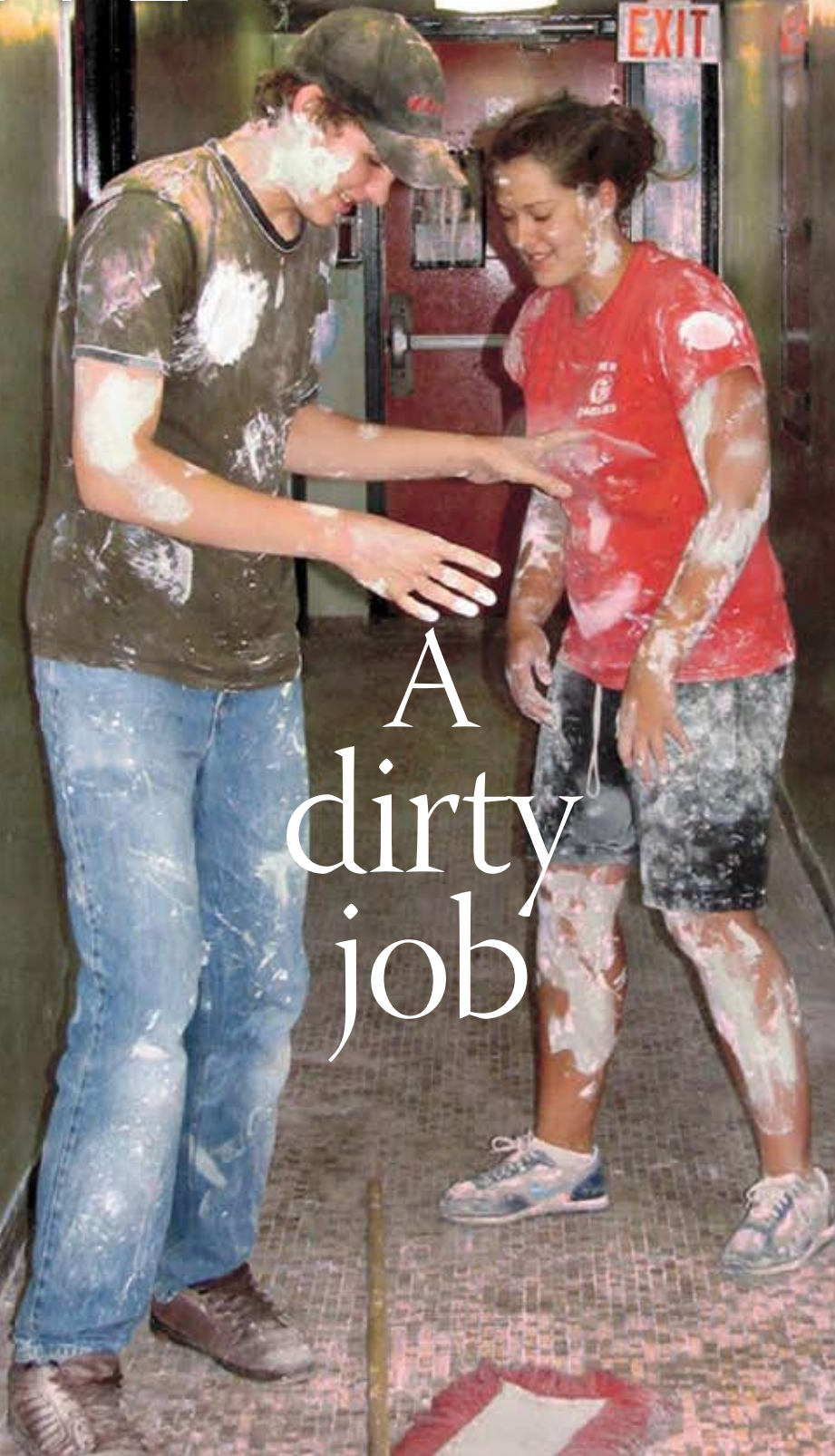


CANADIAN MENNONITE

Oct. 29, 2007
Volume 11 Number 21



A
dirty
job

inside

Peace Sunday 4
A generous man 15
Books and Resources 18

EDITORIAL

Peace is Jesus' way

TIM MILLER DYCK
EDITOR / PUBLISHER

In this issue, we're featuring two stories from Christians living out the understanding that when Jesus said to love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, he meant for his followers to really do that. "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven,'" Jesus said in Matthew 5.

We are now living in a country and at a time where that peace witness is so needed. In Afghanistan, Canada is now conducting its first military combat mission since the Korean War. "Afghanistan is not, nor has it ever been, a traditional peacekeeping mission. . . . Negotiation is not an option with groups such as the Taliban nor al-Qaeda, who are not interested in the kind of peace that the Afghan people seek," says the Dept. of National Defence.

In Canada, we are now seeing again repeated images of caskets coming home on television newscasts. Seventy-one Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have died in Afghanistan since 2002. Many more come home maimed. Figures on Afghan deaths aren't as precisely monitored, but a report released a year ago by the Joint Co-ordinating and Monitoring Board (composed of the Afghan government, Canada and other involved foreign

governments, and the UN) estimated more than 3,700 people had been killed in about the first 10 months of 2006, including an estimated 1,000 civilians.

Besides physical injuries, mental health injuries among those asked to harm and kill in the name of their country are sharply up. According to a CBC report on the psychological problems that result from military service, the Operational Stress Injury Clinic in Winnipeg has seen military referrals nearly double in 2007 over last year.

Nearly all seeking help have recently returned from Afghanistan.

MaryLou Driedger wrote a powerful letter published in the Sept. 3 issue, in which she reported what a Canadian soldier returning from Afghanistan said to her Grade 11 English class. "Our guest said there was absolutely nothing glamorous about the war. 'It's hell and I don't want to go back,' he told my students," she wrote.

In my last two editorials, I've been writing about the way Christians acted to bring about the end of the legal slave trade in Britain 200 years ago. Their concern was not just for slaves, but also for the spirits of those involved in any part of the industry. "I know of no method of getting money, not even that of robbing for it upon the highway, which has so direct a tendency to . . . rob the heart of



every gentle and humane disposition, and to harden it, like steel," wrote former slave ship captain John Newton.

I heard Christian Peacemaker Teams co-director Doug Pritchard speak a few months ago on war. "Yes, there are still walls going up in Israel/Palestine . . . and at the U.S./Mexican border. Atrocities still happened in Rwanda and in Congo. War still came to Afghanistan and to Iraq," he said. "But more and more people are seeing that these wars are a failure, that they cannot bring peace, that violence only begets violence and that another way is needed.

"I believe that it is possible that in another 100 years war will be outlawed. . . . [W]e celebrate the 200th anniversary of the British parliament outlawing the slave trade. There is no longer any legal or moral basis for one human being owning another human being. It has become unthinkable. The same can come true of war. More and more Christians see there is no such thing as a just war. It is a heresy," he concluded.

Jesus commands us to love our enemies not just because it is what he did or it is what he wants us to do. It's also the healthiest option for our spirits, whether we are Christian or not. Sin tears at us. It damages our ability to be whole people. We are all made in God's image. Our highest and best calling is to love God with everything we are and do. It is no surprise that doing differently does deep damage to us and our communities.

This was recognized by Christians before it was seen by others in the case of slavery. It is something our church has long recognized about war. May God work in our world so that war will come to be seen as slavery is seen: as an abomination against God and all human beings. ✠

ABOUT THE COVER:

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) has been busy across Canada this year, cleaning up after disasters in B.C. and Manitoba (see page 34), and helping with restoration work at the 614 St. Jamestown Church in Toronto (front cover). Pictured, Tyler Midgley, left, part of a southwestern Ontario youth team, said of the experience, "The work we had to do wasn't fun work, but we found ways to do it and have a fun time doing it."

MDS PHOTO

Please contact Lisa Jacky at office@canadianmennonite.org or toll-free at 1-800-378-2524 ext. 221 for subscriptions and address changes. Subscriptions can also be ordered at our web site. Postmaster: Send returns to head office. We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Government of Canada through the Publications Assistance Program toward our mailing costs (PAP Reg. No. 09613, Agreement No. 40063104). ISSN 1480-042X

Canada

CANADIAN MENNONITE

Head office: 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, ON, N2L 6H7
Phone: 519-884-3810 **Toll-free:** 1-800-378-2524 **Fax:** 519-884-3331
Web site: canadianmennonite.org

Please send all material to be considered for publication to:

General submission address: submit@canadianmennonite.org

Letters to the Editor: letters@canadianmennonite.org

Calendar announcements: calendar@canadianmennonite.org

Milestones announcements: milestones@canadianmennonite.org

Material can also be sent "Attn: Submissions/Letter to the Editor/Calendar/Milestones" by postal mail or fax to our head office.

Mission statement: *Canadian Mennonite (CM)* is a bi-weekly Anabaptist/Mennonite-oriented periodical which seeks to promote covenantal relationships within the church (Hebrews 10:23-25). It provides channels for sharing accurate and fair information, faith profiles, inspirational/educational materials, news and analyses of issues facing the church. In fulfilling its mission, the primary constituency of *CM* is the people and churches of Mennonite Church Canada and its five related area churches. *CM* also welcomes readers from the broader inter-Mennonite and inter-church scene. Editorial freedom is expressed through seeking and speaking the truth in love and by providing a balance of perspectives in news and commentary. *CM* will be a vehicle through which mutual accountability can be exercised within the community of believers; the paper also encourages its readers to have open hearts and minds in the process of discerning God's will.

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).

Head Office Staff

Tim Miller Dyck, Editor/Publisher, editor@canadianmennonite.org
Ross W. Muir, Managing Editor, managinged@canadianmennonite.org
Barb Draper, Editorial Assistant, edassist@canadianmennonite.org
Tim R. Dyck, Graphic Designer, artdirector@canadianmennonite.org
Lisa Jacky, Circulation/Finance, office@canadianmennonite.org

Advertising: Karen Suderman, advert@canadianmennonite.org, toll-free voicemail: 1-800-378-2524 ext. 224, home office: 519-745-4507

Correspondents

Teresa Falk, National Correspondent, ca@canadianmennonite.org, 204-888-6781 ext. 178; **Amy Dueckman**, B.C. Correspondent, bc@canadianmennonite.org, 604-854-3735; **Donita Wiebe-Neufeld**, Alberta Correspondent, ab@canadianmennonite.org, 780-436-3431; **Karin Fehderau**, Saskatchewan Correspondent, sk@canadianmennonite.org, 306-933-4209; **Evelyn Rempel Petkau**, Manitoba Correspondent, mb@canadianmennonite.org, 204-745-2208; **Dave Rogalsky**, Eastern Canada Correspondent, ec@canadianmennonite.org, 519-579-7258

Board of Directors (by appointing body)

MC Canada: Brice Balmer, Aiden S. Enns, John W. Goossen, Paul Krahn; **MC B.C.:** Henry Neufeld; **MC Alberta:** Brenda Tiessen-Wiens; **MC Saskatchewan:** Joe Neufeld; **MC Manitoba:** Bernie Wiebe; **MC Eastern Canada:** Larry Cornies; **Elected by CMPS:** Margaret Ewen Peters, Joanna Reesor-McDowell, Tobi Thiessen

contents



Peace Sunday reflections 4

Former Nazi officer **ERWIN CORNELSEN** is now an outspoken proponent of peace in his church, community and family. Plus **An act of conscience** by **KOOZMA J TARASOFF**.

Three places, one message for mission 14

Son of missionaries to India, **TIM FROESE** follows his parents' footsteps with MC Canada Christian Witness.

Focus on Books and Resources 18

MPN executive director **RON REMPEL** reports on the publishing agency's debt repayment. Plus book reviews by **EDITH VON GUNTEN** and **MARK STEINACHER**, the fall books list, and an excerpt from *Forgiveness*.

Goodbye, my friend 28

KARIN FEHDERAU reports on the first of many farewell celebrations planned for the soon-to-be-defunct German language paper, *Der Bote*.



Vietnam recognizes Mennonite Church 31

After two decades of struggle, **NGUYEN QUANG TRUNG** sees church legitimized by government.

Land rights now / More bread, less bullets 32

International Day of Peace celebrations take place in both Canada and Colombia.

Artbeat 36

GRANT KLASSEN photo on Canada Post stamp, **BETTY DIMOCK** presents Stations of the Cross exhibit to CMU, and storyteller **JACK DUECK** presents cantata in Alberta.

Regular features:

For discussion **7** Readers write **8**
Milestones **13** Yellow Pages **34**
Calendar **38** Classifieds **39**

Peace is Jesus' way 2

TIM MILLER DYCK

Fourth step to a good hug 9

MELISSA MILLER

Payday loans and cash advances 10

DARREN PRIES-KLASSEN

Searching for a thick faith 11

DAVE BERGEN

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 Nov. 12 issue will be posted by Nov. 8.

To remember is to

Peace Sunday—Nov. 4—is an annual opportunity to preach, teach and reflect upon the gospel of peace proclaimed and embodied by Jesus Christ. At a time of year when our nation honours military service, it is an important occasion to hear once again Jesus' call to love our enemies, to resist evil non-violently and to live as people of peace. Canadian Mennonite offers the following stories—of a former Nazi soldier and a Doukhobor entrepreneur—as examples to follow.

BY MARK JANZEN

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

“W

hat did you learn about the whole situation of war?” German master sergeant Erwin Cornelsen asked the young comrade who had just marched into his office. “What have you learned and what does the government and officials say about it?”

“We have no right to think or talk about the situation. We just have to follow Hitler blindly. He makes no mistake,” the soldier reported.

Cornelsen scrunched his face, stiffened his body and, without thinking, uttered the line that should have taken his life. “No,” he said. “It’s only God who’s unfailing.”

The comrade stared into Cornelsen’s eyes. Saying nothing, he turned and walked back out of the office. Cornelsen stood with a blank stare draped across his face.

The comrades in his unit who had overheard the conversation rushed to him. “Keep your mouth shut,” one soldier said with a furrowed brow and an obvious fear for Cornelsen’s life in his eyes. “You will end up in the concentration camp.”

“I hadn’t been thinking; it just blurted out,” Cornelsen replied.

It was February 1945 and Cornelsen was the “mother” of a Nazi unit in Norway, where he was responsible for the well-being and general health of 200 soldiers.

World War II had been fought for six enormously painful years and Cornelsen’s feelings had finally erupted. It was evident Germany was losing its grip on the war. The reporting soldier had been to a training



act for peace



workshop on how to boost soldiers' morale.

God intervenes

"If he had reported me to the Gestapo and the higher authorities, I would not have been alive anymore. I don't know why those men did not report me," Cornelsen says, reflecting on the incident so many years before. "It just came out without thinking."

After welcoming me into his home for the interview and seating me in his chair with the well-worn cushions, he sits down across from me as he begins to patiently and comprehensively lay his life out before me.

Cornelsen doesn't understand why he survived that one sentence of brutal honesty. "[It's] one experience that I still see as a miracle, as God's intervention in my life," he says.

Born May 28, 1919, the former master sergeant now lives in a quaint house in South Vancouver, where he is an active member of the congregation he founded—Sherbrooke Mennonite Church.

He openly talks about his experiences as a member of the Nazi forces under Adolf Hitler. He sees the war as an avenue to promote his now deep-seated commitment to peace. "Those experiences give me a base to talk to people," he says. "Occasionally I meet Canadians who were bragging about dropping

bombs in Germany, and so there's a good subject to talk about."

One day many years after the war, Cornelsen was working as a carpenter when one of his co-workers—a Canadian war veteran—turned to him and asked a most perplexing question: "Why did we ever go out to war? I went out to kill you and you went out to kill me. Why did we do that?"

They looked at each other blankly.

"If he had reported me to the Gestapo and the higher authorities, I would not have been alive anymore."

They had no answer.

Passionate for peace

Since coming to Canada in 1956, Cornelsen has lived with a passion to advocate for peace. He learned his lesson by serving in the German army and now dreams no one will ever have to endure another world war.

In a world consumed with war, Cornelsen is still frustrated so many citizens and political leaders believe war is an answer to conflict. Since World War I—known as the War to End All Wars—more than 100 wars have been waged and more than 160 million people have died. More than 68,000 Canadians were killed in the First World War and another 173,000 were wounded. In the

Second World War, 45,615 Canadians died and another 54,000 were injured. In Afghanistan, 72 Canadians have been killed since 2002.

Why?

"Human nature," Cornelsen suggests. "It began with Cain and Abel. It's just human nature that Christ teaches us to overcome. Christ taught us to settle things with our people in a peaceful way. It is simply not the way to settle disputes

and, as Christ said, love overcomes everything."

"I basically think there are different ways and means of settling international disputes and international differences," he muses. "I just can't go out and kill my neighbour if we don't get along. We sit down and talk about it."

His peace position has never been stronger than it is now. He marched for peace in Iraq, feeling peaceful demonstrations are a doorway to pressure Canada's government to abandon military action.

He strongly maintains that Canada's role in countries like Afghanistan should be strictly as peacekeepers, discussing resolutions rather than imposing solutions with violence.

Following Hitler to war

While he has a formidable reputation as a non-violence activist today, Cornelsen was not always as passionate about peace. He wasn't even drafted into the military. When he was 17, he willingly joined Hitler's ranks.

He was born in the small Mennonite village of Schweingruber—directly translated as “pig sty”—and grew up on a farm. The oldest in a family of nine children, Cornelsen bore much responsibility for the farm although he had little interest in farming. Instead, his desire was to become a teacher.



throng of German citizens anxiously awaiting the arrival of their “glorious leader.” His eyes scanned the crowd that flooded into the streets. The crowd pushed forward to capture a glimpse of the Führer.

As Hitler approached, the masses chanted “Heil, Heil.” Citizens were jumping, shouting and crying as the nationalistic emotion grew. And in the middle of the crowd was Erwin Cornelsen—jumping, shouting and crying in unison with the people around him.

Finally, he saw Hitler, the excitement climaxed and

going on,” he says.

Cornelsen talks about these times with a wrinkled face and drooping eyes. It is not a fond memory, but he tells it so others don't repeat this history. This is one of his contributions to peacekeeping, and he expresses his story to whoever is interested.

Since his epiphany, Cornelsen has concentrated very much on keeping the peace at school, in the church and his community—even among his children. As a father, he says, “I had to sit down and make the peace position very important to them.”

Cornelsen still believes it is a miracle from God that he wasn't sent to a concentration camp because he was so open about his decision to follow Jesus Christ rather than Hitler. One evening, when the result of the war was still in doubt, he was discussing the future of Germany with a superior officer who was a strong Hitler advocate.

“Just wait until we have the victory,” his superior said, looking deep into

Cornelsen's eyes. “That same day, we'll take care of the strongest enemies we have within our nation. We will take care of all the Christians because Germany cannot govern the whole world with people within our nation who are not completely dedicated to our system. The plans are all made. That very night we will take care of the enemies we still have within our nation.”

Cornelsen fired a glare right back into his superior's eyes and didn't blink. “Why don't they take care of it now?” Cornelsen asked.

“We still need you,” said the captain.

