

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

Feb. 4, 2008  
Volume 12 Number 3

## Sainthood & sports: Mutually beneficial or at odds?



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EDITORIAL

# What's a parent to do?

ROSS W. MUIR  
MANAGING EDITOR

In a July 2006 Associated Press story, it was reported that as Floyd Landis “crossed the Tour de France finish line Sunday, his devout Mennonite parents were riding their own bicycles home from church.”

Did they do the right thing, or should they have skipped church and made the trip to Paris to see their son become the darling of the cycling world?

This dilemma is played out in many Mennonite Church Canada homes and congregations each Sunday, especially in the wintertime, when “hockey fever” sets in across the country.

What are parents to do? Should they hold out against Sunday sports and insist that their children be in Sunday school and worship time with them each week? Or should Sundays be shared with their kids’ sports teams, if that’s what it takes for them to make the squad. This is a particularly sticky questions for families whose children are “elite” athletes, who are required to travel most weekends for tournaments. But it is becoming something parents of children of all athletic abilities will likely have to address as the growing number of participants in many house leagues requires expanding schedules across every day of the week.

Each choice has its pros and cons.

With the former, parents ensure that their children—and themselves by

extension—are with their Christian peers each week, receiving spiritual nourishment on a regular basis and, hopefully, providing the same to those with whom they fellowship. However, depending on the availability of sports programs for their children the rest of the week, they run the risk of cutting their kids off from such opportunities altogether.



Rather prophetically, “Outside the Box” columnist Phil Wagler stated recently, “If [parents] choose Jesus, those you love are forced to live with the ramifications of your decision.”

At worst, it can lead to resentment on the part of their children, who may choose to leave the church when they are older to pursue a dream that was forbidden to them in their younger years. This is what happened with Landis, who left the conservative Mennonite church of his upbringing when it conflicted with his racing career.

With the latter choice, children have the opportunity to broaden their horizons and witness to teammates by living out their Christian values. On the flipside, they also learn that there are other things that can take precedence over church attendance if there is a conflict. Is that what parents want to teach their children, however unintentionally?

Certainly, church attendance can be made into an idol. But neglecting such attendance affects not only the absent

person, but the entire body of Christ. The famous verse in Hebrews about not “neglecting to meet together” (10:25) can be used to hit people over the head when their pew is empty, but it was really meant as call for the early church to persevere in its ministry. Church attendance, in the mind of writer to the Hebrews, was tied to “provok[ing] one another to love and good deeds” and “encouraging one another.”

This isn’t lost on sports coaches and trainers in many leagues, who insist on attendance at all games and practices. “You get kicked off a team if you miss practices,” says Steve Wiebe, a Calgary high school basketball coach and member of Foothills Mennonite, who understands the dilemma Christian athletes and their parents face. Commitment to the cause of sport is tantamount. Not so with church, though, according to Wiebe, who notes, “You don’t get kicked out of church for not coming.”

This is not to suggest that churches reinstitute shunning or the ban for those who miss church for hockey. After all, as MC Canada general secretary Robert J. Suderman writes in this issue, “The gift of Sabbath is not legalism designed to make life difficult for us. It is a gift that helps us enjoy what God provides for us.”

But maybe churches need to do a better job of letting members know what is expected of them up-front. After all, when parents take their Sidney Crosby or Hailey Wickenheiser protégés to sign up for hockey, they are handed a list of expectations for them and their children. In church terms, we call that discipleship.

One way that parents might consider exercising that discipleship is to explain why they are pulling their children out of sports leagues that refuse to take into account the impact of scheduling on Christian participants.

**ABOUT THE COVER:**

**Goaltending may be one of the loneliest positions in sports to play, but as the ranks of youth sports teams continues to climb, lonely can also describe some churches, as the ranks of their young are depleted—to be found at the local arena on Sunday morning. See page 4 for an in-depth look at this phenomenon.**

PHOTO: DON HAMMOND, DESIGNPICS

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

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# Sainthood

© BY ROBERT WEITZEL (SPORTSSHOOTER.CA)



*In the face of increasing pressure from year-round organized sports—that now often play their games and schedule their tournaments on Sunday morning—churches today are facing an uphill battle as they strive to get their young members into spiritual shape.*

**BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD**

Alberta Correspondent

**T**he youth Sunday school teacher glances around the room. Four of 10 students are absent, one snores gently on the couch, and another looks like she is about to join the sleeper at any moment. A basketball tourney, early ice times and the pressure to catch up on homework have taken their toll.

Contemporary society, with its multitude of opportunities, exerts tremendous pressure as people struggle to set priorities. As more people are able to participate in sports, conflicts with church schedules have become common.

“Our church has all too much experience with Sunday sports and worship. . . . The concept you can’t miss worship for anything but sports . . . is troubling,” says Lorin Bergen, pastor at Living Hope Christian Fellowship in Surrey, B.C.

Youth leaders struggle to schedule weekday events around practices and weekend competitions. Church often takes a backseat to these demands.

Steve Wiebe, a Calgary high school basketball coach and member of Foothills Mennonite, understands the

# & sports:

## Mutually beneficial or at odds?

difficulty athletes face. “You get kicked off a team if you miss practices,” he says. “You don’t get kicked out of the church for not coming.”

While the conflict between sports and church schedules is nothing new, pastors are noticing an increase in sports events planned for Sundays.

“Over time you can see a shift that is taking place when it comes to when events are being planned,” says Jarrod Chamberlin, pastor of Elim Mennonite Church in Grunthal, Man. “Some time ago, you wouldn’t have games or tournaments being planned on Sundays out of respect for the importance of worshipping together. That, over time, has changed. Priorities . . . have shifted.”

Although sports can draw people away from church activities, they often provide important opportunities for personal growth.

Wiebe says he could talk for hours about the benefits, citing “discipline, commitment, teamwork and persevering through trials” as examples. “[Young athletes] also find a great place to belong, and for some kids that is exactly what is needed during the often-tumultuous teenage years,” he says.

Laura Duncan, a former University of Regina volleyball player (pictured in action on page 4), is clear about what she gained through sport: “Keeping in

shape, learning teamwork, meeting new people, travel, learning to manage time, and learning coping skills under stressful situations.” Duncan is candid about how high-level competition—combined with science studies—affected her church life. “To be honest, I didn’t go to church all last year because of travelling on Sundays or playing on Sundays,” she says. “Then when we played at home usually I just didn’t put the effort in going to church, rather than catching up on sleep or homework.”

Finding a balance between the benefits of sports and participating meaningfully in a congregation is a constant



*‘You get kicked off a team if you miss practices.  
You don’t get kicked out of the church for not coming.’*

struggle.

“Because of the major time commitment involved, it is hard to strike a balance between work, sport, family and faith,” Wiebe says. “I’m still searching for the answer to how to keep balance and perspective in my life!”

Parental role models play a crucial part in keeping children connected to their faith community.

“You are the parents, you set the priorities for the home,” Chamberlin stresses. “At times in life those priorities will be challenged, but it really comes down to you. . . . Sports will come and go, but the

gift from Jesus Christ lasts forever.”

Wiebe suggests that parents put priority on worship time. “Most sports schedules cannot be changed, so if a family ensures that another time is set aside for meaningful devotions, worship and prayer, the importance of honouring and connecting with God is emphasized with your family.”

Growing pressure from sports means that churches—as well as families—need to employ new strategies to relate to young athletes, emphasizing personal connections and creative scheduling.

“Having the opportunity to be able to contact someone and feel safe about

it really helps,” Duncan says, adding, “[B]eing able to e-mail can help people stay connected, . . . typing a quick question, talking with someone, spilling out emotions, or asking for a prayer, has helped me personally.”

Churches might also consider scheduling alternate worship times or Bible studies on a weekday evening, to enable those with Sunday morning conflicts to attend. There are many possibilities for churches, families and athletes to team up. Where they manage it, all parties stand to gain in physical, spiritual and community fitness. ❧

# From the pulpit to behind the bench: Portrait of a hockey dad

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent

Is it possible to simultaneously be an enthusiastic hockey dad and a committed pastor at a Mennonite church? For Rick Neufeld of Altona (Man.) Berghaler Church, the answer is a resounding yes.

Neufeld's 15-year-old son, Craig, is a gifted player, having received invitations to Western Hockey League camps and been drafted by the Portage Terriers of the Manitoba Junior Hockey League.

Hockey has a rough reputation.

"We, as parents, have tried to raise our children to be loving and respectful of all people—to work at peaceful ways of playing, working and interacting," Neufeld says. "Hockey tends to negate that perspective and, in fact, at times, promotes the opposite. We have reminded [Craig] that he has the power to control his play and his attitude toward others and the game."

When young athletes compete at high levels, they are often pulled away from church. Neufeld is concerned about "the level of commitment and priority that sports teams demand from kids these

days. Nothing short of 100 percent is usually the criteria, and so when church activities and games/practices conflict, then guess what gets left out?" He admits that this can be "detrimental to the development of the person unless . . . there are significant things at work to counteract that pull in one direction."

For the Neufelds, those "significant things" are a supportive Christian school (Mennonite Collegiate Institute), a strong local community and an involved youth pastor who, Neufeld says, "continues to find places to meet [Craig] away from the church."

Neufeld says the opportunities his son has received have been great assets in his life, listing "positive friendships with others outside the church, a very good strengthening of his relationship with his youth pastor, and a great deal of support from his church family," among them. "[Craig] knows and feels the support of the church, and that has



Hockey dad Rick Neufeld

been a great benefit to him and to us."

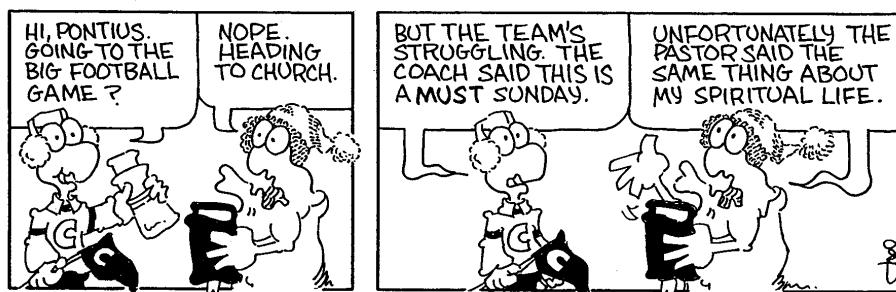
Neufeld has felt the support of his congregation directly, when they encouraged him to spend a season coaching his son's team. "When I asked about coaching, they said by all means we want you to do that. The church wants its pastor to be involved not only within the walls of the church, but in the community. Some of my best pastoral work was at the rink," he says.



*"I feel that sports and the church can co-exist, but it takes effort on all sides to be more understanding. . . ."*

Neufeld feels his roles as a pastor and hockey parent have meshed well. "I have always felt a respect from the other parents and coaches as to our position and feelings toward certain things. . . . I feel that sports and the church can co-exist, but it takes an effort on all sides to be more understanding with one another." ❧

## Pontius' Puddle





# Not a brawler

*Former NHL draft pick speaks out about decision to stop fighting and leave hockey*

BY JOHN LONGHURST

Canadian Mennonite University

**W**illie Friesen's "Damascus Road" experience came after a fight during the 1974-75 hockey season. A sixth-round draft pick of the Philadelphia Flyers, he was playing left wing for their farm team, the Philadelphia Firebirds of the North American Hockey League, when, during a game in Syracuse, N.Y., he dropped his gloves and fought a player on the other team. The crowd loved it, cheering on the combatants.

But later in the penalty box, Friesen had second thoughts. "I knew that guy. I played against him when we were both in Saskatchewan," he told a rapt audience of over 300 youths and young adults at last year's Peace-It-Together conference at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg. "And yet here I was fighting him far from home, cheered on by 10,000 people. It was like I was like a gladiator, entertaining the crowd."

From then on, he said, "it was harder and harder to fight." But getting to that point was a hard journey for Friesen, who was brought up in a Mennonite family in Saskatchewan. "I really liked to win," he said of his younger years in sports. He also liked to play tough, and got into a lot of fights during games—something that deeply worried his father, a committed pacifist. "If one day you have to go before a judge to say you don't want to go to war, how will you ever be able to say you are a conscientious objector with all your fights?" he said his father asked him.

But fighting was what his coaches wanted him to do. In junior hockey, he played on a line with future NHL Hall of Famer Bryan Trottier in Swift Cur-

rent, Sask., scoring 25 goals in his last season with the Broncos. But that's not what his coaches wanted. They wanted him to play tough and protect stars like Trottier—not put the puck in the net himself.

Once he was drafted by the Flyers in 1974 and sent down to their farm team, he did well, scoring 25 goals and being named runner-up for rookie of the year. "I had a good rookie year, but the Flyers weren't satisfied; they wanted more toughness," he said. "It was always the same speech."

But after that night in Syracuse, Friesen didn't want to fight anymore. The things his father had said about peace and living like Christ kept coming back. The following season, during training

camp, he concentrated on playing, not fighting, and in one memorable NHL exhibition game scored two goals in a Flyers' win.

After the game, though, he was called in to meet the coach. He thought it might be to tell him how great he had played and what a great addition he was to the team. But it was the opposite. "I was told that the Flyers hadn't drafted me to score goals, but to play tough," he said. "That's when I knew I couldn't do it anymore."

He quit. At the age of 21, his pro hockey career was over "before it had ever really started," he said. But, he added, "hockey was not where my gift was meant to be."

After leaving hockey, Friesen joined the Calgary (Alta.) Fire Department, rising to the rank of lieutenant. "God has a plan for each of us," he told the conference. "Hockey was not where my gifts were meant to be used."

As for sports, Friesen, a member of Calgary's Trinity Mennonite Church, said that Christian athletes need to know "the difference between winning and winning at all costs." They also need to make sure that the drive to win doesn't turn into "something that hurts other people." ❧

CMU PHOTO BY JOHN LONGHURST



*Former Philadelphia Flyers draft pick Willie Friesen (in his farm team Philadelphia Firebirds uniform, photo left) told CMU students that he gave up a promising pro hockey career when he discovered that he was not cut out to be an on-ice brawler.*

YOUNG PROPHETS

# Nine men in: Modelling church on a ball team

*Will Loewen wrote this article when he was still youth pastor at Tavistock (Ont.) Mennonite Church. He batted ninth and played right field for the Tavistock Twins. He is now serving with Mennonite Church Canada Christian Witness in South Korea.*

WILL LOEWEN

As I approached the age of 14, I dreamed of achieving a certain level of acceptance within my church. Sure, the beginning of high school meant that I could start attending youth group activities, and it meant that I could now join the cool Sunday school class that always got to do the fun Christmas skits, but, more importantly, 14 was the minimum age required to play on the church slo-pitch team.



I did have the occasional athletic flash of brilliance and the cute girls in the bleachers would sometimes even cheer for me by name. However, no matter how rare those personal successes were, I was part of the team. And when we won the championship, I got a medal just like everyone else.

When I was called to my present

that the connection between this team and the church was quite loose, with only a few players actually attending on a regular basis. The first church league I played in outlawed any kind of alcohol use in uniform, while these guys gathered for beers after every game.

Would I be able to adjust to the skill level? Would I be accepted in this new social group?

I was determined to persevere at least one season. I liked how baseball could connect me as a pastor with other aspects of the community, and what other kind of activity did I have to keep me fit during hockey's off-season?

