

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

Nov. 26, 2007  
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Pope presented with  
martyr's tale

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CANADIAN  
MENNONITE  
10<sup>th</sup> anniversary

## EDITORIAL

## Seeds bearing fruit

TIM MILLER DYCK  
EDITOR / PUBLISHER

One of the greatest privileges of my role here is the chance to visit congregations across the country. Let me share two stories.

First Hmong Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont., had its origins with a group of seven or eight families that started worshipping together in 1979 in New Hamburg, Ont. Some of these families were sponsored as Laotian refugees in the 1970s by local Mennonite churches, including Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden, Ont.

Some that came were Christians, and they started a small worship service, meeting in a space arranged for them by their sponsors. This small group was then joined by other Hmong refugees in the surrounding area who also wanted to worship in their own language.

As the church grew, the group moved to another facility provided by Wilmot Mennonite Church, New Hamburg, Ont., and then to yet another at First Mennonite Church in Kitchener. In 1996, the congregation moved into its own building and changed its name from Hmong Christian Church to First Hmong Mennonite Church.

Hmong refugees, many of them sponsored by churches in the 1970s and 1980s, were scattered across Canada. But, desiring to be together, the Hmong people slowly located each other and most then decided to move together to the Kitchener area. There are 800 to 1,000 Hmong there now, most of the

total Hmong population in Canada other than a small group in Vancouver, according to First Hmong pastor Dan Yang. Church members worked on welcoming and caring for the newcomers. They went caroling to their homes at Christmas. They visited the sick and went to funerals. "Hmong people, they like to have a party, and they give a testimony to their friends and relatives.



Hmong people usually go to visit the sick people at the hospital and encourage and strengthen them in prayer. Some of them become Christians," said Yang.

First Hmong has grown by leaps-and-bounds. It is now about 300 people in 50 families. It is bursting with children; they outnumber adults, actually. The church would like to hire an (English-speaking) youth pastor to help with youth ministry.

Why did the church choose to join the Mennonite church when they had never

PHOTO BY BOUA SHAO VANG



Earlier this year, First Hmong Mennonite Church invited Canadian Mennonite's board and staff to meet and enjoy a delicious meal of Hmong food together.

heard of Mennonites before? "Their [Mennonite] sponsors loved them, housed them and took care of them, so the Hmong people feel that the Hmong church is a daughter church of the Mennonite church," said Yang.

On another visit, this one to Lao Canadian Evangelical Mennonite church in Toronto, I met Matthew Sou. Now part of one of our newest congregations, he was sponsored out of a Thai refugee camp by Salem Mennonite Church in Tofield, Alta. "I will never forget it," he told me. "I was baptized there. It is still my home no matter where I live."

There are many Canadian Mennonite churches who have invested so much in sponsoring refugees. Sometimes, these newcomers later move away and perhaps contact is lost. I wanted to tell the story of how two small seeds of faithfulness have borne fruit in amazing ways. God multiplies faithfulness!

**New National Correspondent:** I would like to welcome Aaron Epp as this magazine's new Winnipeg-based national correspondent. He graduated from Canadian Mennonite University earlier this year with a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in English and Biblical and Theological Studies.



Aaron Epp

He was president of the student council, yearbook co-editor and residence assistant at different times, and is a member of Douglas Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. My thanks to outgoing national correspondent Teresa Falk.

**Christmas schedule:** Please note that the next two issues will arrive three weeks apart rather than two. Grace and peace to you all in this time of remembering and celebrating Christ's coming.

**ABOUT THE COVER:**

MWC president Nancy Heisey presents a framed image of Anabaptist martyr Dirk Willems to Pope Benedict XVI. She told the story of Willems, who was captured, tried and convicted, but escaped from prison in 1569. Willems fled across the thin ice of a pond, but when the guard who pursued him broke through the ice, Willems turned back and rescued him. Willems was then recaptured and soon burned at the stake. See stories beginning on page 16.

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# CANADIAN MENNONITE

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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 Dec. 17 issue will be posted by Dec. 13.

# Covenant, not constitution

*Lay ministry-led Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship decides from the beginning to limit its structure*

BY FRAN GIESBRECHT

Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship

For most of the history of Mennonite Christianity, Mennonite churches have called up pastors from within their own congregations, generally selecting people without formal theological training and sometimes choosing among candidates by lot. Those selected often needed to continue working at other jobs to financially support themselves.

This practice has almost completely changed in the last 50 years. Most congregations in our denomination have decided they are now best served by calling pastors that have spent time identifying, studying and training for this calling, and to pay them so as to free them from other responsibilities when carrying out their ministry.

However, a small number of Canadian Mennonite churches have, very deliberately, chosen to call up only lay leadership. We approached four of these churches in different parts of the country to ask for their experiences with this model of church leadership, as well as asking Sven Eriksson, the church's most senior pastor, to reflect on the subject. —Ed.

**F**orty years ago, Winnipeg Bergthaler Mennonite Church, now named Home Street Mennonite, called on pastor Lawrence Klippenstein to lead in the establishment of a General Conference Mennonite congregation in the Winnipeg suburb of Fort Garry. This congregation, named Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, worshipped in two local college campus settings for approximately 17 years before constructing a church building at its present site. Consensus takes time, after all!

Initially, about 10 to 15 families discussed and planned what our church structures—or intentional lack of them—would be. It was determined we would be a strong supporter of our conferences and of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). We always had ordained ministers and biblical scholars in our midst, but still decided on a lay ministry model in a multiple team ministry setting, a model which each of our leaders was familiar with.

If you would have asked this group of people—many of whom are still attending—what their vision was for this congregation at that time, they likely would have responded with a simple: “We exist to give our service and witness to God as members of the General Conference of Mennonites, now named Mennonite Church Manitoba and Mennonite Church Canada.”

Over the next few years, under the lay leadership of member Henry H. Epp, we wrote our covenant. We had decided to limit structure in our fellowship, so we determined we would write a covenant instead of a constitution. This living document would eventually contain our beliefs and commitments on salvation, membership, baptism, communion, multiple team ministry, worship, stewardship and mission, as well as our bylaws, com-

## Honouring one of their own

*Fort Garry congregation creates student bursary*

BY TERESA FALK

National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG



Approximately 150 people gathered to celebrate the life of Carole Sawatzky during a fundraising event at Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship in Winnipeg on Nov. 9. The event was held to raise money for a women in ministry bursary that has been established at Canadian Mennonite University in Sawatzky's name.

Sawatzky, now 42, was discerned to be one of the congregation's lay ministers two decades ago. In 1999, she was diagnosed with a progressive neurological disorder and is now a resident of Deer Lodge in Winnipeg.

The event, which raised nearly \$10,000, included a variety of entertainment, a silent auction of donated

items and a time of sharing where people talked about how Sawatzky had impacted their lives.

"It was absolutely beyond all expectations," said Sawatzky's mother, Anna.

Despite being sick earlier that day, Sawatzky was at the event with a smile on her face.

Prior to her illness, Sawatzky was an occupational therapist looking for a career change. Her father, Peter, told the audience she was planning to attend Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. "We think it's a very good idea," he said of the Carole Louise Sawatzky Seminary/Graduate Studies Bursary. "It suits her very well."

Abe Peters, a member of Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, approached the Sawatzkys with the idea of creating a bursary in their daughter's name. "We wanted to find a way to support women who are entering ministry," he said. "Carole was very active in ministry—children's ministry and worship services. She was very creative in terms of ministry work. And we want to honour her contributions."

*Carole Sawatzky plays during a Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship worship service during the late 1980s.*

mittee responsibilities, gift discernment process, and vision for the "circles of fellowship" we named K-groups.

K-groups were given the task of being the "first-in-line" pastoral caregivers for our members; over the years, some even planned weddings and funerals for each other. Our lay ministers would support these K-groups and other ministries in their efforts to do pastoral care, along with their other tasks.

We believed the Word called some to be preachers, teachers, visitors, counselors and to do other tasks, and so we covenanted with each other to build the local congregation by assigning tasks to each other, for terms of two or three years.

Not scheduling any weeknight programming was our way of encouraging members to get involved in their local community functions—in an effort to be the church during the week.

It was, and remains, the responsibility of our Worship Committee to discern those among us who have been given the gift of preaching and worship leading. Our lay ministers preach when invited to do so. We have five lay ministers, typically a mix of men and women, who preach when asked—approximately two

or three times a year each, with others taking their turn the rest of the time.

We implemented a church structure that positioned our decision-making authority in the congregation, with decision-making to be done by consensus. Each spring we meet to discern the Spirit-given gifts of each person in prep-

*It's a humbling experience to have an entire congregation meet to discern the gifts given to you by God's Spirit, and then call on you to use them.*

aration for discerning who we will ask to serve in the tasks of our fellowship.

It has always been necessary for our people to foster a culture of saying yes when asked to serve. It's a humbling experience to have an entire congregation meet to discern the gifts given to you by God's Spirit, and then call on you to use them. It has been said, "If the church calls, you ought to serve." We are still working to continuously improve this process.

Our congregation has several individuals and families who are serving internationally and many members who are involved in local service through MCC and other ministries. Leadership

gifts have been nurtured in a number of young adults who are now serving in pastoral ministry elsewhere.

We attempt to devote 60 percent or more of our planned giving to agencies serving Christ in our name—especially MC Manitoba, MC Canada and MCC.

Our congregation has always had

strong involvement in sponsoring refugees, first from Vietnam and later from El Salvador, Bosnia and Congo.

The church's leadership structure has been integral in determining first who we were and then who we've become. A single decision made 40 years ago by a small group of people discerning what it meant for them to be faithful to the calling of God's Spirit has benefited us greatly. ☺

*Fran Giesbrecht is chair of Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg.*

## KITCHENER-WATERLOO HOUSE CHURCHES

# Seeking the priesthood of all believers

*Intense commitment and honesty are 'God-filled times' for some but not all*

BY DAVE ROGALSKY  
Eastern Canada Correspondent

The Kitchener-Waterloo House Churches were founded in 1969 by John Miller and Walter Klaassen—both professors at the time at the then-named Conrad Grebel College—along with others. Their impulse, like that of other house churches founded around that time, was to return to an early church format where “the priesthood of all believers” mentioned in I Peter 2:5,9 was to be practised. This was a fundamental part of Mennonite Church Concern Movement beliefs among scholars and church leaders in the 1960s and ’70s.

The KW House Churches are intense, intimate and intentional communities of worship, mutual responsibility, care, study, spiritual formation and service. Many of the key participants and long-term core members are “Mennonite professionals” working and serving in Mennonite institutions like Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), House of

Friendship and Community Justice Initiatives. Others work in peace and justice-related institutions like Mary’s Place, a shelter for women leaving abusive relationships. Together, the four individual groups that make up the K-W House Churches support and run a refugee reception centre for which they receive government funding.

*Many of the key participants and long-term core members are “Mennonite professionals” working and serving in Mennonite institutions . . . .*

The K-W House Churches’ membership is admittedly quite an homogeneous group, but Marg Nally, chair of the MCC Ontario board and a member, with her husband Bob, since 1982, wonders how they can be more inclusive and welcoming.

This form of church is not for all people, Nally acknowledges, as it re-

quires intense honesty, high commitments of time and energy, prioritizing these groups and participation in them, as well as deep engagement. The implicit culture of the House Churches may make some people feel excluded rather than included. Some people have not found the House Churches a positive experience, either finding the intensity too much, or not enough; the latter have left looking for even deeper community, perhaps even communalism.

