



# CANADIAN MENNONITE

Dec. 17, 2007  
Volume 11 Number 24

## Christmas Voices

### inside

Churches vote to leave 15

35 Under 35 23

An MC Alberta check-up 28

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

GUEST EDITORIAL

# O 'Little Loonie Tunes' for this season

BERNIE WIEBE

Most people have heard of *Looney Tunes* cartoons. Last Advent I invented my own "Loonie Tunes" in Winnipeg.

I live downtown and often meet panhandlers in my walks. With Advent coming, I wondered how I might help generate some feelings of promise and hope together with them. My decision was simple: During the Advent season I would not walk by any panhandlers without looking into their eyes until I felt some contact and then give to them at least a loonie—our Canadian dollar.

It became a remarkable experience—even a small touch of the enjoyment provided by the *Looney Tunes* on TV. The panhandlers soon realized that to meet me was to get eye contact and a loonie. It became apparent some were spreading the word because they came back with friends. I didn't always have the right change, so it wasn't the exact amount each time. Only twice came the suggestion: "How about making it a 'toonie'?" I never did.

As I reflect on that experience of a year ago, I come to some conclusions.

First, it was not a big sacrifice to give the money; the eye contact became more than I had expected. I found I could not connect eyes without giving something of myself to each one. It became a very tiny glimpse of the "coming" promised to

us by God.

Of course, "tiny" is nothing to regret. God chose tiny Bethlehem, tiny Nazareth, unknown Mary from nowhere, a baby, shepherds without titles, a stable crib, to become Emmanuel—God-with-us.

Second, I doubt anyone received a



*I would not walk by any panhandlers without looking into their eyes until I felt some contact and then give to them at least a loonie. . . .*

greater blessing than I did from this little deal. It helped me face several fundamental questions in fresh ways:

- I believe in God; do I believe in God-in-me and in God-in-other-people?
- I believe in God the Holy Other; do I believe in God-on-earth?
- I believe in God out there; do I believe in God-with-us-together?

In reflecting again upon the promise of Gabriel to Mary (Luke 1:26-38), I am reminded that this annunciation is not in the past tense—God came; nor in the future tense—God will come; but in the present tense—God comes! Advent is about the continuing present; it is an ever-ongoing action.

God came then, comes now, and will continue to come among us. This is a significant theological statement about

God: One of the essential, promise-filling, hope-delivering features of God is this being the God-who-always-comes-among-us-and-into-us whenever we receive that coming.

Third, quite coincidentally, this Advent experience cost around \$200—200 loonies—the same amount I had planned to give to each of my children and grandchildren. This last tiny item became very emotional for me. It symbolized to me that these panhandlers are part of my immediate family and the global family of God's creation.

Dictionary definitions of "looney" include "insane" and "extremely or senselessly foolish." Does this describe what I tried to do last Advent? *Looney Tunes* cartoons were created to bring joy to

children. The "loonie" is one Canadian dollar. Looney or loonie—take your pick. I chose to try "O Little Loonie Tunes" for last Advent, and I am glad that I did.

Life is meant to be a constant Advent. We are waiting for God's promise of healing and hope. God waits for us to discover and to receive the coming of Jesus among us to help us with our fears and struggles, our hope for healing, our expectations of fulfillment, our true joy! For Advent to become constant to us and in us, we must choose to be ready for it and choose to accept it.

What "tunes" are you giving to bring "Joy to the World"?

*Bernie Wiebe is chair of Canadian Mennonite's board. He attends Hope Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.*

## ABOUT THE COVER:

Missionaries in Burkina Faso gather each year after Christmas for an annual retreat where they decorate cookies for the festive occasion. See pages 4 to 9 for *Canadian Mennonite's* annual Christmas feature, including a story about Christmas in this African country.

PHOTO BY LILLIAN NICOLSON

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

Canada

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

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

**Please send all material to be considered for publication to:**

**General submission address:** submit@canadianmennonite.org

**Letters to the Editor:** letters@canadianmennonite.org

**Calendar announcements:** calendar@canadianmennonite.org

**Milestones announcements:** milestones@canadianmennonite.org

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

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

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

## Head Office Staff

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

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

## Correspondents

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

## Board of Directors (by appointing body)

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

# contents

## Christmas Voices 4

In his poem **JOSEPH BAYLY** looks at Jesus' birth narrative from the perspective of four different participants. Plus a story of Christmas overseas by **AARON EPP**, novelist **KATHLEEN NORRIS'S** claim that Christmas is more than just a day, and a report on how Bethlehem is not just the nostalgic place of our Saviour's birth.



## Finding salvation in a strawberry pie 14

Another in the 'Stories of Faith in Life' series by **JACK DUECK**.

## Greendale, Olivet vote to leave MC B.C. 15

**AMY DUECKMAN** updates the status of four churches that didn't sign the area church covenant this summer.

## Preparing for pandemic 20

MC Canada Christian Witness helps churches prepare for a public health emergency.



## A canner reflects 22

Winkler's **DAVID MARTENS** sees God's hand in his two-year stint with the MCC meat canning team.

## Other inconvenient truths 24

**ROSS W. MUIR** explores how congregations may be breaking the law with what they show and print in church. Plus **JOEL KAUFFMANN** provides a cartoonist's perspective on copyright issues.

## Regular features:

For discussion **9** Readers write **10** Milestones **13**  
Pontius' Puddle **24** Schools Directory **27**  
Calendar **30** Classifieds **31**

## O 'Little Loonie Tunes' for this season 2

**BERNIE WIEBE**

## To whom will you sacrifice your children? 11

**PHIL WAGLER**

## Reading with class in mind 12

**AIDEN ENNS**

## Electronic Delivery

All subscribers can get the complete contents of *Canadian Mennonite* delivered free by e-mail or view selected articles online. For either option, visit our web site at canadianmennonite.org. The Jan. 7 issue will be posted by Jan. 3.

# Christmas Voices

BY JOSEPH BAYLY

*First published in Decision, December 1974.  
Reprinted by permission of Mary Lou Bayly.*

## MARY

Wretched place to be delivered. Birthplace of oxen,  
of asses, of vermin. Pain. Travail in a stable.

***Fear not, Mary***

Stench of manure. Straw, pungent, acrid.

Birth pangs in a stable.

***For thou hast found favour with God.***

Pain, my first baby. A boy. Born in a stable, born away  
from home. Nine months. Nine long months.

***Thou shalt conceive in thy womb,  
and bring forth a son.***

A son. My son. Strange thought—not his. Pain.

My son, my Saviour. Our Saviour.

***Thou shalt call his name Jesus.***

Jesus. Jesus. Pain. He shall lead our people  
into the Promised Land. Beautiful name.

Jesus, my first baby. A boy.

***He shall be great, and shall be called  
the Son of the Highest.***

God's Son in a stable? Birthplace of oxen, birthplace of  
vermin? Pain, what pain. Son of the Highest.

***The Lord God shall give unto him  
the throne of his father David.***

Palaces, not stables, for kings. Pain. Pain. Stables for

asses, for sheep. For a little lamb.

***Of his kingdom there shall be no end.***

David's kingdom ended. Every kingdom ends. Pain.

His kingdom. Pain. Pain. My baby. My Saviour. Pain.

Pain. Pain. Joseph. Joseph.

My baby. Those fingers, so tiny. Round little arms and  
legs. My baby.

***That holy thing that is born of thee . . .***

Cover him up. Wind it tight. Drafty old stable. Stars  
through the roof. Smelly manger, hard and cold.

***He shall be called the Son of God.***

Those hands, those tiny, perfect little hands. They  
made the stars, the Earth. God's Son, my Saviour, my  
baby. It's cold tonight. Cover the hands too.

## JOSEPH

It's cold and drafty. She's cold. Why couldn't the boy  
have been born while we were still in Nazareth, in-  
stead of here, alone, no one to help. Only me, and I've  
never delivered a baby.

***Fear not, Joseph.***

I do believe God. I take him at his word.

A baby, but not mine.

***Take unto thee Mary.***





*Each Christmas Nazareth Village re-enacts the Christmas story in full costume. As crowds of visitors mill about the pathways and terraces—viewing the action as if from the wings of a stage—actors and animals move through the story in an intimate and dramatic fashion. But as important as the birth event is, the fact that Jesus spent 90 percent of his life in Nazareth is not forgotten; last year's event even focused on the annunciation by the angel Gabriel to Mary, which took place in Nazareth.*

Mary—how I love her. I love you, Mary.  
Here, hold my hand. I'll see that nothing goes wrong.

No, God will see to that, he'll take care of you.

He's got to—it's his baby. Don't be afraid.

***She shall bring forth a son.***

He'll work beside me, help me smooth a yoke,  
build a house. I'll get him a little saw,  
the boy and I will work together.

***Call his name Jesus.***

I like that name: Jesus.

Joshua—he brought our people to this land.  
He was a leader, Joshua was. He was God's man.

***He shall save his people . . .***

It's beyond me. I am just a carpenter, not a rabbi.

How can he save, even after he comes of age?

When the Messiah comes . . .

***. . . from their sins.***

Things are so bad. People are so bad, not just the  
Romans, either. For that matter, I'm bad—

I need a Saviour. Mary. I'm here.

Don't be afraid—cry out, if you feel like it.

***Emmanuel.***

God with us. Mary. God's with us, and here's the baby.

Listen to him cry? Where did you put the bands

to wrap him in? I love you, Mary.

And I love your baby—our son.

#### SHEPHERD

It's a night for lambing, a dark one. No moon or stars.

It's good we built this fire. What's that?

***Fear not.***

Don't be afraid? When you see an angel big as life?

And hear its voice rock the whole countryside? I'm

glad this hole is here.

***For, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy . . .***

I wish it'd go away. Or lower its voice. Great joy sounds  
good, though. I could sure use some. Do you suppose  
that's a real, honest-to-goodness angel?

***. . . which shall be to all people.***

Impossible. How can the same news be good for the  
Roman swine and for us? The angel must be Jewish,  
like God. It probably means "to all Jews."

For unto you is born this day in the city of David. . . .

In Bethlehem? Little Bethlehem, where I was born?

Impossible. Maybe Jerusalem, but not Bethlehem.

***. . . a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.***

The Messiah, born tonight, born in Bethlehem? We've  
waited for centuries, and no Messiah. Tonight's a night

for a lamb to be born, not a Messiah.  
*And this shall be a sign unto you;  
you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling  
clothes, lying in a manger.*

The Messiah born in a stable? A baby all wrapped up?  
Impossible. A lamb in a stable, a king in a palace.  
Hey, look a that, a whole army of angels! More than a  
Roman legion. And what a bright light!

*Glory to God in the highest . . .*

They must be able to hear the whole way  
to Bethlehem.

*. . . on earth peace, good will toward men.*

Peace, that's great. Especially if it means the Romans  
will leave our country. But "good will toward men"?

They must mean toward Jews.

If they are speaking for God.

Hey, where did they go? It's dark again. They're gone.  
Did you see that? Did you hear what they said? Wait  
till I tell the wife about this. Let's go to Bethlehem and  
see what they were talking about. Maybe we'll find the

Messiah; maybe we'll only find a lamb.

In a stable, mind you.

Look at the newborn. A perfect little thing,  
like a lamb without a blemish.



## THE FATHER

My Son

Farewell.

A body I've prepared

for you

in Mary

Jewish girl

betrothed to Joseph

Jewish carpenter.

You who have been with me  
from everlasting days

who with me made all things

including earth and man

and Mary

tonight become

a creature vulnerable

a baby most helpless.

The Holy Spirit

takes you to her

through darkest night.

I send an angel army

to protect

proclaim your birth.

You'll grow

and spend a few days light

and then darkest noon

and you'll return.

I'll have the dust of earth

the virgin's fruit

at my right hand

forevermore.

Tonight I joy

that you delight to do my will

to take God-sized step

to earth and womb

and tree.

My Son. Farewell.

I hear a baby's cry.

*After graduating from Wheaton College and Faith Theological Seminary, Joe Bayly's long career as author and educator began with his appointment to InterVarsity Christian Fellowship as a staff member to the Ivy League schools. For 25 years he wrote a column, "Out of My Mind," for Eternity Magazine. Shortly after writing a final silver anniversary column in July 1986, he joined three sons who preceded him in death.*

# Christmas feasting

*MC Canada Christian Witness worker describes how Christmas is celebrated in Burkina Faso*

BY AARON EPP

National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG

Spending Christmas away from home wasn't hard for Lillian Nicolson, but it was strange.

Before the Mennonite Church Canada Christian Witness worker moved to Africa, she had spent the holidays away from her family, but this was the first time she was celebrating a Christmas without snow.

"It was just a little surreal," she said by phone from North Carolina, where she and her husband Norm are on furlough until January. "On top of there being no snow, there was no Christmas music on the radio [and] no carols being sung. It felt very un-Christmas-like."

Lillian grew up in Bluesky, Alta. Her family would celebrate Christmas with her uncle's family, making a group of 14 in total. They would gather on Christmas Eve to eat "Newfie soup," prepared by Lillian's mother, who is originally from Newfoundland. Everyone then went to church.