I wasn't sure what to expect after the first few months. I was the only person who wasn't already close friends with at least one other player, I almost

*Would they feel as welcome at my church as I felt around their beer cooler?*

church to serve as the youth pastor, I was thrilled to be invited to play on the church ball team as well. This time, however, a few things were different. The bats, balls and gloves were all the same size, but the pitches were whipped in windmill style rather than lobbed in slo-pitch style. Another key difference was

never knew who they were talking about in their post-game storytelling and reminiscing, and my weak play definitely hindered the team. Still, I was accepted around that beer cooler just like everyone else.

Sometimes people at church would approach me and mention the baseball

team. They would either regale me with stories of their own athletic conquests on that team before age or injury cut their career short, or they would commend me for playing with "those guys," as though my presence on the team was an act of grace. However, I could only think that I was receiving grace much more than I was giving it. I started to wonder, would they feel as welcome at my church as I felt around their beer cooler?

Recognizing the grace I had received, I once thanked them for being so welcoming. They laughed it off, saying how cool it was that I even wanted to hang out with them. They knew I was a pastor, I didn't drink, swear or condone pre-marital sex, and they had never seen me lose my temper with an opponent or an umpire. Knowing that, they assumed that I wouldn't want to associate with them. Their experience of church had taught them that this would probably be the case.

So if I could convince them that their impressions of church were wrong, maybe they would start attending, right? What if I took all the good of the way our team operated and used that as a model for how to do church? What would that look like?

Our team has room for aging veterans and green-horned rookies, star performers and athletic failures, and everyone shares playing time. The coaching responsibilities are shared, and we all respect the decisions made by our peers. Around the post-game cooler, the circle is expanded every time another person shows up. Since everyone contributes equally, there is always enough to share. Players' contributions on the field don't change their status off the field.

No wonder we all enjoy playing together. If this is what they get from their baseball team, shouldn't they also get it from their church? ☿



# Bluffton inductees recall glory year of '62

BY DAVE ROGALSKY  
Eastern Canada Correspondent

**F**orty-five years after the 1962 Bluffton College baseball team won the National College Athletic Association championship, the team—which included two Canadians—was inducted into the Bluffton Athletic Hall of Fame last year. Inductees into the Bluffton hall of fame must have shown good sportsmanship, a will to win, playing within the rules, and a record of involvement in sports or the community after their college careers.

A Mennonite friend of Howard House of Vineland, Ont., convinced him to go to Bluffton College, where the potential of playing baseball was a large draw. Going to school in the U.S. in the 1950s was as exotic as his daughter going to do field work for her master's degree in Guatemala in the '90s, he says.

House entered college under probation because he hadn't finished Grade 13. Having worked for several years after high school, he recalls, "I was older than the other guys and more dedicated to studying. I never needed to cram the night before an exam. I was always prepared—something I applied to all my years of teaching," he says, referring to his 34-year career as a high school biology and chemistry teacher in Thorold, Ont.

Not Mennonite himself, House played ball and hockey over the years with many Mennonites, however. The 1956 softball team he played on, which went All-Ontario, was about two-thirds Mennonite.

Later, House also played Junior A and B hockey, and has continued to play in team and individual sports right to the present, including hockey, golf, biking and skiing.

John Weber, the other Canadian inductee, had been previously inducted as

*Howard House is still an avid skier, just one of the many sports in which he is still an active participant.*



*The 1962 Bluffton College baseball team included Canadians John Weber, back row fourth from right, and Howard House, back row third from right, who were inducted into the now Bluffton University's Sports Hall of Fame last year.*



*John Weber stands with his bronzed football boot from his years of playing sports at Bluffton College.*

an individual and as a member of several other Bluffton teams.

Weber's involvement in sports after college has been more in management, support and fundraising—with the Kitchener (Ont.) Panthers baseball club—than in participation. While he focused on football at college, he was on the 1962 ball team that came together for that one auspicious year.

Relationships from his Bluffton days influence him to this day. Elbert Dubenion, who went on to be an NFL Hall of Famer with the Buffalo Bills, has been a lifelong friend. Dubenion, an African-American, taught him about racial integration and about integrity, both on and off the field, he says.

Admitting he was "not academically inclined," Weber ended up at Bluffton

without Grade 13 or a foreign language, then requirements for university in Canada. He studied business, where he learned that playing to win and playing by the rules were important off the field as well.

Bluffton professor Howard "Pappy" Raid taught him to be proud of his business acumen and to use his abilities for church, community and the college. Weber's involvement at Stirling Ave. Mennonite Church in Kitchener has included being a trustee and a member of the education committee. And he hasn't forgotten Bluffton (now Bluffton University), having personally contributed to its sports facilities and programs; he also fundraised for the education institution.

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TOP AND BOTTOM PHOTOS BY DAVE ROGALSKY

# Jamie Ramer: Profile of a hockey minister

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD  
Alberta Correspondent

The worship service at Zurich (Ont.) Mennonite Church last May was both special and unusual. It was special because the congregation licensed a new minister. It was unusual because Jamie Ramer works for Hockey Ministries International, an organization dedicated to serving Christ within the world of hockey.

“Hockey ministry is living and taking the gospel of Jesus to the hockey community in relevant and culturally sensitive ways,” says Ramer. “Hockey Ministries International seeks to do this by leading through its experience and understanding of the culture . . . through team chapel programs and summer hockey camps for kids, among other things.”

Currently, Ramer is in charge of chapel ministries for junior hockey players in Ontario. He feels there are many things believers get from participation in sports:

- Working together as a team;
- Discipline; and
- Healthy physical activity.

“It is also a place to work out your faith,” he says. “It is at least one opportunity for Christians to live out and share their faith.”

As players become increasingly involved in the game, they may find it difficult to regularly connect with church. Chapel services—offered in 20 North American hockey leagues, from the NHL on down—help promote faith connections and provide players with a safe place to express themselves and work on issues in a supportive environment.

Ramer urges churches to encourage and support families and players who are busy with the game, perhaps scheduling opportunities other than

Sunday morning for fellowship or worship. “I guess some advice I would give church leaders is to not force to choose between hockey and faith but rather help them see how they can put their relationship with God first, understanding that this may work out slightly different in each person.” ❧

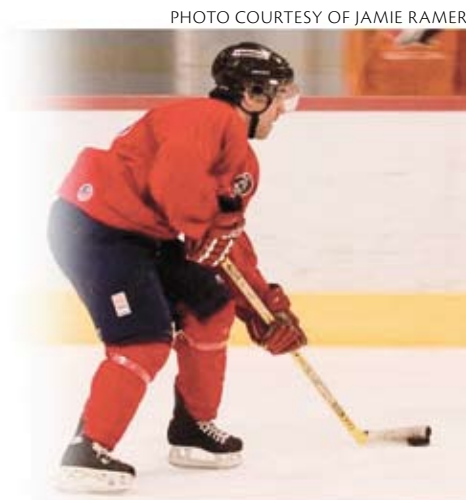


PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMIE RAMER

*Hockey Ministries International chaplain Jamie Ramer sees the hockey rink and dressing room as places where Christian players can “live out and share their faith.”*

PHOTO BY SANDRA REIGER PHOTOGRAPHY



*The hockey rink was chosen as the location for this Ramer family portrait. From left, wife Lea-Anne, daughter Payton, son Brody and Jamie holding daughter Kaybrie.*

## ❧ For Discussion

1. Does the conflict between sports and church activities happen in your family or congregation? Has this conflict been growing over time? Which sports have the most conflict with church activities? Which age groups have the most conflict? How do the families and individuals you know respond to the conflict?
2. What are some of the benefits of playing team sports? Should the church encourage its people to get involved in sports? Do you agree that the church shouldn't force people to choose between sports and church? Should churches provide a worship time other than Sunday morning to accommodate those with Sunday morning conflicts?
3. Jamie Ramer works as a chaplain for junior hockey players. Are there other ways that the church can try to bring faith to the playing field or arena? Do church leagues work at outreach?
4. Willie Friesen says Christian athletes need to know the difference between winning and winning at all costs. Do Christian athletes know where to draw the line? Do recreational sports avoid the temptation of driving to win without regard for others?



## 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](mailto: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

## ✉ Myths surrounding the state of Canadian farming need dispelling

THE NOV. 12, 2007, issue of *Canadian Mennonite* addressed an important matter: the state of Canadian farming today. The helpful set of articles makes a case for urban churches joining with rural churches to address a common challenge, but a weakness in this discussion is a ready acceptance of several myths that prevents confronting basic economic and political realities.

First, free trade is presented as a destructive force that limits enterprising family units from earning a living from the production of food in a sustainable manner. But free trade in agricultural goods does not

## FROM OUR LEADERS

## Hallowing the Sabbath

ROBERT J. SUDERMAN

It's a new year. It may be that we left some things undone in 2007. Or we may regret having done some things we did do last year.

The new year gives us the time for another chance to do more, and to work at undoing that which we regret having done. We thank God for time. Time is a sacred gift.

God declared time to be "hallowed."

The very first thing that is said to be "hallowed" in the Bible is the Sabbath (Genesis 2:2-3). Other ways to describe the hallowing of time is to say that time is sacred, holy and sanctified by

God. The Sabbath is the holy rest that celebrates work well done. As such, it is connected to the previous six days and thereby sanctifies all time, not just the seventh day.

*"Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy, . . . the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it"* (Exodus 20:8,11b).

The Sabbath is a sanctuary of time within the ordinary life of the people of

God. It celebrates God's creative power during the creation of the world. Later on, it also celebrates God's act of liberating his people from Egypt. The purpose of the Sabbath is to sanctify time, rest and creative/liberating effort. The best way to approach the Sabbath is with a spirit of thanksgiving, remembrance and celebration.

I remember the time, on a Friday



*The gift of the Sabbath is not legalism designed to make life difficult for us.*

at dusk, when we participated in the Sabbath celebration in a large Jewish synagogue in Jerusalem. The liturgy began when a beautiful woman, dressed in white as a bride, slowly made her way to the front of the synagogue. She symbolized the arrival of the Sabbath and its holiness. The people cheered and applauded her entrance. They sang and celebrated.

The coming of the Sabbath was joy-filled. It was an opportunity to celebrate the gift of hallowed time that God gives to his people. The coming of the Sabbath indicated that God was granting them another opportunity for faithful service and commitment.

The gift of the Sabbath is not legalism designed to make life difficult for us. It is a gift that helps us enjoy what God provides for us. And it encourages us to redouble our efforts to obey God.

At the beginning of this new year, I encourage us all—individually and corporately—to re-ignite our commitment to the Sabbath: to enjoy this sanctuary of time that God has modelled for us. The ingredients of this recommitment are gratitude to God, creative effort

to re-make and liberate the world, a strong dedication to the sacred vocation of God's peoplehood, and enough trust in the power of God that allows us to rest in this assurance.

May you experience this new year as a sacred trust from God.

*Robert J. Suderman is general secretary of Mennonite Church Canada.*



exist. Governments in the high-income countries are paying subsidies to their farmers that approach a billion dollars a day.

Corn farmers in Mexico are now finding it difficult to compete with subsidized corn grown in the United States. We are in this mess not because of the World Trade Organization (WTO); rather, it is the product of a failure to include agriculture in the WTO. If formally part of the WTO, farmers in the U.S. would not be able to dump their excess production in Mexico at prices well below the cost of producing the corn.

The 100-Mile Diet is set forth as a means of countering the destructive effects of “free” trade. But if all consumers in the world adopted this strategy, Canadian agriculture would be devastated. And a primary

effect of a successful implementation of the 100-Mile Diet would be to drive up land prices within 100 miles of our cities and reduce to sheer poverty farmers operating beyond 100 miles.

Another significant myth links genetic modification of canola to the plight of farmers. It is not the genetic modification per se that is the problem. Rather, the concern of the farmer is a form of genetic modification that has patent protection that forces farmers to annually buy their seed from this corporation if they want the cost benefit associated with growing a certain variant of canola.

A third myth is the presumption of a typical or average farmer who faces harsh market conditions in what is a high-risk venture to begin with. Family farms

## GOD, MONEY AND ME

# The relay of life

EDWIN FRIESEN

It was the school picnic and time for races—sack races, distance running, the three-legged race, wheelbarrow race and then there was the four-person relay. There are two essentials for winning relays: running fast and successfully handing off the baton—in those days, we used a short stick scrounged from an adjacent bush. Do either one poorly and you are out of the medal round. I never wanted to be the closing runner for fear of letting the team down and being tagged with failure.

Our time on the playing field of life is not unlike running our assigned turn in a relay race. We may run our segment of the race well, but unless we have a well-rehearsed plan for handing off

to those who run after us, it won't matter much how well we run. The hand-off is critical. If someone misses the hand-off, the whole team feels the loss.

Do you have a written “hand-off” plan in place? Suppose you lose the ability to take care of your finances; have you authorized someone else to step in for you? Adding another signing authority to

your bank account allows that individual to pay your bills from that account, but what about signing income tax returns or your pension application? What if property needs to be sold? Or investments realigned? For someone to stand in for you in these and other areas, you will need to grant a trusted person a general enduring power of attorney for property. These powers must be granted while you have mental capacity to understand what you are doing.

What if you were to die unexpectedly?



*Now, for a short while, it is our turn on the track and then we too must hand off to those who follow.*

Do you have a plan in place to hand off the baton for your affairs to someone else? Do you have a current will in place? Are the guardians you have named for the care of your underage children still the right ones? Are the executors you have named in your will still the right ones given your current circumstances? Are the estate distribution instruc-

tions you have outlined in your will still applicable?

We stand in a long parade of runners spanning the centuries, each of us charged with running our segment of the relay. Now, for a short while, it is our turn on the track and then we too must hand off to those who follow. The stands are packed with fans all hoping we do well, as the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews states: “*Therefore since we are surrounded by such a great crowd of witnesses . . . let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us*” (Hebrews 12:1,2).

Once we are done with our segment of the race, we have no use for the baton. Likewise, when we die, our assets are of no value to us. But we can use them to bless our family as well as release some to further the work of God around the corner and around the globe—helping to spread the good news of Jesus, alleviate

hunger, provide education and promote justice. That is leaving a legacy of faith and good deeds. Are you ready for your hand-off in the relay of life?

*Edwin Friesen is a stewardship consultant at the Winnipeg office of Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For stewardship education and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit [mennofoundation.ca](http://mennofoundation.ca).*

are now competing against corporate farms as well as communal approaches to farming like the Hutterites. Both of these alternatives have a clear cost advantage in that they do not have to buy their land every generation.

For a typical family farm, the retirement income is tied up in the value of the land. To retire, the farmer has to sell the land. The younger generation buying the land pays for it two to three times over by the time the mortgage is paid off. That is a major cost handicap carried by family farms.

HENRY REMPEL, WINNIPEG

## ✉ Churches can't exclude gays and expect to attract young people

RE: "YOUNG PEOPLE see Christians as judgmental, anti-gay," Nov. 12, 2007, page 22.

Many congregations want to attract young people and exclude gay people. But the survey results described in the "Briefly noted" article indicates to me that this is unlikely to happen. Since the thoughts and practices of secular society and governments are closer to the compassionate spirit of Jesus Christ, the church needs to catch up with them.

