

CANADIAN MENNONITE

March 17, 2008

Volume 12 Number 6

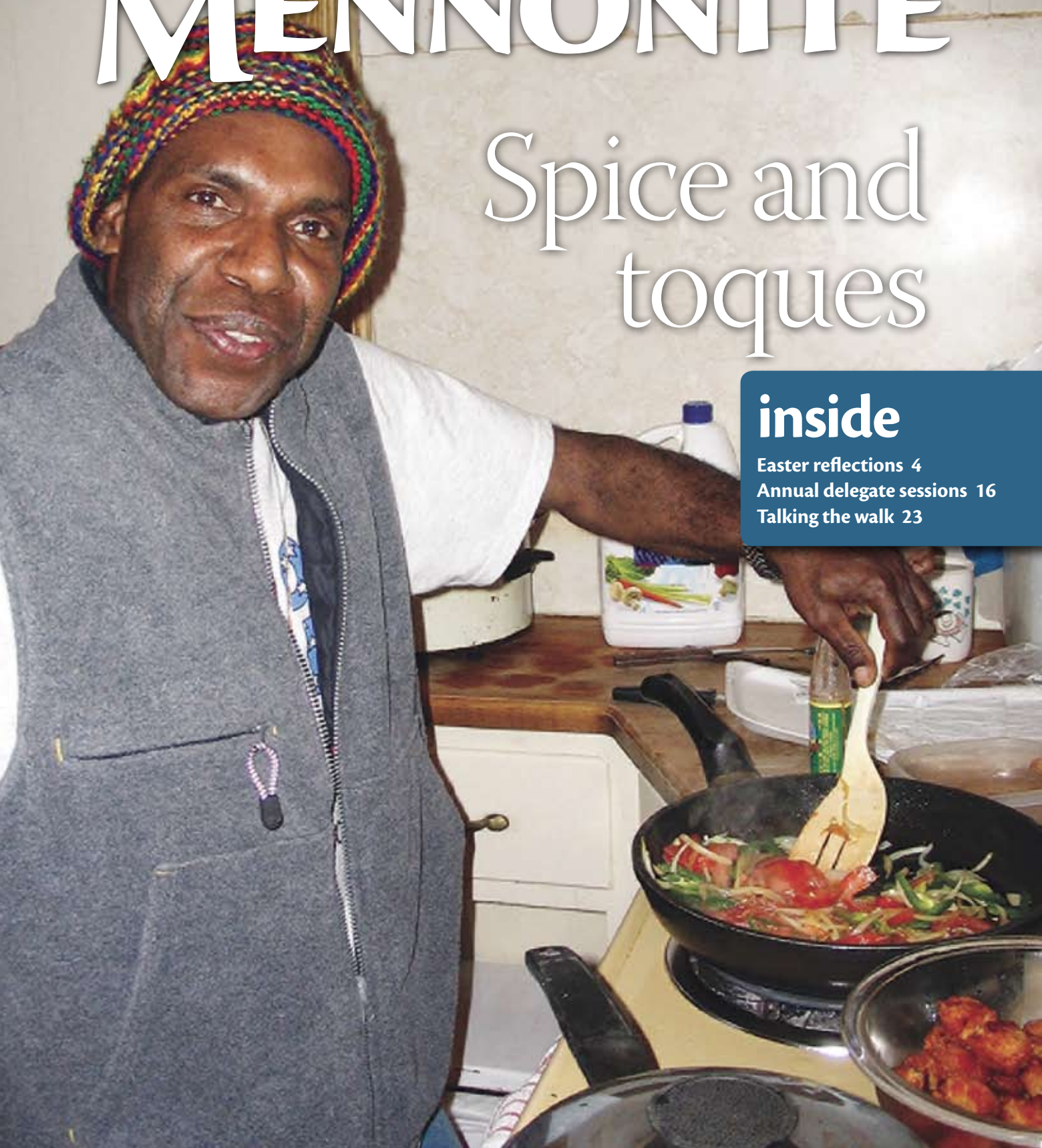
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God has redeemed you

TIM MILLER DYCK
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

I've been spending time in Deuteronomy recently, as I have been preparing to preach at the Mennonite Church Alberta delegate sessions at Tofield Mennonite Church. The text we will be exploring together is Deuteronomy 4:1-9. This is part of one of Moses' great sermons to the people of Israel.

They have come out of Egypt as escaping slaves, spent 40 years in the desert, and are now about to enter the land full of milk and honey. God, through Moses, is preparing the people for what is ahead for them.

You can sense Moses' concern, the fear he has for his people that they will get lost once again. It's not a physical lost-ness in the desert this time. His warning is that in finding a physical place of wealth and plenty, they will become spiritually lost from the God who brought them there. The danger is that they will soon see goods instead of God, and forget the latter for the former.

Moses has good reason to be worried. Deuteronomy begins as a solemn retelling of God's mighty acts on behalf of Israel, and a retelling of Israel's frequent doubting and disagreeing with God. "Surely the Lord your God has blessed you in all your undertakings; he knows your going through this great wilderness. These forty years the Lord your God has been with you; you have lacked nothing," Moses reminds the people.

But why were they in the wilderness in

the first place? They had been unwilling to enter the land as God commanded, unwilling to believe God would continue to care for them. "You rebelled against the command of the Lord your God; you grumbled in your tents and said, 'It is because the Lord hates us that he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to hand us over to the Amorites to destroy us.' . . . [I]n the wilderness, where you saw how the Lord your God carried you, just as one carries a child, all the way that you travelled until you reached this place. But in spite of this, you have no trust in the Lord your God. . . ."



What is the antidote, the immunization for the temptations ahead? It is learning and obeying God's word. "So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe." The outcome is simple: life.

But God has more in mind than just the welfare of God's people. God's care for the world is always bigger than that. What God also wants is witness to all the other nations. "You must observe [God's commands] diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!' For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is whenever we call to him?"

The word "remember" keeps coming up through Deuteronomy. Remember

that you were a slave in Egypt. Remember that the Lord your God has redeemed you. Especially at this time of Easter, we remember the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's ultimate gift of salvation to all humanity. Remember and respond.

Is it harder to be faithful to God in good times than hard times? I see Scripture pointing that way. Mennonites have a long history of coming from places of persecution, violence and terror. Some of those places were Russia, Switzerland and Austria; Laos and Thailand; Ethiopia and Sudan. We came with God to this country, and most of us have found plenty in terms of material wealth, much more than what we left behind. But Moses' warning and his remedy applies just as much to us as it applied to those Israelites.

