

CANADIAN MENNONITE

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Walking with God



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CANADIAN
MENNONITE
10th anniversary

EDITORIAL

Business as a calling

TIM MILLER DYCK
EDITOR / PUBLISHER

The world of business has had some high profile moral failings in the last few years. Deliberate deception and accounting cover-ups by senior executives at Enron, WorldCom, Tyco and Global Crossing led to the destruction of the investments and retirement savings of many thousands.

Another recent example was the Conrad Black trial. Just as the former Enron, WorldCom and Tyco CEOs were all convicted of criminal actions, so was Black. A culture of personal greed and entitlement lead some to abuse their power, and many others to keep their mouths shut even when they knew what was going on was deeply wrong.

I had a chance to see a different culture in operation at the annual gathering of members of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), which was held earlier this month in Toronto.

One of the speakers there had an up-close and personal view of one of these corporate downfalls. Eric Pillmore is a Christian business executive who was hired by Tyco in 2002 to help the company clean up its act. He was there for five years as senior vice-president and is now a college professor focusing on ethics and corporate governance.

"It's really important for those of us working in the business world that we recognize it as a calling," he said,

describing how he felt God had called him and prepared him for his role at Tyco through a series of difficult business leadership positions at General Electric. "Through it all, despite some of my crazy efforts to control my course, the Lord carefully determined my steps through each one of these situations, adding



spiritual muscle each time I lived through one of these stressful times, truly preparing me for the days ahead," he said.

Pillmore sees his business life as a way to express his faith. He described his role at Tyco as an opportunity to help rebuild the culture of a company in strong need of healing. One of his examples was what the simple practice of personal integrity and moral courage can do for a person in business: "In the case of Tyco, there were about 40 people inside the company that had knowledge of what was going on and not one person spoke up during the five years that the problem unfolded.

"Billy Graham said, 'When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others are often stiffened.' And it is really true. Edmund Burke, in the 1700s, said the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. Those two quotes sit on the opposite ends of each other. It just takes one person to exhibit courage and the whole scenario changes in that group."

Tyco, Enron and so on are big examples of what happens when integrity and honesty aren't present in business. But I don't want to suggest that Pillmore's story, or others I heard at the MEDA conference, sent me a message that the business world was just a basically evil place.

What I did hear, over and over again from Mennonite businesspeople in different settings—from a partner of a Toronto merger-and-acquisitions firm to the owner of a woman's clothing store in St. Jacobs, Ont.—was how they saw their businesses as ways to help and serve their customers with excellence and integrity. In conversations and seminars, I heard repeated expressions of concern for customers, for the poor, for the environment and just for how to live out faith in business settings.

What an opportunity for Christian witness this is! It is a great gift that my work enables me to meet so many of my Christian brothers and sisters across the country, but I confess I also feel envious at times of the built-in opportunities of others to take their faith outside the church world. God's blessings on you as you live out your faith in the same kinds of marketplaces where the apostle Paul ran his tent-making business and told people about the greatness and goodness of our God.

Introducing a new feature: When the Mennonite women's magazine *Timbrel* recently decided to shift from being a bi-national to a U.S.-oriented publication, I approached Canadian Women in Mission to find a way to not lose those stories of Canadian women and Christian faithfulness. Together, we developed a feature page devoted to these stories that we'll be publishing six times a year. The first edition is on page 30 of this issue.

ABOUT THE COVER:

Experiencing autumn's beauty in the mountain setting of Camp Squeah is always a draw for those who attend the annual B.C. Mennonite women's retreat. Enjoying a Saturday afternoon walk during free time are Sally Hanet of Kelowna, Ann Wiebe of Kelowna, and Val Hanet of Williams Lake. See story on page 26.

PHOTO BY AMY DUECKMAN

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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).

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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. 26 issue will be posted by Nov. 22.

The state of Mennonite farming today

Five years after a special church conference met to examine issues facing Mennonite food producers and consumers, how are our farmers faring? In this feature report, Canadian Mennonite interviewed farmers across the country as well as going back to several people involved in that conference to ask what has changed since then. We also asked Cam Harder and Elaine Froese to write for us on these issues and report on how they were addressed at the recent J.J. Thiessen Lectures at Canadian Mennonite University. Ed.

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent



A few weeks ago, I visited the farm of Reg and Bev Stow, bean growers from Graysville, Man., to buy a bag of beans for our 100 Mile Diet (an initiative to limit consumption for 100 days to food that has been grown and produced within a 100-mile radius). I was not the first 100-miler to request some of their beans and the owners were delighted to market right from their bins to a local buyer. In the last five years, though, they went from processing beans for 30 growers to processing only their own crops. Free trade, they claim, “has pretty well shut us down and much of the Canadian food-processing industry.”

Southern Ontario dairy farmer Mark Erb, member of Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden, Ont., sits down with his extended family every two weeks to talk about the issues, fears and dreams running their family-owned farm engenders. They do this to fend off the crises that have put too many of their neighbours under.

The Mennonite community was once a largely agrarian community, but today farmers represent a rapidly diminishing segment of our membership. What is happening to that group, to those whose agricultural roots are in the present instead of a generation or two removed, as with many of us?

The changing agricultural landscape

Just prior to the 2002 annual delegate sessions in Saskatoon, Mennonite Church Canada held a two-day con-



ference at Osler (Sask.) Mennonite Church, on agriculture and farming issues entitled “Making Peace with the Land.” It was an opportunity for rural and urban people to come together and learn more about the rural situation, and it led delegates at the national church assembly to pass a motion instructing the MC Canada General Board to further pursue these issues. (See “Whatever happened to ‘Making Peace with the Land,’” page 6).

Has anything changed since then? Conversations with farmers across the country indicate that the issues continue to be myriad and complicated.

Stu Clark, senior policy advisor at Canadian Foodgrains Bank, says, “We are coming out of a period from 1999 to 2005 where we had the lowest prices in 70 years, since the Depression. All over the world grain was selling for less than cost.” As a result, people have been pushed off the land.

Recently, though, that downward spiral has begun to reverse in some sectors. New cereal crop prices, in particular, have strengthened. Clark credits this to two changes:

- An increase in meat consumption in China and India, resulting in the growth of feed lots and intensive meat production; and,
- A surge in bio-fuel production.

Rodney Wiens, 45, and a member of Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite Church, farms 607 hectares near Herschel, Sask.

Out of a membership of about 150 at their church ... only 10 are still involved in agriculture.

He recalls, “2002 was one of the worst years. That’s the year I am going to be telling my grandchildren about. I had written off my entire crop by the beginning of July and, as a grain farmer, I basically shut down my farm because of drought.”

Rain came later that summer, which turned despair into hope for the following year. In 2003, he harvested a reasonable crop, but prices were low. When he harvested his biggest crop ever in 2005, it became one of the worst years for cash flow. “Nobody wanted it,” he says. “Piles of grain stood outside in the middle of fields, rotting. World markets were not there to ship the grain to.”

Wiens, too, has felt the momentum shift. “Because of world events, such as the drought in Australia, demand for wheat and cereal crops has outstripped supply for the last three or four years,” he says, noting, though, “The flip side is that it cost me more to put the crop in. Costs of fertilizer and diesel have, in some cases, almost doubled.”

Harold Penner, a member of Arnaud

Mennonite Church, has a grain and oil seed farm with a small herd of beef cattle near Arnaud, Man. “I am more discouraged than five years ago. The treadmill is getting worse and we don’t know what the solution is,” he says.

He feels the weight of the issues with

which rural farmers and communities struggle. “We are being forced into greater and greater efficiency, with the margins getting increasingly tighter, squeezing out smaller farmers,” he says. “We are forced to expand and to keep pace, but this is killing rural communities.”

Penner points out that Arnaud, like many farming communities across Canada, has been critically impacted. “We can barely get a hockey team together,” he says. “Our children have to go to cities. The quality of life in rural Canada has really deteriorated.”

Penner has taken on half-time work with Canadian Foodgrains Bank to supplement his farming income. Without it, he says, “we wouldn’t be able to sustain ourselves at this point,” adding, “I do not enjoy farming as much as I did in the ’70s and ’80s. We have no control over the input prices and sales, and I don’t see it changing much.”

In central Alberta, Lyle and Betty Brown have a livestock and feedlot operation that they are in the process of transferring to their daughter and son-

Whatever happened to 'Making Peace with the Land'

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent

In July 2002, a two-day conference, "Making Peace with the Land: A Country Mouse and a City Mouse Talk about the Pantry," focused on Canada's food system from a faith-based perspective. A number of speakers, along with about 300 other participants, gathered at Osler (Sask.) Mennonite Church to help begin what would hopefully be an ongoing dialogue.

The conference was planned by the Peace and Justice Office of Mennonite Church Canada after consulting with the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba Agricultural Committee, the Mennonite Environmental Task Force and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. It was a response to the farm crisis and to the decision by the 2000 Lethbridge annual assembly to make agriculture and the food system a theme of the 2002 assembly.

As a result of the conference, Saskatoon church assembly delegates passed the following resolution: "Whereas food and the food system involve all of us, not only producers; whereas food is an important question not only for us, but for all people; whereas 'Making Peace with the Land' was strongly affirmed as a good beginning; and whereas there is need for faith-based initiative and leadership in these areas; be it resolved [that] the General Board of MC Canada find ongoing ways to encourage and facilitate reflection and action, and the creation of new models, about the production and distribution of food, with a view to strengthening community and well-being."

However, things have changed since then. The national church's Peace and Justice Office was closed, and peace and justice work is now handled by the Christian Formation Council.

in-law. Like Penner and Wiens, Brown reports that "the margins have continually gotten tighter [and] fuel and fertilizer costs have gotten out of proportion with grain prices. If you have a bumper crop it works, but otherwise it doesn't meet expenses." And with the rise in the loonie, they have lost any advantage they had in cattle sales.

Other issues facing farmers

As a farmer, Lyle Brown feels a sense of isolation. Out of a membership of about 150 at their church, Bergthal Mennonite in Didsbury, only 10 are still involved in agriculture. Many have retired off the farm. "There are not that many from the younger generation that are farming," he says resignedly. "The only one is from our family."

Having just turned 60, Brown is farming the land his grandfather homesteaded. Regarding the farming transition to the next generation, he says, "We need them as much as they need us. . . . In a way it is far easier to sell the farm, but the financial aspect is not the only thing. It is an honourable way to make a living."

He faces other issues as well. "When I started in agriculture, even 25 years ago, there was no GM [genetically modified] canola, but now you have to go with GM canola to come out with the same margin," he says. "You won't stay in agriculture if you don't go with it. Monsanto and other large corporations have such power. You can't grow your own seed, and eventually this will be the case with other grains."

There is no longer an MCC Manitoba Agricultural Committee and no other provincial or national MCC programs are working on these issues other than through Canadian Foodgrains Bank, according to MCC Canada executive director Don Peters. The Mennonite Environmental Task Force no longer exists and, instead, MC Canada is involved with the Creation Care Network, a bi-national group that began in January 2006.

MC Canada general secretary Robert J. Suderman says that agriculture and food issues "have not been front and centre on our agenda," noting, though, that "Creation Care has come out with a book that we helped to publish and we have two representatives on that network."

Christian Formation Council executive secretary Dave Bergen acknowledges, "There has not been anything specifically that has come out of that [resolution] except the discussions this summer on creation care."

This deeply frustrates Harold Penner, one of the organizers of the conference and a farmer from Arnaud, Man. "We pass a motion and no one has to deal with it. I don't understand that," he says of the lack of action.

"People remember that conference," says Marilyn Houser Hamm, another organizer and member at Altona (Man.) Mennonite Church. "With the farming crisis several years ago we had a moment when we were pulled together, felt empowered, impassioned. Now we have to rekindle that passion."

Canadian Foodgrains Bank senior policy advisor Stu Clark also points to the larger picture of how all of us live. "The fact that we refuse to reduce our consumption is hugely important," he says. "Humans will do whatever we can to not change things."

In the words of Arthur Wiens, a retired farmer from Herschel, Sask., and former pastor at Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite Church, "The Bible is loaded with agricultural references. Maybe it is time for the church to sit up, take note and help us get on with this important work." ❧

Working on Sunday also presents issues for Brown. "We have to have so many [hectares] to survive and then you have the pressure to work on Sunday to get the harvest in," he says. "This year we worked two Sundays. It's our own struggle."

Banding together

Mark Erb's dairy farm has been in the family for generations, ever since it was Crown land. But increasingly he and his siblings are finding it hard to survive on their own, so he founded Gathering the Farm Community in Hope group several years ago, in an effort to pull farmers together to seek solutions.

"Farmers don't know how to talk about these issues within their families," Erb says. "There is a lack of trust, a fear of

not being able to share our dreams. We keep putting it off until there is a crisis. Very often the crisis happens," he adds, listing the outbreak of mad cow disease, inflation and dropping commodity prices as just three of many problems they have faced in the past generation.

"Who is there for us?" he asks. "It is very lonely."

The litany of discouraging factors may be long, but Erb says, "if it wasn't for the faith ingredient, we wouldn't have made it." Faith is central to the organization's work, which has engaged churches, as well as politicians and the agriculture industry, for support. "Out of our deep pain and faith we have made some inroads. We hear each other's stories. Families are learning to talk about their pain and also about their dreams. I have a tremendous passion for the land, but also for the family unit on the land," says Erb.

"We desperately need interaction," says Manitoba's Harold Penner. "This is a societal issue, not just for farmers. We need to recognize that we need to change our lifestyles. Our society as a whole needs to address this, not just the farmers."

Laura Rance, editor of *Manitoba Cooperator*, a provincial agriculture publication, and one of the speakers at the 2002 conference, says, "We are a long way from making peace with the land. Farmers understand our connection to the land and the broader environment, but as society becomes more urbanized there is less of a connection. We see the world as not able to sustain our lifestyle and so we come up with short term fix-its."

Like the farmers across the country, she would argue that Canadians have to renew the conversation between rural and urban folks, and that the church has a critical role in these issues. "The church and church institutions are one of the few places that we can still transcend the rural/urban culture," Rance says. "It can move across those boundaries. It can provide a stronger leadership role. We need to take a hard look at how we live. The process of renewal doesn't need to be a process of denial." ❧

Fragile vessels

Rural communities are loved by a God who has the power to raise them from the dead

BY CAM HARDER

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

I spent a week with rural folks from around the world this past summer. It was invigorating. Their love for small places, open spaces, natural beauty and close community was infectious. It left me with lots of hope. I've spent a good deal of time the last few years helping rural communities work through struggles, but I am increasingly convinced that rural Canada has a strong future.

First, Canada's rural population overall is slowly increasing. The baby boomers are beginning to retire and a growing number are interested in a lifestyle that is not defined by smog and concrete. For younger families, rural communities continue to be a good place to raise children. In fact, the 2006 Government of Canada's "The Well-being of

export young people for whom faith is not a private personal preference, but a shared way of life. They disproportionately send out Christian leaders to serve churches in cities and towns in Canada and around the world. And rural congregations don't easily forget what God has done through their ancestors because that history is engraved on the tombstones that surround their churches.

Finally, rural communities are loved by a God who has the power to raise them from the dead.