JIM SUDERMAN, WINNIPEG

### FAMILY TIES

# Pondering death

MELISSA MILLER

In the season of Lent, we ponder the mysteries of death and human frailty. We participate in Ash Wednesday services, perhaps take on Lenten disciplines of sacrifice, and generally turn our attention towards sin and mortality. It's a sombre season. Given the simultaneous changes in our weather, as the increasing hours of sunlight warm the Earth and sprout growth in vegetation, the timing of Lent can run counter to our inner leanings, as we yearn for all the warmth and pleasures of spring. Perhaps that sharpens the effort required to quarry the spiritual treasures of Lent.

Facing our losses and our deaths can yield spiritual fruit. United Church minister Jean Stairs, in *Listening for the Soul: Pastoral Care and Spiritual Direction*, encourages people to listen for notes of death being sounded in the day-to-day conversations they share. According to Stairs, many Protestants are inclined to rush through such topics, in a hurry to put the cross behind them and get into the bright light of Easter.

She draws on Catholic spirituality that honours the death experiences of our lives as a means of joining in the paschal mystery of Christ's suffering and death. Quoting texts such as Romans 6:4 and Colossians 2:12, she notes how we enter into—and live out—death and resurrection in our bodies and souls. Such a perspective deepens our awareness of Jesus' passion-gift expressed in his death and resurrection, and enables us to enter more fully into the transformation stories of others.

Lent is well-suited to practising this



*God's spirit is at work . . . stretching one's soul in an echo of Jesus stretched on the cross.*

kind of "listening for the soul." We may hear hints of death when people mourn torn relationships—a spouse who has fallen out of love, a child who has wandered far from a loving parent, a fractured sibling relationship. And there's the deaths of our friends and loved ones, a number that accumulates as we age. Sometimes we proclaim with muted or fierce anger, "There's too much dying going on!"

Physical losses are another place of

conversation. A breast lost to cancer. Chronic challenges from polio or diabetes, which increase as the body ages. Arthritic hands that keep one from playing the piano or knitting. Alzheimer's robbing a loved one of memories, even the names of spouses and children. We lose homes and churches and jobs. Each loss brings sadness, a tug or tearing of our spirit, a call to release attachments. All of these become places where God's spirit is at work, comforting, bringing healing and stretching one's soul in an echo of Jesus stretched on the cross.

As we journey towards the cross in the weeks before Good Friday, we can attend to the cross-like moments we see in ourselves and others with openness and compassion. For example, should Grandpa say, "I'm ready to go, but I'm worried about Grandma; I just don't

know how she'll get on without me," we can offer a listening ear and a comforting hand. We may respond by acknowledging his love for his wife and his readiness to die, even as the tears are shining in our eyes. We may assure him that we will care for Grandma. In doing so, we will mine the holiness of such moments.

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

## ✉ Let dissenting B.C. congregations 'go their own way'

RE: "GREENDALE, OLIVET vote to leave MC B.C.," Dec. 17, 2007, page 15.

The article states that negotiations with the four congregations that didn't sign the covenant are continuing. These discussions have been ongoing for a long time now and I would strongly urge the MC B.C. executive not to waste any more valuable time in further talks.

These churches should be sent packing very quickly. They will never be satisfied, regardless of how much we compromise in order to accommodate them. In my view, the issues are less about theology and more about their leadership being on a power trip. Let them go their own way. We do not need dissenting churches. They wouldn't be content if God himself was leading Mennonite Church Canada.

JAKE REMPEL, WINNIPEG

## A big difference between knowledge and wisdom

RE: "READING WITH class in mind," Dec. 17, 2007, page 12.

My words are not a critique, rather of a memory that it recalled. In the mid-1990s I, like Aiden Enns, was asked to speak to 80 or so MC Canada church workers, but many of these were seniors. In my talk, I felt that, given my age, I needed to be edgy with my words, so I chose to speak about the very same parable using the social science methodologies as applied in William Herzog's work that Enns quotes. What I said seemed to go over well, and as a young adult I felt good about being cutting edge and relevant.

Afterwards, however, an older gentleman approached me. He commended me for being willing to speak to the group, and for reading broadly enough to know some of Herzog's work. Then he asked me, "Given what you have said, how do you see this 'new interpretation' of the text working canonically?" In other words, how does this new way of viewing the parable of the talents affect the way we read and apply the rest of Scripture, which for hundreds of years has been seen as a collection of apostolic writings, universally acknowledged by the church as authoritative in its entirety, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and guarding the truth against all heresy, in order to provide an eternal norm for church doctrine?

I was stunned. I had no response. I had not considered what it would mean canonically. I was humbled and realized that day that there was a big difference between knowledge and wisdom.

DOUG KLASSEN, CALGARY

## /// Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

- Cluthe**—Abigail Rose (b. Jan. 14, 2008), to Caroline and Troy Cluthe, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.
- Funk**—Sophie Erin (b. Oct. 24, 2007), to Jeanette Schlosser and Wayne Funk, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.
- Plett**—Orie Markus Zaki (b. Dec. 10, 2007), to Barrette and Sandy Wiebe Plett, Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, in Assiut, Egypt.
- Regier**—Roxanne Elsa (b. Dec. 3, 2007), to Christopher and Lesley (McGilp) Regier, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask., in Calgary, Alta.
- Rempel**—Joelle Faith (b. Dec. 13, 2007), to Henry and Katharina Rempel, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.
- Wall**—Kennedy Lorelle (b. Dec. 3, 2007), to Kurt and Melissa Wall, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man.
- Wiebe**—Nathan Paul Krueger (b. Dec. 19, 2007), to Colin and Jennie Wiebe, Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont.

### Baptisms

- Blair and Frances (Fran) Smith**—Trinity Mennonite, Calgary, Alta., Jan. 13, 2008.

### Marriages

- DePooter/Janzen**—Darcie DePooter and Derek Janzen, Trinity Mennonite, Calgary, Alta., in Sombra, Ont., Nov. 3, 2007.

### Deaths

- Bergen**—Vonda, 81 (d. Dec. 31, 2007), Zoar Mennonite, Waldheim, Sask.
- Driedger**—Jacob, 80 (d. Jan. 12, 2008), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.
- Neufeld**—Henry, 71 (d. Jan. 12, 2008), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.
- Thiessen**—Lenora (Friesen), 93 (b. Oct. 18, 1914; d. Dec. 13, 2007), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- Wideman**—Marion, 87 (b. Sept. 15, 1920; d. Jan. 12, 2008), Brussels Mennonite, Ont.
- Wiebe**—Nathan Paul Krueger (b. Dec. 19, 2007; d. Dec. 19, 2007), infant son of Colin and Jennie Wiebe, Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont.

**Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones announcements 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

Lillian Nicolson's mother grew up in North Dakota and later spent two years in voluntary service in Newfoundland in the early 1960s, where she learned to make "Newfie soup." Also, when Nicolson was growing up the family opened their Christmas gifts on Christmas evening after the traditional family dinner. Incorrect information appeared in "Christmas feasting," Dec 17, 2007, page 7. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the errors.



## VIEWPOINT

# Students teach prof the value of serving Jesus

JOHN PETERS

*At the end of last September, John Peters, a retired Wilfrid Laurier University professor from Waterloo, Ont., flew to Ethiopia to teach at Meserete Kristos College in Ethiopia for three weeks, his second trip in two years. The day before he left, a fellow church member from Waterloo North Mennonite Church came by, prayed with him and then gave him some money, saying, "Use this in whatever way you wish, for those in need at the college." The story of how he stewarded the money follows.*

I gave 500 burr (about \$58) to Getschew (not his real name) with a note in an envelope, stating, "From the Christian church in Canada." Two days later, with a huge smile on his face, he asked whether I had time to talk. He pleaded with me to tell him specifically how I had heard the voice of God telling me to give him this gift. He told me that after becoming ill last summer, his medical care and hospitalization bill stood at a staggering 3,000 burr. His church gave him 100 burr, his family the same amount. He told me that the remaining debt was so heavy that just three days earlier he had walked out to the grassy area of the college compound, threw himself on the ground and literally cried to God for help.

Prayer is central to students at the college; I had learned that on my first visit. Twice as I walked into my classroom at 6 in the morning, I came across a student, shawl over her head, on her knees conversing with God.

I met another student—B1—every morning, as I ate breakfast with him and his peers. In his early youth he trained in Cuba, then worked with intelligence



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN PETERS

*During his second teaching session at Meserete Kristos College in Ethiopia, John Peters of Waterloo, Ont., right, presents one of his students with a laptop computer that he brought from Canada.*

forces in Ethiopia. As a third-year student, he worked for 30 cents an hour to support his wife, four children, his wife's mother and sister, and the sister's young daughter. Caring for extended family members is a given in this culture.

*Twice as I walked into my classroom at 6 in the morning, I came across a student, shawl over her head, on her knees conversing with God.*

B1 is one of many former Ethiopian soldiers who have found Christ, many of whom now serve in the Meserete Kristos Church. His home was a day's journey from the college and his wife was about to give birth to their fifth child very soon. With no money to pay for a bus trip home, I placed 500 burr in his pocket.

The next day, while he was working

in the college diningroom, we clapped in glee. He had just become a father. He later gave me a written message in broken English, "Thank the Christian church in Canada for their gift."

Monica comes from the far north, a gruelling two-day bus trip to school. About 11 years ago he was about to graduate from an agriculture program, when he heard God's call. After serving in a congregation for several years, he was now in his third year of studies at the college. His church was too poor to provide the annual 800-burr tuition fee, so I gave him 400 burr in an envelope with the same message about the Canadian church.

Two days later, with such a radiant smile, he insisted I tell him how God had told me to give him that specific amount. He had worked all summer in Addis Ababa, where he earned 400 burr, and now the balance was in his hand—a gift from God! When I asked him about his daily needs—such as soap or a periodic coffee—he hastily dismissed the thought. These were not concerns to him.

Another 550 burr went to the college's Student Need Fund, run by students for those at the college. The purse is always empty! Another 500 burr went to mission service on the Eritrean border, where an organization in which the husband of one of my students, a former Meserete Kristos College grad, was serving.

I am home again. I give no thought to what I will eat tomorrow. I have

a wardrobe the size of any 10 of my Ethiopian students. While a \$300 health bill is a major disruption to their lives, I can easily "waste" this amount in a few months. I now find it hard to eat out or plan a vacation, while I struggle to ponder how these African believers can show such a passion and delight in following Jesus! ❧

## GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

## Sun-powered education

*Solar panels now help power Rockway Mennonite Collegiate*

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent  
KITCHENER, ONT.

Environmental superhero Photovoltaic Man and “Bob Dylan” made special appearances at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate last month as the school switched on its fledgling solar power system.

Echoing the “we can do it attitude” of joy and fun, the Jan. 15 celebration was chaired by Photovoltaic Man—mild-mannered student Alec Barnett—and featured teacher John Moyer doing his interpretation of Dylan’s ‘60s classic “The Times They Are A Changin’,” appropriately re-titled “The Climate Is A Changin’”

ARISE Technologies president and CEO Ian MacLellan (whose Cambridge, Ont., company built and installed the new photovoltaic system), student Rebekka Gondosch and Rockway principal Terry Schellenberg flipped the switch to have “first light,” a direct reference to the petroleum industry’s “first oil” from a new well. A prayer of blessing was brought by David Martin, executive minister of MC Eastern Canada.

Local federal, provincial and regional elected representatives and the executive team from ARISE Technologies attended the celebration.

Rolf Thiessen, the teacher in charge of the project and celebration, said that solar energy is part of caring for the creation God has given humans to steward. Conservation and renewable energy sources are part of “a reconciliation with the Creator and creation,” he said.

Rockway students raised \$15,000 over three years to install the six solar panels on the southern exposure of their school building. These funds were matched by the Toronto Dominion Friends of the En-

vironment Foundation, the Elora Centre for Environmental Excellence and the KW Community Foundation.

The installation is a small one, producing only one-kilowatt of electricity, but the school hopes to install more panels over time as students continue to raise funds for the project.

In the meantime, the current installation will form a significant teaching tool for the school. Plans are underway to have a public display to show students and visitors how much electricity the panels are producing at any given time. Such information can be used by physics and math classes, as well as environmental studies and religious classes.

The environmental project encompasses more than just the panels; a Youth Environment Summit, co-sponsored with Mennonite Central Committee Ontario, is planned for Feb. 29 at Rockway. ❧

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



*Photovoltaic Man—student Alec Barnett—leads Rockway students in a cheer as the school’s fledgling solar power system was turned on last month.*

MCC PHOTO BY HEIDI LINTON



**A doctor attends patients at Kaesong Provincial Pediatric Hospital in North Korea. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is donating \$200,000 to renovate the century-old hospital. According to Kathi Suderman, an MCC representative for northeast Asia, currently hospital staff must contend with a faulty electrical system, drafty rooms and a lack of basic equipment for surgeries as they treat about 35,000 children each year. The MCC funds are being channelled through Christian Friends of Korea, a partner organization based in Black Mountain, N.C. Workers will replace original windows and doors, install 202 beds, lay water pipes and refurbish an operating room with tiles, lights and other equipment.**



# A tearful, joyous farewell

*Brice Balmer leaves House of Friendship after 28 years*

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent  
KITCHENER, ONT.

Within days of ringing in the new year, Brice Balmer rang out nearly three decades of service to House of Friendship with a “farewell bash” in his honour. Balmer has been involved with the Mennonite-founded social service agency for 28 years—five on the board and 23 as an employee (either part- or full-time), most lately as chaplaincy director.

Balmer was repeatedly praised as being the conscience of the community. Speakers included federal, provincial and regional politicians, staff, friends, members of Interfaith Grand River, and Balmer’s wife Karin.

Quoting from Balmer’s book, *Meeting Our Multifaith Neighbors*, House of Friendship board chair Elizabeth McNair noted that “faith is a lived reality” applied

to Balmer in many ways.

Mike Shuster, commissioner of social services for Waterloo Region, remembered that Balmer focused on immediate issues as well as systemic sources of poverty, living the “old values” of “trust, courage, compassion, generosity and hope.”

Regional chair Ken Seiling offered the opinion that “the social gospel is alive” in Waterloo Region through Balmer’s influence.

Balmer’s wife praised him for being as “praiseworthy in [his] private life as his public [life].”

Light moments came when Wendy Kirk of the Catholic Family Counselling Centre remembered Balmer as “the best dressed” among the social workers, and Deb Schlichter, executive director of House of Friendship, recalled that they could always tell when Balmer was going to the counselling centre by how well he was dressed. She also noted that Balmer was known by the users of House of Friendship services as “that minister,” “the pastor without a collar,” and “the big boss.” Schlichter called him “a whirlwind of energy, ideas and enthusiasm” who cared deeply for the poor of Waterloo Region.

One of Balmer’s key roles at House of

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



*At his farewell party from House of Friendship in Kitchener, Ont., last month, Brice Balmer greets Layla Bigelli of the Islamic Humanitarian Service and a member of Interfaith Grand River, a discussion and action group which first met two days after the 9/11 attacks in the U.S.*

Friendship was directing interns who came to learn on the job. To his credit, Balmer will be replaced as chaplaincy director by Michael Hackbusch, a former intern.