Others have found the intense debate and honest disagreement too confrontational. Nally, however, sees the disagreements as “God-filled times” of human experience.

Gathering in their four groups, the adult members meet weekly on a weeknight to fellowship, worship, study Scripture and apply it to life. Every other Sunday the groups meet together to worship and for Christian formation sessions

for youths and children.

Leadership is by consensus, both within the individual groups and in the combined gathering. Some groups rotate leadership of study and worship, while others identify gifts and are led by the same folks most weeks. Yearly retreats, evaluations and newsletters that communicate the past year’s happenings are ways of holding each other accountable.

While the cores of each group have remained stable, many people have come and gone, often while studying at Conrad Grebel University College. Some members worship in other congregations on Sunday mornings. In recent years, a young adult house church has formed, mostly from the children of long-time members. Nally sees this as a key test of the Christian formation and “passing on the power” which the groups have practised. ☸



PHOTO BY STEVE IZMA

*The K-W House Churches offer a time to honour their aging and growing in the spirit. Sharing in a blessing of light for Joan Crick and Barbara Hopkins, who are holding birthday candles, are Margaret Nally, left, and Cheryl Bunzenmeyer.*

## PEMBINA FELLOWSHIP

# Uncharted territory

*House church cluster still going strong after three decades*

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent

**P**embina Fellowship is a cluster of house churches in the Morden-Winkler area of Manitoba. Without paid leadership, a building or an administrative structure, this group of 25 to 30 families enjoys a measure of flexibility that has enabled it to respond and adapt to individuals and needs over its 32-year history.

Recently, Les and Marrian Zacharias, Abe Hildebrand, Bernie Loeppky, James Friesen and Howard Zacharias, all long-time members, met to reflect on their journey as a church. All of them have children who have grown up in the house church.

Pembina Fellowship began as a group

*'We celebrate the 12th birthday in a big way. The child and his/her parents plan the service. The whole Sunday is about the kid.'*

of four couples that met for Sunday evening Bible study and fellowship. Others soon joined and came to view the group as their church.

"For those of us who had continued with church involvement elsewhere, the prospect of committing to the establishment of a house church represented a significant challenge," said Les.

It was uncharted territory for them, but they took the decision seriously and have learned much along the way. Les did a year of theological studies at seminary, while Hildebrand visited several intentional communities throughout North America.

"We didn't have a model necessarily, but we always asked ourselves, 'What would the early Anabaptists' communities be like?'" said James.

"In some ways our decisions were a reaction to the larger church," said Howard. "We wanted to move away from putting on a performance, in being over-committed and over-organized," added Abe.

Pembina has resisted formal leadership and, although it has experienced significant growth, it remains committed



PEMBINA FELLOWSHIP PHOTOS



*Hosting a hog roast fundraiser; meeting for an outdoor summer service; building a ramp for one of their own who has multiple sclerosis.*

to the house church model. Howard recalled a time when the members appointed a group of elders to look at issues, but because this was not well-received it had to be abandoned.

The fellowship meets in five homes on Sunday mornings and once a month it gathers as an entire group at a rented facility for worship. The five groups are rearranged every two years.

"Each house group has a coordinator who brings issues and concerns to the open membership meetings that are held when needed at the end of the month," Howard explained.

Sunday morning worship usually does not include sermons. "Each group decides how to do Sundays. It usually includes drama, kids' activities, music,

more typical Bible study or dialogue around questions related to the lectionary," Howard noted. Sunday worship is always followed by a potluck lunch and frequently afternoon activities.

"Sometimes there's been a tendency to be more issue-centred than worship-centred, and we have to bring ourselves back to what worship is about," said James.

Communion services are held in the evening without children present, but sometimes a house group will have communion independently.

"We leave it up to the parents about their children's participation," said Les. "A variety of people have performed baptisms and done marriages. We have held preparation for baptism classes, but some go elsewhere for premarital counselling."

Pembina Fellowship has had only one funeral in its history. A former United Church minister, who joined for nine months prior to her death, taught the group about dying. When she died, Pembina Fellowship women prepared her body and the casket was made by one of Pembina's members.

A significant rite of passage that Pembina Fellowship celebrates is the 12th birthday of each child.

"We celebrate the 12th birthday in a big way," said Marrian. "The child and his/her parents plan the service. The whole Sunday is about the kid. They choose an adult to speak for them. They are given a Bible and a rose and are welcomed as 'one of us.'"

Pembina Fellowship has only one appointed position—a treasurer. Not having a building, paid leadership or an involved structure has been freeing for the church. The fellowship has bought and renovated houses for refugees it has sponsored on two different occasions. Later, the houses were sold and the housing money now goes to Church World Service's Build a Village program when there are no local projects to fund.

Much of Pembina's giving goes to concerns that people in church are con-

nected with through work or through volunteering. When projects are identified and undertaken, a committee is formed. The long-time members all agreed that, while it sounds ad hoc and chaotic, it works well.

Pembina Fellowship itself works well. It has nurtured strong intergenerational relationships, met spiritual needs, reached out to the wider community and sustained Christian community, even when contentious issues and trying times made the journey harder. ❧

The Worship Committee plans our Sunday mornings—worship leading, music and speakers. Lay speakers come either from within the congregation or as guests (who are paid an honorarium). At Lent, Easter, Advent and Pentecost, carefully designed worship services consist of hymns, Scripture readings and prayers.

Although we do not have the continuity of a pastor speaking each Sunday, we sometimes ask speakers to address selected themes or to focus on one book of the Bible throughout the month. More often, we follow the lectionary texts, reminding us that even though we're a small group, we're worshipping with the same texts as thousands of believers around the world.

Point Grey's volunteer administrator/coordinator looks after the mail, the telephone answering service and the Sunday bulletin. The Pastoral Concerns Committee has responsibility for visitation, small groups, prayer and arranging counselling as needed. Although many in our congregation are comfortable with this, some would definitely prefer having a pastor to call on in times of crisis or to provide spiritual leadership.

One of our members is licenced to perform marriages on behalf of the fellowship, each marriage being approved by the church board beforehand. Marriage preparation sessions are arranged through professional Christian counselling agencies. ❧

*Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship is dually affiliated with MC B.C. and the Mennonite Brethren Conference. Henry Neufeld is a long-time member of the church.*

# Hymnals, chairs and half a piano

*With no paid pastor Vancouver fellowship uses tithes for outside church work*

BY HENRY NEUFELD

Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship

When our last pastor left rather abruptly about 16 years ago, our high hopes for profound sermons and excellent leadership were suddenly dashed, forcing our little fellowship to continue the next week without a pastor.

We quickly realized that unless we did things ourselves, the fellowship would fold, so people readily agreed to help with administration, preaching, planning, visitation and praying. Since people rallied so well, and since it is nearly impossible for 40 people to attract an exceptionally talented individual to be our part-time pastor, we continued without one.

Given our size and resources, we are fortunate that we don't have a church building to finance. Instead, we rent the chapel of the Menno Simons Centre, a former convent turned into a university

student residence, near the University of B.C. in Vancouver. We own some hymnals, chairs and half a piano.

Unlike most churches, we have no paid staff. But a pastor should not be doing things we can manage on our own anyway; that would merely be relieving us of our responsibilities. Furthermore, given our small size most of our financial resources would be used for the pastor's salary. By not having a pastor, our tithes can go to church work outside our little fellowship.

POINT GREY INTER-MENNONITE PHOTO



*Members of Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship are pictured at a church retreat this spring.*



## FROM OUR LEADERS

# To pay or not to pay . . . a local church decision

SVEN ERIKSSON

Does Mennonite Church Canada have an “official position” about paid—as compared to unpaid—ministers?

The *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* addresses “Ministry and Leadership” in Article 15: “We believe that ministry continues the work of Christ, who gives gifts through the Holy Spirit to all believers and empowers them for service in the church and in the world. We believe that God calls particular persons in the church to specific leadership ministries and offices. . . .

“The church calls, trains and appoints men and women to a variety of leadership ministries on its behalf.”

As we visited congregations on the God’s People Now! Tour, general secretary Robert J. Suderman and those of us who accompanied him found a very rich variety of applications of the above prin-

ciple of leadership from our *Confession of Faith*.

We met with house churches and with those whose ministerial leadership was being shared by folks in their congregations. We also met with congregations whose ministerial needs were being



*It is clear that each kind of congregation faithfully worships, serves and reaches out in compassionate witness as the body of Christ.*

addressed by teams of paid pastoral staff. We also met with congregations whose pastors worked full-time in other vocations while serving their congregations because, in most cases, the congregation could not afford to provide a salary and benefits for its pastor.

It is clear that each kind of congregation faithfully worships, serves and reaches out in compassionate witness as the body of Christ. It is also clear that

faithful, compassionate, wise leadership was being practised in both types of congregations.

These differences of leadership practice among our congregations reflect a rich variety of history, culture, gifts and circumstances. It may well be easy for some congregations who are unusually blessed with gifted leaders to muster non-paid pastoral resources from within, allowing their financial potential to go to ministry beyond the congregation. This is good.

It is more common, though, for the needs and circumstances of a church to call for one or more full-time paid

pastors. Hence, MC Canada provides a salary scale to guide a congregation in supporting its pastor.

The essential principles of church leadership are based on the calling out of leadership by the Holy Spirit and the discerning of that leadership in the church. Exactly how that unfolds is a matter of local tradition, need and creativity.

*Sven Eriksson is MC Canada’s denominational minister.*

## ⌘ For discussion

1. Fort Garry Fellowship, K-W House Churches, Pembina Fellowship and Point Grey Fellowship are Mennonite congregations that don’t have paid pastors. What do you find appealing about these groups? What questions would you like to ask them?
2. These congregations intentionally do not pay pastors and most don’t own buildings. What are they able to do because they are not tied down to paying for upkeep and salaries? What might be some disadvantages in not having a pastor? What do they do for ongoing teaching and leadership, or for weddings and funerals, or in times of crisis?
3. Sven Eriksson says that some congregations are “unusually blessed with gifted leaders.” Could any congregation manage without a pastor, or are unusually gifted leaders necessary?
4. Eriksson says church leadership is called by the Holy Spirit and discerned by the congregation, but how it “unfolds is a matter of local tradition, need and creativity.” Does your congregation feel comfortable with its model of leadership? What might your congregation learn from groups without a paid pastor?

## 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

#### ✉ **Conserving energy our best defence against nuclear power**

**RE: "SHOULD THE church invest in nuclear energy?"**  
Oct. 1, 2007, page 12.

My first reaction to Ed Janzen's article put me in a state of shock. I fail to understand why this would even be considered as a possible investment opportunity, especially since the membership has already been intentionally investing in socially responsible funds. Why would the church depart from this and fund an irresponsible investment?

I understand it is very difficult to get accurate information since the uranium companies have been actively promoting nuclear energy as a clean energy resource. I understand that nuclear energy doesn't produce the same air pollutants, but it produces something far more dangerous—nuclear waste

I cannot in good conscious support leaving these by-products to my great-grandchildren. Furthermore, when we look at northern Saskatchewan and the uranium mines there, it becomes clear that the uranium mining process has left a terrible scar on our landscape.

In Saskatchewan we already have one of the most expensive environmental clean-up projects in our country. Why would we make this problem worse? Would this be embracing a biblical view of stewardship? When I think about the biblical push towards proper stewardship of our resources, the answer is crystal clear—nuclear energy does not fit within this stewardship model.