A dwindling vision

In spite of the hope, I am angry that there seems to be little vision for the future of Canada's rural community in government chambers. Federal and provincial governments, exclusively headquartered



Life isn't always easy in rural Canada, but it can be very good. And our churches can help make it so.

Canada's Young Children" report consistently found that young rural children had better emotional, social and, in some cases, physical development than their urban counterparts.

Second, almost all of Canada's natural resources are located in rural areas. There is increasing demand for them as vast Asian populations industrialize. Resource-based communities have the opportunity, the experience and the responsibility to ensure that our national treasures are managed responsibly.

Third, rural communities are still Canada's best source of spiritual life. They form people who understand responsibility to their neighbours. They

in urban settings, have systematically chipped away at rural infrastructure that has taken decades to build. In Saskatchewan alone, agrologists and community development officers have been pulled out of rural communities. Post offices, grain elevators, rail service and schools have been closed in large numbers.

It reflects a deep prejudice. If all of the health care or educational institutions were suddenly ripped out of one of our cities, the outcry would be deafening. But simply because the numbers affected are smaller, legislators regard such damage in rural areas as acceptable.

Decision-makers often justify their actions by claiming that rural decline

PHOTO BY TIM R. DYCK



is inevitable, as if history travels in straight lines, which it doesn't. In fact, there is nothing inevitable about the depopulation of a rural community. It has been the result of human decisions and it can be reversed.

Decision-makers also tend to operate with the hidden assumption that only the fittest—usually meaning powerful and numerous—have the right to survive. Even church leaders fall into this mindset. They often close churches when the number of worshippers drops below an arbitrary limit, rather than look for alternative ways to be church with small numbers.

God cares for rural communities

Ripping out the blood and bones of rural communities is offensive to me as a Christian because I am convinced of three things:

- **God's mission in the world is to build communities that reflect the life of the Trinity.** In I Corinthians 15:28, Paul says that God ultimately intends to be "*all in all*." The Christian experience of God is that of three divine persons in a deep unity. And it seems that God wants to extend that community to us. In John 17:21 Jesus prays, "*As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us,*

so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

If this is so, then God's mission—and, by extension, the church's mission—is not simply to rescue individual souls, but to build healthy communities. God saves us for community. God saves us by the healing, faith-building work of communities, in communities.

- **Communities are loved by God as much as individual people are.** Because communities are God's creation and reflect God's own communal nature, God loves them. God places a high value on them. Their worth is not determined by their numbers or economic power.
- **Communities live by the grace of God, who is much greater than market or demographic trends.** For that reason their future is not bound to the past. Past failures and losses, or present weakness and bondage to greater powers, do not determine a community's future. In fact, Paul suggests in I Corinthians 1 and 2 that the Spirit tends to work most mightily through the weak. God's reason is simple: Entrusting the mission to fragile vessels—as many rural communities have become—makes it clear to the world that when something really good is done, God has been at work.

A shared responsibility

That being said, our churches have a responsibility to share this hope with their communities. They are called to help them creatively imagine how to re-invent themselves and rebuild the infrastructure they need to be healthy and to attract newcomers.

Unfortunately, it's easy for rural congregations to fall into survival mode. They may no longer recognize the wonderful resources that the Spirit brings—and they can bring—to God's community-building enterprise. Some look back with longing on the happy days of the 1950s and '60s, when boomer youths filled their pews. They long to be young again, but they feel old and impoverished, not realizing there are many things that they can do better because they are small—like caring for members, celebrating life passages, training leaders and so on.

Erwin McManus, in *An Unstoppable Force: Daring to Become the Church God had in Mind*, notes that there is no promise in the Bible that ensures the survival of churches. Their purpose is to witness to and serve their communities. "Witness," he points out, is the same word as "martyr" in New Testament Greek: "Christian families, tribes and communities have been persecuted and brutally killed for their faith. They didn't survive. Yet they left a witness. The purpose of the church cannot be to survive or even to thrive, but to serve. And sometimes servants die in the process."

Perhaps then, the task of rural Christian leadership is to lead our churches out of palliative care and back into the world. Strong enough or not, we are called to serve as long as God gives us life. And I know that in the power of God's Spirit, that service will be a public challenge to the forces that are dismantling rural life.

Gifts to the community

Let me briefly suggest three gifts small rural congregations can bring to their communities:

- **Hope.** Churches have a powerful narrative, a word of hope and blessing that challenges survival-of-the-fittest and inevitability thinking. Our community might be small but, we have a big God.
- **Relationship-building tools.** Churches are places where people from various walks of life can get to know each other and build trust. Churches have resources for reconciliation and forgiveness. They are safe, neutral spaces to talk about important community issues, where quiet voices can be lifted up.
- **Healing.** Churches offer rituals for healing community hurts and dealing with crises. Confidential care, prayer, the gracious presence of God and acceptance in the face of shame are what we major in. ☸

Cam Harder was a speaker at the 2002 "Making Peace with the Land" church conference. He is a professor at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon and is currently occupied with getting the Centre for Rural Community Leadership and Ministry (CiRCLe M) off the ground.



Strangers in their own land

Lutheran professor explores food and faith at CMU's J.J. Thiessen Lectures

BY JONATHAN DYCK
Canadian Mennonite University

If people knew how to value the land and how hard it is to grow food on it, farming would not be the most fragile sector of today's economy.

That was one of the messages shared by Ellen Davis, professor of Bible and practical theology at Duke Divinity School, at the annual J.J. Thiessen Lectures at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg last month.

Speaking to the theme, "Live long on the land: Food and farming in biblical perspective," Davis stated that "from an Old Testament perspective, the health of the land is the best index of the health or sickness of our covenant relationship with God." Looking at North American culture's violent relationship to the earth, she suggested they are failing to take this covenant seriously.

By focusing particularly on agricultural practices in North America, Davis revealed the diseased state of the environment through a biblical lens. She compared the laments of prophets like Jeremiah and Isaiah to the writings of contemporary environmentalists like Wendell Berry and Wes Jackson, people who are working at "meeting the expectations of the land," suggesting that they believe the way people treat the land has global, even cosmic, consequences.

The Old Testament writers, she said, speak to the ingrained immoral habits of society both then and now. In North America, people have access to "the

cheapest food in human history," she noted, but at what cost?

Among the costs she listed was the decline of traditional family farms, which have been taken over by agribusinesses all over North America. Davis compared modern farmers to Jeremiah and his fellow exiles: they are strangers in their own land.

But, she said, the Old Testament offers a solution—if people realize that the mutual destruction between creatures and the environment is a product of a severed relationship with God. From an agrarian perspective, the land people inhabit is not "real estate, but a fellow creature that should expect something from us," she said. Quoting Wendell Berry, Davis said that "economies begin to lie when they as-

[T]he land people inhabit is not 'real estate, but a fellow creature that should expect something from us.'

sign a fixed value to the land."

Davis noted that the temptation to take ownership of creation begins in Genesis, where Eve's first sin was "an eating violation." Internal to Eve's thinking, she said, was the idea that "consumption leads to enlightenment." In eating from the forbidden tree, Eve took food and ate without tending the ground or remembering that God's gifts carry with them a special obligation.

In her closing lecture, Davis traced the relationship between a modern understanding of work and the current state of



PHOTO BY JOHN LONGHURST

Duke Divinity School professor Ellen Davis delivered this year's Thiessen Lectures at CMU on the theme, "Live long on the land: Food and farming in biblical perspective."

the earth's environment. The agricultural industry "has convinced many that food production is a simple matter," she said, noting that Genesis says that eating adequately and responsibly outside of Eden will be hard work. Drawing on the image of the "valorous woman" from Proverbs 31:10-31, Davis explained that biblical wisdom is never abstract from practice. Only through hard work and ongoing interaction with creation will people begin to see the world properly, she said.

She added that people could address

issues related to the land by building up local communities and home-based economies, and by "learning from the land in all our particular places." University staff and students can keep this in mind by refusing the tendency to reduce—or remove—theology from the sciences or separate ecology from agriculture. By tending to the needs of the land, she said people can begin to see how everything we receive from God is interconnected. ❧

Jonathan Dyck is a student at CMU.



Communicate, connect, celebrate

The three Cs of ministering to farm families

BY ELAINE FROESE

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

Communicate love, hope and support in practical ways to farm families. Connect with agricultural issues and meet to pray, listen and talk about practical supports for farm families. Celebrate with an attitude of gratitude for the people who put food on your table, toiling and taking risks so we all can enjoy daily bread.

Communicate, connect, celebrate. These three words are all people have to grasp and act on in order to support their brothers and sisters who till the soil, according to Dr. Nikki Gerrard, a Saskatoon-based psychologist. Her study, "What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Stronger!" is based on decades of studying the people who daily are making peace with the land.

My passion as a farmer and farm family business coach is to encourage families to communicate, connect and celebrate. I want farmers bounding back from the bumps of life to be resilient and thrive, not just strive to survive. Farmers are an independent entrepreneurial lot who are hesitant to ask for help. When they do ask, people should recognize the courage it took them. There are many underlying fears of failure: disappointing the legacy of the past farming generations and role confusion among them. If a farmer is forced to let go of the farm, who is he?

How to help

Here are practical ways to minister to our farm families:

• **Respect:** Don't judge farmers as simple-minded plaid-clad folks. They take huge

risks every day to put food on our tables here in Canada and around the world. Communicate your respect and your care for farmers through the media, by writing letters to the editor or calling in to talk shows. Europeans revere farmers because they still remember what it was like to go hungry.

• **Encourage:** Connect with words of encouragement. If you see a media report about a farm family, track them down on canada411.ca and send them some words of encouragement and pray for them.

• **Visit:** Visit us on our farms. One of the signs of high stress is farm families pulling back into more isolation. Take care to see who is showing up in your circle of community, and find out if or why the farm families have withdrawn from fellowship. You can simply be a caring church member



If a farmer is forced to let go of the farm, who is he?

who wants to share coffee and courageous conversation. Create support groups for people to voice their pain and frustration. The Gathering the Farm Community in Hope group connected with Cassel Mennonite Church and other churches near Tavistock, Ont. (see page 6) has reached out to encourage farmers for years now with annual gatherings. Have you ever been to a rural fair or a small town reunion? Come visit!

• **Profitable returns:** Don't rejoice in our high Canadian dollar; that really hurts our export markets. We spend less than 10 percent of our disposable income on food, and the farmer gets the smallest

portion of our food dollar. Each sector of the industry has cycles of highs and lows. The cattle hog producers are really struggling with high input costs and low returns right now. Don't be fooled by the announcements of large government payments to farmers; on a per-farm basis, it's not a cure-all for the farm financial crunch.

• **Financial awareness:** We need to take the shame out of rural bankruptcy. The church family needs to recognize feelings of hopelessness, depression, anger and shame, watching that people don't withdraw into themselves. As a farm debt mediator, I am familiar with the courage it takes for a farmer to admit that his or her debt has become a monster. The large expensive equipment used can be the brunt of jokes, but the truth that there is no cash flow is a sad reality for many. We don't appreciate the paycheque mentality or jokes about double overtime. There are some new business models appearing on the Prairies whereby urban-based partners put venture capital into the farm corporation. The use of the term "factory farm" is a hurtful misnomer for larger family farm corporations.

• **Pray and read the Bible:** Thank God for the daily bread and the rich resources of

this awesome peaceful country we are privileged to live in. Read the Psalms as your praise for the wonderful way God provides for you, and notice the agricultural metaphors throughout the Bible: "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously" (II Corinthians 9:6), or "How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies" (I Corinthians 15:36).

• **Counselling:** Help is needed for those struggling with past issues that are affecting their mental health. Unfortunately, two out of three people do not seek treatment for mental health issues. In North Dakota, Dr. Sean Brotherson's

PHOTO BY KRISTY-ANNE GLUBISH

study discovered that 51 percent of that state's farmers would not seek out mental health professionals. Pride is a huge factor, as is the culture of independence. Some think, "I should be able to fix things by myself." Unfortunately, people are a lot more complex than machines. God needs to be part of the healing also.

• **Appreciate the weather:** Weather is a really big deal to rural folks; we measure our rain, and pray for swathed crops to stay dry. It was heartening to receive calls from urban friends in Toronto who wanted to know how we were coping during the flood of 1997, which drew lots of media attention. The same thing happened with a devastating hailstorm in 1994 and tornados in 2007.

• **Unique culture:** Value the fact that farmers are very special people, comprising only 2 percent of the Canadian population.

• **Transition issues:** The average age of a farmer in Canada today is 52. There is a huge backlog of farmers in their late 60s and 70s who are still hanging on to the founder's role, and not transitioning ownership and management. This means that many families will be experiencing huge change in the next 10 years. There are not enough young people embracing farming, although the ones who are passionate about agriculture are the best role models around. We need to see more of this commitment from the under-35 crowd.

• **Buy local:** You've heard about the 100 Mile Diet, and eating locally grown foods. I smile when I realize that as a farm kid, and now farm woman, I've eaten local for more than 50 years. Buying food products from local farm families is another way to develop relationships and boost farm gate receipts. Also encourage the food manager at your grocery store to do more to buy from local food suppliers.

• **Recognize overload:** Many farmers work 80- to 100-hour weeks and more than 50 percent of farm women have off-farm income, making them susceptible to burn-out. These women are extremely busy managing the home, family and off-farm job, while contributing to the farm operation. There is a huge degree of



tiredness among rural woman who commute long distances to perform tasks. The distance factor can be shortened with caring phone calls, e-mails and words of encouragement.

There are many farm families who would rejoice if they knew urbanites really wanted to communicate, connect and celebrate God's goodness with them. Find contacts and publications to help you understand how you can help bring about peace on the land. Have an attitude of gratitude, and bless the food you eat with a thankful heart. Words kindly

spoken are "like apples of gold in settings of silver" (Proverbs 25:11). What are you waiting for? We won't be giving you a formal city-like invitation. Use your phone, call us, and then drop in. ❧

Elaine Froese of Boissevain, Man., farms with her husband in southern Manitoba. She is a speaker, certified coach helping people live intentional lives and the award-winning author of Planting the Seed of Hope. She is a member of Boissevain Mennonite Brethren Church, where she serves as a deacon and adult education leader. Visit her at www.elainefroese.com or call 1-866-848-8311.



❧ For discussion

1. What type of farming is most predominant in your geographical area? How has it changed over the past 20 years? What challenges do your rural neighbours face?
2. How connected are urban and non-farming Mennonites to the issues faced by farmers? Do urban Canadians play a role in the challenges farmers face? Is there anything the larger Mennonite Church should do?
3. Cam Harder sees much hope for rural Canada. Do you share his sense of hope? What government policies would you like to see benefit rural areas?
4. How important is the role of the church in a rural community? How do you know when it's time for a small church to close its doors?
5. Which of Elaine Froese's suggestions do you believe are most helpful to farm families? Why?

VIEWPOINTS

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.

✎ Readers write

✉ Youths challenged to get involved, not just 'coast through the year'

RE: JON OLFERT'S From Our Leaders column, "Growing in leadership and faith," in the Sept.17, 2007, issue.

I read this article a few times and something doesn't sound right. Aren't these youths who are working at camps supposed to be learning to live out their faith and develop leadership characteristics that will stay with them? If so, why are they just "coasting through the year" to get back to camp?