Photography Contest Announcement

As part of our 10th anniversary year, the magazine is launching a photography contest. From now through June 23, the photographers in our readership are invited to submit their work. Photos can be entered in either of our two theme areas: caring for God's creation and young adults in our churches (based on two of the Abbotsford 2007 assembly statements). Photos can be submitted electronically at our Flickr *Canadian Mennonite* group photo pool, by e-mail or by postal mail to our office. We are restricting entries to amateur photographers, and there is no entry fee. The winning photographers for each theme will receive a framed copy of their photo and a \$100 donation to their church, and all the top entries will be published either in print or online by us. Winners and finalists will be announced at the upcoming national church assembly in July. More details are on our website.

It will be fun and creative—enjoy!

ABOUT THE COVER:

John Meage from Indonesia cooks up a hot and spicy chicken dish for the potluck supper at the Mennonite Central Committee's International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP) mid-year conference held in February at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

PHOTO: BARB DRAPER, CANADIAN MENNONITE

Circulation: Please contact Lisa Jacky toll-free at 1-800-378-2524 ext. 221 or at office@canadianmennonite.org for subscriptions and address changes. Subscriptions can also be ordered at our web site. Postmaster: Send returns to head office. ISSN 1480-042X

We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Government of Canada through the Publications Assistance Program toward our mailing costs (PAP Reg. No. 09613, Agreement No. 40063104).

Canada

CANADIAN MENNONITE

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General submission address: submit@canadianmennonite.org

Letters to the Editor: letters@canadianmennonite.org

Calendar announcements: calendar@canadianmennonite.org

Milestones announcements: milestones@canadianmennonite.org

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

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

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

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Electronic Delivery

All subscribers can get the complete contents of *Canadian Mennonite* delivered free by e-mail or view selected articles online. For either option, visit our website at canadianmennonite.org. The March 31 issue will be posted by March 27.

GOOD FRIDAY

God loves that much

BY DAVID W. SHENK

A Muslim imam explained, “There is nothing surprising in Islam, for Islam is the religion of the natural man.”

“May I respond?” I asked. “That might be true of Islam, but the gospel is an astonishing surprise. God has entered history in Jesus the Messiah. He was arrested, flogged, mocked and put on a cross. On that cross the hate and rebellion of all humanity crashed upon Jesus, who is God with us, and as he died he forgave!”

The imam objected, “But God cannot love that much!”

Like the imam, people from religions around the world are surprised about the cross. I hear comments from people from non-Christian traditions about their surprise when they meet the good news of Jesus crucified and risen:

- **Jesus suffers with us.** Refugees from Darfur, Sudan, invited me to worship with them in a mud and wattle shelter. This Muslim-background congregation of 150 was mostly widows and their children. Tears of gratefulness wet cheeks as they heard of Jesus, who joins with them in their suffering as comforter and Saviour, for he also suffered tragic injustice and death on the cross.

- **Jesus died for my sin.** When we were enjoying goat steak in the home of an aged Tanzanian Mennonite bishop, he said, “David, never forget this. No thought has ever entered my soul more amazing than this: ‘Jesus Christ, God’s Son, has died for my sins. His blood cleanses me and I am forgiven!’” This truth was at the soul of the East Africa Revival Fellowship.

- **The cross reconciles.** The East African revivalists were nicknamed the People of the Lamb, for they joined with Jesus in the reconciling suffering of the cross. When intertribal wars came to Rwanda and the Mau Mau war for independence in Kenya, the People of the Lamb embraced reconciliation and refused to engage in the violence.

“Why did you not strike back and defend yourself?” I

From a lifetime of engagement with other religions, David W. Shenk, global consultant with Eastern Mennonite Missions, reflects on the Lamb of God



asked a revivalist whose face was scarred from knife slashes by Mau Mau warriors who attacked him.

He responded, "In our African traditional religions when, in the presence of the ancestors, we ate the lamb of the covenant sacrifice together with our enemies with whom we sought reconciliation, we could never again do violence against each other. How much more so

when we partake of the blood and flesh of the Lamb of God in the communion service, can we never again do violence against anyone for whom Christ has died."

• **Reconciliation demands brokenness.** The revivalists insisted that the way of the cross is to serve one another in brokenness. African chiefs rule from the top; however, Jesus Christ came down and

humbled himself even to the ignominy of the cross. The cross is a low door—we can only enter the door as we bow in submission to one another following the example of Jesus (Philippians 2:1-11).

• **We forgive as Jesus forgave.** At a revivalist convention in East Africa, a former Mau Mau freedom fighter stood and turned to a woman in the audience. He confessed, "I am the warrior who killed your husband." With tears she arose and responded, "Because of Jesus I forgive you; in fact, I forgave you the day you killed him."

In Solo, Indonesia, where I recently met the local Hizbollah commander (unaffiliated with a group of similar name in the Middle East), he explained that their mission is to kill their enemies and defend Islam.

I responded, "When we kill our enemies, do we not make more enemies? Jesus shows another way—to make peace with, and forgive, the enemy."

Then I gave him a copy of the book I co-authored, *A Muslim and a Christian in Dialogue*. The commander broke down and wept. After regaining composure he said, "This book is showing us another way of peacemaking as we respectfully share our faiths with one another."

• **We are forgiven.** "Why are Buddhists in South Korea coming to Christ?" I asked Paul Yongi Choo, who leads a congregation of 800,000 members in Seoul.

"In Buddhism, the law of Karma excludes any forgiveness. In Christ crucified, we receive forgiveness of sin,"

he explained. (The law of karma is also central to the Hindu objection to forgiveness. The deeds you do determine your destiny; forgiveness is impossible, for it would destroy the laws of destiny.)

When flying into Seoul, I saw red neon crosses across the city. They were a witness of the forgiveness experienced in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus. That Sunday I heard Yongi Choo preach to upwards of a million people. His message: "We are sinners. We need forgiveness and redemption. Christ is the substitutionary sacrifice for our sins. Receive the gift of forgiveness he offers. Through the power of the Spirit of God, live in obedience to Jesus."

Many took expansive notes as he preached, and at the invitation scores

my work!"

• **Jesus is the Lamb of God.** I asked a former Muslim in Khartoum, "Why have you become a Christian?"

