDiv  
Jean Ness—MDiv  
Ryan Siemens—MDiv



Mary E. Klassen

**Andy Alexis-Baker (right)** received the faculty award named after **C.J. Dyck**, professor emeritus of Anabaptist and Sixteenth Century Studies, and was able to meet C.J. at the AMBS commencement celebration.

### Bible department awards:

Christine Guth—Gertrude Roten Greek Exegesis  
Charleen Jongejan Harder—Willard M. Swartley New Testament Interpretation

Kendall Jongejan Harder—Millard Lind Old Testament Interpretation  
Rachel Siemens—Perry D. Yoder Hebrew Exegesis ●



**Fred Lesakale, David Marty, Priscillah Metekai, Mirawati Moeljono, Jean Ness**

## 2007 Graduates

**Audrey Ratzlaff** MDiv. Will pursue a pastoral ministry assignment. Audrey is married to Aaron Ratzlaff and is a member of Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan.

**Jane Roeschley** MACF. Will continue as associate pastor of Mennonite Church of Normal, Normal, Ill. She and Mark Roeschley, her husband, have three children.

**David Sararus** MACF. Will work part-time and support his family at home while Juanita Laverty, his wife, begins a pastoral ministry assignment. David is a member of Pioneer Park Christian Fellowship in Kitchener, Ont. David and Juanita, also a 2007 AMBS graduate, have one son.

**Gail Shetler** MACF. Will pursue Bible teaching and writing opportunities. Gail and Byron, her husband, have three children. They are members of Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

**Rachel Siemens** MDiv. Will pursue a pastoral ministry assignment. Rachel is a member of First Mennonite Church of Winnipeg, Man. She is the daughter of Lorne and Irene Siemens, Winnipeg.

**Ryan Siemens** MDiv. Will begin as pastor of Grace Mennonite Church, Prince Albert, Sask., in August. Ryan and Sandra Sinnaeve, his wife, are members of Lethbridge Mennonite Church in Lethbridge, Alb.

**Julie Stegelmann** (not pictured) MACF. Will continue working with Pathways Spiritual Retreat Center in Goshen, serving as spiritual companion, guide and director. She also will be a diaconal minister in the Lutheran Church. She and Bodie Stegelmann, her husband, have three children.

**Karla Stoltzfus** MDiv. Will pursue bivocational work in ministry and agriculture. Karla is a member of Spring Mennonite Church in Luray, Va., and an associate member of Benton Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. She is the daughter of Omar and Catherine Stoltzfus.

**Diane Stone** MDiv. Will continue as pastor of Springport and Lee Center United Methodist Churches in Springport and Lee Townships, Mich. She has one son.

**Adam Tice** MACF. Will pursue an associate pastor ministry assignment. He and Maria, his wife, attend Bethel Missionary Church, Goshen, Ind. He is the son of AMBS alumnus Ezra Tice and Joan Tice, Gettysburg, Pa.

**Jessica Uhl** MAPS. Will pursue clinical social work in the field of mental health. She is the daughter of Roger and Sally Uhl and when visiting them in Bakersfield, Calif., attends Bakersfield Community Church of the Brethren.



**Audrey Ratzlaff, Jane Roeschley, David Sararus, Gail Shetler, Rachel Siemens, Ryan Siemens**



**Michael Van Eerden** MATS with a concentration in Church History. Will pursue work in Seattle, Wash., while Jessie Van Eerden, his wife, is Milton Center Fellow at *Image Magazine* of Seattle Pacific University.

**Aaron Voth** MATS with a concentration in Biblical Studies. Will pursue further study in the field of social work. Aaron is a member of Rainbow Sharing Community in Kansas City, Kan.

**Samuel Voth Schrag** MDiv. Will pursue pastoral ministry. Sam is married to Rachel Voth Schrag and is a member of Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan. ●

## Belong to Christ

**G**od's call is an ongoing call, bigger than what you might do for a paycheck, April Yamasaki told the 2007 graduates.

April, pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C., addressed the graduates at the May 19 commencement service at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Sharing the experience of her own unexpected call to congregational ministry, April told graduates, "God's call is more than a noun, an event to look back on. God's call is a verb, a movement, a direction. What sustains me is not that God called me 14 years ago, but that God is continuing to call me even today."