As a final thought, obviously conserving energy is our best defence. Geothermal and solar technologies have made huge strides recently. Passive and active solar power are huge resources, especially when we design our buildings in an environmentally sustainable way. I know a Mennonite success story in Saskatoon,

where Bethany Manor has recently installed a geothermal unit with solar panels.

CURTIS DYCK, SASKATOON

#### ✉ **Church must take seriously Jesus' call to visit him in jail**

**WHAT A DELIGHT** to read the Ryan Grills story, "Letters from the 'big house,'" July 30, 2007, page 11.

Two thoughts come to mind. My experience over the last 25 years with M2/W2, a B.C. Christian prison ministry, has impressed me with the wonderful opportunity to respond in obedience to Christ's invitation to meet him in jail. Yet I am sadly astonished at the pathetic neglect of the teaching and challenge given to us by Christ himself to visit him in prison. There is acceptance of this program by inmates, as more than 200 are presently waiting to have a Christian come to visit them. The Canadian correctional service enthusiastically welcomes this partnership with the Christian public, so please come!

I have been told by correctional workers and a prison chaplain just recently how much of a difference an M2/W2 connection with inmates makes, not only in the prisoner's life and habits, but also in the improvement in the tone and environment of the institution.

But it must also be said that there is a pathetic lack of public teaching of this theme in the churches, Mennonite and otherwise, of these "fateful" words of Jesus. How can our pastors and leaders be so negligent in the teaching of this invitation and other Bible texts related to the theme of caring for the poor and disadvantaged?

Since the publication of the story, I have since given two inmate friends copies of it and have asked them for names of fellow inmates who would like to have a Christian pen pal.

GEORGE EPP, CHILLIWACK, B.C.

#### ✉ **Pastors need support 'on duty' as well as when on sabbatical**

**I WAS GLAD** to see the "Caring for your pastor" article, Oct. 1, 2007, page 4. Making people aware of the common practice of sabbaticals should lead to more well-informed congregations. That is important because many church members who are ultimately asked to give their blessing on the granting of a pastoral sabbatical probably come from a work background where sabbaticals are either uncommon or non-existent. This can sometimes lead to feelings of frustration or disillusionment for them. Undoubtedly, it has also left some pastors in unfair or uncomfortable positions.

If the goal is to protect the physical and emotional

health of our pastors and enhance the quality and longevity of their ministries, I would only add an encouragement to congregations to look for creative and effective means of supporting pastors while they are on duty, as well as when they are on leave.

Churches can make sure that pastors have people to talk to about life in the church. Churches can talk to the families of the pastor to see how things are going and to find out if they are aware of any areas where there is a gap in support of the pastor's work.

People in church leadership can stop by the church office, or meet the pastor on a somewhat regular basis. Having the opportunity to meet with leadership might help give pastors a sense that they are not facing all church issues alone when they face all of their employers on "game day."

No church will support a pastor perfectly, but we probably can do more. Pastors are not only a valuable resource, many of them are our friends. Churches don't need any more reasons than that to be intentional about supporting them where they can.

PHIL GUENTHER, STEINBACH, MAN.

### ✉ Magazine's 'editorial freedom' called into question

AS I GLANCED down the table of contents of the Oct. 15, 2007, issue of *Canadian Mennonite*, my eye was drawn to the magazine's mission statement that includes, "Editorial freedom is expressed through seeking and speaking the truth in love and by providing a balance of perspectives in news and

## GOD, MONEY AND ME

# All about money

SHERRI GROSZ

It's a struggle many parents face: How can they teach their children to manage money responsibly? Is it too late if they are in their teens or 20s?

The best time to begin teaching children about money is when they are young. Giving children an allowance is a great way to teach saving, spending and sharing habits that can last a lifetime.

For teens, it can be more challenging.

There isn't as much time left and the amounts of money involved are larger. Allowances aren't simply play money; there should be expectations

attached to them. Perhaps the parents provide lunch, but if the teens want to purchase lunch, they pay for it. Parents may pay part of the fees for lessons or sports, but their teens could pick up the rest of the tab.

By the time teens are finishing high school, they could reasonably be expected to be handling the money for most of their own expenses through an allowance and earnings. It seems like a very expensive proposition for parents to

hand large sums of money to their kids. In reality, it's money you would have given or spent on them; you are simply letting them learn to manage it.

Add up what you might reasonably spend on your teens over a period of time and give them that amount. It's important that parents give clear expectations of what the money is to cover: Clothes, school trips, car insurance,



*Parents would never hand their teens the keys to the family car and tell them to be careful while they learn to drive.*

music lessons, sports fees. Make it clear what choices are not permitted. While parents may permit their teens to purchase their own clothes, they retain the last right of refusal on their choices. So if they come home with something inappropriate, parents might let them deal with the loss of the item. Clear expectations are critical!

Parents fear that their teens will make poor choices and have no money to pay for more important things. That can,

and possibly will, happen. If teens blow money on a concert and can't pay for car insurance or fees for sports, or can't buy new shoes, it will be a hard lesson and a tough few months for both generations. But learning that lesson now, while the stakes are low, is better than learning it later when they can't pay for something more serious—such as rent, a student loan or the hydro bill.

Parents would never hand their teens the keys to the family car and tell them to be careful while they learn to drive. They need driver training and experience gained with their parents at their side. Money management is much the same.

The results of not learning can be disastrous and long-lasting; teens may

struggle to pay bills or, later in life, may even declare bankruptcy as a result of poor choices. Teaching children and teens to handle money is one of the best gifts they can be given.

*Sherri Grosz is a stewardship consultant at the Kitchener, Ont., office of Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For stewardship education, including helping young people learn how to budget, and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit mennofoundation.ca.*

commentary?”

Imagine my surprise, then, as a few pages into the magazine I read Aiden Enns' column, "Five reasons to stay in church." Enns expressed his view that "God is present everywhere, in all people and in all faiths." Immediately following the sentence containing that statement, an italicized editor's note was inserted into the column indicating that this is contrary to the teaching of the church.

This is editorial freedom? That this editorial rejoinder should happen in *New Order Voice*, which is intended to reflect the views of younger Christians,

and in a column where Enns talks about the role that doubt can play in the church, was unbearably ironic.

Is the editor really to be the arbiter of the church's positions? If so, the editor has plenty of space on the editorial page to argue his views without plunking comments into the writing of a columnist.

I beseech you to let columnists speak their heart and mind, and trust us readers, as your mission statement concludes, "to have open hearts and minds in the process of discerning God's will."

DEAN E. PEACHEY, WINNIPEG

## FAMILY TIES

# Table setting

MELISSA MILLER

**H**umming softly, I put the finishing touches on the dinner table, lighting a small candle, which cast a golden hue on the setting. Readying the table was calming, pleasant work. On this evening there were just two place settings, for my husband and myself, although I've found the joy to be as satisfying no matter how many are gathering for the evening meal.

Turning back to the kitchen to finish making dinner, I smiled, remembering how the table setting ritual began. Previously, I let the table setting go until the last minute, usually misjudging the time I needed. Often I rushed through the job, frantic with the overlapping tasks. Often when I sat down to eat, I came tense, feeling overwhelmed and frazzled. Not the sweetest way to host a meal with loved ones!

The turnaround came with words of a woman from a previous generation. A few years ago, my mother- and father-in-law were one of 10 couples in their small country church who had been married more than 50 years. In recognition of this commitment, church leaders decided to hold a celebration, honouring these long, faithful marriages. The local newspaper picked up the story, and interviewed

some of the couples. When asked what makes a happy marriage, one woman replied, "I always made sure the table was set when he came through the door. I figured if the potatoes needed a little more time to cook, he would be patient if he saw that the table was set. Dinner would be coming soon."

At the time, I chuckled at her comment, gleaned from a life where women worked at home with a primary task of ensuring the hungry man was fed when he came into the house. Such was the life



*[M]ore often I came to dinner relaxed and ready to enjoy the food and the people . . . .*

I knew as a child. But for many people my age and younger, such distinct roles between men and women no longer exist. Today there are many fathers home with young children, or couples who divide equally the work of the kitchen. The shared evening meal itself is often elusive, given the factors that pull individual family members out of the home—work commitments, church meetings, and activities like sports, music or study opportunities.

My chuckle soon gave way to seeing the wisdom in her words, and I began to

set the table ahead of time, when I had a few moments in the midst of dinner preparation. A modest change produced a big reward. In this little space, I could take pleasure in the colours of the placemats and dinnerware. I might add a flower or two. I could create a small amount of order by placing forks to the left and knives and spoons to the right (especially valued on a day when too much disorder had occurred). I could imagine the warmth of holding hands, of praying, of being grateful to God for food and home. An unforeseen bonus was that more often I came to dinner relaxed and ready to enjoy the food and the people gathered around the table.

Meal times are holy times. Stories about food and hospitality are plenteous in the Bible. Jesus' ministry often occurred in settings involving food. Jesus'

mother heralded his conception by remembering God's promise to "fill the hungry with good things" (Luke 1:53). I didn't realize it at first, but I was hungry when I read the wise woman's advice about having the table ready. I was hungry to have more calm, peace and pleasure in the acts of preparing and hosting food, in the holy space of eating with loved ones and guests. And God provided!

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

## ✉ Editorial comment in Enns' column seen as rude interruption

SEVERAL NIGHTS AGO my sleep was rudely interrupted by incredulous gasps from my wife. She was reading *Canadian Mennonite* again. Wishing to see what all the hullabaloo was about, I was directed to Aiden Enns' column, "Five reasons to stay in church," Oct. 15, 2007, page 9.

I was enjoying Enns' ruminations, when I was jolted by another rude interruption, this time from the editor. There, in the midst of Enns' challenge to take an interfaith approach, the editor found it necessary to enlighten us with the real truth: There is only one way to salvation.

Suddenly I felt like a child. I was back in Sunday school again, being carefully herded onto the narrow paths of righteous thinking. As a veteran reader of newspapers, both secular and religious, I have never seen such ideological hovering over the content of a column. Is this *Pravda* or *Canadian Mennonite*?

The editor's smarmy interjection slams the door on one of the most important issues of our time—interfaith dialogue. If someone doesn't explain to the editor the difference between a column and an editorial, *Canadian Mennonite* will shrivel in its mission to provide analysis of issues facing the church today and swell in its role as a treatment for insomnia.

PHILIP MARTIN, KITCHENER, ONT.

### YOUNG PROPHETS

# Different gifts, same Spirit

SEULMI AHN

The theme of a service I attended at Charleswood Mennonite Church said that "there are varieties of gifts, but the same spirit." I certainly knew what that meant, but what was I, a mere high school student with little faith experience, supposed to make of this?

To gain a better understanding, I went to the best source there is available—the Bible. I Corinthians 12:12-31 talks about how the church and the people are like one body. Every body part has a different role, and without the other parts of the body it cannot meet its full potential. All the parts of the body are equally important, just as God loves all of us equally.

Reading the Bible reminded me of that. When I am at church, I know that God loves us all equally despite our faults and differences. The tough part is keeping that in mind when I'm not at church. It gets really difficult to focus on that fact because I have a bit of a perfectionist

personality. I am too busy pursuing my goals. I always forget that God doesn't care if I get the best mark in class, a lead in a musical, or the Most Valuable Player award. God gives each of us different



*Ironic, isn't it, though, that because I grew up in a multicultural society, surrounded by different religions . . . it made my own faith stronger?*

gifts and talents for a reason—to serve and follow God as a whole community. We are to work together, and support and help each other, just as the different parts of the body should work for and with each other.