He responded, "A friend gave me the Gospel of John. In the first chapter I read, 'Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!' (John 1:29). Immediately I thought of the millions of animals we Muslims sacrifice every year at the feast of sacrifice. These sacrifices commemorate that God ransomed a son of Abraham by providing 'a tremendous sacrifice' (Quran 37:107). Then I realized that these sacrifices are a sign pointing to Jesus, who is the Lamb of God."

"Who explained that to you?" I asked.

"The Holy Spirit!" he said.

• **In Jesus crucified we are justified.**

himself enters the courtroom to take our place, then we are free! In Christ, God has entered the courtroom, and 'suffered for sins, the just for the unjust'" (I Peter 3:18, KJV).

There was a minute of profound silence as the congregation contemplated the gift of justification that Christ offers.

• **Jesus redeems and resurrects the ancestors.** An African pastor explained, "Africans are concerned about the well-being of the ancestors. When Christ was crucified, many dead arose and walked the streets of Jerusalem (Matthew 27:52-53). This is a sign that Jesus went into the realms of the ancestors and took those whose hearts were turned toward God with him into glory (Ephesians 3:8-10; I Peter 3:19). In the resurrection we will join them!"

The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8) stands in the centre of the throne of God. That is the power centre of the universe. God gives the Lamb the book of history, because "you were slain and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation" (Revelation 5:9). All the angels and creatures of heaven and earth join in loud songs of joy, for the Lamb is worthy!

The Lamb is the central event of history and the cosmos. Let us never cease to be amazed at the wonder of it all. Let us rejoice with the choirs of heaven for the Lamb is worthy of our full and ultimate loyalty! ☼

Jesus was sacrificed on a pole, thereby exposing the death-giving powers of the nature gods, but he has triumphed over these gods in his resurrection.

responded.

• **Jesus has triumphed over the nature gods.** In the jungles of West Kalimantan, a Dyak chief told me, "We used to be afraid of singing birds for they were the omens of the nature gods. We sacrificed pigs and put them on poles to appease gods. Jesus was sacrificed on a pole, thereby exposing the death-giving powers of the nature gods, but he has triumphed over these gods in his resurrection. Now it is much easier being a chief. I just pray and plan and go about

Another Muslim explained his decision to become a Christian with one word, "Justification."

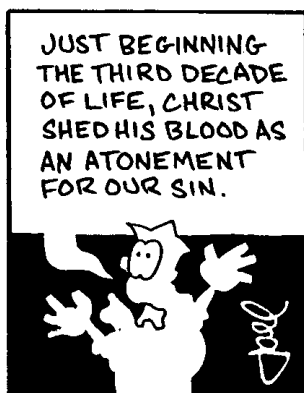
In Islam there is a set of scales weighing good and bad deeds. We can never know that the good outweighs the bad.

"Jesus has taken our place, and so the scales are 'kaput,'" we shared with a Muslim congregation, but the imam reminded us, "In court each person must bear his own punishment; there can be no substitution."

We responded, "However, if the judge



Pontius' Puddle



EASTER SUNDAY

Surprised by life

BY MARK VON KAMPEN

"[S]he turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn't know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away'"

JOHN 20:14-15.

Has it ever struck you as strange that the resurrection came as such a surprise to those who first encountered the risen Christ? Prior to his death, Jesus had prepared his followers that he would suffer, die and be raised again to life. They had seen Jesus heal the sick. They had seen him quiet a storm, give sight to the blind and even revive the dead. Yet none of them seemed to expect the resurrection.

Mary Magdalene, especially in John's Gospel account of the empty tomb, seemed to have a particularly difficult time grasping the idea that Jesus was alive. She went to the tomb, presumably to grieve and to anoint the dead body of her lord. When she found the stone rolled away, she didn't praise God and say, "Hallelujah my Lord is alive." No, she ran in horror to tell her friends that his body had been stolen. Mary had gone to the tomb looking for death, not life.

When she

returned to the empty tomb and was greeted by two angels, she again insisted that someone had taken his body. Even when her risen Lord stood right in front of her, Mary couldn't recognize him. Supposing him to be the gardener, she asked if he had been the one who had removed the dead body from the tomb. Mary had come to the tomb so intent on finding death and preserving a dead body that she couldn't recognize life even when it cast its loving gaze upon her.

One of the fundamental questions that this text raises for the church and us as individual Christians is: What are we expecting to find as we approach the open tomb this Easter?

A few years ago, I attended the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Zimbabwe. It was an experience that affected me in a profound way. I think I've always known in my head that while the numerical growth of the Mennonite Church in North America and Europe is in decline, it's exploding in Asia,

In Africa ... the Christians seem to have high expectations of God and the church.

Africa and South America. It's one thing to know something, though, and quite another thing to experience it.

While at the assembly, I met people from all over the world and remember chatting with a fellow from Germany. We wondered

together about the growth of the church in the Third World and its decline in Europe and North America. My German friend made the observation that there was something very different in the way people look at the church and faith in his country compared to what he was witnessing in Africa.

In Africa, he said, the Christians seem to have high expectations of God and the church. God is seen as a living provider and sustainer in every facet of life, and the church is seen as God's living instrument through which faith is nurtured, lived out and made real in the world.

FLOWER PHOTOS BY ROSS W. MUIR



In contrast, he commented that with all the affluence in Europe people don't really need God—or so they think—and so they don't expect much of God. God is pretty much dead to them. As for the church, he went on to say that they preserve it like its some kind of artifact. There are beautiful cathedrals where tourists stream to take pictures and buy postcards, but they are like museums, places where people preserve something that once was.

While he was painting a picture with

What might be the things in our own lives that keep us from recognizing the presence of the living Christ in our midst?

broad strokes, it made me wonder if those of us in the developed world who consider the church as the body of Christ see it as a corpse or do we see it as a living body, constantly having new life breathed into it by the mysterious and awesome power of God?

Do we look at the church fearfully, anxiously and sentimentally as a body that needs to be preserved to look like it used to? Or do we look at the church with wonder and awe as a living, breathing, changing and marvellously unpredictable body?

Do we see our purpose as a church to be maintaining what we've created, re-enacting what we've done, reliving what we've experienced and enshrining all these things? Or do we see our purpose as nurturing believers towards following a living Lord, ministering to human beings with love and compassion, and expressing in all that we do the meaning of the good news that Jesus is alive—actively inviting others to become followers of the risen Christ and participants in his vibrant, living, changing body, the church?

Christ's body couldn't be contained by the tomb. And Christ's body—the church—can never be contained by our anxious efforts to preserve it. Mary went to the tomb expecting to find death, but she was surprised by life! Joy triumphed over sorrow.