On Christmas morning the family would wake up and open presents. They would do a devotion together, and then the kids would play with their new toys. The celebration would continue on Boxing Day, when the family would eat a big dinner.

In 1999, Nicolson moved to a small village in Burkina Faso called Tin, whose Muslim population doesn't celebrate Christmas. Nicolson spent the past few years celebrating Christmas in Badara, a village north of Tin that has a small

Christian church. Even that has been different from what she grew up with, though.

Unlike the North American Christmases she remembers, Lillian noted that "you don't have the cookies, or the chocolates, or the candles and everything."

Instead, the churchgoers in Badara gather together on Christmas Eve for a supper of corn porridge and okra sauce. After the meal, they celebrate all night long around the fire by beating drums

and dancing.

At 5 a.m., when the sun comes up, everyone goes home, showers, gets changed and goes back to the church for the Christmas Day service. Afterwards, they eat lunch together—pork and rice with peanut butter sauce.

Lillian recalled one Christmas when the preacher emphasized during the service that the true meaning of Christmas is to celebrate the birth of Christ, and not just to eat a big meal for lunch. She had to laugh—the message was the same as what a North American pastor might preach, and yet the meal he was referring to was much smaller than a typical North American Christmas feast.

"I found it interesting that they could focus on food so much," she said. "People get hung up about the material things there, too, even though they don't have as much."

When Norm Nicolson thinks of Christmas in Burkina Faso, he thinks

of the missionary retreat that happens every year right after Christmas. Missionaries in the area gather for three or four days to celebrate, share about their work and enjoy each other's company.

Norm first experienced this retreat in 2004, and it was especially meaningful then. He had grown up in B.C. celebrating Christmas much the same way as Lillian did, and has fond memories of his father's co-worker dressed up as Santa Claus delivering bags of candy and fruit to the Nicolsons.

Three deaths in his family, however, each occurring during different Christmas seasons over the years, led to the Nicolsons drifting apart at Christmas. Norm said they went from a family that "really celebrated Christmas to one that really didn't, because of all the other things associated with that time of year."

He described the retreat in 2004 as "very refreshing, and a very good time of spiritual renew-

PHOTO BY LILLIAN NICOLSON



*Norm Nicolson, right, wakes up Sarah Thiessen and Phoebe Thiessen on Christmas morning.*

al. . . . With the losses in the family, there were things that had overshadowed what Christmas should have been about." The retreat allowed him "to get back to . . . focusing on Christ's birth, and the reason for that birth."

Norm and Lillian will return to Burkina Faso in January, when Norm will begin working in a recording studio and Lillian will continue her work forwarding the cause of literacy among the Siamou-

speaking people of Tin.

Before they go back to Africa, however, they'll celebrate Christmas with her family in Alberta, the first time in six years that they will have all been together to celebrate.

"We'll be doing pretty much the traditional family thing we did when I was growing up," Lillian said. "Before, there were 14 of us; now we've doubled. It'll be interesting." ❧

## ADVENT TO EPIPHANY:

# Why Christmas is more than a day

By ROSS W. MUIR

Managing Editor  
TORONTO

Remembering. Waiting. Hoping. These are the proper pursuits of Christmas—as opposed to seasonal shopping, a packed house at the Berkeley Church in downtown Toronto was told on Nov. 13. The occasion was the Canadian launch of *God With Us: Rediscovering the Meaning of Christmas*, a beautifully illustrated new book that features meditations and prayers for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany by six popular spiritual writers: Eugene Peterson, Richard John Neuhaus, Luci Shaw, Scott Cairns, Emilie Griffin and Kathleen Norris, who spoke at the event on "The Countercultural Pursuits of Christmas."

Perhaps a little ironically, the two book sale tables did a brisk pre-Christmas business, with many shoppers lining up to have Norris sign their copies.

The *New York Times* bestselling author of such books as *The Cloister Walk* and *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography* and award-winning poet told the crowd it was the incarnation of God in Jesus

that attracted her back to Christianity as an adult. The incarnation, she suggested, is much bigger than the Dec. 25 celebration of the birth, beginning as it does with Advent and continuing through the Twelve Days of Christmas to Epiphany, when the visit of the Magi and Jesus' baptism are celebrated.

"I love to sing Advent carols during Advent," Norris said, during the period when the consumerism of Christmas "has us by the throat." Such a discipline, she said, "makes you ready to sing Christmas carols during the Twelve Days of Christmas."

Advent harkens back to the creation account in Genesis 1, Norris said, when "even God waits." Not surprisingly then, Advent forces people to wait. But, according to Norris, that waiting—at least as described by Luke—produced the great

poems of Christianity, including Mary's Magnificat and Zechariah's prophecy. "Waiting is what artists do. We wait for ears to hear and eyes to see," she said, providing some insight into the attraction this Christian season holds

for her.

But "modern culture asks, why wait?" she said, adding, "There has been an erosion of the discipline of waiting in recent years. Waiting seems to be at odds with progress." But biblical waiting is more than a passive pursuit. It is active, vigilant, Norris said, quoting Isaiah 40:31: "*But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*"

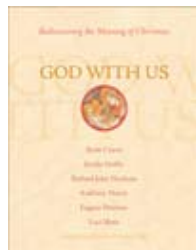
Advent, however, is not as marketable as Christmas, Norris acknowledged, when "we resist remembering human suffering and death." But without Advent and Epiphany, Christmas can easily become only an artificially happy time when it is hard to reject what she called the materialistic ethos to "shop for joy."

But the whole season of the incarnation makes clear that "joy is a product of the Holy Spirit," she said. "Scripture reminds us that remembering what God does, allows us to hope." That hope, though, is not a saccharine concoction, but grounded in the entire life, public ministry and death of Jesus on a cross.

While Christmas alone might miss that reality, she noted that the Twelve Days of Christmas don't gloss over the continuum between Christmas and Easter. In Jesus' presentation in the temple, Simeon tells Mary that "*a sword will pierce your own soul too*" (Luke 2: 35). And, noted Norris in conclusion, what most North Americans consider as Boxing Day is, in the Christian calendar, the feast of St. Stephen, the first martyr. "That puts you right up against it," she said.

And that, for Norris, is why the Twelve Days of Christmas are a bracing "antidote" for the one day of Christmas. ❧

Canadian Mennonite will feature a review of *God With Us: Rediscovering the Meaning of Christmas in 2008*.





# From Bethlehem to Galilee

*Palestinian peace worker tells MCC Manitoba meeting that the city where Jesus was born has gone from grotto to ghetto*

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent  
MORDEN, MAN.

**Z**oughbi Zoughbi, founder and director of the Wi'am Centre in Bethlehem, Palestine, brought his hunger and passion for peace in the Middle East to the gathering of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba delegates last month.

"I'm shivering with hope, joining you in 'celebrating God's love' that goes beyond borders, race, and nationality," he said. Zoughbi, a Palestinian Christian involved in community mediation, expressed appreciation for MCC's work in Palestine since 1948.

Many North Americans experience Bethlehem through the Christmas story, he said, but noted that "Jesus was born under Roman occupation. Our children are born under Israeli occupation. Bethlehem has changed from a grotto to a ghetto."

Twenty-two Israeli settlements that surround Bethlehem and the wall separating Bethlehem from Jerusalem "are choking and isolating Bethlehem," Zoughbi said, noting that it was easier to travel halfway around the world—despite an Air Canada delay in Toronto—than to make the five-mile trip to Jerusalem. "At home, we measure trips by the number of checkpoints we go through. It's a

lovely day if we have only two checkpoints, even between West Bank towns. We are living in an open prison."

Although there have been many peace talks and agreements signed, he said that "nothing has improved." In 1995, with the support of MCC, Zoughbi started Wi'am to work for non-violent resolutions to the problems Palestinians face, with programs for women, youths, children and families.

"I do not want to be anti-Israel or pro-Palestine, but rather pro-justice, restorative justice," said Zoughbi. He would like

to see the agreements implemented, justice and reconciliation established, and then a two-state solution implemented. "We need to work on education. Right now, each is looking at history from his own narratives and what we have is a clash of narratives."

"Celebrating God's Love" was MCC's 2007 theme. Zoughbi described how love has enabled him. "Love enables me to look through a new lens—the lens of hope and faith. Love enables me to be assertive, but not aggressive, to be tough on injustice. Love is the driving force for the restoration of relationships on all levels.

"Since Christ came to the world to save humanity, there is no longer any concept of promised land and chosen people," he said. "Every land is promised, every person is chosen.

"We talk about Bethlehem a lot," Zoughbi concluded, "but it is time to talk about going up to our Galilee. . . . Go up high and observe. This was where our Lord was resurrected in the world, where we are encouraged and challenged by him." ❧



Zoughbi

## ❧ For discussion

1. Which of the voices from the Joseph Bayly poem, "Christmas Voices," speaks loudest for you? Which images are most vivid? What insights into the Christmas story do these reflections on pain and fear provide?
2. The cookies on the front cover were made by missionaries far from home at Christmas-time. If you were far away from your family at Christmas, what would you miss most? Do you think we focus on food (and decorations) to the point that we lose the true meaning of the season?
3. "There has been an erosion in the discipline of waiting in recent years," said Kathleen Norris. Do you agree? What are the benefits of not rushing into the celebration of Christmas? How might celebrating the Twelve Days of Christmas (from Dec. 25 to Jan. 5) change our attitude toward this holiday?
4. Zoughbi Zoughbi says that the Palestinians of Bethlehem are "living in an open prison." Do you think Mary and Joseph also felt that way, living under Roman occupation? Does a romantic image of the "Little Town of Bethlehem" keep Christians from being concerned about peace and justice for the people who live there today?

## 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

#### ✉ Give money instead of food to help feed the needy

AS SOON AS I opened the Oct. 15, 2007, *Canadian Mennonite*, I was especially pleased to see the lead article on "Food localism: From farm to fork" on page 4. It reminded me of an article I wrote four years ago as a suggested discussion topic in our adult Sunday school class.

With the millions of hungry and starving people around the world, it certainly behooves those who have resources to not only share generously and graciously, but also in an efficient, effective and economical manner. Although there are many individuals who appreciate the opportunity to share tangibly through food drives, it appears there is a much better avenue of giving than simply donating a tin of food or bag of groceries.

For hundreds of years, society has found that using money is far more advantageous than the barter system. Cash is the easiest and most efficient way of moving goods or services from one place to another. With the affluence that many Canadian Christians enjoy, donating a few items to a food drive merely salves their conscience when they could—and should—be giving much more generously.

It would be easy for most people who donate to a food drive to donate the equivalent of setting an extra place should a hungry person come to their door. This could be done on a much more regular basis than food drives are conducted. Using the "extra plate philosophy," think of the amount that many families could give in monetary form if a certain percentage of their weekly spending on groceries was put aside to donate in lieu of tangible foodstuffs.

If a charity that dispenses food from food drives

could receive cash instead of actual groceries, it could use the money to purchase needed items by the case at a wholesale rate. Items could be purchased in keeping with clients' needs and tastes. Food drives tend to put the charity in a position where its charitable action may be demeaning, rather than positive and encouraging. With donations of money, nutritious frozen foods, fresh fruits, vegetables and meat could become part of the available grocery items. For the recipients of this wider range of items, it would be far more nourishing as well as uplifting.

LESTER C. FRETZ, PORT COLBORNE, ONT.

#### ✉ Recycling 10-cent plastic cups unhealthy, dishonest—and freaky

RE: "RECYCLING REDEMPTION at Super 8," Nov. 12, 2007, page 13.

So much of what Will Braun says about the merits of shopping, donating and being a part of the remarkable thrift movement is appropriate. But I must strenuously take issue with a couple of points he makes.

Plastic cups that are recycled do not suffer "a fate of waste," as he says. I would also suggest that the time and energy required to price and tag an item for 10 cents—plus the cost of the tag—are grossly inefficient, given the high volume of higher value "stuff" to be processed each day.

The real kicker, however, is Braun's declaration that, after having used "my cups well," he will put them back in the wrappers that he has saved, and then have them resold. That is really freaky! Aside from the health issue, the dishonesty of selling a used cup, returned in its original branded wrapper, is, in my mind, counter to the reputation that all Mennonite Central Committee thrift stores strive to create.

LEWIS WEBER, NEW HAMBURG, ONT.

#### ✉ Editorial intervention in Enns' column found to be 'deeply offensive'

I STRONGLY RESONATED with Aiden Enns' "Five reasons to stay in church" column, Oct. 15, 2007, page 9, including his suggestion to look for God in all peoples and all faiths.

While at first I chuckled over the editorial intervention reminding us that Acts 4:12 tells us that salvation is only through Jesus Christ, I later found it deeply offensive. The editor does not need to tame Enns' radical message for us by citing Scripture. Let him say his piece and let the letters page be the place for debate, if necessary.

PAMELA KLASSEN, TORONTO

## ✉ Editor commended for correcting columnist's unbiblical teaching

RE: "FIVE REASONS to stay in church," Oct. 15, 2007, page 9.

Although the goal of keeping people in the church is commendable, there is little in columnist Aiden Enns' proposals with which I can agree.