But as a normal human being I have experienced envy and jealousy, and even greed at times. While there are a lot of wise, kind and faithful people out there, you can also find people with opposite qualities. To follow God as one community, we need to deal with even

those people who are troublesome and difficult.

I actually find that I benefit from these "difficult" people. I attend a public high school consisting of approximately 1,000 students who belong to different religions, including atheism. Ironic, isn't it, though, that because I grew up in a multicultural society, surrounded by different religions, perspectives and values, it made my own faith stronger?

For the sake of the common goal of following God, we need to all unite and accept one another and ourselves. It is a difficult thing to do, and it is something that a church will always have to work at. But you must know that faith and

unity are not exactly easy to accomplish and keep. Having faith—and accepting both myself and others—will always be a challenging thing for me. But challenge is good, and I think God will grant me enough strength to accomplish this.

*Seulmi Ahn is completing Grade 12 this year at Fort Richmond Collegiate, Winnipeg, where she serves on the school's student council, charity club and Amnesty International chapter. Originally published online in the Charleswood Mennonite Church e-zine, Grapevine, and reprinted by permission of the author.*

## /// Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

**Belau**—Tomas Erwin (b. Oct. 25, 2007), to Kendrick and Rima Belau, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., in Kalamazoo, Mich.

**Dick**—Ava Louise (b. Oct. 13, 2007), to Timothy and Kathy Dick, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Doell**—Amy Joyce (b. Oct. 15, 2007), to Brenda and Ted Doell, Carman Mennonite, Man.

**Dolyniuk**—Cayden Carter (b. Sept. 28, 2007), to Jarred and Coralee Dolyniuk, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Dupuis**—Clare Alizia (b. Oct. 22, 2007), to Stephen Dupuis and Helen Toews, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Dyck**—Carter Michael (b. Oct. 26, 2007), to Ashly and Michael Dyck, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., in Morden, Man.

**Fransen**—Pia Sophia (b. Oct. 7, 2007), to Aaron and Shelley Fransen, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., in Toronto.

**Gartner**—Caleb Adam (b. Oct. 31, 2007), to Tricia and Cameron Gartner, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary.

**Leis**—Samuel James Willard and Benjamin Wesley Randall (b. Nov. 2, 2007), to Holly and Terry Leis, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

**Love**—Etta Mae (b. Aug. 28, 2007), to Emma and Matt Love, Eigenheim Mennonite, Rosthern, Sask.

**Montgomery**—Sarah Alayne (b. Oct. 28, 2007), to Jim and Laurie Montgomery, Shantz Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

**Neufeld**—Riley William (b. Oct. 31, 2007), to Jake and Susie Neufeld, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Olfert**—Jonah Carl and Samuel Eric (b. Oct. 19, 2007), to Jon and Nikki Olfert, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, in Watervalley, Alta.

**Schellenberg**—Manuel (b. Aug. 17, 2007), to Duncan Schellenberg and Julie Laliberte, Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal.

**Sider**—Gabrielle Annette (b. Sept. 23, 2007), to Denielle and Ivan Sider, Listowel Mennonite, Ont.

**Unger**—Jacob Benjamin (b. Oct. 11, 2007), to Michael Unger and Michelle Lawler, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Van Alstine**—Emma Erin (b. Sept. 25, 2007), to Erin Van Alstine, Hunta Mennonite, Driftwood, Ont.

**Van Alstine**—Riley Benjamin (b. July 22, 2007), to Ben and Angela Van Alstein, Hunta Mennonite, Driftwood, Ont.

**van Sintern-Dick**—Jannik Matthew (b. Oct. 29, 2007), to Matthew and Cathrin van Sintern-Dick, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

### Baptisms

**Tara Penner**—Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Oct. 3, 2007.

### Marriages

**Barrera/Rodriguez**—Freddy Barrera and Luz Rodriguez, Mount

Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Aug. 11, 2007.

**Diaz/Nieves**—Diana Diaz and Omar Nieves, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sept. 23, 2007.

**Funk/Kerr**—Douglas Funk, (Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.) and Lisa Kerr (Southridge Community, St. Catharines, Ont.) at Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 27, 2007.

**Hill/Wideman**—Jason Hill and Amy Wideman, Listowel Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 13, 2007.

**Jenney/Wideman**—Andrea Jenney and Peter Wideman (Waters Mennonite, Lively, Ont.), in Tillsonburg, Ont., Oct. 20, 2007.

**Penner/Schulz**—Kaitlin Penner and Tim Schulz, Vineland United Mennonite, Vineland, Ont., Oct. 20, 2007.

**Peters/Walsh**—Chris Peters and Pam Walsh, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Aug. 22, 2007.

### Deaths

**Albrecht**—Sarah, (nee Kuepfer), 84 (b. Dec. 30, 1922; d. Oct. 16, 2007), Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont.

**Barker**—Sadie Shirley (nee Pongoski), 82 (b. Aug. 12, 1925; d. Nov. 2, 2007), Carman Mennonite, Man.

**Burkhardt**—Kenneth Roy, 83 (b. Feb. 23, 1924; d. Oct. 26, 2007), Breslau Mennonite, Ont.

**Candy**—Norma J. (nee Johnston), 78 (b. July 18, 1929; d. Oct. 17, 2007), Hamilton Mennonite, Ont.

**Friesen**—Elizabeth, 94 (d. Oct. 9, 2007), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

**Giesbrecht**—Otto, 88 (d. Oct. 11, 2007), Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

**Ham**—Nikolai, 80 (d. Aug. 4, 2007), Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

**Kropf**—Ruth (nee Schlegel), 77 (b. Jan. 8, 1930; d. Oct. 30, 2007), East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

**Lesser**—Helena, 79 (b. Sept. 9, 1928; d. Nov. 3, 2007), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

**Reimer**—Henry (Harvey) Remple, 77 (b. Nov. 14, 1930; d. Nov. 3, 2007), Carman Mennonite, Man.

**Rogalski**—Victor, 70 (d. June 30, 2007), Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

**Stahl**—Harold William, 90 (b. March 16, 1917; d. Nov. 7, 2007), Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask.

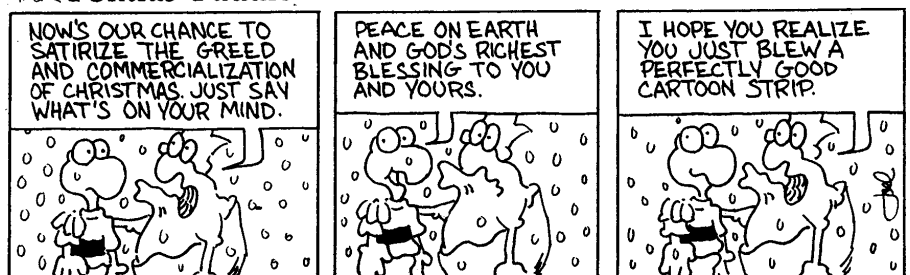
**Toews**—Anna (Anni), 82 (d. Nov. 3, 2007), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**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

At-Tuwani is located in the West Bank. Incorrect information was provided in “The wall came tumbling down” article on page 33 of the Oct. 29, 2007, issue. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the error.

## Pontius' Puddle



## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

# Global rejoicing

*Manitoba congregation joins in celebrations of new church half-way around the world*

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent  
 CARMAN, MAN. / BORABUR, THAILAND

On Nov. 4 the Living Water Church of Borabur, Thailand, gathered for worship for the first time in its newly constructed church building. But thanks to modern communications tools, scenes from this inaugural service became part of the Carman Mennonite Church worship service that same morning 12 time zones away.

The Carman service was particularly celebratory, as five church members had just returned from a short-term service trip assisting MC Canada Christian Witness workers Pat and Rad Houmphan in the running of several English-language camps in the area.

Three local schools had invited the Houmphans to lead the camps during a Thai school break. The Houmphans, who have a passion and a calling for bringing the Christian message to the Isaan people

*MC Canada Christian Witness worker Rad Houmphan leads singing during the inaugural service in the new Living Water Church in Borabur, Thailand. This picture was beamed 12 time zones away to Carman (Man.) Mennonite Church, where five church members had just returned from a service trip to Thailand.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF LIVING WATER CHURCH



PHOTO COURTESY OF CARMAN MENNONITE CHURCH

*Members of the Carman (Man.) Mennonite Church short-term service team are pictured at the border between Thailand and Laos with MC Canada Christian Witness workers Rad Houmphan, second from left, and Pat Houmphan, centre. From left to right, the Carman team included: Frank Letkeman, Tracy Enns, pastor Bob Pauls, Alice Elias and Marie Dyck.*

of northeastern Thailand, saw this as an opportunity to share the gospel with these students. Enlisting the help of their North American partners has enabled them to work with five large classes of students in each of two elementary schools and a high school. A team of four energetic Laotian musicians from a Thai university used their study break to help out and sing with the students.

Carman Mennonite pastor Bob Pauls and congregants Frank Letkeman, Alice Elias, Marie Dyck and Tracy Enns all came home exhausted and impassioned.

"I wondered about the ministry value in this at first, until I saw how apparent the gospel message was in every session, beginning with the creation story and ending with the death and resurrection of Christ," said Pauls.

Team members shared their experiences with the Carman congregation and brought greetings from the Houmphans

that morning. They were struck with the pervasiveness of Buddhism in every aspect of the culture. Less than 1 percent of the Thai people are Christian, while 95 percent are Buddhist.

"To be Buddhist is to be Thai and to be Thai is to be Buddhist," said Pauls. "They see Christianity as a western faith."

The Carman team worked hard to prepare for the week-long classes, gathering supplies, preparing lessons and raising funds months ahead of their departure. Members felt the strong support of their church and the presence of God with them throughout their journey. "We experienced a lot of answered prayers," said Letkeman.

The team also developed a keen sense of respect and admiration for the Houmphans' ministry. When high school administrators tried to cut short the teaching time, "Pat switched the drama to the opening," said Pauls, who recalled the opening program at the high school when the administrator told the students, "You should listen to them because they might help you find the light."

"Now they are left with a lot of follow-up work to do," Pauls added.

Carman Mennonite Church has followed the activities and developments of the Houmphans and Living Water Church for several years, assisting as it could with the purchase of a truck for transporting people to and from church and, more recently, with the new church building. ☼

# Dialoguing with the pope

*Mennonite World Conference delegation dialogues with Catholic leaders, presents concerns over 'ecclesial communities'*

BY FERNE BURKHARDT

Mennonite World Conference  
VATICAN CITY

**W**hen Mennonites from 10 countries spent five days with Roman Catholic Church leaders in Vatican City, each group was interested in learning to know the other better. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity hosted the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) delegation from Oct. 18-23.

"We learned much about how the Roman Catholic Church carries out its mission, and we were able in many of our encounters to share our own understandings, to describe our ministries and to raise our questions," said MWC president Nancy Heisey following the meetings.

## Audience with the pope

On Oct. 19, the delegation had an audience with Pope Benedict XVI, who said to them, "Since it is Christ himself who calls us to seek Christian unity, it is entirely right and fitting that Mennonites and Catholics have entered into dialogue in order to understand the reasons for the conflict that arose between us in the 16th century. To understand is to take the first step towards healing."

Benedict also spoke of a common understanding of non-violence and active peacemaking at the heart of the gospel and of a continuing search for unity. "Our wit-

ness will remain impaired as long as the world sees our divisions," he concluded.

