

CANADIAN MENNONITE

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EDITORIAL

Neither east nor west

TIM MILLER DYCK
EDITOR / PUBLISHER

As Donita Wiebe-Neufeld writes in this issue, the upcoming World Communion Sunday is a reminder that Christians around the world find unity through our shared allegiance to Christ.

Phil Wagler, in his column on page 8, reminded me of a similar theme in contrasting “Mennonite” with “Christian.” As he so truly says, we must remember that our identity as Mennonites comes from first being Christian, and that our Christianity comes first from Jesus Christ.

Mennonite World Conference is the main body where Mennonites from very different countries and backgrounds gather. The Mennonite World Conference General Council adopted a statement of seven shared convictions last year; the seventh conviction addresses our global identity directly: “As a world-wide community of faith and life we transcend boundaries of nationality, race, class, gender and language. We seek to live in the world without conforming to the powers of evil, witnessing to God’s grace by serving others, caring for creation, and inviting all people to know Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.”

From some perspectives, the people we worship with on Sundays or at regional, national or global church gatherings are so very different from us. We are those born in Canada and those who came to Canada from another life elsewhere. We vote from the political right to the political left, or don’t vote at all. Some are more interested in preserving the good things God has given us while others are

more interested in seeing where God is to be found in new waters.

These sorts of dual emphases are found even in the short conviction statement above: We do not confirm to the evil in the world but we serve others in that world all the same. We care for the creation all people share even while witnessing to all that Jesus Christ is our Saviour and Lord in the hope that they will take this step too. Other examples are evangelism and peacemaking, or the primacy of scripture and the testing of personal discernment by the faith community. I say “Yes” to all those things, and more besides.

In what I consider a masterful piece of motion writing, delegates at the 2004 national church assembly voted on a resolution to join both the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (seen as more theologically conservative) and the Canadian Council of Churches (seen as more theologically liberal) as a single decision—it was both or neither.

This is a very unusual thing in the church world: In addition to Mennonite Church Canada, just five other denominational groups out of the 40 in the EFC and 21 in the CCC are full members of both organizations (our five like-minded denominations are an interestingly varied bunch: Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, Baptist Union of Western Canada, Christian Reformed Church in North America—Canada, Regional Synod of Canada—Reformed Church in America and the Salvation Army).



Sometimes the EFC can speak to issues the CCC doesn’t have consensus upon (such as the legal change to allow same sex marriage or abortion) and sometimes the CCC can address issues the EFC’s board doesn’t believe their members have consensus on (such as the bombing of Afghanistan in 2001 or invasion of Iraq in 2003). Note that the two organizations work together in many areas as well!

It’s certainly a challenge sometimes to decide things together just in our church with our various views on hot issues. How can the church find its guiding vision within these human muddles?

Our church’s *Minister’s Manual* has an answer as it discusses communion. “Communion is at the same time an intimate and a public event. It is intimate because in this feast, we meet Christ as he really is (the incarnation of grace) and our brothers and sisters as they really are (given a relationship with Christ and one another by grace). ... Though profoundly personal, the breaking of bread is a public event in that all who belong to Christ are invited; it is not a private event in which only people with particular attachments to one another gather.”

We gather at the same table not because of who we are, but because of the love of the person to whom we belong. Our obedience to Jesus’ teachings and our response to God’s grace overrides any other views we might have, our backgrounds or our preferences—full stop. This is both difficult and necessary. In Luke 13, Jesus says: “*Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able. ... There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrown out. Then people will come from east and west, from north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God.*”

ABOUT THE COVER:

Mrs. Minj serves communion at the Asia Mennonite Conference, Shamshabad, India, November 2004.

PHOTO: ELEANOR MILLER, MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

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Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching (Hebrews 10:23-25, NRSV).

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WILL BRAUN

Electronic Delivery

All subscribers can get the complete contents of *Canadian Mennonite* delivered free by e-mail or view selected articles online. For either option, visit our web site at canadianmennonite.org. The October 1 issue will be posted by September 27.

The church's job description



Shortly after you receive this issue, on the first Sunday of October, the global church will be remembering World Communion Sunday. This is a day for followers of Christ, of every language, skin colour and theological tradition, to be reminded that we are bound together not because of our own efforts or even desire. It is Christ himself that has done that, as the cornerstone of our faith and of all our churches. Donita Wiebe-Neufeld, co-pastor of First Mennonite Church, Edmonton and Alberta correspondent for Canadian Mennonite, reflects on World Communion Sunday through a sermon she preached on it last year. Scripture texts for the sermon included Mark 9:38-50 and James 5:13-20 (see sidebar).

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Today is World Communion Sunday. The idea to designate a specific day for Christian churches everywhere to symbolically unite like this was started by Presbyterians in the 1930s. Its purpose was to help foster unity and peace among churches by highlighting our common foundation in Jesus Christ.

The idea of uniting in Christ across denominations and cultures is particularly appropriate when we reflect on recent world struggles. In the last months alone, we have heard about so many conflicts. Many of these touch us here in Edmonton:

- The situation in Lebanon was personalized for those of us at our Camp Valaqua retreat when Randal and Suzanne Nickel shared letters they have received from Lebanese friends.
- The recent coup in Thailand made many of us wonder about the safety and welfare of Nhaw-Nhaw and Thaw-Thaw, the two young women in a refugee camp we are hoping to sponsor to come to Edmonton. We worry that this unrest might slow their application process.
- And we have all heard of the unfortunate results of the pope's speech in Germany, when he quoted a 14th



century Christian emperor as referring to elements of the Muslim faith as “evil and inhuman,” as some have used them to widen rifts between Muslims and Christians.

We live in a world desperately in need of unity. Compassion, respect and tolerance between peoples of varying Christian denominations, cultures, religions and nationalities is crucial if we are to see an increase in justice, peace and a hopeful future for the world.

The discord among people of the world is overwhelming. What is the church to do about it? When we are faced with the daily news headlines, how do we understand what our job is to be as a Christian church in addressing the disunity and dysfunction we face?

One of the lectionary scriptures today, being read this morning by many different churches, is from James. The Book of James is a favourite of many practically minded Christians. It’s easy to read because it is not primarily concerned with dotting every philosophical “I” and crossing every theological “T.” It urges us, as believers, to feed the hungry, comfort the sick, to bite our tongues, and witness to our faith through action. It seems very Mennonite.

When I first read the James 5 passage it jumped out at me as a simple job description for the church. When we suffer, we are to pray. When we are cheerful, we rejoice and worship. We are to be unashamed to ask each other for help, and to be humble enough to confess our inevit-

able failings to each other. It is a simple job description that, if followed, results in a community in which people will cry with each other and stand together when life is difficult. It is a place where laughter and enjoyment are shared, and people feel encouraged. And it is a place where people are humble and gentle with each other, so that all feel safe enough to be able to confess, forgive, learn and grow.

Of course, this is an idealistic view of what might happen if the job description

The discord among people of the world is overwhelming. What is the church to do about it?

was followed to the letter. We discuss these ideals, but we have to live in reality. We know that even in the church people sometimes suffer alone, or that joy can be ruined by jealousy or by differing opinions that are poorly expressed. We don’t all ask for help when we need it, because we are embarrassed about the response we might get. And confessing our failings to each other is much harder than it sounds. It requires a level of trust and safety that realistically seldom happens in a large group.

As a church, we don’t quite measure up to the full ideal of James, but there are times when we do get it right:

- When a distraught person is supported in their time of need.
- When we celebrate regardless of differences in opinions.
- When we are able to ask for help, or

confess to each other in small groups, and receive what we need.

The church does work, it does make a difference for us somehow, or we would not continue to keep coming. We can see places where it works, and it presents a worthwhile ideal goal. But so far I’ve only applied it to a limited definition of church, to our own congregation. When we use the word “church,” we are most often referring to it as this place we go on Sunday morning and to these people. What hap-

pens when the job description is applied to a wider definition of church?

Today is World Communion Sunday. Churches across our city, our country and our world gather to read the same scriptures and to eat the bread and drink the juice or wine that reminds us of the life and death of Jesus Christ, whom we all proclaim as Lord and Saviour.

Some services will have praise and worship bands, amplified music and repetitive choruses. Others will be sombre, with much prayer and reflection. Some may be completely silent, while others reverberate with piano, flute and harmonized voices. In African churches there will be dancing in the aisles to the sounds of drums and rejoicing, and in a Colombian church I know of, the people will all pray out loud, a cacophony of different prayers all at the same time. In some churches, the

preachers will deliver fire and brimstone sermons, pounding pulpits and delivering a literal view of salvation for the world. In others, the preacher will present a symbolic view of Scripture and ask questions about the nature of salvation.

How does this job description hold up when applied broadly to such diverse understandings and expressions of faith? This is difficult. We know that we struggle to fulfil this job description among even the relatively homogenous blend of people in this sanctuary. It gets more difficult when we even move so far as to attempt to apply it to our provincial and national conferences. How can we ever hope to extend this vision of caring, sharing and confessing across denominations, let alone across cultures?

The Gospel reading from Mark gives some aid in considering the question of unity in Christ: "John said to him, 'Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.' But Jesus said, 'Do not stop him, for



no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us.'"

We have an opportunity to do amazing things together in God's name.

Jesus is telling his disciples not to get too convinced that they are the only ones with the truth, or that they should be able to dictate the way things of faith are done. If the man's works are good, he should be left to them. Jesus' message to the disciples is emphasized by its placement in the Gospel of Mark. Earlier in chapter 9, the disciples themselves were unable to help a young boy with convulsions and Jesus had to heal him. I wonder if their noses were a bit out of joint when they saw someone else, a non-disciple, able to do what they could not.

Later, in chapter 10, the disciples are pictured arguing about who among them is the greatest. Jesus' earlier comment that "whoever is not against us, is for us" is a strong warning to the disciples not to get caught up in themselves. Their

Scripture Texts

John said to him, 'Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.' But Jesus said, 'Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterwards to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

'If any of you put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

'For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.'

—Mark 9:38-50, NRSV

Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

—James 5:13-20, NRSV

understanding of discipleship and proper practice of faith is not the only way.

This is where there is some solid warning—and encouragement—for the larger church as we seek to find unity and common purpose in Christ. We do not all have to believe or practise in exactly the same way in order to be doing God's work. In fact, if we take Jesus' warning seriously, we should be very careful to never claim to be in exclusive possession of the "truth."

In our working with other Christians, if we can keep our job description simple, we have an opportunity to do amazing things together in Christ's name. We may not be able to work together with other churches in matters of understanding salvation, the way to do baptisms, or who can have church membership. Those details will likely always divide us.

However, we can perhaps share our faith simply in caring for those who suffer, rejoicing with the cheerful and humbly confessing that we all make mistakes. If we, as churches small and large, local, national and international, can foster the careful and humble attitude of this job description, we have a very real chance to be united in effective witnesses to Christ, in spite of our real differences.

Today we remember Christ, together with millions of other Christians around the world. Many of us are not able to agree on theological details or worship styles, but we can stand together in unity because of our Lord and our shared desire to be connected with God. ☸

Pontius' Puddle



For Discussion

1. Have you experienced worship services where the style is very different from what you're used to? Why might new ways of doing worship be exciting and/or frightening?
2. Donita Wiebe-Neufeld suggests a church should be a "place where people are humble and gentle with each other, so that all feel safe enough to be able to confess, forgive, learn and grow." Does your congregation feel like this kind of a safe place? Can peace and unity grow where people don't have the freedom be vulnerable?
3. Are there activities or projects that your congregation works at in partnership with people of other denominations? What are the joys and difficulties in this type of partnership?
4. Are there situations in which fostering unity and peace through tolerance can compromise truth?

—Canadian Mennonite

CALL TO PRAYER

BY MARY H. SCHERTZ

Lord, as we gather today, in our ordinary way,
 in your presence, and in the presence of one another,
 we are all too aware that much is amiss in the world.
 We are all too aware, that even in this quiet moment,
 some of your beloved people and parts of your beloved earth
 are being visited by death and destruction.

For the sake of the world you love,
 we pray that our simple commitment to the routines of worship
 will not be an escape from life
 but a sacrament of hope
 that turns us back to the needs of the world
 more grounded in your love.

May our attention to ordinary things
 be a way of saying that we trust you
 as the one who cradles the world and its people
 in your all-embracing arms.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Menno idol

PHIL WAGLER

Are we Mennonite or Christian? There are moments when I wonder if the non-Menno world—and yes, Virginia, there really is a non-Menno world—see Christ when they see us.

Don't choke on your borscht just yet, I have nothing against Menno Simons—he was a courageous godly guy with a really cool beard if the pictures are to be believed. Neither do I despise the solid heritage that is mine through martyrdom, immigration, faithfulness and three butter-laden meals a day. For this I am thank-full. I still believe the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century grasped what is transforming and Spirit-filled about life. I'm just not so sure we—especially we of European-ancestry—remotely grasp what they did. Let's be honest, it's been a long time since we comfy cultural Mennos faced any real suffering for our abandonment to Christ.

Menno was enraptured by an evangelical faith that could not lie dormant; it called him to yield all to Jesus and let the chips fall where they may as life is rewritten as a second book of Acts. We seem, five centuries later, happily captivated by our ethnic religious genius. We've hung our reputation on a name and it's

not Jesus—we are Menno unplugged.

Mennonites, apart from the Good News passed on to us and not discovered by us, are as lost and confused on this planet as any other people. Apart from the fruit of repentance we can say “Lord, Lord” all we want and it won't make one iota difference. The Sermon on the Mount—have you read it and wept lately?—is now softened by a nicer, palatable and more politically correct social religion that laughs at original sin and shies away from saying “There is a Way,



Menno was enraptured by an evangelical faith that could not lie dormant.

let us walk in it.” The cost of discipleship these days is Wal-Mart cheap and Jesus-like.

“Who do people say the Son of Man is?” Jesus asked his disciples. Everyone had an opinion, but he was looking for an answer beyond human reason. He pressed in close, “But who do you say I am?” to see if his closest friends saw only with ethnic eyes. “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Only God settles this heavenly reality in any earthly heart, causing life to readjust dramatically.

This conviction moved born and bred Jews to set aside their peculiarity for the sake of Gentiles and a Dutch priest to abandon his pension for life on the run. This conviction brings a sword to human identification, demanding that we bear his name alone and not share his glory with another. Jesus is not defined by Mennonites; he must define, and perhaps redefine, us. “Peace, peace” we cry, while increasingly holding to the outrageous idea that utopia will suddenly dawn apart from lives bowed at the foot of Christ's cross. His broken body, not our protests, is the only hope for peace. When did we stop believing this?

We have turned Menno into an idol, Jesus into an available option on our proudly humble ethnicity, and we risk no longer being his Church built upon the

rock. We risk becoming nothing more than an adjective for furniture, crafts, baking and the simple life—the pathetic polar opposite of Martha Stewart and Paris Hilton. This Menno idol must fall. We must decrease in spades; Jesus must increase. This hypnotic gaze upon ourselves must be redirected if we really are Christian, and if there remains any true evangelical faith among us.

Phil Wagler follows Jesus with amazing saints in Zurich, Ont. You can reach him at phil_wagler@yahoo.ca.

/// Readers write

We welcome your comments and publish most letters sent by subscribers intended for publication. Respecting our theology of the priesthood of all believers and of the importance of the faith community discernment process, this section is a largely open forum for the sharing of views. Letters are the opinion of the writer only—publication does not mean endorsement by the magazine or the church. Letters should be brief and address issues rather than individuals.

Please send letters to be considered for publication to letters@canadianmennonite.org or by postal mail or fax, marked “Attn: Letter to the Editor” (our address is on page 3). Letters should include the author's contact information and mailing address. Letters are edited for length, style and adherence to editorial guidelines.

✉ ‘Absolute claim’ letter full of ‘skewed rhetoric’

IN HIS LETTER, “Natives have no ‘absolute claim’ to Canada,” July 30, page 19, Harold Jantz exhibits the same fuzzy logic and skewed rhetoric that have been used for centuries to disenfranchise Aboriginal Peoples.