Enns advocates a reckless pluralism in which "all faiths, including Christianity" lead to God. Yet Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one

comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

I commend the editor for inserting that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of the world and including Acts 4:12 as a corrective to Enns' viewpoint. However, I question the willingness of *Canadian Mennonite* to publish unbiblical teachings.

Enns' suggestion that people attend worship services just for social reasons is simply wrong. Our *Confession of Faith* says "church is the assembly of those who have accepted God's offer of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ." Worship is our response to a praise-worthy

### OUTSIDE THE BOX

# To whom will you sacrifice your children?

PHIL WAGLER

I write this at perhaps the only time of year that our culture recognizes the worth of sacrifice—Remembrance Day. Images of battlefield horror may be the glorification of all things military or the uncensored documented proof that all things are broken. Love or hate the day, this individualistic, consumerist, me-first society can surely use the reminder of sacrifice for a cause bigger than itself.

Ironically, the most somber of silences at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month is quickly followed by that most maniacal of marches towards the 25th day of the 12th month. How quickly we move from one form of child sacrifice to the next. In the former, we remember sacrifices made for the state; in the latter, we gorge on sacrifices for the self. In November, we were a people willing to lay down our lives; in December, we are gluttons for sales and easy credit.

Martin Luther once made the chilling statement, "Idolatry involves a question of what you would sacrifice your children for." The state or the self: Which idol is receiving our children these days? Perhaps, and probably, it is both. The power

of any idol is its diabolical clout that convinces us to give up our young in its name.

Now before we get uppity, snap our suspenders and declare ourselves free of such silliness, perhaps we need to be reminded of one limb of the church's



*If you choose Jesus, those you love are forced to live with the ramifications of your decision.*

love affair with the political left and the other limb's desperate dependency on the political right. The state still begs for—and consumes—our offspring. And then there is the surrendering of our kids to the selfish amusement and titillation of an age of decadence and excess with very few questions asked beyond, "Will that be cash or credit?"

As followers of Jesus we know the walk by faith is one of sacrifice—the self-sacrifice of Christ for sinners and the reciprocal sacrifice of the self marked by the taking up of our crosses in an about-face. You cannot be in Christ without accepting the sacrifice for you and making a sacrifice yourself. In contrast to the demands of the state, we are commanded

to love even our enemies and name only one Lord. In contrast to the self, we are commanded to give up all that was once for our profit.

Yet even here, beneath a good God's mothering wing, we do not escape the disturbing image of child sacrifice. Theologian Stanley Hauerwas says, "No ethic is worthy that does not require potentially the suffering of those we love."

The Trinity gives up the Son. And how many toddlers did Bethlehem lose to the Father's decision to shine on David's city? If you choose Jesus, those you love are forced to live with the ramifications of your decision. To choose Jesus under Nero meant the potential suffering of your offspring. Household conversions meant embracing an ethic your loved

ones could die for.

Does this still happen? Living with such an individualistic society and spirituality, we forget that it is still the case that what adults choose is what the next generation is forced to deal with. Since, statistically at least, Canadians are abandoning Christian faith faster than the Maple Leafs, it makes you wonder what god and ethic we have sacrificed our children for. And for those who have named Jesus as Lord: Do you still believe this Christmas that he's worth the sacrifice?

*Phil Wagler (phil\_wagler@yahoo.ca) is a pastor at Zurich (Ont.) Mennonite Church and the proud daddy of three who have already made sacrifices that humble him.*

God and church attendance is done as an act of obedience to God (Hebrews 10:25).

Enns is ready to justify his “unorthodox” views by appealing to Anabaptism’s openness to the voice of each member in the community, but his appeal to Anabaptism is highly selective. The Anabaptist martyrs would roll over in their graves if they knew how Enns builds on one aspect of their cherished convictions, only to trample on others. Anabaptism does promote the priesthood of all believers, but voices

that weren’t soundly biblical and Christ-centred were considered out of tune.

I’m not advocating that we don’t question tradition and the status quo, but let’s promote genuine spiritual renewal and biblical discipleship in the Mennonite Church. As *Canadian Mennonite’s* Mission Statement says, “Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful” (Hebrews 10:23).

NATHAN LICHTI, WATERLOO, ONT.

NEW ORDER VOICE

# Reading with class in mind

AIDEN ENNS

I was anxious earlier this month when I gave a seminar at a convention for Christian youth workers from across Canada.

We were in a posh new hotel in downtown Vancouver, with marble walls between the toilets and live jazz by the escalators. They offered us free candies, chocolate bars, ballpoint pens and even a fair-trade, burlap shoulder bag, handmade by a former prostitute, imported directly from the streets of Calcutta, India.

I was anxious because I’ve added a class lens to my reading of the life of Jesus.

Now when I’m reading the story, I ask from what social class did Jesus come? To what economic class did he migrate, which class did he condemn, which did he console? And with which class should we build meaningful solidarity?

With about 80 youth workers in attendance, I decided to re-read Jesus’ parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30). Growing up Mennonite, I was always taught that this is a parable about being good stewards of our wealth and other gifts. If we keep a clean heart, make wise investments and do all our music lessons,

God will probably bless us in material and spiritual ways.

In this parable, a very rich landowner goes on a journey. Before he leaves, the landowner gives money to three servants so that they can continue expanding his estate. Two of them invest their “talents.” By the time the owner returns, they have doubled the money. The third servant, on the other hand, took his talent, dug a hole, hid it in the ground and then gave



*I was anxious because I’ve added a new class lens to my reading of the life of Jesus.*

it back to the owner. He is rebuked, punished and banished from the estate.

A normal—that is, middle and upper class—interpretation of this parable understands the rich owner to represent God, the one who entrusts us with gifts. If we are faithful servants, we will take our gifts, which include “the gift of making money,” develop them and, by grace, multiply them.

But one unresolved question remains: Is God like the landowner, a “hard man” who exploits others, “reaping where [he] did not sow”?

In an alternate reading that pays attention to class, the parable offers a different interpretation. The landowner represents himself, one of the rich elites who routinely exploits the masses. The third servant refuses to take part in this chain of exploitation and, afraid, returns the money to his master.

William Herzog, in his book *Parables as Subversive Speech*, calls this a parable of the whistle-blower, the story of an insider who renounces the corruption of the ruling elites. Jesus’ hearers would have felt empathy for the third servant. I interpreted the meaning for youth workers: They need not bless the structures of wealth concentration with their choice of activities. Instead of using ever-new technology and entertainment, they could play free interactive games, visit farms, analyze television ads, learn to can jam or visit the core area of their city.

My hearers were more receptive than I thought. There, in the belly of opulence, I

found openness to question affluence.

At the edge of a culture that glorifies luxury is a gospel of communal sharing and a concern for those who suffer exploitation under the hands of the rich and ruling elites. May we have the eyes to see this incarnation of the love of God. May we also have the courage to renounce our participation in the chain of exploitation.

*Aiden Enns can be reached at [aiden@geezmagazine.org](mailto:aiden@geezmagazine.org). He is a member of Hope Mennonite Church in Winnipeg and sits on the Canadian Mennonite board.*

## ✉ Editor's note to Enns' column shows theological convictions

IN THEIR NOV. 26, 2007, letters to the editor, Dean Peachey and Philip Martin offer somewhat excessive reactions to what they consider an inappropriate editorial interjection into Aiden Enns' New Order Voice column ("Five reasons to stay in church," Oct. 15, 2007, page 9). I suggest that neither literary licence nor editorial freedom are "gospel," but, rather, are matters of respectful discernment within Christ's community—"speaking the truth in love."

As the editor of our denominational magazine, I value someone with theological convictions that reflect our confessions of faith. As a member of our discerning faith community, I would appreciate reading more of his insightful commentaries on the editorial page—especially on controversial topics.

Tim Miller Dyck receives my congratulations for revitalizing *Canadian Mennonite*. The many stories of faith, service, struggle and faithfulness experienced throughout the global church are uplifting.

IVAN UNGER, CAMBRIDGE, ONT.

## ✎ Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

**Altstadt**—Chance Samuel (b. Nov. 14, 2007), to Michelle Wright and William Altstadt, Osler Mennonite, Sask.

**Bergen**—Harley Noah (b. Nov. 13, 2007) to Dana and Jesse Bergen, Hague Mennonite, Sask.

**Cornies**—Kaesha Leanne Heide (b. Sept. 30, 2007), to Shauna Heide and Ken Cornies, Toronto United Mennonite, Ont.

**Dyck**—Elias John (b. Nov. 19, 2007), to Bonnie and Mark Dyck, Coaldale Mennonite, Alta.

**Dyck**—Skylar Nevaeh (b. Nov. 8, 2007) to Jolee and Ryan Dyck, Hague Mennonite, Sask.

**Friesen**—Faith Rae (b. Oct. 28, 2007), to Nancy and Ryan Friesen, North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

**Kuepfer**—Drew (b. Sept. 3, 2007), to Amanda and Danny Kuepfer, Riverdale Mennonite, Millbank, Ont.

**Jantzi**—Hudson Aaron (b. Nov. 18, 2007), to Cindy and Jason Jantzi, Riverdale Mennonite, Millbank, Ont.

**Loewen**—Isaiah Cruz (b. Sept. 23, 2007), to Andrew and Jennifer Loewen, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Shantz**—Marissa Grace (b. Nov. 16, 2007), to Luke and Joanna Shantz, Shantz Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

**Sonnenberg**—Chloe Faith (b. Nov. 9, 2007), to Gary and Trish Sonnenberg, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary.

**Salese**—Sofia Maria (b. Nov. 16, 2007), to Steve and Karla Salese, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

**Seyler**—Noah David Elliot (b. Nov. 12, 2007), to James and Susan (Elliot) Seyler, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., in West Hampstead, United Kingdom.

**Sincock**—Sofia Marie (b. Oct. 6, 2007), to Jeff and Marie Sincock, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Willms**—Kai Jeffrey (b. Nov. 16, 2007), to Deanna and Shami Willms, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.

**Wilson**—Brynn Rowan (b. Nov. 16, 2007), to Karla and Graham Wilson, Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite, Sask.

### Baptisms

**Ben Borne, Amy Indzeoski, Graham MacDonald, Matthew Stock**—Wildwood Mennonite, Saskatoon, July 22, 2007.

**Bryn Olfert**—Wildwood Mennonite, Saskatoon, Aug. 19, 2007.

**Jenny Matthews, Olivia Matthews, Rudy Sawatsky**—St. Agatha Mennonite, Ont., Nov. 18, 2007.

**Joel Allen**—Crosshill Mennonite, Ont., Nov. 18, 2007.

**Joel Nafziger, Derek Zehr**—Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., Nov. 11, 2007.

### Marriages

**Boehm/Derksen**—Jared Boehm and Ranelle Derksen, Hague Mennonite, Sask., Nov. 24, 2007.

**Clark/Teichroeb**—Andrew Clark and Chrissy Teichroeb, Laird Mennonite, Sask., Oct. 20, 2007.

**Bergen/McDonald**—Darlene Bergen and Scott McDonald (Sturgeon Lake Christian Fellowship) at Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Oct. 27, 2007.

**Gibney/Ruedig**—Tammy Gibney and Scott Ruedig, North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask., Oct. 27, 2007.

**Kampen/Rempel**—Anita Kampen and Hans Rempel, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Sept. 8, 2007.

**Kroeger/Shackleford**—Robert Kroeger and Krista Shackleford, Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 20, 2007.

**Smith/Zacharias**—Sheri Smith and Andrew Zacharias (Fiske Mennonite, Sask.) at Rosetown United Church, Sask., Nov. 10, 2007.

### Deaths

**Berg**—Mary, 94 (d. Nov. 22, 2007), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

**Boldt**—Maria, 95 (b. Dec. 16, 1911; d. Nov. 13, 2007), Osler Mennonite, Sask.

**Dueck**—Henry, 80 (b. Oct. 17, 1927; d. Nov. 4, 2007), Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Enns**—John, 88 (b. Jan. 28, 1919; d. Nov. 2, 2007), Coaldale Mennonite, Alta.

**Giesbrecht**—Margaret, 96 (b. Dec. 3, 1910; d. Nov. 13, 2007), Hague Mennonite, Sask.

**Krause**—Erich, 100 (b. July 11, 1907; d. Nov. 26, 2007), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont. in Vineland.

**Pauls**—Nettie, 91 (d. Nov. 18, 2007), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

**Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones announcements (formerly Transitions) within four months of the event. Please send Milestones announcements by e-mail to [milestones@canadianmennonite.org](mailto: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

Joe Heikman is associate pastor at First United Mennonite Church in Vancouver. His name was inadvertently left off the list of current pastors in the "Turning 70" article that appeared on page 21 of the Nov. 12, 2007, issue. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the omission.

STORIES OF FAITH IN LIFE

# Finding salvation in a strawberry pie

BY JACK DUECK

“Now that we have the proof, there’s only one thing we should do—call the police,” Ruby\* says. “To think that these punks would steal from a thrift store!”

“Could we first talk to the boys?” Helen suggests. “They might have had reasons we don’t know about.”

“Stealing is stealing,” Ruby insists. “Unless these kids are taught a lesson early, they’ll end up in serious crime and in jail. I think three strikes and you’re out is a good idea. Now let the police handle it.”