In 1982, Cornelsen visited this man in Germany. He marched up to the captain's doorstep and knocked on the door. His superior of nearly 40 years ago opened it.

“What do you think about the situation now?” Cornelsen asked. “Things have turned out just the other way around, and what do you think about your ideas and discussions about the Christian faith?”

The former captain cleared his throat,

Since his epiphany, Cornelsen has concentrated very much on keeping the peace at school, in the church and his community—even among his children.

When he was 17, his family couldn't afford to give him the necessary education to become a teacher. A member of the Hitler Youth, he took up the Führer's offer of free education to anyone who served in the army for 12 years.

Teaching peace to solve conflicts was not a focal point in his Mennonite congregation growing up. “Yes, our forefathers have taught to remain peaceful and not go to war,” he remembers his catechism instructor saying. “But now we all have to serve our fatherland and our Führer, Adolf Hitler.”

If the instructor had emphasized non-violence or anti-war sentiments, he would have been taken to a concentration camp, Cornelsen explains, adding, “I don't hold that against him. That was the situation in those days, and since most of the Mennonites were farmers, Hitler's whole new economy had saved many, many farms from going bankrupt.”

Only one year after signing up at a Nazi rally in 1938, Cornelsen realized it was a mistake to have joined Hitler and his militia.

But stationed in Berlin, he joined

people cried with emotion. It was mass hysteria. Then just as quickly, Hitler disappeared, the crowds dispersed and Cornelsen walked home, agonizing over what had gripped him to join the hoards in exultation of Germany's political mastermind.

He asked himself, “What happened to you? What took place?” As a Christian, he could not follow the crowd. He could not become another puppet in Hitler's show. He knew to worship another man with such fervour would be to turn his back on God.

We still need you

“You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them,” he says now, quoting Exodus 20:3-4.

“I had made my decision to follow Christ already and it was so strange to me that here was something so demonic



stared into Cornelsen's eyes and didn't blink. "Mr. Cornelsen, a German officer does not change his mind that quick."

Hope found in the Bible

Life should not be spent dwelling on the failures and tragedies of the past if nothing is learned. If the mistakes of previous generations don't teach society about the future, then history is of little value. Using history as a learning tool brings optimism to a world savaged by war and destruction. Maybe one day we'll truly understand our past and in doing so create a great society.

Cornelsen says that while this is important for the next generation, there is a much greater hope that can bring peace to the world. Soon after the war was over and Germany had lost, soldiers were depressed, aimless and hopeless.

Cornelsen saw a soldier slicing into his wrists. "I can't live because Hitler doesn't live anymore. I can't live," the miserable soldier said.

"What are you doing there?" another soldier asked Cornelsen.

"Reading the Bible," I answered," Cornelsen recalls. "And that's the only thing where I find hope and conciliation and peace again."

The interview was over. As I stepped out of his home—my mind racing through the stories he had shared—I took two steps down the front stairs and looked back as he closed the door. Right beside the door was a sign with a poppy flower on it and these words: "To remember means working for peace."

Mark Janzen recently graduated with a diploma in journalism from Langara College and is currently attending the B.C. Institute of Technology's broadcasting program. He attends Sherbrooke Mennonite Church in Vancouver.

An act of conscience

BY KOOZMA J. TARASOFF

Some people are persuaded to go to war and follow the drum of patriotism in defence of one's country. Others refuse to follow the herd because their conscience dictates that killing another human being is contrary to everything that they have been taught in a civil society; they follow the biblical injunction: "Thou shalt not kill."

Those who refuse to kill are legitimate world citizens who are courageous. Their actions reflect a moral stance on vital issues of humanity as expressed by concerned citizens around the world. In 1895, 7,000 dissident Russian Doukhobors burned their guns and swords in a mass demonstration to the world to get rid of the institution of militarism and war once and for all.

Earlier this year, a Doukhobor friend from Saskatchewan sent me a letter with the following story of his son who is an entrepreneur with a conscience:

I now want to share with you my pride and respect for my son, Kim. I was sitting in his office last week and he says to me, "Dad, I received an order from the Canadian military; they want me to produce several thousand military badges. What do you think?"

Needless to say I was taken aback because the order is for many thousands of dollars. I then said to him the order repre-

sents a lot of money that you can use.

He said, "Dad, I know, and I have made a decision. I will not manufacture these badges because they promote the military that I am totally against. It is more important to me and my family to know the principles I stand for than this money. So I will inform them of my decision."

We sat silent for awhile and it took all my willpower not to shed tears. He did inform his family and they were supportive. So, my friend, is it not gratifying to know that there are people like Kim in this world whose actions follow their beliefs!

Kim, you are a hero for taking such a principled stand, and for refusing to contribute to the war effort. Instead, you are helping to create a non-killing society.

The last word goes to Kim himself: "I am making sure that my kids see what war and politics are really about. I have said it before, that people have the choice to produce good things and bad things in their factories. If each factory owner refused to produce weapons, there would not be any. So if you own a factory that produces a million guns, then are you not responsible for a million lives lost? How many people would not have been killed if those weapons were never made? It is not so easy to kill with your own hands because your conscience will get hold of you." ☸

For Discussion

1. Why did Cornelsen join the German army under Hitler? What happened at the Nazi rally in 1938 that made him think it was a mistake? What effect did his war experience have on him?
2. Cornelsen remembers that long after the war, a co-worker, who was an Allied war veteran, said, "I went out to kill you and you went out to kill me. Why did we do that?" Do you agree that it is human nature to impose solutions with violence in times of conflict? How do countries persuade their people that such violent action is necessary?
3. In the "An act of conscience" story, an entrepreneur refused to make military badges. If you were a struggling factory owner would you have made the same decision? Under what conditions would you refuse to make military products?
4. How did Cornelsen and the Doukhobors work for peace? How can we, as congregations, work for peace? How important is it to have peaceful interpersonal relationships?

/// 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.

✉ Scripture, not science, the key to a proper understanding of God

JOHN 5:39-40 STATES: "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life."

In a generation that is used to fiction, entertainment and storytelling, it is easy to look at Scripture the same way. We assume that what is written in the Bible happened fictionally. We assume that the miracles presented are a nice story—but only a story. We assume that what God says happened must be fiction because it doesn't fit our everyday experience. This is the general perception of the world concerning Scripture, that it is a nice bunch of stories or myths. Some place their trust in their interpretation of it, so that they become ensnared in our own understanding.

Jesus said we search the Scriptures to find him. Searching Scripture is not wrong, but our focal point may be. Do we search the Scriptures to prove our bias right or to allow God to speak to us?

We place more importance on what we can observe or prove than on the revelations of the Holy Spirit. We tend to accept what scholars say rather than our own personal search of the Scriptures.

Instead of Scripture being read with a heart of faith, now there seems to be a push to read with science's criteria. What happened to "God said it; I believe it"? Unknowingly we have eaten of the same fruit that Eve did.

What is the way back?

- Accept what God say to be true, search God rather than human knowledge. (Knowledge will come as we trust and fear God first.)
- Science is of human origin; it will never lead us to God.
- Accept God's absolutes, not our own understanding.
- Acknowledge that God knows more than we do.
- God is always trustworthy; humans are not.

- Obey God rather than humans. Proverbs 1:7 says, "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom."

As an example of faith run amok, look at what happened to Israel whenever godly wisdom was rejected. It eventually cost them deportation to Babylon. Are we any better than they? No we are not, and church history bears me out in this. The Reformation came because humans had fallen into misguided unbelief. We are now on the brink of doing it again.

SIMON NOORDAM, NOELVILLE, ONT.

✉ What games are suitable for Mennonite children to play?

IS THAT BATTLESHIP the boys are playing on the back cover of the Aug. 20, 2007, issue of *Canadian Mennonite*?

LAVERNE SIEMENS, ALTONA, MAN.

(The game is, in fact, Battleship, and the suitability of just such a game for Mennonite children was brought to the floor of the Abbotsford assembly after the photograph originally appeared in the assembly newsletter. Ed.)

✉ Potter accused of witchcraft, The Simpsons of mockery

WHEN I READ the book review on Harry Potter ("Vanquishing Voldemort: Why Harry Potter had to be a wizard," Sept. 3, 2007, page 26), I was shocked, since we went through that whole thing after the first Harry Potter book came out. I believe Anabaptist Mennonites teach their children faith in God through the Bible. Yes, there are fairytales, but Harry Potter is witchcraft.

And that review of *The Simpsons Movie* ("Does *The Simpsons Movie* demean Christianity? Doh!") on the next page. The whole Simpsons franchise is one big mockery of God.

MARLENE HIEBERT, BLUMENORT, MAN.

✉ Redesign of magazine lauded by former publisher

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE successful launch of a new design! I got my Sept. 3 issue and it's exciting and satisfying to see *Canadian Mennonite* reaching for ways to stay fresh and relevant. I appreciated Helmut Harder's rationale for a church paper 10 years ago (see "Ten years of 'a good thing,'" Sept. 3, 2007, page 2). And I agree that the rationale is as relevant today as then.

RON REMPEL, WATERLOO, ONT.

Ron Rempel is executive director of Mennonite Publishing Network and the former editor and publisher of Canadian Mennonite.

FAMILY TIES

Fourth step to a good hug

MELISSA MILLER

My mother has been known to say, "I wish you were all still babies that I could hold on my lap." The first time I heard these words, a comical image popped unbidden into my head as I saw my mother's eight children, all grown to adulthood, vying for space in her willing, yet limited lap. Having made my own journey as a parent of an infant who became an adult, I better understand the sentiment behind her comments.

Parents know as well as anyone that the time comes for a hug to end. Children are always moving away from the parental embrace. When the preacher says, "*There is a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing*" (*Ecclesiastes 3:5b*), a father or mother nods in agreement, although they might wonder whether now is a time when their child, big or little, needs to be held or needs to be free from parental arms.

Whatever the timing, there is no arguing that hugs end. As theologian Miroslav Volf says in *Exclusion and Em-*

brace, "The other must be let go so that . . . her genuine dynamic identity—may be preserved. . . ."

This moment of release is the fourth step in a good hug. The previous steps



May our hugs draw us closer to each other, and to God.

of opening one's arms, waiting for the other's response, and embracing, conclude when the hugger opens his or her arms and releases the huggie. Volf says that all four steps must be included in order for the hug to be a hug. Without step three, it's an "aborted embrace." Without step four, the act of love is "pervert[ed] . . . into an act of oppression. . . ." While we may know precisely what he means, it may still be difficult for us to practise the moment of release when we are the huggers.

Our different personalities feed into the challenges we have with hugs. Some of us struggle more with the first step of hugging, that of simply being vulnerable

and opening our arms. Others miscue on waiting for the other's response. Some of us have difficulty savouring the moment of embrace, while others resist the moment of release. There are cultural differences related to touch, who may or may not touch whom and under what circumstances. And, of course, there are different kinds of hugs.

Not all hugs can, or should, feel the same. A hug offered during a family reunion is different than a hug received at a time of grief or tragedy. Sibling hugs may carry memories of the family history they share. Hugs exchanged between lovers reflect their sexual bond.

When both huggers are adults, the message is often different than that conveyed by adult-child hugs.

Most significantly, if the hug is going to be a good hug, it is so only because the huggie desires intimacy with the hugger, just as the hugger has desired the intimacy with the huggie. May our hugs draw us closer to each other, and to God.

Soon I'll be visiting my mother. We'll both enjoy the long history between us, and there will be good hugs, incorporating all four steps! But I don't plan to climb onto her lap!

Melissa Miller (familyties@mts.net) lives in Winnipeg, where she ponders family relationships as a pastor at Springstein Mennonite Church, a counsellor and an author.

✉ Warts and all, Mennonites are aware of their calling to follow Jesus

IN MY OPINION, Phil Wagler's "Menno idol" column (Sept. 17, 2007, page 8) starts off on the wrong foot. "Are we Mennonite or Christian?" is a bit like asking, "Are we farmers or golfers?"

Wagler uses the pronouns "we" and "us" a lot, as if we Mennonites were a monolith. When he says, "We seem, five centuries later, happily captivated by our ethnic religious genius," I really don't know what he's talking about. "My Mennonites" are well aware of their warts, and just as convinced as early Anabaptists ever were that their calling is to serve in the redemption of a battered world by following in Jesus' footsteps.

I particularly take exception to the comment, "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." From where I sit, this describes nothing real. If anything, we have foolishly neglected the witness of Menno Simons and his fellow Anabaptists, and have come to idolize the North American version of fundamentalist Christianity that tends to reduce the gospel to "born again" clichés and spirituality focused too exclusively on personal salvation and emotional stroking.

The story of the Old Testament is centred on the Exodus, a series of events by which God established an ethnic peoplehood through which he intended to bless

GOD, MONEY AND ME

Payday loans and cash advances

DARREN PRIES-KLASSEN

The demand for immediate cash and short-term loans is so profound that in a decade the payday loan industry has grown from zero to 1,400 outlets in Canada and continues to expand. The names on the storefront may vary, but the services are virtually the same: provide small, short-term loans, cheque-cashing, and cash advances from a non-traditional lender—for a fee.

A 2006 public interest article produced by the Parliamentary Information and Research Service explained the details of an actual short-term loan: \$400 was loaned at a cost \$51.28 plus the original amount. That is a nominal interest rate of 12.82 percent annually. However, in this case the loan was for only 17 days. When the payday loan is calculated based on 365 days, the effective interest rate balloons to 1,242 percent.

Section 347 of the Criminal Code of Canada makes it a criminal offence to charge more than a 60 percent effective interest rate. Interest rates beyond this amount are illegal and referred to as predatory lending.

So how is an interest rate of more than 1,000 percent possible? Unlike banking

and investing, the payday loan business is relatively unregulated. The Canadian Payday Loan Association does have a code of conduct, but is a self-regulatory body and membership is voluntary. By using the term “fee” in place of “interest,” payday loan companies have made pros-



The wisdom of Proverbs 22: 7—‘the borrower is slave to the lender’—couldn’t be more appropriate.

ecution under the Criminal Code more difficult. Consumers seem to be okay with the high cost of borrowing money when it is called a fee, not interest.

The cost of borrowing the \$400 was promoted by the payday loan company as follows: interest—\$8.64; per item fee—\$9.99; cheque-cashing fee—\$32.65; principal—\$400. Total cost is \$451.28.

The type of person who uses a payday loan service is not necessarily the person you might expect. In a 2005 study by the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, more than half of the respondents cited convenience as the No. 1 reason for using these services, while only 14 percent cited credit and banking issues. What that means is that a large number

of people are using this type of expensive credit even though cheaper options are available to them. Either they don’t know—or don’t care—about the high cost payday loan companies charge.

It is understandable that payday loan companies have found a niche market, but that doesn’t mean you need to be part of it. If you use, or are tempted to use, payday loan services, have a look at alternative lenders such as your bank or credit union first. Even a cash advance on a credit card will be less costly than most payday loans.

Practise restraint. Is your need for immediate cash going to be used to satisfy a need or a want? If it is a want, you are better to do without it than incur heavy

borrowing costs. If you have any doubts about your ability to manage money or make financial decisions, talk to someone who can help you—a financial planner, your bank or credit union, or Mennonite Foundation of Canada.

The wisdom of Proverbs 22: 7—“*the borrower is slave to the lender*”—couldn’t be more appropriate than in the case of payday loan services. Wise management, fiscal restraint and practising contentment are as much a part of biblical stewardship as is learning generosity.

Darren Pries-Klassen is a stewardship consultant at the St. Catharines, Ont., office of the Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For stewardship education, and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit mennofoundation.ca.

the world. It is not a mighty stretch to see the Anabaptist movement as God’s establishment of another ethnic peoplehood through which he, similarly, meant to bless the world.

I don’t think I’m proud to be a Mennonite, much less that I idolize the fact, but I am thankful that I was born into the culture that I was. If Wagler is saying that we need to keep the essential gospel firmly at the centre of our work and worship, then he’s absolutely right. In the end, our ethnic identity is a transient matter; to found a faith and way of life on it would be foolhardy.

GEORGE EPP, ROSTHERN, SASK.

✉ Time to consider commissioning vegetable farming ministers

WILL BRAUN’S NEW Order Voice column, “One hundred mile grace,” in the Sept. 17 issue of *Canadian Mennonite* is a kind of reread of some old ideas.

Over the past 30 or more years various groups of people, both in the U.S. and Canada, have talked about developing a land trust whereby people would buy shares in farmland that would, in turn, be rented to farmers. The ideas revolved around three goals:

- First, to assist farmers who were going bankrupt due the successive farm crises.
- Second, to help those farm families where inheri-

FROM OUR LEADERS

Searching for thick faith

DAVE BERGEN

Christian Formation Council just finished holding its fall meetings in Saskatoon. Among the things we spent time on was a “futures thinking” exercise in which we asked what areas of ministry the council might discern as needing attention in Mennonite Church Canada in the near- and longer-term future.

One item at the top of the list was the matter of ministry to seniors.

While the discussion was inclusive of those who are currently seniors, we spoke much more about the large contingent of Canadians, including Mennonites, who will be turning 65 in the next 15 years—by some estimates, approximately 11 million people (fully a third of our country’s population).

The upcoming seniors demographic on the whole is less likely than their parents to engage in regular spiritual practices such as Bible reading, intentional times of prayer, attending adult

Christian education on a weekly basis, or participating in smaller, more intimate study groups for spiritual growth.

For many, regular worship attendance means going to church one or two times a month, with summers for “lake time” and a few weeks in winter off for vacation. The result is a whole generation of older adults who, despite being raised in church, do not regularly have signifi-



[H]ow can we plan as a church to thicken the faith of this generation?

cant encounters with the Bible, nor do they have extensive experience with the church as a living faith community. We might describe their faith as rather thin, based more on casual exposure than intensive encounter and engagement with God and God’s real-life people.

Given that as we age we begin to ask weightier questions about faith, life and mortality, how can we plan as a church

to thicken the faith of this generation? How can we help people become deeply rooted in the story of a God who wants to nurture an intense relationship with humanity through the ages? How will we invite so many soon-to-be seniors into the life of the church, a community refined in the crucible of persecution and testing, and in the Scriptures as a continuing revelation of the character and intention of God in Jesus Christ?

The exploration of the council offered no easy answers to this gargantuan challenge, but several thoughts emerged:

- Can we begin now to produce faith-forming resources that are able to speak in plain language about the nature of God, the significance of Jesus Christ, the movement of the Holy Spirit, the role of the Bible, and the place of Christianity among diverse world faiths?

- Can we create spaces in our congregations that welcome any inquiry or topic of discussion without criticism or judgment, but rather as an opportunity to identify the movement of the Spirit in our midst, and the presence of the truth of God in the world?

Dave Bergen is executive secretary of MC Canada's Christian Formation Council.

tance issues made the land too pricey for one family member to continue farming when other family members wished to have their farm inheritance in cash.

- Third, to provide some new opportunities for growing local produce somewhat along the lines of the 100 Mile Diet. Unfortunately, it was another one of those ideas that seemed good at the time, but sputtered and died.