He refers, for example, to “the hole in which they find themselves,” as if the plight of aboriginals was a matter of bad luck, rather than the result of systematic oppression of European colonialism. He asks, too, “How can a 1784 treaty bind us today?” as if the mere

VIEWPOINT

FROM OUR LEADERS

Growing in leadership and faith

BY JON OLFERT

“Resource” is a word we hear a lot in Alberta. We talk about natural resources, of which we have many, and human resources, of which we never have enough.

I am in a privileged position to be working with one of the greatest and possibly most undervalued resources in our church conference: our youth.

When I talk to people about my job, I brag a lot. I work with some of the greatest coworkers around and they are mostly between the ages of 16 and 20. I am always thrilled to let people know how hard my coworkers work, how committed they are, and how much fun they are to

work with.

When I interview my staff in the spring, I ask them “How has your Christian faith grown or changed in the past year?”. The typical response is ‘Well, I was on a real high after camp and then sort of coasted



For many of these youth, there is no real connection between camp and church.

through the year and just looked forward to getting back to camp.’ For many of these youth, there is no real connection between camp and church. Camp is seen as a separate entity from church.

From the youth perspective it makes

sense. At camp, our young adults are in charge. They have duties and responsibilities and they run the show. At Church, they are often bystanders, in the way, or at best involved in groups of their own.

So here is the challenge, how do we make our youth and young adults feel as welcome and integral in the church as they feel at camp, a church institution?

I challenge churches to involve youth, and not just as ushers! Invite them to serve on committees, involve them in worship, and ask their opinions. There are amazing gifts and talents in these young people and while they will need guidance and encouragement it is infinitely worth

it to watch them grow into leaders and deepen in faith. After all, they are our greatest resource.

Jon Olfert is director of Camp Valaqua, MC Alberta's church camp.

passage of time can invalidate a promise made in good faith.

He likewise disparages the quest of Aboriginal Peoples for rightful compensation by construing it as “simply waiting for payments that can support them.” And he attempts to turn a political and legal struggle into an amorphous metaphysical one by saying, “We sojourn here for a time and then pass from the scene,” as if Aboriginal Peoples ought to simply forget about the bigotry and economic disparity that they have endured, and should, instead, just sit back and contemplate the unfathomable wonder of existence.

Jantz is at least right in noting the need for “honest speech.” However, I think that what honestly needs to be said is that our European ancestors plundered aboriginal land and decimated aboriginal cultures in order to profit themselves, and that we—their descendents—continue to perpetuate that abomination so long as we do not redress it through rightful compensation.

MARK MORTON, KITCHENER, ONT.

✉ Peace witness must be a centrepiece

RE: “CHURCH SENDS peace tax letter,” May 14, page 16.

Wishing to send a “gentle” peace message to the Harper government about the escalation of military expenditures, national church leaders are proposing a military tax redirection for some benighted Christians, including benighted Mennonites. Such a proposal against a military build-up would be admirable if the church at least had a consistent humanitarian and peace message. But it doesn’t. In fact, the church has no idea what the search for and pursuit of peace is about.

In an example from my own province, about a year ago, Mennonite Church Manitoba church leaders were presented with an opportunity, nay responsibility, to convey to our government, the public, and other evangelical groups what a peace-witnessing Anabaptist Church strives to be about. They might even have demonstrated to the world that they actually care about humanity, including Muslim humanity.

They failed to do this last October when many

NEW ORDER VOICE

One hundred mile grace

BY WILL BRAUN

The system that puts food on our tables is headed for major change. Agricultural is energy intensive—in Manitoba, agriculture accounts for 30 percent of greenhouse gas emissions—so as fuel prices rise and the economics of climate change evolve, the contents of our fridges will change.

We Mennonites could play a significant role in a graceful transition to a new food system. The question is whether we'll see that role as inconvenient and threatening, or as a spiritual opportunity.

Food is on my mind these days because my wife Jennifer and I are five days into the 100 Mile Diet. For 100 days, over 100 Manitobans will eat only food produced and processed within 100 miles of their kitchen tables. Most of us will make a few exceptions; in our case, salt and vinegar for pickling are the main ones.

There have been a couple lean meals thus far, but right now I'm happily digesting a couple tasty crepes (flour, eggs from friends, and milk)—one with apple slices (from my parents' tree) and honey, and another with tomatoes and home-made pesto (from the veggie farm I work on part time).

The point of this gastro-ethical adventure is to consider the story of each

item that enters our temples of the Holy Spirit—to be mindful of the environmental costs, labour practices and energy inputs associated with each item, and then to respond with care. In supermarket aisles, our attention is focussed on appearance, taste, and price. The stories of the items are almost impossible to obtain.

This leaves many questions unanswered, questions of spiritual import. If the food



What if each church commissioned two members to become their vegetable farming ministers?

we buy is the fruit of exploitation of agricultural labourers or God's creation, surely that has significance for our spiritual health.

The shift to local food is a shift from anonymous food to trustworthy food. Right now, we have three 100-pound bags of dried beans in our kitchen (to be shared with other 100-milers). I know who grew these beans. I know their names and where they live. I can learn pretty much whatever I want to know about these beans from them (and, it turns out, a whole lot about NAFTA and Superstore as well). And I know the money we paid for them went directly to the farmer, and to strengthening the rural economy. I find it easier to say grace before a meal of

beans like these.

Mennos are well positioned to experiment with a more wholesome food system. Church denominations are among few forums in society in which urban and rural folk connect. Our MCC-rooted, more-with-less tradition of caring about food and the world also puts us on good footing. So what if each church commissioned two members to become their vegetable farming ministers? After receiving appropriate training, they could obtain land and supplies via church networks and congregational financing, and then be guaranteed a market. Or what about urban churches connecting with rural churches in order to gain direct access to meat, eggs and grains? What

about non-farm Mennos providing financial safe-guards and markets for farm Mennos willing to take the risk of farming in less fuel- and chemical-intensive ways? I'm wary of using religious networks for marketing purposes, but I do believe in communities of faith sharing the gifts of God's earth amongst each other.

The responsibility for making the food system more caring and loving lies as much with non-farm consumers as with the sometimes-maligned conventional farmers. We all need to work together graciously for a system that is healthier for body, earth, spirit, and community.

Will Braun is editor of Winnipeg-based Geez magazine. He can be reached at will@geezmagazine.org.

Mennonites attended the Franklin Graham Festival in Winnipeg, "swelling the multitudes for Christ" but ignoring Graham's lack of human and Christian integrity.

At the Mennonite Church Manitoba delegate sessions, the leadership thwarted any serious discussion of Graham's theology—heaven forbid that his politics be on display or dissected. Several stalwart senior delegates made a gallant effort to make delegates aware of Graham's apocalyptic war rhetoric and his expressed hatred for Islam, but that upset others, including the leadership, so the issue died on the floor.

The handful of Mennonites outside the festival handing out leaflets with a "Bless our enemies" message was a last minute, valiant but feeble, effort to refute Graham's war-mongering form of Christianity (Nov. 13, 2006, page 18).

So instead of having a courageous valid voice of integrity, while standing in the shadow of Anabaptist martyrs, your readers are now informed that "Telling a 'better' story" is "where it's at" (May 14, page 18). From this, I'm led to conclude that Mennonites have no respect for the gospel they espouse. They are a disgrace to the "grace" they purportedly have bet their souls on.

This story is a telling example of what comes out of CMU as Christian witnessing.

Evangelist Joe Boot is quoted as saying that in order to do evangelism, Christians “have to tell a better story than everyone else.” So now, in 2007, our theological teaching boils down to a sales pitch! Franklin Graham would approve. I’ve become convinced that evangelism is the coward’s way of practising faith. It is in fact a cop-out from just being Christian.

Since 9/11, Christians are encouraged to demonize Islam and the Qur’an. Soon they will demonize everyone except themselves. But then, that is already well on the way—while the peace witness is tucked into a “miscellaneous” file to be hauled out when it is convenient. I guess I was naive; I thought the peace witness was, at least, one of the centrepieces of Anabaptist/Mennonite theology.

PETER F. HIEBERT, WINNIPEG

✉ Lord’s Supper must regain baptismal connection

GOD MEETS US in varied and wonderful ways. It may be the viewing of a newborn child, the awesome grandeur of creation or an ancient cathedral, the peacefulness of an isolated lakeshore, or even the gratitude evoked by an undramatic communion service.

My recent review of New Testament references to the Lord’s Supper reveal the distance we have come from the original apostolic practice. The Lord’s Supper, like baptism, is primarily a communal experience, not merely a sign or symbol of some other event.

Throughout the New Testament, the Lord’s Supper has a very strong emphasis on loving relationships among the participants, unlike our current privatized expressions of it—meditating over a bit of pastry and a sip of juice. The biblical accounts are loaded with terms and metaphors that have significant practical implications. Concepts such as cup, blood of Christ, new covenant, body of Christ, breaking of bread and koinonia further express the mutually interdependent implications of the Lord’s Supper.

Paul combines these terms in referring to the unique relationships within the church and how this separates us from idolatry. In I Corinthians 10:16, he asks, “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?” Two chapters later, Paul expands on the interdependent nature of the body of Christ. The English words for koinonia—fellowship, participation, sharing and communion—are loaded with mutuality, something inherent within the meaning and function of Christ’s church.

In Mark 10:38, Jesus makes some significant associations with the new covenant and with discipleship: “Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”

The Lord’s Supper, by biblical implication, can be viewed as a covenant-renewing event, the original covenant being that of our baptism. That adds to its communal significance.

It is only a modern Protestant phenomenon that has separated the Lord’s Supper from a prior baptismal commitment to Christ and his church. Practices that were meant to be mutual expressions of renewed devotion and covenant commitment became religious rites with magical and legalistic emphases. While these practices received significant emphases within the Schleithem Confession of Faith, and by both 16th and 20th century Anabaptist theologians, the emphasis within our churches unfortunately became progressively less.

IVAN UNGER, CAMBRIDGE, ONT.

✉ Writer needs to ‘puleeze’ clarify comment

RE: “READER RESPONSE to cost of ministry claim” letter, July 30, page 20.

Rudy Kehler of Hope, B.C., responded to the statement, “Ministry costs money. Good ministry costs more!” in the Mennonite Foundation column, “To pledge or not to pledge,” June 25, page 14, with “Oh puleeze!”

I don’t know how to interpret that. I sense sarcasm in what appears to be the intentional misspelling of the word “please.” But I’d be very interested in hearing more. Is Kehler saying, “This statement is obvious”? Is he saying, “Ministry does not cost money”? Is he saying, “Good ministry does not cost more than mediocre ministry”? Is he saying, “Let’s not talk about money and ministry in the same breath”? Is he complaining about the high cost of good ministry?

Each of these possibilities can be legitimately read into his response. And each of them, in turn, warrants a serious response.

ERWIN WARKENTIN, WINNIPEG

The letter writer is the general manager of Mennonite Foundation of Canada.

✉ Another lesson from the global church

In mid-July, delegates from 140 countries were met by host families at the Toronto airport for the World Assembly of International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. (See “Lessons from the global church,” Aug.

20, page 2). We were delighted to meet our guests amidst the mass.

We met Yama (a pseudonym) from Africa. She was bright, cheerful, committed to God, daring and visionary. She told of experiences in her country we could not fathom. Evangelical Christians in her country are under constant watch and no public meetings are permitted. Conversations among believers in groups of four to eight are with hushed voices. Her pastor is in prison. Obtaining a visa and borrowing money for this trip were all a huge miracle.

Her husband is a pastor. He visits, teaches and encourages his church constituency—always with a guarded ear and eye. Believers meet in small groups, but do not sing aloud nor make any posture of prayer.

Neighbours, including those from other churches, may report “subversive” activity by these who wish to live God’s love. Yama’s family was asked to leave their rented home because the landlord was suspicious of unusual number of visitors. With prayer—and waiting—they found an even better place (a gift from God). This family truly lives by faith, with no security of income or salary.

While in our home for less than a day, she inquired about foods, spices and pottery, and asked questions about Mennonites. She called her parents by telephone, using code language.

I wonder what her thoughts were about our freedom to freely speak of God, her visit to the Mennonite Visitors Centre in St. Jacobs, Ont., and being allowed to take pictures of an Old Order Mennonite meetinghouse? In our guest book, she gave thanks to God for the rest, and for God’s preparation of Lorraine and my hearts for her visit.

I ponder the encounter. Why am I materially privileged? Why and how have I lived my life without sensitivity to my brothers and sisters? The bigger question is: How will I now live my life as a confessing Christian?

JOHN PETERS, WATERLOO, ONT.

✉ Ad not relevant to readers

I WAS SURPRISED to find in the August 20 issue a very large advertisement for Tremzac’s wood shaving machine (page 19). It was, by my accounts, the largest and most glitzy of your advertisements. What will be next? A full-page colour advertisement sharing the benefits of Viagra?

Unless the aim is to turn *Canadian Mennonite* into a money-making poster board, I would suggest keeping advertisements to those items relevant to the large majority of your readers.

RANDY GRIESER, MORDEN MB

✉ MCC leader’s departure a wake-up call

I’M WRITING IN response to the article on Robb Davis’s departure from MCC in the July 30 issue of *Canadian Mennonite* (“From high hopes to frustration,” page 33).

I had the opportunity to meet Robb at an MCC Eastern Canada retreat in May 2006 (my six year term with MCC ended in July 2006, and I continue to be a strong supporter of MCC and its aims).

I was impressed by Robb’s passion and by his willingness to live the kind of ‘on the edge’ leadership which I agree that MCC needs. In the article, Robb seems to take all the blame for his premature departure on himself, and says that a mature leader would have stuck it out.

Obviously, I don’t know all that went on in Akron, or within Robb’s heart. However, I can’t help feeling that Robb’s departure is a serious wake-up call to MCC and to all of us who support it as a wider church. It brings many questions to my mind:

Why should a leader who is nudging us to be a prophetic voice feel like he has to “stick it out”? Shouldn’t we be supporting that person in any way we can? Shouldn’t we be running a bit faster to keep pace with leaders ‘on the edge’ instead of dragging them back to trudge along at our slow, cautious pace?

Robb put me on to Hebrews 12 which speaks of running the race before us with perseverance, with our eyes fixed on Jesus. I believe that’s what Robb was challenging us to do. Mennonites and MCC are well placed to be a prophetic voice, so let’s not slacken our pace in that race. Jesus calls us to go out ‘on the edge’ with him.

I also have to ask myself: If his name was Wiebe, Dick or Bauman, would it have been easier for him to “stick it out”? I ask this question with the utmost respect for all who bear such grand old Mennonite names, several of whom I count among my dearest friends. We need to be constantly vigilant against our human tendency to let a strong sense of identity become a force of exclusion, even subconsciously.

Robb Davis’ departure from MCC presents all of us with a challenge to look at ourselves as a church and MCC as an organization. We need to ask these tough questions of ourselves and look earnestly together for the answers. We may be surprised by what we find.

SCOTT MORTON NINOMIYA,
ST. JOHN’S, NEWFOUNDLAND

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Bailey-Dick—Ezra Jasper (b. Aug. 3, 2007) to Nina and Matthew Bailey-Dick, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Barney—Abigail Jeanne (b. Aug. 4, 2007), to Yvonne Funk and Trevor Barney, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

Bartel—Brynna Madelyn (b. Aug. 24, 2007), to Becky and Rick Bartel, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Dueck—John Bradford (b. Aug. 6, 2007), to Colin and Kirsten Dueck, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon.

Enns—Abby Janelle (b. Aug. 3, 2007), to Alfried and Viola Enns, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Ens—Sierra Mary (b. June 9, 2007), to Trevor and Carla Ens, First Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.

Friesen—Houston Michel Russel (b. July 22, 2007), to Ryan and Deanne Friesen, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

Friesen—Nate Sean (b. Apr. 13, 2007) to Sean and Tania Friesen, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

Funk—Denis Joshua (b. Apr. 21, 2007) to Abe and Nici Funk, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

Giesbrecht—Jayden Noah (b. June 11, 2007), to Erich and Helga Giesbrecht, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Grasmeyer—Josiah Andrew (b. Aug. 16, 2007), to Marvin and Cindy Grasmeyer, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary.