Mary E. Klassen

**April Yamasaki, pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C., emphasized God's call as a verb not a noun.**

Then sharing examples of people she has encountered in her ministry, she emphasized that "whatever your paid employment might be, your calling is wider than that. It is to belong to Jesus Christ."

In response to the charge to the graduates,

given by Alan Kreider, associate professor of church history and mission, the graduates sang a new hymn text written for them by graduate Adam Tice. Joining in on the third verse, the congregation sang, "Be our living guide; let your Spirit be our strength and song; with the gifts that you provide, lead where we belong." ●



**Karla Stoltzfus, Diane Stone, Adam Tice, Jessica Uhl, Michael Van Eerden, Aaron Voth, Samuel Voth Schrag**

# Panorama



Mary E. Klassen

The AMBS library and campus center, completed this summer, will welcome students at the beginning of the fall semester. Dedication of the facility is scheduled for the weekend of April 25–26, 2008, in connection with the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the beginning of AMBS on the Elkhart campus. For more information about plans for the celebration, see <[www.ambs.edu/news-and-events/anniversary-dedication](http://www.ambs.edu/news-and-events/anniversary-dedication)>.

## Alumni Awards honor peacemaker and poet

Ahmed Haile of Nairobi, Kenya, and Yorifumi Yaguchi, of Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan, are the 2007 recipients of the AMBS Alumni Ministry and Service Award.

Ahmed, who received a MAPS degree in 1989, currently is a peace studies instructor at Daystar University in Nairobi, Kenya. In addition, Ahmed gives leadership to Somali Christians who are studying at the university.

Yorifumi combines an unusual mix of theology, pastoral work and poetry writing. A 1965 B.D. graduate of Goshen Biblical Seminary, Yorifumi was a professor of English poetry and Bible literature at Hokusei Gakuen University in Sapporo for 33 years and edited *Poetry Nippon*, a Japanese magazine of



English poems. He also was a pastor of several churches for 40 years.

Ahmed will receive his award at the San José gathering of MC USA in July. Yorifumi will receive his award in November when AMBS President Nelson Kraybill travels to Japan.

## Faculty publications, 2006–2007

A list of all the published work by AMBS faculty in the 2006–2007 year is available on the AMBS web site: <[www.ambs.edu/news-and-publications/faculty-writings](http://www.ambs.edu/news-and-publications/faculty-writings)>. The list includes books, articles and book reviews.

## New appointments at AMBS

The following are new appointments for AMBS administrators and faculty:

**Rebecca Slough:** Academic dean

**Loren L. Johns:** Full-time faculty (formerly academic dean)

**Irene Koop:** Registrar (formerly director of financial aid)

**Robert Rosa:** Director of Admissions (formerly dean

of student development at Ashland Theological Seminary).

## Fifth summer for !Explore

!Explore: A Theological Program for High School Youth is in its fifth summer with two groups of 15 higher schoolers participating. To find out about this summer's youth, see <[www.ambs.edu/explore](http://www.ambs.edu/explore)>.



To make a gift to !Explore, supporting this program that encourages young people to listen for God's call to ministry, see <[www.ambs.edu/explore/gift](http://www.ambs.edu/explore/gift)>.

## Updated Speakers Bureau

Information about faculty and administrators who are available to speak to your congregation or other group has been updated on the AMBS web site. Visit <[www.ambs.edu/speakersbureau](http://www.ambs.edu/speakersbureau)> to see topics and presenters along with information about how the speakers bureau works.

## Alumni News

**Philip K. Clemens** (Bachelor of Divinity 1966) is author of *Beyond the Law: Living the Sermon on the Mount*, published by Herald Press. He is pastor of Pike Mennonite Church, Elida, Ohio.

**Keith Graber Miller** (Master of Divinity 1988) and **Malinda E. Berry** (Master of Arts: Peace Studies 2000) are authors of *Wrestling with the Text: Young Adult Perspectives on Scripture*, published by Cascadia Publishing House.

**Doug and Wanda Roth Amstutz** (both Master of Divinity 1996) will serve as country representatives for Mennonite Central Committee in Ethiopia, beginning in July.