Perhaps it is time to revisit the old idea of land trusts and meld it with commissioned vegetable farming ministers. Perhaps we need to look at other issues, such as preserving—developing a local canning facility, as many of us are too busy to do that ourselves—where we know what is going into the can. Perhaps what we really need to do is to move this entire issue of food higher on our agenda within the church.

KEN REDDIG, WINNIPEG

✉ Farm implement ad approved, travel, banking ads criticized

RE: “AD NOT relevant to readers” letter, Sept. 17, 2007, page 12.

We question why the Tremzac ad seemed to bother the letter writer so much, since Tremzac is an environmentally responsible product.

Right across the page was a TourMagination ad encouraging us to worldwide travel, which pollutes our atmosphere with every take-off and landing.

Add to that the ads for investments that earn rates of interest that, for the most part, can only be called usury.

Unfortunately, *Canadian Mennonite* requires advertising revenue to keep subscription rates reasonable. If we truly wish to nitpick, we would be eliminating most of the advertising.

RALPH AND JACQUELYN HUNSPERGER, EMO, ONT.

YOUNG PROPHETS

Bridging the solitudes

BY TAMARA PETKAU

There's something unnerving about staring into the headlights of oncoming traffic. I tend to get a panicky feeling in my stomach when I realize the taxi I'm in is not going with the flow of traffic, but rather driving against it. But aggressively driving against traffic became a common occurrence for me after I accepted a teaching position at a private high school in Cairo last year. Similarly, I found that many aspects of life overseas frequently came at me from opposing and unexpected directions.

I arrived in Egypt in late August during a heat wave. I have never felt such intense and suffocating heat. Images that I had had of sandy beaches, golden pyramids and boulevards lined with palm trees were tempered by the reality of the regional conflict between Israel and Lebanon. And the traffic terrified me.

I found life in Egypt difficult to adjust to. Things are very different. As a single, white female I was often singled out from those around me. There was the verbal and sexual harassment on the streets and the expectation that I would pay inflated prices at the markets.

On the other hand, the preferential treatment that was accorded me, a westerner, was another matter that offended my personal sensitivities. I earned more than my Egyptian co-workers who did the same work. Because of where I taught, I lived among the wealthiest foreigners in the country. I was given priority seating at soccer matches while surrounded by armed security personnel. I was always entry to exotic resorts and was always welcome at the Four Seasons Hotel.

While these gestures were meant to welcome and accept me, they left me

with a growing sense of isolation and seclusion. I felt a growing divide between the "me" and "them," and wondered to what extent these solitudes could be bridged.

To look back on my experience from a

Any attempts at giving personal expression to my faith seemed to be inconsequential and drowned out by the practices of the prevailing culture and faith.

faith perspective remains a challenge. I still am unclear as to how to interpret and understand the impact that my experience in Egypt had on my Christian faith. Living in a predominately Muslim culture, but having limited opportunities to relate to Muslims, I felt very out of place. Any attempts at giving personal expression to my faith seemed to be inconsequential and drowned out by the practices of the prevailing culture and faith.

Located not far from where I lived, the Maadi Community Church proved to be a place of refuge. It was here that I experienced peace and security, and received encouragement in my faith pilgrimage. It was here that I could ask my questions and share my doubts and frustrations.

Familiar songs of praise and worship were sung here and, while they could not compete with the loud echoes of the neighbourhood mosques, they provided

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TAMARA PETKAU



Tamara Petkau of Carman, Man., spent a year teaching in Cairo, Egypt, where she found the life and culture teaching at a private high school difficult to adjust to.



me with the sense of community and the acceptance that I needed.

Staring wide-eyed into oncoming traffic made me feel vulnerable and scared. Meeting glaring disparity and inequality head-on was something I often wanted to run away from. Now back in North America, my tendency is to go with the flow, travel with traffic instead of against it, get behind the wheel myself, but I don't want to forget that fear-induced adrenaline. Knowing that much of the world experiences a different reality, I need to keep my eyes and heart wide open, alert to being a faithful and responsible

Christian sojourner. I am still discerning what this means.

Tamara Petkau, 25, is a member of Carman (Man.) Mennonite Church. She is currently teaching high school English in Stonewall, Man.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

- Bender**—Hayden William Alexander (b. April 20, 2007), to Phil Bender and Alexandra Mayeski, Hillcrest Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.
- Bergen**—Carter Mitchell (b. Sept. 11, 2007), to James and Shauna Bergen, Hague Mennonite, Sask.
- Bremner**—Jordan Charlotte (b. July 7, 2007) to David and Tracey Bremner, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- Enns**—Kennady Loryn Mae (b. Sept. 27, 2007), to Philip and Natalie Enns, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.
- Friesen**—Cole John Robert (b. Oct. 7, 2007), to George and Jennifer Friesen, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.
- Gaulton**—Jonas Clare (b. Oct. 4, 2007), to Sherry Wagler and Jamie Gaulton, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.
- Knipple**—Ty Lucas (b. June 8, 2007), to Kelly and Amy Knipple, Hague Mennonite, Sask.
- Lebold**—Kaia Li-Mei (b. Sept. 15, 2006), adopted by Brad and Karen Lebold, Hawkesville Mennonite, Ont., on June 18, 2007.
- Lichti**—Noah McGregor (b. Sept. 17, 2007), to Rod and Mary Lichti, Hillcrest Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.
- Livingston**—Elsa May (b. July 6, 2007), to Mike and Amy Livingston, Hillcrest Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.
- Pineda**—Natanja (b. Sept. 28, 2007), to Isaias Pineda and Carol Guzman, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.
- Rempel**—Ashtyn Delaney (b. Aug. 8, 2007), to Chris and Colleen Rempel, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man.
- Roth**—Samuel James (b. Sept. 23, 2007), to Andrew Roth and Jennifer Helmuth, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont.
- Schroeder**—Kayla Jordan (b. July 19, 2007), to Sean and Shelley Schroeder, Pleasant Point Mennonite, Clavet, Sask.
- Schroeder**—Keziah Maxine Joy (b. Aug. 29, 2007), to Elmer and Deborah Schroeder, Steinbach Mennonite, Man.
- Schroeder**—Makenna Kathryn (b. Oct. 7, 2007), to Rebecca Schroeder, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.
- Stucky**—Paxton William Philip (b. July 24, 2007), to Jeff and Cindy Stucky, Hague Mennonite, Sask.
- Weber**—Loghan Lee (b. Sept. 27, 2007), to Amie and Alex Weber, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

Baptisms

- Ken Felker, Angela Lockstadt**—Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.
- Jesse Doerksen, Ryan Dueck**—Steinbach Mennonite, Man., Sept. 23, 2007.
- Sam Derksen, Andrew Loewen, Kim Neudorf,**

Kara Doerksen—Hague Mennonite, Sask., May 20, 2007.

Silvanos Sawatzky, Lorina Sawatzky—North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Sept. 30, 2007.

Wesley Jacobs, Greg Guenther, Daniel Sawatzky—Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., Sept. 9, 2007.

Marriages

Aguiar/Funk—Nelson Aguiar and Delfina Funk, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Aug. 18, 2007.

Brubacher/Hall—Mark Brubacher and Allison Hall, Hawkesville Mennonite, Ont., Sept. 29, 2007.

Byblow/Derksen—Adam Byblow and Denise Derksen, Hague Mennonite, Sask., June 2, 2007.

Dyck/Friesen—Peter Dyck and Phyllis Friesen, Carman Mennonite, Man., Sept. 8, 2007.

Dyck/Wiebe—Lisa Dyck and Bernie Wiebe, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., Aug. 25, 2007.

Friesen/Kleinschmidt—Anna Friesen and Paul Kleinschmidt, Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 25, 2007.

Gabrysh/Shane—Amber Gabrysh and Chris Shane, Hague Mennonite, Sask., Aug. 11, 2007.

Heier/Zacharias—Jeremy Heier and Joelle Zacharias (Winkler Berghaler Mennonite, Man.), in Winkler, Sept. 22, 2007.

Jutzi/Zehr—Julie Jutzi and Lynn Zehr, Hillcrest Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont., Aug. 18, 2007.

Lichti/Taylor—Todd Lichti and Melanie Taylor, Hillcrest Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont., Aug. 11, 2007.

Martens/Penner—Sally Martens and Shawn Penner, Hague Mennonite, Sask., July 7, 2007.

Mohr/Sferrazza—Angel Mohr and Joey Sferrazza (Hillcrest Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.), in Stratford, Ont., Aug. 25, 2007.

Millar/Thiessen—Melissa Millar and Brian Thiessen, Tofield Mennonite, Alta., Oct. 6, 2007.

Neufeld/Neufeld—Matt Neufeld and Sabrina Neufeld, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., Aug. 12, 2007.

Deaths

Becker—John, 91 (d. Sept. 24, 2007), Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Bekker—Helen, 82 (b. Nov. 10, 1924; d. Oct. 3, 2007),

Tofield Mennonite, Alta.

Driedger—Elden Richard, 74 (b. April 4, 1933; d. Sept. 23, 2007), Zoar Mennonite, Waldheim, Sask., in Rocky Mountain House, Alta.

Driedger—Ernest, 77 (d. Sept. 20, 2007), North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Driedger—Margaret, 68 (d. Sept. 1, 2007), Winkler Berghaler Mennonite, Man.

Friesen—Agnes, 87 (d. Sept. 10, 2007), Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Friesen—Jacob E., 101 (b. May 30, 1906; d. June 25, 2007), Hague Mennonite, Sask.

Friesen—Katie, 97 (b. April 18, 1910; d. Sept. 6, 2007), Carman Mennonite, Man.

Friesen—Mary, 88 (b. March 10, 1919; d. March 17, 2007), Hague Mennonite, Sask.

Goertzen—Jake, 81 (d. Aug. 19, 2007), First Mennonite, Calgary.

Hammer—Ruby, 86 (Oct. 25, 1920; d. Sept. 30, 2007), Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Muehleisen—Ernst, 84 (d. Aug. 16, 2007), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Peters—Jake, 72 (b. May 27, 1935; d. Sept. 25, 2007), Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Popove—Joseph Martin, 77 (b. March 3, 1930; d. Aug. 27, 2007), Eden Mennonite, Chilliwack, B.C.

Schellenberg—Peter (d. Sept. 25, 2007), of Winnipeg, Altona Mennonite, Man.

Swartzentruber—Verda, 87 (d. Sept. 16, 2007), Cassel Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Veith—Franz, 84 (b. May 24, 1923; d. Aug. 8, 2007), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Voth—Mary, 85 (d. May 20, 2007), Whitewater Mennonite, Boissevain, Man.

Wiebe—John, 77 (d. Sept. 21, 2007), Winkler Berghaler Mennonite, Man., in Winnipeg.

Zacharias—Erna (nee Neufeld), 67 (b. Jan. 6, 1940; d. July 11, 2007), Hague Mennonite, Sask.

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.

Pontius' Puddle



GOD AT WORK IN US

Three places, one message for mission

Son of missionaries to India follows in his parents' footsteps with MC Canada Christian Witness

BY DAN DYCK

Mennonite Church Canada
WINNIPEG

Despite his 13 years of international ministry experience, Tim Froese continues to search for one message that will reach everyone, regardless of where they are along life's journey.

"I have a theory," says the soft-spoken executive director of international ministries for Mennonite Church Canada Christian Witness. "There are three places where mission is needed. First, the front door of the church, where we present the gospel and invite people in. Second, the pew, where followers of Christ are invited to live the gospel in community with one another. The third is the back door of the church, for those that have 'been here, done that,' but have decided to leave. We need to find one message that serves each of those places, because we never know the place where people are when we first meet them."

The father of three children, Froese spent the first six years of life in Andhra Pradesh Province of India with his missionary parents, where his father served as a medical doctor with Mennonite Brethren Missions and Services for 13 years. This formative experience, combined with life-long modelling by his parents, shaped Froese's desire to serve. As an adult, he has lived in Canada,

the U.S., Panama, Brazil and South Korea. Out of these experiences grew a love of people from a variety of cultures. In South Korea he took a leadership role in founding the Korea Anabaptist Center, now a burgeoning concern for Anabaptist Christians in Korea.

The graduate of the strongly mission-minded Briercrest Bible College in Saskatchewan, the University of Manitoba in recreation studies, and M.Div. studies at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif, loves his multi-disciplinary work. This allows him to integrate the disciplines of business administrator, missionary, historian, theologian, network builder and follower of Jesus.

His gift for learning languages has also been a boon; Froese speaks Portuguese, Spanish and Korean, in addition to English. But it is clearly his passion for the church—God's intended change-agent in the world—that permeates Froese's being. "In seminary, a professor said that next to

very fortunate to be a paid change-agent where the rubber hits the road, where you can engage churches, people in the pews, pastors—those who are asking how to engage the world, the youths, the struggles in the world," he says thoughtfully.

One big concern Froese has for the future of missions is the human ambivalence

So what would he do if a million dollar donor walked through the door? 'I'd ask if the donor can come along with the million dollars. . . .'

propagated by the information age. In fast-paced Western society, the world's most privileged people—a small proportion of the entire global population—are driven by 90-second sound bites and video clips on CNN and the Internet. People are lulled into a false sense of knowledge about what life is really like for generations of people raised on poverty and violence. "We think we know what it's like because we've seen the pictures. But if we haven't lived it, we have no idea," says Froese.

Nov. 11 is the day that Mission Sunday is officially acknowledged in Mennonite Church Canada and MC USA—and it's also a day that special offerings are often dedicated to missions. Froese, however, insists that every day should be Mission Sunday.

So what would he do if a million dollar donor walked in the door? "I'd ask if the donor can come along with the million dollars. I'm after people, not just their money. People make the difference. If I could get that donor to sponsor 100 of his family and friends to disperse into the world to learn and walk beside others, maybe that's what I'd do with it."

Froese sums up this idea with a quote from Tim Dearborn, an author, theologian and educator: "It is not the church of God that has a mission in the world, but the God of mission that has a church in the world." ❧



PHOTO BY DAN DYCK

With a staff of three, Tim Froese, executive director of international ministries for Mennonite Church Canada Christian Witness, administers 60-plus ministry workers in more than 30 countries.

the question of who God is, the question of what the church is, will have the biggest influence on one's view of life and ministry."

Together with three home office staff, Froese administers 60-plus ministry workers in more than 30 countries. "I am

Profile of a generous man

Instead of hoarding his wealth, Alberta entrepreneur gives it to charity, including MCC

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD
ALBERTA CORRESPONDENT
EDMONTON

What would you do if you had a million dollars? The whimsical 1992 Barenaked Ladies' song, "If I Had A Million Dollars," proposes buying a fur coat and expensive ketchup for macaroni and cheese. Unfortunately, though, many adults never move beyond self-centredness with their own wealth.

Frank Flaman is not one of them. As head of the Flaman Group of Companies, he invests his profits in people, creating the Frank Flaman Foundation to assist existing local and international charities. In the

last two years, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has become a benefactor, joining organizations like World Vision, Operation Eyesight, Mother Teresa Missionaries of Charity, and Change for Children.

Flaman learned about MCC through a customer who told him of a golf tournament fundraiser in Tofield, Alta. "I didn't realize how big they were, but MCC is quite big and they do a big job," Flaman says. One of the things attracting him to MCC is its inclusiveness. "You help everyone, it doesn't matter what religion they are," he says enthusiastically.

Flaman grew up Catholic, but admits, "I'm not much of a church-goer really. I come from a small town north of Regina [where] you never heard much about raising money for the Third World. . . . I admire the Mennonites; they do more than any other religion per capita."

A passion for helping is something Flaman wants to spread. In May, he took a group of his employees to Guatemala



PHOTO BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Frank Flaman stands next to a small solar cooker, one of the samples he is looking into for use in Third World countries. He thinks they will cost \$20 to \$30 to produce, but he is looking into selling them to the poor for about \$5 apiece.

to see MCC at work. Such trips are an employee incentive and learning opportunity. "Instead of going to Hawaii, go on a trip like this. It will be more rewarding,"

Continued on page 16

PHOTO BY BOB BERG



The annual golf fundraiser held in Tofield, Alta., on Sept. 22 raised \$115,284 for the work of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). The record amount was due to the lack of a tournament in southern Alberta this year, as well as an offer of up to \$50,000 of matching funds from Alberta businessman Frank Flaman, left, who is pictured presenting MCC Alberta director Abe Janzen with a cheque for the full \$50,000.

Trip proves an eye-opener for Flaman employee

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Twenty-year-old Jillian Van Nistelrooy describes her trip to Guatemala with a group of Frank Flaman's employees as life-changing. "You come back and you really take stock of your life and try to make some changes," she says.

"It was huge," she says of the differences between her own life and that of those she met in Guatemala. "I'm only 20. My whole life revolves around stupid things. You come back from a place like that and . . .



Van Nistelrooy

. my priorities have changed. . . . Everything [Frank] works for goes towards helping others; therefore, everything I work for goes toward helping others. It made me feel really good about the job I have and the place I'm at right now."

The group saw MCC projects the Flaman Foundation was supporting, such as fish farming, medicinal gardens and tree farming. Van Nistelrooy was impressed by how aid was given, noticing that recipients were being equipped for self-sufficiency.

Before the trip, she had never heard of MCC, but she liked what she saw. It was clear to her that MCC was working with the people, not for them. "Everyone was on the same level . . . everyone's opinion was valued," she says. ☘

Generous *From page 15*

Flaman says. "I want them to realize they're not working for me. Some might say, 'You know, Frank, instead of giving this money, why not increase our bonuses or salaries?' But who's running short here? Who doesn't have food in his fridge, or a home?"

For those with a million dollars, consider Frank Flaman and be inspired.

Flaman's passion for improving lives includes an active interest in fitness and the environment. Currently he is investigating solar cookers for the poor in Third World countries. "I didn't realize how big this solar cooking is," he says. "How primitive, they cook [in the Third World]. In

the kitchen there's a steel plate with wood under it. People who cook there . . . it's as bad as smoking two packs of cigarettes a day. With the solar cooker, it's healthier, better for the environment and it can be a cost benefit. In some places, in extreme cases, they earn \$2 a day and 50 cents goes for wood or charcoal."

Flaman has a clear vision for how he wants to make a difference in the world. "I drive a small car. I don't have a cottage at the lake. . . . I live a frugal life. We just live in a regular condo, two-bedroom. So instead of buying a million-dollar house, my money goes to charity."

For those with a million dollars, consider Frank Flaman and be inspired. ❧

Making a difference one choice at a time

BY DEBORAH FROESE

Mennonite Church Canada
ALTONA, MAN.

Dan and Crystal Kehler can't forget Colombia. Since their visit earlier this year on a Mennonite Church Canada Learning Tour, they have struggled to come to terms with the contrast between their comfortable Canadian lifestyle and the poverty, violence and injustice that prevails in Colombia.

But there is more to the Kehlers' struggle than simply recognizing the imbalance; they know that their lifestyle choices impact Colombians. In a land rich with resources such as oil and gold—and where an illegal drug industry thrives—more than three million Colombians have been forced from their homes and livelihoods so that others can reap profits from the land.