Kerr—Adelle Patrice (b. Aug. 28, 2007) to Jamie and Katrina Kerr, Listowel Mennonite, Ont.

Knight—Nicholas Erich (b. Aug. 4, 2007), to Ted and Linda Knight, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask., in Calgary.

Kradko—Vanessa (b. Aug. 13, 2007), to Anna and Evgeny Kradko, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Larson—Kira Grace (b. Aug. 4, 2007) to Andrew and Faith Larson, First Mennonite, Burns Lake, B.C.

Lievsay—Miles Vernon (b. June 28, 2007) to Chris and Ramona Lievsay, First Mennonite, Burns Lake, B.C.

Loranger—Linnea Grace (b. Aug. 15, 2007) to Randy and Rose Loranger, First Mennonite, Edmonton.

Renwick—Sadie Morgan (b. June 23, 2007) to Chris and Rachel Renwick, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Schmidt—Christof Frederick Reimer (b. Aug. 5, 2007), to Christina Reimer and Mike Schmidt, Rockway Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., in Toronto.

Thole—Gabriel Patrick (b. June 7, 2007), to Naemi and Jean-Philipp Thole, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Toews—Ricky Alejandro (b. Aug. 8, 2007), to Alfred and Greta Toews, Steinbach Mennonite, Man.

Wiebe—Emily Angelina (b. July 23, 2007) to Delmer and Wendy Wiebe, Steinbach Mennonite, Man.

Zomer—Olivia Jane (b. Aug. 20, 2007), to Riks and Patty Zomer, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

Baptisms

Bloomingdale Mennonite, Bloomingdale, Ont.—Shannon Cressman, August 26, 2007.

First Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.—Eleanor and Jacob Goertzen, Aug. 9, 2007.

First Mennonite, Edmonton—Margaret Eggert, May 27, Alyse Ediger, June 24, 2007.

Mannheim Mennonite, Petersburg, Ont.—Benjamin Frey, Caleb Good Gingrich, Sarah Holderness, Katrina Matthies, Talina Matthies, Jenna Moyer at Hidden Acres Camp, June 10, 2007.

Wildwood Mennonite, Saskatoon—Ben Borne, Amy Indzeoski, Graham MacDonald, Matthew Stock, July 22. Bryn Olfert, Aug. 19.

Marriages

Baljeu/Doell—Corinna Baljeu and Curtis Doell, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Aug. 25, 2007.

Bean/Baxter—Matthew Bean (Wilmot Mennonite, Ont.) and Sarah Baxter, in Hamilton, July 14, 2007.

Bergen/Plett—Angela Bergen and Ben Plett, Crystal City Mennonite, Man., June 30, 2007.

Becker/Friesen—Amy Becker and Brent Friesen, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask. at Englefeld, Sask., July 20, 2007.

Brown/Ecker—Lindsey Brown and Jason Ecker, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 4, 2007.

Cornies/Clement—Matthew Cornies and Dawn Clement, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 12, 2007.

Doerksen/Wiebe—Ben Doerksen and Jenn Wiebe, Emmanuel Mennonite, Winkler, Man., Aug. 18, 2007.

Enns/Peters—Michael Enns and Rebecca Peters, Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Aug. 26, 2007.

Friesen/Kehler—Dale Friesen and Tammy Kehler, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg, June 16, 2007.

Garland/Nowak—Nathan Garland (Brussels Mennonite, Ont.) and Angela Nowak, at Waterloo Mennonite Brethren, Ont., Aug. 31, 2007.

Gingerich/Winter—Brandon Gingerich and Jessica Winter, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 11, 2007.

Good/Robinson—Rosanne Good (Wilmot Mennonite, Ont.) and Marty Robinson in St. Jacobs, Ont., Aug. 25, 2007.

Harder/Nerenberg—Marvin Harder (Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.) and Natanya Nerenberg, at Canton de Hatley, Que., July 29, 2007.

Heide/Penner—Herman Heide and Lisa Marie Penner, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 11, 2007.

Janz/Schroeder—Chris Janz (Rosenfeld Bergthaler Mennonite) and Whitney Schroeder (Victory Church, Altona) at Altona Mennonite, Man., Aug. 17, 2007.

Janzen/Rausch—Kathy Janzen and Ryan Rausch, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., July 14, 2007.

Paetsch/Sawatzky—Chalan Paetsch and Joel Sawatzky, Osler Mennonite, Sask., Aug. 25, 2007.

Peters/Wahl—Jonathan Peters (Altona United) and Ashley Anne Wahl (Rosenfeld Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.) at the Wahl farm, Halbstadt, Man., July 14, 2007.

Robinson/Zehr—Maria Robinson and Terry Zehr, Zurich Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 16, 2007.

Deaths

Cornies—Ingrid, 62, (d. July 31, 2007), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Cressman—Lettie, (nee Seamont), 91, (b. Mar. 29, 1916; d. July 16, 2007), Breslau Mennonite, Ont.

Dettwiler—Erma, (nee Cressman), 77, (d. July 25, 2007), Elmira Mennonite, Ont.

Dyck—Alice (nee Roth), 82 (b. Dec. 18, 1924; d. Aug. 27, 2007), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Dyck—Jacob, 89, (b. May 21, 1918; d. Aug. 2, 2007), Grace Mennonite, St. Catharines, Ont.

Freiter—Erich, 82, (b. Apr. 26, 1925; d. Aug. 22, 2007), Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

Hamm—Nikolai (Nick), 80 (b. Aug. 27, 1926; d. Aug. 4, 2007), Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

Klassen—Edward, 84 (b. Oct. 4, 1922; d. Aug. 23, 2007), Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

Koch—Karl, 89, (d. July 1, 2007), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Krahn—Helen, 53, (d. June 25, 2007), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Lemke—Hildegard (nee Scheffler), 73 (b. Dec. 9, 1933; d. Aug. 13, 2007), Point Grey Inter-Mennonite, Vancouver.

Martens—Peter, 85 (b. Sept. 4, 1921; d. Aug. 9, 2007), Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon.

Penner—Ryan David, 22, (d. June 28, 2007), Elmira Mennonite, Ont.

Poetker—Peter V, 92 (b. Aug. 2, 1913; d. Feb. 20, 2007) Steinbach Mennonite, Man.

Regehr—Eva (nee Peters), 84, (b. Feb. 18, 1923; d. Aug. 26, 2007), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Regier—Abraham, 82, (b. Jan. 25, 1925; d. Aug. 18, 2007), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Regier—Mary, 77 (b. Feb. 15, 1930; d. June 16, 2007), Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

Sacher—Sophie, 75 (b. Nov. 10, 1931; d. June 25, 2007), Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Schmidt—John, 83 (d. Sept. 3, 2007), North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Wiebe—Emily Angelina, 4 days (b. July 23, 2007; d. July 27, 2007), infant daughter of Delmer and Wendy Wiebe, Steinbach Mennonite, Man.

Wiebe—Henry, 85 (b. June 3, 1921; d. Apr. 14, 2007), Steinbach Mennonite, Man.

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

VIEWPOINT

Toward a reverential use of God's name

DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

When my young son glimpsed the gargantuan strawberry, an involuntary “O my God” burst from his lips. In the following stunned silence, we read shock in each other’s eyes and waited long seconds for words to come.

“Where do you hear that kind of language?” I asked.

“At school” was the immediate reply. “All the kids say it. It’s just an expression.”

The incident led to an amazing discussion about the power of names, and who we are as witnesses to our Lord.

In the last few decades, society has used the phrase “O my God” as an audible exclamation mark. While it used to be mainly in the domain of private adult usage, the phrase is now firmly entrenched in the public sphere, heard regularly in prime time media, and is shouted across playgrounds by elementary school children.

In secular usage, the name of God has become meaningless, a simple matter of convenient punctuation. In the church, however, this cannot be the case. Christians pray, do works of charity, and spread the good news of Christ in God’s name. The name of God is power. For Christians, it expresses the meaning of life and should never be reduced to a thoughtless expletive.

So how do Christians claim back a reverential use of our Lord’s name in

the midst of a culture that assumes it is meaningless?

Elsie Rempel, director of Christian Education and Nurture for Mennonite Church Canada, says; “Spoken language needs words and tones of exclamation, much like written language needs exclamation marks for expressing our pas-



In secular usage, the name of God has become meaningless, a simple matter of...punctuation.

sion, enthusiasm, or shock.... Channelling that need for expression into words that are appropriate—and that really express what we mean—is healthier for children than learning to stifle the inappropriate, or ‘swear’ word that comes so easily to lips that haven’t practised an alternative. Experimenting with and picking harmless sounds that serve our need for expression is one good approach.”

In a society working toward cultural and religious tolerance, respectful use of language plays an important role.

A Christian teaching in Edmonton’s public school system for 25 years, Jan Wilhelm makes use of the concept of respect. When she hears children saying “O my God,” she replies with something like, “No, we don’t say it that way in the class because some people believe in God and think that’s a swear, and that’s not the right way to talk.” She then gives them some alternatives and moves on.

Wilhelm notices that children will sometimes courageously hold each other to account regarding their use of language, and she sees a good example for adults in this. “I was personally in a situation last weekend where someone was saying it quite emphatically and quite often, and I didn’t say anything,” she says. “As adults, especially in social situations, we’re uncomfortable, but we don’t always know how to respond”.

At Menno Simons Christian School in Calgary, principal Joanne Wiens asked staff if they notice inappropriate uses of God’s name among their students. “We really do not see this as a large issue at our school,” she says. Occasionally, when a

student uses God’s name inappropriately, other students and the teachers gently hold them accountable.

In our post-strawberry discussion, I asked my son how he would feel if people shouted his name whenever they were surprised, angry or shocked about something. He didn’t like the idea, as it would be confusing, disrespectful and annoying. We agreed that God might feel the same way.

For us, ‘O my God’ is a phrase we will use reverently when we speak to or about the Lord we love. Our talk was an incredible awareness-building experience for both of us. Perhaps there are more of these conversations waiting in our communities if we are courageous enough to voice our reverence for the name of God.

The author is co-pastor of Edmonton First Mennonite Church and Canadian Mennonite’s Alberta correspondent.

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

Faith on the airwaves

Thai woman who made 'journey to light' now serving in Mennonite church

BY RYAN MILLER, MC CANADA
Borabu, Thailand

Three years after she first began listening to a Christian program on her portable radio in Wangprado, Thailand, Orathai Apong considered herself a believer. But in all that time, she had not met a single Christian in and around her village.

Today, Apong is helping other young Christians know that they are not alone. Now 24, and nine years removed from the day she first heard about Jesus over the airwaves, Apong is completing a 10-month internship as a church leader with Living Water Church in Borabu, working primarily with youths like her, who find themselves struggling for direction.

"She is part of a new generation of God's people who are being equipped to carry out his great commission to the Isaan people," says Pat Houmphan, a leader at Living Water supported by Mennonite Church Canada Witness and Mennonite Mission Network.

As a teen, Apong had many worries. Her parents had told her that they could no longer afford to send her to school. Without school, she did not know where her life in the Isaan region of northern Thailand would take her. She locked herself in a room in her home and listened to the radio. Then the words began arriving daily on her radio—words of inspiration that told her how faith in Jesus could help remove her worries.

She listened to the program—*Journey into Light* from Lutheran Hour Ministries—for two years, increasingly intrigued by the messages. Finally, Apong wrote to the radio station, started Bible correspondence courses and called the broadcasters



Orathai Apong teaches Sunday school at Living Water Church in Borabu, Thailand.

occasionally to ask for advice about her life and her faith. She prayed that God would help her with her desire to learn.

Two weeks after her prayer, a spot for her opened at a weekend school in her area, a school with a lower cost that her grandfather agreed to cover. Soon after, another prayer was answered: A group of Christians arrived on her porch.

Houmphan, along with his wife Rad and a lay leader at Living Water, first visited Apong in 2001, three years after she began listening to the *Journey to Light* broadcasts. The broadcasters had contacted the church

leaders, advising them of a new believer in the area—a young woman who felt alone in her burgeoning faith.

The four believers sat on the porch and shared stories. Her parents watched, intrigued by the visitors as well as the new ideas that had changed their daughter's outlook on life and brought her out of her room. On Easter Sunday, 2002, after taking a training course at Living Water, Apong and her parents were baptized in a pond in nearby Ban Daeng village. Her sister also became a Christian.

Pat says the largest barrier between the Thai people and Christianity is sociological, not theological. Many people in Thailand see Christianity as a western construct that will destroy their eastern Buddhist way of life. In this way, Christian faith is a threat, not a blessing.

Although the Houmphans were born among the Isaan people in Laos, both left the area as refugees and settled in Canada before returning as mission workers in 1996. Despite their places of birth, the Houmphans are considered outsiders. They need people like Apong for the next generation of ministry.

"The people would listen to us...but we cannot go by ourselves," Rad says. "We need the local people who know those around them."

Despite the challenges and isolation involved in being a Christian in northern Thailand, Apong is developing strength in her faith. She plans to continue studying at Prayao Bible College, then hopes to return to Living Water to minister to children and youths. ✎



Nearly 90 students who attended this year's Hickson Community Vacation Bible School (VBS) at Cassel Mennonite Church in Tavistock, Ont., helped knot a comforter for Mennonite Central Committee. A thousand dollars was collected for the international Free the Children clean water initiative through daily offerings and at the final evening's special program.

!Exploring leadership

Youth from across Canada report on their time in church leadership training this summer

BY TERESA FALK
National Correspondent

Mennonite youth from across Canada and the United States spent the summer exploring their Christian faith at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind., as part of the fourth year of the seminary's youth church leadership program (see also "Youth program to cut back but continue.")

"It was really challenging. It was definitely something I haven't had the opportunity to experience otherwise," said Wendy Luitjens from Rosthern, Sask. Luitjens was among seven Canadians who participated in the !Explore program. She said the experience



The !Explore group gathers at the Amigo Center, a camp and retreat centre near AMBS.

helped her grow in her faith.

"Being around other believers helped me think about what I believe and helped solidify it," said the 18-year-old. During !Explore, Luitjens enjoyed visiting other churches, including a Hispanic church in Chicago, and seeing how other Christians worshiped and lived out their faith. She has been busy serving in her home congregation of Rosthern Mennonite by planning worship, writing a drama, helping in the

office and doing visitations.

CaitieJo Reusser from Kitchener, Ont., also enjoyed her time at the seminary.

"It was such a good experience partly because I'd never done anything quite like it before and I really didn't know what to expect," she said.

Reusser's pastor encouraged her to apply for the program.

"I had done some work in the church before with children and worship leading, but the idea of church leadership interested me," she said. Reusser, 17, has been using her gifts to contribute to the church's faith formation hour and children's time during the worship service. She is also interested in putting together a worship service and doing visitations.

This is the first year the !Explore program has had a participant from Quebec. Elizabeth Loughheed from Montreal attends the only English-speaking Mennonite church in Quebec—the Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal. Loughheed's pastor provided her with information on the program.

"I'm interested in church ministry and how the church works," said the 17-year-old. Since returning to Montreal, Loughheed has assisted in her home congregation with everything from office work to visitations.

Thirty young people ages 17 and 18 participated in the !Explore program this summer. !Explore is divided into two components: a group experience and a congregational experience. The 18-day program begins with a few days at a local camp. During this time the participants concentrate on team building, leadership develop-

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ment and spiritual disciplines.

Lougheed especially enjoyed the camp portion of the experience.

"At the camp we met each other and had group building activities," she said. Several days are also spent exploring inner-city ministry through the DOOR (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection) program in Chicago where youth groups can experience urban or inner-city service opportunities.

Youth are also introduced to seminary life and given the opportunity to engage in theological discussions with professors through mini-classes, panel discussions and informal conversations during several days at the AMBS campus. Reusser said all three aspects of the program are very different.

"The part at Chicago is very people-oriented and I was immersed in a totally different culture than I'm used to," she said. "The part at AMBS was really educational. And the part at the camp was really good for group bonding."