**Emily Toews** (Master of Divinity 2006) has been called as pastor of North Star Mennonite Church, Drake, Sask.

## Summer 2007 Volume 17 Issue 3

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

Editor and Designer: Mary E. Klassen  
Graduate group photos: Steve Echols

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## People&Events

**Waterloo, Ont.**—The Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches celebrated its 75th anniversary on June 16 and 17 at Waterloo MB Church and Bethany Community Church in St. Catharines. In 1924, a trainload of 800 Mennonite refugees from Ukraine arrived in Waterloo, to be hosted by local Swiss Mennonites. As soon as possible the new arrivals began meeting for their own worship services in High German because they didn't feel at home in their hosts' churches. At first, the Mennonite Brethren and General Conference Mennonites worshipped together. As the immigrants began moving to new job locations, they organized fledgling congregations. In 1932, when the Ontario MB Conference was founded, there were small congregations in New Hamburg, Hespeler (now Cambridge), Vineland, Port Rowan and Leamington, as well as the original church in Kitchener. Today the Ontario MB Conference has 33 churches with approximately 4,500 people attending.

—**Barb Draper**

**Winnipeg**—It's been quite a year for Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) music major Melissa Hart. In February, she was one of three Manitobans selected to be part of the National Artists Program at the Canada Winter Games in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. Now, she has been named one of the top 25 young artists in the province by the Canada Council for the Arts; on June 12, she participated in the Next Generation of Artistic Leaders Dialogues, a nationwide consultation with young artists to help determine the future of the arts support in Canada.

—CMU release



**Hart**

## Transitions

### Births/Adoptions

**Albrecht—Brooklyn Faith** (b. April 8, 2007), to Edward and Samantha Albrecht, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.

**Doerksen—Keziah Jean** (b. June 18, 2007), to James and Elenore Doerksen, Jubilee Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Ellis—Kyana Joy** (b. May 28, 2007), to Peter and Kendra Ellis, St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.

**Erb—Megan Rose** (b. May 3, 2007), to Rod and Lisa Erb, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.

**Froese—Myra Sophia** (b. April 19, 2007), to Charlotte and Tim Froese, Emmanuel Mennonite, Abbotsford, B.C.

**Gerber—Reid Joshua** (b. March 5, 2007), to Josh and Melissa Gerber, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.

**Hiuser—Maggie Nora MacBride** (b. June 18, 2007), to Jennifer and Josh Hiuser, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

**Klassen—Alexander James** (b. June 5, 2007), to Daryl and Natalie Klassen, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

**Klassen—Roman** (b. May 23, 2007), to Bryan and Maria Reimer, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

**Neufeldt—Annika Lenelle** (b. May 22, 2007), to Mindy and Bruce Neufeldt, Zoar Mennonite, Waldheim, Sask.

**Quiring—Nadia Kate** (b. June 6, 2007), to Darren and Ruth Quiring, North Kildonan Mennonite, Man.

**Redekop—Carter Gabriel** (b. April 21, 2007), to Michael and Janice Redekop, Emmanuel Mennonite, Abbotsford, B.C.

**Weber—Janessa Grace** (b. June 15, 2007), to Mike and Kay Weber, Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont.

**Witzel—Caleb Christopher** (b. June 12, 2007), to Chris and Pauline Witzel, East Zoar Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

**Wozniak—Hannah Elizabeth** (b. May 23, 2007),

to Ryan and Ashley Wozniak, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

### Marriages

**Brenneman/McFarlane**—Andrea Brenneman and Kyle McFarlane, at Cassel Mennonite, Ont., June 16, 2007.

**Cressman/Halliday**—Daniel Cressman and Kathryn Halliday, at Nith Valley Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont., May 19, 2007.

**Dyck/Krahn**—Melany Dyck (Blumenort Mennonite, Gretna, Man.) and Trenton Krahn (Bethel Berghaler Mennonite, Winkler), at Blumenort Mennonite, May 26, 2007.

**Falk/Fehr**—Cody Falk and Jaime Fehr (Blumenort Mennonite, Gretna, Man.) at Blumenort Mennonite, Feb. 24, 2007.

**Friesen/Unrau**—Bernie Friesen (Altona Berghaler Mennonite) and Dorothy Unrau, at Altona Park, Man., June 16, 2007.

**Gerber/Zehr**—Chad Gerber and Kaitlyn Zehr, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., at East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., May 12, 2007.