Balmer leaves to become a lobbyist for the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition in Toronto, contacting government members and bureaucrats, and keeping the issues of systemic poverty before them. He began a three-year term at the coalition on Jan. 1. ❧

## ❧ Briefly noted

### Rick Cober Bauman named as new MCC Ontario executive director

KITCHENER, ONT.—Rick Cober Bauman has accepted the unanimous call of the board of directors of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario to the position of executive director. Cober Bauman has been part of the MCC community for 19 years, the past nine in senior management as program director, and he has been a leader in the collaborative planning processes for MCCs across Canada. He began his MCC experience in the Innu community of Sheshatshit, Labrador, during which time his understanding of aboriginal issues, poverty, injustice and the prophetic witness of the church was formed and grew. Cober Bauman has been lauded for his ability to work well in MCC’s diverse constituency and he looks forward to building up relationships with the various communities that support the organization. He and his wife Louise are members of Tavistock (Ont.) Mennonite Church; they have three young adult children.

—Mennonite Central Committee Ontario Release



**Cober Bauman**

### MCC names new resource generation network director

GOSHEN, IND.—Philip H. Rush has been appointed as resource generation network director to lead fundraising work for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in the United States and Canada. An associate professor of business and information systems at Goshen College and a former regional director for development at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., Rush previously served with MCC from 1991-93 as an English teacher in China and from 1995-97 as assistant director of the China Educational Exchange program. In addition to his MCC service, Rush has supported the organization’s work by serving as financial coordinator for the Michiana Mennonite Relief Sale and as board president for an MCC thrift shop in Harrisonburg, Va. Rush began work as MCC’s resource generation network director on a part-time basis in January and will begin the position full-time in June. He will be based at the MCC Great Lakes office in Goshen.

—Mennonite Central Committee Release



**Rush**



# One-day fast commits church leaders to ending world hunger

BY AARON EPP

National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG

Church leaders from a variety of Christian denominations and their relief and development agencies participated in a one-day fast on Nov. 28, 2007, as a symbol of their commitment to ending hunger.

"I think [the fast] was significant for me personally because I was made conscious of those who go throughout the day without food," said Don Peters, executive director of Mennonite Central Committee Canada and a member of Canadian Foodgrains Bank, the agency that ties all of these Christian churches together in the

## ▄ Briefly noted

### Project Ploughshares appoints new chair

WATERLOO, ONT.— Long-time journalist Dona Harvey of Waterloo has been appointed chair of Project Ploughshares. Harvey was formerly editor-in-chief of the *Winnipeg Tribune* and managing editor of the *Vancouver Province*. Harvey succeeds Moira Hutchinson of Toronto, who served as chair of Project Ploughshares for the past five years. Esther Epp-Tiessen of Winnipeg, peace ministries coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada, was also appointed to the Ploughshares board of directors, replacing William Janzen of Ottawa, who represented MCC Canada on the board for 25 years. Project Ploughshares is an ecumenical agency of the Canadian Council of Churches that works with churches, governments and non-governmental organizations to develop and advance approaches that build peace and reduce reliance on military force.

—Project Ploughshares Release



Harvey

work of ending hunger. "When it occurs to you throughout the day that you're hungry, you think about these things."

"This fast serves as a witness to Canada and to the world," said Rev. Rick Fee, chair of the Foodgrains Bank board, in a prepared statement. "We may have differing opinions on some issues, but there is one



*'I think it would be more effective if a larger group of people [fasted] together'*

thing we all agree on. Hunger must end. It is not acceptable that there are still over 800 million people in the world without sufficient food to eat."

In addition to spending the day in fasting and prayer, participants added their names to a letter that was sent to Prime Minister Stephen Harper. "As we undertake a personal commitment to examine what we can do to help end hunger, we also call

upon our government to redouble its efforts through its aid, trade and human rights policies to join us in this essential work," the letter read in part.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank also launched a new program called End Hunger Fast in conjunction with the day of fasting. The goal of the program is to provide a meaningful way for Canadians to get involved in the work of ending hunger in whatever way they can, whether through a monthly donation or through a commitment to fasting, reducing consumption or seeking

justice for the hungry and oppressed.

"I think it would be more effective if a larger group of people [fasted] together," Peters said of his experience. "Say, if the entire staff of Mennonite Church Canada, or our [Foodgrains Bank] board fasted together. I think if people who work together would fast together, it could be significant." ▄

## Safe Third Country decision welcomed by rights organizations

Canadian Council of Churches/Amnesty International Canada/Canadian Council for Refugees Joint Release  
OTTAWA

The Canadian Council for Refugees, the Canadian Council of Churches and Amnesty International welcome the Nov. 29, 2007, Canadian federal court ruling concluding that the three-year-old Safe Third Country Agreement between Canada and the U.S. violates refugee rights.

The agreement effectively closed the border to the majority of refugee claimants who came through the U.S. on their way to making refugee claims in Canada. Turned away by Canada, these individuals were, instead, forced to turn to the U.S. asylum system for protection. In launching this court challenge, the applicants had argued that this approach would be acceptable if the American asylum system met recognized international standards for the pro-

tection of human rights, including refugee rights, but it did not.

The court judgment found that it was unreasonable to conclude that the U.S. complies with the United Nations Convention against Torture and the UN Refugee Convention, and pointed to serious shortcomings in the American asylum system.

"This decision is an eloquent reaffirmation of how important it is that governments scrupulously ensure the safety of refugees and uphold the full range of their human rights," said Amnesty International Canada secretary general Alex Neve. "This is a message that will, and must, be heard around the world."

The three organizations now call on the Canadian government to immediately suspend the operation of the Safe Third Country Agreement.

Mennonite Church Canada is a member of the Canadian Council of Churches. ▄

## Christian Witness workers credited for 'love fund' scholarships

BY DEBORAH FROESE,  
WITH JEANETTE HANSON

Mennonite Church Canada  
CHONGQING, CHINA

The presentation of 12 scholarships to freshmen at Chongqing Medical University last fall caught the attention of a student reporter. The resulting college newspaper article credits Julie and Philip Bender, Mennonite Church Canada Christian Witness workers, and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker Mark Sunderman with helping poor students financially so they can focus on their studies.

Entitled "Foreign teachers show love by collecting donations for poor students," the article reflected great appreciation for the teachers' concern and support, referring to the scholarships as a "love fund."

In China, education beyond primary levels is hard to access. Fees are high and opportunities for entrance are few. Two years ago, however, scholarships for students at Chongqing Medical University were created by Mennonite Partners in China (MPC) with funding from the MCC Global Families Program. MPC is a partnership of four Mennonite agencies, including MC Canada Christian Witness, with whom the Benders have been working at Chongqing for the last four years.

Love-fund recipients were selected by the university's student services office based on financial need—many are orphans or have only one parent, which adds to their financial challenges—and a willingness to consider employment after graduation in rural communities where medical care is difficult to access and sometimes substandard.

Julie Bender has witnessed the impact financial struggles can have on students. "I have heard my students talk about poor classmates who are forced to eat only one

meal a day," she says.

As an orphan, Fu Juan Juan, a second-year laboratory medicine student, is well aware of the pressure her extended family endures to assist her with her university expenses. The scholarship she received last year eased some of that pressure. Like many other post-secondary students, Fu works part-time tutoring middle school students in Chinese and math; she and another scholarship recipient, Wang Fen Fen, also tutor Philip Bender in Chinese.

University life still poses challenges for Chen Long, a student from Yilong County in eastern Sichuan whose father is dead. But thanks to part-time jobs and his scholarship, he has managed. In his second year of study in his major, public health inspection, Chen looks to the future. He hopes to improve healthcare and disease prevention techniques, preferably back home in Yilong County.

Like Chen, Wang, a second-year dentistry student and one of the first scholarship recipients, looks forward to being



MC Canada Christian Witness worker Julie Bender, left, speaks with scholarship recipient Pan Gui Fang.

of service when she graduates. She says she dreams of being "a good dentist, with care, skill, honesty and loyalty to my patients." ❧

## MCC provides food aid as peace talks begin in Democratic Republic of Congo

BY TIM SHENK

Mennonite Central Committee  
NORTH KIVU PROVINCE, CONGO

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is helping to provide food to about 30,000 people who have been displaced by violence in the troubled eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Fighting between government and rebel forces has displaced hundreds of thousands of civilians in Congo's North Kivu Province since last August, according to the United Nations. With financial support from MCC, relief workers are distributing a 20-day supply of beans, corn, rice, cooking oil and salt to recently displaced people in North Kivu and neighbouring provinces.

Food has become scarce throughout North Kivu because farmers have fled their land, according to Kawaya Ngenda, a coordinator for the aid organization, ACT International, which is carrying out the

food distribution. In addition to food, ACT International is providing plastic sheeting, water cans, sleeping bags and other needed items for displaced households.

On Jan. 6, a peace conference began in Goma, the provincial capital of North Kivu. It is hosted by the Congolese government and includes representatives from regional militia groups, civil society, religious communities and the international community.

The peace process is complicated by the presence of numerous rebel groups in the area. International observers report that various rebel groups are at war with each other as well as with the central government, and some factions are supported by neighbouring countries.

Ngenda believes that much is at stake in the peace efforts. If they fail, the fighting could escalate further, dragging one of Africa's largest and poorest nations into a devastating regional war, he wrote in an e-mail. ❧



# Making a difference

*Nutana Park Mennonite sees its relationship to Mennonite Central Committee as a marriage partnership*

BY GLADYS TERICHOW

Mennonite Central Committee  
SASKATOON, SASK.

Posters promoting Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) programs and events can be found on every bulletin board in Nutana Park Mennonite Church.

"These are teaching tools," says pastor Anita Retzlaff as she counts 15 such posters on bulletin boards around the church. "We are an ordinary congregation, but people here are passionate about MCC."

Church leaders play a key role in promoting the work of MCC, says Retzlaff, who has been a member of the congregation of about 500 for more than 30 years and a part of the pastoral staff for 12.

Every week she spends about three to four hours processing mail. This provides her with a large selection of information that could be shared with the congregation, but she makes a conscious choice to highlight the work of MCC. "We need MCC and MCC needs us," she says. "MCC provides the structure and opportunities, and we participate with cash and our own resources and energy."

While some of the older congregants have first-hand memories of assistance provided through MCC, the challenge is to pass on this passion and enthusiasm for MCC through engaging youths in the organization's work, explains Retzlaff.

Youths, she says, have a social conscience and are interested in MCC activities relating to the environment, racial tension, peacebuilding and justice. "I believe our younger adults consider their lives within the realities of the world around them," she



"These are teaching tools," says pastor Anita Retzlaff as she counts 15 MCC posters on bulletin boards around Nutana Park Mennonite Church.

says. "They are aware of the pain in this world and hopeful that they can make a difference."

Young adults from Nutana Park Mennonite Church participate in the Menno Mile—a five-kilometre run or three-kilometre walk to raise funds for the MCC Saskatchewan Relief Sale. They also work in thrift shops, raise funds for MCC projects and sponsor children through the Global Family Program.

During the past three decades the church has sponsored 29 families through MCC Saskatchewan's refugee assistance program. "When we hear that another family needs sponsors, we always have a group of individuals who meet the challenge," says Retzlaff.

She describes her church's relationship with MCC as a marriage partnership: "A flexible relationship where there is give and take. Sometimes the church provides direction to MCC and other times the church waits for MCC to provide direction." ❧



Anita Froese, a member of First Mennonite Church, has her blood pressure taken by Mary Toews, a member of the congregational nursing program and the blood pressure monitoring is a part of the overall health care program.



# Dreaming of home-cooking

*Lunch program offers MCC staffers and those from nearby businesses the chance to escape the daily sandwich grind*

BY GLADYS TERICHOW

Mennonite Central Committee  
SASKATOON, SASK.

Every Wednesday the aroma of a home-cooked meal fills the atrium in the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Centre located in an industrial area near the Saskatoon Airport.

As the noon hour approaches, volunteers working in the material resource department put down their needles, scissors and packing tape, and enjoy the camaraderie of eating together. Friends and families celebrating birthdays or other special

PHOTO BY KARIN FEHDERAU



Mennonite Church in Saskatoon, Sask., sits in a recent Sunday morning service to have a blood pressure clinic. The church is into its second year of a condensed pressure clinic was offered to members as the main focus of the program.

events join the ever-growing number of people coming to the MCC office for this noon-hour meal. People working in nearby industries also take advantage of buying an affordable home-cooked meal within walking distance of their workplace.

Marlene Froese, a retired teacher, started a catering business called Made Just For You in 2001 and started preparing these weekly meals in the centre's commercial kitchen in February 2005. "It is still unpredictable, but we now prepare meals for 85 to 90 people," she says.

The atrium, a large entrance lobby for Ten Thousand Villages, MCC material resources and offices, has seating for about 50 people. When this space fills up, people take their trays of food to the lounges and diningroom facilities on the mezzanine floor.

The menu is different each week, and includes soup and pie, ethnic Mennonite meals and ethnic meals from other countries, especially France, Italy and Mexico. Froese says many meals are prepared using recipes from MCC's new recipe book, *Simply in Season*.

"The food is excellent and the money goes to a good cause," says Mirjana Dautbegovic, noting she and about 20 other employees from a business nearby take advantage of this weekly meal service.

"I come here whenever I can because it is a home-cooked meal, it's very quick and very convenient," says Jonathan Pauls.

But "food service is way bigger than [just] food," explains Froese. "It is about building community, interacting, listening, hearing stories, sharing stories and building relationships. Food service meets spiritual and emotional needs."

Preparing and serving these noon-hour meals "fill me with delight and pleasure," she says. "I don't walk out of here thinking what an exhausting day I had. I always walk out of here feeling buoyant."

This feeling, she explains, comes from knowing that she is using her abilities and her business to raise awareness—and funds—for MCC and its programs. "I don't quilt blankets, but I love cooking and I love being among people. If I can do this for MCC, I say that's cool."

Froese is also helping MCC staff fulfill a dream to develop the atrium into a community gathering place.

"This is a place where we can create awareness about MCC, through Ten Thousand Villages, material resources and our displays," says executive director Bruno Baerg. He notes that the office has

MCC PHOTO BY JOANIE PETERS



Marlene Froese uses her interest in food service to provide a weekly noon-hour meal service in the MCC Centre.

been located in the same building since the early 1990s, but that the renovations undertaken in 2004 make it possible for MCC to undertake these new ventures.

The idea for a weekly lunch program, he explains, stemmed from the success of people supporting the Fair Trade Café that is located in the atrium and the brown bag lunches that feature guest speakers.

"We just dream and let our dreams take their own course," says Froese, as she muses about future plans for the lunch program. "This started as a dream and we'll let it go where it will go." ❧

## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

# Making connections

*CMU prof meets fellow Christian in the back seat of a taxi*

BY TITUS GUENTHER

Mennonite Church Canada  
SANTIAGO, CHILE

After attending a week-long conference of the Southern Cone Countries Latin Mennonite Churches in Uruguay, Karen and I are “coming down” from all the excitement—literally and figuratively. We emerge from the Santiago airport and attempt to locate an airporter van, a convenient and economic means for getting to the Methodist guesthouse, where we have a reservation for a two-day layover before our return to Canada.

But an eager taxi driver dogs us. “I’ll take you for the same price as the airporter and you don’t have to crowd in with others,” he insists. “I have to head back to the city anyway.”

We finally relent. When we reach his car, we notice it is not a common cab, but a classier vehicle used for well-to-do tourists. Our driver, it turns out, is the taxi service coordinator for business-people at Chile’s international airport.