"The petroleum industry is huge globally and affects Colombians directly, particularly in the rural areas, where the oil is and where the pipeline runs," says Dan, associate pastor at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church. "We know that the whole economy is driven by the North American



Diego, a second generation Mennonite in Colombia, left, served as interpreter for Dan Kehler and others on the MC Canada Learning Tour to Colombia in February. Diego is discerning how he can serve his church in Colombia while planning to pursue a master's degree.

obsession . . . with big cars."

The Kehlers went into the country with some understanding of the atrocities committed against Colombians, but meeting Colombians themselves gave their knowledge new significance.

Crystal remembers encountering a well-dressed family of six in the streets

one evening. The father was trying to sell individual candies from a bag of sweets. Through a translator, they learned that paramilitary forces had threatened to enter the town where the family lived and kill whoever remained. The man, his wife and four children fled with only the clothes on their backs. The man's effort to sell the candies was an attempt to feed his family.

"I looked at the beautiful children and my heart broke," Crystal recalls. "I reached into my pocket and gave him 5,000 pesos. This would be considered generous. It's about \$2.50. The look of gratitude on the father's face will be seared into my memory forever." She later regretted not giving the man everything she had with her. "It would not really have affected me at all."

For Dan, a Moment of Peace event at the Teusaquillo Church in Bogotá was a turning point. Sitting among the displaced and feeling their pain and bewilderment, Dan listened to pastor Peter Stucky read Psalm 27. Although David's prayer for God's protection against his enemies had not held significance for Dan previously, when he heard the Psalm this time, something clicked.

Dan shares his experience in a letter: "I was sitting with men and women who had first-hand experience of this. Evil men had advanced against them and not only devoured their flesh. . . . The pain in my heart penetrated the knowledge in my mind and the two came together in a profound understanding of the significance of faith in terrible times."

Since their return to Canada, the Kehlers have made a conscious effort to rethink how they use their resources. The biggest change so far is to leave their car at home more often.

But supporting Colombians does not mean avoiding everything that is produced there. Crystal recalls buying a dozen roses for their Colombian host. She paid about \$2.50 for flowers that would have cost \$50 in Canada. She asked about the disparity and wondered if she should boycott the flower industry. Told that the floral industry provides employment for many women, she was urged to "fill your church with flowers, because if people don't buy flowers we have nothing." ❧

STEWARDSHIP STORIES FOR THE GENEROUS LIFE (PART VI)

A preacher, philosopher and poet keeps on giving

BY FERNE BURKHARDT

“Nothing before and nothing behind, the steps of faith fall on the seeming void and find the rock beneath,” proclaimed the deeply resonant voice of the philosopher and poet, Arthur Gingrich. At nearly 87 years of age, Arthur was preaching at a Sherk reunion in 2000, just months after the death of his beloved wife, Marie.

Two hundred years earlier, Joseph Sherk and Elizabeth Betzner migrated from Pennsylvania to Ontario. Hundreds of their descendants gathered for worship on that August Sunday morning at Pioneer Memorial Tower in Kitchener’s east end.

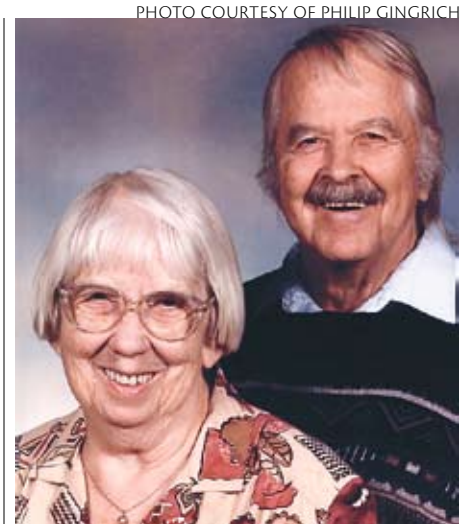
In his sermon, Arthur recalled the faith of the pioneers who ventured into the unknown, and that of Moses who, after hearing God’s call from the burning bush, “resolved to trust the call . . . [and] find

only meagre financial support from the Ontario Mennonite Mission Board. Frequently carloads of visitors arrived from the south to cheer up the isolated missionaries—expecting to be housed and fed, often for days at a time. The thoughtful ones brought their own sheets and towels, saving Marie the work of hand-laundering the extra linens in tubs of water pumped from the well, carried to the house and heated on the kitchen stove. But all guests were welcome, even when cupboards were bare.

Miraculously, often food—and sometimes cash—arrived as unexpectedly as the guests. A former colleague told of coming to the log house to spend an evening. Marie made coffee, but she had no food in the house. Then there was a knock at the door and a neighbour stepped in, eager to share one of her freshly baked loaves of bread. Marie accepted the gift and cut a few slices to serve her guest. The rest of the loaf would be tomorrow’s breakfast.

One spring, a carload of husky young men came to help Arthur with some outdoor work. They brought along their tools and what appeared to be plenty of food for everybody for the entire week. However, the fresh air and hard work created ravenous appetites, and by Friday—Good Friday, when the only store within miles was closed—the food was gone.

Marie didn’t know what she would serve for breakfast on Saturday. But early in the morning, she fired up the wood stove and set a mixing bowl on the table. Into it went the last bits of whatever grain products she could scrape from the nearly empty containers in her cupboard. Soon a tantalizing aroma from the hot oven brought the seven children and as many adults to the breakfast table. No recipe exists to dupli-



Marie and Arthur Gingrich

cate those light-textured, flavourful and nutritious fresh-baked “miracle” muffins.

Arthur’s ministry included worship services, Sunday and vacation Bible schools in Markstay and nearby communities. He preached, nurtured converts and did much visiting, often walking miles on snowshoes to isolated villages along the railway line and to lumber camps.

The struggles of mission work on the frontiers of northern Ontario occupied Arthur and Marie for more than 30 years. In one of his books, though, Arthur reflects on an “abiding peace” during those years of ministry: “We always had a sense of God’s presence. . . . It seemed to us the place where we should be at that time.”

Later, that sense of peace went with them to London, Ont., where they ministered first as surrogate parents for more than a decade to psychiatric residents, then to troubled teens, and finally to adults with special needs, embodying the love—and perhaps some of the mystery—of God that Arthur, a poet and philosopher at heart, found so intriguing.

“We are not always called to lead new movements or to promote new ideas. But we are always called,” he told the Sherk family. “There is nothing in life more real or more certain than that call to be what we should be.”

Originally published by the MC Eastern Canada Stewardship Commission in 2004-05.

We always had a sense of God's presence. . . . It seemed to us the place where we should be at that time.

what I will find.” He could identify with Moses and the pioneers. Throughout his life he said he was “trusting in God to be with me and that is enough.”

Arthur was not the “ordinary person” he claims to be in the preface of his autobiography, *Like a River Flowing*. His dreams, natural curiosity and adventurous spirit took him as a young man to Markstay, Ont., in response to a call to do mission work in what was then undeveloped north country. He married the love of his life, Marie Burkholder, in Breslau, Ont., on Sept. 27, 1940. Together, like his Sherk ancestors nearly 150 years earlier, they cleared away a few trees, built a log “dream house” and raised seven children.

Life in the woods was difficult without electricity, telephone, running water and

FOCUS ON BOOKS AND RESOURCES

A debt repayment milestone

RON REMPEL

On Aug. 2, Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN) made the final payment on long-term debt which stood at \$5.1 million five years earlier. The debt is now paid!

With principal and interest, the total payout for debt over the past five years has been around \$6 million—20 percent from donations, 27 percent from operational earnings and 53 percent from the sale of bookstore assets.

When the final payment was wired, a conference leader sent this note: “What a tremendous accomplishment. . . I admit that I did not think it possible.” This comment provides a small glimpse into the journey that ended in this debt repayment milestone. The journey continues in the ongoing challenge of nurturing a robust and financially viable publishing ministry.

The credit for this significant accomplishment goes to many people. Thank you to the denominational leaders who formed a “publishing transformation team” to set overall direction, and initiated a variety of emergency measures back in 2001-02 to keep the publishing program from sliding into insolvency. Invoking the long tradition of mutual aid, they called for a “barn-raising campaign” to help repay the debt.

Further, on behalf of the wider church, they took a considerable risk in backing several large loans used to consolidate debt and repay debenture notes. At the time the loans were announced, I was still editor of *Canadian Mennonite*, and I expressed editorial concern about en-

cumbering the church with these loans.

Thank you to the many congregations and individuals that contributed to the campaign in 2002-03 and that have continued to donate since then. Will donations still be needed now that long-term debt has been repaid? Yes. The current business plan calls for 5 to 6 percent of revenue—about \$200,000 in the current



I was still editor of Canadian Mennonite, and I expressed editorial concern about encumbering the church with these loans.

year—to come from donations to the Resource Development Fund. The fund helps pay for the development cost of core church resources that do not fully pay their own way.

Thank you to interim executive directors who implemented new directions, and to publishing and bookstore staff who remained resilient in a time of painful restructuring. The fact that operational earnings accounted for 27 percent of overall debt repayment speaks for itself. Amidst all the turmoil of change, staff continued to serve with distinction and creativity both in the stores and in publishing.

Thank you to congregations and individuals that are buying curricula, periodicals and books produced by MPN. Unlike some other programs of the church that depend almost solely on donations, the publishing program is funded primarily by sales. Many of our books and other resources sell beyond our denomination. However, the primary

test of whether we are doing our job is whether our own churches are buying what we publish.

Overall, it's exciting to see the strong sales of so many MPN materials. For example, we were pleased at the enthusiastic response and higher-than-expected sales at the MC Canada assembly in Abbotsford, B.C. Similar display and sale venues at area church meetings have been well received.

One challenge we face is how to produce Sunday school curricula in an increasingly diverse church with a declining Sunday school attendance. For example, when the new Gather 'Round curriculum was released in the fall of 2006, the percentage of churches ordering the material was slightly lower than when the previous curriculum was

released in the early 1990s. Along with other denominational publishers, we are trying to learn what we can do, and what the church can do, to reverse the trend. Historically, strong curriculum sales have been one cornerstone of a viable publishing program.

Finally, thanks be to God for the publishing mission entrusted to us, and for grace and strength to do what was needed in recent years. In the more than 100 years of publishing in our denomination, the past five years have not been the first time that our church has worked its way out of debt. May God grant us wisdom as we apply our best business skills to the mission of publishing resources “that equip the church to experience and share the gospel of Jesus Christ from an Anabaptist perspective.”

Ron Rempel is executive director of Mennonite Publishing Network, the publishing agency of Mennonite Church Canada and MC USA.

BOOK REVIEW

Overcoming obstacles

Coming Home: The Story of Tikinagan Child and Family Services.
Maurice Brubacher. Tikinagan Child and Family Services, 2006, 276 pages.

REVIEWED BY EDITH VON GUNTEN

Aboriginal people are at a crossroads, states author Maurice Brubacher. “We have inherited a legacy of despair from past generations, a legacy of oppression, racism, attempted genocide and assimilation, and the theft of our most precious resource, our children. Now, we can continue to live with this despair or we can work to create a legacy of hope for the coming generations” (page 237).

The chiefs of 30 First Nations communities in the Nishnawbe Aski Nation of northwestern Ontario listened to their elders’ vision of emotional, mental, physical and spiritual wholeness for their communities. *Coming Home* is the powerful story of their struggle to use traditional teachings and customs to find the healing and strength needed to assume responsibility for their own children and families.

A *tikinagan*—the traditional cradleboard used to keep infants safe and secure—became the symbol of their effort, and Tikinagan Child and Family Services was born in early 1986.

The leaders and elders found out time and again in those early years that putting flesh to such a big dream is never easy. Brubacher chronicles the newly formed agency’s painful struggles and the immense challenge of working within the Ontario Child and Family Services Act, while facing unique social and geographical challenges. In the beginning there was also scepticism and mistrust in First Nations communities; after years of having outsiders come into the community and snatch their children, residents saw the same rules applied by their own people, whose agency was located in Sioux Lookout, far south of many of the communities.

The agency’s inexperience, the abun-

dance of immediate needs in the communities and lack of funding for staff training made it virtually impossible to fulfill the initial vision, but the agency worked to strengthen families by hiring staff who would live and work in the communities. As a result, communities and extended families began working together to decide what was best for their children.

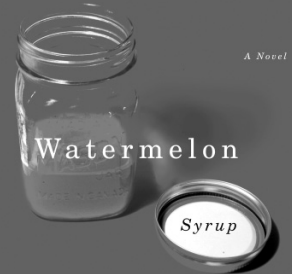
Brubacher was seconded to Tikinagan for six months in 1998-99 after a particularly tough period. He helped the agency develop policies and management systems that became a unique aboriginal model called *Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin*, an Oji-Cree phrase meaning “Everyone working together to raise our children.”

The lack of social and recreational services in the North prompted the leadership of the First Nations and Tikinagan to reach out to the voluntary and corporate sectors. As a result, partnerships have been built with a variety of church, school, service and recreational groups. Unfortunately, there is a wide cultural gap, as well as scorn and fear, between mainstream society and First Nations people.

Tikinagan executive director Michael Hardy says of the author, “Maurice has taught us about the Ontario child welfare system. At the same time, he has listened intently, visited our homes and learned about our culture. With his help, we have found better ways to bridge the gap between Toronto policies and the realities of life up north.”

May mainstream society hear Tikinagan’s message, like Brubacher did, and respectfully desire to bridge the gaps of understanding.

Edith von Gunten is co-director of Mennonite Church Canada’s Native Ministry.



ANNIE JACOBSEN
with Jane Finlay-Young and Di Brandt

Watermelon Syrup

A Novel

Annie Jacobsen with
Jane Finlay-Young and
Di Brandt

\$24.95 paper • 978-1-55458-005-7
Life Writing series

“Within a few pages I found myself swept into Lexi’s life and, until the novel’s close, I never left her side, so attached that I too experienced the pain and glory of the new world she entered as a young woman hired as ‘home help.’ When she/we had to return to the family farm, I thought my heart would break—but I kept on reading and she/we survived the grief of loss and emerged whole and strong. *Watermelon Syrup* is a wonderful novel of leaving, of discovery, of finding one’s true self and of learning about love. Annie Jacobsen was a wise and beautiful woman and she has left us a wise and beautiful book.”

– Isabel Huggan,

award-winning author of

Belonging: Home

Away from Home

Purchase at your
favourite bookstore
or call 1-800-565-9523

Laurier Press • transforming ideas

BOOK REVIEW

Answering the question 'Who are you?'

In Defense of Privilege: Russian Mennonites and the State Before and During World War I.
Abraham Friesen. Winnipeg and Hillsboro, Kan.: Kindred Publications, 2006.

REVIEWED BY MARK STEINACHER

“Who are you?” Fans of TV’s CSI have heard that question for seven years. The Who, the band that wrote the song, have asked the question for 29 years. Mennonites have been asking the question for close to half a millennium.

The perennial question has been asked once again, this time with particular reference to the Russian Mennonites, in Abraham Friesen’s *In Defense of Privilege*. Subtitled *Russian Mennonites and the State Before and During World War I*, the 372-page text by the emeritus professor of Renaissance and Reformation history at the University of California at Santa Barbara is augmented by 172 pages of notes.

Few stones are left unturned. The irony is that today’s Mennonites—because of all the hand-wringing over their identity—probably have one of the clearest self-images among Christians of a volunteer stripe.

This book’s strength lies in its detailed discussion of the difficulties encountered by Russian Mennonites as they picked their way through a minefield of profound and threatening changes in Russian imperial policy. As Russia consolidated its empire into a modern nation-state, it attempted to homogenize its populace culturally, religiously and linguistically. Mennonites, who had entered Russia with certain economic and spiritual guarantees, were caught as authorities attempted to revoke those privileges. “Addicted,” as Friesen claims they were, to their special status, some Mennonites went to extremes—bribery

and the taking up of arms—to defend it.

At the heart of the matter, Friesen argues, was the question of “race” or “ethnicity.” Had the Mennonites been Dutch refugees from what had been part of Poland, or were they German infiltrators from Prussia? This was no small question; their property ownership and ability to worship freely hung in the balance after the First World War broke out.

The reader is provided with a blow-by-blow briefing on the battle—that began in 1897 and lasted for decades—over the propriety of using the non-Mennonite historian Ludwig Keller’s theory of the Mennonites’ Dutch origins and link to the medieval Waldensians, part of an unbroken chain he claimed

reached back to the apostolic era.

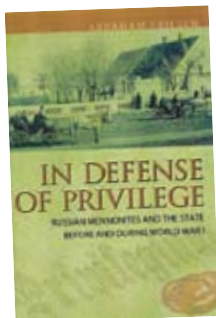
The book has some technical flaws. One is an oddity in the book’s structure. Where one would expect a conclusion, there is,

instead, an epilogue. The sense of oddity is increased by the introduction of a tremendous amount of new material at the end, something one avoids in a conclusion. Friesen also makes long citations of original texts, whereas the reader would have been better served by including these admittedly valuable rare texts in an appendix and citing only the germane items in the book. Finally, notable omissions include a succinct summary of the size of the affected Mennonite community in Russia and the absence of any maps locating their colonies.

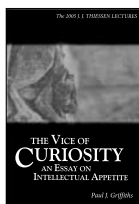
So, should you read this book? Yes, this is a book worth reading, with the above qualifications in mind. For those of Russian Mennonite background, particularly those whose families emigrated after World War I, the content of this book may help explain attitudes and comments encountered throughout life. Put another way, it may help answer the question, “Who are you?”

“Outsiders” (Friesen’s use of the term is regrettable) may be less excited by the book’s content, but it does make a sound contribution to historical understanding, opening a window into a little-known portion of the Christian world. ❧

Mark Steinacher is the historian of the Congregational-Christian Churches in Canada and on the faculty of Tyndale Seminary, Toronto.



THEOLOGY FROM CMU PRESS



The Vice of Curiosity:
An Essay on Intellectual Appetite
by Paul J. Griffiths
(University of Illinois at Chicago)
2006; 96 pp; pb;
\$16.95 Cdn.

To Live is To Worship:
Bioethics and the Body of Christ
By Joel James Shuman
(King’s College, Wilkes-Barre)
2007; 86 pp; pb;
\$16.95 Cdn.



To order, contact CMU Bookstore at 877-231-4570 toll free.
Or e-mail: cmubookstore@cmu.ca. Visit CMU Press at www.cmu.ca/publications.



CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

500 Shaftesbury Blvd. | Winnipeg, MB | R3P 2N2

Chrysalis Crucible

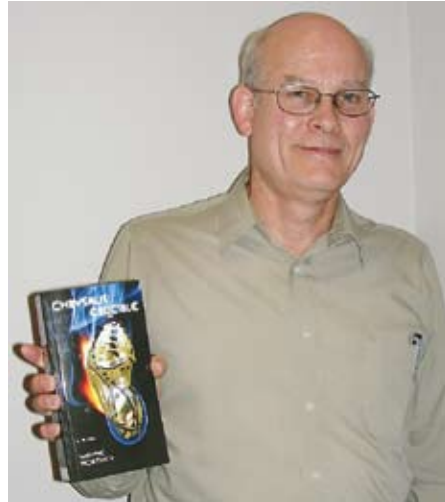
Street evangelism fallout
the focus of new
Wayne Northey novel

BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent
ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

For Wayne Northey, the experience of street evangelism and handing out Christian literature in Germany in the early 1970s left an indelible impression. So when he tried his hand at writing a novel, the subject matter came naturally.