**Jantzi/Zehr**—Ryan Jantzi and Brittany Zehr, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., at Living Waters Community Christian Fellowship, New Hamburg, Ont., April 28, 2007.

### Deaths

**Drudge—Erma** (nee Habermehl), 93 (b. Aug. 12, 1913; d. June 4, 2007), Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

**Ens—Bernard**, 91 (d. June 6, 2007), Zoar Mennonite, Waldheim, Sask.

**Funk—David I.**, 88 (b. Oct. 7, 1918; d. May 30, 2007), Morden Mennonite, Man.

**Hildebrand—Margaret** (nee Harms), 92 (b. March 1, 1915; d. March 12, 2007), Crystal City Mennonite, Man.

**Mack—Nettie** (nee Wiebe), 80 (b. Oct. 11, 1926; d. June 12, 2007), Coaldale Mennonite, Alta.

**Plett—Ronald**, 66 (b. July 31, 1940; d. June 4, 2007), Morden Mennonite, Man.

**Prang—Eva**, 81 (d. June 6, 2007), Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask.

**Shantz—Florence**, 94 (b. Dec. 19, 1912; d. June 7, 2007), Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

### Baptisms

**Blumenort Mennonite, Gretna, Man.**—Dustin Fehr, Althea Friesen, Vincent Rempel, Matthew Zacharias, June 3, 2007.

**Breslau Mennonite, Ont.**—Christopher Dettweiler, Daryl Good, Simon Martin, Matthew McGill, Adrienne Schellenberg, June 10, 2007.

**Emmanuel Mennonite, Abbotsford, B.C.**—Jonathan Janzen, James Dueckman, Noel Dueckman, Kevin Currie, June 10, 2007.

**North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg**—Tracey Bremner, Christopher Titterton, Kimberly Urbonas, May 27, 2007.

**Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont.**—Adam Ropp, Maxine Kuepfer, Jordan Schultz, Nick Jantzi, Wes Balfour, Oren Birch, Christine Birch, Janet Schultz, May 27, 2007.

**Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.**—Olivia Blake and Janessa Hendriks, May 27, 2007.

**Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask.**—Emily Dueck, Peter Dueck, Zachary Dueck, Derek Thiessen, Theo Wiebe, May 27, 2007.

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

## Mennonite Church Canada

### Prayer and praise requests

Please pray for:

- The Houpfans, MC Canada Witness workers in Thailand who are currently on a North American ministry assignment while the ministry of Borabu and the construction of a new church building continues with help from local staff. Construction is expected to be completed in October. Please pray for the congregation and team leaders of the fellowship in Borabu as this church building project continues, and for the Houpfans as they visit churches and family during their North American ministry.
- MC Canada Witness workers Dan Nighswander and Yvonne Snider-Nighswander, who have recently been focusing their work in South Africa on the Way of Life Church in Khayelitsha, a township at the edge of Cape Town. They were invited to assist the 10-year-old church with development of administrative systems. Pastor Xola Skosana of Way of Life has a passion for enabling the church to better serve its community. The Nighswanders ask for prayer for the leadership of the Way of Life Church and its pastor as they work towards bringing wholeness to the people of the Khayelitsha community.
- Cheryl Woelk, Witness worker at the Korea Anabaptist Center (KAC), who was invited to be part of peace camps for children in East Timor from July 25 to Aug. 23. The peace camps are run by Frontiers, a KAC partner organization. During the peace camps, she will be observing and evaluating teachers and the curriculum she helped develop. Please pray that the peace witness of the church will be strengthened through these camps in a

country that has experienced considerable unrest.

—**Hinke Loewen-Rudgers**

## Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

### 'Margin' ministries share with each other

On May 10, directors from MC Eastern Canada-supported ministries that relate to people on the margins of society and pastors from churches which do the same, gathered together to share their joys and to support each other in their challenges.

Having experienced similar out-of-the-ordinary situations, they quickly developed a sense of deep connection with each other. Each person had a story to tell, many of them focusing on the importance of relationships in their work. They told stories of parents who fled their home country and, after many years of separation, were finally reunited with children; of a receptionist who invited a single mom to her home for dinner; of the struggles of a woman who chose to enter Canada legally; of a vulnerable woman who, through help from her pastor, learned to stand up for herself in an abusive relationship; of transformation in the life of a troubled youth.