What about us as individual believers? As you think about Christ in your own life, what are you looking for? What are you expecting to find?

Mary's inability to recognize Jesus suggests that if we're so set on looking for a corpse, we'll find it difficult to experience our risen Lord. If we're so focused on death and grief, it's difficult to see life and joy.

This John 20 passage raises the question for each of us: What might be the things in our own lives

that keep us from recognizing the presence of the living Christ in our midst? Are we, like Mary, so overwhelmed with grief, with losses, with broken dreams or dashed hopes, that we are unable to see signs of grace and new life?

Sometimes we have a tendency to cling to our grief, to our broken hearts, to our childhood traumas, to our bad choices, even to our sins and our sorrows. Sometimes we cling to these so tightly because they've become all that we know.



They're familiar to us. They're what we expect. In a strange sort of way we even start to take comfort in them and they become what we think we want.

Mary came looking for a body, but she encountered a living, risen Saviour. She figured that if she could just find the corpse that she'd gone looking for, she would be satisfied. But God gave her so much more!

The empty tomb invites us to give up what we think we want the most, in exchange for what God wants to give us. It invites us to look beyond the doom and gloom in our lives that compete for all our attention and energy. It invites us to let go of our fixation on the hurts, the disappointments, the grief, the sins, fears and the anxieties of our lives enough to recognize the risen Lord standing there with us offering us new life, new beginnings and new possibilities in him. ❧

Mark von Kampen is a chaplain with Inter-Mennonite Chaplaincy Association and associate minister of First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.



/// For discussion

1. David Shenk says that "people from religions around the world are surprised about the cross." What makes the cross so surprising for them? Why might North American Christians have more trouble understanding the meaning of the cross?
2. The East Africa revival taught that the way of the cross means serving one another in brokenness and it means forgiving others. Are humility and forgiveness traits we are taught to strive toward? Do Old Order Mennonites and Amish do a better job than we do?
3. Mark von Kampen observes that Africans tend to see the church as a living instrument of God, while Europeans see the church as something old that needs to be preserved. Is this observation accurate? Do North Americans perceive the church more as a dusty museum or more as a living body?
4. What are the signs that a church is alive? What makes an alive church attractive? Does the definition of "alive" vary from person to person?

VIEWPOINTS

/// Readers write

We welcome your comments and publish most letters sent by subscribers intended for publication. Respecting our theology of the priesthood of all believers and of the importance of the faith community discernment process, this section is a largely open forum for the sharing of views. Letters are the opinion of the writer only—publication does not mean endorsement by the magazine or the church. Letters should be brief and address issues rather than individuals.

Please send letters to be considered for publication to letters@canadianmennonite.org or by postal mail or fax, marked "Attn: Letter to the Editor" (our address is on page 3). Letters should include the author's contact information and mailing address. Letters are edited for length, style and adherence to editorial guidelines.

✉ Mennonites must quit paying for Canada to go to war

I HAVE BEEN doing some thinking and praying about what "extending the peace of Jesus Christ" means and how it relates to our paying for war. When my forefathers came to this country, they were promised exemption from serving in the military. During World War II, many Mennonite young men received conscientious objector (CO) status. Some applied for CO status and were refused and put in jail.

What does it mean to be a Peace Church today? There is no conscription or draft, yet wars abound and Canada participates. Our tax dollars pay for more sophisticated weapons, which kill more people with fewer soldiers. We are participants in this carnage. In a civil society, it is as much of a crime to pay someone to commit a criminal act as it is to commit the act yourself, so it appears to me that paying someone to kill for me is just as wrong as doing the killing myself.

I believe that the Mennonite Church has the obligation to speak out against war and to refuse to pay for it. I appreciate the letter that our leaders have written to the government on this issue ("Church leaders send military letter . . ." May 14, 2007, page 16), but is that enough? What if five members from each congregation in Mennonite Church Canada were to withhold 8 percent of their federal income tax—that portion of our income tax used to fund military expenditures—and write letters to our government officials and newspapers explaining our action? I think our government would be astounded. At the same time, we could voice our support for the proposed Bill C-460, the Conscientious Objection Act. Once this ball got rolling in our churches, it could snowball.

If we as Mennonite Church Canada claim to be a Peace Church, we should put our words into actions.

BENNO BARG, KITCHENER, ONT.

✉ Letter telling B.C. churches to leave found distressing

I FOUND THE letter regarding the four Mennonite Church B.C. congregations that have not signed the covenant document of that provincial conference from Jake Rempel of Winnipeg distressing to say the least ("Let dissenting B.C. congregations 'go their own way,'" Feb. 4, page 14).

I have not been pastoring with Mennonite Church Canada since 1995, but I have attempted to keep pace through online reading of *Canadian Mennonite*. While I have my own set of concerns about MC Canada, I find its spirit to be like our Lord's.

Do any of us have the insight to say, "They wouldn't be content if God himself was leading Mennonite Church Canada"? That comment and attitude is very distressing to me. My prayers regularly attend the conference and now Jake Rempel.

TOM WARNER, VINELAND, ONT.

Tom Warner is lead pastor of Vineland Mennonite Brethren Church.

✉ Non-covenanting churches need prayer and love, not abandonment

RE: "LET DISSENTING B.C. congregations go 'their own way,'" Feb. 4, page 14).

Many of us in B.C. are feeling some fatigue in the process that led to the renewal of covenant last year, and the decision by certain churches not to participate in that renewal process. Our delegate body has encouraged our executive leadership to continue to reach out to these congregations even as we begin to listen to God's stirrings among us for new missional efforts in Mennonite Church B.C.

We do this because our love of the many brothers and sisters who are part of these congregations is greater than our fatigue. Our hope for further efforts to expand the witness of Christ's compassionate love in B.C. with these brothers and sisters is greater than our fatigue. And our disappointment with some of the leaders of these congregations is not as great as the hope we have that a better future awaits us if we are patient in love and forbearance.

None of this is easy, and we can only forge forward in faith, believing God's Spirit is at work in all of us. Rather than invite these congregations to leave, I invite people's prayers (including letter writer Jake Rempel) for our leaders—in particular, Gerd Bartel, Karen Heidebrecht Thiessen and Garry Janzen—who give so sacrificially of their time and energy, and whose families bear a great burden as they seek to exemplify the discipleship of Christ in leadership.