In her remarks to the pope on behalf of MWC, Heisey spoke of the "great common heritage of faith . . . [and] the challenges of being God's people in this time" that Mennonites and Catholics share. She noted that "the role of the church in matters of mission and evangelism, peace and justice, and a life of discipleship," and "the complexities of relationship between church and society," are other common struggles.

## History of dialogue

The invitation for the visit grew out of the international dialogue between MWC and the Pontifical Council, which took place from 1998-03 and resulted in the 48-page report, "Called Together to be Peacemakers."

This visit provided the opportunity for MWC to take responses to the report, as well as concerns about the Catholic Church, from its member churches around the world to the Pontifical Council. The delegation also held conversations with the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, the Vatican Secretariat of State, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

"When Catholic Church leaders think of Mennonites, they see us as leading Christian bearers of the message of peacemaking and non-violence, which is at the heart of the gospel," noted MWC general secretary Larry Miller. Many key Catholic leaders now see active peacemaking and non-violence rooted in Jesus Christ as normative, not disconnected from the gospel, he said, noting, "Pope Benedict XVI reiterated this position in his remarks. . . ."

Memories of 16th century Anabaptist and Catholic encounters—when the Anabaptist practice of baptizing believers already baptized as infants was considered heretical and provoked persecution—were recalled. Now, however, adult baptism among Catholics is seen as "normative," according to Rev. Augustine DiNoia, undersecretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and is increasing in frequency, particularly in the Global

## /// Briefly noted

### **Mennonites, Catholics speak together to peace convocation planners**

Mennonites and Catholics are developing a common statement to the World Council of Churches (WCC) as it prepares for the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in 2011. The convocation, convened by WCC, will come as the culmination of the Decade (2001-10) to Overcome Violence—Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace.

Two Mennonite "Decade to Overcome Violence" representatives—Fernando Enns (Germany) and Hansulrich Gerber (Switzerland)—joined Mennonite World Conference representatives in Rome as part of a Mennonite delegation there at the invitation of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

The group worked on a statement with suggestions and recommendations to propose to WCC by next February as it plans for the 2011 convocation. The joint statement will address biblical and theological foundations of peace, peace and discipleship, and particular peace challenges the churches face today.

"It is very encouraging to hear the way the Catholics are prepared to cooperate with the Mennonites in working on a joint text of peace theology," said WCC general secretary Sam Kobia, upon receiving news of the consultation. "It is even more encouraging to note that such a text would contribute to the development of the Ecumenical Peace Declaration."

—MWC Release



North.

Monsignor John Radano, head of the Western Section of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, credits Anabaptists—together with Baptists—as “the primary proponents of adult bap-

tism.” However, he asked, “Do Mennonites accept Catholic adult baptism?” Mennonites and Catholics agreed that questions of baptism require much more discussion.

### More than ‘ecclesial communities’

A disappointment for MWC delegation member Paulus Widjaja, MWC peace commission secretary from Indonesia, was hearing that the Catholic Church calls most other Christian churches outside the

## Affirmations and concerns

*A personal reflection on meetings with the pope and Catholic officials to discuss Christian unity*

BY HELMUT HARDER

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

I was impressed anew with the Catholic Church’s deeply rooted spiritual history. In Rome, cathedrals and basilicas are built in honour of historical persons and events, including the apostles Peter and Paul, and Mary the mother of Jesus.

Also impressive was the Vatican’s storehouse of artistic and symbolic treasures that proclaim the richness of the Christian heritage. Walls and ceilings are painted with dramatic scenes from biblical and church history. This too belongs to the proclamation of the gospel.

One has to be impressed with the Catholics’ promotion of the unity of the church. The one Catholic Church encompasses a vast array of bishoprics, parishes, orders, institutions and schools. Can we imagine all the various Mennonite and related Anabaptist groups around the globe—from conservative Amish and Hutterites to liberal-minded North Europeans—all functioning under one doctrine, one worship style, one ethic, one church?

Our Mennonite delegation was impressed by the gracious hospitality and openness extended to us at the Vatican. In his comments, Pope Benedict showed great respect for Mennonites. He expressed appreciation for our peace witness. He spoke in favour of continuing the dialogue for the sake of improving relations. We understand that the recent Catholic pronouncements about Protestants not being regarded as churches “in the proper sense” until they recognize that all Christian churches “subsist” in the Catholic Church, implies the invitation to non-Catholics to state their own self-understanding of the church. This would lend integrity and mutuality to our conversation with Catholics. It would position us to learn from each other.

I come away from our church-to-church visit with a growing appreciation for many dimensions of the Cath-



PHOTO COURTESY OF HELMUT HARDER

*Mennonite World Conference (MWC) delegate Helmut Harder, left, shakes hands with Pope Benedict XVI during a recent visit to the Vatican, while MWC president Nancy Heisy looks on.*

olic Church. We have much to learn from the spiritual devotion of Catholic Christians. We admire the serious attention that Catholic theologians and biblical scholars give to the Christian faith. We appreciate the desire of Catholic leaders to realize the unity of the church for which Jesus prayed (John 17) and to which the apostles called us (Ephesians 4:1-7). We respect the sacrifice that many Catholic workers make for the cause of peace and justice.

However, I remain uneasy that the Catholic Church appears to position itself as somehow above—or better than—non-Catholic Christian communities. Yet the way

*I come away from our church-to-church visit with a growing appreciation for many dimensions of the Catholic Church.*

to deal with that issue is not to complain or to berate the Catholics. Rather, it is for us to articulate our Mennonite self-identity alongside of, and as a counter-balance to, those aspects of the Catholic view that we disagree with. (See “A Mennonite Ecclesiology in Outline,” page 18.)

Meanwhile, let us be “making every effort to pursue the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3).

*Helmut and Irma Harder were two of 12 members of the global Mennonite community who took part in a church-to-church visit to the Vatican, where they were hosted by the Catholic Church’s Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, whose purpose is to promote understanding and pursue a spirit of unity between the Catholic Church and the other churches.*

Catholic Church “ecclesial communities,” not “churches.”

“At the end of our visit, the MWC delegation formulated a document that states what a church is in our belief. (See below.) Both the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity had stated their openness to receive such a document and to study it,” he said.

The MWC statement identifies belief in the triune God, Jesus Christ as the foundation of the church, empowerment by the Holy Spirit, the Bible as the authority

for the church, baptism as a public sign of commitment to a life of discipleship in the Believers Church tradition, the Lord’s Supper as remembrance and corporate sharing in the body and blood of Christ, and of celebration, hope and encouragement for the church to be one.

### Future plans

At the end of the visit, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and MWC leaders discussed both the visit and the question of future contact. MWC leaders want to report to, and get direc-

tion from, the General Council, which meets next in 2009. Catholic Church leaders desire dialogue with Mennonites and will adapt to the MWC timetable, noted Miller.

“As Mennonites, we have something to share and to learn at the same time,” said Mulugeta Zewdie, delegation member from Ethiopia and general secretary of the Meserete Kristos Church. “The dialogue and this visit can help [us] fellowship with Catholics at the local level. I encourage MWC to continue to work on this fellowship.” ☞

## ‘A Mennonite Ecclesiology in Outline’

*Abridged from a document addressed to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, by a Mennonite World Council (MWC) delegation during a Mennonite-Roman Catholic dialogue at Vatican City on Oct. 23, 2007.*

1. **The triune God**, who is the community of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, calls the church into being, sustains the church throughout its history, and guides the church to its promised glory.
2. The foundation of [Mennonite] ecclesiology is well expressed in the words of the Apostle Paul to the church at Corinth: “No other foundation can anyone lay than the one that has been laid; that foundation is **Jesus Christ**” (I Corinthians 3:11).
3. **The Holy Spirit** empowers the church for life in community and for witness in the world.
4. **The Scriptures** are the basis of authority for the church. The truth of Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, is interpreted and discerned as church communities gather around the Word of God to hear, to speak, to decide, and to act under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.
5. **Baptism** is the public sign, in the midst of the church, of repentance from sin, reception of the Holy Spirit, and commitment to a life of discipleship. Baptism is administered with water, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, to persons who freely request it.
6. **The Lord’s Supper** is a meal of remembrance whereby participants thankfully recall and proclaim that Jesus’ body was broken and his blood was shed for the sins of all people; and that he was raised for the forgiveness of sins and the promise of new life.
7. The MWC community of churches stands within the **Believers Church** tradition. Believers Churches

emphasize baptism upon personal confession of faith, rather than infant baptism; church membership as a covenant among voluntary believers; non-conformity to the world; scriptural authority free of state control; and discipleship.

8. **Salvation and discipleship** are seen by Mennonite churches as inseparable aspects of the Christian experience. Teaching of salvation centres on personal faith in the atoning work of Christ, while discipleship is understood as the commitment to follow Christ in life.

9. The MWC community of churches stands within the **Peace Church** tradition.

10. **Leadership** in Mennonite churches follows two basic principles: First, it is the privilege and responsibility of each member of the body of Christ to contribute to Christian ministry for the well-being of the Christian community and for witness in the larger society. Second, church officers in ministries, . . . both men and women, are called of God and affirmed by church communities (Ephesians 4:11; I Timothy 5) to equip the members for the work of ministry.

11. The church is characterized by **mission and service**. Mission activity is carried out in a peaceful manner without coercion, and includes the ministries of evangelism, reconciliation, social service, and advocacy for peace and justice among all people.

12. **The oneness of the church** is a matter of importance for Mennonite churches’ self-understanding. The Apostle Paul’s appeal to the churches, to “mak[e] every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3), is understood by Mennonites to apply first and foremost to a spirit of unity within each local church.

13. The church is a **communion of saints** in the sense of the biblical reference to “saints,” which includes all who believe in Jesus Christ and seek to follow him in holy living (Romans 1:7; I Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 1:1). Sainthood is not based on ethical merit, but is accorded those “*looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith*” (Hebrews 12:2).

# Forming an identity

Youth conference gets beyond event-based ministry for teens

BY TERESA FALK

National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG

Approximately 50 youth pastors, youth sponsors and Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) students added to their youth ministry toolbox during a conference at the university on Nov. 3.

Andy Brubacher Kaethler, director of the Explore program and an instructor in youth ministry at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind., addressed the group on how to effectively minister to youths in a congregational setting.

He feels identity formation is an important part of youth ministry. "There are a lot of good things happening in youth ministry these days, but consciousness about identity formation is the missing piece," he said. "It's something we haven't paid enough attention to. This doesn't mean that you have Bible studies on identity formation. It means that when you do have a Bible study, you tie your identity in."

Brubacher Kaethler outlined seven aspects of identity formation for youth ministry: begin with the end, think identity formation, embrace biblical narrative, acknowledge various narratives (such as family or denominational narratives), pursue moral formation, practise cultural literacy, and prepare for kingdom living in a postmodern world.

To help young people become mature Christian adults, youth pastors and sponsors need to think beyond events and focus on the bigger picture, said Brubacher Kaethler. "Obviously, there's still a place for events, because events provide a context. But the question I want us to think more carefully about is, what is it that we're trying to do at those events and how can those events not merely be the end

*Andy Brubacher Kaethler flips through a book during the youth ministry conference—part of the larger Adding to the Toolbox conference—at Canadian Mennonite University on Nov. 3.*



PHOTO BY TERESA FALK

in themselves, but the means to a greater end, which is helping young people become mature Christian adults," he said, noting this may mean paying more attention to intergenerational events or events with a certain style of worship.