For the congregational experience component, youth spend 100 hours working with a pastoral leader in various ministries. At the end of the program, the young person is required to write a paper reflecting on the experience.

Marilyn Rudy-Froese, pastor at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont., believes !Explore is a valuable program for young people.

"It puts the youth into a setting they typically wouldn't be in," she said. "What a gift to sit with seminary professors and have discussions around theological issues." Rudy-Froese also feels the exposure to the wider church benefits the youth.

"At this age they're getting a sense that the church goes beyond the local congregation and conference," she said.

Andy Brubacher-Kaethler, director of !Explore, said the purpose of the program is to "encourage youth to consider pastoral ministry as a vocational calling and to get them excited about theological reflection and education." He said the program tends to get highly energetic and highly committed youth who are very passionate about the church and who value the leaders in their congregations and want to learn from them.

The other Canadian participants in the 2007 !Explore program are: Stephanie Chandler (Bloomingdale Mennonite, Ont.); Carrie Lehn (North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.); Amanda Pauls (Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg); and Natasha Plenert (Springstein Mennonite, Winnipeg).

For more information on the !Explore program visit the AMBS website at www.ambs.edu. ☞

Youth program to cut back but continue

BY TERESA FALK
NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT

The !Explore program at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind. is entering a new phase since it has come to the end of its four-year \$1.8 million grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc., an Indianapolis-based, private philanthropic foundation.

"We are moving into a new phase with !Explore and we are very excited about continuing the program. It has born much fruit and we know it will continue to bear much fruit," said Andy Brubacher-Kaethler, director of !Explore. AMBS intends to continue the program and has received a four-year \$562,000 supplemental grant, which is a 50/50 matching grant, from the Lilly Endowment Inc.

Brubacher-Kaethler said the seminary is working hard at fundraising for !Explore and is hoping to eventually endow the program. Because AMBS is receiving less grant money, there will be changes

to the program.

These changes include:

- There will only be one group of 15 youth each summer, rather than two groups.
- The youth will not participate in the DOOR program in Chicago. They will rather do similar ministry work in the Elkhart area.
- AMBS will continue to pay for the program, but not the participants' transportation costs to and from Elkhart.
- There will be no \$2,000 scholarship available to youth. In the past if a young person completed both components of the program and enrolled in full-time studies at a Mennonite college or university in North America, he or she would receive a \$2,000 scholarship for tuition.
- AMBS will provide each participant who completes both components of the program with a \$500 US stipend, rather than a \$1,000 US stipend. AMBS is hoping the youth's church will provide the remaining \$500 US.

Looking back on the past four years, Brubacher-Kaethler feels the program has been very successful.

"The oldest !Explore kids are just going into their final year of college. So it's hard to tell in the long run what kind of fruit the program will bear, but in the short term it's clear to me these are the kind of young people who go on to colleges and are very involved in student government and spiritual leadership," he said. ☞



Lauren Derstine
and Elizabeth Lougheed

Generous spirit extended to learning tour

Canadians find South Africans appreciative of their visit from 'across the world'

BY DEBORAH FROESE

MC Canada
South Africa/Botswana

A trip to southern Africa gave members of a Mennonite Church Canada learning tour the opportunity to witness generosity and grace in the face of issues such as racism, poverty and injustice.

Led by Rudy and Sharon Dirks, the tour group travelled across South Africa and then to Gaborone, Botswana, and back again. Along the way, they visited a variety of townships, ministry locations and churches, immersing themselves in the history and culture of the land. For the Dirks, the trip was a journey home. From 1996-03 they served as MC Canada Wit-



Worshippers at Head Mountain of God Church gathered around the MC Canada learning tour group and fervently prayed out loud for the Canadians. As the group was leaving, the pastor approached Rudy Enns with a word from the Holy Spirit regarding his health, surprising Enns and the others with the accuracy of his statement. Tour leader Rudy Dirks called the utterance "a reminder...that God speaks to us in unusual and unexpected ways."

ness workers in Botswana; they now pastor at Niagara United Mennonite Church.

Witness workers Dan Nighswander and Yvonne Snider-Nighswander in South Africa and Glyn Jones and Susan Allison-Jones in Botswana organized meetings and activities for the tour.

Each morning began with devotion from *Forty Days in the Desert*, a book by Steve de Gruchy, director of the theology and development program at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. In a meeting with de Gruchy, he

said the effect of the apartheid movement on black South Africa was like the effect of North America on the rest of the world.

This was a sobering thought for tour member Lorraine Mueller, who was appalled by the contrast between the poverty of southern Africa and the general wealth in North America. "What once seemed normal (in North America) now seems outrageous," she said.

In the Old Naledi squatter settlement, exuberant children flocked to the visitors, providing a bright contrast to dusty streets and a landscape dotted with cement-block homes. The children sang their national anthem for the tour group, which responded with a rendition of "O Canada."

In the South African township of Mpophe, the tour group visited the Masibumbane HIV/AIDS mission and Project Gateway, its community garden project. There, organic crops of beans, corn, squash, melons, lettuce, cabbage and other vegetables are raised to provide healthy food for local people and to generate some income. Students engaged in Canadian Mennonite University's Outatown program in South Africa spend part of their time at Project Gateway.

In Botswana and South Africa, Mennonites have been asked to work with the African Initiated Churches (AICs) rather than planting Mennonite congregations. Tour members also experienced African worship—with music, drums and dancing, and services lasting two hours or more. In a single service at Spiritual Healing Church in Botswana, approximately 30 men and women were baptized by immersion, children were dedicated and communion was shared. ✻



MC Canada Witness worker Dan Nighswander, left, delivers 33 Anabaptist books to Annette le Roux, librarian at the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa, while Yvonne Snider-Nighswander and assistant librarian Ken Chisa, look on. The books were donated by Waterloo North, Hawkesville and Cassel Mennonite churches, and by C. Arnold Snyder of Pandora Press. Says Nighswander of the potential impact of the books: "We met a Presbyterian pastor here who read *The Politics of Jesus* and, as a result, took the difficult stand of non-combatant service, refusing to carry weapons during his obligatory military service. He believes that "other students will also find these books to be very significant in shaping their understanding and beliefs as they prepare for ministry in ... Africa."

MWC in healthy state in lead-up to Assembly 15 in Paraguay

BY FERNE BURKHARDT

Mennonite World Conference
Asuncion, Paraguay

This is a good moment for MWC," Larry Miller, Mennonite World Conference general secretary, told the MWC Executive Committee which met here August 1-7. In his "State of the Communion" presentation, Miller cited progress on the program and organizational plans adopted at General Council meetings in Pasadena in 2006, including initiatives to support member churches, and a healthy financial situation.

The Global Mission Fellowship has decided to work towards becoming an MWC commission, reported Janet Plenert, chair of the GMF planning committee. The Executive Committee authorized MWC staff to work with GMF on developing a missions commission.

Four emerging initiatives being developed since the Pasadena meetings are a deacons commission, Global Anabaptist Deacons, a remodelled Global Church Sharing Fund and Koinonia Delegations.

The first Koinonia Delegation, with representatives from each of the five continental regions, was already in place and headed for Zimbabwe on August 16. Its mandate was to learn, listen, encourage and stand beside the Brethren in Christ Church there which continues to experience much distress.

MWC finances are "in pretty good shape," said Paul Quiring, treasurer, largely due to positive response to a "Leadership Campaign" launched last year. The objective was to raise unrestricted funds of \$200,000 (US) per year for four years from major donors committed to making annual donations to the campaign. Excellent response has resulted in a new goal: \$1 million by 2010. During this period, MWC will continue to work at long-term funding plans.

At the end of 2006, the unrestricted

fund showed a positive balance of nearly \$70,000. A deficit in the assembly fund, as budgeted, will continue to grow as assembly costs mount before registration fees come in. "Paraguay 2009 is estimated to cost approximately \$1.8 million—more than double the cost of Assembly 2003," noted Quiring. "Almost everything will cost more than in Zimbabwe."

Registration fees are expected to cover approximately 60% of assembly costs. Paraguay member conferences have agreed to raise \$200,000 with additional donations likely to come from the Paraguay business community and the Mennonite cooperatives. "There appears to be strong financial ownership [in Paraguay] in the success of this assembly," said Quiring.



Mennonite Church Canada's Janet Plenert helps to "prepare the ground" for the 2009 world assembly.

The Executive Committee devoted considerable time to discussing the July 14-19, 2009 assembly.

Ray Brubacher, Assembly 15 international coordinator, noted that of the 20 Anabaptist conferences with some 30,000 members in Paraguay, eight conferences with more than 22,000 members belong to MWC. These eight conferences, including German, Spanish, and Indigenous, are working together on assembly planning, a first-time collaboration.

Paul Dueck, assembly music coordinator who lived in Asuncion until age 12 when his family migrated to Leamington, Ontario (Canada), also participated in program planning.

The Executive Committee discussed a range of suggestions before settling on a theme for 2009 related to unity and service, based on Philippians 2:1-11 and charging the Program Committee to define the language. The Executive Committee also agreed to shorten the assembly, starting on Tuesday, July 14 rather than Monday, July 13 as previously publicized.

Executive Committee members and staff visited the Centro Familiar de Adoracion (CFA) complex, the venue for assembly gathered, which is still under construction but will be completed in 2008 and will provide adequate space to accommodate the anticipated more than 7,000 assembly participants. Registration information is expected by April 2008. ❧

'Live the difference' theme for Global Youth Summit

Asuncion, Paraguay—AMIGOS, the Mennonite World Conference youth committee, have decided that "Service: Live the difference" will be the main theme for the Global Youth Summit in Paraguay in 2009. The five committee members, each representing a different continental region, are dedicated to global youth networking, encouraging intergenerational dialogue and organizing the summit. They met in Asuncion this summer. Elina Ciptadi, former Global Youth Summit delegate and now president of Amigos, stated, "We want young Mennonites and Anabaptists to understand that service is a lifestyle, a lifetime calling as followers of Christ, and something to pursue beyond our comfort zone. We want to invite young people to a world of service that is so much more exciting than just donating spare change, isolated projects, service trips or evangelism without addressing social issues. We hope biblical analysis, cross-cultural interaction and sharing of each other's experience in ministry will deepen our understanding of service." Amandus Reimer, Amigos vice-president national planning coordinator for the 2009 youth summit, hopes that 850 young people from Paraguay, Latin America and throughout the world will gather in Asuncion in 2009 as delegates, participants and volunteers.

—MWC Release

Building the church with newspaper

BY LYNDA HOLLINGER-JANZEN

MC Canada
Playa Pascual, Uruguay

The fourth chapter of Exodus reports that an incredulous fugitive thought the voice from a flame-shooting bush was calling him to an assignment beyond his capacity. But, God's question, "What is that in your hand?" inspired Moses—and his spiritual descendants—to undertake audacious projects.

Add ingenuity to this kind of faith to believe that an emerging Mennonite church in Uruguay is building their church with newspaper, one coil at a time.

"We begin like this, under and over," Yanela Martínez says, crouching on the floor as she weaves long, thin rolls of newspaper into a basket.

Martínez, who also teaches crafts in a local school, has helped the congregation learn the skills of basket-making that have added much-needed income toward the church's building fund.

Martínez and her husband, José Luis Gonzáles, opened their home in Playa Pascual for Christian fellowship about five years ago. This gathering quickly outgrew the confines of their livingroom and, with the help of other Uruguayan believers, the

Jesús es mi Rey (Jesus is my King) congregation purchased a property with a building that had a troubled history, including a suicide. Now that building overflows with worshippers and the young congregation has taken on the challenge of a \$30,000 building program.

Gonzáles and Martínez, who serve as pastors at Playa Pascual, also receive instruction from the Centro de Estudios de las Iglesias Menonitas de Uruguay (Uruguayan Study Center of the Mennonite Churches) that offers training courses for church leaders. So many of the Jesús es mi Rey members have an ardent desire to deepen their biblical knowledge that the study centre has opened an extension program in Playa Pascual.

Jesús es mi Rey is the first project of Campomisión, a ministry in which German- and Spanish-speaking Mennonites collaborate to reach those who don't know Jesus in southwestern Uruguay. Mennonite Church Canada Witness contributes to Campomisión and the Uruguayan Study Center of the Mennonite Churches.

The church has reached out to its neighbours in a variety of ways, especially those on the margins of society. In her school classes, Martínez teaches the Golden Rule along with art. She also offers two hours of crafts and other activities accompanied by Bible classes at the church on Fridays and Saturdays.

What seems to be key for the life of the congregation is its ministry of love and service to the community," says Tim Froese, executive director of International Min-

istry for MC Canada, after a visit to the congregation.

Translated, Playa Pascual means "Easter Beach." Ironically, this beach is often used for spiritist offerings and ceremonies—an influence of Umbanda spiritism that has come from Brazil.

"The [Jesús es mi Rey] workers noted that spiritual warfare is also an issue they contend with in a very real way in witnessing to Christ in their community," says Froese. Still, the congregation attracts those who formerly participated in the occult.

Karen Schellenberg, pastor at Portage Mennonite Church in Portage la Prairie, Man., visited Jesús es mi Rey as part of a trip to re-connect with Uruguayan pastor Beatriz Barrios, whom she hosted in Manitoba during IMPaCT 2006 (International Mennonite Pastors Coming Together).

Schellenberg was struck by the fact that the basket makers were selling their products by donation only. "With a \$30,000 goal, I thought, 'Wow, this is going to take a lot of baskets,'" says Schellenberg, adding, "I wondered if our churches in North America could be as persistent and patient. We want big donations, and we want them fast. The basket-making project showed me persistence and patience. And complete trust in a God who is going to help to make their dream a reality." ❧

A 60-hour dash for the latest Die Mennonitische Post

BY GLADYS TERICHOW

Mennonite Central Committee
Manitoba Colony, Mexico

Twice a month Jacobo Zacharias embarks on a 30-hour trip to Manitoba. He drives a 1990 full-size Chevrolet van—the fifth van he has bought in four years. He always stops to visit three children and seven grandchildren living in southern Manitoba, but his destination is *Die Mennonitische Post* in Steinbach. When he has loaded about 2,000 issues of the German language newspaper into his van, along with other publications and books to be distributed in Mexico, he begins the 30-



Yanela Martínez of Jesús es mi Rey Mennonite Church and Beatriz Barrios, pastor of La Floresta Mennonite Church in Montevideo, Uruguay, examine rolled newspaper coils that will be used in weaving baskets to raise money for a building program for the Jesús es mi Rey Mennonite congregation.



Mennonite Central Committee staffers Mary Enns and Lena Peters sort Die Post and Das Blatt for distribution in the Mexican states of Chihuahua, Durango, Campeche and Zacatecas, and the country of Belize.

hour return trip to Mexico.

“We have been to Manitoba 107 times the past four years,” says Zacharias.

In Mexico, his arrival at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) resource centre near the city of Cuauhtémoc marks the beginning of a flurry of activity. The boxes of newspapers are unpacked and sorted for distribution in the states of Chihuahua, Durango, Campeche and Zacatecas, and the country of Belize.

A green flag at the driveway leading to the resource centre lets passing motorists know that the newspapers have arrived and are ready for distribution. Volunteers from numerous small villages pick up the papers for distribution to subscribers or to sell as single copies in stores. Radio announcements also let people know the new issue has arrived in Mexico.

“This is the way we have been doing it for 30 years. It’s not the most efficient way, but it is the cheapest way,” says *Post* editor Kennert Giesbrecht, explaining that Zacharias’s commitment to picking up the papers in Steinbach reduces the need to find volunteers who can deliver the paper to Mexico twice a month.

Sending it with travellers usually helps to get the paper there sooner than through the big shipping companies, he adds. This

way *Die Post* will arrive at its destination within 3 to 4 days, whereas the shipping companies will not commit themselves to deliver it within a week.

Zacharias, a former long distance truck driver, says he enjoys driving and is glad that he can use his skills to strengthen connections among Low German Mennonite communities. “We don’t transport *Die Mennonitische Post* to earn money. We do this to help unite Mennonite people,” he says. “Many German colonies are very isolated. The world stands still for people living in these colonies.”