Together, the pastors and directors celebrated the work of volunteers and what they learned.

As they shared the challenges they faced, leaders listed some short-term goals to help meet them:

- Leadership training;
- Finding peace in the "eye of the storm";
- Encouraging the use of gifts and passions;
- Focusing on children and youths;
- Finding a balance between urgent agenda items and taking time to implement new strategies; and
- Building relationships with

staff and board members.

After the meeting, one pastor wrote, "This felt like people who, like me, are doing frontline ministry. It surely felt like a group with a lot in common. I came away with several really good ideas...."

## Mennonite Church Manitoba

### Camp Moose Lake turning 50

Camp Moose Lake will celebrate 50 years of ministry this summer. The camp was begun in 1957 at the initiative of a group of Moose Lake lot owners who had a vision for a Mennonite camp. They saw this camp having the key values of worship, work and play while emphasizing family programming.

Over the years, Camp Moose Lake has been nurtured and promoted by people with a deep passion for camp ministry. Its ministries have grown to include a regular summer program for children, summer programs for adults with disabilities, winter retreats and year-round hospitality services for school, church and family groups.

The anniversary celebration will take place on Aug. 26 at the camp, located 35 kilometres northeast of Sprague. The celebration will begin with a morning worship service featuring reflections and music representing various eras of the camp ministry. A special building project will be announced at the service. The program following lunch will include waterfront and other activities, reminiscing and visiting. The event will conclude with a wiener roast.

For more information, contact the Camps with Meaning office at 204-895-2267.

—**Bob Wiebe**

*The author is director of Camping Ministries for Mennonite Church Manitoba.*

## Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

### New pastors in new positions

The season for interim positions seems to be drawing to a close in Saskatchewan, as a total of five MC Saskatchewan churches welcome pulpit replacements in the coming months. For these congregations, this has been the happy result of a long search for the right candidate.

- Grace Mennonite in Prince Albert has hired Ryan Siemens as its new pastor starting Aug. 15. Former pastor Ed Olfert stepped down six months ago.
- Ben Pauls will be working at Carrot River Mennonite. The congregation had worked with interim pastor Ed Cornelson for two years before hiring Pauls.
- Northstar Mennonite in Drake also endured a long wait, during which time it employed two interim pastors. Harold Peters-Fransen spent 14 months serving the congregation as intentional interim and, last summer, Audrey Miereu Bechtel began as a second interim pastor, working from Saskatoon.

"At the end of Harold's stay, we still had not found a suitable candidate," said congregational chair John Bartel, explaining that the church needed someone who would, among other things, be willing to serve as a community pastor, since Northstar Mennonite is the only church in the town of Drake.

- Emily Toews from Leamington, Ont., is to start as Northstar's pastor in July.
- Abe Buhler is in place for Zoar Mennonite in Langham.
- Patrick Preheim begins at Nutana Park Mennonite in Saskatoon this fall. Preheim, coming from the U.S., served for two months at Tiefengrund Mennonite Church last fall

while its pastor was on a three-month sabbatical.

Only two MC Saskatchewan churches presently remain without pastoral leadership.

#### Mennonite Church Alberta

### Church anniversaries celebrated

On June 9, Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite Church had two reasons to celebrate.

A new addition to the church, including a gym/meeting room and classroom spaces, was dedicated to the Lord's service at the same time as the congregation rejoiced in its 26th anniversary.

Many previous congregational leaders were present as MC Alberta conference minister Jim Shantz and current

pastor Chau Dang presided at the dedication.

The vibrant, growing congregation of approximately 220 members needed the extra space for an English young people's program, fellowship times and Sunday school rooms.

On June 24, First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, celebrated 10 years in its 91st Street location with a potluck and "an afternoon of artistic delights" featuring the adult choir, children's choir, volunteer items and visual arts. A plaque inscribed with I Corinthians 3:11: "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ," was prominently affixed to the building's cornerstone following a litany of rededication and prayer.

#### Mennonite Church British Columbia

### Youth groups plan for summer service

Several Mennonite Church B.C. youth groups are planning to spend their summers doing service around B.C. and in other locations:

- Abbotsford's Olivet Church youth group will be going on a missions trip to Kettle Falls, Wash., from July 15 to 19. Activities will include leading children and youth programs, and participating in community events and service projects.