“But Ruby, that’s not who we are . . . and we don’t really know the boys.”



down; a fourth smirks nervously.

“Well, it’s yes or no. . . . Do you like my pie?” One nods fearfully, another croaks out yes. Smiling, Helen says, “It feels good when people like what I bake.”

Helen cuts the pie into large slices and sets them before the four boys. They sit staring at the pies—seeing only a trap.

Eating her slice, she encourages them: “Come on, eat. It’s not poisoned!”

Slowly they oblige.

After letting them eat in silence for a bit, she says, “Boys, I like that you enjoy my pie. But you don’t have to take it from the store. Just ask me and I’d

hisses, “Cut it out. Let her talk.”

“Now I have a suggestion,” Helen says. “How about sweeping the walk in front every morning, and clear the snow in the winter? And also, when you have an hour here and there, help me with some errands in the store. I find some of these boxes a bit hard to handle alone. When you and I agree the stuff you took is paid for, I will pay you for every hour you work here. Will you help me?”

## Epilogue

I encounter this story while storytelling in a rural farming community, where someone suggests I join him at Helen’s funeral. In the church assembly, and later at the cemetery, I notice two police officers near three young men—Helen’s boys.

Brian stands with an arm around Jimmy’s shoulders. Jimmy had not been able to gain control over his kleptomania, resulting in a lengthy incarceration. Prison authorities allow him to come to Helen’s funeral, resulting in the police presence.

Brian comforts Jimmy: “You’re okay,” he says. “Helen would be proud. I’ll come get

PHOTO BY ROSS W. MUIR



*They sit staring at the pies—seeing only a trap. Eating her slice, she encourages them: ‘Come on, eat. It’s not poisoned!’ Slowly they oblige.*

Kate, the store manager, suggests, “Let’s try this first. Helen, when the boys come in again, would you sit them down in the back and talk with them? Then we can take it from there.”

But will they come? They come, mingling cagily among customers. Large, heavy set Grandma Helen walks up to the boy nearest the exit, blocking it, and says, quietly but firmly, “I need to see you boys in the back room . . . now. You tell the others, okay?”

She follows, herding them. “Come, sit at this table, on that side.” She notes that some feet don’t quite reach the floor. The smallest sits corkscrewed around the chair legs. She sits facing them. “Do you like my strawberry pie?”

One squirms; two sit rigid, looking

give you some. Now is that so hard?”

Smirks soon melt into confusion.

“You see, I bake these strawberry pies for the store. We sell them here and the money is then given to people who are hungry, so they too can buy food. And all the things in this store are donated—even our work—so we can help people who have nothing.”

“Now, boys, I need your help,” she tells them—Brian, Jimmy, Patrick and Bobby. “The missing pies mean someone did not get the help they needed from that sale. And if you took other items, this also kept help from families that really needed it. You see, this store is to help anyone in need. Even you—you must have been very hungry.”

To sob-convulsed Jimmy, Patrick

you in two months when you’re released.”

Later Brian tells me, “Man, she saved our lives. Bobby, who used to stutter before Helen told him how she cured her own son of that, has become a professional singer and is raising a fine family. Patrick is doing Helen’s work in Africa micro-enterprises.

“You know, at the times of the ‘Great Thrift Store Heists,’ three of us were shunted about in foster care, and Jimmy was almost ruined for life by an alcoholic stepfather. But we’ve all agreed that when Jimmy is released from prison and Patrick’s back from Africa, we’re all meeting for stories with our former church youth group—Helen’s church—and a strawberry pie feast. ❧

\* All names used are pseudonyms.

## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

# Greendale, Olivet vote to leave MC B.C.

*Area church continues negotiations with the four congregations that didn't sign covenant this summer*

By AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent  
ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

After a two-year process of shared re-  
visioning and restructuring, Men-  
nonite Church B.C. leadership asked all its  
member churches to sign a new covenant  
document that entails a common commit-  
ment to six areas of doctrine and practice  
(see *Canadian Mennonite*, June 25, 2007,  
pages 39-40). The document had exten-  
sive—but not universal—support, as 30  
out of 34 member churches signed.

The four non-signing churches are  
Abbotsford Mennonite Fellowship; First  
Mennonite Church, Burns Lake; First  
Mennonite Church Greendale in Chilliwack;  
and Olivet Church in Abbotsford.

In the months since the May 27 signing  
ceremony, the MC B.C. Executive and  
these churches have been holding private,  
one-on-one negotiations to determine  
next steps. In interviews with representa-  
tives from each of these congregations, as  
well as MC B.C. leaders, *Canadian Men-  
nonite* heard that discussions between the  
area church and local congregations were  
ongoing, but little could be said publicly.

The MC B.C. Executive, together with a  
group of former area church leaders, de-  
veloped a draft “Covenant and the Process  
of Reconciliation” document to lay out a  
desired approach to negotiations. It is al-  
ready being used as a guide for discussion  
with the four non-covenanting congre-  
gations, according to MC B.C. executive  
minister Garry Janzen. In early November,  
the document was sent to all B.C. congre-  
gations and their chairs, and will be pre-  
sented as a resolution at the February an-  
nual delegate sessions.

However, later in November, events  
moved rapidly and two of the churches—

First Mennonite Church Greendale  
and Olivet Church—voted to leave the  
denomination.

First Mennonite Church of Greendale  
chair Vic Ewert said one reason the church  
did not sign is concern over stronger ties  
with Mennonite Church Canada. “Our as-  
sociation with the Canadian conference  
has been weak for some time,” he said. He  
added that it is “not highly productive” for  
the church to comment further in *Can-  
adian Mennonite* because “we have not  
yet come to agreement among our own  
congregation as of yet on all these mat-  
ters.” Since *Canadian Mennonite* spoke  
with Ewert, 70 percent of the church voted  
to withdraw from Mennonite Church B.C.  
on Nov. 18.

Olivet Church pastors Randy Thompson  
and Stacey O'Neill said, “We truly appre-  
ciate our Anabaptist roots, but it would be  
hypocritical for us to sign the covenant. . . .  
To make a covenant with integrity requires  
agreement and we are not in agreement  
on salvation-based theology, nor practice  
of core doctrinal values. There are some  
key areas where we cannot have diversity  
and must be in unity in order to partici-  
pate in a covenant. The central difference  
boils down to the view and interpretation  
of Scripture.” Thompson and O'Neill also  
expressed concerns about accountability  
within MC B.C., the essential connection  
of pacifism to the gospel, and “liberalism  
within some Mennonite Church Canada  
congregations that do not hold to homo-  
sexuality as a sin.”

On Nov. 12, the Olivet congrega-  
tion voted by 71 percent to leave the  
denomination.

Abbotsford Mennonite Fellowship said it  
chose to abstain from signing the covenant.  
According to church chair Don Harder

and founding member Walter Paetkau,  
there seemed to be a lack of clarity to the  
Fellowship around why the signing was  
necessary, given that the church had com-  
mitted to Mennonite Church B.C. when  
it joined some years ago. Harder said the  
church has no problem being a member  
of MC B.C., but feels “an affirmation of  
support should be sufficient.” Further dis-  
cussions with MC B.C. are ongoing.

For its part, First Mennonite Church of  
Burns Lake continues to be in the negotia-  
tion process. “We are in dialogue with MC  
B.C. and don't want to make any public  
statements at this point,” said church chair  
Robert Wiebe.

“The negotiations are to take place until  
the congregations have decided whether  
they will sign the covenant, in other words,  
whether they will choose to belong to MC  
B.C. or not,” wrote Janzen to *Canadian  
Mennonite*. “While each congregation  
will come to their decision whenever they  
are ready, and some have already done so  
[Olivet and Greendale], we don't want to  
go on any longer than February 2009.” ❧

MC CANADA PHOTO BY DAN DYCK



**Alf Redekopp, director of the Mennonite Heritage Centre, left, Margaret Kroeker and Hanna Rempel participate in a dedication ceremony outside the centre at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg on Oct. 5. A tree was planted as a gift to the centre from Mennonite Genealogy Inc. (MGI), in recognition of the contributions of Abram Andreas Vogt to the preservation of Mennonite heritage. The ceremony included a dedication of the extensive archival collection which MGI transferred to the centre this past June as it ceased operations.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF GREG YANTZI



# Church

*In the spirit of ecumenical diversity and camaraderie, Harrow (Ont.) Mennonite Church held two months of joint services with the local United Church congregation this past summer. Service themes followed the Mennonite Publishing Network's Gather 'Round curriculum on the parables of Jesus. During the final service, Betty Schmidt (Harrow Mennonite Church) read words of blessing and thanksgiving during an exchange of hymnals with Eleanor Walker (Harrow United Church).*

PHOTO BY LEORA BERGEN

*Ben Pauls, centre, was installed as pastor of Carrot River (Sask.) Mennonite Church on Oct. 7. Taking part in the service were MC Saskatchewan conference minister Jerry Buhler, left, and Pauls' wife, Pat. Pauls joins assistant pastor Ron Nickel on staff. The Pauls spent 10 years in Paraguay as missionaries. Since their return to Canada in 1992, Pauls has worked as a pastor and in music ministry in Abbotsford, B.C., and Winkler, Man.*



PHOTO BY BILL HEAVENER



*A harvest dinner was held this fall at Hunta Mennonite Church, Driftwood, Ont., with close to 100 in attendance. The community is given an invitation to this annual event to share with the church from God's bounty and to praise him with grace before the food was served and the fellowship began.*



# snapshots

PHOTO BY JAKE NICKEL



*On Nov. 1, Patrick Preheim, kneeling, was installed as co-pastor of Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, during a service that included a prayer circle with, from left, Tiefengrund Mennonite Church pastor Lorne Epp, Nutana co-pastor Anita Retzlaff, and youth pastor Wendy Harder, among others. Preheim and his wife Patty, who were formerly co-pastors of Faith Mennonite Church in Minneapolis, Minn., were also received into membership at Nutana Park that day.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF DOUG DURST



*This fall, Grace Mennonite Church in Regina—which has had the participation of Lao believers for three decades—unveiled a banner depicting life in rural Laos and featuring the words of Psalm 37:34: “Wait upon the Lord and follow his ways.” The artist is a former drug addict who is rebuilding his life with the support of a Christian community in Vientiane, Laos. Pictured with the banner are Kham Phommavong and dancers Vanessa Phommavong and Angeline Phongsavath.*

PHOTO BY TIM MILLER DYCK



*Around 400 people gathered on Nov. 18 to dedicate a building addition at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont. Participants added pieces of brick and tile used in the building of the new gymnasium/fellowship hall, along with stones, to create a mosaic frame for a work of art that was painted to celebrate the opening.*

# Is the sermon dead?

*Future of preaching to be discussed at CMU ministry seminar*

BY JOHN LONGHURST

Canadian Mennonite University  
WINNIPEG

People today might be wondering if the sermon is dead, considering all the new ways they get information and entertainment—the Internet, TV, video games, iPods and a hundred other media. In this world of fast-paced stimulations and distractions, is preaching the best way to communicate today? Or is it time to declare the death of the sermon?

“I don’t think so,” says Thomas Long, professor of preaching at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, Ga., and keynote speaker at the Church in Ministry Seminars at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU), Jan. 14-15. “But I do think that preachers have to work more creatively to get a hearing. There was a time when people were attuned to getting their infor-

mation from the human voice. Preachers could assume that congregations were at least ready to hear them if they did a good job of preaching. But that’s not true anymore.”

According to Long, “People today get their information more randomly and episodically. There’s no plot line to their world. People’s attention is so fragmented, and so attracted by a burst of energy there, a burst of energy here, that making any sense of the whole is a difficult task.”

Long says that preachers today need to recognize this new reality by changing the way they preach. “It’s not possible today to preach a traditional sermon with a narrative plot that has sequential sections,” he says. “If somebody quits in an early section, the whole thing is lost.”

Long’s current thinking is that he will “no longer start with sentence one and as-

sume a continuity of listening through to the end of the sermon. I think of my sermons in terms of chunks. For each section, I want to be sure to give the congregation the information they need to listen to what I am saying and be able to use it.”

While at CMU, Long will be speaking on the topics of “Engaging the biblical text in preaching,” “Engaging the hearers in preaching,” and “Preaching in a wind-storm: Speaking the gospel in today’s culture.”

In addition to Long, Dan Epp-Tiessen and other CMU faculty will be offering workshops and clinics on sermon-related topics at the seminar, which is entitled “The Witness of Preaching.”

“Sermons need to be lively, engaging, and not drag on” if they are to capture and hold the attention of the congregation today, says Epp-Tiessen, who teaches homiletics—the art of preaching—at CMU. Preachers also “need to use language and images that are vivid and lively, and that gets people’s minds and imaginations going,” he adds. ☼

Pastors Week  
January 28–31, 2008

Leadership Clinics  
January 28, 2008

*Risky and Risqué*  
**Everything you  
always wanted to  
know about  
testimony\***

Featuring AMBS professors:

Arthur Paul Boers, Alan Kreider, Ben Ollenburger, Rebecca Slough and others

Examine biblical foundations for testimonies, consider why we are reticent to testify and look toward new models of testimony that are faithful to Scripture and authentic to our time.