Die Mennonitische Post, along with *Das Blatt fuer Kinder und Jugend*, a magazine for children and youths published monthly by *Die Post*, provides a window to a bigger world, says Zacharias.

In addition to providing courier services for the newspapers, he provides courier services for the Kleine Gemeinde publishing company in Mexico that publishes a German school curriculum and other books used by Mennonite churches and schools in Canada.

“Sometimes the van is just as full going to Manitoba as coming back,” Zacharias says. ☘

Popular paper in Mexico turns 30

BY GLADYS TERICHOW

Mennonite Central Committee
Nuevo Casas Grandes, Mexico

Jacob (Jake) Fehr doesn’t have a subscription to *Die Mennonitische Post* but whenever he has enough money to buy a paper he stops at the local Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) resource centre to pick one up.

“Everything is interesting—the news, the pictures, the stories,” he says about the German-language newspaper published by MCC Canada. “I like everything in the paper.”

Fehr, a farmer and road grader operator, went to school until he was 12 years old. He learned basic reading skills at school, but said having access to this German-language newspaper as an adult helped improve his literacy skills.

Die Post helps Jacob and Tina Fehr stay in touch with relatives living in Alberta and Ontario. Several months ago they were thrilled to see in the paper a five-generation photo of relatives living in Taber, Alta.

The first issue of *Die Mennonitische Post* rolled off the press at Derksen Printers in Steinbach, Man., 30 years ago—April 16, 1977. The 12-page newspaper was started by MCC workers Abe and Myrna Warkentin in the basement of their home.

Today it is a 28-page paper, with 7,600 copies published twice a month in Steinbach, Paraguay and Bolivia. About 4,700 copies are printed at Derksen for distribution in Canada, the U.S., Mexico and Belize. Derksen also sends electronic copies to Paraguay and Bolivia, where a total of 2,900 additional copies are printed.

The paper’s current editor, Kennert Giesbrecht, enjoys travelling to Low German communities that receive *Die Post* and meeting readers at gatherings called *Post-treffen*. “These trips recharge my batteries,” he says. “I often hear that *Die Post* is a much appreciated visitor in their homes.”

The newspaper is the only source of news and information in some of the more conservative Mennonite colonies, Giesbrecht notes. This is foremost in his mind as he selects stories and news items of interest to this diverse multi-national readership.

About 10 pages are designated for letters written by readers. “It is a connecting tool—a connecting paper,” Giesbrecht says, explaining that these letters are used by readers to share information about deaths, illnesses, accidents, the weather, and church and community events.

The number of photographs has increased, but Giesbrecht wants the paper to maintain strong news content written at a level that promotes reading and literacy. “Many people have said to me, if it wasn’t for *Die Post* they would have never learned how to read,” he says.

Publishing *Die Mennonitische Post* has led to other initiatives, commonly referred to as “*Post* ministries.” These ministries include publication of *Das Blatt fuer Kinder und Jugend*, a 32-page monthly magazine designed for children and distributed through schools; a book ministry; and the sale of inspirational literature and music in German, English and Spanish. ☘

GOD AT WORK IN **Us****PRAYER**

Watching Dad pray

BY CARL DEGURSE

Dad had keys to our church when I was a boy and occasionally we would go there to pray, just the two of us. He would leave the lights off and, in the sanctuary's mystical darkness, I was awestruck. I was supposed to pray, but I seldom did. Instead, out of the corner of my eye I watched Dad pray.

He certainly had lots to pray about. I later learned that he disliked his stressful

our mother during her three-year battle with cancer.

I thought of Dad's prayer habit recently when I was at his bedside at Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie, Ont. A stroke in April had paralyzed his right side.

Even worse, he has global aphasia, a medical term which means he can't understand oral or written language. Words of love from family and friends

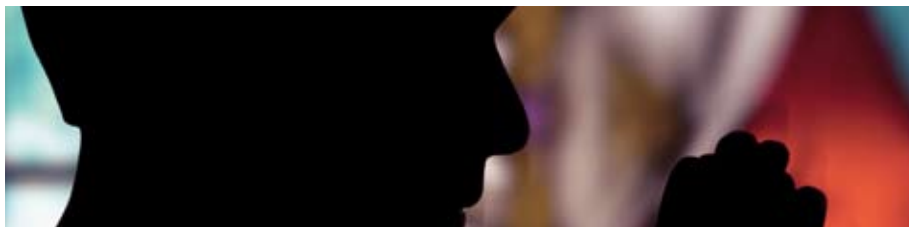
exception to this bleak scenario. He can still pray. Shut off from regular communication with the world, he remains linked to the God who has long guided and strengthened him.

Here's what it's like at his bedside. Someone takes his small cross from his end table and puts it in his one hand that works. His face and eyes light up and he kisses the cross. Someone starts a familiar prayer—"Our Father, who art in heaven..."—and his lips make the appropriate movements as he follows along silently.

A medical expert might have a logical reason why the victim of a massive stroke can still participate in spoken prayer even though he doesn't understand language. But I consider it grace.

I also feel that, inside his stroke-struck

He remains linked to the God who has long guided and strengthened him.



job as a life insurance salesman, but needed the pay cheque to support his five children. His string of heart attacks began when he was only 34. His reliance on prayer continued throughout his life, recently giving him strength to care for

make no sense to him. And when he tries to express his thoughts and feelings, it sounds to us like unintelligible babble.

His speech pathologist says that, to Dad, it seems like everyone else uses a foreign language. But there is a wonderful

body, Dad may still have an interior prayer life. Medical texts report that some people who have recovered from aphasia have said that, during the time when they couldn't communicate, their minds worked fine and they created mental puzzles to break the boredom. Knowing Dad, he's praying as fervently as he is able.

I'm grateful to God for leaving Dad the solace of prayer. And I'm also grateful to God for giving me a father who prays, a life-long model of a man trying in all circumstances to stay aligned with God.

After leaving the stroke ward to return home, my wife and I went camping for a weekend with our three sons. We were far from our home church on Sunday morning, so the five of us held a makeshift service around a campfire. While praying, I looked up and saw my 11-year-old son. He was supposed to be praying, but he wasn't. Out of the corner of his eye, he was watching me pray.

Carl DeGurse is a member of Douglas Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Valerie Bender of Crosshill (Ont.)

Mennonite Church, left, and Susan Roes of Wellesley (Ont.) Mennonite Church were among 40 administrators from across Mennonite Church Eastern Canada who spent a June afternoon looking at computer basics and database programs as part of the MC Eastern Canada Administrators Day. Carol Penner, MC Eastern Canada assistant moderator and pastor at The First Mennonite Church in Vineland, spent time delving into issues surrounding self-care in the workplace. She offered a prayer for church administrators: "You are the God of details. Thank you for my calling to keep track of details for this church. In the alphabetical files and numerical ordering, I am your servant, doing humble tasks for a greater purpose."



Moral authority and divine diplomacy

After more than 20 years, Kreiders bid UBC farewell

BY HENRY NEUFELD

Vancouver

On a June afternoon Evan Kreider, wearing one of his classic bow ties—which he sews himself—walked from his associate dean of arts office at University of British Columbia (UBC) to the campus library, where he took his wife Janice’s hand and they stepped into retirement.

Janice worked at the UBC library for almost 25 years, initially as a science bibliographer and then as assistant university librarian. In 1975, Evan came to UBC’s School of Music to teach medieval and renaissance music history; he became associate director at the School of Music and, in 2000, was invited to become associate dean of arts, helping to oversee four schools, 16 departments and two museums.

For the Kreiders—graduates of Goshen College, with roots in Swiss Mennonite communities in Ohio and Indiana—the move from New York State to Vancouver required some adjustments. Janice was pregnant, they were in a new country, had few acquaintances, and were unfamiliar with Russian-descended Mennonites.

“It was a different Mennonite culture here,” says Evan of Canada’s west coast.

“And not just the food,” adds Janice.

The Kreiders were used to a stronger emphasis on the peace position and a simple lifestyle. “We were surprised at the level of political involvement among Mennonites here,” says Evan.

Evan and Janice are founding members of the Menno Simons Centre (a student residence) and the Point Grey Inter-Mennonite church that meets there. “The centre and the church has a lasting impact on young lives,” says Janice. “There’s great value in living together in a Christian community.”

Evan and Janice are central in the life of



Stepping into retirement: *Their jobs were an extension of church work.*

the congregation, where she is church treasurer and Evan is the church’s unofficial, unacknowledged and unpaid pastor. He leads services, organizes liturgies, and performs marriage ceremonies, child dedications and funerals. Both take their turn as Sunday speakers in this small church that has no paid staff. At Evan’s suggestion 20 years ago, the church’s discussion time following each sermon provides time for interaction and reflection, much like a seminar.

The integration of faith into a secular work situation was never a problem for Evan or Janice.

“The church was the main patron of music before 1600, so much of the music dealt with Scripture and I’d get to talk about it,” Evan says of the classes he taught, where he noted an increasing biblical illiteracy among students. “I’d be surprised if 10 percent of the students know any Bible stories.”

Of his time in administration, especially in the dean’s office, Evan says: “I viewed this as a calling, as an extension of church work. Much of what I did with students and faculty was relational. The most important thing is to listen.... I tried not to offer solutions before people were ready to hear them and tried to make the university’s complex impersonal system work humanely. I try to avoid confrontation.”

At a recent retirement event for Evan,

UBC’s dean of arts described Evan as “a person of sage wisdom, enlightened judgment, sharp wit, divine diplomacy, literary elegance and unparalleled standards.” He was known throughout the faculty for his “wisdom, moral authority and delightful sense of humour.”

Evan and Janice were known throughout the campus as wise, calm people who were gracious to all; exemplary colleagues; and inspiring models of ethical leadership. Judy Barry, Evan’s administrative assistant, says, “Evan brought to all of us a sense of his strong religious belief. I learned from Evan that death is a part of life.”

Evan is modest about his impact on students. “A number of students have said I’ve changed their lives. I’m not sure how,” he says.

In retirement Janice will have more time for gardening and volunteer work, while Evan will do some much needed healing—some of it on the golf course! He continues to sing in two auditioned choirs. And their church still needs them.

A powerful theme in their lives is that God is found in right relationships, not in dogma and doctrines. A colleague says of Evan, and it’s equally applicable to Janice: “He seems unobtrusive until you notice that he is the calm at the center of the storm. There’s no need to say more, it wouldn’t be the Mennonite way.” ☞

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Speaking on Afghanistan

National church makes statement to government with 11 other denominations

BY TERESA FALK

National Correspondent
Winnipeg

Mennonite Church Canada has joined 11 other Christian denominations in the pursuit of peace in Afghanistan.

In August, 12 church leaders from Christian denominations belonging to the Canadian Council of Churches sent a letter containing several peace suggestions to Prime Minister Stephen Harper and other Canadian political leaders. Robert J. Suderman, MC Canada general secretary, said the letter addresses Canada's international responsibilities, specifically the conflict in Afghanistan.

"Traditionally Canada has been seen as a peacekeeping nation. In Afghanistan it's more of a combat assignment. So there's growing concern about that," he said. "And then from a Christian perspective, what does that mean for us and what do the churches say about that?"

Suderman said MC Canada reviewed many drafts of the letter and made several suggestions before signing it. MC Canada had problems with one of the three main principles outlined in the letter. The principle states: "We believe that the valiant effort of Canadian troops must be directed in the first instance to the protection of lives and the preservation of civilian infrastructure in the manner prescribed by the *Responsibility to Protect* doctrine."

"We basically wanted them to say don't use troops at all; that there are better ways to get involved in Afghanistan than by the use of troops," said Suderman. "But in that circle, that kind of argument doesn't hold much water."

The Canadian Council of Churches letter comes on the heels of another letter sent to Harper in April from MC Canada.

"Our letter was broader than Afghanistan. It more has to do with the militarization of Canadian society," said Suderman.

At the 2006 Annual Assembly in Edmonton, delegates passed a resolution saying MC Canada should push for conscientious objection to the payment of those taxes designated for military purposes. The MC Canada letter was a result of this resolution. Suderman said it's important to both speak with one voice and many voices.

"There's a balancing act between the value there is in demonstrating unity in the church as one body and the value there is in demonstrating the distinctness there is in the body," he said, noting the MC Canada letter is a clear example of distinctness

in the church body, while the Canadian Council of Churches letter shows unity in the church body.

Suderman believes both letters are already having an impact on the Conservative government.

"If you've been listening to Prime Minister Harper's most recent comments on Canada's role in Afghanistan, they are actually significantly modified," he said. "And he's even beginning to make some noises in terms of altering our strategic presence there from combat to other things."

Suderman added, "Our hope for letters like these is that the Canadian presence in Afghanistan and other countries around the world is a presence that is more focused on the generation of life, not death." ❧

War's long legacy in Lebanon

BY GLADYS TERICHOW

Mennonite Central Committee
Beirut, Lebanon

Heavy fighting in North Lebanon, bombings and assassinations in Beirut, and deaths and injuries from unexploded cluster bombs in South Lebanon have cast a shadow of despair over the country, says Ken Seitz, one of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) representatives there.

MCC, he says, continues to support the efforts of partner organizations that assist people fleeing their homes, including the Philanthropic Association for Care of the Disabled, which will soon open a workshop to produce artificial limbs for victims of cluster bomb explosions and provide re-

habilitation services. MCC has provided a \$7,000 grant for this project—funds that are being used to purchase an oven used in the production of the limbs.

Although most recent injuries and deaths were caused by cluster bombs that were dropped by Israeli forces during the 34-day war last summer, people are still being injured and impacted by the injuries caused by cluster bombs dropped by the Israeli army between 1974-82.

In early June, MCC's Lebanon staff and Titus Peachey, director of the peace education office for MCC U.S., travelled in South Lebanon. "The bombs come from our communities, from our dollars and the structures that give our lives security and comfort," he says. ❧



Salima Barakt, a 62-year old widow, nearly died when a cluster bomb exploded as she swept debris from the steps of her house. She still suffers from her wounds and has a difficult time supporting herself and her two grown children, Ali and Maryam. Both children have mental disabilities and Maryam is blind.

SRI on steroids

Going further than social responsible investing

BY GERHARD PRIES AND
SERGE LEVERT-CHIASSON

Mennonite Economic Development Associates
Waterloo, Ont.

Before walking through the makeshift gate into the yard of Juanita's ramshackle house, no one would have guessed that she was the proprietor of a thriving bakery business. But there it is—a large wood-fired clay oven, three young men rolling out hundreds of kilos of dough, her husband loading up the delivery vehicle to send bread and pastries out to various retailers, and Juanita making sure that everything runs like clockwork from early till late.

But this is no ordinary bakery. Juanita's bakery is in a shanty-town in Nicaragua, the poorest country in Latin America. Her husband's delivery vehicle is a bicycle. There are children and chickens all around. And the three young men were all unemployed before she hired them. In fact, before she started the bakery, she and her family also lived a hardscrabble existence. The children weren't in school and they scraped hard to keep everyone fed.

Now, thanks to a bank loan and her own entrepreneurial spirit, her family is flying high. The bank from which Juanita got a loan is also no ordinary bank. It is a micro-finance bank, set up specifically to make small loans, averaging \$500 each, to micro-entrepreneurs like her. And the owners of Juanita's bank are no run-of-the-mill shareholders, either. They are, in fact, private investors from Canada and the United States who are actively looking for investment opportunities that will achieve both a financial and social return.

These investors are part of a new investment class known as socially proactive investments (SPIs). They have eagerly moved beyond socially responsible investing to something more purposeful. Rather than simply screening out the bad companies, SPI investors seek out firms that are having a direct positive impact on poor communities. Moreover, rather than sticking only to



Juanita's bakery provides jobs for formerly unemployed workers in Nicaragua.

publicly traded companies, they are willing to invest directly.

SPI investors want their investments to make this world a better place. But if asked, they will quickly claim that this is not mere charity. They have little patience with soft management or negative bottom lines. They want to give poor communities a chance to grow, but know that everyone loses when they prop up a losing venture.