Chrysalis Crucible, just published by Fresh Wind Press, tells the fictional story of Andy Norton, an idealistic young Canadian fresh out of university who goes to Europe to evangelize during the height of the Vietnam War. But the experience



Author Wayne Northey holds a copy of his first novel, *Chrysalis Crucible*, based on his experiences as a street evangelist in Europe during the Vietnam War years.

will change him, becoming a crucible that forces him to re-evaluate virtually everything he believes.

The character of Andy, according to Northey, is good at argument and apologetics, and is confident in his language skills: "He goes over self-assured and then cracks start to appear. His Christian faith was about certainty and giving answers, then he discovers questions [that are] simply overwhelming."

Today a member of Langley (B.C.) Mennonite Fellowship, Northey grew up in the Plymouth Brethren denomination. After his own university graduation he joined a group of short-term missionaries in West Berlin through Literature Crusades. He experienced first-hand what promoting a formulaic approach to Christian evangelism can do to a person. Of the 12 in his original group, he says only seven remained to the end of the two-year term; five left early in varying states of "disarray." In writing the novel, Northey says, "I felt I needed to come to terms with the fallout of that experience."

As co-director of the Abbotsford-based Christian restorative justice organization M2/W2, Northey is firmly dedicated to the way of peace, and he hopes the theme of violence/non-violence comes through clearly in *Chrysalis Crucible*. "Set in the Vietnam War years, the novel speaks to

Briefly noted

School of Writing names author David Elias to faculty

WINNIPEG—Writer David Elias has been named an instructor at the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) School of Writing, joining acclaimed authors Rudy Wiebe and Sarah Klassen. The three will teach classes in fiction and poetry at the next School of Writing, which will run from May 19-23, 2008, at the university. Elias, who lives in Winnipeg, has written two collections of short fiction, from which his short story, "How I Crossed Over," was a finalist for the 1996 Journey Prize. His novel *Sunday Afternoon*, published in 2004, was nominated for several awards, including the Books in Canada First Novel Award, the McNally Robinson Book of the Year Award, and the Margaret Laurence Award for Fiction. The application deadline for the 2008 School of Writing is March 1. For more information or an application form, visit cmu.ca.



Elias

—CMU Release

anytime years, including War on Terror years," explains Northey. "The present should be lived out according to the already impinging, but not yet fully come, peaceable kingdom."

Despite the inner personal conflicts he experienced that are the basis for the novel, Northey says, "I didn't want the book to be bitter and angry. This is a coming-of-age novel, a catharsis story. It's a novel full of questions and question marks; it's not an easy book about faith."

To order *Chrysalis Crucible*, visit chrysaliscrucible.blogspot.com. ❧

The Bookshop at PANDORA PRESS

One stop shopping for Mennonite authors

TOM YODER NEUFELD
Recovering Jesus
Brazos Press

ARTHUR PAUL BOERS
Way Is Made By Walking
IVP Books

WILLARD SWARTLEY
Covenant of Peace
Eerdmans

CHRIS K. HUEBNER
A Precarious Peace
Herald Press

JEREMY BERGEN
Creed & Conscience
Pandora Press

www.pandorapress.com
1-866-696-1678

Fall 2007 Listing of Books & Resources

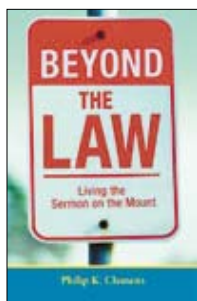


Erdmans, 2007, 320 pages.
Finger explores the agape-meal tradition of the Jerusalem church and encourages the church today to do more sharing in community.

Theology, Spirituality

Beyond the Law: Living the Sermon on the Mount. Philip K. Clemens. Herald Press, 2007, 223 pages.

Clemens reflects on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and what it means for Christians today. Discussion questions are included for each of the 12 chapters.



Christ in our Midst: Incarnation, Church and Discipleship in the Theology of Pilgrim Marpeck. Neal Blough. Pandora Press, 2007, 275 pages.

Blough, director of the Mennonite Centre in Paris and professor of church history, has translated and updated his dissertation on Marpeck.

Creed and Conscience: Essays in Honour of A. James Reimer. Jeremy M. Bergen, Paul G. Doerksen, Karl Koop, eds. Pandora Press, 2007, 301 pages.

The essays in this collection, written by friends and colleagues of Jim Reimer, show the wide range of theological issues that he is enthusiastic about discussing.

Everything Must Change: Jesus, Global Crises and a Revolution of Hope. Brian D. McLaren. Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 2007, 362 pages.

McLaren declares that Christianity cannot only focus on spiritual needs; it must deal with economic injustice and take Jesus' words about peace seriously.

Forgiveness: A Legacy of the West Nickel Mines Amish School. John L. Ruth. Herald Press, 2007, 152 pages.

In this little book, Ruth gives an inside

perspective on the Amish response to the shooting at West Nickel Mines. (See excerpt on page 25. Ed.)

Jim and Casper go to Church: Frank Conversations About Faith, Churches and Well-Meaning Christians. Jim Henderson and Matt Casper. Tyndale House Publishers, 2007, 169 pages.

Jim Henderson hired an atheist to join him in evaluating 12 American churches in the summer of 2006.

Martyrdom in an Ecumenical Perspective: A Mennonite-Catholic Conversation. Peter C. Erb, ed. Pandora Press, 2007, 211 pages.

The papers and responses from this collection come from a Mennonite-Catholic conversation about 16th century Anabaptist martyrs.

The Mennonite Handbook. Herald Press, 2007, 208 pages.

This Mennonite guidebook combines practical information about church life and historical and theological information, with some fun facts scattered throughout.

Mennonite Perspectives on Pastoral Counseling. Daniel Schipani, ed. Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2007, 258 pages.

The writers of this collection of essays evaluate why and how pastoral counselling can be a ministry of the church.

Neglected Voices: Peace in the Old Testament. David A. Leiter. Herald Press, 2007, 188 pages.

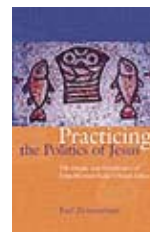
Leiter, a pastor in the Church of the Brethren, examines the theme of peace in the Old Testament.

Of Widows and Meals: Communal Meals in the Book of Acts. Reta Halteman Finger.

Practicing the Politics of Jesus: The Origin and Significance of John Howard Yoder's Social Ethics.

Earl Zimmerman. Cascadia Publishing House and Herald Press, 2007, 273 pages.

Part of the C. Henry Smith series, this book describes how John Howard Yoder's experiences in post-war Europe influenced him and shaped his theology.



Recovering Jesus: The Witness of the New Testament. Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld. Brazos Press, Grand Rapids, Mich., 2007, 352 pages.

The author, a professor at Conrad Grebel University College, wrote this New Testament examination of Jesus to be used in his undergraduate course on Jesus.

Roman House Churches for Today: A Practical Guide for Small Groups. Reta Halteman Finger. Erdmans, 2007, 224 pages.

In a series of nine lessons from Romans, the writer guides readers in recreating the early church in Rome to compare their issues with the church today.

The Spiritual Brain: A Neuroscientist's Case for the Existence of the Soul. Mario Beauregard and Denyse O'Leary. Harper-Collins, Toronto, 2007, 368 pages.

A neuroscientist explains how our brains process religious, mystical and spiritual experiences.

Seeking Peace in Africa: Stories From African Peacemakers. Donald E. Miller, Scott Holland, Lon Fendall and Dean Johnson, eds. Cascadia Publishing



and Herald Press, 2007, 246 pages.

This collection comes from presentations made at a conference in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2004, when peace church leaders in Africa met to share stories.

To Live is to Worship: Bioethics and the Body of Christ. Joel James Shuman. CMU Press, 2007, 86 pages.

In the 2006 J. J. Thiessen Lectures at Canadian Mennonite University, Shuman examines the intersection between medicine and faith.

Viviendo las Primicias: Dando a Dios lo Mejor de Nosotros. Lynn A. Miller. Herald Press, 2007, 100 pages.

In this Spanish language book, Miller describes first-fruits living as returning to God the best parts of God's gifts to us.

History

Building Communities: The Changing Face of Manitoba Mennonites. John J. Friesen. CMU Press, 2007, 240 pages.

This history of Manitoba Mennonites, with

its many illustrations and maps, describes the developments and challenges of various Mennonite groups from 1870 to the present.

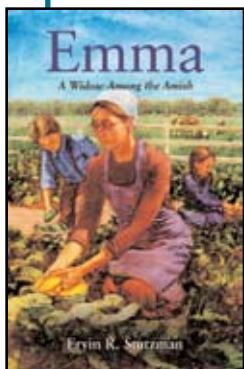
Imagined Homes: Soviet German Immigrants in Two Cities. Hans Werner. U. of Manitoba Press, 2007, 300 pages.

Werner compares the experiences of Soviet German immigrants to Winnipeg and Bielefeld, Germany, after World War II. The author teaches Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg.

Out of the Jungle: The True Story of a Young Mennonite Boy in the Paraguayan Chaco. Peter Boldt. Privately published, 2007, 147 pages.

Boldt describes what life was like growing up in the Paraguayan Chaco in the 1940s and '50s. He moved to Canada at age 14.

Under Vine and Fig Tree: Biblical Theologies of Land and the Palestinian-Israeli



Emma: A Widow Among the Amish

A true story woven by strands of faith, family, and community. Ervin R. Stutzman tells the story of his mother, Emma, who raised six children after the sudden death of her husband, Tobias. In the aftermath of the tragedy, Emma copes with her entrepreneurial husband's significant business failures. A sequel to *Tobias of the Amish*.

Paper, 350 pages, \$16.99. Hardcover, \$23.99.

Send Forth Your Light A Vision for Peace, Mission, and Worship

"Willard M. Swartley expertly weaves together the themes of peacemaking, mission, and worship. He offers a compelling argument for understanding this three-stranded cord as essential to the Bible's good news."

—Sheila Klassen-Wiebe, Canadian Mennonite University

Paper, 350 pages, \$18.99

1 800 631-6535 • www.heraldpress.com

 **Herald Press**
A division of Mennonite Publishing Network
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

Conflict. Alain Epp Weaver, ed. Cascadia Publishing and Herald Press, 2007, 204 pages.

Several writers reflect on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict over land.

Fiction/Literature/Poetry

Chrysalis Crucible. Wayne Northey. Fresh Wind Press, 2007.

This is the story of a young man who comes of age on a short-term mission assignment in West Berlin. The experience forces him to re-evaluate his beliefs.

Domain. Barbara Nickel. House of Anansi Press, Toronto, 2007, 94 pages.

This is Nickel's second collection of poetry. The poems, arranged as rooms in a house, explore the places in which we live.

Jakob, Out of the Village. William Driedger. Your Nickel's Worth Publishing, Regina, 2007, 208 pages.

Set in an Old Colony Mennonite village in Saskatchewan between 1922-44, these stories about Jakob's growing-up years provide a window into this Low German community.

Watermelon Syrup. Annie Jacobsen, Jane Finlay-Young and Di Brandt. Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2007, 280 pages.

When a young Mennonite woman from rural Saskatchewan moves to Waterloo, Ont., to work for a doctor's family during the Depression, she encounters a whole new world.

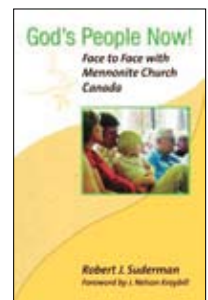
Where We Start. Debra Gingerich. Cascadia Publishing and Herald Press, 2007, 89 pages.

This collection of poetry is part of the DreamSeeker Poetry Series, Vol. 4. Gingerich's poems reflect on life experiences, including the life of traditionalist Mennonites.

Other books

God's People Now! Face to Face With Mennonite Church Canada. Robert J. Suderman. Herald Press, 2007, 128 pages.

This is the report of Suderman's "listening tour," where he visited all congregations of Mennonite Church



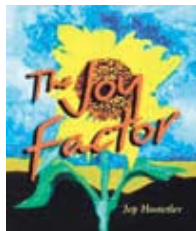
Canada in 2006.

Doing Good Even Better: How to be an Effective Board Member of a Nonprofit Organization. Edgar Stoesz. Good Books, 2007, 190 pages.

Stoesz offers practical advice for non-profit boards in this revised and updated handbook.

The Joy Factor. Jeph Hostetler. Herald Press, 2007, 100 pages.

This easy-to-read book encourages Christians to live their lives with humour and joy. Hostetler enjoys performing magic and has been speaking about joy for 20 years.



Lasting Marriage: The Owners' Manual. Harvey Yoder. Herald Press, 2007, 160 pages.

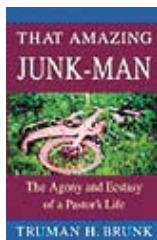
Written by a marriage counsellor, this book provides practical suggestions for developing and maintaining a healthy marriage.

Road Signs for the Journey: A Profile of Mennonite Church USA. Conrad L. Kanagy. Herald Press, 2007, 208 pages.

Kanagy interprets the data from a 2006 survey of American Mennonites, comparing it to information gathered in 1972 and 1989.

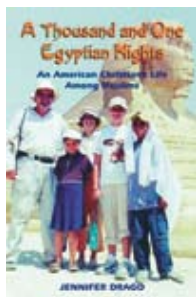
That Amazing Junk-Man: The Agony and Ecstasy of a Pastor's Life. Truman H. Brunk. Cascadia Publishing and Herald Press, 2007, 215 pages.

This collection of stories comes from Brunk's family and his life as a pastor.



A Thousand and One Egyptian Nights: An American Christian's Life Among Muslims. Jennifer Drago. Herald Press, 2007, 304 pages.

In an effort to reach out to Muslims, the writer and her family spent three years in Egypt working with MCC. The stories of their interactions provide a glimpse into Egyptian Muslim culture.



Upstairs the Peasants are Revolting: More Family Life in a Farmhouse. Dorcas Smucker. Good Books, 2007, 168 pages.

The chapters in this collection were originally written as newspaper columns. They are about ordinary rural life, told with a touch of humour.

CDs/DVDs

Celebrating God's Love. MCC, 2007, DVD.

This 11-minute presentation reports on how MCC has been serving in Congo, Nigeria, Guatemala and Burundi, as well as in Canada and the U.S.

Colombia Churches Call For Peace. MCC, 2007, DVD.

This 11-minute presentation calls on Christians everywhere to assist as Colombian churches respond to the needs of those people displaced within their country.

House Calls and Hitching Posts: Stories from Dr. Elton Lehman's Career Among the Amish. As told to Dorcas Sharp Hoover. Good Books, 2007, 6 CDs.

Dr. Lehman has been practising medicine among the Amish of Wayne County, Ohio, for 36 years. These are some of his stories in audio-book form.

Plautdietsche: Bibel Jeschichten fa Kjinja. MCC Canada, 2007, cassette.

These 19 Bible stories for children are narrated in Low German.

Sing the Story. Ken Nafziger. Herald Press, 2007, CD.

This CD contains selections from the *Sing the Story* hymnal supplement.

When Life is the Prize. MCC Canada, 2007, DVD.

Cindy Klassen, Olympic medallist, visits Nigeria and Ethiopia, where she finds stories of suffering and hope. The four segments are from two to 11 minutes each.

The Word of Promise New Testament Audio Bible. Thomas Nelson Inc., 2007, 20 CDs.

This dramatic reading of the New Testament (New King James Version) comes with sound effects and music.

Mennonite Publishers

Cascadia Publishing House

Telford, Pa.
215-723-9125
contact@
cascadiapublishinghouse.com

CMU Press

Winnipeg
204-487-3300
kkoop@cmu.ca

Good Books

Intercourse, Pa.
1-800-762-7171
custserve@goodbooks.com

Institute of Mennonite Studies

Elkhart, Ind.
574-296-6239

Kindred Productions

Winnipeg
1-800-545-7322
kindred@mbconf.ca

Mennonite Media

Harrisonburg, Va.
1-800-999-3534
info@MennoMedia.org

Mennonite Publishing Network

800-245-7894 (for all orders)
• Herald Press (book division)
hp@mph.org
• Faith and Life Resources
flr@mph.org

Pandora Press

Kitchener, Ont.
519-578-2381
info@pandorapress.com

BOOK EXCERPT

The legacy of forgiveness

On Oct. 2, 2006, a lone gunman burst into the West Nickel Mines Amish School in Lancaster County, Pa. Before he turned his weapon on himself, Charles Carl Roberts IV shot 10 female students, killing five of them. The world was stunned when the Amish community, in the midst of its grieving, offered words of forgiveness to the dead killer and his family. Author John L. Roth believes that the extraordinary Christian forgiveness shown by the victims remains the legacy of that heartbreaking day. Canadian Mennonite presents a chapter of Roth's meditation on the incident and its aftermath, *Forgiveness: A Legacy of the West Nickel Mines Amish School*, as a testimony to that legacy. To learn how the community is coping today and the response of a World Council of Churches' delegation during a recent visit there, see page 26. Ed.

"The Effect of Community"

Awful as it felt, the Amish grief was not the "unimaginable emptiness" that afflicted the loner who had killed their children. Theirs was a corporate as well as an individual emotion. Their belief, in essence, is that in Christ God has worked a grand reconciliation by which not the enemy, but the enmity, is slain. Without sophisticated articulation of an idea, they live in the logic of that cosmic reconciliation that changes the tone of human connectedness.

The forgiveness that the Amish man told a TV interviewer he felt "in my heart" comes out of a covenanted culture. A corporate pre-commitment to live in such an attitude makes forgiveness a possibility beyond the imagination of individualists. If pressed to explain this, a member of the Plain people might simply say, "The way we are raised, you get used to it."

This could be regarded as simply the power of group-think, which lessens the need for personal moral courage. But that is a double-edged criticism. Many who wield it justify their own lack of obedience to the Sermon on the Mount by claiming that they simply haven't been

made by their Creator to be what the sermon calls for. They aren't wired to be pacifists.

It is only fair, though, to ask whether the Amish outlook on forgiveness in a small-scale context is applicable on a broad, international scale as well. For this the commonly cited scheme of German philosopher Ferdinand Tönnies is helpful. He uses the words *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* to name what he considers the two basic kinds of relationship:

1. Simple face-to-face communities of home, kinship and village; or
2. City and political or business corporation.

Obviously, Amish society is a classic surviving example of the first type, *Gemeinschaft*.

Its people know each other, eat meals in each other's homes, share the same memories, lingo and outlook. Family is strong, trust operates by shared covenant, and the individual often places the good of the group above his or her individual freedoms (for example, "Shoot me first"). Not to do so brings shame.