WALTER BERGEN, ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

✉ Hoarding store-bought food shows a lack of trust in God

TIM MILLER DYCK refers to his mother as being taught to cook, bake and preserve in his Feb. 18 editorial, “Tempted and tested” (page 2). She was obviously taught well.

But let’s translate that to our present life. Mothers, as well as an increasing number of fathers, spend much time and money going to supermarkets. It’s all there in our western civilization; the food is cooked,

baked and preserved, all to the tune of our currency—money. One word stands out for me: hoarding.

For the past few years I have tried to buy bi-monthly, or even weekly, getting only enough to last for a week or two. I try not to buy staples until the shelves or freezer are empty of those items, nor other goods that will just sit on my shelves. Some might say this is hand-to-mouth living. But do we really trust God for our future as well as day-to-day?

HILDEGARD THIESSEN, ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Sinner and a movie

PHIL WAGLER

The arts have a powerful way of helping us know each other. They wrestle with the human condition frankly, often leaving us very uneasy. In fact, the arts may do a better job of defining sin than the church these days, what with our tendency to think that everything should have a happy ending in this world.

The Academy Awards presented five films for best picture this year. The show’s host, Jon Stewart, noted that the nominees—save one comedy about a teenage mother—were rather psychotic in nature. “Tonight we look beyond the

dark days to focus on this year’s plate of psychopathic killer movies,” Stewart quipped. “What happened? Does this town need a hug? All I can say is, thank God for teenage pregnancy!”

Hollywood sees the world darkly. But how is the church responding to this sarcastic cry for mercy? The church goes to two extremes: It misrepresents sin, on the one hand, and shrouds the power of redemption for a culture needing a hug, on the other.

The first—with its overemphasis on the inherent goodness of humanity—too flippantly dismisses the depths of our depravity. Sin is downplayed and explained

away as outdated or too brutal for our fragile self-esteem. The cross of Christ is merely the symbolic act of a “super-dude in sandals” who inspires us to good things, only to leave us completely distraught because, alas, we simply don’t, won’t or can’t do it.

The second extreme, with its overemphasis on our darkness and sinful acts—especially sexual misdeeds, foul language and tattoos—too flippantly



Hollywood sees the world darkly. But how is the church responding to this sarcastic cry for mercy?

degrades, dismisses and judges people by mere appearances. The cross of Christ becomes a formula or weapon over against the lives of those who aren’t like us.

Both extremes tend to be knee-jerk reactions to the other—not a good foundation for sound biblical reflection.

Sadly, both miss the same mark. They leave redemption in our failing hands, thinking a good pep talk or talking down to can raise us from the dead. Both keep us shackled to ourselves and ultimately without hope, as we carry a weight even our ancestors were unable to bear. Both extremes deal in externals and offer the same thing—a diagnosis of our problem

that simply requires we read the right literature and abide by a new regimen until the symptoms of our pathology pass. This is a bogus gospel. This is not good news.

This age in need of a hug requires we speak clearly about sin as our individual and collective condition. Sin is the human disease and we are without natural immunity. It is our inevitable bent to choose our way and justify it at all costs, even with religion. It shows up in sins we can’t outgrow—like pimples on an adolescent—in hidden and visible actions, attitudes and asinine self-centred, idolatrous choices.

We ache to be free from sins that hound the race, but we need to be redeemed from sin first. That this is possible in Christ’s cross has always been the

hope-filled message of the gospel that has embraced sinners in every age. And this age, like every one before it, requires a people speaking with honest courage: “We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin” (Romans 6:6-7).

So, while the movies keep crying out, may our communities be living pictures of redeemed art.

Phil Wagler, a pastor in Zurich, Ont., still marvels at the wonder of redemption (phil_wagler@yahoo.ca).

✉ Spirituality of sporting competition needs further consideration

INTERESTINGLY, THE CBC radio program, *Tapestry*, produced a special on spirituality and sports the same week as the *Canadian Mennonite* feature on “Sainthood & sports.” The *Tapestry* program offered some sincere insights into how participation in sports can be a deeply spiritual experience. Bruce Kidd, the guest speaker, mentioned how specific moments of competition were so deep and rich that he considered them spiritual moments.

I, too, can recall moments of competition, both winning and losing, in which I felt the presence of God. A few of these moments include sitting with long-time teammates after losing a big game, feeling God’s strength when I thought I couldn’t continue, and celebrating a miraculous victory our team thought was impossible.

These types of moments are rarely talked about from a spiritual perspective and perhaps we need to bring them into our discussions on spiritual matters. The spirituality of sports goes well beyond the often cited benefits of discipline, teamwork and commitment.

NEW ORDER VOICE

Love in the global village

WILL BRAUN

Our heritage was shaped largely in quiet, industrious villages, but now we Mennonites have emerged into a noisy, complicated global village. And while our history—at least in the case of Mennonites with a European heritage—has been one of withdrawal from the world, our response to our new village is openness. We have adopted the bells and whistles of the global economy. We have also been open to the problems of the world and have spread out to needy areas to help. The global village is about interconnectedness and we are connected. Withdrawal is a bygone notion.

I have inherited something of the impulse to spread out. Two such ventures, both with Mennonite Central Committee, have shaped how I understand what it means to follow Christ in an interconnected world. One journey took me to the other end of the pipeline that supplies some of our continent’s oil. The other took me to the other end of the transmission line that carries the electricity I have used for most of my life.

Few experiences have been more formative for me than seeing where some of the products I consume come from and meeting the people who live there. In both cases—Little Buffalo, Alta., and

Cross Lake, Man.—I found suffering, wonderful people and a few lessons about love in the global village:

1. A direct link exists between my wealth and the poverty of others. In these cases the links were tangible—the pipeline and the transmission line, which carry wealth southward. I learned that in many cases wealth and poverty are two sides of the same equation. Poverty is often created by a system that works really well for us and really poorly for others. Their disadvantage is our advantage. The same essential dynamic applies to countless products of the global econ-



The global village is about interconnectedness and we are connected. Withdrawal is a bygone notion.

omy. Interconnection often means exploitation.

2. These economic relationships have a spiritual dimension. I saw how profoundly oil development and hydroelectric dams affected the lives of my new friends and I could only conclude that if it affected their spirits, then my consumption at the other end must have a corrosive effect on my spirit. What we consume means something for our souls, even if we are not aware of the impacts of

what we buy.