**\*but were afraid to ask**



Associated  
Mennonite  
Biblical  
Seminary

See more and register at [www.ams.edu/pastorsweek](http://www.ams.edu/pastorsweek)

3003 Benham Avenue  
Elkhart, IN 46517  
1 + 800 964-2627  
[www.ams.edu](http://www.ams.edu)

## 14<sup>th</sup> Mennonite Heritage Cruise

In Ukraine on the  
Dnieper River and Black Sea  
**Sep 28 to Oct 14, 2008**

**Ultimate roots discovery trip**  
also known as the  
“Floating Mennonite University”

**Odessa to Kyiv via Crimea**  
with

Senior Historian Paul Toews  
Architectural Historian Rudy Friesen  
Genealogist Alan Peters  
Agronomist John Martens  
Guides include Olga Shmakina  
and Lyudmilla Karyaka

contact:

Marina Unger or Jane Clemens  
Vision 2000 Travel, Toronto  
1-800-387-1488 ext. 2827,2243  
[marinau@vision2000.ca](mailto:marinau@vision2000.ca)

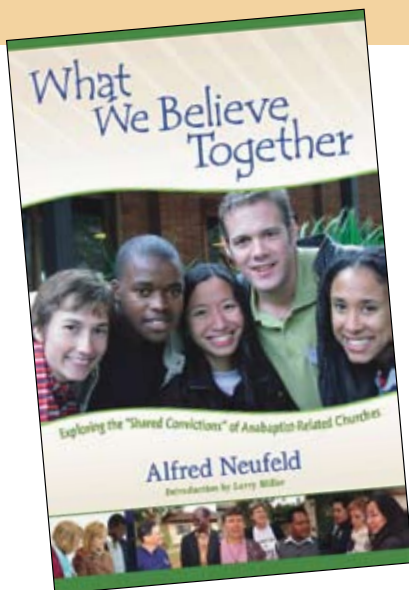
<http://home.ica.net/~walterunger/>  
or

**Google Mennonite Heritage Cruise**

## Global Anabaptist/Mennonite Shelf of Literature

(a project of Mennonite World Conference)

# Our 2007 Selection!



## What We Believe Together

Exploring the "Shared Convictions" of Anabaptist-Related Churches

by Alfred Neufeld

### About this book

This first-of-its-kind book explores seven convictions shared by Anabaptist-related churches, now on six continents, who have always insisted that what we believe will be reflected in how we live.

Mennonite World Conference commissioned this project and asked theologian and teacher Alfred Neufeld, of Asunción, Paraguay, to write this commentary on the shared convictions. In a rich and readable style, he fills out their meaning and significance, drawing upon Old and New Testament Scriptures, as well as examples and stories from history and current church life around the world. Very engaging!

Paperback • \$9.95 (U.S.)

### How you can be involved

Read this book yourself. Hand it to young persons and inquiring friends. Study it with your small group, reading group, or Sunday school class. (And make sure your church library has at least one copy.) Helpful study questions are included in the text.

### How to get this book

Check with your local bookstore. Or — in the U.S., call the publisher, Good Books, at 800/762-7171, ext. 221, or shop at the secure website, [www.GoodBooks.com](http://www.GoodBooks.com). In Canada, call the Bookshop at Pandora Press at 866/696-1678.

### Purpose of the Shelf

*The Global Anabaptist/ Mennonite Shelf of Literature* envisions a new book selection each year, encouraging the fellowships around the world to translate it into their own languages. The book or booklet of the year may have been published first in any one of the languages spoken within the Anabaptist-related fellowships found in 53 countries around the world. For more information, email General Secretary Larry Miller at [LarryMiller@MWC-cmm.org](mailto:LarryMiller@MWC-cmm.org).

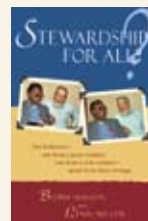
## Mennonite World Conference

Strasbourg, France • Kitchener, Ontario, Canada • Clovis, California, USA • Asunción, Paraguay

(This ad was made possible by an anonymous donation to MWC.)



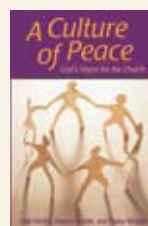
## Global Anabaptist/ Mennonite Shelf of Literature



2006  
Selection

\$6.95 (U.S.)  
Paperback

*Stewardship for All?*  
by Bedru Hussein and  
Lynn Miller



2005  
Selection

\$9.99 (U.S.)  
Paperback

*A Culture of Peace*  
by Alan Kreider, Eleanor  
Kreider, and Paulus Widjaja



2004  
Selection

\$7.95 (U.S.)  
Paperback

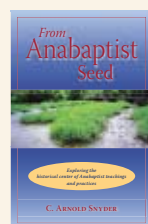
*God's Shalom Project*  
by Bernhard Ott



2003  
Selection

\$6.95 (U.S.)  
Paperback

*Sharing Gifts in the  
Global Family of Faith*  
by Pakisa K. Tshimika  
and Tim Lind



2002  
Selection

\$8.95 (U.S.)  
Paperback

*From Anabaptist Seed*  
by C. Arnold Snyder

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

# Preparing for pandemic

*MC Canada pandemic task force helps churches prepare for a public health emergency*

BY TERESA FALK  
National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG

The Parable of the Good Samaritan describes the way Jesus' people need to respond to marginalized and hurting people, said Sven Eriksson, Mennonite Church Canada denominational minister.

"A pandemic will feature major marginalization—brokenness, sickness and

dying," he said.

The MC Canada pandemic task force met from Nov. 1 to 3 at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, to determine how to respond to a pandemic in a prepared and compassionate way.

The task force's objective is to develop an information package that MC Canada and area churches can disseminate to congregations on their role in preparing for, and responding to, a public health emergency, said Gord Friesen, task force facilitator.

Through Mennonite Disaster Service, Friesen participated in a Canadian Council of Churches pandemic preparedness committee. Working together with MC Canada Christian Witness, Friesen was then asked to lead a 12-member pandemic task force on behalf of Witness.

The task force considered three main areas to be included in the information



Friesen

package:

- How to care for members of a church and their neighbours in an emergency;
- How congregational practices and worship could be impacted in an emergency; and,
- How congregations can connect with their local government au-

thorities and the larger community in an emergency.

Friesen said the task force also discussed why the church should be involved in pandemic preparedness. Using Manitoba Mennonite Health Services resource material as a guide, the group agreed on three main reasons: "Jesus calls us to care for those who are sick; healing is a fundamental part of God's work in the world; and healing is holy work."

"We were looking at the bigger picture of why we should be involved in the health of our members and we feel there's a strong theological basis for it, as well as a very practical basis, because if there was a public health emergency, the public health sector would be overwhelmed and compassionate people in churches should be taking care of each other," Friesen said.

Much literature has already been distributed by the government and health authorities on pandemic preparedness, said Friesen; however, little of this literature is faith-based.

"Everybody else has a public health response to an emergency, but the church's needs to be theologically based," he said.

Janet Plenert, executive secretary of MC Canada Christian Witness, affirms the need for this task force.

"The church is called to be a faithful witness in its context and time" she said. "It is important for the church to consider what would be the role of the church as God's agent during a time of general societal crisis. Health care bodies can provide us with the basic tools, but we need to think from a kingdom of God perspective as to our responsibility."

Friesen said this topic will be on MC Canada's leadership agenda for the next several months. The pandemic task force plans to meet again in early 2008. ❧

MCC PHOTO BY KATHY LANDIS



**Patients sing during** the dedication of an AIDS clinic that Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) helped build at Mengo Hospital in Kampala, Uganda. The new clinic includes six counselling rooms, a pharmacy and other facilities to serve about 1,700 men, women and children with HIV. MCC has supported Mengo Hospital's AIDS work for 15 years; this year alone, it provided more than \$90,000 to build the clinic, in addition to paying for some medications, patient services and supplies, such as school materials for children with HIV.

## CMU wins second campus commuter challenge

By JOHN LONGHURST

Canadian Mennonite University  
WINNIPEG

When it comes to caring about the environment, staff and students at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) walk the talk—and ride bikes, carpool and take the bus, too.

Their commitment was confirmed in September, when CMU placed first among Manitoba universities and colleges in Resource Conservation Manitoba's Campus Commuter Challenge. It was the second time this year that the university placed first in challenges aimed at encouraging sustainable commuting.

CMU's participation rate during the Sept. 17-21 challenge was 20.2 percent. Winnipeg's William and Catherine Booth College, a Salvation Army school, placed second with a rate of 15.48 percent.

CMU's achievement was recognized by Resource Conservation Manitoba at a celebration on Oct. 3. "Congratulations to CMU," said Stephanie Fulford, who directs the Campus Commuter Challenge. "You're definitely showing your green stripes."

CMU's effort was spearheaded by Sanctoral Cycle, a student-run bike co-op that encourages students and staff to use bikes to commute to school.

"We were excited to win," says Jacqueline Neufeld, a co-op organizer who cycles about 70 kilometres round-trip to CMU each day from her home in Howden, Man., south of the city.

This is the second time that CMU has won the provincial campus challenge. It also won in 2005.

In June the university also placed first in a national campus challenge sponsored by Go for Green, a program that aims to increase the awareness of the benefits of sustainable commuting. ❧

## TRAVEL WITH TOURMAGINATION TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

### 2008 TOURS

AN ANTARCTIC EXPERIENCE (January 2-14)  
VIETNAM (January 18 - February 4)  
AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 1-21)  
LEARNING ABOUT MENNONITES in PUERTO RICO and a SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE (February 27 - March 8)  
MEXICO (February 29 - March 9)  
SPRINGTIME CRUISE from AMSTERDAM to PARIS (March 22 - April 2)  
EXPERIENCE SOUTH AMERICA (March 28 - April 11)  
VISIT "TRANSYLVANIA EMERGING" - ROMANIA and HUNGARY (April 21 - May 2 - with MEDA)  
MOSCOW and SIBERIA (May 24 - June 4)  
ISRAEL/PALESTINE with AMBS (May 25 - June 4)  
MENNONITE GREAT TREK ALONG the SILK ROAD (May 25 - June 9)  
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 4-16)

ENGLAND, SCOTLAND and WALES (June 25 - July 7)  
EUROPEAN HERITAGE (July 7-20)  
EXPLORING YOUR FAMILY ROOTS in EUROPE (August 25 - September 7)  
MENNONITE STORY in POLAND with PETER KLASSEN (September 16-24)  
CHINA and a YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (October 8-21)

### 2009 & 2010 TOURS

CHECK OUR WEB SITE



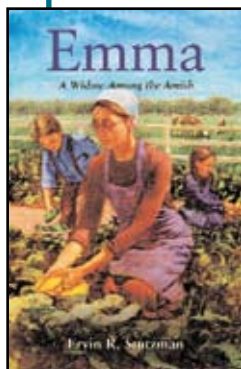
"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians around the world through custom-designed travel."

CALL 1-800-565-0451

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR TOUR

E-MAIL: [office@tourmagination.com](mailto:office@tourmagination.com) WEB: [www.tourmagination.com](http://www.tourmagination.com)

9 Willow Street, Waterloo, ON N2J 1V6 Canada Reg. #50014322 2308 Wood Street, Lancaster, PA 17603 USA



### Emma: A Widow Among the Amish

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

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

### Sleep in Peace

This charming book by **Ingrid Hess** is the perfect bedtime story. It assures the child trying to put off the inevitable that no matter where or how they live, everybody goes to bed sooner or later. Children learn that, just like them, kids around the world are going to bed too. And, just like them, God watches over all children as they *Sleep in Peace*.

Paper, 40 pages, \$12.99

1 800 631-6535 • [www.heraldpress.com](http://www.heraldpress.com)

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

## GOD AT WORK IN US

# A canner reflects

*David Martens sees God's hand in his two-year stint with the MCC meat canning team*

BY ELMER HEINRICHS

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

WINKLER, MAN.

David Martens returned to his hometown this fall as a member of the four-man Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) canning crew. The four will again travel thousands of kilometres through the U.S. and Canada between now and next April, and produce—with the help of volunteers—hundreds of thousands of tins of meat that will be shipped to more than a dozen different countries.

Martens, 20, grew up on his parents' beef and dairy farm near Grunthal, Man., where he was involved in a Reinländer Mennonite Church youth group. He later moved to the Winkler area, where he worked with his uncle in construction and where he and his girlfriend began worship-

*'I think all canners over the past 61 years have felt it to be the call of God to go on the canner.'*

ping in the nearby Chortitza Old Colony Church.

His involvement with canning began almost accidentally, like the ankle he hurt that kept him off construction for a time. But a friend tapped him to take a shift at the canner when it made its Winkler stop. One shift led to two, and then a few more.

Soon co-ordinator Wilf Unrau came and asked him to run the machine that seals the cans. At the Winkler run's end, Unrau approached Martens to sign off on the job, but he then revealed that Martens

*David Martens poses with the MCC canner during a recent stop in Winkler, Man.*



PHOTO BY ELMER HEINRICHS

had signed a "fake" contract to travel with the canning crew. Just a little fun, or so Martens thought.