He is an incessant talker. When he drops the word “evangelical” in reference to himself, I become attentive. Having formerly taught church history in Chile’s interdenominational Protestant seminary, I wonder if he is one of the country’s nearly two million Pentecostal Christians. When he proceeds to call himself a Baptist, my ears really perk up. Does he know the Baptist convention’s leadership, Freddy Paredes or Omar Cortés, I ask?

“Omar baptized me in the Fourth Baptist Church,” he replies.

Bingo! Imagine among the thousands of taxi drivers in this city of five-million-plus, we are being pursued by a “disciple” of a Mennonite Church Canada Christian Witness worker!

During my previous time in Chile, I had become friends with Omar. By providing a reference letter, I had helped him connect with MC Canada via Vancouver’s First Mennonite Church, when he came with family to do graduate studies at Regent College. And Karen and I had just spent a week at the Southern Cone conference with Omar.

As we share this with our driver, he volunteers his identity card, which reads, “Elías Pantoja Cid, Chief of Traffic (for Taxis).”

We now think it only fair to tell Elías that we are Mennonites. But Elías says he has only a “vague idea” of who Mennonites are. We point out significant commonalities between Mennonites and Baptists, and mention that the Union of Evangelical Baptist Churches of Chile has begun conversations with MC Canada about setting up an Anabaptist Peace Theology Resource Centre for



PHOTO BY CONSTANZA PANTOJA

*Elias Pantoja Cid poses with his taxi cab in Santiago, Chile. Baptized by Omar Cortés, Mennonite Church Canada Christian Witness worker in Chile, the taxi driver struck up a conversation with CMU prof Titus Guenther on a trip from the Santiago airport to the Methodist guesthouse in Chile’s capital city.*

church leaders. Omar is playing a vital role in this initiative.

Elías quickly warms to the idea. “The proposal of collaboration between the Baptist Union of Chile and Mennonite Church Canada would be greatly helpful and advance our projects and activities,” he says.

A half-hour later, we arrive at the Methodist Centre. After paying our “moderate” taxi fare we take leave with a Chilean-style embrace from our erstwhile pushy taxi driver, an (Ana)Baptist brother in Christ!

Without his persistence, we could have easily missed the connection. ❧

*Titus Guenther, professor of theology and missions at Canadian Mennonite University, spent four months last year in Chile on special assignment for MC Canada Witness and Mennonite Mission Network.*

## Chilean Baptists exploring Mennonite peace theology

Tim Froese, executive director of MC Canada’s International Ministry, learned on a 2007 trip to Chile that the seminary and conference leadership of Chile’s Union of Baptist Churches are actively seeking to reclaim and redefine their Anabaptist identity.

Since the 1930s, Chile’s 500 or so Baptist churches—with 35,000 baptized members and roughly 100,000 congregants—have primarily identified themselves with

the Southern Baptist Convention of the U.S. However, the teaching ministry of Mennonite Church Canada Christian Witness worker Omar Cortés at the Baptist seminary has been instrumental in igniting renewed interest in Anabaptist ecclesiology and practice—particularly Mennonite peace theology.

With the Chilean Baptist union taking the lead, conversations are now underway to affiliate more intentionally with the Anabaptist community in Latin America and beyond.



# Building bridges

*Toronto Mennonite New Life Fellowship seeks closer ties with Cuban denomination*

BY REBECCA YODER NEUFELD

Mennonite Church Canada

TORONTO

Two years ago, Toronto Mennonite New Life Church was invited to develop a relationship with the Evangelical Missionary Church of Cuba. Under the guidance of New Life co-pastor Adolfo Puricelli—and in keeping with the framework of a partnership between the Cuban denomination headed by president Andrés Olivares and Mennonite Church Canada—a proposal of the types of spiritual support that could be extended across the miles was drafted.

When it was learned that congregant Olga Durán was travelling to Cuba, she was asked whether she would give the church's communication a personal touch by taking its introductory letter herself. "Yes, I am willing," she replied. Little did anyone know what a blessing this would become to her and, consequently, to everyone at New Life.

Durán was not familiar with the existence of Olivares' congregation or the location of its denominational leadership, but her mission was to find him and pass on the letter.

"Upon arrival in Havana, I communicated by phone and discovered to my great surprise that the church was located almost in the patio of my house," Durán recounts. "Within five or 10 minutes pastor Andrés Olivares was in my home, blessing me and setting a later meeting in which we shared the intention of . . . New Life . . . for relationship with this group of Cuban churches.

From that moment on, Durán became integrated into the Cuban congregation and became familiar with its efforts to direct Cuban families in the way of the



*Olga Durán, centre, is pictured with Ricardo Vargas, left, and Luis Arias, all of whom are members of the committee at Toronto Mennonite New Life Fellowship that spearheaded a partnership between the Canadian congregation and the Evangelical Missionary Church of Cuba.*

Lord during her three-month stay. "For my part, I shared everything that is done at New Life to help immigrants in their integration into Canadian society," she says.

With a personal knowledge of the Havana neighbourhood, Durán asked locals about the church. "They enjoy a high reputation and work cooperatively and respectfully with other neighbourhood organizations," she notes. "Their growth demonstrates that the society really wants—and seeks—this spiritual support, this impressive joy and enthusiasm. I noted that the spiritual work they carry out strengthens family ties, cultivates love for our Creator, and forms young people.

"This church is building its meeting place, as we have in New Life, with congregational effort and the assistance of others," Durán continues. "The building is modest, but has been built with great love, and is already too small given the growth of this church and the events they host there. It breathes unity, love, peace and the blessings of the Lord."

Durán is happy to report that "the brothers and sisters there pray for the members of New Life, and intercede for the strengthening of relational ties."

To aid in building a relationship with New Life, the Cuban congregation filmed a video about its ministry.

The Evangelical Missionary Church of

Cuba is not limited to this one congregation, however, but has spread throughout the country. Durán was able to interact with some of the young pastors.

"They are full of faith in the success of their community work, and their joy and satisfaction at being in God's service is contagious," she says. "Much can be done for these new churches, and older churches can benefit from the energetic spirit and the youths [who] fill them. They receive with open arms all the help offered to them and this capacity to receive from others is matched by their desire to give to others what they possess."

Having taken this first step of effective contact between two countries separated by distance and level of development, Durán is "sure that this beginning will grow into the spiritual support that both churches need. I'm ready to continue being the messenger, the link between these two congregations into which I have integrated, seeking peace and the way to eternal life."

After the recent celebration of its 20th anniversary, New Life is sending a video of this event to Cuba so that the brothers and sisters there can get to know the Toronto congregation better and deepen their fraternal ties. ☸

*From a draft by Olga Durán and New Life co-pastor Betty Puricelli.*



Olivares



## Opening paths of unity and exchange

*Mennonite theological educators, leaders from the Americas meet for multilateral talks*

From Mennonite World Conference Releases  
GUATEMALA CITY, GUATEMALA

Contemporary challenges in theological education brought 45 Latin American Anabaptist/Mennonite theologians and educators together late last year to reflect on ways to unite and exchange resources.

“Anabaptist Vision for Theological Education: Opening Paths of Unity and Exchange in Facing Contemporary Challenges,” a theological education consultation that intentionally focused across the Americas, took place last November.

Semilla, the Latin American Anabaptist Seminary based in Guatemala City, called together leaders of Spanish and Portuguese Anabaptist theological education programs from across the Americas. The consultation ploughed the field for new theological interaction and for more intentional exchange of resources among institutions. The participants agreed to intentionally continue this interaction and foster stronger relations among institutions and programs.

Steps outlined include compiling a list of Anabaptist theological programs



*Gladys Siemens of Brazil, left, and Consulta Anabautista Menonita Centroamericana executive committee members lead a song prior to one of their meetings in Guatemala late last year. Siemens was featured in the “Experiencing IMPaCT” article in the July 30, 2007, issue of Canadian Mennonite during her visit to Canada for the International Mennonite Pastors Coming Together gathering in Water Valley, Alta.*

in Spanish and Portuguese; developing bibliographies, libraries and courses in electronic or virtual formats to facilitate serving people in different countries; and promoting ways to share teaching personnel and increase communication.

In her presentation, Alix Lozano, director of the Colombian Mennonite Biblical Seminary and president of the Mennonite Church in Colombia, said, “We know that the key for our institutions is in reading the signs of the times to discern the *Kairos* [opportune time], and in understanding that the alternatives in the quest for answers happen through movements and alliances, and not through institutionalized answers, and also through a re-reading of the Bible . . . and even a re-reading of Ana-

baptism for our times and contexts.”

Those present stayed—and another 45 people arrived—to take part in the 34th assembly of *Consulta Anabautista Menonita Centroamericana*. There were delegates from every member conference and organization in Central America as well as people from Mennonite Church USA, Canada, and the Andean and Southern Cone areas.

The assembly’s theme, “The call to mission: Reflections and challenges from an Anabaptist biblical perspective,” was examined by Peter Stucky of Colombia, Mennonite World Conference executive committee member for Latin America.

Stucky described the experience of Teusaquillo Mennonite Church in Bogotá, Colombia, where he is pastor: “I would like to use this [experience] to illustrate that to live the gospel and to live Anabaptism are not two different things, but rather that Anabaptism provides a specific way of understanding what it means to follow Jesus. I do not say it is better or worse than the perspectives of other families of faith, but that it is our own, that it enriches and orients us in the midst of the great tensions that we suffer in Latin America.”

Stucky opened his presentation on the Holy Spirit in Anabaptist history by saying, “It is no secret that in historic

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churches, the topic of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the church has generated considerable controversy, rejections, sadness and perhaps some divisions or loss of members and congregations in conferences. On one side, people with certain prejudices easily say that some of our churches don't have the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, some of our Anabaptist 'purists' disqualify some of the more 'lively' Mennonite churches, saying they are not Mennonite."

In a concluding statement, delegates said that they felt called by the Holy Spirit to live and proclaim a gospel that "reveals anti-kingdom values in the world and offers a liberating and integrating message inspired by the Holy Spirit."

Canadian Women in Mission and Mennonite Church Canada were thanked, along with many other organizations, for their support of the consultations that also included a gathering of Central American Mennonite women theologians on the topic of domestic violence. ❧

### ❧ Briefly noted

#### Yarrow United Mennonite welcomes new pastor

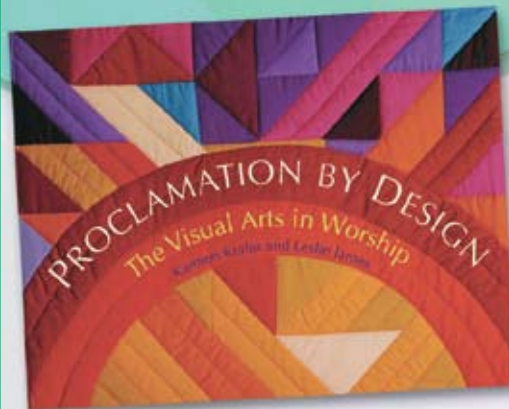
YARROW, B.C.—Barry Lesser has recently joined the staff of Yarrow United Mennonite Church as senior pastor, having begun his duties on Dec. 1, 2007. He came to Yarrow from Zoar Mennonite Church, Waldheim, Sask., and previously served as pastor of Zion Mennonite Church, Swift Current, Sask., and Covenant Mennonite Church, Winkler, Man. Lesser studied at Swift Current Bible Institute, Canadian Mennonite Bible College (now Canadian Mennonite University) and at the Winnipeg Seminary Consortium. He and his wife Judy have four children, three of whom are married, and two grandchildren. "I am looking forward to growing together with the congregation in ministry, and look forward to what God will do in the community," he says. Lesser joins youth pastor Keith St. Jean on staff at Yarrow United Mennonite. He was installed as pastor on Jan. 13.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN



*Central American women challenged the church to address domestic violence when they met in Guatemala City, Guatemala, late last year, for a consultation that received funding from Canadian Women in Mission. Some 50 women delegates from Central American countries participated. After reviewing what their churches are currently doing in relation to domestic violence, and discerning what the churches' role could be, the Central American Anabaptist Women Theologians adopted a declaration that, in part, called on the church to "promote and set up domestic violence care programs that include training, prevention, intervention and coordination with networks of people to accompany victims and to orient women about where to seek referrals in cases of violence."*

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# Turning away from historic beliefs

*MC U.S.A. members think core Mennonite values are barriers to unchurched, historian claims*

BY CONRAD STOESZ AND KEN REDDIG

Canadian Mennonite University WINNIPEG

For John Roth, Mennonite Church members in the U.S. are in a paradoxical moment in time.

Never before, he said, have Mennonites enjoyed such credibility and support from other denominations; in ecumenical circles, Anabaptism is seen as the “darling child,” with interest, support and acceptance of traditional Mennonite distinctives

such as peace and service.

But it’s a different story within many churches in Mennonite Church U.S.A., said Roth, this year’s speaker at the 2007 Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) John and Margaret Friesen Lectures. While other Christians are embracing core Mennonite theology, Mennonite Church members south of the border are turning away from their historical beliefs, he stated.

Basing his observations on visits to about 150 MC U.S.A. congregations over the past eight years, Roth, director of the Mennonite Historical Library and professor of history at Goshen College in Indiana, said he was encouraged to see congregations embracing the missional church concept—reaching out to friends and neighbours. But, he said, many people seem to think that Mennonite beliefs and traditions are barriers to the unchurched, with the result that some downplay Mennonite beliefs and identity to become more generically Christian.

Referring to the 2006 MC U.S.A. mem-



Roth

bership profile, Roth noted that less than a third of members had strong denominational loyalty. This concerns him, since he believes Mennonites are stewards of a distinctive theology and practice that other denominations now appreciate.

Roth went on to note a number of pressures impacting Mennonites today: mass media, individualism and freedom of choice. Members are becoming consumers of faith; many people today, he observed, go church shopping to find a congregation that meets their needs when, where and the way they want them met. Without a clear theological centre other than self-interest, he suggested that the church will continue to be haunted by fragmentation.

In response, Roth said there is a need for clarity of Mennonite identity and a renewed commitment to the body of Christ. He pushed hard the idea that the future identity of the Mennonite Church needs to be grounded in a renewed faith and rooted in a renewed commitment to local congregations—where relationships are nurtured and which are rooted in a love for the world.

Roth concluded his series with a rather surprising appeal for a recovery of worship. He lamented that worship has often been pragmatic and consumer-oriented, rather than transformational, adding that it might also be appropriate to understand baptism and the Lord’s Supper in more sacramental terms.

Arguing that baptism and communion are not just symbols, Roth suggested that they should be seen as acts of remembering and re-remembering—that is, acts of beauty and holiness that not only bring together the shards and splinters of the broken soul, but also a public activity that gathers Christians together to restore what has been torn asunder in the world. ☸

*Conrad Stoesz is an archivist at the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies and the Mennonite Heritage Centre. Ken Reddig is director of the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada.*

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## Mennonite Church Manitoba Annual Delegate Session



**Theme: "Faith Grows"**

Reflecting on the various stages of faith development  
"*...Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?*" (Luke 24:32)

**Steinbach Mennonite Church, Feb. 22-23**

Registration on Friday, February 22, at 4:30 p.m., followed by supper together and worship at 7:00 p.m. Saturday sessions begin at 8:30 a.m.