3. If we extract ourselves from harmful connections, we experience something new of God’s love. This is the crux for me. Our Scriptures say that “no one has ever seen God, but if we love one another God lives in us and God’s love is perfected in us” (I John 4:12). In our interconnected world, refusing participation in harmful economic relationships is a key part of loving others and participating in God’s love. This brings us to a revived Mennonite sense of withdrawal. Practically, this can mean consuming less, spending money at businesses we know to be respectful, and working to make economies more fair.

Some will argue that not buying bananas or sweatshop clothes just means people on the other end will be worse off than they are now. While this raises important questions about how best to make the economy fair, an argument that offers no better solution than ongoing

participation in a system that works really well for us and provides meagre survival for others seems, at best, awkward.

4. The truth has the power to liberate. Wrapping our heads around economic relationships is more complicated than the usual charity model in which we are the noble helpers. But we can trust that the truth will set us free to experience more of God’s love.

Will Braun lives in Winnipeg. He can be reached at editor@geezmagazine.org.

I would have liked *Canadian Mennonite* to focus more on the spirituality of participating in sports rather than dwelling mainly on the conflict with Sunday morning worship times. Perhaps you can offer us a second “Sainthood & sports” feature.

JONATHAN SCHMIDT, CALGARY, ALTA.

✉ ‘Despairing’ columnist confuses stewardship with eschatology

To say that Aiden Enns flummoxed me with his remarks on eschatology (“Awake to despair, I discover hope,” Feb. 18, page 8) would be an understatement.

Before looking at his main point, let me first contradict his assertion that “the Spirit of God” is within us all. The generalization “us all” is simply not true, whether we are speaking of Mennonites, all denominations or people as a whole. His idea reflects a monistic worldview in which God is part of everything. However, Scripture demonstrates that the relationship is covenantal; for people, this demands both divine call and creaturely choice.

I suspect Enns’ monistic theology explains his comments on eschatology, which means “doctrine of future things.” Enns is honest and tells us that “most Christian words of hope fail to console me.” This forces him to find hope in the physical creation even though he says “we’re ruined.” The problem is that Enns uses the word “eschatology” when the term “stewardship” is what fits. But stewarding creation is different than redeeming or restoring it.

To reject the Christian hope for creation means we reject its renewal outside history. As I write, many secular researchers are trying to manipulate the tree of knowledge within history. Their goal is to outwit creational law and to place the future of humanity in human hands.

Francis Crick, the co-discoverer of the DNA double helix, sees our future in migrating to distant planets. Pierre Baldi of MIT wants to use computers to sequence every dead person’s genome and re-create them via cloning. Physicists like Frank Tipler envision a far-distant future when humans will have exited from an uninhabitable Earth and will have

YOUNG PROPHETS

Working together like a hockey team

BY JOSHUA EWERT

We have just come out of a season of gift-giving and, as happens every Christmas, there are gifts we receive that are practical and those that are impractical. However, the Scripture supports not material gifts, but gifts of the spirit.

Now imagine the kingdom of God as a hockey team. I imagine most of you are familiar with the fastest game on ice. The people of God are the players, and all of them are the team’s assets.

The gifts of the Spirit are like this:

- There are minor gifts, gifts nearly everyone has, like skating or the ability to walk, talk, listen and feel.
- And then there are special gifts—gifts many people don’t have, or have to a much lesser extent. Healing or speaking in tongues are examples given in

Scripture, and on this hockey team the gifts are shown by an exceptionally hard slap shot or the ability to deke and stick-handle through a crowd of people. And a large amount of special gifts are given to the goaltender, at the expense of other gifts.



Now imagine the kingdom of God as a hockey team.

But the Spirit works like this: By embracing our talents—and contributing our unique abilities to the team or to society—the Spirit works like a backbone, making the gifts as a whole worth more than the sum of the parts. Just as a team working together will fare much better than a team where the individuals seek only to display their own talents (in

an effort to put themselves in a higher standing), the gifts of the Spirit work best when used in unity with others around them.

Do not keep your gifts to yourself, or seek to profit from them alone, because these are the gifts of the Spirit, and need also to be used with the Holy Spirit as their base, their foundation, their guide.

An arm attached to the body shows special talent from any other part of the body; however, dislocated from the body or Spirit, it is useless. Just as no part of the body is most important, no gift of the Spirit is either. Let us embrace our gifts, and serve the Lord our God with all uniqueness as a whole team, the entire

body with all its parts—as one church.

Josh Ewert graduated from Westgate Mennonite Collegiate last year and is now in his first year of general studies at Canadian Mennonite University, where he plays on the volleyball and hockey teams. Originally published online in the Charleswood Mennonite Church e-zine, Grapevine, and reprinted by permission of the author.

become immortalized as virtual software agents.

The bottom line in all schemes of physical eschatology is that humans cannot change the outcome of the universe's death. We can reduce, reuse and recycle; we can become Amish; we can live in voluntary poverty below the income tax line; we can do lots of lifestyle things that are good stewardship. But not one of them will change the final outcome.

This is why the Christian hope will never be outdated, since only it can change the final outcome.

LAWRENCE E. BURKHOLDER, GORMLEY, ONT.

✉ Magazine lauded for taking environmental concerns seriously

I FULLY SUPPORT the decision of *Canadian Mennonite* to engage its readers in a prolonged discussion about the environmental revolution that is reaching into every area of the planet. I look forward to hearing from Paul Fieguth ("Living Within Limits" column) and others who have special insights into the dilemma we are facing.

Let's examine carefully the harsh realities included in the data presented by the global scientific community while at the same time listening for the voices of change that will inspire us to find personal and collective solutions to living within our ecological limits.

ROGER BAER, WATERLOO, ONT.

Corrections

Author Todd Schiedel was misidentified in the cutline accompanying the photograph of the launch of the special Fall 2007 issue of *Rhubarb* (Feb. 18, page 27). The issue was also incorrectly subtitled; it should have been "Words and Images from Ontario."

The MC Canada 2009 youth assembly will be held in Caronport, Sask.; incorrect information appeared in Anna Rehan's From Our Leaders column ("Worship is more than singing," Feb. 18, page 7).

Canadian Mennonite regrets the errors.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Bergen—Arianna Tanisha (b. Jan. 30, 2008), to Roselinde and Torsten Bergen, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Dyck—Reuben Jacob (b. Feb. 21, 2008), to David Dyck and Sandra Wiebe, Hope Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Erb—Oliver Roger (b. Jan. 17, 2008), to Leanne Baer and David Erb, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Heinrichs—Luke Anthony (b. Feb. 23, 2008), to Lisa and Robert Heinrichs, Langley Mennonite, B.C.