I have worked with youths and young adults as a volunteer in my congregation for a few years now, and

FROM OUR LEADERS

On a generous journey

The church would simply not exist without generosity. Until I began my role as executive minister for Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, it had never fully dawned on me how foundational generosity is to the life and mission of the church.

The primary fuel that powers the church is the generous spirit at work within those who are joyfully responding to what God has done for them and are aligning themselves with what God is doing in the world. Generous alignment of our prayers, time, skills, gifts and money with the mission of God is what powers the church to respond to the amazing things that God is doing.

In my role with MC Eastern Canada, I have been privileged to witness the incredible legacy of generosity that empowers our churches to engage in the mission of extending Christ's peace to our world.

The Generosity Project is an area church initiative that MC Eastern Canada began last spring with a series of regional dinners. At each of these

dinners, pastors and lay leaders were invited to reflect on how we can nurture a culture of generosity in our churches so that our congregations will have more than enough for engaging in ministry at the local level as well as participating in



Generosity is born out of a joyful response to our encounter with a generous God.

the ministries of the wider church.

More recently, the delegates of our area church met for a day-long consultation on generosity to reflect on what we heard from each other at the regional meetings and to discern how God might be calling us to deepen our commitment to generously embrace the mission of the kingdom. During a day filled with rich biblical reflection, joyful music and times of facilitated discernment, we tested three key areas that might help us move forward on our generosity journey:

- We asked whether we, as congregations, needed a better understanding of the mission of the church from an Anabaptist perspective. Do we really

understand the call of Christ and God's mission in our world?

- We considered whether we need greater intentionality of leadership at the pastoral and lay level that provides a clearer sense of vision and challenge for our people.
- We asked whether we need to invite our people into fuller ownership of the church's mission through calling them to deeper spiritual engagement with our generous God.

While the delegates affirmed these three areas, they also suggested many more ways that God might be calling us

to faithful, joyful giving. How exactly we move forward on this journey of nurturing generosity remains to be seen, but I am thoroughly convinced of one thing: At its most foundational level, generosity is born out of a joyful response to our encounter with a generous God.

Anything that we as pastors and leaders can do that will open the hearts and minds of our people to the presence of our loving and generous God in their lives and their world, will undoubtedly encourage them on the path to greater generosity. Pray with me that it will be so.

David Martin is executive minister of MC Eastern Canada.

I don't ever recall a time when youths were pushed away or told to step aside. I think Olfert makes a good point that youths and young adults often don't get involved in the nuts and bolts of the church, but I don't think the blame goes totally to the church.

Most churches I am familiar with would be thrilled to see young adults throw their hats into the ring, as it just doesn't get any better than that. Olfert's challenge must be two-sided. So young people, if we're challenged to let you get involved, I challenge you to involve yourself.

GERHARD W. TAVES, LEAMINGTON, ONT.

✉ Rediscovering Menno Simons will not make him an 'idol'

I WOULD LIKE to take issue with the thrust of Phil Wagler's column, "Menno idol," in the Sept. 17, 2007, issue of *Canadian Mennonite*. From where I sit—I grew up Mennonite Brethren and have since shifted to the then so-called General Conference of Canada—there is no danger whatsoever of Menno Simons figuring too prominently in Mennonite Church Canada church life.

For me, it was a long and rewarding journey to discover for myself what our brothers and sisters in

NEW ORDER VOICE

Recycling redemption at Super 8

WILL BRAUN

Consider this a tribute to the woman—at least I'm assuming it was a woman—who paused for a moment in the motel room while doing one last check under the beds and across the bathroom counter, when her gaze landed on three unused but entirely usable (and entirely free) plastic cups beside the sink. Unable to just let the Super 8 Motel cups go to waste, the woman, in a particularly Mennonite moment, put them in her purse and went down to her husband who was already in the car.

Back home in Winkler, Man., the three cups, each individually wrapped, as they always are, ended up in a slightly dusty back nook until the next spring, when, on a sunny Saturday well-suited for spring cleaning, the woman put the cups in a box for re-usable and just barely redeemable items that she would later take to the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) thrift store, that special place where things of this world have one last chance to be saved from a fate of waste and returned to the virtuous realm of utility.

Consider this also a tribute to the

woman—I'm assuming it was a woman—in the back room of the MCC store who, in another particularly Mennonite moment, deemed those cups worthy of a chance at redemption on store shelves and put a 10-cent price tag on them.

I bought those three cups.

I saw them on the shelf and, thinking



I think of those [MCC] volunteers who assemble puzzles...before they go on the shelf.

of my own Mennonite moments, I wanted to complete the cycle started in the Super 8 room by ensuring the cups would not go to waste.

I was pleased with my purchase, and a little bit inspired, because I too have looked twice at the cups on my way out of a motel room. I wash plastic bags and eat everything on my plate. I take things to the thrift store, and buy things from the thrift store, including half my wedding outfit. I claim this as part of my Menno heritage.

Thrift stores, like anything else, are not all good or all bad. They can be used as a means for overstuffed souls to simply make room in their closets and

consciences for more stuff. But the MCC store ethos also serves as an antidote to a world of disposable excess. In such a world, I value the common Mennonite aversion to waste and attraction to thrift. And though we Mennos often end up on the commercial treadmill of our day, and sometimes succumb to the miserly underside of thrift, remnants of these countercultural impulses remain.

I think of those volunteers who assemble puzzles donated to MCC to check for missing pieces before they go on the shelf. These people bear witness to values greater than efficiency and productivity. And each puzzle, pillow case and noodle maker that comes in the back door and goes out the front of an MCC store is a small whack at the structures

upholding the spiritually harmful mainstream commercial machinery.

So let me unwrap my Super 8 cup, fill it with Welch's and propose a toast to MCC store volunteers, and to all of you who use tea bags twice, keep a stash of pre-owned tin foil and see virtue in Super 8 castaways. In your honour I will use my cups well and, some spring day, give them a final wash, put them back in their wrappers—which will be saved next to the tin foil—and send them back to the MCC store for one more round of redemption.

Will Braun grew up in Winkler and now lives in Winnipeg. He can be reached at editor@geezmagazine.org.

the U.S. rediscovered as the Anabaptist vision (with the help of the likes of Clarence Bauman, William Klaassen and others). It seems to me that it would be well for every generation of Mennonites to make that rediscovery for themselves as well.

As Wagler's piece highlights, "Menno was enraptured by an evangelical faith that could not lie dormant," and that is why the telling of his story and of the other pioneers in the 16th century and beyond is valuable today. This in no way makes an idol of Menno.

The serious study of the Anabaptist movement is an important part of the Christian education of Mennonites today—or should be. I see no evidence of Menno looming as a potential idol, especially when very few Mennonites today even know of his existence, to say nothing of his role, along with many others, in the story of our faith denomination.

Frankly, I think the headline is a cheap shot.
VIC DOERKSEN, KELOWNA, B.C.

✉ MCC supporter disturbed with stories of 'hurt' she hears

I APPRECIATED SCOTT Morton Ninomiya's letter, "MCC leader's departure a wake-up call," Sept. 17, 2007, page 12. His honesty gave me the courage to say some things that have been on my heart for several years.

My family and extended family have been faithful supporters, helpers and voluntary service workers with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario and Canada in the last 40 or more years. I have been a strong supporter of the work MCC does with those who are struggling locally and overseas. I have been encouraged to see MCC supporting programs that promote conflict resolution, reconciliation and restorative justice, and have been trained to do some of this work myself and use it in my present situations.

However, in the last few years I am hearing stories of hurt—unfair treatment and firings without any

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Where is the church?

PHIL WAGLER

In answer to the titled question, surely many will immediately think of the crossroads upon which a particular meetinghouse is found and point down the road with directions about how to find a building. Where the church is, in this case, is landlocked.

Or perhaps you think of some pet burr in your saddle—which may explain the uncomfortable gait of some cowboys. You wonder where the church is when it comes to a pressing issue of the day or hour. What is the church's stance on this or that, and why doesn't the church—and we really mean someone other than us—do something about the mess. Where the church is, in this case, is in her position papers.

I'm weary of such shallow "churchianity." After all, since the church is not a building, if asked where the church is, you should point to yourself and your believing neighbour, don't you think? And if you wonder where the church is in regards to some social tsunami, you might consider a conversation with the mirror or look at the collective statement

of lives shared in the fellowship of the king. What does the witness of our lives declare about what the church stands for?

I know a family, an amazing clan, and if you ask me where the church is I'll give you both directions to their home and tell you to watch their lives speak about what the church stands for. They



They are not perfect, and are maybe a little crazy, but they are where the church is.

would be completely embarrassed if they knew you were reading about them, so don't tell, but that alone highlights the subversive nature of their witness. Like Christ, they do not do what they do for accolades, but because something within demands it.

This family has adopted four incredible children, biologically contributed a couple more, are fostering three others, and are dreaming of ways to serve the hungry more effectively in our community. They are not perfect, and are maybe a little crazy, but they are where

the church is. Their home is the church. They are incarnating the selfless love of God and yet, tragically, pathetically, there are those who might click their tongues midst the gossip about such sorts in a church building lobby.

Believers like this bear an incredible weight. They not only carry the thankless task of loving what often bites back, but they—and others like them—are carrying the weight of the integrity of the church before a culture that is ignoring our fair-weather song and dance, but cannot ignore the long-suffering of those

who see hope and give it.

In the current cultural reality it will be homes and hearts like those of our friends who, centred on Jesus and his people, embody that pure and faultless God-ward life found in a long obedience of sacrificial embrace and not in the tidy and trendy buildings, programs and rhetoric we engage in, that leaves many still asking, "Where is the church?"

Phil Wagler, a leading servant at Zurich (Ont.) Mennonite Church, is grateful for and humbled by the Zielmans and others like them who daily live the faith. You can reach him at phil_wagler@yahoo.ca.

working through the relationships. Not many people are speaking up; it hurts too deep and the cost is too great because you can't fight an organization which, for the most part, is highly respected.

I find it difficult to support an organization that speaks of justice, honesty, truth and love, on the one hand, and on the other treats some staff and workers with another bent.

KATHY PROCTER, BELGRAVE, ONT.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Bergen—Ivan Henry Friesen (b. Oct. 12, 2007), to Lisa Friesen and Glen Bergen, Hope Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Bessey—Ava Grace (b. July 2, 2007), to Dallas and Julie Bessey, Hanley Mennonite, Sask.

Dyck—Danae Joy (b. Sept. 19, 2007), to Sara and Kevin Dyck, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Ewert—Lauren Marie and Arella Rose (b. Oct. 5, 2007), to Chuck and Amy Ewert, North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

Fay—Ruby Louise Bearinger (Sept. 7, 2007), to Trevor and Rebecca Fay, Shantz Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Guenther—Natalia Hannah (b. Oct. 3, 2007), to Steve and Jan Guenther, Osler Mennonite, Sask.

Leili—Addison Nicole and Anissa Lauren (b. Sept. 5, 2007), to Paul and Elsie Leili, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

McKay—Henry Corbet and Ella Brazil (b. July 18, 2007), to Lilette (nee Wiens) and Scott McKay, Mississauga Mennonite, Ont.

Steckly Leis—Norah (b. Oct. 22, 2007), to Nathan and Jill Steckly Leis, Shantz Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Wheaton—Amelia Cecile (b. Oct. 25, 2007), to Chris and Bernia Wheaton, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

Baptisms

Dorothy Proctor, Elizabeth Lougheed—Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal, Sept. 23, 2007.

Douglas Epp—Mississauga Mennonite, Ont., Sept. 2, 2007.

Marriages

Bachanek/Sithideth—Ian Bachanek and Miki Sithideth (Mississauga Mennonite), Oct. 20, 2007.

Bender/Hunter—Kyle Bender (East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.) and Angela Hunter, in Woodstock, Ont., Oct. 13, 2007.

Burkholder/Musselman—Heather Burkholder and Peter Musselman, Rouge Valley Mennonite, Markham, Ont., Sept. 22, 2007.

Dyck/Hunter—Amanda Dyck (Hanley Mennonite, Sask.) and Tee Hunter, at Bethlehem Lutheran, Hawarden, Sask., Aug. 11, 2007.

Gerber/Schwartzentruber—Robena Gerber and Kenneth Schwartzentruber, Steinmann Mennonite, Oct. 20, 2007.

Martens/Penner—Sally Martens (Hanley Mennonite, Sask.) and Shawn Penner, at Hague Mennonite, Sask., July 7, 2007.

Patkau/Rozon—Robyn Patkau (Hanley Mennonite, Sask.) and Tori Rozon, at Hanley Lutheran, Sask., Aug. 25, 2007.

Deaths

Lauber—Erma, 99 (b. Dec. 24, 1907; d. Oct. 12, 2007), Salem Mennonite, Tofield, Alta.

Rempel—Henry, 98 (b. Oct. 24, 1908; d. July 24, 2007), Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal.

Wiebe—Annie (nee Andres), 91 (b. May 14, 1916; d. Oct. 11, 2007), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Witmer—Edna, 95 (d. Oct. 12, 2007), First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

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.

/// Correction

Ruth Hess is pictured on the right of the Warden Woods Community Centre tree-planting and plaque-unveiling photograph ("Church snapshots," Oct. 15, 2007, page 15, centre). She was incorrectly identified in the caption. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the error.

/// Pontius' Puzzle



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VIEWPOINT

Do pastors preach cheap grace?

JONATHAN EMERSON-PIERCE

When reading Scripture passages such as II Timothy 4:5, “*But be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry,*” do we pastors ever allow that it is also written to us?

I do appreciate reading some of the challenging writing in *Canadian Mennonite*. Still, as many of us probably already know, few modern writers are as prophetic towards pastors as Paul was. But while modern North American Mennonites sometimes lose sight of the uniqueness of the pastoral call, Danish philosopher-theologian Soren Kierkegaard ably reminds us of the high calling to which the early church says we have been summoned (Ephesians 4:10-13, I Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 13:17, I Peter 5:1-4).

In contrast, his journals describe how ministers at the break of Modernity had moved from being influential people to “being controlled” by the surrounding culture—as a way to achieve perfect conformity with “an ordinary run of worldly ideas” that were then proclaimed “Christian.”

This desperate attempt on the part of church leaders to become useful, to get a hearing, to appear relevant to whatever the new shift in culture demands—in other words, to save face—is something to which pastors can relate. But there was a problem. Here, says Kierkegaard, was born the “watered down” Christianity of our own time, what Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s *The Cost Of Discipleship* traces back to the beginnings of

preaching “cheap grace . . . the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner.”

Paul describes this in II Timothy 3:1-4 as the kind of time when “*people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profli-gates, brutes, haters of good, treacherous,*

Modern churches ‘may be in danger of becoming cults of positive thinking, with too many questions and not enough answers.’

reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to the outward form of godliness but denying its power.’

Can we say the situation is any different in our own day? Do pastors not want to feel rational, friendly and relevant? Or do our churches feel as though they are rational, friendly and relevant in relation to the surrounding culture?

Yet there is, however, even in the midst of all this, good news and hope for the church. As when Modernity first arose, our own contemporary situation actually calls for a purifying effect, beginning, as Kierkegaard notes, with church leaders as tough on themselves as the gospel is tough on humankind. We also cannot ignore Kierkegaard’s caveat that pastors must remember to first apply the gospel to themselves, and only then to those they minister to. As Paul says in I Tim-

othy 4:12: “[S]et the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.”