In recent years, the SPI industry has seen the birth of numerous Venture Funds and Private Equity Funds. The most prominent, and often most successful of these invest in the microfinance banking sector in emerging markets. While still in its early stages, this sector, which provides financial services to the poor, has seen phenomenal growth. The World Bank estimates that global demand by micro-entrepreneurs in developing economies exceeds \$200 billion. But only 10 percent of that market is currently being served, leaving a lot of growth potential and investment opportunity for SPI investors.

MEDA Investments Inc., a subsidiary of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), is currently working with a group of partners to create Canada's first investment fund for the microfinance banking industry. ☸

Home ownership made easier

BY ANGELIKA DAWSON

MCC B.C.
Abbotsford, B.C.

Vancouver City Savings Credit Union (Vancity) recently presented Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) B.C. with a grant of \$46,000 to teach home ownership readiness courses as part of Vancity's Springboard home ownership program.

The Springboard program helps people navigate the challenges of owning a home. The high cost of housing and the challenge of saving enough money for a down payment leave many renters without the opportunity to own their own home. While many can meet their monthly rental payments and have sufficient income to manage a modest mortgage, they lack the resources for a down payment.

The Springboard home ownership program, which is geared towards low income individuals currently in non-profit housing, will loan qualified participants 100 percent of the money needed to buy a home for up to \$300,000, including a 20 percent down payment interest-free. The program includes a home ownership readiness course, which will be delivered by MCC B.C.'s employment and community development department.

"I think this is the most important part of the program," says James Siebert, who manages MCC B.C.'s financial literacy and asset development program. "People will leave the course with a better understanding of what is involved in buying a home and being a homeowner before they go out and buy a home."

The six-hour course addresses such topics as the pros and cons of home ownership, financial help for home ownership, and finding the right home. Offered since last November, nine families have been able take up residence in a home to call their own.

"It feels like winning the lottery, just better," says Donna Kientz of Abbotsford, the first Springboard participant and proud owner of her first home. ☸

Able to take that 'first step'

BY TIM SHENK

Mennonite Central Committee
North Korea

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is providing 181 metric tons of soybeans, worth \$138,000, to make soy milk for children in North Korean schools and orphanages.

The shipment is intended to alleviate malnutrition among 40,000 children. According to the World Food Program, more than a third of North Korean children are chronically malnourished, causing many health problems, such as stunted growth.

MCC is partnering with a Canadian Christian organization based in Vancouver, First Steps, to purchase the soybeans in China and ship them to North Korea. Using equipment from First Steps, North Korean schools and orphanages process the soybeans into soy milk and serve it daily to children.

Susan Ritchie, the executive director of First Steps, says that malnourished children become more healthy when they drink soy milk regularly. "The first thing we notice is that their skin improves," she says. "Many of the sores on their faces disappear, and we see that the children become more energetic and their growth charts reveal that they go through a growth spurt."

MCC has provided North Koreans with food and supplies worth more than \$14 million since 1996. According to the World Food Program, North Korea faces chronic food shortages as large as a million metric tons per year.

Ritchie helped to form First Steps after visiting North Korea with a Canadian diplomatic delegation in 2000. She was deeply moved by a meeting with a North Korean mother who had recently given birth to twin daughters. "I could see that she was struggling to feed her daughters," Ritchie says. "I came back to Canada and started praying for her and for her children, and for many other mothers who were in the same position."

Two years later, she helped form First



In partnership with Vancouver-based First Steps, MCC is providing soy milk to children in North Korea who are at risk of malnutrition.

Steps to provide food aid for children in North Korea. She named the organization after her prayer for the woman's daughters, "that they would survive and that they would be able to take their first steps." ❧
In partnership with Vancouver-based First Steps, MCC is providing soy milk to children in North Korea who are at risk of malnutrition. ❧

Civil war worsens as tsunami problems recede

BY TIM SHENK

Mennonite Central Committee
Colombo, Sri Lanka

More than two years after the Indian Ocean tsunami devastated coastal communities in Sri Lanka, an escalating civil war is creating similar humanitarian needs in the country, according to Nigel Kenward, a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) tsunami response coordinator.

Kenward says that the physical devastation of the tsunami is being repaired as Sri Lankans move into new houses and other buildings constructed with aid money from many sources, including MCC. However, Sri Lanka's 24-year-old civil war is worsening, Kenward says. In the last 15 months, the war has driven an estimated 300,000 people from their homes.

"The physical damage of the tsunami over most of the island is getting healed," he says. "But in terms of the conflict, the effect that it's having on the island as a whole is just appalling."

In response, MCC is funding a project that will provide leadership training, water and sanitation facilities, vocational training and small loans to people who have been displaced by the civil war. MCC is providing \$23,000 to Lanka Evangelical Alliance Development Service (LEADS), a partner organization, to carry out the project in four villages in eastern Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lankan civil war began in 1983 as a rebellion by militants from among the country's Tamil ethnic minority. The rebels and the government reached a cease-fire agreement in 2002, but both sides have routinely violated it since 2005. Today, civilians in northern and eastern Sri Lanka are caught in a conflict that involves numerous armed factions and government forces.

MCC mainly works in Sri Lanka by providing three workers to serve with local organizations and funds to build houses for families who lost their homes in the tsunami.

MCC workers live in Colombo, Sri Lanka's capital, away from the front lines of the war. Kenward says that visa restrictions prevent foreign workers from easily travelling to areas of northern or eastern Sri Lanka that are heavily affected by fighting. However, LEADS and another Sri Lankan organization are building houses in eastern Sri Lanka with funds from MCC.

Kenward expresses his admiration for the Sri Lankan workers who are building houses in the middle of a war zone. "It's incredible and just the grace of God that's allowing them to continue working there," Kenward says. ❧

Crimes and consequences

Traditional methods of dealing with offenders allows them to escape responsibility for their crimes

BY GLADYS TERICHOW

Mennonite Central Committee
Krasnogvardeisk, Crimea

Five boys—aged 11-18—stole 28 cell phones from a consignment store in an open market in this city of 15,000 people in the Crimean peninsula of southern Ukraine. Just outside the city three other boys—all 12 or under—caused extensive damage to irrigation systems and crops.

In both cases, the offenders were identified and the judge referred the cases to a newly formed victim-offender mediation group called Harmonia.

Galina Saditchko, an attorney and founding member of the mediation group has mediated 23 cases. With the exception of one case, the offenders and victims have been able to negotiate agreements that were presented to the court for implementation.

“Personally, I hate sending juveniles into the penal colonies [detention facilities] or prison,” says Marina Kiruhina, the only judge in Crimea—and one of only 12 in the entire country—who refers cases involving young offenders to the mediation group established by the Ukrainian Centre for Common Ground.

Traditional methods for dealing with young offenders are prison sentences, probation or parental custody, explains Kiruhina, adding that such methods do not require offenders to take responsibility for the consequences of their crime. “Young people are absolutely passive if courts make the decisions,” she states. “If they go through the mediation processes, they have to be involved in the discussions and are required to make choices.”

The owner of the irrigation systems, Vladimir Zhadky, believes in the mediation system. His case was resolved with parents paying to repair the irrigation systems and the juvenile offenders providing manual labour to reimburse the farmers for crop damage. “After they worked so hard on the fields, nobody had the desire to destroy more fields,” says Zhadky.

The mediation process for the stolen cell phones involved not only the storeowners



Five youths stole mobile phones from Dmitri Lapiev's consignment store. The store owner says a victim-offender mediation process requires offenders to take responsibility for their actions and deters youth from committing more crimes.

and offenders, but also the 28 owners of the phones. Four of the five youths—with the support of their parents—made arrangements to pay back phone owners.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) supports the centre through the consultation work of Otto and Florence Driedger, a Canadian couple who conduct seminars on and teach restorative justice principles. ❧

❧ Briefly noted

Clerical ‘must-haves’ on sale

Isothermal winter-wear cassocks for priests and MP3 bell chimes were two of the items on display at SACROEXPO, a trade fair of church supplies in Warsaw, Poland, sponsored by Roman Catholic leaders and the Polish Ecumenical Council. A spokeswoman for Pratulín, a Polish firm marketing isothermal cassocks, said the product, retailing for about \$400, was a must-have for priests who conduct services in unheated churches and outdoors during the winter. “It’s expensive,” said Bogumila Niewiadomska, “but once you buy one, it lasts a lifetime.” Horvat Elektronika, a Croatian firm that makes an MP3 carillon, said the device held 1,500 electronic chimes recorded by professional ringers in the Netherlands and United States. The company boasts that, at about \$11,000, the electronic appliance is cheaper than a regular set of bells. —ENI release



Fifty-one Canadian and American young adults attended Aug. 11 to 16 orientation sessions in Akron, Pa. in preparation for starting volunteer 11-month assignments around the world through the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Serving and Learning Together (SALT) program. Joining them were another 51 international young adults coming to Canada and the U.S. to begin one-year assignments through MCC’s International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP). —Tim Shenk, MCC

Back to school

Meet three students in three different provinces and learn what their hopes are for the coming school year

BY TERESA FALK

National Correspondent



Cassie Mathies



Dorothea Toews



Michelle Veeneman

Students across the country are building a firm foundation thanks to Mennonite institutions. Michelle Veeneman believes her time at Columbia Bible College is helping prepare her for future endeavors.

The 21-year-old is entering her fourth and final year at the Abbotsford, B.C. school. She will be a resident assistant this year.

“I’m going to have a bunch of first year girls, so it’s super exciting to be able to mentor them,” she said.

Veeneman has taken an active role in student life at CBC, including serving on student council and attending Bible studies. She believes participating in school activities provides young people with various skills, such as conflict management, time management, communication, leadership and teamwork.

After graduating from high school, Veeneman made the decision to stay in her hometown and attend college.

“I was planning to go somewhere else and then I just realized that wasn’t where God wanted me to go,” she said. “So I visited here (CBC) and decided I wanted to go here.”

Growing up non-Mennonite, Veeneman said she was welcomed into the CBC family.

“There are a lot of students here that are non-Mennonite. They’re very open here,” she said, adding she has enjoyed learning about the Anabaptist history and taking classes on unique subjects, such as peace and justice theology.

“It gave me a new understanding of some of those issues,” said Veeneman, who will graduate from CBC this year with a Bachelor of Arts in caregiving and counseling.

Conrad Grebel University College student Cassie Mathies agrees that Mennonite institutions are very accepting. She has Mennonite roots, but was not raised Mennonite.

“One thing I’ve found about Grebel is it does have

this strong Mennonite character to it, but it's very diverse in the people who attend there," she said. "There's a huge sense of acceptance there."

The Peace and Conflict Studies program drew Mathies, 22, to the Waterloo, Ont. school.

"I was very attracted to the Mennonite community here because it encourages living out your faith through social action," she said.

Mathies was also looking for a Christian community on campus within a larger university setting.

"Especially moving to a new city, it was nice to have that community around me," said the Chilliwack, B.C. native.

Prior to attending Grebel, Mathies served with Youth with a Mission (YWAM) in England, Thailand and China.

"That helped form my decision to go to Grebel and go into the Peace and Conflict Studies program," she said.

This is Mathies's second year at Grebel. This year she will be one of the coordinators of the school's Peace Society. She is

'I was very attracted to the Mennonite community here because it encourages living out your faith through social action.'

also part of the Chapel Leadership Team, a group of students which plans the college's student weekly worship service.

"It's challenging to step up into that leadership role, but it's also a very encouraging environment for that," she said.

Dorothea Toews has also accepted that challenge at her school, Canadian Mennonite University, in Winnipeg, Man.

During the past two years the 19-year-old has been involved in several aspects of CMU life and plans to continue this in

her final year. This year Toews will be a commuter assistant, which is the equivalent to a resident assistant. Approximately half the CMU population is commuters, noted Toews.

"We want to make sure they feel included and involved in the community," she said.

Toews also participates in other areas of student life, such as chapel.

"Where possible I involve myself. I like to be a part of the CMU picture," she said.

Toews wants to end her time at CMU on a strong note.

"I've left most of my option courses to the end so I'm really excited about the courses I'm going to be taking. There's a lot with a biblical and theological focus," she said.

"Other than that, I hope to make a lot of connections with other students before I leave and really establish myself as part of this community for the long term. And a lot of the professors have become good friends and I want to make sure that continues when I leave here."

Toews discovered and embraced her Mennonite identity at CMU.

"Going to a Mennonite school has given me a sense of what it means to be Mennonite. I grew up in Mennonite churches but was never deeply rooted in any of them because we moved around a lot," she said.

Toews believes there are many benefits to attending a Christian school.

"The obvious benefit of going to any Christian institution is having the support behind what you believe and learning based

We Decided to Live Deliberately

BY ADAM ROPER

August is a bridge between two lives, and I am far from both. The ending summer and the new semester. The expectation and the old hope falling asleep like the seconds before sunset.

I want to taste community
like grape juice from a tall glass after a long dry day,
passed hand to hand, with finger marks by the outer brim.

But we keep to ourselves like water in teapots.
Every tea needs several cups to pass around,
and every eye needs lines for someone else to notice.

We need new lines to draw wisdom, without words.
The essence of a face is wrinkles that speak louder,
and tell stories of every time we decided to live.

August is a bridge between two seasons,
old hope fading like a quiet revival,
and a new hope of living, like a cool morning air.
And we are far from both.

Adam Roper is a student at Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford, B.C., studying youth ministry.

on that, rather than having everything you learn challenge your faith," she said.

Toews will graduate from CMU this year with a Bachelor of Arts and plans to continue her education at the University of Manitoba pursuing a Master of Occupational Therapy.

Toews, Veeneman and Mathies encourage other young people to consider a Christian education at a Mennonite school.

"I just love it here. I feel like I fit in here more closely than I would in a larger university," said Toews. "And the faith community has really helped me."

Veeneman added, "I think it's a great place to get to know yourself better and to get to know God better." ❧

Creed and Conscience

Long-time theology prof honoured with essay collection

CONRAD GREBEL RELEASE

Toronto

“**W**hen Jim Reimer speaks to Mennonites, he urges them to take the wider historical Christian tradition more seriously. And when he speaks to other Christians, he explains how Mennonites are a faithful part of that wider tradition.”

This observation by Jeremy Bergen is an apt summary of A. James Reimer’s career, a career that was honoured on a hot evening at the University of Toronto in late May. Tributes were offered by Mennonite theologians, many of whom were Reimer’s former students; by faculty at the Toronto School of Theology (TST); and by a Muslim theologian from Iran with whom Reimer has had many interfaith conversations.

A highlight of the evening was the surprise presentation to Reimer of a *festschrift* in his honour. The collection of essays, entitled *Creed and Conscience: Essays in Honour of A. James Reimer*, was intended to interact with and promote Reimer’s theological interests, as well as “to act as a gesture to the kind of person Reimer is, to the kind of career he displays to the Christian church and the larger academic community,” explained Paul Doerksen, who edited the book with Bergen and Karl Koop.

Reimer’s wide-ranging theological interests include Scripture, the Anabaptist tradition, pacifism, modernity, technology, the ecumenical tradition, political theology, the work of Paul Tillich, the philosophy of George Grant, spirituality and dialogue with Muslim theology. Many of these themes were addressed in the essays in the *festschrift* (a volume of writings by different authors presented as a tribute or memorial, especially to a scholar).

Reimer has been a full-time faculty member at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont., since 1986, and

was instrumental in initiating its Master of Theological Studies program. He has also been an adjunct professor at TST since 1982, teaching courses and supervising many theses. He provided the impetus for the development of the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre at TST, and continues to serve as its academic advisor.

His contributions to the theological centre have been acknowledged through the establishment of the A. James Reimer Award by former student Al Armstrong, who credits Reimer with changing his life through a rigorous encounter with the classical Christian theological tradition.

The goal of the Reimer Award is to provide excellent Mennonite doctoral students in theology with funds on par with the scholarships offered in the sciences. Conrad Grebel invests donations to this award and uses earnings to enlarge the fund and to provide an annual scholarship. Currently, the fund is more than halfway to the goal of \$250,000. Each dollar donated is matched with \$1.60 from the Ontario Trust for Student Support.