Chris Titterton, a youth sponsor at North Kildonan Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, agreed. "We need to take the focus off of event-based ministry, where you're just surviving the night. Instead, it needs to be about working towards more of a final goal," he said.

Abe Bergen, youth ministry confer-

ence organizer, said the event is a valuable networking tool. "The purpose is to bring together people who are concerned with and involved in the front lines of youth ministry, and to encourage them, inspire them and equip them for effective youth ministry," he said.

The youth ministry conference was part of the larger Adding to the Toolbox conference at CMU. Other workshops were on music and worship, church conflict, and looking into the face of grief. ❧

## Dirty work at Camp Squeah

*Volunteers spend day doing on-site renovations, clean-up*

BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent  
HOPE, B.C.

Light drizzle couldn't stop 20 volunteers who came to Camp Squeah on Oct. 20 to do such tasks as drywalling, raking and demolishing at the fall camp workday.

The workers included Camp Squeah staff and committee members, members of Mennonite Church B.C. congregations, and six volunteers from Kingcrest International Neighbours, an interdenominational Christian non-profit organization from Vancouver that ministers to newcomers to Canada.

Some of the jobs completed were:

- Demolition of the interior of the main floor of The Pines, a former staff residence, to prepare for its renovation into an administration building;
- Cleaning up and storing picnic tables for the winter;

- Cleaning the canoeing bus and storing lifejackets and paddles for the winter;
- Raking leaves and cleaning up the piles;
- Removing cobwebs in the lodge; and
- Doing drywall work in one of the staff residences.

The Kingcrest group has helped at Camp Squeah for years. Members ended the day by holding hands in a circle and praying for site manager Dan Friesen, who suffered minor injuries after a two-by-four fell on his head during some of the demolition work, as well as for the ministry of Camp Squeah.

The church workers also proved their dedication with long hours of labour. Nine alone came from First Mennonite Church, Greendale. Greendale youth worker Darren Derhousoff even returned on his day off the following Monday to help finish the drywall work he had started on Saturday. ❧

# Nurturing generous communities

*MC Eastern Canada fall meeting celebrates being servants of a generous God*

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent  
FLORADALE, ONT.

Part celebration, part pep rally and part consultation, MC Eastern Canada's fall church gathering last month had only one order of business: "to nurture generous communities in Jesus' name."

"This is not a money grab," assistant moderator Carol Penner told the gathering. "Our goal is for the local congregation to be able to do its ministry, including the ministry we do together as MC Eastern Canada, MC Canada and Mennonite World Conference."

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



*Perry Bartel, pastor of Hawkesville (Ont.) Mennonite Church, doubled as the prophetic town crier at the MC Eastern Canada Church fall gathering, calling people to "hilarious" giving.*

Stories of generosity from all over the area church were told, including the decision by Steinmann Mennonite in Baden, Ont., to give 2 percent of its building project funds to other church building projects around the world; the creation of 9,000 spring rolls by Grace Lao Mennonite in Kitchener, Ont., for a fundraiser;

and the youth leaders at Hunta Mennonite in Driftwood, Ont., who drive nearly 130 kilometres each week to shuttle youths to and from events.

Phil Bergey of the Philadelphia-based Design for Ministry consulting firm both reported on the Spring Generosity consultation dinners and the online generosity survey, and led a discussion on the results and a brainstorming session.

Bergey's sessions were interspersed with three rounds of Bible study led by Conrad Grebel University College professor Tom Yoder Neufeld. Working with Paul's fundraising appeals in II Corinthians 8 and 9, Yoder Neufeld taught about "God's Economy of Generosity," "A Culture of Generosity: Grace at Work," and "Hilarious Givers." Because God had been at work generously among the Macedonian Christians, they wanted to give as well, to the point of being silly or "hilarious" about it. His teaching was infectious, as people were gripped by the idea of giving as a heart-felt response to God's generosity and not only as a dry discipline.

The overwhelmingly positive response to his teaching led some to wonder if the whole day was "preaching to the converted," the ones who already had received God's grace, trusted God for what they need, and were ready to give hilariously.

According to Bergey, though, people in MC Eastern Canada churches face the challenge of creating a "culture of generosity." While direct deposit giving and other technical changes make it easier for people to give regularly, the real challenge is to move from a culture of want and need, to a culture of grace/thanksgiving and generosity.

Specific challenges remain for those who attended the event:

- How to bring the excitement of the day home?
- How to bring the Bible's truths to fruit in individuals and congregations?
- How can people in North America see themselves as rich, with so much to give to their communities and the world?

But Bergey told those gathered that he sensed the movement of the Holy Spirit in MC Eastern Canada already, as people put God first in their hearts and are prepared to share God's grace. ☸

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# Camping Ministries a priority

*MC Manitoba wrestles with camping shortfalls, protecting riverfront camp property and re-aligning camp committees*

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent

WINNIPEG

Camping Ministries has always pulled at the heartstrings of Mennonite Church Manitoba members. But in discussing a resolution brought to the fall delegate assembly last month by a group concerned about the protection of Camp Assiniboia property, delegates learned that Camping Ministries also pulls at the purse strings.

Moderator Hans Werner said, "There is no agenda, no formal board discussion about selling camps, but yes, we have concerns about financial viability. We face challenges when we look into the future. We need to address these concerns."

"A serious financial downturn" has seen Camp Assiniboia revenue decline by \$100,000, explained MC Manitoba executive director Edgar Rempel.

The resolution, which asked for a task force to develop long-term goals and objectives for the care and conservation of Camp Assiniboia property, was passed by the delegates. The task force will invite submissions or proposals from congregations and interested groups, and will disseminate the proposal to congregations before a decision at a future delegate session.

MC Manitoba also solicited responses and questions concerning changes to camp structure. A review began in January 2006, when it was suggested that there was a need to clarify lines of accountability and improve overall coordination of Camping Ministries.

The new camp accountability structural model proposes support teams for each camp that will initially consist of members from the disbanded regional committees.

PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

*Sheila Giesbrecht, who, together with her husband Richard Boyd, was recent manager at Camp Assiniboia, speaks in support of the resolution concerning the protection of Camp Assiniboia riverfront property.*



Members from the now-terminated Camping Ministry Reference Group will take term positions on the new Camp Planning Committee, under the leadership of the director of Camping Ministries. The Facilities Committee has been disbanded and management of camp facilities is now lodged with the director and camp managers.

Besides the practical issues of implementing the changes, MC Manitoba board and staff members also addressed concerns from the delegates meeting at First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

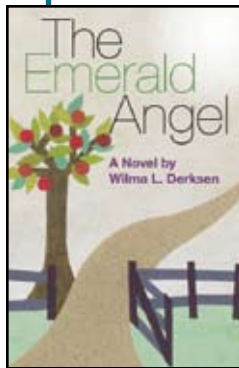
"What is the vision? Where do we want to be 20 years from now?" asked Dan Harms of Niverville (Man.) Mennonite Church.

Phyllis Friesen Wiebe of Winnipeg suggested looking "at what kind of marketing we do for the 10 months we don't have summer camp. Each camp should look at their own market," she suggested.

A delegate from Winkler, Man., said, "Is this a top-down way of doing business, because then I'm not comfortable with it. Some of my peers at church don't have a sense of ownership and the camps won't succeed until people feel this is ours."

Delegates approved in principle the 2008 ministry budget of \$1.74 million, with a congregational giving portion of \$766,045. The 2008 congregational giving budget is 2 percent higher than last year. According to Rempel, this increase "just maintain[s] what we currently have." As of the delegate meeting, 55 percent of 2007 congregational giving was in.

The annual delegate session will be held Feb. 22 and 23, 2008, at Steinbach (Man.) Mennonite Church. ❧



## The Emerald Angel: A Novel Wilma L. Derksen

A mysterious path through an orchard attracts the attention of young Ava, who knows that her grandmother's house is at the end of that trail. Why do so many local people visit Ava's grandmother with their troubles and problems? As Ava watches, her grandmother blesses the visitors with her extraordinary gifts of compassion, empathy and, most of all, listening.

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## GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

# The right thing to do

*Students for Humanity gather school kits for MCC*

BY ANGELIKA DAWSON

Mennonite Central Committee B.C.  
LANGLEY, B.C.

For the past six years, classrooms at Brookwood Secondary School have been abuzz with the sound of teenagers chatting as members of the Students for Humanity Club brainstorm ways they can make a difference in the lives of others.

"It started because one Grade 11 student in my socials class said, 'You teach us all these things [about what's going on in the world], but what can we do to make a difference?'" says Lynie Tener, a Brookwood teacher and club sponsor.

Since 2001 the club has raised thousands of dollars for schools in Kenya and for the Stephen Lewis Foundation. It has also raised funds and collected materials to meet local needs, including books for a local elementary school and winter coats for Union Gospel Mission in Vancouver.

"The goal of the club is to educate students about global issues and to raise money or materials for local and international needs," Tener says. "But an equally important goal is altruism. The kids get no pizza parties, no nominations for citizenship awards. We do these things because it's the right thing to do. We live in a privileged society. It's important for kids to have a sense of giving back."

And so they do.

Tener first heard about Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) school kits through her own volunteer work with Ten Thousand Villages in Langley, a sister organization of MCC that gathers materials for school kits year-round. She suggested this as a project to the club five years ago. That year members put together 17 kits—a total that has nearly doubled every year;

this year they put together 252 kits. Each kit contains spiral-bound notebooks, pencils, pencil crayons, a ruler and an eraser. The supplies are placed in drawstring bags that are sewn by volunteers at MCC. These kits enable students around the world who cannot afford to purchase their own supplies to attend school.

"When I first heard about what Lynie and her students were doing, I knew I had to meet the group. I was so impressed by their selfless giving and the fun they were having too," says Dave Hiebert, material aid coordinator for MCC B.C. "At MCC we try to facilitate mutually beneficial relationships with people in developing countries, and I think Lynie and her students are doing just that—blessing others and being blessed themselves."

To learn how to put together a school kit, visit [mcc.org/kits](http://mcc.org/kits). ❧

MCC B.C. PHOTO BY ANGELIKA DAWSON



*Members of the Brookwood Secondary School Students for Humanity Club hold some of the 252 school kits they have put together for Mennonite Central Committee B.C. this fall.*

PHOTO BY BARB DRAPER



**Glenn Martin, left,** and Douglas Draper prepare potatoes while Elsie Springer cuts the dessert for a Sunday evening meal at the House of Friendship men's hostel in Kitchener, Ont., on Oct. 28. Volunteers from Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church support the hostel by cooking a meal one Sunday each month. Each summer the rural congregation also grows and processes corn and green and yellow beans to provide hundreds of pounds of frozen vegetables for the House of Friendship program.

GOD AT WORK IN US

## Glenn Witmer pulls plug on MennoLetter

Former church worker in Israel reflects on his years there and says what's ahead

By TERESA FALK

National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG

After six years of sharing his and other voices with thousands of people around the world, Glenn Edward Witmer has pulled the plug on *MennoLetter*, the electronic newsletter on Middle East issues that he began in 2002 while working as the North American Mennonite Church representative in Israel.

Witmer, 65, "retired" from his assignment with Mennonite Church Canada Christian Witness Council and the U.S. Mennonite Mission Network (MMN) in October, only to become the new president of the Bat Kol Institute earlier this month. Headquartered in Jerusalem, Bat Kol has student centres worldwide offering graduate-level study programs for Christian educators taught by rabbis and Christian lecturers. The institute's motto is, "Christians studying the Bible within its Jewish milieu, using Jewish sources."