Last year, a Dec. 23 article in the *National Post* entitled “Tough Love” stated, “With a flimsy and changing message, [churches] are less able to attract new members or retain their old. Modernizing reforms might get good headlines, but in the long run no one seeks shelter under a tree that bends with the wind. The problem today, according to a survey of Canadian clerics, sociologists and political observers, is that many Canadian churches have taken the modernization strategy too far. They may be in danger of becoming cults of positive thinking, with too many questions and not enough answers, too much social justice and not enough personal morality, too much humanity and not enough God. . . . As

more and more churches adapt to the changing times, the call for modern relevance is starting to ring hollow. For modern Christianity, the way forward might in fact be backward.”

And so, while it may seem paradoxical, the gospel “in its severity” is the message our congregants must hear from pastors once again if our churches are to impact the culture of our day, remembering that it is a simple matter of faithfulness, a matter of being watchful, enduring afflictions, working as evangelists, and fulfilling our ministries as God has called each one. The way of Jesus is, of course, narrow and demanding, but it is also a great treasure, a pearl of great price—even “in its severity.”

Jonathan Emerson-Pierce is pastor of Hagerman (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Lights, camera, relief

Hollywood stars learn from Tanzanians about malaria prevention

BY LINDA WHITMORE

Mennonite Economic Development Associates
MWANZA, TANZANIA

Hollywood A-list actors Matt Damon and Ben Affleck recently learned firsthand about development in action during a trip to the Makongoro Clinic in Mwanza, Tanzania. The event was organized by rock star Bono's group, DATA (Debt Trade AIDS Africa), with the help of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA).

During their visit the actors learned how activities supported by U.S. President George Bush's malaria initiative and other donors are helping to reduce the prevalence of malaria among pregnant women and children under five—those most vulnerable to malaria. Bush launched his initiative in 2005 to reduce malaria deaths by 50 per cent in 15 African countries.

In an effort to significantly decrease the number of deaths in Tanzania from malaria, the Tanzanian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare developed an initiative in 2004 called *Hati Punguzo* (translated roughly from Kiswahili as "subsidized voucher"). *Hati Punguzo* promotes a unique public-private partnership that provides Tanzanians with a subsidized voucher allowing them to purchase a mosquito bed net at very low cost. Through the initiative, more than 5,000 retail outlets have been established nationwide, where previously the life-saving nets were not



MEDA PHOTO

MEDA staff Peter Ngowi, left, Prisca Msong'o, centre, and Juma Kaswahili, right, hosted Hollywood actors Matt Damon and Ben Affleck at the Makongoro Clinic in Mwanza, Tanzania, during a trip sponsored jointly by MEDA and rock star Bono's group, DATA (Debt Trade AIDS Africa).

available. MEDA acts as the government's logistics manager for the voucher program. Approximately 2.6 million vouchers have been redeemed since the program began.

Damon and Affleck were visibly touched when one mother shared her experience of losing a child to malaria. The actors were shocked when another woman said that she had walked for two hours to reach the clinic in a country where hospitals are few and far between.

The actors visited the clinic laboratory

and learned how malaria transmission occurs, and also accompanied a pregnant mother to the nearest participating retail shop to see how a bed net voucher is redeemed.

Mothers, clinic staff and NGO representatives were happy to share their stories and pass on information.

Most importantly, Matt and Ben—as they are now known by many in Mwanza—promised to take their messages back home and find more ways to help. ☸

DVD urges Canadians to Work for Peace . . . Stop Paying for War

CONSCIENCE CANADA RELEASE
TORONTO

Conscience Canada has launched its new *Work for Peace . . . Stop Paying for War* DVD. It describes Conscience Canada's journey to bring in legislation that protects freedom of conscience in objecting to warfare and military support. The 11-minute DVD features interviews with some prominent Canadians such as Thomas Berger, famous for the Berger Inquiry into the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline. The organization states, "For many of us it is not enough to avoid

personal military service because we know that funds taken from us in the form of tax will be used for war and other violent purposes. In other words, we know that we will be made complicit in war through our taxes no matter what our beliefs and values might be." What this means for

taxpayers who "work for peace" and don't want to "pay for war" is described in the DVD, a free copy of which is available at consciencecanada.ca. ☸



Loonie in full flight

Higher Canadian dollar means lower book prices from MPN, investors in American companies should beware

BY TERESA FALK

National Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

Canadians will now pay the same price for Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN) material as Americans.

As a result of the loonie reaching parity with the greenback on Sept. 20, and moving as high as \$1.08 since then, MPN has adjusted its Canadian prices to equal current U.S. prices. The currency exchange adjustment came into effect in mid-October.

The price adjustment means MPN will have to swallow some of the production

costs associated with some of its material. "Some of the products that we are now selling on par we have development dollars in them at a higher price, but we feel it's more important to pass along the most recent currency exchange to our customers," says MPN executive director Ron Rempel. "And we realize there probably was a period of time where our Canadian

MPN will have to swallow some of the production costs associated with some of its material.

customers were paying more than what the currency exchange warranted because we can't change our prices as fast as what the currency has changed."

Rempel says MPN has been discussing how to respond to the rising Canadian dollar for quite awhile. "Part of the challenge is that our book catalogue is produced only once a year, so the prices in our 2007 catalogue were created last fall," he explains, noting that in the 2007 catalogue Canadian prices are roughly 20 per cent higher than the U.S. prices.

The catalogue includes approximately 400 titles produced under the Herald Press imprint.

No new 2007 catalogues will be issued, but the prices are being changed in the MPN computer system and customers will be informed of the adjusted price when they make their orders. The adjusted prices will carry over into the 2008 catalogue,

which will be printed in November.

To help determine what the loonie may do in the coming year, Rempel has consulted economists and online resources. "The more recent projections are that it could stay on parity for a good part of next year," he says.

As the Canadian dollar gradually rose over the last few years, MPN reviewed and adjusted its prices, says Rempel. But this past year the dollar moved more suddenly. Given the ongoing fluctuations in the currencies, MPN plans to review its prices in six months.

Canadian Mennonite investors are also feeling the impact of the soaring Canadian dollar. Gary Hawton, chief executive officer of Meritas Mutual Funds in Cambridge, Ont., says the rise in the loonie will negatively affect Canadians who have bought shares of American companies.

"If you bought shares of a U.S. equity fund and put in Canadian dollars, the manager turned it into shares of U.S.-based companies that they bought with U.S. dollars," he explains. "Maybe the value of those shares went up by 10 per cent, but if the value of the U.S. dollar dropped by 10 per cent, you broke even, because you need your money back in Canadian dollars."

Hawton recommends Canadians develop a well-diversified portfolio, noting that Meritas helps people join beliefs with deeds using the tools of socially responsible investing. "There are more people within the Canadian Mennonite population that are starting to recognize that they can get strong financial performance, but also have investments that reflect their beliefs," he says. ☸

Disaster Recovery Studies at CMU



If you are looking for a challenging and fulfilling career helping people recover from natural disasters, check out the new Disaster Recovery Studies program at CMU!

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One millionth tonne of food supplied

BY HEATHER PLETT

Canadian Foodgrains Bank
WINNIPEG

Sometime during this past summer, Canadian Foodgrains Bank supplied its one millionth tonne of food to people coping with hunger around the world. That's enough food to fill 15,873 box cars with bags of grain—a train that would stretch approximately 290 kilometres.

"This is a significant milestone for us," says Jim Cornelius, executive director of Canadian Foodgrains Bank. "A million tonnes of food is enough to provide a full ration of cereals, pulses and oil to over 66 million people for one month. That's twice the population of Canada, or 1 percent of the world's population."

"Our mission is to end hunger," continues Cornelius. "Sometimes, when the task seems too large, and we consider that over 800 million people are still without

sufficient food, it can seem overwhelming. Stopping to think about the number of people who have already benefited through the generosity of Canadians, however, encourages us to carry on. Our work is far from over, but today we are celebrating what's already been done."

Since its inception in 1983, the organization has supported food, agriculture and nutrition programming in 74 countries. The one millionth tonne was part of a four-month food-for-work project which supported the rebuilding of critical community assets after floods in India. Wheat and rice were purchased within the surrounding region to support this project.

The country that has received the greatest amount of support is Ethiopia (332,504 tonnes). Much of the food supplied to households in Ethiopia has been distributed through food-for-work projects to construct water catchment and diversion systems, and rehabilitate land and the environment in an effort to improve long-term food security.

"We could not have done this without the support of generous Canadians," adds Cornelius. "A lot of people give of their resources—money, grain, time, commodities—toward the cause of ending hunger."

We are very grateful for the strong support we receive and we know that each of our beneficiaries shares that gratitude."

In addition to donations from the public, Canadian Foodgrains Bank receives funding from the Canadian International Development Agency, which just increased its annual funding to the foodgrains bank to \$20 million per year (a 25 percent hike).

"There are a lot of reasons to celebrate," says board chair Rick Fee. "We have increased our strength by adding new members and new funding, and we are confident that millions more people will benefit in the future. Today, we congratulate staff, volunteers, donors and partners for their hard work and dedication. We remain committed to the task of ending hunger." ❧

❧ Briefly noted

Atheists wonder if fellow troops have their backs

HUNTSVILLE, ALA.—In the midst of their fight to bring freedom to Iraq and Afghanistan, some American soldiers say they are finding their own freedoms threatened by the troops on their own side. Although the U.S. Constitution mandates that the government apply no test of faith for employment—and, one presumes, deployment—soldiers who are open about being non-believers can face harassment from fellow troops and their officers, some say. "We didn't let anyone know we were atheists," said Steve Moore of Huntsville, who served two tours in Iraq as an army staff sergeant. Moore and his wife Renee recently helped pack goody boxes for non-believing soldiers as part of Operation Foxhole Atheist. "There is nothing more frightening than a radical fundamentalist with an assault rifle," said Moore.

—Religion News Service Release

PHOTO BY MELISSA ENGLE

Viviana Cucul Tun, 16, practises weaving a *guipil*, part of K'ekchi indigenous dress. She attends classes at Bezaleel, a K'ekchi Mennonite education centre, which provides education for youths in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. One of the school's aims is to preserve K'ekchi language, culture and traditions, including weaving. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) provides funds for the vocational arts classes, which also include sewing, carpentry, welding, organic agriculture and healthcare. MCC also partners with Fundameno, a K'ekchi Mennonite foundation that gives scholarships for students to attend Bezaleel.



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

Is camp worth it?

After 50 years, Camp Moose Lake supporters say yes it is

BY BOB WIEBE

Mennonite Church Manitoba
SPRAGUE, MAN.

Camp Moose Lake celebrated 50 years of ministry with a special day of worship, reminiscing and recreation at the end of August. More than 170 guests attended, representing former and present campers, summer and year-round staff, regional committees and supporters.

The morning worship service was divided into three sections.

Paul Peters reflected on the early years of the camp. Moose Lake came about because a need for a camp uniquely suitable for children of Mennonite churches arose.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LORI WIEBE



Lori Wiebe, left, and Marianne Sawatzky enjoyed Camp Moose Lake's 50th anniversary party this summer.

The vision for the camp was realized primarily because of the energy and vision of key individuals like Henry and Anne Goertzen and the Camp Moose Lake Regional Committee. Peters also shared how meaningful it was for him to see his family involved over four generations with the camp.

Wilf Sawatzky shared about the middle years of the camp's five decades. He, too, began with a personal reflection on the blessings experienced during 30 years of involvement, beginning with a retreat as part of Steinbach Mennonite Church Boys' Club, two years of voluntary service as manager, and his many years on the regional committee. "This is the place where God will meet his people," Sawatzky said, appealing to the congregation to continue the example of founders who believed in this vision with their hearts, minds, bodies and chequebooks.

Sara Jane Friesen reflected on the recent years. Her personal involvement began with coming along to camp at age five with her mother, the camp nurse. Friesen learned to deeply appreciate the adult campers with disabilities. Through her years as a summer staffer and program director, she came to realize how much the camp is a ministry, part of which is providing opportunity for young people to learn in a supportive environment to use the gifts God has given them.

The music for the service also reflected various eras, ranging from hymns to current contemporary Christian music, led by Bucky Driedger, Darryl Neustaedter Barg, Loretta Friesen, Alisa Wiebe and Verna Wiebe. The theme song for the morning was "Here by the Water, I'll Build an Altar to Praise You." Participants were given a stone when they arrived, and the service concluded with a walk to the waterfront, where an altar was built as a memorial to God's work over the past 50 years.

Jac Siemens led a reminiscing hour later in the afternoon. People told stories of the various building projects and maintenance tasks which volunteers completed over the years. Others recalled the era when Sunday morning worship services were offered for the local cabin owners. Henry Goertzen's vision and drive was again recognized and held up as a model.

Ken Doell posed the question, "Is camp worth it?" His answer: "Yes, even if only one child or youth comes to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ."

A story was told of an unchurched boy who wandered in from a local cabin and became a key staff member over time, owning Christian faith along the way and spending many years in Christian ministry.

Co-manager Wilf Martens presented a new building project, which will see a timber frame picnic shelter erected. Participants were invited to buy a "peg" for \$100. ❧

Bob Wiebe is director of Camping Ministries for Mennonite Church Manitoba.

❧ Briefly noted

Great Commission 2.0: Online kids ministry

For kids these days, Internet security is hard to come by. But for kids concerned about eternal security, cyberspace is precisely the place to be. Dozens of Christian groups are rethinking 10 a.m. Sunday school classes, finding that there may be a bigger, better way to fulfill the Great Commission—just add wireless. Online kids ministry is still in the experimental phase, but it may be an effective way to spark the interest of tech-savvy children. The last time the U.S. Census Bureau checked in on national child computer use in 2003, 50 percent of first through fifth graders used the web and 91 percent used computers. Those numbers are climbing. Sites like WonderZone are part of a larger effort among Christian groups to turn the information superhighway into a superhighway to heaven. With broadband connections and increased access overseas, religious organizations have progressed from posting a plain-text plan of salvation to streaming gospel-oriented films in hundreds of languages.

—Religion News Service Release

Turning 70

Vancouver congregation relives memories as many 'come home'

BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent
VANCOUVER

From six German-speaking families in 1937, to a multicultural congregation now worshipping in three languages, First United Mennonite Church has come a long way in 70 years. God's blessings through many changes were noted on Oct. 14 as the church celebrated this milestone anniversary.

It was a day of thanksgiving and praise. English and Spanish mixed with German as the congregation sang many familiar hymns. Four former pastors returned to the church for the celebratory service, and the congregation viewed many historical pictures of the past 70 years as they reviewed its history.

In the 1930s, many Mennonites were moving into British Columbia's Fraser Valley. Many found employment in Vancouver. In 1935, Rev. Jacob Janzen came from Waterloo, Ont., to look after the spiritual needs of the families who had settled in the city. The group of six families first met in homes, then purchased a small church building in 1937.

Rev. Jacob Wiens of Kitchener, Ont., was called to be the first pastor, and the church was officially founded on Dec. 27, 1937. In 1938, a German Saturday school was started. By 1941, the congregation had grown to 60 members, with 40 children in the Sunday school.

In the late 1940s, the Vancouver congregation continued to grow through a large influx of refugees from Russia and Paraguay. The current building was purchased in 1955.