Martens took the "contract" home with him and decided that would be the end of it, but he couldn't stop thinking about it. He decided to tell his girlfriend, thinking that she would disapprove of him going away. "She surprised me by telling me that if I felt it was God's will, I should do it," he says. "I then prayed about it all day Sunday, and then decided to put in my application for a canner position."

Now in his second year of a two-year assignment with the canning crew, Martens explains what they actually do: "Four of us are in charge of setting up the canning trailer, and on occasion organizing the volunteers. Then we make sure that the canning, from start to cooking and sealing of cans, is done according to specifications so the food won't spoil."

Martens reflects on God's work in his own life through this project. "God has a way of getting us to do things that we had never dreamed of doing," he says. As a former member

of the Poplar Ridge Boys, he sang with the group for five years, but admits to finding speaking in public difficult. "Now I'm out speaking in churches about my canning experiences," he says.

Twice in the canning off-seasons, Martens has joined MCC excursions to Honduras and Haiti, to meet people and see distribution of the end result of his canning efforts. "These trips have made the canning efforts more meaningful," he says. "To see the distribution—and seeing how people respond—help me to be able to talk about it to others and in churches in a

more competent manner."

He recalls one experience in Honduras in particular. The team asked one lady, who lived with her daughter and eight other children, whether they would have this meat for supper. "No, we'll save it for the weekend, because it's something special," she said.

"Haiti was a different experience for me," Martens says. "I came to realize that free used clothing from Canada and elsewhere also has some negative effects; it's put seamstresses out of work. And cheap imported re-processed rice is a detriment for Haiti's rice farmers."

On a personal level, Martens notes that it's difficult to carry on a long-distance personal relationship, but his favourite Bible verse—"I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13)—helped him through it all.

When he considers his canning assignment, though, he says the positives definitely outweigh the negatives. "I've learned to organize people on a project, and it's something I feel quite good about now," he says. "And while I would definitely encourage other young people for such an assignment, it's a position that requires patience, and you need to feel that it's God's will for you. I think all canners over the past 61 years have felt it to be the call of God to go on the canner."

As for plans beyond his two-year stint, which ends in 2008, he says, "I'm hoping we'll be getting married, and I've got work options here at home. Perhaps God has more service work for me, but for the time-being I'll let things settle . . . take a break." ▮

# 35 Under 35

*Church-planting pastor  
honoured as a young  
Canadian Christian leader*

BY JOANNA REESOR-MCDOWELL

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

ZURICH, ONT.

**P**hil Wagler, lead pastor at Zurich Mennonite Church since 2003, was recently recognized as one of the young Canadian Christian leaders on a “35 Under 35” list. The leaders, working in very diverse ministry settings, were recently profiled in a special edition of *ChristianWeek*. Wagler is one of a small number working in a more traditional congregational setting; Zurich Mennonite is almost 100 years old and is located in a rural community near Lake Huron.

The 35 Under 35 National Recognition Project, initiated by Arrow Leadership Ministries, *ChristianWeek*, the Canadian Council of Christian Charities and the Bridgeway Foundation, has the stated aim “to celebrate and equip select members of a new generation of leaders in order to bolster their ministries, and to be heartened by the skills and commitment they demonstrate.” They hope that Canadian Christians of all ages will “be inspired by the wealth of talent already operating in our midst and the great hope for the future they represent.”

When asked what caught the panel members’ attention for his nomination (more than 220 leaders were nominated), Wagler reflects that they saw “an older, more established congregation that was willing to take some risks, and try new things.” He emphasizes that there has been a team of leaders working in partnership, with complementary skills, that has made it possible.

Even though the congregation appeared to be the successful mega-church in its rural community, with well-run programs and attendance of between 250 and 300 people each Sunday, the leaders felt changes were needed in order to prepare the congregation to become a “multiplying church.” Zurich Mennonite moved from

two worship services to one, so that the church could be “of one heart and mind,” Wagler says.

Zurich Mennonite also took a year-long sabbatical from all church programming except for Sunday services and small groups that studied Scripture and prayed together. After this time of reflection, the congregation made a decision to be intentional about planting house churches in nearby communities. The first group started this fall; the second one is planned for next year. Wagler says the groups may move to larger facilities if needed in time, but the ministries will not be “building-centred.”

Wagler acknowledges that, although

*... Wagler reflects  
that they saw  
'an older, more  
established  
congregation that  
was willing to take  
some risks, and  
try new things.'*



change feels natural to him, a lot of people find it difficult. The church prepared by putting good people in place to provide stability, in areas such as pastoral care, before moving forward. Although his personal style leans toward being prophetic rather than pastoral, he has been deliberate in building a leadership team with a variety of gifts, based on Paul’s teachings in Ephesians 4.

Clayton Steckley, an active member of Zurich Mennonite since 1974, says he was not surprised that his pastor was selected for the “35 Under 35” list. In his view, Wagler has exceptional gifts as a speaker and writer, is energetic and “instrumental in getting things going.” Although Steckley acknowledges that change can be challenging, he says that Wagler has a way of “getting people on board if he feels that something is God’s will.” Steckley also appreciates how energy has shifted in the

congregation from focusing on internal controversies—such as different tastes in musical and worship styles—to reaching out. This has contributed to a sense of more unity in the congregation.

The 35 selected leaders were sent to a retreat in B.C. in early November that was intended to encourage, equip and strengthen them for a lifetime of ministry. Wagler says it was a blessing to meet all the other young leaders from across Canada, involved in such a stimulating mix of different work, including several from Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ ministries. The group was also given free tuition for the Christian charities council conference in September that focused on

the emerging ministry landscape. Wagler appreciates how his congregation has encouraged his participation and released him to attend these events.

When not doing pastoral work, Wagler and his wife Jen are busy parenting three adopted children between the ages of four and 10. He also squeezes in a little time to play hockey and read. His contribution as a volunteer in his neighbourhood has been focused on the challenging task of trying to set up group homes for mentally handicapped members of the community. And since 2005 he has been contributing to stimulating discussions with other Mennonites about faith issues through his regular column, *Outside the Box*, in *Canadian Mennonite*. ❧

ARTBEAT

# Other inconvenient truths

*How congregations may be breaking the law with what they show and print in church*

BY ROSS W. MUIR

Managing Editor  
WATERLOO, ONT.

**H**ave you watched Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* in church over the last year in an effort to learn more about global warming? Has your pastor shown a clip from *The Nativity* as a way

of putting a new spin on his umpteenth Christmas sermon? Have your children come up after Sunday school enthusing about the latest *Veggie Tales* episode they watched in the unexpected absence of their teacher? Anyone "split a side" over a good religious cartoon in your church newsletter lately?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, there is a good chance your congregation is breaking Canada's copyright laws—most unwittingly, although some may take the position that it is better to ask forgiveness than permission because they are serving some higher good.

"It's an increasingly important issue. . . as more congregations initiate video-viewing on Sunday mornings," says Arlyn

Friesen Epp, the manager of the Mennonite Church Canada Resource Centre in Winnipeg, although he says that most churches seem to have gotten the message about how copyright applies to the songs and hymns they sing. Friesen Epp fields numerous inquiries about video/DVD usage by churches across the country.

"There is a certain level of disbelief that restrictions apply," he says.

But they do. Under Canadian copyright legislation, films or television programs in VHS or DVD formats that are purchased or rented are restricted to viewing in the pri-

vate home of the buyer or renter—unless proper permission has been granted by the work's copyright holder or licensing



# A cartoonist's perspective

*Pontius' Puddle's Joel Kauffmann speaks out about copyright issues and the church*

*Canadian Mennonite: How do you feel when you see your cartoon in the church newsletter of a congregation you visit, knowing that they are not a paying customer?*

**Joel Kauffman:** Actually, I can't recall that has ever happened, but I have had people come and tell me they saw my strip in places where I know payment was not made, and I have chosen to let it slide.

The tricky part of a religious-oriented cartoon strip is finding and maintaining a line between faith and commerce. I need to be paid to continue to create. On the other hand, I don't want greed to creep into the part of my life I consider most precious.

Because of the nature of my strip and clients, I determined long ago that I would operate on a trust basis. I know that churches can be some of the worst offenders of copyright laws—like sheet music—but I feel all I can, and want, to do is make the rights issues and payment expectation as clear as I can, and then go by faith from there.

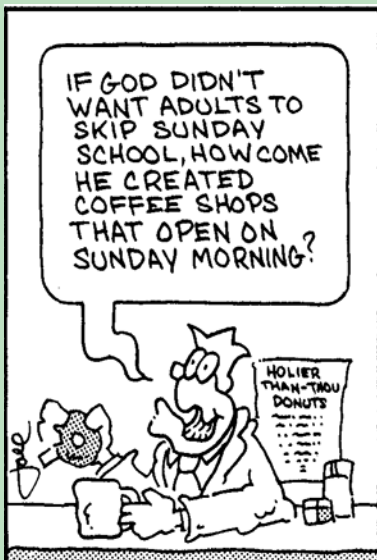
Of course, when congregations do use the strips [without permission], it means they have copied them from a publication such as *Canadian Mennonite* that has paid a fee.

**CM: What would you like churches to know about how you operate as a cartoonist?**

**JK:** I request that congregations that reprint my strips from other publications pay a \$10 reprint fee. Congregations under 100 members can pay \$5. I do not ask for prior permission to be requested from me, although sometimes this happens for special uses where they would like the fee waived.

**CM: How does the biblical injunction that workers are worthy of their hire apply to intellectual property rights?**

**JK:** Few in a congregation would offer their professional services gratis. But I've taken a life-is-too-short approach to tackle a task that would be impossible anyhow—tracking down and demanding payment from offending congregations.





agent.

The MC Canada Resource Centre is working on providing churches with written copyright guidelines, but at present staff either explain copyright issues on a case-by-case basis or refer churches to the online United Church guidelines ([united-church.ca/local/copyright](http://united-church.ca/local/copyright)) or the Mennonite Publishing Network site ([www.faithandliferesources.org/pdf](http://www.faithandliferesources.org/pdf)) and click on "Copyright Q&A.pdf").

"Congregations do have a moral and legal responsibility for any material they use," Friesen tells those who call for advice.

This viewpoint is shared by Diana Ginn, who co-wrote *The Legal Guide for Canadian Churches*. "Churches have an obligation to adhere to the law," the law professor says. By not getting permission—which often means the paying of a one-time fee or a yearly licence—she says, "what they are really doing is theft." Besides the moral issue, Ginn notes that churches who break the copyright laws open themselves up to both criminal and civil litigation.

The United Church website explains what may happen to churches that break the law: "When . . . copyright is infringed, the author [or copyright holder] is entitled to civil remedies, including such remedies as compensatory, exemplary or punitive damages [money] from the infringer. Criminal penalties may apply if the infringer sells or rents the illegal copies, or distributes illegal copies to such an extent that the owner of the copyright is affected prejudicially."

Despite the legalities, Friesen Epp sympathizes with congregations that dread the copyright issue. "They are either sceptical to support a third-party licence holder, or unconsciously they assume ownership of copyright items, or they have a history of not valuing the contribution of the artist, or are deterred by the paperwork and expense, or believe an apology later might suffice," he says.

Audio Cine Films Inc. is one of the major film licensing firms in Canada, holding the licensing rights to both *Veggie Tales* and *The Nativity* and hundreds of other religious titles. A large part of its website is devoted to educating congregations about the process of obtaining a licence

and legalities/moralities involved.

The ACF website ([acf-film.com](http://acf-film.com)) lists a number of things churches should know:

- The Copyright Act prohibits pastors from showing a film clip as part of their sermon.
- Videos and DVDs donated to the church library by congregants cannot legally be shown publicly without first obtaining a proper licence for each one.
- A congregation is responsible for obtaining a licence for any work shown by outside groups inside the church building.
- Churches can purchase rights for one-timing showings of a single movie or an annual licence that covers all works held by a licence-holder like ACF. ACF rates begin at \$125 for a single showing and range from \$199 to \$900 for an annual licence, based on the average weekly attendance. Denominational discounts are

available.

While Pontius' Puddle artist Joel Kauffmann takes a "life-is-too-short" attitude to pursuing those who illegally copy his

*By not getting permission— . . .  
'what they are really doing is theft.'*

cartoon from publications like *Canadian Mennonite*, the same cannot be said for large organizations like ACF, whose website indicates that "copyrights in films are vigorously enforced" because, if a movie producer "does not retain ownership of his or her work, there would be little incentive for them to continue and little chance of recouping the enormous investment in time, research and development, much less profits for future endeavours."

Or, as Jesus put this inconvenient truth, "*The labourer deserves to be paid*" (Luke 10:7b). ☿

## MOVIE REVIEW

# Award-winning film worthy of accolades

*Stellet Licht* (*Silent Light*). Written and directed by Carlos Reygadas.  
A Mexican-French-Dutch co-production, 2007.

REVIEWED BY VIC THIESSEN

**S**ilent *Light* by Mexican director Carlos Reygadas won the Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival earlier this year, and was one of the featured highlights of the London Film Festival last month. Residents of the London (England) Mennonite Centre were invited to see the film and we were not disappointed.