Sessions include worship, keynote addresses, stories, celebration, communion, dialogue and discernment, reporting and workshops.

**Leadership Seminar:** Friday, Feb. 22, 2008, 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. on "Pastoring Persons Through Their Life Cycle" with Ken Hawckley.



**Keynote speaker  
Ken Hawckley**

## Mennonite Church Saskatchewan 2008 Annual Delegate Session



**Theme: "Come, Let Us Worship!"**

**First Mennonite Church in Saskatoon  
Feb. 22-23**

Registration begins at 1:30 p.m. on Friday and the host church leads us in a time of worship at 2:00 p.m. Saturday morning registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and worship begins at 9:00 a.m.

We will have two times for round table discussions:

- Friday's topic: Response to Canada's increased militarization
- Saturday's topic: Worshipping with my finances

Please see your church secretary or pastor for registration forms and more information.



**Guest Speaker:  
Sven Eriksson, MC  
Canada Denominational Minister**

## Mennonite Church B.C. LEAD Conference & Annual Meeting

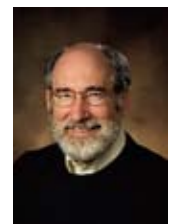


**LEAD Conference**

Friday, Feb. 22, 1:00-5:30 p.m., followed by dinner.

Everyone is invited. Cost is \$10.

**"The Transforming Power of Forgiveness at Nickel Mines"** and **"The Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness"**  
with author Donald Kraybill.



**Donald Kraybill**

**MCBC Annual Meeting**

**Theme: "We're in a new place"**

Saturday, Feb. 23, 8:30 Registration / 9:00 Opening  
We will deal with matters including: installation of the Executive Minister; implementation of the vision; resolutions on the covenant process and the building project at Camp Squeah; acceptance of a new church into membership; elections and commissioning of workers.

Both events at **Peace Mennonite Church**

11571 Daniels Road, Richmond, B.C.

Please register by Feb. 12 through your church office or at the MCBC office (admin@mcbc.ca or 604-850-6658).

## GOD AT WORK IN US

## VALENTINE'S DAY REFLECTION

# Something special for Mary

*What happens when a thrift store volunteer and his wife follow Jesus' lead in showing tenderness to 'the least of these'?*

BY ANONYMOUS  
WATERLOO, ONT.

I woke up filled with curiosity. What would I experience this day? My volunteer job as truck driver for a thrift shop on Monday mornings always brings surprises. My helper is a street person, someone needing money whom the store hires for four hours.

To my surprise, every helper has a strong work ethic and seeks ways to be helpful. They are gracious with donors. We groan together as we move yet another heavy sofa bed—sometimes only good for the dump—from a basement

profession for several years. The day we worked together he was grateful for these few hours of paid work. He was hopeful of finding employment.

"Where do you get food to eat?" I asked.

"From the soup kitchen—and we get supper and breakfast," he replied.

"Are you in a rooming house for accommodation?"

"Out of the Cold," he said.

My gut was pierced. I had been to an Out of the Cold church gymnasium. Ten

The response was exactly what anyone would expect—fear!

"We don't know them," she said, asking, "Would it be safe?" She gave deep thought to it all in the afternoon. In the evening she asked about details and then calmly gave her approval.

The next day I went to the soup kitchen and asked about Bill and Mary. I found them sleeping in a corner of the diningroom floor. I aroused him and asked him what he thought of the plan. He was pleased, wishing to keep it a secret from his wife.

The next evening, a cold snowy night, I picked them up. Stella warmly greeted them and offered tea. We chatted in the livingroom. My wife offered them towels for a bath. Mary immediately leapt up and took a bath. The evening went well.

As we all retired Bill indicated that an 8 a.m. breakfast would work well. The next morning, there was no stirring by 9. We wondered what to do. Stella said they

*Given his state, what, I wondered, could this man do for his wife?*



DESIGNPICS PHOTO BY DON HAMMOND

through a narrow hall, around a corner and out the door, the last thrust being onto the truck!

Some of my helpers are relatively quiet, but most prefer to talk. I listen attentively to stories, many of which prick my middle class ears. These stories cover the gamut: youths, parents, employment and unemployment, maybe a work-related accident, the struggle to live. I learn of rooming houses, alcohol and drugs. One helper picks through his plastic bag of cigarette butts as he rolls a smoke.

Bill\* is a likeable fellow. At 34, he's not on drugs or alcohol. He learned to lay flooring in college and worked at his

of our church people volunteer there. He said this was a bit difficult for his wife, Mary\*.

I thought of the guest bedroom in our home, where guests we choose stay when they visit. I also knew Jesus spoke and acted with tenderness for the poor.

Bill said he would like to do something special for Mary on Valentine's Day, only two days away. Given his state, what, I wondered, could this man do for his wife?

At home after work I relayed the morning's events to my wife Stella\* with mixed joy and sadness. I then made a proposal. "Could we have them spend Valentine's night with us?"

likely needed sleep more than anything else. At 10:45 they appeared. We had breakfast, chatted again and they signed our guest book before I took them back to the soup kitchen.

Mary wrote, "Thanks you so much for providing me with a peaceful shelter." Bill added, "I thank you . . . for sheltering us through our storm. May God bless you."

This event lingers in our minds and hearts. We perceived it as a great risk, yet it is an act that Jesus clearly asks of us: "*Just as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me*" (Matthew 25:40).

\*All names are pseudonyms.

## ARTBEAT

## HYMNAL REVIEW

# Putting a fresh face on Jesus

*Sing the Story. Hymnal: A Worship Book Supplement II.*  
Faith & Life Resources, 2007.

REVIEWED BY MARK DILLER HARDER

This past summer Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN) released *Sing the Story*, the second of a two-part supplement to *Hymnal: A Worship Book*. The 124 songs in *Sing the Story* are organized and focused on the life of Jesus, corresponding to the Church Year from Advent through Easter. It includes a helpful index at the back organized under the same Acts of Worship as the original hymnal.

Congregations have already been enjoying *Sing the Journey*, the first supplement—published in 2005—that explores the life and mission of the church. Both supplements have vibrant hymn texts, whose strong, evocative images and contemporary language give voice to the joys, struggles and issues of faith in our time.

This second supplement makes the story of Jesus come alive again. Often fresh new texts are given for music already familiar from previous hymnals; for example, “Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness (No.1), whose 1987 text is set to an American folk melody published in 1813. It also includes Kenneth Nafziger’s adaptation of a provocative text by Menno Simons (“O God, to Whom Then Shall I Turn?” No. 61). Seventy-nine creative and imaginative worship resources—prayers and readings—close the supplement.

The music comes from a wide mix of styles, genres and time periods. Roughly 20 percent of the 124 hymns use music familiar from previous hymnals or full hymns rediscovered. There are even two Bach chorales set to new texts. Most of the remainder use more recent musical styles or arrangements

of melodies, with the notable lack of many Christian contemporary worship band songs, often due to copyright restrictions.

There are a number of songs coming out of the African American gospel and spiritual tradition, including “Jesus, Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child” (No. 19), as well as a wonderful jazz lament (“How Long, O Lord,” No. 82). Songs from around the world are present, although not as prominent as in the first supplement. There are also fewer John Bell songs. There are a couple strong Taizé songs and various folk melodies from different traditions, including an Irish melody used in the 2007 Advent series from the *Leader* magazine (“My Soul Cries Out,” No. 124).

Once again, MPN has produced an inexpensive collection of accompaniments in loose-leaf pages. This resource, which also includes extra verses and instrumental parts, is essential for congregations.

Overall, *Sing the Story* is a solid addition to congregational singing in the Mennonite Church. It expands our musical options during times like Christmas, Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost, although this focus on the Church Year may also limit its use at other times.

The strongest section may be the songs for Lent and Holy Week. *Sing the Story* is perhaps less musically accessible than *Sing the Journey*, as some of the music takes creative effort and some of the accompaniments and styles need an advanced level of piano accomplishment. ❧

Mark Diller Harder is a pastor at St Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church and an avid church musician.

## Yellow Page Business Directory

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## Calendar

### British Columbia

**Feb. 15, 16:** MCC fundraising banquets at Bakerview MB Church, Abbotsford (15) and Bethel Mennonite, Langley (16). Contact MCC B.C. at 604-850-6639 or 888-622-6337 for tickets.

**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.

**March 7-8:** Youth workers' conference at Columbia Bible College.

**March 15-16:** Lenten Vespers with Abendmusik Choir at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford (15) and Knox United Church, Vancouver (16) at 8 p.m. Donations to Menno

Simons Centre.

**April 16-19:** Mennonite Educational Institute spring production.

**April 19:** Columbia Bible College commencement.

**April 25-27:** Junior Youth Impact retreat at Camp Squeah.

**May 4:** Women's Inspirational Day at Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, Abbotsford.

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

**June 5:** Mennonite Educational Institute graduation.

### Alberta

**Feb. 22-24:** Sr. High Snow camp at Camp Valaqua. Contact ritaheidebrecht@gmail.com or 403-289-7172 for information.

**March 7:** Camp Valaqua fundraising banquet with entertainer Gery Schubert at Foothills Mennonite Church, 6 p.m. For information call 403-637-2510.

**March 8:** Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) and Mennonite Foundation of Canada mini-convention at Radisson Hotel, Calgary Airport. For more information contact meda.org or 800-665-7026.

**March 14-15:** Mennonite Church Alberta annual delegate sessions in Tofield.

**March 16:** Free Winter Fun Day for the whole family at Camp Valaqua. Call 403-637-2510 for information.

**May 10:** Spring work day at Camp Valaqua. Call 403-637-2510.

**June 7:** Camp Valaqua Hike-a-thon. Call 403-637-2510.

**July 4-5:** MCC Relief Sale at Millennium Place, Sherwood Park. Call 403-275-6935 for information.

### Saskatchewan

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

**Feb. 29:** Dessert Fair fundraiser for MCC Relief Sale with musical entertainment and speaker Bruce Campbell Jantz, MCC Africa Director, at Cornerstone Church, Saskatoon, 7:30 p.m.

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

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

**April 6:** Evening of Quartets, a musical fundraiser for MCC Saskatchewan, at Forest Grove Community Church, Saskatoon. Call 306-665-2555 for information.

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

### Manitoba

**Feb. 15-17:** Mennonite Church Manitoba Young Adult retreat at Camp Koinonia.

## People's Summit to examine ministry 'at the crossroads'

BY PAM PETERS-PRIES

Mennonite Church Canada  
WINNIPEG

Members of Mennonite Church Canada and MC U.S.A. are invited to meet together at a bi-national "People's Summit for Faithful Living" on July 8-10 on the campus of Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg. Intentionally called a "People's Summit," any interested person is welcome to attend.

Under the theme, "At the crossroads: Promise and peril," Canadian and American participants will focus on the urgent task of being a faithful community of God amidst the many challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. Deuteronomy 4:1-9 will be the theme text.

"The book of Deuteronomy is especially suited for use in such a summit," says MC Canada general secretary Jack Suderman. "It is directed at God's people as they move into the land God has allowed them to possess, where they face important questions like, 'Why does God work through peoplehood even when that people is not deserving?' 'What does covenant mean and how does that inform

our questions of faithfulness?' 'What are the temptations of God's people in the land in which they live?' 'Where do God's people find security as they live in the land and are tempted by wealth, power and ownership?'"

These are the urgent questions that the summit will address through worship, study and discussion. MC USA identified similar questions at its convention in San Jose, Calif., when it passed a resolution calling for "resources that help us live faithfully in Christ-like ways, sometimes at odds with our national culture, acknowledging that no culture is either completely redeemed or completely fallen."

Plenary worship speakers are April Yamasaki of Abbotsford, B.C., Tom Yoder Neufeld of Waterloo, Ont., and Tom and Christine Sine of Seattle, Wash. A variety of workshops and activities, as well as time for visiting and recreation, will round out the two-and-a-half-day event.

The People's Summit was announced in July 2007 at the MC Canada annual delegate assembly in Abbotsford, B.C., and the MC U.S.A. biennial convention in San Jose, Calif. The two bodies last met together at a joint convention in Charlotte, N.C., in 2005, at which time delegates strongly supported continuing to meet together.

MC Canada will hold its own separate delegate assembly at the same location from July 7-8—just prior to the People's Summit—to address issues, business items, budgets and receive ministry reports. Agenda items will include follow-up on the 2007 creation care and militarization discussions, interfaith dialogue, and issues arising

from the fall 2007 survey of current and former pastors.

For more information about both events, visit [mennonitechurch.ca](http://mennonitechurch.ca) and follow the "Highlights" link on the right side of the homepage. ❧



**Feb. 16-18:** Twin Cities Mystery Tour sponsored by MCM Evangelism and Service Ministry. Young adults will visit congregations in Minneapolis.

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

**Feb. 29-March 2:** Ministry of Listening "Seeing God's Heart" retreat at Circle Square Ranch near Holland. Visit [ministryoflistening.com](http://ministryoflistening.com) for information.

**March 1-2:** Mennofolk Manitoba art reception at Outworks Art Gallery (1) and concert at the West End Cultural

Centre (2). Visit [mennofolk.org/manitoba](http://mennofolk.org/manitoba) for more information.

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

**March 7-8:** Partnership Circles meeting at Home Street Mennonite Church, Winnipeg with speaker Richard Twiss, president of Wiconi International.

**March 7-9:** Peace-It-Together Youth Conference at CMU. Theme: "My world, God's world: Hurts and healing in creation." Visit [cmu.ca](http://cmu.ca).

**March 7-9:** MMYO Junior High

Retreat at Camp Moose Lake. Register by Feb. 27.

**March 17-19:** CMU presents Proclaiming Christ in a Post-Christian World. Speaker: John Stackhouse of Regent College, Vancouver. Visit [cmu.ca](http://cmu.ca).

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

**April 18-20:** Manitoba Mennonite World-wide Marriage Encounter weekend, Winnipeg. For more information, visit [marriageencounter.org](http://marriageencounter.org).

**May 14:** Westgate work day.

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

### Ontario

**Feb. 10:** Join Menno Singers for "Evensong: A Vesper Hymn Fest" at Tavistock Mennonite Church, 7 p.m.

**Feb. 18:** Family Day at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp. For more information contact 519-625-8602 or [info@hiddenacres.ca](mailto:info@hiddenacres.ca).

**Feb. 19-21:** MCEC/CGUC School for

## ☞ Briefly noted

### Conrad Grebel PACS Program celebrating 30th anniversary

WATERLOO, ONT.—The weekend of Feb. 29 to March 2 will mark the 30th anniversary of the Peace and Conflict Studies Program at Conrad Grebel University College. The milestone will be observed with several events, including a free public celebration and keynote address, a fundraising banquet and a student conference. Celebration of the program's first 30 years will be held at the Centre for Governance Innovation at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 29. This free event is open to the public. On March 1, a fundraising banquet for the Frank H. Epp Memorial Fund in support of Grebel's PACS program will be held at the college at 6:30 p.m. The weekend celebration is being held in conjunction with the Inter-Collegiate Peace Fellowship's 2008 student conference on the theme, "Building bridges, breaking down barriers: Religion's role in reconciliation."