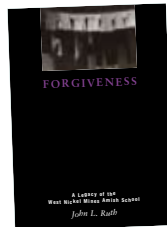
By contrast, notes Tönnies, in *Gesellschaft* (society), individuals and primary groups pool their self-interests when possible in order to gain what they want. Instead of covenants, there are contracts

(which are readily broken if self-interest so dictates and the civil law does not effectively punish). The connection between parties involved is not trust, but "cash." This is how things work in a nation that is made up of a variety of clans, races and religions.

Simply put, in *Gesellschaft* the various primary groups average their interests. Though this is done for the benefit of the general welfare, the individual is really acting out of his own interest. His or her identity becomes, in comparison to that of a small-group member, less specific—more generic. He or she is bound less by voluntary covenant than by contracts having legal force. Life looks different than it had on the farm or in the village and clan. Ethical questions, including the meaning of forgiveness, are complicated and less interesting.

When persons raised in the *Gemeinschaft*-type mindset of the Pennsylvania Plain people tradition move out into the *Gesellschaft* or larger society, they usually give up—as impractical—the simple applications of the Sermon on the Mount of their heritage. Some who keep on being religious find backing for this in a wholesale accepting of a new interpretive grid in the footnotes of the Scofield Bible, a dispensationalist interpretation that postpones the applicability of the ethic of the sermon to a future era.

Meanwhile, the relatives who have stayed Amish, "having their children to themselves" back a long lane from the road and sending them to a one-room schoolhouse with a 20-year-old Amish teacher, may be able to continue in terms of the *Gemeinschaft* of their heritage. Sure, say those who have left, but the Amish group is a bounded one that seldom puts its interior drama out in public. This gives fuel to Evangelical Christians who fault the Amish for having "no witness." Ironically, when their simple Christian ethic is splashed into the mass media, whether by the feature film *Witness* or the sensation of their forgiveness at Nickel Mines, what they believe and represent can reach the attention of millions.



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

Nickel Mines a year later

BY HERMAN BONTRAGER

Mennonite Central Committee
NICKEL MINES, PA.

Following the shootings at the Amish school in Nickel Mines on Oct. 2, 2006, people around the world wanted to share however they could. Many people gave financially to help those affected by this tragic event.

Donors from around North America and elsewhere contributed more than \$4.3 million to the Nickel Mines Accountability Committee in the months following the tragedy that saw 10 schoolgirls shot, five fatally. About one-third of the funds have been utilized to date and plans are underway to place the balance in a trust fund for the ongoing expenses of victims and their families.

The committee has also made contributions to the charity funds of several medical providers that gave medical service, and to some of the volunteer public service organizations that responded to the event. A contribution was also made to Marie Roberts, widow of the gunman, who took his own life.

Additional funds were contributed to the school committee for construction of New Hope Amish School. Classes moved from a temporary location set up the week after the shooting, to the new school in April of this year. The children are reported to be enjoying their classes, but they keenly miss the girls who died. Four of the five injured girls have been in school since December. Two of the four have missed some school days for rehabilitative therapy or corrective surgery, but have kept up with their school assignments.

To the casual observer life goes on in Nickel Mines, with its daily and seasonal demands of work, school, births, family and church. But for the families, each day brings with it the pain, grief and questions

Rays of light

World Council of Churches delegation learns how Christians respond to violence with forgiveness

BY JERRY HAMES

World Council of Churches
PARADISE, PA.

From the farms and rolling hills of Pennsylvania's serene Amish countryside, where five young schoolgirls were killed a year ago, to an immersion into the inner-city violence of Philadelphia, a World Council of Churches Living Letters delegation learned first-hand how profound tragedy can suddenly impact everyday life. But they also saw rays of light where forgiveness and reconciliation are helping to create a more humane society.

Members of the team, on a nine-day visit in September to meet with U.S. church and community leaders in several cities, included a South African ecumenical leader, a public health specialist from Lebanon, a Brazilian ecumenist and a human rights lawyer from Pakistan. The visit of the four-member team, called Living Letters, is part of an initiative by the World Council of Churches (WCC) to mobilize churches around the world to seek peaceful alternatives to violence.

Experiencing Christian hospitality over lunch in an Amish farmhouse near Paradise, delegation members talked with an Amish deacon and their host, and learned in graphic detail how, a year ago, a dairy truck driver with no apparent history of violence barricaded himself in a one-room schoolhouse and, after releasing all of the boys, shot 10 schoolgirls, five of whom died, before killing himself. One of the girls still lives on life-support.

Many people around the world, grief-stricken by the news of the shooting among people who traditionally have stood for non-

violence and peace, responded with more than \$4 million in aid to help pay for hospital costs and counselling expenses for all the families affected. Within days, members of the Amish community called upon the widow and children of the killer, offering forgiveness and financial assistance for the family.

"We took this forgiveness and reconciliation as a huge lesson," Marcelo Schneider from Porto Alegre, Brazil, told the Amish leader. He added that in his home country, people would rather "look for revenge, for more blood to be shed," believing that this was necessary for the benefit of Brazilian society.

"I come from a violent part of the world and, when I read of the details, I was touched by the way the Amish reacted. It was inspirational," said Lina Moukheiber of Beirut, Lebanon, a member of the Greek Orthodox Church.

"It was something that challenged people's imagination," agreed the Rev. Hansulrich Gerber, the WCC coordinator of the Decade to Overcome Violence. "We talk about forgiveness, but our [countries'] national systems of punishment and persecuting offenders don't generally make room for forgiveness."

The deacon, who in the Amish tradition asked that his photograph not be taken nor his name published, said Amish reaction to the tragedy included the same questions other Christians have had at such moments: "We asked, 'Why did God let this happen?'"

Both Amish men said the Amish struggle to live up to the expectations of others. "We are not a perfect people," said the host. The deacon added, "We just hope we can live up to the way people think we are."

In Paradise "we found the meaning of following Christ to the last consequence," Schneider wrote later in a blog. Commenting on the public's reactions to the forgiveness of the shooter, Schneider quoted the Amish deacon: "Isn't that what Jesus has told us to do all of the time?" ❧

that remind them of their loss.

The strength of community in Nickel Mines helps the families cope with this event, which changed their lives forever. Sharing their experiences with family and friends in the church community, and the steadfast support of others in helping the families do their work, are essential components of the healing process. For some, reaching out to others who have suffered similar tragedy is part of their own healing. Recently 29 people travelled to Blacksburg, Va., to meet with school officials and families of the Virginia Tech shootings, to show their concern and to deliver the comfort quilt that had been given to Nickel Mines.

The forgiveness extended by the Amish community to the Roberts family was noted around the world. The Amish did not wish such publicity for doing what Jesus taught and want to make sure that glory is given to God for that witness.

One family, whose oldest daughter died instantly at the scene, stated in a recent update to the Amish community: "God has given. God has taken. Blessed be the

COURTESY OF THE INTELLIGENCER JOURNAL, LANCASTER, PA.



The New Hope School in Bart Township, Pa., replaces the West Nickel Mines School, which was razed following the Oct. 2, 2006, shooting of 10 female students, five of whom died.

name of the Lord.' That verse from Job has given us a lot to think about . . . since the terrible happening at West Nickel Mines School." ❧

❧ Briefly noted

Church group castigates UN for holding tourism day

SINGAPORE—The Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism has called for an end to the exploitation of women by the tourist industry, and criticized a decision by the UN to hold World Tourism Day on the theme, "Tourism opens doors for women." The Thailand-based group said that tourism often results in the sexual exploitation of women. "A tourism that is propped up by images of women and the lure of sexual pleasures is not one that liberates women," the coalition added.

—ENI Release

Transitioning into ministry

MC Eastern Canada offers formation program for pastors who are new to ministry

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

Research has shown that 40 percent of new ministers leave within five years of beginning in the pastorate. Others experience difficulty in their first position and need a few years to recover from a hurtful experience.

Pastoral training has often focused on education rather than the person's character or their formation into discipleship, and has assumed that a seminary education fully equips them for the diverse expectations of congregational ministry. However, the new Transitioning Into Ministry program seeks to support beginning pastors and their congregations and assist them to develop faithful practices and habits for lifelong ministry.

This three-year program includes scheduled retreats during which the beginning minister will be provided with group coaching, spiritual guidance and

direction, teaching components in regard to ministry practice and theology, and personality inventories. There are also regular meetings with experienced pastors, who serve as mentors. Coaching for congregational leaders in how to walk alongside and support a new pastor will provide spiritual and leadership development support for the congregation.

The approximately \$3,800 cost per person for the program will be met primarily through congregational contributions and MC Eastern Canada, although other funding sources are being considered. Participants will also contribute a portion from their continuing education allowance. Consideration for smaller congregations that might find the fees onerous is being explored. Feedback received from five participating congregations and pastors has been enthusiastic.

MC Eastern Canada Leadership Council's larger initiative—called Educational and Formational Expectations for Ordination—is also exploring formational experiences for mid-career pastors and for pastors in the last decade of their ministry before retirement. ❧



Ancient Stones, Living Stones: The Holy Land in Perspective

April 24-May 16, 2008

A Canadian Mennonite University Study Tour with Gordon Matties, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Biblical Studies & Theology

For more information visit:
www.cmu.ca/studytour2008.html,
call 204.487.3300, ext. 635
or email: gmatties@cmu.ca

Goodbye, my friend

First published in Saskatchewan, Der Bote returns to its roots for farewell celebration

BY KARIN FEHDERAU
Saskatchewan Correspondent
SASKATOON

Although the turnout was small at the first of many farewell celebrations for the German paper, no-one could ignore the fact that *Der Bote*, now more than 80 years old, had a widespread impact on the Mennonite community.

First published on Jan. 14, 1924, in Rosethorn, Sask., the fledgling paper greeted its newly formed readership with the words, "Das Jahr 1923 wird in der Geschichte der Mennoniten unvergessen Bleiben." ("The year 1923 will, in the story of Mennonites, remain unforgotten.") The annual subscription rate then was \$1.54 for a four-page weekly.

Those opening words seemed to foreshadow the use and intent of the widely read publication for many years after, as it allowed readers to also remember their past lives in another country and to cor-



PHOTO BY KARIN FEHDERAU



Esther Patkau said goodbye to an old friend at a farewell celebration for Der Bote in Saskatoon earlier this month. The German language newspaper will cease publication next March.

respond with each other in their mother tongue.

Bernard Stobbe, who arrived as a new immigrant in 1949, recalls reaching often for his father's copy, and later ordering his own subscription. Stobbe has found the publication helpful in finding connections with long-lost relatives through the obituaries. Further to that, he sees much value in the paper. "The things I appreciate are the stories people write of their experiences in Russia," he said.

Despite many grateful readers like Stobbe, *Der Bote* will cease publication next March.

Dave Bergen, executive secretary for MC Canada's Christian Formation Council, which oversees publication of the paper, said that the conference could already see the writing on the wall 12 years ago. Citing a dwindling readership as the main reason, Bergen acknowledged the emotional response felt by readers. "It comes with significant feelings of loss and grief," he said.

Esther Patkau has fond memories built around the paper. "The *Bote* was a welcome visitor in our home for many years," she said

during her speech to the white-haired group assembled at Bethany Manor on Oct. 13. Among other things, the former missionary to Japan said the paper helped immigrants find new roots in a strange, unfamiliar land and, indirectly, acted as a bridge from one continent to the next.

Patkau noted how, in each decade of its existence, the publication spoke to the issues of the day. In the 1930s, there were important articles about farming and crop failures. In the '40s (during the war years), *Der Bote* wrote about conscientious objection. During the '50s, the paper was a much-needed tool to reunite families.

Reader response to the demise of the paper had been varied.

"There is deep disappointment and grief at the loss," said Heinz Bergen, speaking during the program.

But Dick Epp offered a different perspective. "Don't grieve that it's ending. . . . It has preserved so much of our history," he said.

Patkau captured the emotions of others with her final comments: "Goodbye, my friend." ❧

HANOVER (ONT.) MENNONITE CHURCH PHOTO



Juanita Laverty, right, was installed and licensed as Hanover (Ont.) Mennonite Church's newest pastor on Sept. 30. The message, "The paradox of calling a pastor," was jointly delivered by Laverty's parents, pastors Ruth-Anne, left, and Brian Laverty. A potluck dinner following the service welcomed Laverty, her husband Dave Sararus, and son Owen.

Enrolment figures encouraging

Canada's three post-secondary Mennonite institutions see student numbers on the rise

BY TERESA FALK

National Correspondent
WINNIPEG

Enrolment figures indicate more young people are choosing a Mennonite post-secondary education in Canada.

After experiencing a 13 percent surge in enrolment last year, Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg is seeing a further increase this year. "Our enrolment is up around 2 per cent," says David Leis, vice-president for advancement.

Almost 2,000 full- and part-time students are taking one or more courses at CMU's main campus, Menno Simons College (CMU's campus at the University of Winnipeg) or the Outtatown School of Discipleship. Last year there were approximately 1,860 students.

"We're one-of-a-kind in Canada in terms of providing a fully integrated Christian Mennonite university," says Leis. "We also have very popular programs—conflict resolution and international development studies."

CMU is pleased with the response to its master of arts in theological studies program, which was launched this fall. "It already has 18 full-time students, so we're

quite delighted by that," says Leis.

Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont., is also experiencing strong enrolment levels. For the fall term approximately 1,730 students are taking courses, up more than 100 from 2006.

"We may reach our highest level of enrolment ever this year," says academic dean Jim Pankratz. "Our residences and classes are full. Our faculty and staff are doing a remarkable job welcoming this large number of students to our campus."

The two departments at Grebel seeing the most growth are music, and peace and conflict studies (PACS). The number of students enrolled in the music degree programs increases every year. And two years after introducing an official PACS degree, 105 students are enrolled in that concentration now.

"It is rewarding to see so many students wanting to study about how to be a more positive peace witness in the world," says PACS director Lowell Ewert.

Columbia Bible College has also seen steady enrolment over the past few years. The Abbotsford, B.C., school welcomed approximately 535 students this year, compared to about 520 last year.

"We believe that many people are choosing Columbia because of our consistent focus on Bible and theology, the intentional community and mentoring, as well as the fact that we are an option close to home for many students in the lower mainland [of B.C.]," says admissions director Melanie Olfert.

CBC has seen a significant increase in part-time students this year.

"In addition to the general trend of students taking fewer courses and working more alongside their studies, we also attribute this increase to our new part-

▄ Briefly noted

Iraqi Christians must choose: Live in fear or flee

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—Extreme Islamic militants increasingly are targeting Christians in Iraq. As a result, Iraq's Christian community—long the minority in a largely Muslim country—continues to dwindle. Most Christians still in Iraq are Chaldean Catholics. One common thread among most of the groups is a concern church leaders have not spoken out to protect their rights.

—ENI Release

time educational assistant program," says Olfert, noting that this program has been designed to provide certification for educational assistants in independent schools in British Columbia.

Enrolment is down slightly at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. There are approximately 185 seminary students this year, compared to 190 last year, reports Bob Rosa, director of enrolment services. Nine of this year's students are from Canada.

Meanwhile, this year there is an increase in full-time students, which means there are more students living on campus.

AMBS is also very encouraged by the increase in the number of students under the age of 30. "Across the board with seminaries in general, the average age of a seminary student is in the high 30s," says Rosa, adding, "More young people are being challenged and encouraged to pursue ministry [at AMBS]." ▄



PHOTO BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Members of Edmonton Chinese Mennonite Church and friends gathered on Sept. 9 to celebrate the baptism of Tina Y Le and the 18th anniversary of the congregation. Pastor Ken Tse and wife Jody are pictured front row left.

Local church responds to Thai migrant workers' crisis

North Leamington congregation's efforts lead to unexpected baptisms

BY BARRY BERGEN

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
LEAMINGTON, ONT.

North Leamington United Mennonite Church took a leap of faith when it decided to assist 10 Thai workers over the past year. The migrant farm labourers, some of hundreds who arrive in the Leamington area seasonally to work in the greenhouses and tomato fields, came to Canada under a federal government pilot project.

Unlike most migrant workers, however, these men borrowed what was for them a staggering amount of money at a very high interest rate and paid it to a contractor in Thailand. In return, they received a one-year Canadian work permit. They were told by the contractor that they could earn much more than what they had borrowed, but with many of the men not even working 40 hours a week, they soon realized that there was no possibility of repaying their debt.

North Leamington discovered their plight in part through work it had done with Laotian refugees decades earlier. A Laotian group meets at the church and some of its members work in the same greenhouse operation as the Thai migrants. The Laotians helped integrate the Thai workers into their church community through various social events and Bible studies.

It was at one of these Bible studies that the Thai migrant workers asked pastor Bruce Wiebe for assistance. Wiebe informed the ministry team and the church decided to help the workers clear up their debt and make it safely back to Thailand, not imagining the road that decision was



PHOTO BY NONIE WIEBE

While North Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church members were helping 10 Thai migrant workers with their employment problems in Canada, discipleship efforts by a Laotian group within the congregation led the 10 to be baptized this spring.

to lead them down.

Meanwhile, the workers signed on with a local lawyer, and were told they should claim refugee status. At this point the church formed a committee to assist them through the process, but the work was difficult due to language issues and cultural differences.

The church agreed to hire Kaylie Tiessen, who began coordinating the work. She worked for several months helping to facilitate their refugee claims as well as finding suitable housing and transportation for the men.

The committee often felt—and still feels—uncertain about how to proceed with this work, trying to discern whether it should consider dropping the refugee claim in favour of trying to extend the work permit, among other issues.

Through all of this, though, the Thai men grew continually closer to the church and their Laotian brothers and sisters, and the church closer to all of them. The 10 attended discipleship classes over the winter

and spring, and were then baptized into the church—an unexpected result of its ministry.

What does the future hold for these workers? At present the Canadian government has changed the length of a work permit from one year to two. The church has written letters to various Canadian departments and ministers, and the Thai embassy, outlining the plight of these particular workers and the other estimated 200 from Thailand in Essex County facing the same situation, and pointing out that other migrant workers are treated much better in other programs where the accountability level is much higher, leaving fewer loopholes and opportunities for abuse.

Through it all, members of the workers committee continue to be amazed at the work they have gotten themselves into and are grateful for the faith to take it on.

With files from the NLUMC Thai Workers Committee

Structures must serve church's vision

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
STRATFORD, ONT.

One schematic of the life-cycle of a congregation lists conception, birth, creative formation, performing stability, protective maintenance, crisis and confusion, closure . . . or a new round of creative formation.

At a Mennonite Church Eastern Canada workshop this fall, Betty Pries of Associates Resourcing the Church said church structures begin at the third stage (creative formation). As a congregation is conceived and brought to birth, or is resurrected from crisis and confusion, four questions

must be answered to develop a vision before structure is established:

- Who are we?
- Who is our neighbour?
- Why are we here?
- What shall we do?

As a congregation grows, either in size or age, structures become imbedded. People join the congregation, or stay, because they like the programs. So long as the answers to the four questions remain the same, the structures and programs can too.

But as energy begins to slip, congregations often begin to ask other questions:

- How do we recapture our energy?