From its lingering opening shot of a beautiful sunrise to the extended sunset that closes the film, *Silent Light* is a slow-paced, thoughtful film that is best appreciated as a work of art. In this case, the work of art is in Low German and concerns the spiritual crisis of Johan, a Mennonite farmer in Mexico (played by Cornelio Wall), who is having an affair.

Johan loves his wife Esther (played by Winnipegger Miriam Toews, author of *A*

*Complicated Kindness*), but wonders if he married the right woman, for he has fallen in love with Marianne (played by Maria Pankratz), who he believes to be his true soulmate. Johan is convinced that God has led him to this woman, but his father, the local pastor (played by Wall's real father, Peter), tells him kindly that the devil is at work. Johan is clearly not at peace and the film chronicles his struggle to come to terms with his infidelity.

Although there is minimal dialogue in the film, we learn quickly that there is little hope of resolving this crisis without great pain for all involved. But as a Mennonite in a close-knit religious community, Johan has unique assets to work with, including his ability to share his dilemma with others, even his wife.



In the last 45 minutes, the film takes some unexpected turns that highlight how much Reygadas sees this as a grand human story that goes to the heart of issues like love and death and forgiveness, and the role of spirituality in all of them. There is no mention of Mennonites or Mexico in the film because Reygadas wants the film to apply to all times and places.

Mirroring what Reygadas perceives as the slow pace of life in the Mennonite community, some of the scenes in *Silent Light* are excruciatingly slow. But the slow pace, combined with the gorgeous cinematography and brilliant sound, gave me the feeling that I was participating in the life of a typical Mexican Mennonite community. This is one of the reasons *Silent Light* will be particularly appealing to Mennonites—the language, dress and behaviour will be immediately recognizable to most, whereas other viewers may never know who these people are or where they live.

*Silent Light* will not appeal to all Mennonites, however. While the subject matter is very tastefully handled—with only a brief non-graphic sex scene and no nudity—there are some who will find it too real and too difficult to watch. Others, especially those who are not used to European art house cinema, will be discouraged by the slow pace of the film.

But for most Mennonites, I would recommend *Silent Light* without the slightest reservation.

*Silent Light* is to be released in Quebec theatres next spring. Information about a cross-Canada release date was unavailable at press time. ❧

*Vic Thiessen is director of the London (England) Mennonite Centre. Earlier this year he interviewed the film's director; see "Low German film wins Cannes festival award," July 30, 2007, page 13.*

## Arts advocate speaks about recovering Christian creativity

MENNONITE HERITAGE CENTRE  
GALLERY RELEASE  
WINNIPEG

Gregory Wolfe grew up in a New York household where the arts were not looked upon favourably. Initially, he shared his parents' views. However, through the years both his political and religious views have changed dramatically.

On Oct. 25, Wolfe spoke at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg, surrounded by the art of the Invisible Dignity Project exhibition. As a promoter of faith-inspired artists as activists changing the world by being involved in it, Wolfe was at home among the artworks celebrating the dignity of the marginalized.

As the Seattle-based editor of the journal *Image*, Wolfe has become one of Christendom's most passionate and articulate arts advocates. He wonders why the church has lost touch with the arts, and why faith and art do not come together more. He proclaims that Christian artists should be creating culture, not shunning it.

In the conservative religious and political worlds of his younger years, modern art was perceived to come from a spooky netherworld that should be avoided, he said. To describe the fear and loathing of the wider conservative political and Christian community, Wolfe leaned into the microphone during his presentation, gravely intoning the words "modern art" as if the very mention of the words was somehow sinister.

*Image* was supposed to be doomed to failure when it began. More than 50 issues later, though, the quarterly publication has become a thriving must-read in many academic, artistic, literary and cultural circles. Christian artists who want to find a home where they can experiment and follow their God-given gifts—wherever those lead them—know they have a supportive partner.

Mennonite artists, writers and poets looking for "a passionate, sophisticated,

supportive voice that stands behind and beside them, should look into *Image Journal* and, perhaps, into bringing Gregory Wolfe to their community," said gallery curator Ray Dirks after Wolfe's talk.

*Image* annually sponsors the Glen Workshops in Santa Fe, N.M. These events bring together hundreds of Christian artists to create, learn and share with each other. Wolfe spoke of one gruff illustrator who attends annually. "He does not often feel welcome in his local faith community," Wolfe said. "Every year at the end of the Glen Workshops, during sending prayers, this jaded man sobs tears of release and joy knowing there is a Christian environment where his gifts are accepted." ❧

### ❧ Briefly noted

#### New online journal tackles religion, conflict, peace

GOSHEN, IND.—The *Journal of Religion, Conflict, and Peace*, edited by Goshen College associate professor of peace, justice and conflict studies Joe Liechty, debuted in October at religionconflictpeace.org. The online scholarly journal, published by a collaboration of Indiana's three historic peace colleges, is a forum for discussion of the role of religion in both conflict and peacebuilding. The premier issue of the journal features articles by nine major thinkers in theology, ethics, religious studies and conflict transformation. Initial topics range from the role of religion in the global war on terrorism by Douglas Johnston, president of the International Center for Religion & Diplomacy, to an argument by secular humanist Hector Avalos of Iowa State University for re-canonizing Scripture to exclude violent texts. The online journal is a project of the Plowshares peace studies collaborative of Earlham, Goshen and Manchester colleges funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. —Goshen College Release

**Schools Directory**



**Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary Schools**  
[www.wmes.ca](http://www.wmes.ca)  
**Middle School at Bedson**  
 250 Bedson St., Winnipeg, MB, R3K 1R7 Ph:885-1032  
 26 Agassiz Dr., Winnipeg, MB, R3T 2K7 Ph:261-9637  
 "Providing quality Christ-centred education..."



**ROCKWAY MENNONITE COLLEGIATE**  
**For Grades 6 to 12**  
*Together we shape great lives through learning, opportunity, caring and faith!*  
**Discover Rockway Open House**  
 December 4th @ 7 PM  
**Spaces Available in Gr. 6-8**  
 Call 519-743-5209  
[www.rockway.ca](http://www.rockway.ca)


**Columbia Bible College**  
 "Learning to Live Well!"  
 2940 Clearbrook Road  
 Abbotsford, B.C. V2T 2Z8  
 1-800-283-0881 / 604-853-3358  
[admissions@columbiabc.edu](mailto:admissions@columbiabc.edu)  
[www.columbiabc.edu](http://www.columbiabc.edu)



**Conrad Grebel University College**  
  
**EXPLORE LEARN GROW LEAD LAUGH SING EAT**  
 Conrad Grebel University College | University of Waterloo  
 Ontario Canada | [www.grebel.uwaterloo.ca](http://www.grebel.uwaterloo.ca)




**UNITED MENNONITE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE** *Leamington, Ont.*  
**Academic...**Full Secondary School Academic Program  
**Spiritual...**Daily chapels, courses in religious studies  
**Extra-Curricular...**Vocal & instrumental music courses, sports, drama  
 Phone: (519)326-7448 Fax: (519) 326-0278  
 E-mail: [umei@mnsi.net](mailto:umei@mnsi.net)



**Menno Simons Christian School**  
 Integrating sound academic learning with growth in character, faith, and service to God.  
[www.mennosimons.ab.ca](http://www.mennosimons.ab.ca)  
 AN EDUCATION FOR LIFE! *Calgary, Alberta*

...a well-rounded education which will inspire and empower students to live as people of God.  
 88 West Gate, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2E1  
 T:(204)775-7111 [www.westgate.mb.ca](http://www.westgate.mb.ca)  


**THE WORLD NEEDS SERVANTS**  
 Nurturing Disciples and Training Leaders to Serve  
  
 Box 160 Hepburn Sask S0K 1Z0 [www.bethany.sk.ca](http://www.bethany.sk.ca) Toll Free 1.866.772.2175



... equipping students for life and forever  
**Preschool - Gr.12 Education**  
 that partners with the home and church to nurture the minds, bodies, and souls of our students.  
**Mennonite Educational Institute**  
 (Campuses in Abbotsford & Chilliwack BC)  
 (P) 604.859.3700 (F) 604.859.9206  
[www.meisoc.com](http://www.meisoc.com)

rosthern junior college  
  
 a christian residential high school seeking to equip students for LIFE  
[rjc.sk.ca](http://rjc.sk.ca)  
 306.232.4222

➤ **Briefly noted**

**Columbia on the Road makes courses available locally**

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—Faculty at Columbia Bible College (CBC) have been inspired by the need in the Christian community for a deeper Christian education even when people can't come to the college for classes. So Columbia on the Road, short portable courses by Columbia faculty, has been developed to provide people with the benefit of a Bible College education in a local setting. Six faculty members are offering courses in a variety of settings and configurations for churches, organizations, retreats and other Christian groups. "Columbia's faculty are equipped specifically to bring their passion and expertise to questions that are of great relevance for Christians of all ages," says Ken Esau. "We see Columbia students every day getting excited about growing in maturity in Christ. This growth should never end for any of us and this is a big part of the reason for Columbia on the Road." Well-known CBC subjects include effective relationships with Ron Voth; Revelation with John Vooy; spiritual disciplines with Gareth Brandt; Old Testament and family relationships with Ken Esau; John with Michael Szuk; and mission courses with Bryan Born. The vision of Columbia on the Road has inspired some individuals to consider providing

partial sponsorship for a series of sessions coming to their home churches. For more information about course offerings, visit [columbiabc.edu](http://columbiabc.edu) and follow the "Academics" link.

—Columbia Bible College Release

**Canadian students among history contest winners**

GOSHEN, IND.—Students at two Canadian educational institutions were among the winners of this year's John Horsch Mennonite Historical Essay Contest, sponsored by the Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee. In the undergraduate category, Nathan Kruger from the University of Waterloo, Ont., was third with "The immigration and settlement of Susanna and Isaac Zacharias: A contextual analysis of their experience in Canada." No first place award was given in the high school category, but Melanie Kampen from Westgate Mennonite Collegiate in Winnipeg garnered a second place for "Reasons for the migration of Mennonites: Russia to Canada, 1870s." The annual contest is named in honour of John Horsch (1867-1941), the German-American historian and polemicist who did much to rekindle interest in Anabaptist and Mennonite studies in the 20th century. The deadline for next year's contest is June 15, 2008. Visit [mennoniteusa.org/history](http://mennoniteusa.org/history) for more information.

—Mennonite Church USA Release

# A Mennonite Church Alberta check-up

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent

**Q. What do you get when you take 1,605 Mennonites and spread them across an area of 661,848 square kilometres?**

**A. Mennonite Church Alberta!**

*A shared desire to follow Christ and a need to connect are two of the glues that hold this rather small yet diverse conference together. Over its 79-year history, MC Alberta has almost taken on a life of its own, complete with personality strengths and challenges. What would happen if this "personality" went for a mental/spiritual check-up with a counsellor? Let's eavesdrop and find out.*



**Mennonite Church Alberta**

**Counsellor: Hello. Nice to meet you, Mennonite Church Alberta. Can I call you "Menno"?**

**Menno:** Go ahead, I like the name.

However, be aware that it carries baggage. Some people assume I'm a *borscht*- and *zwieback*-eating, harmony singing, agriculturally employed stereotype. Don't get me wrong, I love *rollkuchen*, but I've developed a taste for stir fry, empanadas and ground-nut stew. I speak Chinese and Spanish, and other languages. My musical tastes are eclectic, and sometimes I even dance in sanctuary aisles!

**Counsellor: Tell me about your family history.**

**Menno:** In the late 1920s, travelling minister C.D. Harder began organizing churches. My birthday is in fall 1929. I had my first constitution in 1959. As a child I was occupied with physical and spiritual survival, and constantly thankful for escape from communist Russia.

Ministers gathered annually for Bible study, spiritual renewal and discussions on reaching isolated Mennonites. My first big project was a Bible school on the Bergthall church yard.

There have been a lot of projects since—a home for the aged in Coaldale, the youth organization that began in 1944, Camp Valaqua that started in 1959, and a youth worker who was hired in 1966. In 1967, the school closed and I started supporting the Bible school in Swift Current, Sask.

At this point, the transition from German to English was evident at conference gatherings. There's been a lot of project beginnings and endings since, but that's a general idea of my start.

**Counsellor: Your roots are Russian Mennonite, but**



*Elaine Klassen, member of Lethbridge Mennonite Church, leads worship singing during the 2007 Mennonite Church Alberta assembly.*

**you mention empanadas and dancing. How would you describe yourself today?**

**Menno:** I was rural, but now most members live or work in cities. Of my 17 congregations, seven have roots other than Russian Mennonite. They are Chinese, Vietnamese, Laotian and Spanish. At Holyrood in Edmonton, a growing number of members are African!

Diversity is exciting and challenging. Doug Klassen, chair of the Congregational Life Committee, says "The prayer, devotion and desire they have pushes us Europeans out of our more comfortable cerebral mode in faith and life." My conference minister, Jim Shantz, says these churches are "nudging us to be more evangelistic and reaching out in our faith."

**Counsellor: How would you describe your spiritual health?**

**Menno:** I am reasonably healthy.

Shantz says, "We need to tone our muscles and strengthen ourselves. . . . We are a conference in recovery after a near death experience." He's referring to my struggles with issues in the last decade. For a while I wasn't

sure I was viable, but now he says I look forward with “openness and readiness for new ideas.”