"We would ask for your prayers so that the gospel of Jesus will fall on receptive hearts," says Stacey O'Neill, youth pastor.

- The youth group from Abbotsford's Emmanuel

Mennonite Church has two back-to-back activities planned. Immediately following participation in the MC Canada Youth Assembly, July 3 to 6, which includes service projects around the city, the youths will be travelling to Ootsa Lake Bible Camp near Burns Lake, where they will be assisting with drama, crafts and counselling.

- As they do every other summer, youths from Cedar Valley Mennonite Church in Mission will be spending Aug. 8 to 17 at Rough Acres Bible Camp near Smithers, as cabin counsellors and support staff for the junior co-ed camp.

"We put a pretty big focus on getting the kids involved in ministry and service," says Chad Neustaedter, pastor of

Continued on page 31

#### HAROLD PETERS-FRANSEN



#### From our leaders

I had the privilege to attend the retirement of Gary Harder, long-term pastor of Toronto United Mennonite Church and, before that, long-term pastor of First Mennonite Church, Edmonton. His initial enthusiasm for ministry, together with the wisdom and experience he gained over the years, made him even more effective at the end of his formal career.

Mennonite Church Manitoba has a wonderful set of pastors, ranging in age from their early 20s to mid-60s, and a few in voluntary roles are even older. But we are in a period when churches that are looking to replace their current pastors seem to be tilting toward calling younger people. Of course, there has always been the belief that a congregation needs a 30-something pastor with 25 years of experience, gifted in preaching, caregiving and administration!

I believe, however, that we have entered an era where this desire is more pronounced than it has been. There is a recognition that our culture is in the process of continuous rapid shifting, with change being the only constant. The belief seems to be widespread that only younger pastors—who have experienced more of this shift—will help our churches to deal with current and future challenges.

Here in MC Manitoba we have many retired pastors continuing to offer themselves in wonderful ways to the wider church. There are also those pastors in their early to mid-50s who are wondering whether they should make a move to another career, fearful or unsure whether

churches will seriously consider them—or if they have the gifts and energies to offer a new setting.

It is my belief that the wisdom they bring is an incredibly valuable asset to congregations. Most pastoral care skills grow with more experience. The amount of change that has already occurred during their time of serving speaks well to their ability

to thrive on challenges immediately ahead.

This means, though, that we as pastors need to continually retool, as is true in many professions. Pastors need to read and attend seminars in ministry on a continuous basis. It is apparent that highly effective pastors like Gary Harder have continued to do that.

Churches need to make the time and funds available for this ongoing type of learning. Churches need to see this as vital to their pastor's work as they would want their family doctors to continue to update themselves to stay current. These are not times off, but vital to ongoing ministry.

We need pastors of many ages in our church. And within congregations we need significant spiritual leadership within a collaborative group around the pastor from age groups other than the pastor's own age. May God continue to call pastors and spiritual leaders of all ages to the work of the church.

Harold Peters-Fransen is interim director of MC Manitoba's Leadership Ministries.

## A wealth of experience

**There is a recognition that our culture is in the process of continuous rapid shifting, with change being the only constant.**

## Calendar

### British Columbia

**Sept. 14-15:** Central Fraser Valley MCC Relief Sale, Auction and Festival at the Tradex Exhibition Centre, Abbotsford. For more information, visit [mcc.org/bc/festivals](http://mcc.org/bc/festivals).  
**Sept. 29:** Mennonite Fall Fair at the Prince George Civic Centre. For more information, visit [mcc.org/bc/festivals](http://mcc.org/bc/festivals).

### Alberta

**Sept. 15-16:** Holyrood Mennonite Church 50th anniversary celebration. For more details, visit [holyrood.mennonitechurch.ab.ca](http://holyrood.mennonitechurch.ab.ca) or call the church office at 780-466-3277. RSVP your attendance to [hmcoffice@interbaun.com](mailto:hmcoffice@interbaun.com) or call the church office.