Former pastors Hans Federau, Erwin Cornelsen, John Dawson and David Nickel all gave greetings and said they felt they had "come home." Current pastors are Ingrid Schultz (lead pastor), Hans-Gerhard Fast (German pastor), Shelley Dyck (youth



Eliesabeth Klassen, 98, right, a founding member of Vancouver First United Mennonite Church, lights a candle in memory of those congregants who have gone home to be with the Lord. Holding the Christ candle is German pastor Hans-Gerhard Fast, while pastor Ingrid Schultz holds the candle representing those who have died.

pastor) and Jorge Hoajaca (pastor of First United Spanish Mennonite). Schultz gave the morning message, basing her sermon on Mark 9:7: "This is my beloved Son, whom I love. Listen to him." John Wiens, son of the founding pastor, also shared stories from the church's beginning.

One part of the service included the recognition of those church members who

had passed on. The only living person who had been present at the church's founding in 1937, Eliesabeth Klassen, lit a candle in their memory.

Following the service, everyone proceeded downstairs to enjoy lunch together, where more memories were shared. ❧

From a report by Helen Klassen.

VALLEYVIEW MENNONITE CHURCH PHOTO



Valleyview Mennonite Church in London, Ont., held an installation service for its new pastoral couple on Oct. 21. Valleyview covenanted with Kendall and Charleen Jongejan Harder, second and third from right, as well as with Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, represented by regional minister Maurice Martin, second from left. Also pictured are pastoral relations committee chair Linda Weber, left, and congregational chair Jake Froese, right. Both congregation and pastors look forward to beginning a new chapter in their faith community's spiritual journey.

Retelling the story of salvation

Association of Anabaptist Missiologists ponder how to best tell about Jesus

BY DOROTHEA TOEWS

Canadian Mennonite University
WINNIPEG

Christians need to rethink the way they present the story of salvation if the church is to successfully reach people in other cultures. That was the message Mark Baker presented at the opening session of the Association of Anabaptist Missiologists (AAM) conference at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) last month.

In his address, Baker stated that the Bible contains a variety of ways of viewing Christ's death on the cross: redemption, justification, sacrifice, triumph and legal transaction, among others.

All of these views are understood on the basis of one underlying story or foundational narrative, he said, claiming that problems arise in cross-cultural mission because the church in the West emphasizes the wrong story. According to Baker, an associate professor of mission and theology at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif., the western church typically presents the gospel of Christ using the penal substitution model of the atonement. In this story, God is holy and creates human beings to be in relationship with him, but human sin has severed the relationship, and so Jesus was sent to live a sinless life on earth and then take upon himself the sin of all human beings, ultimately dying in their place.

Baker stated that while this story makes sense in a western guilt-based culture, where crime and punishment go hand-in-hand, it doesn't resonate in cultures based on honour and shame. Baker suggested that Christians who want to share the gospel outside of North American

culture need to tell the story that "Jesus accepts and accompanies the victims of oppression, and he confronts the oppressors who are sealed in a system of their own making." Jesus stands in solidarity with people who are shamed and excluded, even to the point of death, he said.

And instead of responding to violence with violence, Jesus embraces those who have failed him and offers restored relationship. Baker suggested that this foundational narrative of the atonement is more universally comprehensible, and since it does not depend on a human sense of guilt, it applies to everyone.

Terrance Tiessen, professor emeritus of systematic theology and ethics at Providence College and Seminary, made the case for what he called "accessibilism," or the belief that God has a means of revealing himself to every person, even if they never hear the gospel in their lifetime.

Tiessen argued that, despite this, the imperative for mission work remains because Jesus commanded his followers to "go and make disciples of all nations," and to love their neighbours. "We want our neighbour to live in the fullest sense possible already now," he said, "so we share with them the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection."

Hun and Sunny Lee, MC Canada pastors at Agape Fellowship House Churches in London, Ont., spoke about Christianity in Korea. Hun lamented that the salvation many Korean Christians so enthusiastically preach is shallow, emphasizing individual belief and a one-time conversion, rather than a life of discipleship in community. Sunny suggested that salvation should be viewed as liberation, and she urged Christians to pursue a relational—rather than an objective—faith.

Dorothy Yoder Nyce of Goshen, Ind., a writer who has focused on inter-religious issues for more than a decade, spoke about the possibility that God might use other religions as avenues to bring people to himself. In her opinion, to place a Christian monopoly on salvation would "strip God of the freedom to save as he wishes."

Hippolyto Tshimanga, MC Canada Mission Partnership facilitator for Europe and Africa, countered by lamenting the current trend for mission workers to only go where they are invited, stating that "every generation needs to be evangelized again and again and again until the kingdom comes!"

In the concluding presentation, Jonathan Bonk, executive director of the Overseas Ministries Study Center in New Haven, Conn., claimed that the rise of Christendom following the conversion of Roman emperor Constantine in the fourth century AD caused the fall of the church. When Christianity aligned itself with political power—a tactic that he said Jesus consistently rejected—it lost its central identity and integrity.

Bonk asserted that many people who would consider Christianity, don't do so because they see only broken



Tshimanga

/// Briefly noted

Young people see Christians as judgmental, anti-gay

NORTH AMERICA—Young people have graded Christianity, and the grades aren't looking good. Majorities of American young people describe Christianity as judgmental, hypocritical and anti-homosexual, and many in the Christian faith don't even want to call themselves "Christian" because of the baggage that accompanies the label. A new book based on research by the Barna Group found that church attitudes about people in general—and gays in particular—are driving a negative image of the Christian faith among people aged 16 to 29. "The anti-homosexual perception has now become sort of the Geiger counter of Christians' ability to love and work with people," said David Kinnaman, the Barna Group's president and author of *UnChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity*.

—RNS Release

families, militarism and economic domination in the church. They want to follow the teachings of Jesus, he said, but they cannot convert in good conscience since they see so many Christians not living as Christ taught.

AAM is a network of missions professors, missiologist scholars and writers, current and former missionaries and church members with an interest in mission studies and practice. The conference was sponsored by CMU, Mennonite Church Canada Christian Witness, Providence Seminary and Steinbach Bible College. ❧

Dorothea Toews is a student at CMLL.

MC Manitoba church leadership in transition

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG

With the start of a new church season also comes new leadership for 10 Mennonite Church Manitoba congregations.

At Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Amanda Wiens responded to the invitation from her church to take on the newly created quarter-time position of children's ministry coordinator. She began as coordinator of the Sunday school and boys and girls club programs, as well as being a resource to teachers and club leaders, on Aug. 15, and was commissioned on Sept. 23.

Dave Lepp began his duties as pastor of Arnaud Mennonite Church on Sept. 1. He graduated this spring from Providence Seminary after working as a computer programmer with Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pa., and Winnipeg for a number of years.

Carman Mennonite Church has called Paul Schmidt to be full-time associate youth pastor. Schmidt graduated from Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) this year and travelled through Europe this

past summer.

Corey Hildebrand has returned to his home community of Winkler as youth pastor at Emmanuel Mennonite Church. He graduated from CMU in 2006, then served as a summer interim pastor at Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg and, more recently, led the Leadership Development Program at Winkler Bible Camp. He was installed on Sept. 23.

Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship is a congregation without hired leadership. For the past number of years it has chosen five lay ministers who, for a three-year term, tend to the pastoral needs of the church community. On Sept. 9, Carl Epp, a retired medical doctor, was commissioned for a second three-year term, and Heidi Garcia, an occupational therapist, was commissioned for her first term.

Ken Warkentin began serving Niverville Mennonite Church as interim pastor a year ago. On Sept. 16, he was installed as lead pastor. Warkentin has been in pastoral leadership for 26 years, serving first at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church and, more recently, at Church of the Way in Winnipeg.

River East Mennonite Church in Win-

nipeg, which conducts all of its worship services in German, installed Gerhard Friesen as pastor and Abram Unrau as administrative leader on Sept. 30. Both will be serving part-time.

After being without a youth pastor for two years, Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church called Chris Lenshyn as assistant pastor on Aug. 1. Lenshyn will have major responsibility for youth and young adult ministries. A graduate of CMU and a member at Niverville Mennonite Church, he was installed on Sept. 23.

Melissa Miller, who was interim pastor at Arnaud Mennonite Church last year, has accepted the call to pastor Springstein Mennonite Church. She was commissioned on Sept. 30.

On Sept. 23, John B. Wiebe was installed as pastor and Justin Zacharias as associate pastor at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church. Wiebe, who began Aug. 1, was previously pastor at Sterling Mennonite Fellowship in Winnipeg. Zacharias began his duties in mid-July; a member at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, he has been away for the past couple of years serving with YES in Thailand and in the YES office in Harrisburg, Pa. ❧

PHOTO COURTESY OF MELISSA MILLER



Melissa Miller, kneeling, was installed as senior associate pastor of Springstein (Man.) Mennonite Church on Sept. 30. Members of the prayer circle (not all of whom are shown), included Miller's husband and son, Dean and Daniel Peachey, church council chair Dave Wiebe, ministerial chair Emmy Wiebe, and Peter Zacharias from Mennonite Church Manitoba.

Lamenting the lack of lament

Western churches called to recover the 'voice of dissent' in a post-9/11 world

BY ROSS W. MUIR

Managing Editor
WATERLOO, ONT.

The Sunday after 16 schoolchildren and a teacher were shot and killed in Dunblane, Scotland 11 years ago, was the worst day in their ministry for many of the country's pastors, according to John Bell, an Iona Community resource worker and the writer of many of the hymns in the *Sing the Journey* supplement.

The reason, he said, was because there was nothing appropriate for the churches to sing. "The Church of Scotland had



PHOTO BY ROSS W. MUIR

Iona Community resource worker and hymn writer John Bell led a large crowd at Erb Street Mennonite Church in Waterloo, Ont., through songs of lament from the global church on Oct. 2.

forgotten how to lament," Bell suggested during his talk, "The Lost Tradition of Lament," to a gathering at Erb Street Mennonite Church on Oct. 2, adding that during his trips to North America after 9/11 he found the same lack of repertoire.

According to Bell, there are both sociological and theological reasons for such a decline in the singing of laments or songs of dissent in the West. The first he called "the culture of success," which doesn't allow society to admit its failures or weaknesses. The other is a misreading of the Bible that leads to an incorrect belief that God expects us to be happy. "But no one in the Bible is guaranteed happiness," Bell said, stressing that "discipleship is costly."

The Christian church in much of the rest of the world knows this well, Bell said, as he led those in attendance through a number of laments (both sung and scriptural) from such places as South Africa, Palestine, the early black church in North America and the depths of mental illness. "Many hymns come from the Bible," he noted, as the Israelites cried out to God. Such a lament can be heard in the South African lament, "Senzenina," in which the black church, like the ancient Israelites in exile, asked, "What have we done? What is our sin?"

But laments in church are for more than to merely express corporate and individual pain and sorrow to God, Bell

said. "Where people offer lament comes the possibility of deep joy," he suggested, as he led the audience in singing "No Mo' Auction Block," a spiritual from the U.S. deep south: "Freedom, freedom over me. / Yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. / Freedom, freedom over me, / many thousands more."

During a Q&A after his talk, Bell was asked how Canadian churches can introduce lament into their worship. Lament is appropriate during times of national disaster, he answered, but added that it can also be much more personal, including helping people during times of depression (such as at Christmas, when many people have trouble being happy) or in times of personal anguish.

He told the story of how the words of Psalm 88—"You have removed my friends far from me and made me utterly loathsome to them. . . . You have taken friend and neighbour far from me; darkness is now my only companion"—became "a testimony to God" when a man, whose friends had deserted him after his schizophrenic son became abusive to them, found himself alone. "Listen for the voice of those we know need to say this to God," Bell urged, so such laments can foreshadow "the possibility of recovery" in this world and be "a foretaste of the heavenly banquet" in the next.

His talk was part of a three-day event with Bell sponsored by Conrad Grebel University College and its Institute for Worship and the Arts. ☸

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Caught in the web

Workshop focuses on issues related to pornography

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
KITCHENER, ONT.

When Phil Dodgson of the Southdown Institute received the second call—from the second Mennonite institution—looking for him to speak at a seminar on pornography and the church, he wondered what was happening among Mennonites.

And when he told peers at Southdown, a Catholic residential and outpatient centre for psychological treatment and spiritual guidance north of Toronto, that he and co-worker Elaine Dombi would be focusing on web-based pornography, they asked, “Mennonites have computers?”

Co-sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario Sexual Mis-

conduct and Abuse Response/Resource Team and Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, the seminar, attended by about 40 church leaders, focused solely on web-based pornography, since the Internet’s anonymity, accessibility and affordability make it a prime source for such material.

Dodgson, a clinical psychologist, and Dombi, an addictions therapist, presented addiction to pornography as a defective or unsound coping mechanism, often based in unhealthy patterns of development as a child. Pornography addiction is a private method of reducing anxiety used when anxiety would be better processed with others, they said.

Rigid families often lecture and shame, rather than help children to process anxious difficulties, they said, while chaotic families often downplay and belittle such anxieties. Believing that no one loves them as they are, children from both family types can become adults who believe that only they can meet their own needs.

Mistakenly thinking that sex is both their most important need and that this need shames them before others, they turn to private sexual fantasies for anxiety reduction. But such reduction is only

temporary; the anxiety returns, leading to repeated episodes of pornography use.

With this compassionate framework in mind, Dombi and Dodgson encouraged pastors to ask parishioners if they had a problem “even if there is only a hint about pornography,” and to get them the professional help they need. Like other addictions, stopping the behaviour only treats the symptom and does not address the underlying problems, they said. ❧

Common future at stake

MC Canada, WCC ready to cooperate with Muslim scholars on world peace initiative

BY TERESA FALK

National Correspondent
WINNIPEG

Mennonite Church Canada is heartened by a recent letter sent to Christian leaders from more than 130 Muslim scholars.

In the letter, “A Common Word Between Us and You,” the Islamic scholars seek common ground with Christians and say world peace depends on cooperation between Christianity and Islam. “Our common future is at stake. The very survival of the world itself is perhaps at stake,” stated the scholars in the letter.

MC Canada general secretary Robert J. Suderman responded to the letter by saying, “The call to a common future, to cooperation and dialogue, and to respect, peace and goodwill, is, I would hope, an

PHOTO BY KARIN FEHDERAU



Elsie Rempel, right, MC Canada’s director of Christian Education and Nurture, spoke with Jamie Meza during an MC Saskatchewan-sponsored Equipping Day in Saskatoon recently, where she led a workshop on children and communion. She made a similar presentation at an MC Saskatchewan Pastors Day in Prince Albert on Oct. 2.

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'apple pie' call for all Christians and most certainly for Mennonites. In other words, it is a self-evident good."

Suderman said initiatives of human solidarity, common futures, respect, peace and goodwill have characterized MC Canada ministries, partnerships and initiatives for decades. "We have gone well beyond cooperation, in that we have advocated also for commitment to the value of human life in every place and time," he said.

Suderman trusts Christian leaders will respond in kind to the letter and that initiatives in the direction of peace would bear much fruit.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) also welcomes the letter. "It is significant in that it is signed by such a large group of Muslim leaders and scholars from around the world, which makes it unprecedented," said WCC general secretary Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia. "Such a rare unity of purpose gives great hope as to what people of faith can achieve together." ❧

With files from WCC.