Klassen is optimistic too. He says, “I would describe it [spiritual health] as very good, if pastors gatherings are any indication. There is a unity among us now that was not there several years ago.”

Klassen and my executive chair, Linden Willms, credit Shantz with helping me gain my health. “Jim was the man of the hour. . . . His leadership and presence have been instrumental in the conference culture shift that we have experienced,” Klassen says. “Shantz has been a large part of keeping our churches connected,” Willms agrees.

**Counsellor: Physically, what shape are you in?**

**Menno:** I’d say I’m in maintenance mode. I haven’t changed my budget significantly and I don’t have much available for new initiatives.

Willms says, “We are a small conference and aren’t able to engage the staff on the level which we often need. Some of our vision, like church planting, is difficult to realize with the resources we have.”

So leadership is a challenge. We’ve had trouble filling executive positions over the past several years.

**Counsellor: Emotional health is strongly tied to relationships. Describe what you do to build and maintain inter-church relationships.**

**Menno:** I’m struggling with this. My annual Songfest—a time to connect and worship—didn’t happen in 2007. It’s hard to find hosts, and attendance had dwindled. Members support a worship event, but I need to reinvent it. So my Songfest committee has proposed an annual event determined by the host church. We’re waiting to see if churches grab hold of the idea.

Camp Valaqua is a focal point for many, but not all, of our youths, and it’s important in outreach and leadership development.

I recently hired Rita Heidebrecht as a youth worker

to help connect young people. Pastors Council is organizing a pulpit exchange, and we have a good newsletter and website to keep congregations in touch.

**Counsellor: Finally, what visions do you have for the future?**

**Menno:** I heard Willms say, “Visioning for the conference has been on our agenda for some time. We have heard what many in our churches want, yet we see that happening slowly or not at all on a conference level. . . . In a sense I see ourselves as eager to move forward but just at the edge of doing so.”

I think he is right.

Klassen says much the same: “I firmly believe God has huge plans forming for us. We just need the courage to envision them.”

So does Shantz: “I envision strong missional churches with visionary leaders to make that [clarity of purpose] happen.”

**Counsellor: It sounds like you’re on the right track. Here’s what I hear you suggesting for the future:**

- Your executive chair, Willms, challenges you to think about leadership. If, as he says, you have “tremendously capable leaders in [your] churches that need to respond to the challenge of conference leadership,” tap some of these promising leaders on the shoulder, then get behind them.
- Pay attention to the good things happening in congregations. If Shantz is ready for you to move forward, and I hear him saying, “Get up, be strong, and stop navel gazing; [you] need to think of the possibilities and use your Godly imagination,” then be encouraged to dream big!

I am reminded what *Soul Tsunami* author Leonard Sweet says, “Can the church stop its puny hack dreams of trying to ‘make a difference in the world’ and start dreaming God-sized dreams of making the world different? Can the church invent and prevent, redeem and re-dream, this postmodern future?” ❧

*Photos from left: Senior high snow camp at Camp Valaqua; Paul White, a member of Holyrood Mennonite Church in Edmonton at the local Mennonite Central Committee thrift shop; Doug Klassen, chair of the MC Alberta Congregational Leadership Committee and pastor at Foothills Mennonite in Calgary on the climbing wall at Camp Valaqua.*

PHOTOS BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD



## Calendar

### British Columbia

**Feb. 8-10:** College and Career young adults' retreat at Camp Squeah.  
**Feb. 9,10,16,17:** MCC fundraising banquets, Central Community Church, Chilliwack (9) Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford (10), Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond (16), South Langley MB Church (17).  
**Feb. 22-23:** Mennonite Church B.C. annual sessions, Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond.  
**Feb. 23:** Mennonite Historical Society of B.C., "Letters from Stalin's Gulag" documentary and book launch with Ruth Derksen Siemens, Bakerview MB Church, Abbotsford, 7 p.m.

### Saskatchewan

**Jan. 4-5:** RJC alumni tournament of memories.  
**Jan. 10:** "Peacebuilding on the Prairies: Treaty Justice" presentation and discussion at MCC Saskatchewan, 7 p.m.  
**Jan. 17:** "Peacebuilding on the Prairies: Mennonite Immigrants in a Land of First Nations" presentation and discussion at MCC Saskatchewan, 7 p.m.  
**Jan. 18:** RJC open house.  
**Jan. 18-20:** Prairie Winds worship and music retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre. Theme: "Sing the story."  
**Jan. 24:** "Peacebuilding on the Prairies:

Challenges and Hopes of Newcomers" presentation and discussion at MCC Saskatchewan, 7 p.m.  
**Jan. 25-27:** SMYO senior high retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.  
**Jan. 31:** "Peacebuilding on the Prairies: Building Cross-Cultural Skills" presentation and discussion at MCC Saskatchewan, 7 p.m.  
**Feb. 22-23:** MC Saskatchewan delegate sessions at First Mennonite, Saskatoon.

### Manitoba

**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.  
**Ontario**  
**Jan. 13:** Join Menno Singers for "Even-song: A Vesper Hymn Fest" at Rockwell Mennonite Church, 7 p.m.  
**Jan. 17:** MEDA breakfast at the Stone

Crock, St. Jacobs, 7:30 a.m. Speaker: Dale Brubacher-Cressman.  
**Jan. 19:** MCEC pastors, chaplains and congregational leaders event at W-K United Mennonite Church, 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. Barbara Fullerton will present "Offering as Worship." Register by Jan. 11 at mcec.ca.  
**Jan. 26:** MCEC Young Adult Volleyball tournament at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate. For information or to register go to mcec.ca/Cong/Min.  
**Feb. 1:** Benjamin Eby Lecture with A. James Reimer, Conrad Grebel Chapel, 7:30 p.m.  
**Feb. 1-3 or Feb. 8-10:** MCEC Youth Winter Retreats at Countryside Camp, Cambridge. Register on-line at mcec.ca/Cong/Min by Jan. 17.

**Feb. 10:** Join Menno Singers for "Even-song: A Vesper Hymn Fest" at Tavistock Mennonite Church, 7 p.m.  
**Feb. 29:** Peace and Conflict Studies of Conrad Grebel University College 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, CIGI Atrium, Waterloo, 7:30 p.m.  
**Feb. 29-Mar. 2:** Inter-Collegiate Peace Fellowship Conference, "Building bridges, breaking down barriers: Religion's role in reconciliation" at Conrad Grebel. Contact icpf.grebel@gmail.com.

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

## Classifieds

### Employment Opportunities



Goshen College invites applications for two full-time, tenure track faculty positions in the Music Department, to begin Fall 2008:

**VOICE AND CHORAL CONDUCTING**— Conduct Goshen College Chorale and Men's Choir; assist with opera productions as needed; teach applied voice; teach courses in vocal pedagogy and class voice as needed; possible assistance with teaching courses in music education and supervision of student teachers.

**ORCHESTRA CONDUCTING AND MUSIC EDUCATION**— Direct GC orchestra, Wind/Brass Ensemble; direct the orchestra for GC opera productions; teach music education courses and supervise student teachers; assist with administering adjunct teachers in the instrumental area; teach other courses depending on the candidate's qualifications and departmental needs in a liberal arts setting.

Terminal degree required for tenure. For more information and application instructions, visit the Goshen College web site at [www.goshen.edu/employment](http://www.goshen.edu/employment). Review of applications begins on Jan. 7, 2008 and will continue until the position is successfully filled. Minority persons are especially encouraged to apply.

### For Sale

CMU Press big sale of Mennonite Studies, Biography, and History books, starting at \$2.00. Go to [cmu.ca/publications](http://cmu.ca/publications) for full list or e-mail us at [cmupress@cmu.ca](mailto:cmupress@cmu.ca).

### For Rent

Student housing available in a smoke-free Christian home close to the University in London. If interested, call Luke Holst 519-274-1148.

### Announcement

Parent Support Group: Announcing a bi-monthly support group for Mennonite parents of GLBT persons in Southwestern Ontario. We provide confidential support, resources and opportunities for dialogue in the Spirit of Christ. For more information please contact the following: [rvfast@rogers.com](mailto:rvfast@rogers.com) or [pmsnyderangel@rogers.com](mailto:pmsnyderangel@rogers.com).

## Briefly noted

### Rare book workshop to be held at CMU

WINNIPEG—People interested in old and rare books and Bibles can learn more about them at the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) rare book workshop, Jan. 11-12, 2008. Led by CMU English professor Paul Dyck, the workshop will explore how books were made and used in the past, and what they meant for people back then. During the workshop, which runs from 7:30 to 9 p.m. on Jan. 11 at CMU and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Jan. 12 at the University of Manitoba, participants will learn about the change from handmade books, or manuscripts, to printed books, and what that meant for people at that time. Participants will also be able to examine a range of medieval and Renaissance books from the collections at CMU and the University of Manitoba, including a 1611 edition of the King James Bible and musical manuscripts dating back as far as 500 years. The workshop will also discuss the development of the book—things like title pages and table of contents. For more information about the workshop, or to register, visit [cmu.ca](http://cmu.ca).

—Canadian Mennonite University Release

**Eden Foundation, Inc.**

Invites applications for the position of  
**DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT**

Eden Foundation based in Winkler, Man. supports the programs of Eden Health Care Services, which is owned primarily by the Mennonite Churches of Manitoba. Eden provides acute and community mental health recovery services in collaboration with our faith constituencies, local communities and the Regional and Manitoba Health Authorities.

**The Candidate:**

The Director of Development works collaboratively with the CEO and staff and is responsible to the Foundation Board. Duties include church and constituency reporting, public relations, fundraising and all aspects of fund development.

**Qualifications:**

A related University degree or equivalent training or experience, strong communications skills, demonstrated project or event management experience and familiarity with the Manitoba church constituency are required. The Board is seeking an individual who exhibits a strong understanding and affirmation of Anabaptist faith and values.

Submit resumes to:

Director of Development Search  
Eden Foundation  
Box 129, Winkler, MB R6W 4A4

Fax: 204-325-8742 email: edencare@valleycable.com  
Applications will be received until the position is filled.

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada invites applications for Regional Minister.

Half-time **REGIONAL MINISTER** required for ministry in the Eastern Region of MCEC to resource pastors and lay leaders for effective congregational ministry. Applicants will require previous pastoral experience, a familiarity with denominational resources, a depth of spiritual maturity, and a commitment to Anabaptist theology. Applicants will be excellent communicators and team builders who are energized by working alongside the MCEC Leadership Team to realize MCEC's mission of Extending the peace of Jesus Christ. Ordination and seminary level training required. Application deadline is Jan. 31, 2008. For more information or to request a job description, please contact:

David Martin, MCEC Executive Minister  
Phone: 519-650-3806 / 800-206-9356  
E-mail: dmartin@mcec.ca  
Web: www.mcec.ca



Are you community-minded, know the value of excellent customer service and enjoy interacting with people?

We are currently seeking a franchisee for a new store in Winkler, MB.

To learn more about our company and how you can become an M&M Meat Shops franchisee, visit our website at [www.mmmeatshops.com](http://www.mmmeatshops.com) and contact Laurel at 1-800-461-0171 Ext.313.

**BE YOUR OWN BOSS.** Independent paint shop business opportunity, located in the heart of the Okanagan Valley (Kelowna, B.C.). Guaranteed revenue for the first two years. Sub lease option, financing available. Contact [evoth@telus.net](mailto:evoth@telus.net).

**ASSOCIATE PASTOR POSITION**

First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, Alberta

This vibrant, multi-generational, urban congregation of approximately 200 members, is seeking a full-time Associate Pastor with a primary focus on youth and young adults. Working with the pastoral team and other leadership people of the congregation, the associate pastor will also focus on supporting and strengthening the community, contributing to congregational worship, and providing pastoral care.

Recognizing that ministry happens in many ways and that each person brings his/her own gifts and abilities to a position, we will encourage the successful candidate to seek creative ways to meet the responsibilities of the position. A seminary degree or a related Bachelor's degree that reflects our Anabaptist/Mennonite beliefs and practices is preferred.

Starting date is negotiable. For a more detailed job description please visit our website at <http://edmonton1st.mennonitechurch.ab.ca>

Interested applicants should forward questions and resumes to:

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



Goshen College seeks **PROJECT DIRECTOR** for Center for Intercultural Teaching and Learning to begin early 2008. PhD or EdD preferred, Master's degree required along with at least 3 years administrative experience with Higher Education experience preferred. Expertise required in intercultural education, project management, development, research management and financial management. For application instructions, visit [www.goshen.edu/employment](http://www.goshen.edu/employment). Goshen College is an AA/EEO employer committed to Christian values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

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

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

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

Salary and benefits. Housing available on site.

Inquiries: Director of Camping Ministries, Mennonite Church Manitoba, 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2J1, [camps@mennochurch.mb.ca](mailto:camps@mennochurch.mb.ca), 204-895-2267.

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](mailto:a.g.lounsbury@rogers.com) or at 416-232-8483.

# We observed his star in the east

PHOTO BY KARL BERGEN



*Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden, Ont.,  
used this star made by Larry Wagler during the  
2006 Advent and Christmas seasons.*