—Conrad Grebel Release

### Annual MC B.C. sessions planned for Richmond

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—Annual delegate sessions of Mennonite Church B.C. will be held Feb. 23 at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., with worship and the morning session beginning at 9; after a noon-hour lunch, afternoon sessions will wrap up at approximately 5 p.m. The Leaders Elders And Deacons (LEAD) sessions will be on Feb. 22, also at Peace Mennonite, beginning at 1 p.m. Although LEAD is planned especially for leaders, elders and deacons, as its name indicates, anyone is welcome to attend. The keynote speaker will be Don Kraybill, whose book *Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy* tells the story of the Nickel Mines schoolhouse shootings. A seminar on forgiveness and credentialing information will be included in the sessions.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

## Saskatchewan conference to attempt to put vision statement into action

BY KARIN FEHDERAU

Saskatchewan Correspondent  
SASKATOON, SASK.

Delegates coming to the 2008 sessions of the MC Saskatchewan conference, held this year at First Mennonite in Saskatoon, are being asked to think ahead about how the conference vision can be put further into practice.

"How do we grow in being Christ-centred?" said moderator Henry Block when asked how delegates can prepare for the Feb. 22-23 event, referring to the simpli-

fied vision statement of "Christ-centred and sent."

The two main proposals on this year's agenda are already familiar to most conference attendees from last year. Discussions about restructuring within the conference and Person2Person ministries were hashed out in 2007 in Regina and final decisions on the details are now expected to take place.

The Saskatchewan conference has undergone a long process of re-visioning under the leadership of former conference minister Ken Bechtel, and now restructuring, which includes shifting some responsibilities and redesigning certain conference programs to be the most effective witness possible.

Person2Person has also undergone changes, specifically within the last year, as

other denominations have been invited to participate in the ministry. A name change is planned along with broadening the initial vision for prison ministry. If delegates give their approval, the organization will move ahead with its plans for expansion and work under an umbrella organization known as Restorative Justice Ministries Saskatchewan.

Roundtable discussions on Feb. 22 will also challenge delegates to consider their convictions about "Canada's increasing militarization." In the past, roundtable talks have often resulted in recommendations and actions taken by the conference. Conference minister Jerry Buhler hopes that there will also be a resolution coming from this discussion that will ultimately lead to action, too ☞.



Ministers, "Jesus and the Quest for Human Fulfillment" with Mary Schertz of AMBS at Conrad Grebel. Register online at mcecc.ca.

**Feb. 23:** Dinner and Auction Extravaganza at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate featuring The Deacons of Jazz at dinner. For dinner tickets (4:30 p.m.) call 519-342-0007 ext. 3012. Auction begins at 6:30 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:** Youth Earth Summit at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate for youth, co-sponsored with MCC Ontario. Register online at rockway.ca/YES.

**Feb. 29-Mar. 2:** Inter-Collegiate Peace Fellowship Conference, "Building bridges, breaking down barriers: Religion's role in reconciliation" at Conrad Grebel. Contact icpfgrebel@gmail.com.

**March 1:** Menno Singers present "Lenten Journey" with Nota Bene Period Orchestra, at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener;

8 p.m. Performance of Buxtehude's "Membra Jesu Nostri."

**March 1:** Fundraising dinner for Frank Epp Memorial Fund at Conrad Grebel celebrating 30 years of Peace and Conflict Studies. Call 519-885-0220 x24223 for tickets.

**March 7-8:** Engaged Workshop at Milverton Mennonite Fellowship. Contact Denise or Barry Bender at denise\_bender@yahoo.com.

**March 10,11:** Grandparent-Grandchild Day at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp. For information contact Hidden Acres at 519-625-8602 or info@hiddenacres.ca.

**March 13,14:** Bechtel Lectures with Alfred Neufeld, dean of theological studies at the Universidad Evangelica del Paraguay at Conrad Grebel Great Hall, 7:30 p.m.

**March 20:** MEDA breakfast at the Stone Crock, St. Jacobs, 7:30 a.m. Speaker: Darlene Ashe, ASSETS+ grad.

**March 29:** Glenbrook Day Camp Open House, Stouffville, with wagon rides, wall climbing and pancakes. For information contact 905-640-2127 or sarah@glenbrookdaycamp.com.

**April 12:** Fraser Lake Camp Dinner and Auction at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, 6 p.m. For tickets contact 905-640-2127 or eric@fraseralkecamp.com.

**April 13:** Conrad Grebel Convocation,

2 p.m., Theatre of the Arts, University of Waterloo.

**April 25-26:** Engaged Workshop at Living Water Fellowship, New Hamburg. Contact Denise or Barry Bender at denise\_bender@yahoo.com.

**April 25-26 and May 2-3:** Rockway Mennonite Collegiate presents Disney's "High School Musical." For tickets call 519-342-0007 ext. 3012 after March 25.

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

**May 14:** Spring Concert at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, 6:30 and 8:00 p.m.

#### U.S.A.

**April 18-20:** Connecting Families Weekend to share stories and concerns regarding sexual orientation issues at Antiochian Village, Bolivar, PA. For more information contact 215-256-0247 or rmoyer@verizon.net.

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

## /// Briefly noted

### Author of *Amish Grace* to speak in British Columbia

ABBOTSFORD/RICHMOND, B.C.—The Amish response to the murders of five schoolgirls in Nickel Mines, Pa., on Oct. 2, 2006, was surprising. How could they offer forgiveness in the face of their own sorrow and grief? What does forgiveness mean to them? Donald Kraybill, one of the authors of *Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy*, will speak to these questions at Frasersview Mennonite Brethren Church in Richmond on Feb. 20 at 7 p.m.; at the chapel service at Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, on Feb. 21 at 10:45 a.m.; and at Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, at 7 p.m. He will sign copies of *Amish Grace* at House of James (2743 Emerson St., Abbotsford) from 9:30-11 a.m. on Feb. 22. All author royalties are being donated to Mennonite Central Committee. —MCC B.C. Release

### School for Ministers to examine 'the quest for human fulfillment'

WATERLOO, ONT.—"Jesus and the quest for human fulfillment" is the theme of this year's Mennonite Church Eastern Canada School for Ministers, to be held from Feb. 19-21 at Conrad Grebel University College. Keynote speaker Mary Schertz of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary says, "The text of the New Testament sometimes suffers from over-familiarity. We know it so well that we hear but don't hear, see but don't see. Giving the New Testament the kind of attention we would give a letter from a very dear friend may renew us both as learners and the church of which we are a part." This year the presentations and small group studies will focus on the quest stories in Luke's gospel about women and men who come to Jesus and engage him in seeking human fulfillment. Besides Schertz's addresses, the three-day seminar is offering afternoon workshops on "Internet and the Bible: Oil and water or bosom buddies?"; "21st century Bible translation: Helping Scripture come alive!"; "Reviving the gospel of peace"; and "Greening sacred spaces." To register by Feb. 17, contact Joan Schooley at 1-519-650-3806 or joan@mcecc.ca.

—BY DAVE ROGALSKY

## /// Classifieds

### Employment Opportunities

Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ontario, is an urban congregation of approximately 300. Through a 1.5 year healing ministry led by an **INTENTIONAL INTERIM PASTOR**, we are rebuilding our congregation. Our contemporary mission statement and our commitment to the 'Transforming Church' program demonstrate the energy our members are devoting to revitalizing this church.

We invite applications for a full-time lead pastor. The successful candidate will:

- Lead a ministry team in identifying our congregation's gifts.
- Be experienced in preaching and worship planning.
- Reflect Anabaptist beliefs.
- Be competent in administration and visitation.
- Help develop authentic worship for members and seekers.

Please contact:  
Muriel Bechtel, Conference Minister  
Mennonite Church Eastern Canada  
4489 King Street East  
Kitchener, Ontario  
N2P 2G2

www.wkumchurch.com

Richmond Park MB Church— A congregation of about 300 people in the growing, mid-sized city of Brandon—is searching for a **YOUTH PASTOR** who is passionate about leading and discipling youth.

Please send resume and 3 references to:  
Reinhold Kramer  
43 Noonan Dr.  
Brandon, MB, R7B 0V7

For information, e-mail [Kramer@brandonu.ca](mailto:Kramer@brandonu.ca) or phone 204-727-7344.



Conrad Grebel University College, a residence and teaching facility affiliated with the University of Waterloo, seeks a married couple for the position of **CAMPUS HOSTS** (formerly known as Senior Residents), beginning approx. June

1, 2008. The role involves living in an apartment in the College's residence building and supervising the College during non-business hours. Rent and utilities are free in exchange for performance of duties. Applicants should be mature, responsible and able to relate to a broad range of people, especially students in residence. If interested contact E. Paul Penner, CGUC Operations Manager, at Ph. 519-885-0220, ext. 24231 or by e-mail at [epenner@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:epenner@uwaterloo.ca). Application deadline is Feb. 15, 2008.

Tenant Resource - **HEALTH/SPIRITUAL CARE COORDINATOR**

Bethel Place is a 140-unit independent, subsidized living senior's home, in Winnipeg with on-site support services. We are seeking to fill a half-time position in the coordination of advocacy & programming of health & spiritual care services, in keeping with the mission and values of Bethel Place. A health care background and experience with seniors preferred. We offer a challenging team-oriented work environment. Salary plus benefit package included. Reply in confidence no later than Feb 15, 2008.

Attention - Bethel Place, Administrator  
Fax #204-284-3763; E-mail: [bethel.place@shawcable.com](mailto:bethel.place@shawcable.com)  
Only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted.



**Assistant Professor of Music Therapy**

Canadian Mennonite University invites applications or nominations for a tenure-track faculty position in Music Therapy commencing as early as August 1, 2008.

Please view the full advertisement at [www.cmu.ca](http://www.cmu.ca) or contact Dr. Harry Huebner, V.P. and Academic Dean, at [hhuebner@cmu.ca](mailto:hhuebner@cmu.ca) for more information.

Processing of candidates will begin immediately, and will continue until the position is filled.

500 Shaftesbury Blvd.  
Winnipeg, MB | R3P 2N2

[www.cmu.ca](http://www.cmu.ca)

Bethel Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio seeks, **PASTOR** to re-energize graying congregation. Full-time, part-time, bi-vocational open options; open to establish outreach to young marrieds and youth. Semi rural fast-growing northern Ohio area. Contact pastor search committee: [dlandis002@neo.rr.com](mailto:dlandis002@neo.rr.com).

LCC INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT SEARCH REOPENED

LCC International University, founded in 1991, seeks a president to lead this liberal arts university effective July 2008 or earlier.

Located at Klaipeda, Lithuania, LCC is poised to become an internationally recognized centre for Christian scholarship and research and the premier Christian residential university in Eastern Europe.

The Board of Directors invites nominations and applications. Application deadline - Feb. 22, 2008

For additional information, nomination and application instructions please visit: [www.lcc.lt/newpresident](http://www.lcc.lt/newpresident)



Mennonite Central Committee Ontario invites application for the position of **PROGRAM DIRECTOR** Kitchener or Toronto, Ont.

This position requires a person with a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and non-violent peacemaking.

The Program Director is responsible for all programs of MCC Ontario, including long-term planning, supervision and budget management, and is part of senior leadership.

Qualifications include: management skills, excellent oral and written communication skills, strong relationship skills and prior experience in similar program work.

This three-year salaried full-time position begins March, 2008. Application deadline: March 14, 2008.

Complete job description available on MCC's web site at [www.mcc.org](http://www.mcc.org). To apply send cover letter and resume to Cath Woolner, 50 Kent Ave., Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1 or [cathw@mennonitecc.on.ca](mailto:cathw@mennonitecc.on.ca).

Gretna Bergthaler Mennonite Church, located in Gretna, Man., is welcoming applications for the position of **LEADING MINISTER**. We are a congregation of about 100 members located in a family-friendly small town setting. Ministry in our congregation is defined by its multi-generational character and by the fact that we are the only church in our community. By God's grace we have enjoyed long-lasting, positive relationships with previous pastors and look forward to establishing such a relationship in the future. The successful candidate will have an Anabaptist/Mennonite faith orientation and be gifted in preaching, teaching, and visitation ministries. Seminary level education will be considered an asset. We are a member of Mennonite Church Canada and follow MC Canada salary guidelines. Our preferred starting date is February 2008 but we are open to negotiation on this point. Please direct your inquiries to Kerry Enns, Congregational Chair, at 204-327-5891 (work), 204-327-6666 (home), or write to me at [kgenns@mts.net](mailto:kgenns@mts.net) if you prefer e-mail. Further information is on file with MC Manitoba.

## FOCUS ON CAMPS AND SUMMER CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## SUMMER VACATION EPIPHANY

## Camp = Community

TIM DYCK

Serving at Mennonite Church Manitoba's Camps with Meaning has been a tradition of mine since I finished Grade 10. I started as a counsellor-in-training in the summer of 2000 and worked for the next seven summers. It was a great summer job for a high school student, offering an enticing blend of time away from home, playing around and earning money all at once.

As I grew older, camp became a getaway I could look forward to after months of working routine jobs. It was even expected in the last few years that my camp life was a hiatus from my job serving coffee at a suburban café. "I'll be back in two months," I'd tell the regular customers.

Many people kept asking why I bothered going back to camp at all, so I started to wonder the same thing. I have come to realize that I kept returning to camp for its community. Camp is a society that exists for a short time. It is comprised of volunteers, children, teenagers, university students and retirees, many of whom are strangers when they meet. Camp is based on the principles of community and the idea of an upside-down kingdom. The entire concept seems tentative and fragile. The faith of many people, however, along with the support of nearly 50 congregations and

camp for something new to do for the summer, and some volunteer time out of their vacation or retirement to work for a week. Every summer the familiar faces shift. There would be new positions for staff to fill, and there would be new skills to learn.

This past summer, I was one of two program directors on the leadership team at Camp Assiniboia, 16 kilometres outside of Winnipeg, nestled in a bend of the Assiniboine River. It was in this environment where activities do not always work according to plan, and where sleep is at times a rare commodity. There were multiple programs being offered, often at the same time, and this meant the services of the leadership team were spread over the entire property. We were in charge of making camp as smooth as possible amidst all the predicted and unpredicted events of a summer. With hot days causing an alternate activity schedule, and the general exhaustion of counsellors, everyone

seemed that preparation for the weekly camp-out in the woods would have to be postponed. However, rescue came on the back of a little John Deere tractor, bringing a chainsaw to clear the road. When there was no lifeguard to supervise the pool, a few phone calls to Winkler, Man., brought out a generous volunteer. As youth camp ran for its first time, two amazing young newlyweds offered to organize and lead it. When the leadership team was busy smoothing

PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM DYCK



Tim Dyck, left, and Richard Toews, Camp Assiniboia's Bible instructor, dress up as Aaron and Moses.

out program-related bumps, the camp pastors stepped in to help wherever and whenever it was needed.

Camp has taught me many things over the years. I learned how to overcome my dislike of horses. I learned to build a fire properly, and light it using only one match. I learned how to canoe and kayak. I learned how to prepare and practise large-scale fire drills. I learned how to manage the general upkeep of a "high ropes" course. I learned how to work a spreadsheet program, and manage a photocopier and fax machine. The biggest lesson I learned, however, was to rely on those around me and to work with them together in unity. ❧

*Tim Dyck, 23, has spent a total of 16 years at camp as a camper, counsellor and leader. He is a member of Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, where he works with the youth group. He is currently studying fine arts at the University of Manitoba.*

*No matter what the circumstances, though, God's grace and provision prevailed each week, often in the most unique and surprising ways.*

the prayers of thousands, hold up the rustic institution.