- How do we keep our numbers?
- How do we keep up our programs?
- How do we fill the slate?

At this point the structures and programs are driving the vision, and congregations begin grasping at straws, trying to find anything that will work to answer these new questions.

At this point the structures and programs are driving the vision. . . .

Working from a business model, Cam Shapansky, a partner at Blue North Strategies in Guelph, Ont., noted, though, that “vision is critical” and that re-visioning can be done only after a congregation has

“re-anchored itself in God.”

Instead of waiting for problems to arise, forcing re-visioning, congregations were told they should be constantly asking the initial questions, checking to see if the vision continues and whether the structures serve this vision. ☘

Vietnam recognizes Mennonite Church group

MWC RELEASE
HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM

Vietnam’s national Religious Affairs Committee presented a Certificate for Religious Activities to the Vietnam Mennonite Church earlier this month in a ceremony to mark the occasion, held at a restaurant in the capital city’s Binh Thanh District.

The document recognizes the church’s purpose to “worship the triune God and love all people according to the Word of the Lord in the Holy Bible, live the gospel, serve God, serve the country and the people.”

Nguyen Thanh Xuan, the deputy director of the Religious Affairs Committee, noted the long-term involvement of Mennonites in Vietnam beginning with the work of Mennonite Central Committee and, later, Eastern Mennonite Missions. He expressed appreciation for the uniqueness of the Mennonite contribution to Vietnam as a Protestant denomination with its emphasis on both religious and social concerns.

Following receipt of the certificate, pastor Nguyen Quang Trung, president of the Vietnam Mennonite Church, made a commitment on behalf of the church to be involved only in religious programs according to the purposes noted in the Certificate of Activities and to follow the church’s constitution and the laws of the country. Trung also expressed appreciation to the Religious Affairs Committee for its support of the Vietnam Mennonite Church.

This is a significant development in a process that Trung has actively pursued for two decades, although he has been involved in the church since 1965. When government control relaxed in the late 1980s, he attempted to seek recognition from local and national authorities, but

MWC PHOTO



Pastor Nguyen Quang Trung, president of the Vietnam Mennonite Church, left, receives a Certificate for Religious Activities from Nguyen Thanh Xuan, deputy director of Vietnam’s national Religious Affairs Committee.

the Religious Affairs Committee at that time was in no position to respond.

There are several stages to church registration in Vietnam. The first stage is approval by local authorities for individual congregations to conduct religious activities. A second stage grants approval for a church to conduct religious activities in a given geographic area or over the entire country.

The national certificate allows the Vietnam Mennonite Church to function throughout the country and to organize an official national conference within the coming year. Should this process proceed normally, the church might be granted legal status to purchase property, organize an official training school and publish materials.

This new recognition does not cover all the Mennonite churches in Vietnam, however, but only those registered with a formal relationship with Trung. This includes about 80 congregations with 5,000 members.

In the late 1990s, a few other Mennonite congregations and groups were independently formed. All these groups met in July 2003 to form a united Vietnam Mennonite Church with Trung as president and pastor Nguyen Hong Quang as general secretary. However, the arrest of some church leaders in early 2004 triggered developments that led to a division late that year, with each representing itself as the Vietnam Mennonite Church. Recently, a significant number of congregations have chosen not to relate to either group. ☘

MSCU Regional Meetings 2007

Your Values
Your Credit Union



Come and learn how MSCU is living its values while providing financial services for our faith community!

Elmira, Kitchener, Waterloo

November 8
St. Jacobs Mennonite Church

Milverton & New Hamburg

November 20
Faith Mennonite Church, Kingwood

Registration: 7:30 pm

Meeting: 7:45 pm

Refreshments to follow



Mennonite Savings
and Credit Union

A tradition of trust.

Aylmer | Elmira | Kitchener | Leamington
Milverton | New Hamburg | Waterloo | St. Catharines

1.888.672.6728 www.mscu.com

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Native land rights now!

CPT congress sends strong message to Queen's Park

BY SCOTT BRUBAKER-ZEHR

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
TORONTO

On Sept. 21—the International Day of Peace—peacemakers unfurled a 75-metre banner in the shape of an arrow pointing directly at the Ontario legislature at Queen's Park. It read "Native Land Rights Now!" to send a message during the Ontario election campaign about

Peacemakers unfurled a 75-metre banner in the shape of an arrow pointing directly at the Ontario legislature at Queen's Park during the recent CPT congress in Toronto.



PHOTO BY JON SCHLEDEWITZ

unresolved conflicts involving aboriginal lands.

The action was a part of the ninth Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) congress, which was held for the first time in Canada, from Sept. 20-23 at Toronto United Mennonite Church. The public witness, co-sponsored by Rainforest Action Network (RAN), included the laying of 107 ribbons—one for each electoral riding in Ontario—as a symbolic call

to candidates to remember and honour Ontario's historic treaty commitments to indigenous people. A number of aboriginal groups were in attendance for the banner's unfurling.

Prior to going to Queen's Park, the 250 congress participants listened to a talk by Judy da Silva, spokesperson for the Asubpeeschoseewagong (Grassy Narrows) First Nation near Kenora, Ont. Grassy Narrows is maintaining the longest-

More bread, less bullets

BY SHALOM WIEBE

Mennonite Central Committee
ARMENIA, COLOMBIA

In the main plaza of this mid-sized city, Mennonite pastor Antonio Herrera warned listeners that, in a nation torn by conflict and violence, peace can't be reached by a greater investment in the military. Rather, he said, "it is reached through more education, health care and more employment for all Colombians."

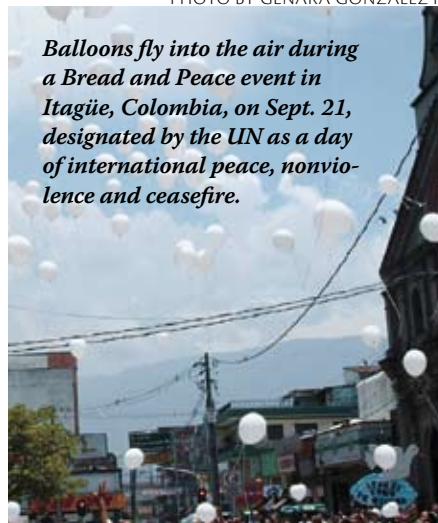
Speaking through a megaphone as part of a Sept. 21 event called *Pan y Paz*, or "Bread and Peace," he said that identifying the factors that contribute to the armed conflict is not enough. "As long as there are empty stomachs, there will always be violence in our country," he said. "Peace is not obtained through more bullets, [but] with more bread we can reach peace."

Sept. 21 is designated by the UN as a day of international peace, nonviolence and ceasefire. To honour the day, churches throughout Colombia hold Bread and Peace events, asking people to consider the link between peace and hunger, poverty and economic injustice.

In 45 celebrations throughout the country, the message was shared in neighbourhoods, parks, plazas, universities and street corners. Speakers called people to commit to a lifestyle embracing principles of nonviolence and highlighted the need for economic justice as the key to a lasting peace in Colombia.

In the capital, Bogotá, people took to

PHOTO BY GENARA GONZÁLEZ R.



Balloons fly into the air during a Bread and Peace event in Itagüe, Colombia, on Sept. 21, designated by the UN as a day of international peace, nonviolence and ceasefire.

the streets and plazas in 15 different Bread and Peace events. Teusaquillo Mennonite Church organized an ecumenical march, stopping at specific "stations" along the way, while using art, theatre and song to highlight the suffering and hope of the Colombian people. Representatives from Mencoldes, the development organization of the Colombian Mennonite Church, wore large, colourful boards calling attention to hunger and agriculture issues in Colombia.

The march, which drew at least 100 people, ended in a main plaza, where representatives from different churches led a liturgy, followed by an address by a UN representative and the sharing of 3,000 small bread loaves with the people in and around the plaza.

In Itagüe, as many as 4,000 people took part. Through the event, said pastor Jorge Gonzales, people see "the Christian church being more active in the reality of the country and more proactive in the search for solutions." ❧

Shalom Wiebe, an MCC worker in Bogotá, Colombia, is national coordinator for Bread and Peace and a support worker for people and communities under threat.

CPT PHOTO

standing blockade in Canadian history to stop Abitibi Consolidated from clear-cutting its traditional land use area. A RAN boycott campaign targeting Weyerhaeuser, the principal buyer of softwood fibre taken from Grassy Narrows' territory, has resulted in the high-profile appointment of a former Supreme Court justice to negotiate land use issues between Grassy Narrows and the government of Ontario. However, the province has yet to abide by the moratorium against clear-cutting issued by Grassy Narrows in February of this year.

The congress also heard addresses from James Loney, co-director of CPT Canada and a former hostage in Iraq, as well as from Ricardo Esquivia, a prominent Colombian Mennonite peace activist and human rights lawyer.

Esquivia described the current situation in his country and encouraged CPT in its ongoing work and partnership with the Colombian Mennonite Church. Since February 2001, CPT has been accompanying rural communities caught in the midst of an ongoing conflict between the army, paramilitary groups and leftist guerillas.

While noting some positive developments within Colombia, such as overall economic growth, he expressed concern for the faltering process of paramilitary demobilizations, which seem destined to fail through inadequate resources and unreasonable timelines.

In the face of such daunting challenges, Esquivia spoke of how the Mennonite Church has helped to create ecumenical networks for peace primarily through an association of evangelical churches. Currently, 500 women across the country have been trained as peacemakers and there is a growing movement to make every congregation a "sanctuary of peace" within a culture deeply mired in injustice and violence. ❧



Earlier this year, after a delay following an Israeli High Court order, contractors removed the low "security" wall on the north side of bypass route 317 near At-Tuwani. The wall had been installed in the spring of 2006 and had interfered significantly with the ability of Palestinians from the area to travel in the direction of Yatta.

The wall came tumbling down

Israeli 'security' wall along Route 317 dismantled

CPT RELEASE

AT-TUWANI, ISRAEL

In early August, members of Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) observed the dismantling of the "security wall" along Route 317. Upon investigating, they saw a crew of workers under Israeli supervision taking the wall down just past the road connecting At-Tuwani to Yatta. By the end of the day, no wall remained in the area.

The short wall—as it came to be known for its 80-centimetre height—along Route 317 was constructed during the summer of 2006. It consisted of six-metre-long slabs of preformed concrete. The Israeli military had originally planned for an eight-metre-high barrier to run along Route 317, but the Israeli Supreme Court had rejected the plan.

The military built the short wall instead, under the auspices of security, despite the fact that, given its height, a person in reasonably good physical condition could climb over it. Its actual effect was to greatly

reduce access to the economic and social hub of Yatta for the people of the South Hebron Hills, and to cut off shepherds from their land on the other side of the wall.

The Israeli army could also more easily stop all vehicle traffic from At-Tuwani and the surrounding villages to Yatta and the villages to the north, because the wall had only two small openings that were frequently the sites of checkpoints. In July 2006, the Israeli military temporarily closed these openings with cement blocks.

In 2006, the people of At-Tuwani and nearby villages, with the support of Israeli and international peace activists, organized demonstrations against the building of the wall. Eventually, they won a court decision that declared the wall illegal. The Israeli army delayed in implementing that court decision for some time.

Asked about the way events unfolded, a village leader for nonviolent activity said, "The [Israeli Defence Forces] routinely disregards Israeli court decisions. We believe what happened is a success for the people's nonviolent resistance. This is a very important step."

The village plans to formally celebrate the dismantling of the wall in the near future. ❧

MENNO
TRAVEL
A RAPTIM COMPANY

Leaders in Missionary Relief
and Humanitarian Travel

www.mennotvl.com
1-800-667-5559 info@mennotvl.com

Always grateful

MDS thanked for continuing work in flood-devastated town

BY EVELYN PETERS-ROJAS

Mennonite Disaster Service
TERRACE, B.C.

As we circle the town of Terrace the beautiful Skeena River is lazily winding its way through town. This was not the case in early June, when snow in the mountains, melting too rapidly in the hot sun, cascaded down the mountainsides, flowing over or through anything in its path.

At one point locomotives were parked on one of the town bridges, in hope that the weight would keep it from being swept downstream. The bridge held; however, many homeowners were not so fortunate, as they and town leaders were unprepared for water that reached areas that had never flooded before.

Shortly after the floods, the B.C. Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) unit went

PHOTO BY EVELYN PETERS-ROJAS



MDS client Trudy Mogg works alongside volunteer George Ediger to prim the walls of her house which suffered flood damage.

Jake Sawatzky from Brandon, Man., checks rafters at a Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) house-building project in Baldur, Man., this summer following a June 22 tornado that wiped out the entire homestead of Norman and Edith Desrochers and their family. Other MDS projects in Manitoba this year have involved cleaning up basements in Arborg following early summer flooding and helping clean up after tornado damage in Elie and Elm Creek.



to investigate and saw that the needs of mucking out homes and drying them were already being met. However, it was discovered that several homeowners needed help with rebuilding and met the MDS criteria of working with the financially and physically compromised who are uninsured or under-insured. In late August, after the houses had dried, MDS began rebuilding 11 homes under the leadership of Ike and Veronica Thiessen, members of Yarrow United Mennonite Church in Abbotsford, B.C.

Roger and Trudy Mogg, whose basement took on almost 1.5 metres of water, are very thankful for the help of MDS. She could not live in the house due to a respiratory illness and he stayed on alone, afraid to leave the house uninhabited. They were exhausted and without hope of life ever returning to normal. Volunteers, including Elmer Schmidt from King Road Mennonite Brethren Church in Abbotsford, B.C., taped and mudded the walls. Schmidt, who drives his own truck for a living, changed his flight to stay on for two extra days just so he could finish the Moggs' home.

Every Wednesday evening, during the weekly MDS worship and sharing time, the volunteers were asked what prompted them to come? Some felt the clear call of God, while others saw it as a commitment to give back, saying, "Freely you have received, freely give."

The Moggs expressed their thanks in a homemade card sent to each volunteer who worked on their home. "Words can't


possibly express the appreciation that your quiet compassion and special concern has meant to us," they wrote. "We will always be grateful for all you have done for us, physically, emotionally and spiritually." ❧

Yellow Page Business Directory

Automotive

West Park Motors, Altona, MB
GM Sales-Leasing-Parts-Service
(204) 324-6494; www.westparkgm.com

Education Resources




**Mennonite & Brethren In Christ
RESOURCE CENTRE**

Your Audiovisual Library

519-745-8458 ext.225 | 50 Kent Ave.
www.mbicresources.org | Kitchener, ON

Financial Services

Gerber Financial Services, Waterloo, ON
(519) 746-1900;
mgerber@dundeewealth.com



EBY FINANCIAL GROUP INC.
Listen. Understand. Plan.

Duane Eby, MBA, CFP, CLU Financial Advisor

410 Conestogo Road, Unit 208, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 4E2
tel 519.725.2006 fax 519.725.2003
email deby@ebyfinancial.com



Mennonite Savings and Credit Union
 Serving members of Mennonite, Amish and Brethren in Christ churches across Ontario.
Head Office 519.746.1010 | 1.888.672.6728
 Aylmer | Elmira | Kitchener | Leamington | Milverton | New Hamburg | St. Catharines | Waterloo
 ACCOUNTS • LOANS • MORTGAGES • ONLINE SERVICES
 FINANCIAL PLANNING • WWW.MSCU.COM

Sound Advice, Excellent Products, Peace of Mind

John Thiessen, BA, BTh, CFP
 Tel: 1.866.324.9574
john@ipcmanitoba.com



Investment Planning Counsel™
 IPC INVESTMENT CORPORATION
 Insurance Provided by IPC Estate Services Inc.

Insurance



MAX Canada is committed to serving the Anabaptist community with insurance protection & mutual aid care.

preserving what you have & restoring what is lost to **WHOLENESS**

- HOME
- FARM
- CHURCH
- BUSINESS
- AUTO*

*Available through Mutual Aid Insurance Brokers Co.

877-770-7729 • www.maxcanada.org
Products available in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario & Saskatchewan

Roth Nowak
INSURANCE BROKERS

119 University Avenue East
 Waterloo, Ontario N2J 2W1
 Telephone: (800) 576-7166
 E-mail: service@rothnowak.com
www.rothnowak.com
Auto, Home & Business Insurance

Dennis Roth • Ed Nowak

Serving the Mennonite Community throughout Ontario

Representing




Proud to Represent



MAX Canada
 Insurance Company

JOSSLIN INSURANCE BROKERS LIMITED

New Hamburg
 519•662•1644

Kitchener
 519•893•7008

Tavistock
 519•655•2377


Wellesley
 519•656•2065

1•888•JOSSLIN (567•7546)
www.josslin.com

Offering specialized products for:
 Church • Farm • Car • Home • Business

Don Wagler
 Rose Wagler
 Scott Wagler
 Steve Wagler
 Don Leis
 Derrick MacDonald

Legal Services



Russel Snyder-Penner
 B.A., LL.B., M.A. Trademark Agent
 Corporate/Commercial Law
 Charities/Non-profits
 Wills/Trusts, Real Estate

255 King St. N. Suite 300
 Waterloo, ON N2J 4V2
 519-725-2500
 (f) 519-725-2525
russ@solicitors.com

SUTHERLAND MARK FLEMING SNYDER-PENNER
 PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
 BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS


Real Estate



HUNSBERGER REALTY LTD.
 Real Estate Brokerage
 "Where integrity, competence and service are assured"

619 Sandringham Dr., Waterloo, ON N2K 3L8
 Telephone (519) 746-1714
 Toll-Free Pager 1-800-263-1420
 Cell (519) 580-5791
 Website: www.hunsbergerrealtyltd.com
 E-mail: merrillhunsberger@rogers.com

Merrill Hunsberger, Ph.D.
 Broker of Record
 "CHINESE ALSO SPOKEN" 中文服務





Performance Realty
 Independantly Owned and Operated

John J. Friesen
 Sales Associate

Business: (204) 255-4204
 Winnipeg, Manitoba
 Toll Free: 1-800-267-0794
 E-mail: johnjfriesen@remax.net



CITYCORP™
 REALTY LTD / BROKERAGE


Commercial/Investment/Residential

EDMUND PRIES PhD
 President / Broker of Record

737 Belmont Ave. W. T: 519-578-0003
 Kitchener, ON F: 519-743-6490
 N2M 1P3 Canada E: broker@citycorp.ca

Retreat/Accomodations

Cedar Springs Retreat House, welcoming individuals, families and small groups yr-rnd, on 16 acres with pond, near Shakespeare Ont. (519)625-8182, jdkuepfer@sympatico.ca



Maison de l'Amitié
House of Friendship
 Guestroom and Student Residence

120 Rue Duluth, Est
 Montreal, QC H2W 1H1
 (514) 843-4356
Experience hospitality in the heart of Montreal's Plateau!
www.residencema.ca

Travel

Bonaventure Travel

Lila Hollman
 Sherryl Koop
 Lori Neufeld
 Rose Szczepanik
 Ruth Wiebe
 Liz Krohn
 Fiona Stafford
 Julie Alexiuk

428 Academy Road, Winnipeg, MB
Phone: 1-888-550-8998
 (204) 488-6653
bontrav@escape.ca
 Fax: (204) 488-6694

Mennonite Your Way Tours
 1-800-296-1991; www.mywtours.com
 Travel with a purpose!