Janzen—Bradley Peter (b. Feb. 9, 2008), to Jeanette and Nathan Janzen, Eigenheim Mennonite, Rosthern, Sask.

Quapp—Mathom Asegid Regassa (b. May 27, 2003; adopted Dec. 31, 2007) by Roma Quapp, Ottawa Mennonite, Ont.

Ratcliff—Lauren Maria (b. Feb. 19, 2008), to Arlon and Heather Ratcliff, Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver, B.C.

Schwartzentruber—Jackson Emmanuel Osborne (b. Feb. 13, 2008), to Darren and Tammy Schwartzentruber, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Siemens—Natalia Carmaria (b. Jan. 26, 2008), to Corinna and Henry Siemens, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Baptisms

Josh Dyck, Jaycee Sabapathy—Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Alta., Dec. 2, 2007.

Stuart Blyde—Zurich Mennonite, Ont., Feb. 10, 2008.

Marriages

Green/Hood—Nick Green and Andrea Hood, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., in Plattsville Ont., Feb. 22, 2008.

Lizotte/Titterton—Jean-Michel Lizotte and Jessica Titterton, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Feb. 2, 2008.

Martens/Sawatzky—Jeremy Martens and Tamara Sawatzky, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Alta., Dec. 29, 2007.

Deaths

Bender—Ervin, 84 (b. Sept. 25, 1923; d. Feb. 11, 2008), Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Demke—Walter, 76 (d. Feb. 23, 2008), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Dyck—Henry Jacob, 80 (b. March 22, 1927; d. Feb. 29, 2008), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Eby—Claire, 84 (b. May 14, 1923; d. Feb. 21, 2008), North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

Elias—Katharina (Tina), 98 (d. Feb. 25, 2008), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Leis—Annie, 87 (d. Feb. 24, 2008), Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.

Neufeld—Katarina, 87 (b. May 30, 1921; d. Jan. 9, 2008), Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Pankratz—Bill, 71 (d. Feb. 20, 2008), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones

announcements within four months of the event.

Please send Milestones announcements by e-mail to milestones@canadianmennonite.org, including the congregation name and location. When sending death notices, please include birth date and last name at birth if available.

LIVING WITHIN LIMITS: PART III

Convenient conservation no longer the answer

PAUL FIEGUTH

Oil is essentially 200 million years of ancient solar energy, approximately half of which we have used up in the last hundred years. We are, therefore, using oil and natural gas roughly two million times faster than they formed. These fossil fuels that we flagrantly consume are a one-time gift.

And what are we doing with this gift? Sitting around in traffic jams, flying around the world complaining about jet lag, and manufacturing (then throwing out) untold mountains of plastic junk. Won't the future be proud of us!

There are up to three trillion barrels of oil remaining, so limits to oil might not seem pressing. However, people went after the easiest energy first; therefore, the energy remaining to us and future generations is more difficult, more dangerous and more expensive to obtain.

As we go after more difficult sources of energy—polar oil, deep-ocean oil, tar sands, ethanol—an ever-larger fraction of the energy coming out of the ground is required to get this energy. For example: 100 years ago a Texas gusher needed perhaps 1 percent of the oil energy to get the oil, while some modern deep water oil and tar sands extraction methods use up between 30 percent and 70 percent of the oil's energy to get the oil out.

Whether oil makes sense to extract economically depends on some economist's assumptions; however, the critical question is whether oil makes sense to extract energetically. Once it takes more than a barrel of oil to explore, drill, pump and refine a barrel of oil, then that barrel of oil will stay in the ground!

The world currently uses 85 million barrels of oil, including ethanol and biodiesel, per day. While virtually all newspaper articles talk about oil

reserves, what matters terribly is energy flow—whether 85 million barrels can be pumped today and again tomorrow.

That a lot of oil remains in the ground is clear. Whether we can maintain—and increase—this rate of flow is much less clear. There are many indications that the rate of oil flow will peak sometime in the relatively near future. Clever new approaches to drilling allow for high flow rates, but reservoir depletion can be quite sudden, as has been seen in England's North Sea, Mexico and Yemen. And even famous fields in Saudi Arabia are producing increasing amounts of water



What moral exception did God grant to North Americans regarding energy profligacy?

in the oil, signalling a limit to remaining production there.

Still, a barrel of oil contains a huge amount of energy, as much as what a single person could do in about 14,000 hours of physical labour. Therefore, a single oil well is a prodigious source of energy, making it worthwhile to create the infrastructure to produce, transport and refine its product. An oil reservoir represents high-density, concentrated energy.

In contrast, solar and wind power, and crop-based ethanol, which are good environmental alternatives, are all very geographically widespread, low-density forms of energy. Enough solar energy falls on the planet every 20 minutes to provide all the world's energy needs for a year, but solar—and wind—power are expensive to collect, concentrate and distribute. This does not mean that solar and wind are bad ideas, though.

Our current reliance on oil and natural gas is clear. They are high-density, easily

transported and energetically efficient, and have been available at high rates of flow. However, old oil reservoirs are producing at lower rates and less new oil is being discovered. And yet we assume the indefinite availability of oil.

In our industrialized world, energy is needed for everything we do: mining raw resources, producing fertilizer to grow our food, keeping Internet servers running, transporting goods. Indeed, the amount of oil North Americans are currently consuming is shocking (*see chart below*). We have, as a society, deluded ourselves into thinking it is "reasonable" to use more than 35 times as much oil as the average Indian and nearly six times as much energy as the world average.

What moral exception did God grant to North Americans regarding energy profligacy?

Given how dependent our society is on cheap energy, what will we do as energy limits are encountered? Will we

allow countries to be invaded for their resources? Will we allow the poor to be priced out of the energy market and have their societies fall? Will we allow the poor to starve and then use their food as our energy?

Convenient conservation—like changing our light bulbs—will not address these questions. We will need real, substantial change. ☞

Selected Countries	Oil per Capita (barrels/year)
Canada	25.0
United States	24.0
Germany	11.9
France	11.7
China	1.8
India	0.7
World	4.2

VIEWPOINT

How to pray for our politicians

BRICE BALMER

The worship service was deeply meaningful and the sermon spoke of God's love for us, not only in life but beyond. The liturgy and scriptures helped me reflect on my life and my week. Good hymns carried our worship and reflection forward.

Then we came to the prayers of the people. The leader led out with a concern. Individuals verbally prayed for the world; others remembered Mennonite Central Committee, Darfur and Israel/Palestine; participants voiced prayers for the church and its members; some mentioned our conference and national church; specific individuals were named out loud.