During an October stop in Winnipeg Witmer explained that he's unable to continue *MennoLetter* because of extensive international travel commitments with his new position. "It's been a wonderful experience and I'd do it all over again," he said of his time working on the electronic newsletter.

The southern Ontario native spent nine years in Latin America and a brief stint in China before venturing to Jerusalem in 1999 for two years of studies at the Ratisbonne Institute, in a Jewish studies program offered by the University of Toronto School of Theology. After completing his

PHOTO COURTESY OF GLENN WITMER



Glenn Edward Witmer speaks with the director of a girls school in Ramallah, West Bank.

studies, Witmer was hired in 2002 by Bat Kol for half-time teaching, and by MMN and Witness to do church work in Israel. He began *MennoLetter* at that time.

"I noticed the lack of knowledge North Americans have about Israel," he said. "What they get is spotty and skewed reporting through newspapers. I decided that if we were going to involve the church in dealing with issues in Israel, they had to know what it was they were dealing with."

So through *MennoLetter*, Witmer attempted to give North Americans a sense of the broader issues in the Middle East in a balanced way. *MennoLetter* was distributed monthly via e-mail, with approximately 2,000 subscribers around the world receiving it. The newsletter included an editorial by Witmer, as well as stories written by Christians, Muslims and Jews from the Middle East and around the world, including former Israeli prime minister Chaim Weitzman. In the September 2007 issue, Weitzman is quoted as saying, "Israel will be judged by the peoples of the world by how Israel treats its Arab citizens."

During his time in Israel, Witmer said the Christian church there has gone "downhill" in numbers. Approximately

1.6 per cent of the population of Israel is Christian, down considerably from when he first arrived there in 1999. "And it continues to drop because Christians are leaving," he noted.

Witmer said most of the Christians in the region are Arab, living in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. These people can't find employment and they live under occupation, which limits their movement. Many of them have family in other parts of the world, giving them an opportunity to leave the country. "If you have family outside and you can get out, in a situation like this, you get out," he said. According to Witmer, the Palestinians under occupation by the Israelis are not receiving the treatment they deserve as humans. "No wonder the hatred is so widespread," he said.

Despite the discouraging situation in Israel, Witmer feels he has been called to this region to learn from the people. "We need to meet the people, get to know the issues, and only decide that we have something to offer them after we know what is going on and after we know what is needed, not to assume that what we have as western Christians is what they want," he said.

Ultimately, Witmer hopes to see peace with justice in the region, not just peace as the absence of conflict. "There will be efforts at peace, the way there has been for decades," he said. "But the issues are so entrenched in things that are not easily negotiable across the table, such as cultural issues, religious issues and territorial issues."

However, Witmer feels there can be "an imposed quietness" in the region. This quietness can be felt at Nazareth Village, a ministry that recreates Nazareth as it was 2,000 years ago when Jesus walked the countryside. "This is one of the gems for the Christian church over here, in what it can do in introducing the world to Jesus," said Witmer, who is on the Nazareth Village board of directors. "We focus on the gospels surrounding the cradle of our faith. We're not there as Mennonites first, but as Christians working with others. And here is a way to present the story of Jesus without preaching." ❧

# Giving thanks at journey's end

BY LEONA DUECK PENNER

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*  
WINNIPEG

**A** Sunday morning worship service in the summer of 2005, which celebrated the lives of Mary and Martha of Bethany, concluded by singing the hymn, "Will You Let Me Be Your Servant?" As we sang the fourth verse, my husband turned to me and whispered, "That's what you're doing with your mother [Mary (Harms) Dueck] these days—laughing and weeping as you help to see her journey [with Alzheimer's] through."

I nodded, my throat thickening as I re-read the words:

*"I will weep when you are weeping,  
When you laugh I'll laugh with you.  
I will share your joy and sorrow,  
Till we've seen this journey through."*

A few days later, the words of that hymn come to mind as I drive to Bethesda Place, the nursing home in Steinbach, Man., where my 90-year-old mother, is slowly approaching her "journey's end." Will she be weeping or laughing today, I wonder, hoping somewhat selfishly, that I will catch her on "a good day," while knowing at the same time that maybe she needs me even more when she is having a bad time.

As it turns out, I know right away that Mom is having a good day when I enter the common room of the Prairie Rose wing that afternoon. Her eyes light up as soon as she sees me, although she can't quite recall my name.

"I'd like to have a cat," she enthuses as I wheel her to her room, "but who would look after it when I'm away?"

"Yeah," I respond, knowing that her times "away" are the imaginary jaunts her mind takes her on. "That might be a problem."

"Still," she persists, her face glowing, "some of the other ladies have cats. They give so much [companionship]."

"Well," I say, not quite knowing how to respond to her longing looks, "you did have a cat long ago. Remember Sparky?"

Her eyes go blank. Of course she doesn't remember and I shouldn't have asked her a question, berating myself inwardly. Questions always make her feel insecure and inadequate because she simply can't remember, or is afraid of giving the wrong answer.

"Also, you've got that nice toy cat that Laurence and Sue sent you from British Columbia," I point out, searching her room for the plush creature. "Here it is, such a soft and furry thing," I say, rubbing the silky toy against her cheek.

But I could tell by her eyes that it wasn't enough.

Just then, Jodi Klassen, the recreation co-ordinator, walks by Mom's room holding a small furry body in her hands. So there was substance to my mother's "cat and commotion" story after all! I hurry after the young woman, asking if perhaps my mother could hold this little cat—which turns out to be a seven-week old puppy—for a moment.

Jodi brings the little dog to her gladly. "Mary, you love this little puppy, don't

PHOTO BY JODI KLASSEN



*"Mary, you love this little puppy, don't you? You can hold him a little longer now while he sleeps."*

you?" she says as she hands the tiny trembling creature to my mother, whose face quite simply shines with joy. "You can hold him a little longer now while he sleeps."

For the next half-hour, that little dog sleeps on my mother's breast while she strokes his body gently—just like she'd done when cradling all her 11 children in years past—and murmurs something

*'I'd like to have a cat, but who would look after it when I'm away?'*

about God's love for babies and other tiny things.

Later, after the puppy is gone, we happily share coffee and butter tarts, and a lovely little walkabout in her beloved courtyard garden. Then as we say our farewells, she calls after me, "Leona, thanks for a beautiful, beautiful day!"

And I respond with special gladness because she remembered my name. "Thank you too, dear mother, for this time of laughter and celebration."

## Epilogue: October 2007

My mother's earthly journey ended this spring when she died of pneumonia quite unexpectedly more than a year after my visit. By the time of her death, her speech had become much more garbled, she needed assistance with meals, and she required a lift to make wheelchair transitions, which were very frightening for her. Yet, what remains with me now is not the sadness and suffering of that stage of her journey, but rather the Christ-light that continued to shine through her.

There was "joy beyond words" on the dawning of Mom's last day, when I sat at her bedside, holding her hands while quietly singing to her. I suddenly noticed that Mom, who had been in a coma for the past 24 hours, was mouthing the words, "Gott ist die Liebe . . . Er liebt auch mich" ("God is love . . . loves even me") along with me.

Those were precious "last words" made more poignant because we sang them together just a few hours before her earthly journey ended. For that holy moment I will always give thanks. ❧



## ARTBEAT

## BOOK REVIEW

# Viewing Christ's peace as a gift

*A Precarious Peace: Yoderian Explorations on Theology, Knowledge and Identity.*

Chris K. Huebner. Herald Press, 2006, 242 pages.

REVIEWED BY DAVID DRIEDGER

“Christian theology is exploration. It is ceaselessly on the move.” So says Chris Huebner in the introduction to his recent collection of essays entitled *A Precarious Peace*.

Setting the tone of his work decisively in the introduction, Huebner explores the issues of Mennonite theology, knowledge and identity. Essential to his work is a commitment to the de-centring of the self from these issues, “explod[ing] that which we take to be given.”

The peace of Christ comes as a gift and, as such, requires us to remain in a posture of reception and thanksgiving, rather than a position of control and manipulation. Too often, the question of theology becomes one of institutionalization, the question of knowledge becomes one of control, and the question of identity becomes one of fixed place or status.

Huebner refers to his work of de-centring as “Yoderian.” In keeping with the work of John Howard Yoder, Huebner shines the light of non-Constantinianism into various contemporary social and theological corners. Non-Constantinianism is a way of reading the world that challenges any reliance on power and violence for legitimacy.

A primary example of this is Huebner’s critique of modern theory and its attempt to control the parameters of discussion. His critique acts as a vigilant questioning of the terms available for debate, asking such questions as, “What are the underlying assumptions of the dualistic cat-

egories of sacred and secular, or nature and grace, in modern discourse? What is being excluded or controlled by framing the discussion in these terms?”

With a slight nod to Liberation Theology, Huebner sees theology arising from the work and challenges of the church. So as our theology and knowledge remain fluid, so too does our identity. Identity cannot be grounded in cultural, historical or theological absolutes. Rather, it is mediated in relationship, so we must remain open to revision and renewed self-awareness as we journey with each other in the world.

As someone who has not been formed in formal Mennonite theology, I am greatly encouraged by Huebner’s work. I was impressed with the range of dialogue partners enlisted for his task. And as I have for some time suspected, the Archbishop of Canterbury may even have a voice at the Mennonite table. In promoting a tone—rather than a structure—for Mennonite theology, I began to realize that I am perhaps more Mennonite than I have given myself credit for.

I have also been hearing more and more about the move away from content-based education in the Mennonite Church, towards spiritual and character transformation. However, I suspect this movement will not gain much momentum until our basic theological orientation also begins to uproot itself from its grounding in historically, culturally and theologically fixed categories. Huebner’s work offers a helpful nudge in that direction. ☚



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FOCUS ON MISSION AND SERVICE

# Button up in Northwood

No cross-border shopping for this team of MDS volunteers from Manitoba

BY BRUCE HILDEBRAND

Mennonite Disaster Service  
NORTHWOOD, N.D.

Twenty volunteers from Winkler, Man., spent the weekend here, not cross-border shopping but helping residents “button up” their houses for winter.

This North Dakota town of 900 survived a tornado that ripped a swath through the middle of the community on Aug. 26, killing one man, injuring many others and causing damage to almost every house and building.

With winter approaching, the “Button Up Northwood” weekend targeted exterior

*Mennonite Disaster Service volunteer Kurt Ginter felt called to respond when he heard the challenge to help the people of Northwood, N.D., affected by a tornado that touched down on Aug. 26.*



repairs to buildings that were still vulnerable to weather damage. Some houses needed roofing repairs, some needed window replacement, and some even needed to have walls rebuilt and closed in. Many church groups, non-profit agencies and crews from businesses in the area rallied to make the weekend a success.

Albert Heide, 51, an experienced Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) volunteer,

organized the group from Winkler. “It was not a problem getting enough volunteers,” he says. “I didn’t give them a lot of time to think about it. If you’re ready, let’s go.”

One of the volunteers, Kurt Ginter, 31, an agricultural consultant, felt called to respond when he heard the challenge. “During 10 years as a youth sponsor, I found my spiritual gift and that was helping others,” he says. “It makes sense

responding rebuilding restoring



“... I only know God put you all there for us just when we needed you... We have the house that love built.”

- Carmen Dedeaux,  
Homeowner, Pass Christian, Mississippi

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to do ministries like this?"