ARTBEAT

Klassen photograph featured on stamp

BY TERESA FALK

National Correspondent
WINNIPEG

A Canada Post stamp currently in circulation features a photograph taken by Mennonite Church Canada web servant Grant Klassen.

The stamp is one in a series of five displaying different geographical areas of Canada. The series, called “Non-denominated Definitives: Flag,” was issued last November and will only be available until the middle of next month. Klassen’s name is shown in small print on the package of stamps.

The photo of Sirmilik National Park on Baffin Island in Nunavut was taken in 1990 while Klassen was working for Parks Canada as an audio-visual producer. It features a fjord with water in the foreground and a glacier tongue stretching into a valley.

“I went up there for a photo survey,” he says. “As we were flying in a helicopter I took the photographs. The pilot took the passenger door off so I could lean out and take photographs.”

Despite being chosen for a Canada Post stamp, Klassen doesn’t feel his photograph is anything special. “Frankly, I don’t think it’s a very good shot,” he says. “However, I am very honoured. I feel very good about it [being chosen].”

Klassen found out about the stamp last December from a fellow photographer. “One of the other photographers who still works for Parks Canada had been contacted by a stamp collector, who wanted the signatures of each of the five photographers [featured in the series of stamps]. So this photographer ‘Googled’ my name



PHOTO BY DAN DYCK

Grant Klassen, MC Canada web servant, displays a Canada Post stamp that features a photograph he took while working for Parks Canada in 1990.

and contacted me,” he says.

Through the stamp, Klassen is sharing part of God’s beautiful creation with Canadians. “That’s one of the things I really

liked about working for Parks Canada,” he says. “I was able to take photographs and show different areas of Canada, some of which are phenomenally interesting.”

The Hand extended

Stations of the Cross exhibit donated by local artist to Canadian Mennonite University

BY JOHN LONGHURST

Canadian Mennonite University
WINNIPEG

Many Protestants are unfamiliar with the Stations of the Cross, a Christian tradition that goes back centuries. But now students and visitors at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) can learn more about this long-time practice of Christian piety as they view and reflect on an artistic rendering of Christ’s final journey by Winnipeg artist Betty Dimock.

The display, called “The Hand: Jesus’ Way to the Cross,” is a series of 14 prints that illustrate Christ’s journey to the cross through the hands of his accusers, those who helped him along the way, and of Jesus himself. It was dedicated Sept. 12.

Dimock, a printmaker who has studied at the Pratt Institute in New York, the

Sorbonne in Paris and also in Italy and Japan, created the display in 1983. She began looking for a permanent home for the exhibit last year, eventually selecting CMU because it would be a way to share the work with young people who could learn from and be inspired by it.

At the dedication service, Gerry Ediger, associate professor of Christian history, noted that the practice of symbolically retracing Christ’s journey to Calvary goes back to the Middle Ages, when reproductions of his final steps began to appear in Europe “as a way for pious Christians to follow in the footsteps of Jesus without travelling to Jerusalem.”

Ediger noted that increasing numbers of Mennonites and other Protestants “are showing a renewed appreciation for the historic sacred symbols of Christianity” such as the Stations of the Cross. It’s a very

appropriate symbol for Mennonites, he suggested, since they have historically viewed themselves as “pilgrim disciples of Jesus, wandering citizens of another kingdom, following in the footsteps of Christ.” Dimock’s representation is particularly apt for Mennonites, he went on to say, since it is “grounded in the symbol of hands, a graphic depiction of reaching out, service and comfort.”

In receiving the gift, CMU president Gerald Gerbrandt praised and thanked Dimock, who has hearing loss, for donating a bursary

‘These two gifts will continue to give for years to come...’

in memory of her husband, to help students with physical challenges study at CMU. “These two gifts will

continue to give for years to come,” he said, adding that he hopes it will “move and affect students to use their hands for good.”

In addition to the display, Dimock has produced a book about the exhibit called *The Hand: Jesus’ Way to the Cross*. It is available from the CMU bookstore. Sixty percent of the proceeds from the sale of the book go to the Herbert Victor Dimock Memorial Bursary. ❧

PHOTO BY JOHN LONGHURST



Betty Dimock stands next to “Jesus Condemned,” part of the Stations of the Cross exhibit that the Winnipeg artist donated to CMU.

Mysteries of Grace and Judgment

Russian Mennonite stories form basis of cantata

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent

EDMONTON

Jack Dueck is passionate about storytelling. One of his stories is about John Hiebert, a mill owner in a Russian Mennonite settlement during the Bolshevik Revolution. Sympathetic to the plight of Russian peasants, Hiebert gave them flour. His church disapproved, telling him to “look after his own.” Hiebert, however, “couldn’t get past Jesus and James,” and continued to aid the poor. When communist marauders threatened the mill, the arguments of peasant women—and well-thrown soft tomatoes—turned them back. Eventually, however, over-ripe vegetables and supportive rhetoric did not save Hiebert from deportation to Siberia, where he disappeared along with others deemed a threat to the communist regime.

Commentary on stories of Russian Mennonites and their journey to Canada are interspersed with Scripture, poetry, letters and hymns in a cantata Dueck has developed and presented in various forms over the last couple decades.

On Oct. 14, Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church in Edmonton hosted *Mysteries of Grace and Judgment*. The work was begun by Dueck in the 1980s, when Goshen College asked him to tell Russian Mennonite stories.

Dueck grew up hearing refugee stories first-hand. “My people were saved by the Mennonite Central Committee [MCC]. They came to Coaldale [Alberta] in 1926,” he said. As such, proceeds from performances have regularly been given to MCC for refugee work.

Dueck was particularly pleased to present the cantata in the original Mennonite Brethren Church building in Coaldale on Oct. 21. The building was used as a dog pound and a machine shop before the

PHOTO BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD



Storyteller Jack Dueck, right, and the Sojourn Singers, conductor by Harold Wiens, left, presented Dueck’s *Mysteries of Grace and Judgment* cantata in three Alberta communities in October. The events were co-sponsored by the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta and MCC Alberta.

community transformed it into the Gem of the West Museum. Dueck remembers the pain of standing at his mother’s gravesite and hearing dogs howling in the old church building, when he needed to hear hymns.

The concert in this very building carried with it a strong sense of redemption and goodwill for him. Also poignant for Dueck is the fact that former Sunday school rooms in the basement have been

‘All... theology and doctrine [are] rooted in story.’

given over to various refugee groups, such as the Japanese, Ukrainians, Vietnamese and the British, for displays featuring their experiences.

Dueck is passionate about making sure the stories of Scripture and the ongoing journey of a people with faith are heard. He says, “Facts have no life of their own. All... theology and doctrine [are] rooted in story. Story is always incarnational, a presence in community.”

If the past informs and energizes the present, Dueck’s work does more than remind a people of its origins. It asks questions of today: How are Mennonite voices sounding in places like Darfur and Burma? How have experiences as refugees equipped and enabled Mennonites to extend God’s love and care to those who are refugees today? ❧

/// Calendar

British Columbia

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

Nov. 17: MCC annual general meeting at Yarrow Mennonite Brethren Church.

Dec. 1, 2: Advent Vespers with Abendmusik Choir, at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford (1) and Knox United Church, Vancouver (2); 8 p.m. both evenings. Donations to Menno Simons Centre.

Alberta

Nov. 10: World AIDS Day event highlighting local and international AIDS work in the context of First Nations and indigenous people. Featuring Ovide Mercredi and Tom Jackson.

Nov. 23: Annette Stanwick, author of *Forgiveness: The Mystery and the Miracle*, will speak as part of Restorative Justice Week events, at Joie de Vivre, Calgary; at 7 p.m. Call Peter at 403-275-6935 for more details.

Nov. 25: Cowboy church with cowboy poetry and music at Trinity Mennonite Church, Calgary. For more information,

call 403-256-7157.

Saskatchewan

Nov. 15: Saskatoon Restorative Justice Committee forum on poverty, at St. Mary's Parish, Saskatoon. For more information, call Ken Landis Frank at 306-655-2555.

Nov. 16-17: Conference on peace, restorative justice and human rights at the University of Regina.

Nov. 19: RJC Auxiliary perogy supper.

Manitoba

Nov. 9-10: CMU Tip-off Classic basketball tournament, Winnipeg.

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

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

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

Nov. 16-17: MCC Manitoba annual general meeting, at Morden Mennonite. Guest speaker: Zoughbi Zoughbi of the Wi'am Centre, Bethlehem.

Nov. 16, 17: Prairie Voices Choral Ensemble and Encore Vocal Quartet benefit concerts for Mennonite Heritage Village; Grace Mennonite Church, Steinbach, 7:30 p.m. (16); Westminster United Church, Winnipeg, 7:30 p.m. (17).

Nov. 25: Faith and Life Advent concert at Bethel Mennonite Church.

Nov. 28: Evening with the arts at Westgate, 7 p.m. Call 204-775-7111 for more information.

Ontario

Nov. 8: Sawatzky Lecture at Conrad Grebel Great Hall, 7 p.m. Speaker: Royden Loewen.

Nov. 8: Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition's "Bend Toward Justice: Fighting for an authentic poverty reduction strategy" forum, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Queen's Park, Toronto. To register, call Brice Balmer, 519-742-8327.

Nov. 9-10: "Meeting MCC & Celebrating God's Love," MCC Ontario annual meeting at The Meeting House, 2700 Bristol Circle, Oakville, Ont. Visit mcc.org/ontario for more information.

Nov. 10: DaCapo Chamber Choir presents "one—in the beginning"; 8 p.m., at St. John the Evangelist Anglican

Church, Kitchener.

Nov. 11: Junior Youth Breakaway at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate. Youth from grades 6-8 and will meet for worship, workshops and fun. Visit mce.ca for more information. Register by Oct. 26.

Nov. 13-17: Ten Thousand Villages' handicrafts and art sale, Old Town Hall, Aylmer; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (13,14); 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. (15,16); 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (17).

Nov. 17: Nithview Home annual Christmas tea and bake sale, New Hamburg, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Nov. 22: MEDA breakfast meeting; 7:30 a.m. at the Stone Crock, St. Jacobs. Speaker: Karen Martin, vice-president of business operations for Sun Life Mutual.

Nov. 29: Willowgrove annual general meeting, at Rouge Valley Mennonite, Markham; punch at 6 p.m.; members dinner at 6:30 p.m.; meeting at 7:45 p.m. For more information, call Ron de Roo at 905-640-2127.

Nov. 30: "Spirituality and aging" lecture at Conrad Grebel.

Nov. 30-Dec. 2: Ten Thousand Villages' Mennonite Christmas festival at the Harbourfront Centre, Toronto; 6 to 10 p.m. (30), 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (1), noon to 5 p.m. (2).

Quebec

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

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.

/// Briefly noted

Balmer leaves House of Friendship to work with reform coalition

KITCHENER, ONT.—Rev. Brice Balmer, long-time chaplaincy director at House of Friendship, will leave the downtown Kitchener social services agency to become secretary of Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC), which has member groups in communities across the province. In the full-time position, Balmer will speak with Ontario government MPPs and civil servants, and arrange meetings between them and representatives of faith groups from across the province. He will also be encouraging and helping to co-ordinate efforts by various faith groups in their social justice work. Balmer has been the coalition's part-time secretary since 1996. He begins full-time duties, for a three-year term, on Jan. 1, 2008. Balmer has been chaplaincy director at House of Friendship since 1986. —ISARC/House of Friendship Release

Gore, UN climate change panel sharing 2007 Nobel Peace Prize

OSLO, NORWAY—Former U.S. vice president Al Gore and the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) are sharing the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to battle climate change caused by human activity. "His strong commitment, reflected in political activity, lectures, films and books, has strengthened the struggle against climate change," the citation said of Gore. "We face a true planetary emergency," Gore said in response. "The climate crisis is not a political issue; it is a moral and spiritual challenge to all of humanity." Gore, who had been widely expected to win the Nobel Prize, took home an Academy Award this year for *An Inconvenient Truth*, his documentary on global warming. Meanwhile, the citation credited the IPCC for releasing two decades of scientific reports that have "created an ever-broader informed consensus about the connection between human activities and global warming." The Peace Prize includes a gold medal and \$1.5 million cash award; Gore donated his share to the Alliance for Climate Protection. —With files from nobelprize.org

/// Employment

Camp Assiniboia, Headingley, Man., requires a **MANAGER**, beginning in April 2008. Key attributes being sought include energy, effective communication, operational know-how and hospitality mindset. Direct inquiries to Director of Camping Ministries, Mennonite Church Manitoba, 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2J1, camps@mennochurch.mb.ca, 204-895-2267.

PASTOR (up to full-time)

Calgary Chinese Mennonite Church English-Speaking Ministry

Opportunity to work with and disciple children, youths and young adults. Exciting, challenging cross-cultural setting in a 26-year-old Evangelical Anabaptist congregation.

Respond to Sandy Chuong, Search Committee Chair, at schuong2007@yahoo.ca or 403-829-9080.



Conrad Grebel University College invites applications for a full-time regular **FACULTY POSITION** in undergraduate Religious Studies and graduate Theological Studies at the University of Waterloo, with a teaching and research specialty in Anabaptist-Mennonite theology. The appointment will begin July 1, 2008, at either Assistant or Associate Professor level. Applications will be accepted until Nov. 9, 2007, or until the position is filled. The College is committed to employment equity. Canadian citizens and permanent residents will be given priority.

For further information about the position, qualifications and application procedures, visit grebel.uwaterloo.ca/positions.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. Menno-Hof Amish/Mennonite visitors centre in Shipshewana, Ind. responsible for implementing the strategic direction for the organization; provides the senior leadership to achieve organizational goals; oversees fundraising and constituent relations. Qualifications: strong knowledge of the Anabaptist faith tradition; experience in strategic planning; ability to communicate issues of faith and culture passionately. Complete job description available at mennohof.org. Application deadline: Dec. 15. Send resumes or inquiries to Leanne Farmwald c/o Menno-Hof, P.O. Box 701, Shipshewana, IN 46565 or lfarmwald@aol.com.

Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ont., an urban congregation of approximately 300, invites applications for a full-time **LEAD PASTOR**. The successful candidate will:

- Lead a ministry team in empowering our congregation.
- Be gifted in preaching and worship planning.
- Reflect Anabaptist beliefs.
- Be competent in administration and visitation.
- Develop authentic spiritual lives in members and seekers.
- Build on the strengths of our rich cultural heritage.

We want to follow Jesus! We are ready for renewal. Please contact Muriel Bechtel, Conference Minister Mennonite Church Eastern Canada 4489 King Street East Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2

www.wkumchurch.com



The Mennonite Central Committee Ontario Board invites applications for the position of **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**.

Mennonite Central Committee Ontario is a peace, relief and development organization active in supporting local, national and international endeavours. It is a resource of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches for meeting human needs in the name of Christ. MCCO has a staff of 65, a significant number of volunteers and a budget of approximately \$9M.

The Executive Director role exists in order to lead the team in successful fulfillment of its mission. It is a full-time position with a three-year renewable term. Beginning date is negotiable.

The Board is seeking an individual who exhibits a commitment to a personal Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Additionally, the person should have a related university degree, and 5+ years in an organizational leadership position.

The successful applicant will need to guide the development of MCCO program plans; the ability to work collaboratively with the Board, staff, colleagues in the family of MCCs, and the constituent church leaders; the skill of effective public communication; the ability to lead MCCO in fund development.

A full job description is available upon request.

Applications will be accepted until Nov. 23, 2007. Send your letter of application along with a resume and three references to:

Search Committee of the Board
50 Kent St.
Kitchener, ON
N2G 3R1

or email to: ontarioedsearch@gmail.com

LEAD PASTOR Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver, B.C.

Sherbrooke Mennonite Church is located in an urban multi-cultural setting and has a weekly attendance of about 130. We have services in English and German and share the building with growing Vietnamese and Korean congregations. Once a month we all worship together. For more information, visit sherbrooke.bc.ca.mennonite.net.

Our congregation is looking for a person of godly character with a strong biblical Anabaptist understanding and faith (seminary degree preferred) who will inspire and equip us to daily follow Jesus. The candidate must have some pastoral experience and demonstrated gifts in preaching, developing leadership, administration and caring ministry. Intercultural experience would be an asset. Starting date is negotiable, but can be early as Jan. 1, 2008.

Please mail resume to:
Pastoral Search Committee
Sherbrooke Mennonite Church
7155 Sherbrooke St.,
Vancouver, BC V5X 4E3
Or email to: smcvan@telus.net

/// For Rent

Home away from home. Two large rooms to rent, available Jan. '08-indefinite. Close to Conrad Grebel College. Energy Smart house. Phone 519-883-0252.

Advertising Information

Contact Canadian Mennonite
Ad Representative

Karen Suderman

1-800-378-2524 x.224

519-745-4507

advert@canadianmennonite.org

Building skills in music, promoting peace

MCC PHOTOS BY MELISSA ENGLE



Beth Peachey teaches Blanca Lidia Barillas in a keyboarding class at the Mennonite Music School in Guatemala City.

By JULIE DELUCA

Mennonite Central Committee
GUATEMALA CITY, GUATEMALA

Note by musical note, families that attend a Mennonite music school in Guatemala's capital city learn how to sing, read music and play an instrument. They also develop relationships with each other, a way of building peace in a city where violence and crime are common.

Through the Escuela Menonita de Música (Mennonite School of Music), Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker Beth Peachey and co-coordinator Isabel Garnica are helping the city's Mennonite Church conference to provide more opportunities for the community to learn music and come together.

Years ago, at Jesús el Buen Pastor, a church where a music school session now takes place every Saturday, drive-by shootings used to occur nearly on a daily basis, according to a church elder. Although gang violence in their neighbourhood has quieted down in recent years, promoting peacemaking is still a necessity.

"The school is a good step to reach out to the Guatemalan community and to create peace by helping people to build relationships. It offers them a constructive way to use their time," says Gilma Córdova, secretary of the Mennonite Church conference.

The Mennonite School of Music, which started in April and meets every Saturday, has more than 100 students from churches and surrounding communities. If students cannot afford the monthly fee, they may submit a letter from their pastor and attend free of charge.

The school allowed Martha Julieta Vásquez de Pérez to register all three of her children in music lessons. She said her 11-year-old, Javier, used to practise playing piano at church, but could only make noise. He wanted to take lessons so that he could worship God through his playing and perhaps even write his own music.

"The vision of the school is not only to teach music," says Garnica. "But the experience of sharing time together is a way to respond to the violence that happens here."

To Peachey, "singing together is something that can really bring a community together. It's a way of connecting people to each other that's very unique," she says. ❧

Isabel Garnica teaches Andrea Saraí Muñoz how to play the guitar during a class at the Saturday music school held at Jesús el Buen Pastor Church in Guatemala.