### Saskatchewan

**July 29:** Shekinah Adventure Challenger.  
**Sept. 7-9:** SMYO junior high retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.  
**Sept. 25:** Youth Farm Bible Camp annual fall supper, Rosthern.  
**Oct. 12-13:** Saskatchewan Women in Mission fall retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.  
**Oct. 13:** Youth Farm Bible Camp ride-a-thon, Rosthern.  
**Oct. 26-28:** Quilting and scrapbooking retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.  
**Oct. 27:** MC Saskatchewan Equipping Day.

### Manitoba

**Aug. 18-19:** Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship 40th anniversary celebration. For more details, contact Anne Peters at [abann@shaw.ca](mailto:abann@shaw.ca).  
**Aug. 25-26:** Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church 125th anniversary celebrations.  
**Aug. 26:** Camp Moose Lake 50th 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.  
**Nov. 2-4:** Quilting retreats at Camp Koinonia and Camp Moose Lake.  
**Nov. 3,4:** Camps celebration banquets at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church (3); Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg (4).  
**Nov. 9-11:** Quilting retreat at Camp Moose Lake.  
**Nov. 9-11:** Scrapbooking retreat at Camp Koinonia.  
**Nov. 10-11:** Home Street Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 50th anniversary homecoming and celebration.  
**Nov. 25:** Faith and Life Advent concert at Bethel Mennonite Church.  
**Feb. 22-23:** MC Manitoba annual delegate sessions at Steinbach Mennonite Church.  
**June 11-14:** 16th annual Believers Church Conference at CMU. Theme: "Congregationalism, denominationalism and the body of Christ."

### Ontario

**Aug. 12:** Annual Reesor picnic at Backus Heritage Conservation Area, Port Rowan. Worship service at 11 a.m. All Reesorites welcome.  
**Sept. 7-9:** Annual "Building Community" retreat for people with disabilities and others at Hidden Acres Retreat Centre. Theme: "All God's children: The global community." Speaker: Esther Kern. For more information, or to register, call John at 519-585-0522 or e-mail [professor\\_flatbread@yahoo.ca](mailto:professor_flatbread@yahoo.ca).

**Nov. 1-4:** MEDA's annual "Business as a calling" convention: "Trust in a world of change," in Toronto. For more information, visit [businessasacalling.org](http://businessasacalling.org) or call toll-free 1-800-665-7026.

**Nov. 10:** In celebration of 51 years of a Mennonite presence in Quebec, La Societe Mennonite Historique du Quebec and Mennonite Central Committee Quebec are holding an evening of pioneer stories and a Mennonite-Quebecois dinner to be hosted at La Maison de l'Amitie.

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

## Subscriber services Mennonite

### How to subscribe:

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

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

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

### Contact information:

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

**Youth** *From page 29*

student ministries. "We see the fruits of it in the years following, as they have made it a habit and not just a one-time deal."

The youths will also be helping with Vacation Bible School in Mission.

• For the third consecutive year, youths from West Abbotsford Mennonite Church will be travelling to Oliver, to volunteer with the Okanagan Gleaners from Aug. 19 to 23.

"At the Gleaners, we will be cutting vegetables, which are dehydrated and mixed with other vegetables, which serve as a soup mix," reports youth pastor Erik Olson. "Last year for one week's work we were responsible for helping the process by making 100,000 servings of soup."

*Unless otherwise credited, the articles in TheChurches pages were written by: 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.*

### Advertising Dates

Issue	Copy Due
July 30	July 17
Aug. 20	Aug. 7
Sept. 3	Aug. 21

#### Contact:

**Karen Suderman,  
Advertising  
Representative**

**1-800-316-4052 x224  
advert@  
candianmennonite.org**

## Scholarship applicants wanted

### ABNER MARTIN MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP

This annual scholarship is awarded by the Menno Singers to a student who is affiliated with Mennonite Church Eastern Canada and is in a full-time program of music study, graduate or undergraduate.

Applications must be mailed by Sept. 15, 2007. For application documents or further information, contact:

Lewis Brubacher, 16 Euclid Avenue, Waterloo, ON N2L 6L9.  
Phone: 519-884-3072. E-mail: Lbrubacher@sympatico.ca.

## Employment opportunities

King Road Mennonite Brethren Church  
in Abbotsford, B.C.,

is seeking a full-time **Senior Pastor** with an evident and enthusiastic passion for the Lord, willing to serve in a multicultural, multilingual church family of 500+ members. We seek a man who is a compelling communicator, committed to guiding others in caring ministries, guiding the pastoral team and church family to a deeper relationship with God.