As Reimer enters his last year of full-time teaching, his commitment to encourage



*Jim Reimer, at the podium, was honoured earlier this year for his long teaching career with the presentation of a *festschrift* that was edited by Jeremy Bergen (pictured), Paul Doerksen and Karl Koop.*

Mennonites to take the wider Christian tradition seriously will be expressed through the final course he will teach at Conrad Grebel: “Mennonites and classical theology.” ❧

PHOTO BY JEFF NOWERS

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Who were these children?

CMU prof to study 1918-20 flu pandemic effects on Manitoba Mennonites

BY JOHN LONGHURST

CMU

Winnipeg

In 1918-20, pandemic flu swept Europe and North America, killing millions. In Canada, an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 died; across the Prairies, about 9,000 people succumbed to the illness.

One poignant testimony to the tragedy can be found in the Chortitzer Mennonite Church Heritage Cemetery in Hochfeld, Man., a Mennonite village near Steinbach. On a stone memorial are the words: "In memory of the epidemic in the year 1918-20 lay 20 children."

When Glen Klassen, a biology pro-

fessor at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) first saw that stone in 2006, questions crossed his mind: Who were those children? Who made the memorial stone? And what was the effect of the terrible pandemic on Mennonite churches in southern Manitoba?

"These are questions that are not only important for historians to answer, but may be important for identifying the problems that may emerge in our experience of a similar disease today," says Klassen.

Klassen will be able to get answers to those questions now that he has received a nearly \$5,000 grant from the D.F. Plett Historical Research Foundation, which supports and promotes history research projects related to Mennonites who came to Manitoba from Russia in the 1870s. He will use the funds to identify and collect historical materials relevant to the pandemic of 1918-20 in southern Manitoba, and to produce articles that tell the story of how the southern Manitoba Mennonite churches faced the killer epidemic.

With the assistance of CMU student



Glen Klassen kneels beside the Hochfeld cemetery memorial stone, commemorating 20 children who died in the 1918-20 flu pandemic.

Kimberley Penner, Klassen will gather materials from diaries, obituaries, newspaper accounts, interviews with survivors or their descendants, cemetery records, family histories, school attendance records, and other available sources.

For Klassen, the research isn't just about

MANITOBA CO-OPERATOR PHOTO BY RON FRIESEN



bechallenged

“Collecting and analyzing data over two years has been an amazing learning experience; it was especially exciting when I found statistically significant results.”

Rebecca Drooger

Major: biology
Minors: Spanish and chemistry
Cross-cultural: Costa Rica
Long-term goal: physician in a Spanish-speaking community

Rebecca's research on the effects of plant-based estrogen on mice could have implications for broader cancer research. She worked in close consultation with Dr. Roman Miller—a typical model of hands-on research for pre-professional students at EMU.

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recording what happened; he also wants to produce something that might help the faith community in Canada today as it faces the challenge of preparing for another potential pandemic. "Canadian churches and other faith groups aren't ready for a pandemic," he says, adding that they need to be, since many health care experts, such as the World Health Organization, say that a flu pandemic is inevitable. Klassen compares the potential of a pandemic to a Red River Valley flood.

Mennonites from southern Manitoba who have stories to tell about how the pandemic flu affected their families, communities or churches in 1918-20 can contact Klassen at gklassen@cmu.ca ❧

❧ Briefly noted

Roth new EMU peace-builder

Harrisonburg, Va.—The Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University has named Lynn Roth as its new executive director. He will begin the position Aug. 13. Roth has been East Coast executive director of Mennonite Central Committee since 1989.



Roth

In his new position, Roth will give overall leadership to the centre and its three divisions: the masters program, Summer Peacebuilding Institute and the Practice Institute. He will provide leadership to internal administration, financial oversight and coordination, work within the university and its wider constituencies, and assist with marketing and fundraising as part of the ongoing development and implementation of the centre's vision. The Center for Justice and Peacebuilding, founded in 1992, seeks to further the personal and professional development of peacebuilders and to strengthen the peacebuilding capacities of the institutions they serve.

—EMU release by Jim Bishop



Adelia Neufeld-Wiens, coordinator of student advising, in her office at the CMU campus in Winnipeg, Man.

A listening ear at CMU

BY TERESA FALK
National Correspondent

Canadian Mennonite University students needing advice on academics or career planning will have another option this school year.

CMU has expanded its student advising program and has hired Adelia Neufeld-Wiens as coordinator of student advising.

"CMU is really moving from being a tiny institution to being a small institution and what happens with something

like that is there are growing edges and one of the realities is that the leadership at CMU has seen the need for the whole area of student advising to be expanded," said Neufeld-Wiens.

Student advising includes not only advising around academics, such as what courses a student should take to fill their course load or fill their graduation requirements, but also advising around career planning and life beyond CMU, said Neufeld-Wiens.

Student advising has existed at CMU for many years. In the past the assistant dean and faculty members handled the responsibilities.

"And we will continue to have our faculty have their student advising groups they

CMU is an excellent training ground for leadership. As a smaller university, it provides many more opportunities to try new things and be involved. At CMU I am able to use my gifts while I develop new skill and abilities. Dylan Tarnowsky, International Development Studies, Calgary, AB

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PHOTO CREDIT: TERESA FALK

are primarily responsible for," said Neufeld-Wiens. "But I'll be able to help coordinate some of that."

Marilyn Peters-Kliwer, dean of student life at CMU, said the goal of advising is to generate learning, growth and self-determination, in addition to sharing information.

Peters-Kliwer believes expanding the program will benefit students.

"Every institution needs to create struc-

tures and practices that help students bring meaning to their college experience. And we're hoping that this advising will enhance that experience for them," she said.

Neufeld-Wiens will also be organizing five workshops for students during the school year. The topics include: Study skills, graduate studies, entrepreneur, resume writing and job interviews, and on and off campus employment. ☼

and the de-humanization of enemies so that they can be targeted, Webel explained.

Webel presented a history of so-called Islamic terrorism, naming the assassination of a number of the prophet Mohammed's followers in the 7th century as some of the first acts of Islamic terrorism. Such violence has occurred periodically in the Muslim world as groups attack what they see as unjust governments, not ruling according to the Quran's call for justice for the poor, he explained, adding that much of the present terror perpetrated by Muslims fits this description and is economic and political in nature, rather than religious.

After laying this groundwork, Webel described non-violence as the best policy

against terrorism from any source. While the cycle of increasing violence begotten by the sides in a dispute could lead to the use of weapons of mass destruction, the only way to de-escalate the violence is through dialogue and compromise, he said.

Webel held up the Northern Ireland Good Friday agreement and recent United States' rapprochement with Libya as examples where this has happened, and the current war on terror in Iraq as a place where violence has obviously made things worse. ☼

Non-violence posed as antidote to terrorism

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
Waterloo, Ont.

Charles Webel, a Fulbright senior specialist in peace and conflict resolution, provided a provocative picture of terrorism, when he addressed a class at Conrad Grebel University College this spring.

Often seen as the actions of non-governmental groups trying to overthrow or influence a government with whom they are in opposition, Webel pointed out that "terror" was first used as a named practice by the

revolutionary government of France in the 18th century. According to him, far more people have been killed through state-managed terror, such as Stalinism or Nazism, than through non-governmental terror.

Citing Georgetown University professor Bruce Hoffman, Webel said that terror perpetrated by either group has as its goal the creation of "unbridled fear, doubt in security and reverberating panic. Terrorists seek to illicit an irrational emotional response."

Such irrational responses include the sacrifice of freedom for security, the use of increasing levels of force against enemies,



Webel

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Bringing newcomer and aboriginal youths together

BY JOHN LONGHURST

CMU

Winnipeg

Since 2001, Winnipegger Noëlle DePape has helped youths from warring countries work together to make peace. But now the executive director of the Immigrant and Refugee Community of Manitoba doesn't have to go far to find that same kind of tension and conflict between different groups, as it's happening in Winnipeg between newcomers to the city and local aboriginals.

"There's a lot of prejudice and misunderstanding between the two groups," says DePape. "It's leading to problems, especially between some young people."

Now DePape and her organization, which is supported by the Manitoba Housing Authority, have teamed up with the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) Institute for Community Peacebuilding to launch the Peace Alliance With Aboriginal and Newcomer Youth. The goal of the alliance, which has been made possible by a \$45,000 grant from the United Way of Winnipeg, is to work with youths from aboriginal, immigrant/refugee and mainstream groups in the city's core, to help them find ways to develop peaceful relationships through sports,

types in the core area, DePape says, adding, "They don't know much about aboriginal history or the reasons for some of the problems. They aren't aware of the positive aspects of aboriginal life." If they could talk, she suggests that they would find that both groups are "facing similar issues of culture shock and adjusting to life in the city."

The program is modelled on Seeds of Peace, an organization that brings together youths from countries in conflict so they can build friendships and lessen misunderstanding.

If they could talk, she suggests that they would find that both groups are facing similar issues.

art, drama and other group activities.

According to DePape, who graduated in 2002 with a degree in international development and conflict resolution from Menno Simons College, some of the problems arise because "newcomers and aboriginals are finding themselves in competition for scarce subsidized housing and other resources in the core area."

At the same time, new immigrants often develop prejudice towards aboriginals since they mainly see the most negative stereo-

A fundamental premise of the project is the belief that "changes between communities occur through relationship-building, not through workshops, lectures or traditional cultural exchanges," institute director David Pankratz says.

The one-year program will begin in September when a part-time director is hired, and will include a week-long camp for 60 youths next summer.

"I believe this pilot project has the capacity to significantly change the relation-

/// Briefly noted

New director of enrolment

Elkhart, Ind.—S. Robert (Bob) Rosa began July 16 as director of enrolment services for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Rosa will be responsible to develop, implement and monitor an overall strategy for recruitment and retention of students. He fills a position similar to that held by Regina Shands Stolfzfus until she left AMBS in the spring to pursue full-time doctoral studies. Previously, Rosa was dean of student development at Ashland Theological Seminary, Ohio, for 12 years. In addition to this role he was senior pastor of Richland Church of the Brethren, Mansfield, Ohio, from 1996-00. He also has served as a hospice chaplain, program director of Toronto Teen Challenge Centre and associate pastor of Bethel Gospel Tabernacle, Hamilton, Ont. Rosa grew up in Toronto. He holds a master of arts in Biblical studies, a master of arts in pastoral counselling and a doctor of ministry degree from Ashland Theological Seminary.



Rosa

—AMBS Release

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ships between ethnic groups in Winnipeg's inner city," says Pankratz, noting that the resources of CMU and Menno Simons College in the areas of peace, conflict resolution and religion will be used to assist in developing and running the project.

"It's a tall order, but we think it can make a difference," says Pankratz of the project, which will be closely monitored and evaluated for effectiveness along the way. "We hope it can serve as a model for cities in North America." ❧

Campus ministry opens for another school year

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
Winnipeg

The Inter-Mennonite Chaplaincy Association chaplain is once again in his campus office in the University of Manitoba Students' Union building for another school year. He is available on Tuesdays

from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. until the end of next April.

Mark Von Kampen has made the office a warm and welcoming place for students. As one said, "The Mennonite Chaplaincy has been integral to my experience at the U of M. After a year away from school, the office was one of the first places I visited when I came back on campus. I saw many new faces, but the open Mennonite Christian community was the same. It was nice to be home."

The door is open to students to bring their questions, to meet other people, to join in times of worship and discussion, to seek help with personal struggles, or just to chat.

Von Kampen can be reached by phone at 204-474-9691 or by e-mail at mvonkampen@shaw.ca.

The chaplaincy association is a partnership of the Evangelical Mennonite Mission, Evangelical Mennonite and Mennonite Church Manitoba conferences working together to provide a Mennonite presence and chaplain on the University of Manitoba campus. ❧

❧ Briefly noted

CBC strengthens relations

Abbotsford, B.C.—Neil Matthies, a former Columbia Bible College (CBC) music faculty member, has rejoined the Columbia team and is responsible for church and donor relations. After 18 years as president of a training company in Winnipeg, Matthies and wife returned to the Fraser Valley, where he has continued to provide personal and professional effectiveness training to his clients across North America. He was inspired by the church and donor relations opportunity and chose to come out of semi-retirement because, he says, "my background of 20 years of teaching music at Columbia, Goshen College and Bethany College, plus 18 highly successful years as a business owner, seemed like the ideal blend of experience for this ministry. I love people and strongly believe that the best gift I can give to another person is to ask them to share their gifts and abilities, whatever those happen to be. I look forward to connecting with churches and friends of Columbia, and finding ways for them to contribute and become meaningfully involved in the mission of this great Bible college!" CBC began in 1936 and currently has an enrolment of more than 500 students.

—CBC Release

Enns new CMU athletics head

Winnipeg, Man.—Christa Enns of Canmore, Alta. has been named director of athletics at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU). Enns, who graduated from the University of Lethbridge with a Bachelor of Education and Social Sciences this past spring, played volleyball for Briercrest College in Caronport, Sask. and at Mount Royal College in Calgary, as well as with an Athletes in Action team that toured India in 2005. She has coached volleyball at the high school and college levels. Enns is a member of the Rosthern Mennonite Church in Rosthern, Sask. She replaces Curt Warkentin, who recently left CMU to become assistant athletic director at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Man.

—Teresa Falk



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ARTBEAT

What is a Christian writer?

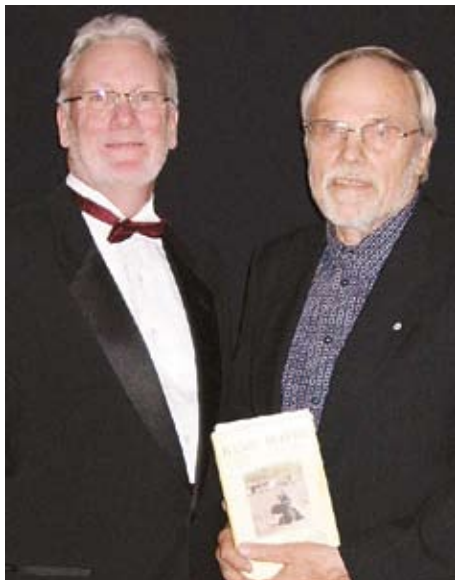
Rudy Wiebe just tries to write about complete people who uncover spiritual problems

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
Waterloo, Ont.

This has been a stellar year for Canadian Mennonite author Rudy Wiebe. He has won the \$25,000 Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-fiction in February, was short listed for the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Arts Awards in May, received the Leslie K. Tarr Award for outstanding career achievement at The Word Guild Writing Awards Gala on June 13, was shortlisted for the City of Edmonton Book Prize in June, and received the \$25,000 Grant MacEwan, Government of Alberta, Author's Award in June. All this for his latest book, *Of This Earth: A Mennonite Boyhood in the Boreal Forest*, the first installment of his autobiography.

Wiebe is widely known as one of the first Mennonite authors to be published in the mainstream publishing world and



Rudy Wiebe, right, received the Leslie K. Tarr Award, from Earl Davey, provost of Tyndale University College and Seminary, at the Word Guild awards ceremony.

his award at the expressly Christian Word Guild ceremony was, according to him, an “unexpected honour.”

Wiebe considers himself a “Jesus disciple,” and writes about spiritual themes and struggles, but he does not write only about good or what some call “victorious” Christians. His books are populated by imperfect people trying to live in this world.

Some have even asked him why he can't tell “good” stories about successful Christians. But his ideas of *nachfolge* (discipleship) include those who try but either don't succeed or only partially or occasionally

succeed. His job is to “tell the true stories about human beings” from the world he knows. His writing is not romance with happy endings, but realism with ambiguous endings.

The Christian world he knows has much to learn from other spiritualities. In conversation at the Word Guild award night he noted that the 19th century conquest theology of the European mission movement, with its sense of being superior in culture and religion, needs to learn from native spiritualities that try to live in harmony with the Earth. ☚

FILM REVIEW

Beyond a normal romance

Away From Her. Starring Gordon Pinsent and Julie Christie. Written and directed by Sarah Polley; based on an Alice Munro short story, “The Bear Came Over the Mountain.” Capri Films, 2006. PG (coarse language).