Walking with God

'Redemption' theme draws B.C. women to annual fall gathering

BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent
HOPE, B.C.

Proving that they need no umbrella organization to continue meeting, women from their teens to early 70s from across British Columbia still turned out at Camp Squeah for the annual Mennonite women's retreat the last weekend of October.

Previously, the annual event had been under the auspices of B.C. Women in Mission. Since that organization dissolved in July, this was the first year the retreat was held on its own, with the camp retreat committee now functioning independently.

With 87 women signed up for the retreat, attendance was higher than last year.

Laurel Hildebrandt, a counsellor in private practice in Abbotsford, B.C., and a member of Wellspring Christian Fellowship, was the keynote speaker. Her theme of "Jesus, our redeemer and friend," drew on her various life experiences.

On Saturday morning, Hildebrandt talked of redemption through the story of creation, with woman being created after man and the animals. She encouraged listeners to tell themselves, "The whole vast world was incomplete without me."

At the Saturday afternoon session, Hildebrandt talked about living victoriously in the journey of life. A continuing theme was telling each woman, "Remember, Jesus loves you. We were chosen by God to be his child, his bride. . . . You were made beautiful and strong [in him]. Now live it."

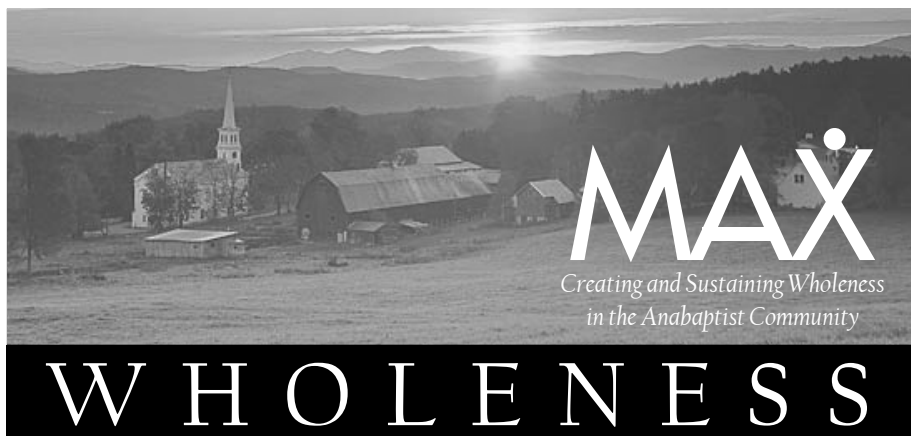
Saturday evening's session centred on how to live redeemed and as God's friend. "God's command is to love ourselves," Hildebrandt said, citing the example of the fairy tale of Cinderella, redeemed from dirt and poverty to become the chosen one of the prince: "God chooses us and says, 'I choose you; you are the one.' God is beautiful; that's why we are beautiful."

In keeping with the theme of the bride of Christ and inner beauty, the room and the evening banquet tables were decorated with white tulle and flowers, as for a wedding. As participants visited around the tables, remarks such as, "I love getting away for the weekend," and, "It's great not to have to worry about cooking or doing dishes," were heard.

Sunday morning's worship included a sharing time and a communion worship service in which participants were invited to place rocks in water, symbolically laying their burdens before Christ.

The retreat committee received many positive comments and, for the foreseeable future, the women's retreat will continue. Next year's retreat will be the weekend of Oct. 24-26, 2008. ❧

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GOD AT WORK IN US

Church musician ponders music 'career'

Zoar Mennonite worship leader taking wait-and-see attitude to marketing her CD

BY KARIN FEHDERAU

Saskatchewan Correspondent
LANGHAM, SASK.

Valerie Wiebe wrote her first song at the age of 12. And she's been singing and writing ever since. Now in her 40s, she is taking tentative steps towards developing her music career further.

Yet thinking of it as a career doesn't sit well with Wiebe, who put together her first CD, *Fallow Ground*, two years ago and who has a wait-and-see attitude about the whole thing. "If I try to market [the CD] too much, it doesn't feel right," she explains.

In an industry where aggressive marketing equals success, Wiebe's quiet approach to the business of singing seems out of place with the way the world moves. But being quiet is not really a place where she feels comfortable either. Struggling through life to be true to herself, Wiebe felt that her artistic abilities and obvious singing talent left her open to judgment from those who think Mennonites are "*die Stille im Lande*" ("the quiet in the land").

But the idea that Mennonites are not supposed to draw attention to themselves doesn't fit her worldview. "Everything I do draws attention to myself," Wiebe says with a sigh.

Brought up to believe a sensible job was more important than expressing her heart through music, the singer and mother of two found herself pushed in the direction of education. She obtained an arts educa-



PHOTO BY KARIN FEHDERAU

Valerie Wiebe struggles with wanting to promote her CD, *Fallow Ground*, on the one hand, and dealing with those who think Mennonites should still be "*die Stille im Lande*," on the other.

tion degree from the University of Regina, but her true calling, it seems, is in public performance and songwriting.

"I really feel the Spirit's presence in her music," says one rural pastor who has heard Wiebe perform.

Henry Block was the interim pastor at Wiebe's church, Zoar Mennonite in Langham, for seven months. He agrees that her role in the worship service is special. "When she leads singing, it's very clear that the music she's leading the congregation in is very important to her faith," he observes.

When all she wants is to share the gifts God gave her, Wiebe is sometimes puzzled by those threatened by her music. "Everyone has gifts," she says simply. "These are just mine."

Playing a public role in worship also forces her to find stability in how she sees her skill. "It's a struggle to feel good about those gifts, but also balance it with humility," she admits with candour.

A three-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in Bangladesh pushed her further away from a North American worldview. Together with her husband and young son, Wiebe accepted the job in 1991, believing that "God was

going to do something for us." While there, Wiebe taught missionary children in school and also helped design products for Ten Thousand Villages.

The culture and the way women were treated in Bangladesh helped offset the low self-esteem she had struggled with most of her life and allowed her to appreciate her value here. And being confronted with the poverty of Bangladeshi women made such a deep impression on her heart that, returning to a society of apathetic wealth, caused further discomfort. It was even more difficult to return to Canada than to adjust to a Third World country, she admits.

"Once you've seen how the rest of the world lives, you're never comfortable here," she explains. "I feel like I live on the edge of the knife."

Wondering where she fits in has made her an effective songwriter, though, as evidenced by the raw pain of her words. In her CD's title track, "Fallow Ground," she sings: "Much of our lives lies wasted and barren / Empty of all that the Lord has to give / Where is the seed that we should be planting / Where is the harvest he wants us to live?"

Yet her songs are not really preaching at an imaginary audience, but simply admitting her own failures in her Christian walk. In "Throwing Stones," she cries: "So Father, forgive me / I don't know how you love me / When I look in my soul I see / Heaven's a long walk home for me."

"Fallow ground" has a personal meaning as well for the singer. Although not raised in a rural setting, Wiebe now lives with her husband on his family's land and has embraced the landscape that surrounds her. She chose the title for the spiritual parallels she sees, in that what God gives people is like developing the potential of a fallow field. "I want to use my gifts for God, not let them lie dormant," she explains.

That, in a nutshell, is really what Wiebe is all about. *Fallow Ground* can be ordered online at valeriewiebe.com. A portion of her sales is donated to MCC. ☸



OBITUARY

In the name of Christ

Long-time missionary nurse remembered for her ministry in Mexico

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
ALTONA, MAN.

Tina Fehr had a presence about her that brought a calmness to any room. Doctors in Cuauhtemoc, Mexico, requested that this unassuming nurse be in the operating room with them especially when performing difficult operations, recalls Helen Ens. "They knew she would be praying."

Fehr, who died of West Nile virus on Sept. 16 in Altona at age 85, worked tire-

▄ Briefly noted

New administrator for Tri-County Mennonite Homes

NEW HAMBURG, ONT—Elizabeth Klassen has accepted the position of administrator of Aldaview Services in New Hamburg, part of Tri-County Mennonite Homes. She began her role there on Oct. 1. A graduate of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ont., Klassen began her career in 1982 as a registered nurse at Fairview Mennonite Home in Cambridge, Ont. For nine years she worked at the House of Friendship as Cramer House coordinator and Eby Village support coordinator. Since 2003 she has been employed by Waterloo Regional Homes for Mental Health Inc. in Kitchener, where, until the end of September, she held the title of assistant executive director. She currently sits on the board of MennoHomes Inc.

—Tri-County Mennonite Homes Release

lessly from 1954-93 as a nurse in Mexico, serving both Mexican and Mennonite communities in and around Cuauhtemoc.

Ens, a teacher, and Fehr shared many experiences in Mexico in the 38 years that their work overlapped, including teaching summer Bible school for several years. In one community they were asked to teach Sunday school, so for two or three years they travelled every Sunday afternoon to Anahuac. A church eventually grew out of their early efforts to bring the gospel through adult and children's classes.

Fehr was one of 12 children born to Jacob and Helena Fehr. She was forced to leave school after Grade 8 to help out at her home southwest of Altona. At 23 she decided to finish her high school education and went on to pursue nursing training.

In the early 1950s Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) was working in drought-stricken Mexico when it put out a call for agriculture representatives and nurses. Fehr answered the call.

A state-run hospital had been built in Cuauhtemoc and Fehr was promptly appointed head nurse. She began a successful program to train local people as



Fehr

nurses. Several years later, the federal government built health centres throughout the country, and when one was built in Cuauhtemoc in 1963, Fehr was asked to be head nurse. When the Mexican president came to dedicate the centre, Fehr officiated with him. "It was quite an honour," says Ens. "It showed how well accepted she was as a foreigner. She was accepted as one of their own."

Fehr sometimes worked 24 hours a day, according to Ens. She was in demand, particularly when it came to delivering babies. Speaking fluent Low German and with a good command of Spanish, Mexicans and Mennonites alike requested her care. "Even the doctors' wives insisted she be at their delivery," says Ens. On average, Fehr helped deliver more than a thousand babies a year.

Several churches joined together to build a seniors home near Cuauhtemoc in the 1990s. After her retirement in 1993, Fehr responded to their call to return to train personnel.

In her retirement in Altona, Fehr continued a life of service. She made many blankets for MCC. She cared for her sister in a nursing home every day. "She liked to stress that whatever service she did, it was in the name of Christ," Ens recalls. ▄

PHOTO BY DAVE DARICHUK



Mennonite historian and documentary filmmaker Otto Klassen, left, received an honorary doctorate of letters from the University of Winnipeg on Oct. 21, for his tireless efforts in telling the story of the Mennonite people. Klassen, who lives in Winnipeg, was surprised and honoured by the recognition. A bricklayer by trade, Klassen has devoted much of his spare time throughout his life to making documentary films about the Mennonite experience in Russia and their various migrations. His newest title is *Remembering Russia: 1928 to 1938—Collectivization and Mass Arrest*.

ARTBEAT

OBITUARY

Beloved Christian author/poet will be missed

Madeleine L'Engle best remembered for *A Wrinkle in Time*

BY D.S. MARTIN

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

One of the best-loved writers of the 20th century has died. Madeleine L'Engle authored more than 60 books, including poetry, memoirs and non-fiction—besides her popular novels. On Sept. 6 she passed away at age 88.

L'Engle is best known for her Newbery Medal-winning novel, *A Wrinkle In Time*, which has sold more than six million copies since its release in 1962. If L'Engle hadn't been persistent, it might never have appeared, since 26 publishers had rejected it before Farrar, Straus & Giroux decided to embrace it.

A Wrinkle In Time quotes extensively from Isaiah, Romans and I Corinthians. Ironically, by the 1990s it had reached the status of being the 23rd most banned book according to the American Library Association, because some believed it to contain anti-Christian sentiments!

A Wrinkle In Time, like its sequels—*A Wind In The Door* (1973), *A Swiftly Tilting Planet* (1978), and *Many Waters* (1986)—carries members of the Murry family through a blend of science-fiction, fantasy and magical realism. Perhaps it is the speculative nature of the book that made many Christians uncomfortable. L'Engle's other popular series features the Austin family, including the Newbery Honor book, *A Ring of Endless Light* (1980). Books in both series show positive images of family love and life, with Christian faith as part of the normal scheme of things.

In her wonderful book, *Walking On*

Water, in which she reflects on faith and art, L'Engle sees all art as "cosmos" found within the chaos of our world, and sees artists as servants of their work. "Basically there can be no categories such as 'religious' art and 'secular' art because all true art is incarnational and therefore 'religious,'" she writes.

One of my favourite poems from her collection, "The Weather Of The Heart," begins, "If I can learn a little how to die . . ." and goes on to reflect on learning



L'Engle

to die to oneself and being freed "through Christ's presence." She plays with the ironies of dying to live, and of death leading to eternity, and concludes: "In death, truth will outlive the deathly lie, And in love's light I will be taught to die."

She was predeceased by her husband, and by one of their sons. ❧

D.S. Martin is a Canadian poet and writer. His poetry chapbook, *So The Moon Would Not Be Swallowed* is available at dsmartin.ca.

BOOK REVIEW

A tale of a time gone by

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

REVIEWED BY JAKE ENS

Jakob Schellenberg was born in a small Old Colony Mennonite village in 1922. This book tells about his adventures and the life of the village as he grows into adulthood from 1928-44. It is written in a manner befitting the Old Colony setting—plain, straightforward, direct, very descriptive and thrifty with words.

The death of an only daughter in childhood is told simply but with its wrenching agony clearly shown. The gentle humour, so evident in the village, is revealed with the same clarity. The experiences of growing up, including the challenges of puberty, are presented in a manner which the Low German dialect describes as "*derch de Bloom*"—literally, "through the flower"—but more accurately translated "with tact and circumlocution taken to the extreme." A glossary of Low German words used in the stories is provided.

The story proceeds from one vignette

to another, connected through the eyes of the growing Jakob. The book is organized chronologically, each section prefaced by a brief description of world events at the time. The village, where the great drought of the 1930s was an unwelcome addition to the Great Depression, was not immune to the fall-out from what was happening in the world—the rise of fascism, the tyranny of Stalin's Russia and the horror of the Second World War. Many Mennonites felt the agonizing conflict between their deeply held pacifism and the need to combat the evil that was facing the world. This conflict provides the theme for the final vignette.

Today the villages that were part of Mennonite settlement in Saskatchewan are part of the mixed urban-rural sprawl around Saskatoon. This little book provides a detailed and loving look at what life was like for Mennonites in earlier years. ❧



CANADIAN WOMEN IN MISSION

Women walking together in faith

Pennies, passion and prayer continue to pay dividends

BY IRENE KLASSEN

The lowly penny has been ridiculed and scoffed at, yet songs and books have been written about it, so its value cannot be over-estimated.

During the Depression of the 1930s a penny or two was often all a housewife could save from her meagre income from selling butter and eggs. Even so, these women had a zeal for missions, and compassion and concern for the missionaries who, after giving up their personal life, went to the mission field, and who, when their work was done, returned penniless. Out of this compassion the Two Pennies and a Prayer project was born.