The more time I spent at camp, the more change I saw in the staff there. For many people, it is something to just try out, a part-time thing. Others serve at

had to pull together. No matter what the circumstances, though, God's grace and provision prevailed each week, often in the most unique and surprising ways.

When a thunderstorm knocked down two large, old cottonwoods, it



# UPDATE

Shekinah Retreat Centre

A Ministry of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

Winter 2008

## A New Vision for Shekinah Retreat Centre



**Engage a heart.  
Inspire a mind.  
Transform a life.  
Influence the world...**

These words capture the desire of the leadership team of Shekinah Retreat Centre (SRC) to impact the hearts and minds of individuals so that those individuals, in turn, can be a positive influence in their families, communities, organizations and the world. This new vision, along with three specific recommendations, was recently adopted by the SRC Board of Directors after a lengthy consultation process facilitated by Waldheim resident Lorelei Nickel.

In the spring of 2006 Nickel began work on her

Masters of Business Administration, using Shekinah Retreat Centre as her model for developing a corporate strategy. Her goal was to provide a road map for future planning, decision making, and action for the organization.

Nickel had been involved with Shekinah prior to this project. "Lorelei had done some facilitation work with business groups," said Lill Friesen, SRC co-administrator. "Her strength as a facilitator, her knowledge of our organization, mission and values, plus her ability to develop strategy from a Christ-centred perspective made this partnership an easy fit."

SRC has existed in its current location on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River, northwest of Waldheim, SK since 1979 when MC Sask. purchased the land. Over the past 27 years it has developed into the year-round retreat centre that was originally planned for the site.

In her final report Nickel outlined the three areas of service which are presently provided by SRC:

- Retreats/Conferences/Reunions
- School Programming/Outdoor Education
- Summer Camp

For the past number of years, the primary goal for the SRC Board of Directors was the building of the Timber Lodge, a beautiful timber framed building which can accommodate groups up to 200 people. Since that goal has now been realized, the Board of Directors decided

*cont'd. on back*

***They came to sing. They came to pray. They came to worship.***

## Prairie Winds

They came to the Prairie Winds Worship & Music Retreat on January 18 - 20, 2008. They came to the Timber Lodge at Shekinah Retreat Centre, nestled in the gentle beauty of the North Saskatchewan River Valley.

"This building is the perfect building for singing," said Irma Fast Dueck, a professor at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg and one of the main organizers of the retreat.

"It is an amazing gift for our church to have a building so perfect for music and voice."

Over 100 people attended the retreat sponsored by CMU, Shekinah Retreat Centre and MC Sask.



## 2008 Special Events

### Winter Fun Day

Sat. & Sun., Feb. 9-10

Saturday evening activities  
 Sunday morning worship service  
 Sunday outdoor activities – tubing, skiing, skating, snowshoeing  
 Trapper's relay  
 Guests invited to stay overnight – rent a room in the Timber Lodge

### Fund Raising Banquet

Saturday, March 28

At Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon  
 Speaker: Vern Ratzlaff, Saskatoon

### Adventure Challenge

Saturday, July 26

A team and community building FUN event  
 Run, walk, bike, canoe with family & friends  
 Recreational and competitive options available

### Green Trek

Sat.–Mon., August 23-25

Please see article on next page for details.

### Quilting & Scrapbooking Retreat

Fri.–Sun., October 24-26

#### Resource Team

Spiritual Leadership:  
 Pauline Steinmann

Quilting Consultant:  
 Deb Stefanuk

Scrapbooking Consultant:  
 Kimberly Willison

## 2008 Projects

- Install Elevator in Timber Lodge
- Renovate Chapel
- Lower level trim & baseboards
- Additional landscaping and sidewalks
- Work on "green" initiatives
- Boardwalk to, and sitting area at, river
- Signage & information area
- Sitting areas along trails
- Shanty Tent mattress replacement
- Renovations to upper level of office building (volunteer housing and staff space)

# Summer Camp 2007

For 27 years children and young people have gathered in the river valley at Shekinah to sing, to play games, to run, to listen to Bible stories, to learn.

This year "244 exuberant campers bounced into camp over the summer", according to a final report by camp directors Laura and Matt Pauls. They were assisted by 10 counsellors, 10 counsellors-in-training (CITs), nine Bible leaders and many volunteer kitchen staff throughout the six weeks of camp.

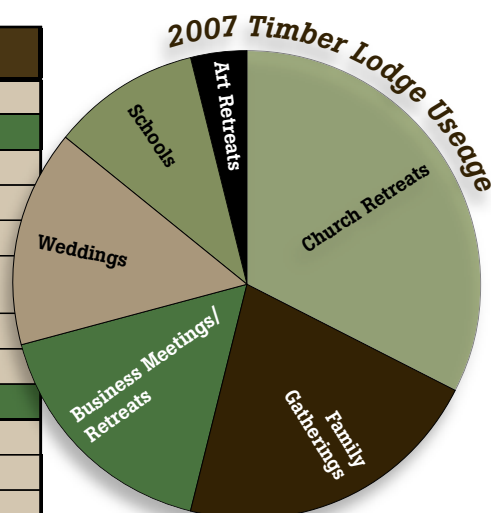
New features of the 2007 camp included an emphasis on using local produce and teaching children about good food choices. Also this year, each of the cabin groups, along with their counsellors, prepared an item for one of the meals for the whole camp. At the end of the week, campers were given the children's version of Simply in Season cookbook. This was a project sponsored by Shekinah Retreat Centre, MCC Sask. and Heifer International Canada.

Another new initiative was tree planting. "Most weeks each camper got to plant a tree," said the directors. "Beforehand we talked briefly about what's happening to the earth and how trees are important and what trees can do for Shekinah."

During Senior Teens week the emphasis was placed on the issue of refugees. Three excellent Bible leaders spoke on this topic and one day was spent in a refugee simulation based on MCC's Exile for a While model.



2007 Visitor Statistics		
	Bookings	People
<b>TIMBER LODGE</b>		
Family Gatherings	16	891
Weddings	4	619
Church Retreats	27	1343
Business Meetings/Retreats	24	695
Schools	10	422
Art Retreats	4	159
<b>CHALET</b>		
Church Retreats	10	250
Conferences	3	65
Family Gatherings	3	125
Schools	49	1922
<b>CABINS</b>		
Schools	30	600
Small groups	21	228
<b>HERMITAGE</b>		
All	15	146



Throughout the course of the past year, Shekinah Retreat Centre has seen approximately 8,000 people use its facilities, many of whom simply drive down the hill to spend some quiet time on the trails or to enjoy the excitement of tubing down Quill Hill in the winter.



# SMYO Retreats

Mennonite young people from across the province were presented with timely issues this year at both the senior and junior youth retreats held at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

At the end of January approximately 100 senior youth discussed the topic of sexuality, led by Roland Martinson, a professor at the Lutheran Seminary in Minneapolis.

"Our intention was to explore how God made each one of us beautiful and how sexuality fits into that," said Anna Rehan, SMYO coordinator. She felt it was a very successful retreat, capturing the attention of the youth and challenging them to think differently of themselves and others.

The emphasis of the junior high retreat in September was on viewing the world differently from an environmental aspect. "Creation care is definitely in the forefront of Mennonite Church thinking," said Rehan, who also felt this to be a timely and positive topic.

With the assistance of resource personnel coordinated by Lorne Friesen, Shekinah co-administrator, the 100 young people spent most of their time outside. They built and used solar ovens, they planted trees, they played games, and they participated in a Pioneer Relay.

"Young people of this age love being outside and being active," remarked SMYO's Rehan. "It was so great to have them in the environment, learning about the environment."



Rosthern Junior College students enjoy a "Snow Day".

# Volunteers

This January almost 40 volunteers logged over a thousand hours making Shekinah even better. Every year the retreat center benefits from the commitment of many, many people who willingly volunteer their time and energy to its programs and facilities. There are times when large groups of people are necessary to successfully complete annual events like our summer camp and the Adventure Challenge. And there are times when a small group put together a storage building or when one or two people quietly work at finishing the amphitheatre stage, the Timber Lodge fireplace or decorating the Timber Lodge for our

annual Christmas concert.

This January Shekinah's board and staff initiated a two week volunteer project where supporters were invited to give of their time and energy to tackle a number of projects in the Timber Lodge. Expectations are that another phase of the chapel will be completed and much painting, staining and finishing will be accomplished! As well, it is hoped that the installation of an elevator will be completed. This will allow the two main floors of the Timber Lodge, as well as the third floor chapel, to become accessible to all people.

Every person, whether giving a few hours or a few days, is sincerely appreciated by all associated with Shekinah.



# Green Trek

## A Christian Call to Creation Care

A new venture is being launched this summer which calls for people concerned about the earth to discover first hand how Christians are attempting to care for the earth.

Green Trek, sponsored by Mennonite Church Saskatchewan and its Commissions, is being held August 23 - 25, 2008 in the Saskatchewan Valley area north of Saskatoon.

During the time that participants spend together, they will be asked to bike, walk, ride a horse or drive an alternatively fuel-sourced vehicle.

They will visit alternate farming operations,

a land fill site, a recycling depot, sacred sites like Christian churches and First Nations sites, participate in a food production activity, advocate for the earth to our governments, and learn more about attempts to be ecologically responsible.

All are invited to come with their friends and to make new ones!

Care for creation is a Christian responsibility. God's blessing to humans, who reflect God's nature, included "Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge! Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air, for every living thing that moves on the face of the Earth." (*The Message*,

Eugene Peterson).

Considering current trends, it is imperative that we stop destructive practices in order to foster sustainable life-giving habits.



More information can be obtained from the Mennonite Church Saskatchewan provincial office, (306) 249-4844 or Shekinah Retreat Centre, (306) 945-4929.







The annual "Bunch of Guys" benefit is one of the area's favorite choral events.



A sleigh ride is one of the many Winter Fun Day activities.



## Shekinah Retreat Centre

### Address

Box 490  
Waldheim, Sask.  
SOK 4R0

### Phone

(306) 945-4929

### Fax

(306) 945-4928

### Email

retreat@sasktel.net

### Web

www.shekinahretreatcentre.org.

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### "New Vision" cont'd. from front

it was time to review its vision and set some long term goals and priorities for future growth and development.

In the fall of 2006, Nickel arranged and facilitated a Strategic Visioning Retreat, attended by Board, staff and supporters.

The format was designed to encourage collaboration and engage stakeholders in the visioning process.

Three major recommendations evolved from this retreat and were adopted by the SRC Board of Directors in October, 2007:

- Develop Shekinah as a Learning/Conference Centre committed to facilitating awareness, enhancing knowledge, and implementing initiatives with a targeted focus on global sustainability.
- Design a promotional strategy to enhance utilization of Shekinah's Retreat/Conference facilities.
- Actively seek collaborative partnerships internally with the MC Sask. Community and externally with organizations/agencies sharing complementary values, goals, and mandates to pursue objectives such as promotion of sustainability initiatives, development of a transformational educational curriculum, enhancement of programming, and increased utilization of facilities and services.

Shekinah Retreat Centre is committed to including an educational component in everything it does. The options are many: shopping locally, buying from area producers, recycling, using recycled materials, promoting 'green' initiatives, creating spiritual spaces, having information and library resources available for people. Shekinah is also working on developing programs for schools that incorporate environmental issues, stewardship concepts, peace and global awareness.

Above all, "Shekinah Retreat Centre's purpose is to provide opportunities for individuals to experience the presence and glory of God through discovery, reflection, interaction, community and nature. The goal of the leadership team is to facilitate the meaningful interaction of people with the Creator, the wholesome interaction of people with creation, and the interaction of people in community. Their desire to create transformational learning experiences are grounded in a faith-based understanding of how meaningful transformation occurs within the life of an individual." (*Consulting Project Final Report*, p. 80).

*Over the past 27 years Shekinah has developed into the year-round retreat centre that was originally planned for the site.*

## Skeletal Beauty on Display

A photo exhibit of night photography is now on display in the Nature Room of the Timber Lodge.

Brad Nichol, a Rosthern, SK resident, used his camera to "capture the skeletal beauty of the timber frame structure" before it was enclosed in 1999.

Brad was one of many volunteers who helped in the construction and timber raising of this impressive building. "I was kind of awestruck by the sense of space created by this place. I've never actually walked among ancient ruins, but the timber frame seemed

to possess all the elements – precision, grandeur and sacredness – of such a place," writes Nichol in his artist's statement.

He used a very slow-speed film and locked the camera shutter open in order to capture available light from the moon and the stars. "The colours – particularly the blue-greens – saturate the background against which the timbers powerfully contrast," he writes.

Nichol believes that night photography can give people a glimpse of what the human eye cannot see, and because of this, that his photographs "also hint at the greater purpose of the Timber Lodge and Shekinah in general."

The photos in this exhibit are to be included in what Shekinah hopes is a permanent collection.



# Outdoor ministry... it's what Jesus did!

## **British Columbia**

Camp Squeah  
#4-27915 Trans Canada Hwy., Hope, BC V0X 1L3  
(604) 869-5353 [www.squeah.com](http://www.squeah.com)

## **Alberta**

Camp Valaqua  
Box 339 Water Valley, AB T0M 2E0  
(403) 637-2510 [www.campvalaqua.com](http://www.campvalaqua.com)

## **Saskatchewan**

Camp Elim  
c/o 78-6th Ave. NE, Swift Current, SK S9H 2L7  
(306) 627-3339 [www.campelim.ca](http://www.campelim.ca)

Shekinah Retreat Centre  
Box 490 Waldheim, SK S0K 4R0  
(306) 945-4529 [www.shekinahretreatcentre.org](http://www.shekinahretreatcentre.org)

Youth Farm Bible Camp  
Box 636 Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0  
(306) 232-5133 [www.yfbc.ca](http://www.yfbc.ca)

## **Manitoba**

Camps with Meaning  
200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2J1  
(204) 895-CAMP(2267) [www.campswithmeaning.org](http://www.campswithmeaning.org)

Camp Assiniboia  
2220 Lido Plage Rd., Cartier, MB R4K 1A3

Camp Koinonia  
Box 312 Boissevain, MB R0K 0E0

Camp Moose Lake  
Box 38 Sprague, MB R0A 1Z0

## **Ontario**

Fraser Lake Camp  
11737 McCowan Rd. Stouffville, ON L4A 7X5  
(905) 642-2964 [www.fraserlakecamp.com](http://www.fraserlakecamp.com)

Glenbrook Day Camp  
11737 McCowan Rd., Stouffville, ON L4A 7X5  
(905) 640-2127 [www.glenbrookdaycamp.com](http://www.glenbrookdaycamp.com)

Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp and Retreat Centre  
1921 Line 37, New Hamburg, ON N3A 4B5  
(519) 625-8602 [www.hiddenacres.ca](http://www.hiddenacres.ca)

Silver Lake Mennonite Camp  
RR#1, Hepworth, ON N0H 1P0  
(519) 422-1401 [silverlake@slmc.on.ca](mailto:silverlake@slmc.on.ca) [www.slmc.on.ca](http://www.slmc.on.ca)



**Mennonite Camping Association**  
[www.mennonitecamping.org](http://www.mennonitecamping.org)