REVIEWED BY JERRY L. HOLSOPPLE

The magic of romance is a staple of the movie industry, but rarely has a love story had the complexity of the one in *Away From Her*, the story of an older couple facing the onset of Alzheimer's and the loss of memory that results.

This movie redefines what love is, by going beyond the typical Hollywood glamorized and sexualized acts of love, to what it means to be deeply in love at the end of life. Because this love that has been built over many years, Grant (Gordon Pinsent) becomes fearful as he considers that his wife, Fiona (Julie Christie) may not remember that she loves him.

The bigger challenge for the marriage happens as Fiona begins to forget the more recent events, but doesn't forget the pain of his much earlier affair. She begins to forget what they have built over the last 20 years, after the earlier traumatic events. Will the relationship become a victim of the events of the past as the ravages of memory loss work their uneven degeneration?

As she realizes what is happening to her, Fiona chooses to enter a care facility. She doesn't want Grant to have to spend all of his moments trying to care for her so, before her memory is gone, she does this as a final act of love for him. He struggles

with her not knowing who he is and her apparent attachment to other people at the facility. But each day he returns with flowers, books and a willingness to just show up. He has found it most difficult to live without her.

For Grant, the difficult decisions start at this point. His questions also push the viewer beyond what is normal for a romance. Grant struggles with how to be faithful and loving even when the other doesn't know who he is. He has to choose not to be jealous, but to seek what is best for her.

What she said to him when he left her the first day at the facility becomes more and more appropriate: “I think all we can aspire to in this situation is a little grace.”

Away From Her is the directorial debut by Sarah Polley, best known by Canadians as Sarah Stanley from the *Road to Avonlea* TV series. The film was named best film of the 2006 Toronto International Film Festival and is now in wide release.

Jerry Holsopple is professor of visual and communication arts at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. The review originally appeared in a longer format online at thirdway.com.



Calendar

British Columbia

Sept. 29: Mennonite Fall Fair at the Prince George Civic Centre. For more information, visit mcc.org/bc/festivals.

Sept. 29, 30: Thanksgiving Vespers with Abendmusik Choir, at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford (29) and Knox United Church, Vancouver (30); 8 p.m. both evenings. Donations to Menno Simons Centre.

Oct. 13: Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. annual banquet. Speaker: John B. Toews. Theme: "In defence of mothers and sisters. The Mennonite Selbstschut in Ukraine, 1918." At Emmanuel Mennonite Church. For tickets, call 604-853-6177.

Oct. 19, 21, 27: M2/W2 fundraising events; dinner at Summit Drive Baptist Church, Kamloops, 6:30 p.m. (19); Calvin Dyck and Gabriella Epp Yusuf in concert at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, 6:30 p.m. (21); dinner and silent auction at Garden Park Tower, Abbotsford, 6 p.m. (27). For tickets to all events, call 1-800-298-1777.

Oct. 26-28: Women's retreat at Camp Squeah. Theme: "Jesus our redeemer and friend." Speaker: Laurel Hildebrandt. For more information, call Jackie Rempel at 604-952-0041.

Nov. 3: Twentieth anniversary of Peace Chinese Mennonite Church, Richmond.

Nov. 8-11: MCC Arts and Peace Festival at CBC, Abbotsford.

Alberta

Oct. 14: Sojourn Singers performing "Mysteries of Grace and Judgment," Harold Wiens conducting and story teller Jack Dueck at Edmonton Lendrum MB Church, 7 p.m.

Oct. 16-18: Pastors retreat at Sanctum Retreat Centre. Call Jim Shantz at 780-485-2518 for more information.

Oct. 20-21: Sojourn Singers performing "Mysteries of Grace and Judgment," Harold Wiens conducting and story teller Jack Dueck at Linden MB Church, 7 p.m. (20) and at Coaldale Gem of the West Museum 2 p.m. (21).

Nov. 2-3: MCC annual celebration at Crestwood Mennonite Brethren Church, Medicine Hat.

Nov. 10: World AIDS Day event with Ovide Mercredi and Tom Jackson.

Saskatchewan

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. 13: Evening of celebration for *Der Bote* at Bethany Manor, Saskatoon; at 7 p.m. Program and refreshments.

Oct. 26: RJC fundraising banquet.

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

Oct. 27: MC Saskatchewan Equipping Day.

Manitoba

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

Sept. 29: Westgate cyclathon. Call 204-775-7111 for more information.

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

Oct. 15-16: J.J. Thiessen Lectures at CMU, Winnipeg. Speaker: Ellen Davis of Duke Divinity School. Theme: "Live long on the land: Food and farming in biblical perspective."

Oct. 19: "Going Barefoot" conference for church communicators at CMU, Winnipeg. Speakers: Reginald Bibby and Gayle Goosen. Visit cmu.ca for details.

Oct. 25: MC Manitoba fall delegate session at First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg; at 7 p.m.

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

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

Oct. 29: Westgate annual general meeting, 7 p.m., at Westgate, Winnipeg.

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

Nov. 3: "Adding to the Toolbox" conference to equip people for congregational ministry at CMU. Workshops on youth ministry, music and worship, pastoral care and conflict resolution. Visit cmu.ca for details.

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

Nov. 6-7: John and Margaret Friesen Lectures at CMU, Winnipeg. Speaker: John D. Roth, Goshen College. Topic: "Mennonite identity in the 21st century."

Ontario

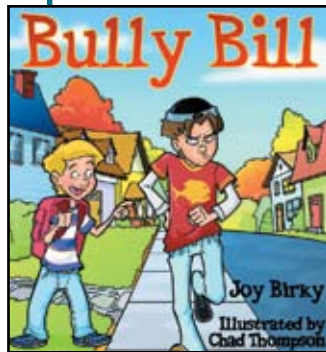
Sept. 20-23: CPT ninth annual Peacemaker Congress: Tearing Down Walls, Restoring Community, at Toronto United Mennonite Church. Keynote speakers: Jim Loney, Judy Da Silva and Ricardo Esquivia. Contact 416-423-5525, canada@cpt.org or www.cpt.org to register.

Sept. 22: Conrad Grebel and the Teaching Circle seminar on adult learning styles for theology students and those teaching adults in church; 9-3 at Toronto School of Theology; Speaker: Dr. Andrew Irvine, DMin, Toronto School of Theology director. Contact Lydia Neufeld at lydia.harder@utoronto.ca or (416) 691-8553 to register.

Sept. 23: Open House at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp to celebrate the completed Woodhouse Retreat Centre, 3-6 p.m. Dedication at 3:30 p.m.

Sept. 24: Willowgrove golf tournament at St. Andrews in Aurora. To register email John Phillips at jsphilips@sympatico.ca.

Sept. 26: Greening Sacred Spaces, "How to teach church members to make their homes environmentally



Bully Bill

Joy Birky. Chad Thompson, illustrator.

Bully Bill is like all bullies: he thinks that because he can fight, he can get his own way. This delightful story for preschoolers can serve as a springboard for parent-child conversations on the subject of bullying, being kind to enemies, and using love to overcome evil and meanness.

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The Bible has a reputation for being about violence in the Old Testament and about peace in the New Testament. David A. Leiter deconstructs that oversimplified notion as he explores passages in which God calls for the making of peace. By identifying key typologies, Leiter shows the Old Testament's relevance to today's struggles for peace.

Paper, 192 pages, \$21.29

friendly" at 6:30 p.m.; Rm 508, 99 Regina Street, Waterloo.

Sept. 29: Official opening of the Wil-lowgrove dining hall, Stouffville.

Sept. 29: Faithful People, Faithful Structures at Avon Mennonite in Stratford, to explore how church structures serve a congregation's ministry. Visit www.mcec.ca/events for more information.

Sept. 30: Milverton Mennonite Fellowship will celebrate 25 years, 10:30 a.m. Guest speaker: Harold Shantz. Call 519-595-8762 for more information.

Oct. 1-2: Fall Seniors Retreat at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp. Speaker: Henry Paetkau. Contact 519-625-8602 or info@hiddenacres.ca for more information.

Oct. 2-4: John Bell lectures: "The Lost Tradition of Lament" 7 p.m. (2); "Developing Corporate Prayer" 1 p.m. (3); "Singing with Integrity" 7 p.m. (3); "The Young Church Sings" 7 p.m. (4). Visit mcec.ca/events or call 519-650-3806 for more information.

Oct. 11: Pornography and the Church workshop 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church. Visit mcec.ca or call 519-650-3806 for more information.

Oct. 12-13: "Family and sexuality in Mennonite history," an academic and community education conference hosted by Conrad Grebel. For more information, call 519-885-0220 ext. 24257.

Oct. 14: Benefit concert for the Abner Martin Music Scholarship Endowment Fund; 3 p.m. at Waterloo North Mennonite Church. For more information, call Lewis Brubacher at 519-884-3072.

Oct. 18: MEDA Waterloo chapter breakfast meeting, 7:30 a.m., at the Stone Crock, St. Jacobs.

Oct. 18-20: Ten Thousand Villages fair trade craft sale at Hamilton Mennonite Church. 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (18, 19), 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (20). Call 905-528-3607.

Oct. 20: WMCEC Fall Enrichment Day at Faith Mennonite, Leamington, 10:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Theme: Sharing our Faith Heritage Stories. Speakers: Esther Saito, Margaret Reimer, Catherine Gortson and Gudrun Mathies. Bring bag lunch.

Oct. 20: Mennonite Genealogy Workshop at St. Clair-O'Connor Community 9:30 a.m.- 5 p.m. Information on Prussian/Russian/Swiss Mennonites. To register contact friesen@sympatico.ca.

Oct. 21: Fourth Annual Gospel Vespers, a hymn-sing from Life Songs #2 led by Bob Shantz at Detweiler Meetinghouse (3445 Roseville Rd.) at 3 p.m. Call 519-696-2805 or 519-885-0220 x24238.

Nov. 1-4: MEDA "Business as a calling" convention: "Trust in a world of change," in Toronto. For more information, visit businessasacalling.org or call toll-free 1-800-665-7026.

Quebec

Nov. 10: To celebrate 51 years of Mennonite presence in Quebec, La Societe Mennonite Historique du Quebec and MCC Quebec are hosting a dinner and stories at La Maison de l'Amitie. For more information, contact 514-849-9039 or maisondelamitie@videotron.ca.

New Brunswick

Oct. 21: Mennonite Disaster Service Region V will present information about its work at Petitcodiac Mennonite, 11:30 a.m.

U.S.A.

Oct. 29-Nov. 2: Intentional Interim Pastors Training, Lancaster, Pa., hosted by the Lancaster Menn. Conference, is open to anyone from U.S and Canada.

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.

Classifieds

For Rent: Sleepy Hollow Cottage. All-season, 3-bedroom home in a peaceful wooded valley in the heart of the Niagara region. Small retreat centre or family accommodations. Bruce Trail. Shaw Festival, Wine tours. Phone: 705-476-2319 or email: shcottage@sympatico.ca for complete brochure.

Employment



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This person will design promotional and informational materials and assist with web site content and other communications assignments. Qualifications include excellent design and photography skills, knowledge of the Mennonite Church, commitment to the Anabaptist/Mennonite faith and the mission of AMBS, and ability to communicate with youth. To apply, send a resume, three references and examples of design work to Mary E. Klassen, director of communications, AMBS, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, IN 46517, or mklassen@ambs.edu. For more information, see www.ambs.edu/employment.

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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



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Please mail resume to:
President's Office
Columbia Bible College
2940 Clearbrook Road
Abbotsford, BC V2T 2Z8

Tel: 604-853-3358
E-mail: Presidentsoffice@columbiabc.edu

Camp Assiniboia, Headingley, has an opening beginning in spring 2008 for a **CAMP MANAGER**, a person with a combination of energy, knowledge and enthusiasm, eager to apply lessons learned in business or career, and able to form staff and volunteers into a community, with the task of building up the operational side of the camp. This person communicates effectively and has the ability to deal with a variety of relational situations. This person is committed to the Mennonite Church and dedicated to our camp mission of "inviting persons to life". Direct inquiries to Director of Camping Ministries, MC Manitoba, 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2J1; camps@mennochurch.mb.ca or 204-895-2267.



Columbia Bible College invites applications for a **REGISTRAR**

This is a management position that administers registration, academic records and planning with the option of some teaching within the College curriculum as feasible.

For a more detailed job description go to the college website at www.columbiabc.edu/facultystaff/employment.

Agreement with CBC's mission statement, Responsibilities of Community Membership and Confession of Faith is essential.

Deadline for applications is October 31, 2007.

Please mail resume to:
Registrar
Columbia Bible College
2940 Clearbrook Road
Abbotsford, BC V2T 2Z8

E-mail: Michael.Szuk@columbiabc.edu

Is God calling you?

United Mennonite Church of Black Creek is looking for a **PASTOR**.

Black Creek is a rural area situated between the recreational centres of the Comox Valley and Campbell River on Vancouver Island.

For more information contact:

Glen Beaton, Search Committee Chair
c/o United Mennonite Church
2277 Enns Rd
Black Creek, BC V9J 1H7

E-mail: stonecr@telus.net Phone: 250-337-5789

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference

The EMMC Conference has an opening for a full time position as Executive Director in its Winnipeg Manitoba office.

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- Participate with the General Board in the preparation of the Ministry Plan
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- Report on activities of the Conference to the General Board
- Communication, reporting and interaction with the Council, General Board, and Regions
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- Experienced leader with demonstrated capabilities of working with multiple priorities
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- Collaborative approach to build consensus on matters while staying focused on achieving the desired results

The EMMC is a Conference of churches holding to the Anabaptist-peace position with ministry in Canada, USA, Mexico, Belize and Bolivia. For further information about EMMC visit www.emmc.ca.

The successful applicant must be fully supportive of EMMC's mission and vision and be prepared to sign the EMMC statement of faith.

Please submit your confidential application/resume stating qualifications, experience and statement of faith to The Moderator, EMMC, Box 52059, Niakwa PO, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2M 5P9.



MCC REPRESENTATIVE: MEXICO CITY.

This three to five year volunteer person provides overall leadership and vision to MCC work in Mexico. Must have a strong identification with MCC's mission, philosophy of development and manner of working. Must respect and have the willingness to work and live within the Mexican culture. Knowledge of community development theory and models preferred. Ability to create, write, monitor and evaluate plans and budgets needed. Ability to communicate in Spanish required. The large geographic focus of the MCC programs in Mexico requires significant travel and limited team time.

Candidates of a gender or ethnic group typically underrepresented in this type of MCC assignment are encouraged to apply. Contact Kathy Jackson at krj@mcc.org or call 717-859-1151 for more information or to apply. www.mcc.org/serve



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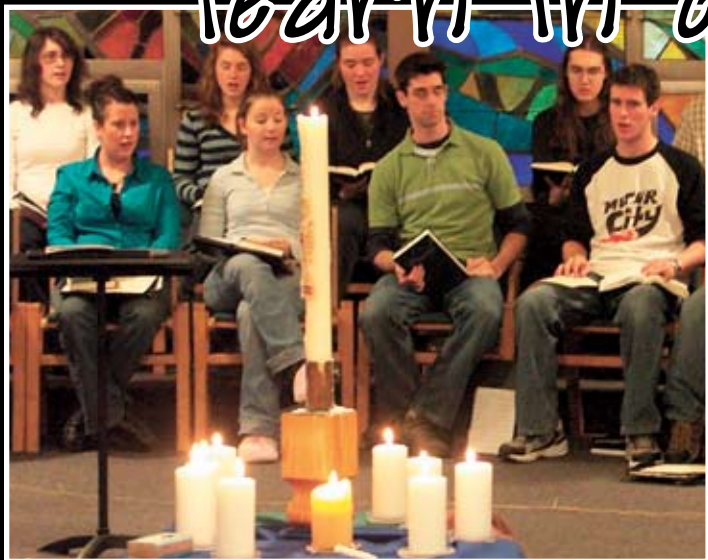
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