Bonnie Turner, 58, director of Lutheran Disaster Relief and Social Services for the state of North Dakota, the lead agency in this recovery, says the volunteer help has had a two-fold benefit. "The idea of 'Button Up Northwood' was to make the homes safe and secure. But the other part of it was to bring hope. Through this effort, I have seen a lot of hope—and a lot of inspiration. This is what is going to help get them through the winter."

Don and Zerlene Woodward, a retired couple living on the edge of Northwood, thought the whole north end of their house was going to be blown away when the tornado snuck up on them. When suddenly the wind blew out their picture window and storm door, they did not have time to reach the basement door, so they ducked into their bathroom and both strained to close the door. The house was shaking and the noise was so loud they could hardly hear each other speak.

When they could get out to inspect the damage, they found that windows were smashed and the roof was leaking. Four 80-year-old trees were blown down, two of them blocking the door.

Like many community members, the Woodwards attempted to get their life back together on their own. Their youngest daughter helped to clean up the debris, pull up the carpets, re-shingle the roof and put up new drywall. But with winter closing in, the windows still needed to be replaced.

The help of the Canadian volunteers who came to their assistance lifted their spirits. "They really did a fantastic job for us," says Don. "It's a great feeling, I tell you, to get it done before the cold weather comes in. I would like to thank them from the bottom of my heart. They were great."

Ed Remple, 51, who works in maintenance at a personal care home in Winkler, helped winterize the Woodwards' house. "It feels good to help someone who needs help," he says. "God says if someone is in need, you help them. . . . We're glad we can do it." ❧

### Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure

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Manuela Förderer, Service Adventure volunteer in Johnstown, Pa., with kids at New Day community center.

Photograph by Mark Wasser.

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# A banner year

*Voluntary service adventures proving popular across Canada*

BY TERESA FALK

National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG

**K**irsten Freed has chosen to lead a no-frills lifestyle in downtown Winnipeg. "Simple living is a valuable experience, as it makes you really think about what you need and what you want. And it brings you closer to the majority of society who are not rich," says the 26-year-old who is participating in the Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure (MVSA) program in the Manitoba capital.

MVSA is having a banner year, with 15 volunteers at four locations across Canada. There are six volunteers in Winnipeg, sponsored by Bethel Mennonite Church; five in Lethbridge, sponsored by Lethbridge Mennonite; three in Toronto, sponsored by Danforth Mennonite; and one in Montreal, sponsored by Montreal Mennonite Fellowship.

Freed was employed as a social worker in London, Ont., when she decided to pursue voluntary service. "I was looking for a bit of a break and had often thought about doing a voluntary service term," she says. "So this seemed like a good opportunity, when I'm still relatively young, to take some time to do that."

Freed is serving as the program co-ordinator for Project Peacemakers, which operates out of Winnipeg's Westminster United Church. Project Peacemakers is the local chapter of Project Ploughshares, which is the peace arm of the Canadian Council of Churches. "The job provides all kinds of new learning experiences and



PHOTO COURTESY OF KIRSTEN FREED

*The Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure unit in Winnipeg includes, from left, Kirsten Freed, Bonnie Quinn, Yvonne Stegmieller, Ronja Grossman, Alex Bergen and Vadim Derksen.*

networking opportunities," she says.

Living in a communal setting is also a new experience for Freed. "It has been challenging, but good," she admits.

MVSA is for young adults from 19 to 30. The support committee in each city finds voluntary work placements for the participants. The placements are at not-for-profit organizations working in the areas of peace and justice, and poverty. Each agency provides a monthly stipend to the support committee for the volunteer's work, while the volunteer also receives a much smaller monthly stipend.

Louie Sawatzky, a member of the Winnipeg support committee, says the volunteers are in direct contact with people in need. "They become very involved in issues faced by people living in poverty or situations of injustice," he says. "This may be their first experience on a day-to-day basis living and working with people who are disadvantaged."

Four of the six participants in Winnipeg are from Germany. MVSA has become a popular avenue for German Mennonites and other Christians, as it qualifies as alternative service to the country's obligatory two years of military service.

Many of these young people hear about the program from past participants, says Sawatzky, adding, "They want to learn another culture and another language. It's a good opportunity for them to combine Christian voluntary service with a new cultural experience."

In 2003, Mennonite Church Canada

decided to discontinue its participation in Mennonite Voluntary Service because of budget cuts. The program is now self-supporting and run entirely by volunteers. ☸

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## Calendar

### British Columbia

**May 23-24:** "Come to the Table," a worship and arts conference. Speaker: John Bell of the Iona Community in Scotland. For details, e-mail Angelika Dawson at music@emmanuelmennonite.com.

### Saskatchewan

**Dec. 7, 15:** A Buncha Guys' Christmas concerts; Knox United Church, Saskatoon (7); Shekinah Retreat Centre (15); both concerts at 7:30 p.m.

**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.

**March 2:** RJC spring dinner theatre.

**March 9:** RJC guys and pies.

**June 13-14:** MCC Relief Sale and Auction.

### Manitoba

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

**Dec. 23, 24:** Sargent Avenue Men-

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

**Jan. 14-15:** Church Ministry Seminar at CMU with Thomas Long, Candler School of Theology. Topic: "The witness of preaching." For more information, visit cmu.ca.

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

**Jan. 29-30:** Winter lectures at CMU with Erica Grimm Vance. Theme: "Art, beauty and Christian theology." For more information, visit cmu.ca.

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

**March 6-8:** Westgate senior-high drama.

**March 7-9:** Peace-It-Together Youth Conference at CMU. Theme: "My world, God's world: Hurts and healing in creation." For more information, visit cmu.ca.

**March 17-19:** CMU presents Proclaiming Christ in a Post-Christian World. Speaker: John Stackhouse of Regent College, Vancouver. For more information, visit cmu.ca.

**March 29:** Winnipeg MCC Festival and Relief Sale banquet.

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

**May 14:** Westgate work day.

**May 28:** Westgate grades 10 to 12 spring concert, 7 p.m., at Bethel Mennonite Church.

**May 29:** Westgate grades 7 to 9 spring concert, 7 p.m., at Bethel Mennonite Church.

**June 11-14:** 16th annual Believers Church Conference at CMU. Theme: "Congregationalism, denominationalism and the body of Christ."

**June 13-14:** Winnipeg MCC Festival and Relief Sale.

**June 29:** Cycle Clear Lake with MCC Manitoba

**July 16:** Drive the Ball to Ukraine MCC Manitoba Golf Tournament

**Sept. 6:** Morris MCC Auction and Relief Sale

**Sept. 7:** MCC Alumni barbecue.

**Sept. 26-27:** Brandon MCC Relief Sale

**Nov. 14-15:** MCC Manitoba annual meeting.

### Ontario

**Dec. 4:** Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, open house for prospective and current Rockway families; 7 p.m.

**Dec. 7-9:** Handel's Messiah by Pax Christi Chorale and orchestra led by Stephanie Martin at Grace Church-on-the-Hill, Toronto; 7:30 p.m. (7, 8) 3 p.m. (9). For more information call 416-491-8542.

**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. 8-9:** Winter concert with works by Handel, Mendelssohn and songs for Advent by the Soli Deo Gloria Singers, directed by Nancy Dyck at UMEI, Leamington; 8 p.m. (8), 3 p.m. (9). For ticket information call 519-326-7448.

**Dec. 13:** Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Christmas concert; 7:30 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 2-4:30 p.m. (23).

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

**May 3:** Menno Singers present "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.**

## Visit the 'Marketplace' again this Christmas season

LISTOWEL, ONT.—Listowel Mennonite Church is again hosting "Marketplace: An Advent Journey," where visitors can experience the nativity story through a series of personal encounters with characters from the first century. Among the stops along the journey to Bethlehem are an active marketplace with artisans and vendors, and a visit with Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus in the manger.

This three-day event is a major undertaking. The entire church building becomes a backdrop for the presentation and many members are cast in the various roles. The congregation has performed this participatory drama 10 times since 1993.

Marketplace tours will leave every 15 minutes between 7 and 9 p.m. on the weekend of Dec. 21-23, and from 2 to 4:30 p.m. on Dec. 23. The tour takes 45 minutes, but the event is popular, so sometimes a wait is necessary. For more information visit cyg.net/~lmc or call 519-291-2350.

—Listowel Mennonite Church Release

PHOTO BY BARB DRAPER



*Spice vendors are among the interesting sights at the Bethlehem "Marketplace: An Advent Journey" presented by Listowel (Ont.) Mennonite Church from Dec. 21-23.*

## Classifieds

### Employment Opportunities

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.

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

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

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

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- Registered Nurse with current registration with CRNBC.
- Minimum three years recent related management experience in a geriatric healthcare setting, preferably long-term care.
- Commitment to supporting a Christian values-based perspective to resident care programs and services.
- Familiarity with computer systems.

Reporting to the Director of Care, major responsibilities would include:

- 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

Tabor Home Society

31944 Sunrise Crescent, Abbotsford, BC V2T 1N5

Fax: 604-859-6695

[www.taborhome.org](http://www.taborhome.org)



Conrad Grebel University College invites applications for the position of **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO THE OPERATIONS MANAGER**. Responsibilities are to provide general support for the Operations Manager and to participate in the smooth functioning of the main office. Duties will include coordinating room & equipment bookings, ordering supplies, arranging for service technicians, attending to records-keeping & correspondence, and responding to general inquiries.

Desirable qualities include initiative and the ability to work independently, exceptional people skills, strong communication skills, solid organizational skills, excellent attention to detail and computer literacy. This position requires the ability to multi-task in an active office environment. Familiarity with University of Waterloo policies and procedures is preferred. Candidates should have an understanding of and appreciation for the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition within which Conrad Grebel University College stands.

This is a full-time position, 35 hours per week. Salary and benefits will be commensurate with experience. The College's support staff salaries are similar to those at the University of Waterloo and the College shares in the University's benefit package.

Please send letter of application and resumé by Dec. 3, 2007 to:

E. Paul Penner, Operations Manager

Conrad Grebel University College

140 Westmount Rd. N

Waterloo, ON, N2L 3G6

Phone: 519-885-0220, ext. 24231

E-mail: [eppenner@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:eppenner@uwaterloo.ca)

# You stand at my door

PHOTO BY SHAUN LOWE



BY MARIANNE HARDER

You stand at my door  
“Who’s there?” I say -  
For my shelter is poor  
And no place is safe  
All’s rubble and flame  
Bombs are falling, there’s no place to hide  
My whole body quakes  
Now soldiers are coming, what will that bring?  
“Are you a friend?”

You stand at my door  
“Who’s there?” I say -  
For I’ve come from my bed  
And can barely stand  
Medicine’s run out  
AIDS is a scourge and my parents are dead  
My spirit is broken  
My body can’t fight what this sickness is sending -  
“Are you a healer?”

You stand at my door  
“Who’s there?” I say -  
For my home is the street  
And my needles are empty  
It’s never enough  
Addiction’s a curse and I’m running on dry  
My soul cries for more  
It all seems so hollow; is there a tomorrow?  
“Are you the Bread?”

You stand at my door  
“Who’s there?” I say -  
For I’m part of the church  
But I feel loneliness here  
They don’t understand  
They’re busy with meetings and don’t take the time  
The knock was so faint  
I wondered if someone wanted to enter -  
“Are you the Christ?”

You stand at my door  
“Come in.” I invite,  
“How I’ve longed for your coming  
My Saviour, my Lord  
Come in with your healing, come in with your filling  
How I welcome your coming  
My Infinite Friend.”

*Marianne Harder attends Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite Church in Laird, Sask.*