In 1935 the Women's Missionary Association (WMA) in the U.S. adopted the Missionaries Pension Fund of the Mission Board as one of its projects. The intent was to create an endowment to be paid to the pension fund. Each WMA member was asked to donate two cents a week and pray. By 1945 the endowment fund had grown to \$22,600.61, with more than two-thirds of it coming from the penny project.

Nearly 20 years later, the Board of Trustees thought the money should all go into the General Fund, but WMA objected strenuously and it remained a separate entity. In 1953 the WMA, later called General Conference Women in Mission (GCWM), adopted a motion that the fund be allowed to grow from the then \$65,000. And so it continued to grow and gather interest.

When Canadian women organized Canadian Women in Mission (CWM), as well as a number of provincial

groups, they picked up the project and for many years faithfully designated \$1.04 per member annually to this project. Even as the amount seemed so small, the importance of the additional prayer was emphasized.

By then, government and other pension funds had been established and returning missionaries received a regular income from these sources. Although groups continued to donate to the fund, it seemed insignificant and its origin was forgotten. So it just lay there silently while it accumulated interest.

When U.S. Mennonite women and CWM separated in 2003, the fund was divided and the portion that CWM received was \$70,341.15. A decision had to be made to use these "Pennies for Pension" or "Pennies from Heaven" to honour the spirit in which they had been given. After a period of discernment and prayer, it was decided that this fund would support women doing ministry through Mennonite Church Canada's Christian Witness Council.

The fund has been given the new name of Pennies and Prayer Inheritance Fund. Donations to the fund can be made through MC Canada.

Irene Klassen has been involved with Women in Mission for 55 years, during which time she served as Canadian vice-chair of the General Conference Women in Mission from 1983-92.

Testimonials

This fund gives us an opportunity to share our blessings with others. In a country where many have more than enough, we can invite friends to contribute to it financially as their gift to women today, on milestone birthdays, anniversaries, memorials or celebrations of achievement. The gift is given twice as women celebrating women support other women. This fund is about giving that keeps on giving. What a blessing!

AUDREY MIERAU BECHTEL, SASKATOON

Our mothers and grandmothers had a vision of helping missionaries with physical and spiritual needs, and in 2007 CWM has the same vision for healing and hope. Today we are so much closer to the whole world, and have access to information at a speed that still astonishes. With today's technology we can see results as they occur. We have turned this rich legacy of caring for others to supporting women sharing their gifts in making the gospel of Jesus Christ relevant to people wherever they are.

EVELYN BUHR, EDMONTON

As with the widow's mite, a few pennies bless others. Through this gift, we "employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" (I Peter 4:10). My hope is to see this fund increase and that our daughters and granddaughters can continue sharing to engage the world with the reconciling gospel of Jesus Christ.

SHIRLEY REDEKOP, FLORADALE, ONT.

The testimonials come from three CWM executive members. Page coordinated by Leona Dueck Penner.



PHOTO BY ALDRED H. NEUFELDT



MC Canada Christian Witness worker Anne Garber Kompaore, right, who is involved with Bible translation work in Burkina Faso, is honoured to be one of the first two women chosen to receive support from the newly revived and renamed Pennies and Prayer Inheritance Fund. Erna Neufeldt, left, is president of Canadian Women in Mission, which administers the fund.



w i n d o w

The path of God is not always straight

Alan Stucky

When I graduated from Bethel College four years ago I thought I had a plan. I was going to wait in North Newton for a year for my future wife to graduate from college and then we were going to move to Elkhart, Ind., so I could work on my Master of Divinity at AMBS.

As so often happens when God is leading, life took a bit of a detour. So for the last four years I found myself working at Buhler Mennonite Church with a tremendous group of young people and also taking classes at the Great Plains extension of AMBS. Looking back, I can see more clearly the wisdom of God, and would not change my experience for anything.

One of the major reasons that I would not change my experience is that I had the opportunity to take classes with a wonderfully diverse group of people from a variety of stages of life and to take classes through a variety of forms. AMBS offers classes in different forms that have allowed me, and many others, to further my education through multiple settings. Most of my classes have been the somewhat traditional kind that meet on a weekly basis, usually in the evenings. As someone who was working for a church during my study, I found

this approach was often helpful because I could have regular contact with the class at a time of the day that actually fit into my schedule.

In addition to the weekly classes, each semester I would usually have a class that would meet three or four times for weekends. While these classes were intense, I found them quite rich, partly because of the people who were there. The weekend classes attracted some people who were outside of my geographical area and would otherwise not have been able to attend.

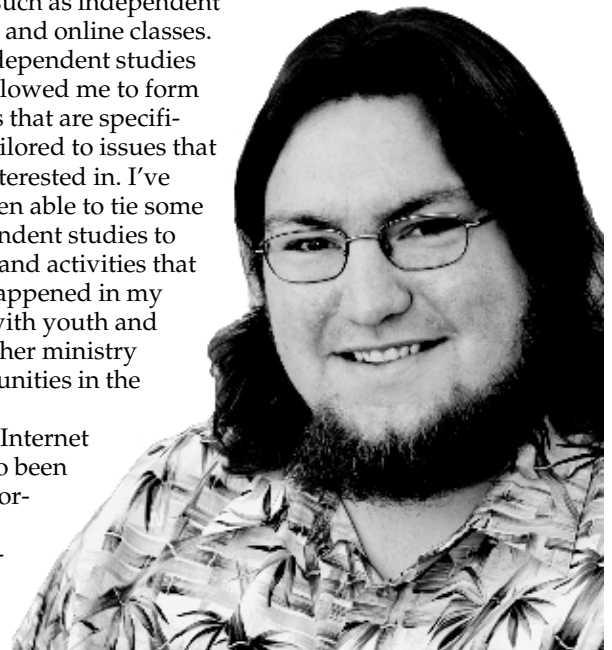
I have also had the opportunity to take classes in more nontraditional forms such as independent studies and online classes. The independent studies have allowed me to form courses that are specifically tailored to issues that I am interested in. I've also been able to tie some independent studies to events and activities that have happened in my work with youth and with other ministry opportunities in the area.

The Internet has also been an important component

in many classes. While I have had classes that were entirely online, many of the weekend classes, and some of the weekly classes, have made great use of online discussion forums to expand the discussion beyond the walls of a classroom.

This fall my path of life has finally taken me to the AMBS main campus in Elkhart. I'm looking forward to this atmosphere for new challenges and new opportunities for learning.

Alan Stucky is a student from Buhler, Kansas. He is in the youth ministry concentration of the Master of Divinity degree. ●



Mary E. Klassen

Fall 2007
Volume 18 Issue 1

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Not your traditional seminary courses**

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Panorama**

Online teaching and learning

Putting good teaching ahead of technology

“Paul was engaged in distance pastoring, using the technology available to him,” Jacob Elias, professor of New Testament, said at a recent meeting where AMBS faculty discussed online teaching and learning. This awareness added a helpful dimension to his recent Romans classes as they used today’s technology—Internet and e-mail.

While AMBS makes accessible seminary study a strategic goal, faculty work with delivery systems that bring courses closer to people across the continent and even around the world. Online courses are one option—an option that continues raising questions about how well online learning prepares people for ministry.

Gayle Gerber Koontz, professor of theology, took an online course on teaching online courses last summer, and she began the recent faculty discussion emphasizing that pedagogy comes before technology.

Gayle pointed out that good teaching must respect diverse talents and ways of learning, and that “technology permits building multiple pathways to learning.”

On the other hand, the questions raised by online courses are significant: Is it possible to build a sense of community among online learners? Can formation for ministry happen online? How can the seminary provide time for faculty to develop online courses, when this requires 50 percent to three times more time than developing a face-to-face course? How can AMBS best provide the technical support needed

for students and professors of online courses?

Some students find that online courses give them better opportunities to participate, because they benefit from the additional time to reflect and share comments online if they are not comfortable speaking out in class. The requirement to write comments and reflections can result in deeper learning, AMBS professors have observed.

However, online courses are not better for **all** students, or for all courses and instructors. Some students are not as able to discipline themselves for the independent nature of online learning. Others may not thrive with the high

demand for written communication in online discussions. This leads to a higher drop-out rate for online courses.

Another issue important in preparation for ministry is that online courses don’t bring students together physically, so the kind of community formed among class members is different. There are ways in which online faculty and students can build community, but it takes more deliberate effort and attention.

Mary Schertz, professor of New Testament, admitted, “It’s hard to laugh with your students online.”

Because of the tension between the challenge to make courses more acces-

sible and the value of ministry formation in face-to-face learning, AMBS is experimenting with more hybrid courses. These classes meet together two times a semester, with online work in between. (See offerings at right)

Nelson Kraybill, AMBS president, points out on page 4: As AMBS seeks to provide more opportunities for distance learning, we also continue to strengthen on-campus teaching and learning as a base for the other delivery methods. ●

To find out more about AMBS online courses, see www.amsb.edu/academics/courses/online



Sometimes seminary study involves a truck breakdown in the countryside of Guatemala. The course, *Peace and Justice: Latin American Perspectives*, took students and AMBS professors Ted and Gayle Gerber Koontz to Guatemala in January 2007. Willi Hugo taught the course at SEMILLA, the Latin American seminary in Guatemala City. This intensive, three-week course is an example of another way in which AMBS offers courses to meet different learning goals. Generally once a year, either in January or summer, AMBS offerings include a course involving encounters with a different culture and country.

Benefits and challenges of online courses:

What students say

"First, I liked the fact that students were from around the world. Second, people were reflecting on their readings while still being in the context of their present ministry."

— Ray Epp, Yubarigun, Japan, Master of Arts in Peace Studies student who has studied both on campus and online

"Online courses made it possible for me to continue gaining credits without always having to invest days on the road. This was a HUGE benefit for me and almost always outweighed any disadvantages, although I would not have wanted to do all my work online.

"What was challenging was that the computer monitor is "flat" (pun not intended, but also true!), compared to being in a classroom with a live instructor to whom one can ask immediate questions. Profs in a live classroom expound on ideas in a lecture, too, in a way that doesn't happen online."

— Jane Roeschley, associate pastor of Mennonite Church of Normal, Normal, Ill., 2007 Master of Arts in Christian Formation graduate ●



Mary E. Klassen

LeNora Klassen Duerksen (holding book) took advantage of the wide range of delivery systems for completing the Master of Divinity degree in pastoral care and counseling. She began taking courses in Kansas at the AMBS–Great Plains extension. She came to AMBS several summers for intensive two-week courses and weekend courses and then moved to Elkhart for periods of on-campus study to fulfill the requirement of completing 30 credit hours in residence in Elkhart. She returned to AMBS in summer 2007 for her last course, *From Daniel to Jesus: Early Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, a two-week course taught by Steve Schweitzer. She says she accomplished the program of study in "an unusual three years—2004–07—while still a resident of Kansas, maintaining relationships with my husband, cat, dogs, chickens and long-horn cattle!" She now is director of senior ministries at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan., and part-time chaplain at Sunshine Meadows Retirement Community in Buhler.

Other class members shown above are Reuben Glick Shank, Jim Smith and Ruth Kelly.

Extension sites

AMBS–Great Plains

To find out more about the AMBS–Great Plains extension in central Kansas, go to www.ambs.edu/greatplains.

A link there opens the course list for 2007–08.

Winnipeg Centre for Ministry Studies

WCMS is an inter-Mennonite partnership on the campus of Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Man. Students in WCMS courses can earn credit at AMBS.

See upcoming courses, at www.ministrystudies.ca.

AMBS–Iowa

Courses are offered in southeast Iowa. See more at www.ambs.edu/academics/extension-programs/ambs-iowa. ●

Not your traditional seminary courses

Hybrid courses

Principles of Pastoral Care
Daniel Schipani, Ph.D., Psy.D.

Three credit hours.

Meets on campus Feb. 15–16 and May 16–17, with online work in between.

Principles of Youth Ministry

Andy Brubacher Kaethler, M.A., Ph.D. student.

Three credit hours.

Meets on campus Feb. 15–16 and April 18–19 with online work in addition.

Online courses

Beginning Hebrew: Ruth

Steve Schweitzer, Ph.D.

Four credit hours

(also offered on campus).

Eastern Christianity

Walter Sawatsky, Ph.D.
Three credit hours.

Off-campus course

Celtic Pilgrimage

June 14–30, 2008

Led by Marlene Kropf, D.Min., and Willard Roth, spiritual director and retired pastor.

Three credit hours (also available for people who do not wish seminary credit).

For more information, contact Rosemary Reschly: rreschly@ambs.edu; 574-296-6244. ●

With all the talk about new delivery systems in theological education, it is good to remember that "delivery" cannot be one-way. Education for mission and ministry is not a product that can be packaged at places such as Elkhart and shipped to the world. Leadership formation is a *process*. It demands give-and-take between teacher and student, between theory and practice. For Anabaptists, learning happens with teachers and students accountable to Spirit, Scripture and faith community.

The church is calling on Mennonite seminaries to make pastoral and theological education accessible—geographically, economically and culturally—for places and people currently underserved. AMBS takes this seriously, and we are learning that:



- A seminary changes—for the better—by having more connection with sites of ministry and mission. Theory is good, but practice hones theory.
- While graduate-level degree programs need to remain central at AMBS, we will serve the church best if we also offer non-degree opportunities and collaborate with undergraduate institutions to provide college-level education. Such non-traditional delivery systems allow the seminary to learn from diverse ethnic, cultural and economic groups that have much to teach about evangelism, worship,

suffering and community.

- Online learning can be good, but there are challenges. It is more difficult for some online students to feel connected to professors and fellow students, and the dropout rate is higher.
- Hybrid courses (part face-to-face and part online) are more successful and rewarding than courses that are strictly online.
- Keeping a vibrant face-to-face learning community at Elkhart gives AMBS a base from which to offer a online and extension courses elsewhere.

When Jesus called his followers to be witnesses "to the ends of the earth," he probably did not have modern travel and communication in mind. But in this era of globalization, even the classroom extends to the ends of the earth, and theological education can be stronger for it.

— J. Nelson Kraybill

Greg Yantzi (Master of Divinity 1996) was ordained at Harrow (Ont.) Mennonite Church, on October 14, 2007.

Karen Weldy (Master of Divinity 2003) was ordained at Southside Mennonite Fellowship on September 30, 2007.

Garry Jost (Master of Divinity 2000) received a Doctor of Ministry from Drew University, Madison, N.J. His project was "Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength: An Authentic Encounter with the Bible in its Original Languages."

Ted Grimsrud (Master of Arts: Peace Studies 1983) is author of *Embodying the Way of Jesus: Anabaptist Convictions for the Twenty-First Century* (Wipf & Stock 2007). Ted is associate professor of theology and peace studies at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Panorama

Fall issue of *Vision*

Gayle Gerber Koontz, AMBS professor of theology, is the editor of the fall issue of *Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology*, focusing on suffering. This journal is copublished by the Institute of Mennonite Studies at AMBS and the Institute for Theology and the Church at Canadian Mennonite University. You can read Gayle's editorial and several articles online at www.mennovision.org/Volume8-2.htm.

Mission lectureship

Darrell Guder, leading authority on missional theology, will be featured in the Shenk Mission Lectureship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, November 30 and December 1. See www.ambs.edu/news-and-publications/events-and-news/guder.

Call for presentations

AMBS extends an invitation for proposals for presentations to be given at the conference, "Upgraded? The influence of technology on Christian worship," August 7–9, 2008. See more

at www.ambs.edu/news-and-publications/events-and-news/upgraded.