Please see job description at [www.kingroad.ca](http://www.kingroad.ca).

If interested, please send resume to  
[search@kingroad.ca](mailto:search@kingroad.ca).

### Associate Pastor Position First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, Alta.

This vibrant, multi-generational, urban congregation of approximately 200 members is seeking a half-time **Associate Pastor** with primary responsibilities for Youths and Young Adults. The successful candidate will work with the lead pastor and with other leadership people of the congregation. Some pulpit and spiritual care ministries will also be expected. A seminary degree or a related bachelor's degree that reflects our Anabaptist/Mennonite beliefs and practices is preferred. Starting date is negotiable. For a more detailed job description, please visit our website at <http://edmonton1st.mennonitechurch.ab.ca>.

Interested applicants should forward questions and resumes to:

Wesley Berg, Chair, Second Pastor Search Committee  
c/o First Mennonite Church  
3650 – 91 Street, Edmonton, AB T6E 6P1  
780-436-3431  
[wberg@ualberta.ca](mailto:wberg@ualberta.ca)

Mount Royal Mennonite Church is inviting applications for the position of **Associate Pastor**. The Mount Royal congregation was established in 1963 and is one of several Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Saskatoon. The person(s) in this full-time position will be part of a pastoral team with responsibilities particularly relating to ministry to youths in a multi-generational, multicultural congregation of about 250 members. Anabaptist faith orientation and training are strongly preferred. This person will have the skills, attitude and vision to bring a leadership role to working with the Youth Ministry Team. Interested persons are invited to visit our website for a complete job description and to submit a resume to:

MRMC Associate Pastor Search Committee  
610 Avenue O North  
Saskatoon, SK S7L 2V3  
Or Attn. Len Andres at [landres@shaw.ca](mailto:landres@shaw.ca)  
Website: [www.mount.sasktelwebsite.net](http://www.mount.sasktelwebsite.net)  
Applicants are to respond by Aug. 10, 2007.



### Associate Director in Human Resources

Mennonite Central Committee is seeking an Associate Director in Human Resources. This person develops MCC policies and policy revisions, oversees administration of MCC compensation and benefits work, ensures HR procedures and processes are effective, efficient and timely, and assists the HR director with personnel crises and other departmental tasks.

Qualifications: 3-5 years experience working with compensation and benefits, demonstrated knowledge of U.S. employment law. Knowledge of MCC and MCC U.S. programs strongly preferred.

This position is located in Akron, Pa. Candidates of a gender or ethnic group typically under-represented in this type of MCC assignment are encouraged to apply.

Contact Kathy Jackson, Human Resources Director, 717-859-1151 ext. 250, [krj@mcc.org](mailto:krj@mcc.org).



## New Hamburg, Ont.

**P**erry Bartel, pastor of Hawkesville Mennonite Church, got “pied” by church members as an incentive for them to bake real pies for the 42nd annual Hidden Acres Camp chicken barbecue and pie auction, held June 12.

At the church picnic prior to the camp barbecue, donors of each of the 10 pies pledged by Hawkesville church members were given a cream pie with which to “adorn” their pastor, who turned both cheeks and his face to his tormentors and then forgave them their trespasses!

The Hidden Acres event proved a big success, as the surrounding community of churches, local businesses, neighbours and townspeople showed their support by coming out in the hundreds (1,100 to be exact). They feasted on the camp’s signature chicken, barbecued by “well-seasoned” committee members, while enjoying an evening of meeting people and appreciating the natural setting. The barbecue itself brought in about \$9,000 for Hidden Acres.

For most of the diners, this was the first time they had seen the new Woodhouse retreat centre standing where there was only pasture a year before. To mark this first year of the new building—and to raise awareness and funds for the completion of the project appropriately called “Widening the Welcome”—a pie auction was held in addition to the regular barbecue events.

In the spirit of long-standing support for the camp, 12 local Mennonite churches donated homemade pies and other baked goods. More than 120 unique baked treats were auctioned off, raising \$3,400, which will go entirely to the building fund.

—**Ross W. Muir**, with files from Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp



A slice of  
**‘pie-ty’**  
for a good cause

*Photos courtesy of Perry “Pie Man” Bartel*