AMBS green building featured

The new AMBS Library and Campus Center is featured in the summer 2007 issue of *In Trust*, a magazine for board members of seminaries. The article focuses on four seminaries that are demonstrating good stewardship by emphasizing sustainability. To read the article, to go www.intrust.org, and select *Read the Magazine*.

Fall 2007

Volume 18 Issue 1

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

Editor and Designer: Mary E. Klassen

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to *Canadian Mennonite* and *The Mennonite*.



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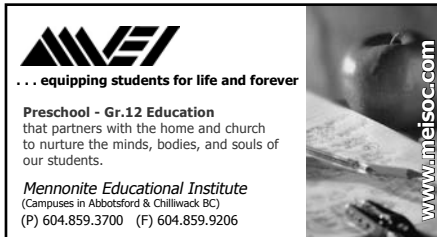
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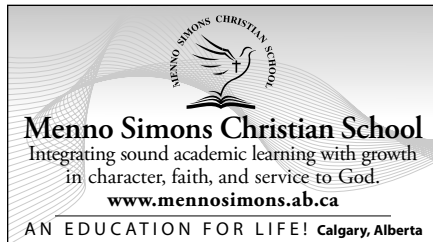
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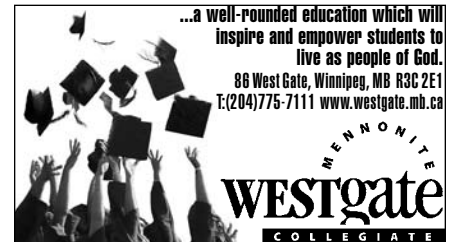
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EMU PHOTO BY JIM BISHOP



The dream of building a prayer labyrinth on the campus of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., began 15 years ago with spiritual formation professor Wendy Miller. That dream came true on Oct. 13, as Miller and others dedicated the prayer labyrinth on the hill northwest of the seminary building. Pictured from left to right, stone mason Kirk Shank Zehr, Eastern Mennonite Seminary congregational resource centre director Linda Alley, and seminary campus pastor Kevin Clark walk the labyrinth prior to the dedication ceremony.

/// Briefly noted

CMU students recognized for work at summer camps

WINNIPEG— Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) students gave a combined three-and-a-half years to camps in Canada and the U.S. this past summer. Eighteen students spent a total of 184.5 weeks serving at camps in Manitoba, B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Iowa. Each student was eligible for CMU's camp wage subsidy; this year a total of \$5,627 was given to help them defray the cost of studying at the university. "We believe that Christian camps provide a valuable service and ministry," says CMU enrolment director Abe Bergen. "That's why we like to support students who work at camps each summer. There are few better opportunities for young adults to develop their leadership gifts, and make a significant difference in the lives of children and teens." The camps the students worked at included Camp Moose Lake, Silver Lake Mennonite Camp, Shekinah Retreat Centre and Camp Valaqua.

—CMU Release

FOCUS ON MUSIC

Menno Singers offers a year of 'musical excellence'

BY MARK DILLER HARDER AND MARILYN RUDY FROESE

Menno Singers Release

In its recently accepted vision statement, Menno Singers describes itself as "a mixed voice choir rooted within the Mennonite tradition and dedicated to musical excellence." The key to the choir, based in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont., is musical excellence!

Menno Singers sings the whole range of sacred music and sings it well. It sings music from all styles, genres, and historical and contemporary periods. The choir is led by artistic director Peter Nikiforuk and accompanist Alison Clark, and continues a strong 50-year tradition.

Menno Singers has an exciting 2007-

08 concert season. Slated to begin with an early November concert for harp and choir featuring artist Dawna Coleman at Elmira (Ont.) Mennonite Church, the concert is a benefit for Woolwich Community Services, a local community service organization. Last year, Menno Singers held benefit concerts for both House of Friendship and the new MCC Ten Thousand Villages store in New Hamburg, Ont.

Menno Singers includes both the Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir and Menno Youth Singers under its broader umbrella. These choirs give young voices the oppor-



The Menno Singers are pictured in 2005 at their golden anniversary concert at Benton Street Baptist Church in Kitchener, Ont.

tunity to learn and sing. All three choirs will join together musically on Dec. 8 at St. Matthews Lutheran Church in Kitchener for a Christmas concert entitled "Three Choirs at Christmas."

Menno Singers also partners with other musical organizations. Over the last few years it has performed several works with the authentic period instrument ensemble, Nota Bene, including Bach's "Mass in B minor." On March 1, 2008, both choir and ensemble will present the magnificent, yet rarely performed choral masterpiece, "Membra Jesus," in a "Lenten Journey" concert at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Kitchener.

Menno Singers ends its season with a "Partly English" concert of music by Parry, Elgar and Vaughan Williams on May 3, 2008, also at St. John the Evangelist Church.

Menno Singers continues to be rooted within the Mennonite tradition. On two winter Sunday evenings, Jan. 13, 2008, at Rockway Mennonite Church in Kitchener and at Tavistock (Ont.) Mennonite Church (date to be announced), the choir will host an evening of energetic hymn singing using *Hymnal: A Worship Book* and its new supplements. ☞

Mark Diller Harder and Marilyn Rudy Froese are co-presidents of Menno Singers.



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Becky Reesor awarded music scholarship

BY LEWIS BRUBACHER

Abner Martin Music Scholarship Committee
WATERLOO, ONT.

Becky Reesor has been named the recipient of the \$2,000 Abner Martin Music Scholarship for 2007-08.

Reesor, who hails from Listowel, Ont., is in her second year of piano performance and music ministry studies at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, where she is involved with choirs both as a singer and accompanist.

While growing up in Listowel, Reesor participated extensively in musical activities in her church, community and high school. At Listowel Mennonite Church she regularly led singing, organized small music ensembles, led the youth band, and played piano in worship services. This past summer she helped organize, and participated in, a fundraising concert for Burkina Faso. At Listowel District Secondary School, she accompanied and sang in various musical groups and served as music council president.

Reesor has also composed and arranged numerous musical selections for worship and memorial services, and she has co-directed and choreographed two musicals, one for the Ontario Mennonite Music Camp.

The Abner Martin Music Scholarship was established by Menno Singers in 1981 to honour Martin's contribution to music awareness among Ontario Mennonites and in the larger community. Martin founded the choir in 1955.

The cash award is made annually to a deserving student who is affiliated with Mennonite Church Eastern Canada and is a full-time student in a graduate or undergraduate music program. This year's award comes from the earnings of the scholarship endowment fund and a donation from Jim and Lorna Blair. ❧

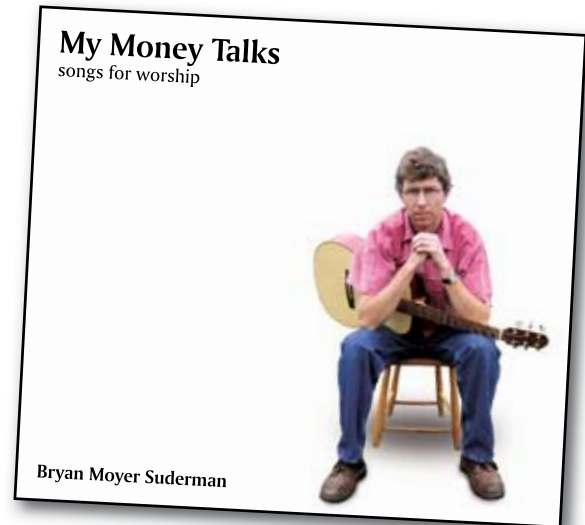
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Calendar

British Columbia

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. 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. 19: RJC Auxiliary perogy supper.

Nov. 21: MEDA annual chapter meeting at Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

Nov. 29-Dec. 2: Christmas dinner theatre at RJC.

Dec. 16: RJC Chorale Christmas concert at Knox United Church, Saskatoon.

Dec. 21: RJC Christmas concert.

Jan. 4-5: RJC alumni tournament of memories.

Jan. 18: RJC open house.

Jan. 18-20: Prairie Winds worship and music retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre. Resource people: Marilyn Houser Hamm, Allan Rudy Froese, Arlyn Friesen Epp and Simply Superb. Theme: "Sing the story."

Jan. 25-27: SMYO senior high retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

Feb. 22-23: MC Saskatchewan delegate sessions at First Mennonite, Saskatoon.

Manitoba

Nov. 24, 25: Faith and Life Choirs' Advent concerts. Theme: "Songs of joy." Grace Mennonite, Steinbach, 7 p.m. (24); Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, 2 p.m. (25).

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.

Dec. 1: North Kildonan Mennonite Church Quartet's annual Advent concert, at North Kildonan Mennonite Church, at 7 p.m.

Dec. 2: First Mennonite Church Choir and orchestra present Rutter's "Magnificat," 8 p.m. at First Mennonite, Winnipeg. Featured soloist: soprano Karis Wiebe.

Dec. 10: Westgate Christmas concert, 7 p.m., at Westminster United Church.

Dec. 23,24: Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church adult choir performs the one-act opera, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*; 3 p.m. (23) and 6:30 p.m. (24).

Jan. 24,25: Westgate junior-high three one-act plays at Franco-Manitoban Centre.

Feb. 22-23: MC Manitoba annual delegate sessions at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

March 6-8: Westgate senior-high drama.

April 18-20: Manitoba Mennonite World-wide Marriage Encounter weekend, Winnipeg. For more information, visit marriageencounter.org.

Ontario

Nov. 17: Fairview Mennonite Home annual handicraft sale, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Cambridge. Features wood crafts, wreaths and swags, wood planter boxes, wearables, fresh baking. Lunch available.

Nov. 18: Dedication of newly expanded facilities at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont.; 2:30 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).

Dec. 1: Annual Urban Mennonite Bazaar at Welcome Inn, Hamilton, Ont.,

from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Quilt raffle, penny sale, homemade baking, preserves and more. For more information or directions, call 905-525-5824.

Dec. 2: Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir presents "In Dulci Jubilo: The Sounds of Christmas," 3 p.m., at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

Dec. 8: "Three Choirs at Christmas" concert with Menno Singers, Menno Youth Singers and Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir, at St. Matthews Lutheran Church, Kitchener; 8 p.m.

Dec. 21: Fairview Mennonite Home Choir and Handbell Choir present "In Search of the Perfect Christmas, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Dec. 21-23: Listowel Mennonite Church presents "Marketplace," an interactive experience with the Christmas story; 7 to 9 p.m. (21-23)

and 2 to 4:30 p.m. (23).

March 1: Menno Singers presents "Lenten Journey" with Nota Bene Period Orchestra, at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener; 8 p.m. Performance of Buxtehude's "Membra Jesu Nostris."

May 3: Menno Singers presents "Partly English" at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener; 8 p.m. Featuring works of Parry, Elgar and Vaughan Williams.

June 20-22: Zurich Mennonite Church 100th anniversary homecoming weekend celebrations.

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

Employment Opportunities

Camp Assiniboia, Headingley, Man., invites applications for: **MANAGER** (April 2008). Key attributes sought include energy, effective communication, operational know-how and hospitality mindset.

GUEST GROUP COORDINATOR (.5 FTE), (April 2008). Organizational and communication skills, flexible schedule, required to coordinate and host guest groups.

FOOD SERVICES COORDINATOR. Cooking and management skills required to oversee and participate in all aspects of meal preparation for campers and guests.

Salary and benefits. Housing available on site. Inquiries: Director of Camping Ministries, Mennonite Church Manitoba, 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2J1, camps@mennonchurch.mb.ca, 204-895-2267.



Silver Lake Mennonite Camp invites applications for the positions of **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR** and **HEAD COOK**. As part of the leadership team (serving under the Executive Director and alongside two Head Counsellors), the Assistant Director will lead and support a summer staff team of

approximately 50 individuals, giving overall direction to the summer camp program. The position is hourly part-time from Dec. 1, 2007, through April 30, 2008, and then full-time from May 1 - Aug. 31. It is preferable to have a candidate who will make a two-year commitment, serving part-time through the fall of 2009. The Head Cook is to oversee the preparation of all food and management of the kitchen at Silver Lake from the middle of June through the end of August. For more information on either position, e-mail silverlake@slmc.on.ca.

Please send a letter of application, a resume and the names of two references to:

Silver Lake Mennonite Camp,
RR#1,
Hepworth, ON N0H 1P0

Mississauga Mennonite Fellowship is looking for a **HALF-TIME PASTOR** who enjoys preaching. To the extent that aptitude and time commitments allow, we welcome particular attention to pastoring our youths and young adults, keeping our fellowship connected to the conferences, and making us aware of peace and social concerns within our immediate and wider communities. Salary and benefits will reflect MCEC guidelines. Contact: Andrew Lounsbury by e-mail at a.g.lounsbury@rogers.com or at 416-232-8483.

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

Sherbrooke Mennonite Church is located in an urban multicultural 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:
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- Providing leadership in the management and coordination of resident care services.
- Participating in the development and evaluation of resident care programs.
- Providing a nursing liaison with the multidisciplinary care team and with community support agencies.
- Coordinating and supporting nursing orientation and education programs.

Fax or Mail Resumes:
Attn: Human Resources
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Fax: 604-859-6695
www.taborhome.org



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



Receptionist

Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC) is accepting applications for a receptionist for our Winnipeg office.

This person will be responsible for front desk and telephone reception, processing incoming and outgoing mail including deposits and receipting, word processing, and various other clerical duties. Experience in a computerized office environment, specifically using MS OFFICE software with proficiency in MS WORD, is desired. Applicants should enjoy interacting with the public and possess strong interpersonal and telephone skills.

MFC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. A complete job description is available upon request. Processing of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Interested persons should send their resume to:

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Tel: (204) 488-1985 Fax: (204) 488-1986
e-mail: rbjanzen@mennofoundation.ca

Taking Jesus' peace to the 'frontier'

BY TERESA FALK

National Correspondent

WINNIPEG

Hyo Sook Yun is hoping to learn all she can about Canadian Mennonites during her year in Canada. The South Korean arrived in Winnipeg in August and began an internship with the Mennonite Church Canada communications department.

Yun, 27, was placed with MC Canada through the Mennonite Central Committee International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP), a vocational and cultural exchange program for international young adults between the ages of 18 and 30.

This is Yun's first time in North America. "There are so many differences," she said. "I was living in Seoul, which is a very big and complicated city. But here [Winnipeg] it is so calm and peaceful. There are many trees. And people are so kind."

On Oct. 16, Yun gave a presentation to MC Canada staff on her work with the Frontiers. She worked with the Korean peacekeeping ministry for five years, serving in South Korea and Afghanistan. Her main tasks were with the media team.

Yun said the organization is committed to talking and bringing peace to conflict areas. "Jesus is peace. If we want to follow Jesus or live like Jesus, we have to share the good news about peace," she told MC Canada staff.

The Frontiers has two main programs: year-long world service and one-month peace camps. The ministry, which is funded through church and personal donations, operates in South Korea, Timor, Indonesia, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Yun will continue her work with the Frontiers when she returns to South Korea next summer. ☘

Before coming to Canada to work as a communications intern with MC Canada, Hyo Sook Yun spent time in Afghanistan (pictured) serving with the Frontiers, a Korean peacekeeping ministry.