The worship leader then asked us to remember our political leaders, but no one mentioned any political leaders or concerns. This had been a significant week for national, provincial and regional governments. Silently I remembered Stephen, Karen, Andrew, Dalton, Elizabeth, John, Deb, Ken, Sean and Carl, but since I was a guest at church, I didn't say anything. Yet I wondered, don't people know politicians well enough to pray for them?

My faith has taken me into the world of politics—not as a politician but as an advocate—especially on poverty and urban community issues. In the process of working with politicians and other community leaders, I have learned that most of them have become involved in politics because of deep concerns about the quality of life in our land. Although the media often portrays elected leaders as power-hungry and self-serving, I have found most are very intelligent and very concerned about their riding, their city,

their province and their country. Ethical and moral issues are important to them and we have had some very interesting conversations.

In many conversations, I hear politicians negatively stereotyped. I've been asked to run for elected office myself, but have refused, stating, "It's difficult enough to be a religious leader, let alone a politician." I hope readers don't see that as fuel for negativity. A friend of mine has been a city alderman and also works with male sex offenders; he often wonders whether he can mention either when introducing himself.

Knowing the church members I worshipped with that Sunday, I'm certain

'It's difficult enough to be a religious leader, let alone a politician.'

many know politicians from our area. Most of these church members read the papers and listen to the news, so they would know the difficult predicaments that politicians must solve.

How might we pray for them? Elected politicians need our moral support as much as discussions about ethical and political challenges.

I pray for our politicians by their first names. It seems appropriate since they are made in the image of God, as we all are.

Second, I remember the issues of the week or month. Everyone needs God's guidance as we discern what is moral, ethical and sometimes also practical. Are we open to the "still small voice of God" in the midst of our busy lives and noisy world?

Next, I confess that I am unable to respond to every important issue. More information comes to me than I can handle through the media, our Mennonite magazines, Internet communication and my work. Should I give dollars to advocacy organizations? Can I write a letter? Or make a telephone call? Should I read more about the issue? Am I willing to talk with friends and family or church members? Should I attend a lecture or public event? I confess that I am human and limited.

I know even more my need for guidance and God's grace. And I know that politicians are in the same position. They are not super-human, even with the help of staff in their offices. I pray that they have associates with whom they can talk honestly. Do they have a pastor or faith community where they are supported? And I wonder if I should be more avail-

able in their discernment process.

As I left worship that morning, I committed myself again to entering into the political fray as a Christian who has a faith community, who discusses issues with others, and who walks among people who yearn for justice and peace. The next time I go to church I'll say their names out loud when we pray: Stephen, Karen, Andrew, Dalton, Elizabeth, John, Deb, Ken, Sean and Carl.

Brice Balmer is secretary of the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition. He is the former chaplaincy director of House of Friendship in Kitchener, Ont.



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

From mountaintops to valleys

Annual delegate sessions celebrate moving forward

BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent
RICHMOND, B.C.

The Mennonite Church B.C. annual delegate sessions here on Feb. 23 were a time of welcoming hellos, regretful goodbyes and of looking to the future with a theme of "We're in a new place."

In his report, moderator Gerd Bartel reviewed the past year, noting that the area church in British Columbia has gone through mountaintop experiences like last May's covenant celebration, as well as valleys, when two of the congregations that did not sign the covenant voted in November to withdraw from MC B.C.

Considerable time was spent on the proposed Covenant and Follow-up Process of Reconciliation to deal with churches that chose not to sign the MC B.C. covenant.



Mennonite
Church
British
Columbia



Vancouver Vietnamese Mennonite Church was welcomed into membership of both MC B.C. and MC Canada at last month's MC B.C. annual delegate sessions in Richmond. Pictured welcoming Nhien Pham, pastor of Vancouver Vietnamese Mennonite Church, third from left, are Gerd Bartel, left, moderator of Mennonite Church B.C.; Garry Janzen, executive minister of MC B.C.; and Robert J. Suderman, general secretary of MC Canada.

While two of these—Olivet and First Mennonite Greendale—have chosen to sever ties with MC B.C., First Mennonite of Burns Lake and Abbotsford Mennonite Fellowship are still in dialogue with area church leadership within the MC B.C. family.

Uncertainty around Abbotsford Mennonite Fellowship occupied some of the discussion. The congregation currently has a difference of opinion with the MC B.C. executive about what not signing the covenant means. Church representatives questioned the assumption that the

Abbotsford church would no longer be a member of MC B.C. for not signing.

In the end, delegates adopted the Follow-up Process of Reconciliation document with an amendment to eliminate reference to the February 2009 deadline for completion of discussion. This will allow the document to continue to be used in the future.

Squeah plans approved

Committee reports were presented, ending with a detailed outline of the plans for improvements at Camp Squeah. With a building project about to start, "in a new place" will also refer to camp ministries. It has been realized for some time that Squeah's facilities could be improved to help accommodate two under-served groups: small groups of fewer than 40 people and seniors.

Squeah executive director Rob Tiessen showed a pictorial presentation of the two proposed new buildings. One will have motel-style rooms and individual bathrooms that would be especially useful for seniors. The other will be a two-storey building to be used primarily as a retreat centre for more intimate gatherings downstairs, with staff quarters upstairs.

Delegates approved a motion "that MC B.C. authorize Camp Squeah to build the presented additional accommodations project." Groundbreaking for both buildings, projected to cost between \$1.5 million

Briefly noted

Japanese Fellowship celebrates ordination

SURREY, B.C.—Takahiko Yoshiyuki was ordained on Feb. 17 at the worship service of Mennonite Japanese Christian Fellowship. Yoshiyuki has served in ministry in Surrey for almost 10 years. Mennonite Church B.C. executive minister Garry Janzen led the ordination and gave the message based on John 21:15-19. The congregation sang songs in both English and Japanese, and several people laid hands on Yoshiyuki and his wife Mari, and led in prayers of blessing. Guests joining the congregation included MC B.C. moderator Gerd Bartel, former MC B.C. conference minister Henry Kliever and his wife Nellie, Gotthard and Marie Rehler from Yarrow (B.C.) United Mennonite Church, and George and Martha Janzen and Peter and Mary Derksen, retired missionaries to Japan. The afternoon ended with an abundant potluck meal consisting of both western and Japanese food, including bean cakes and sushi. The Yoshiyuki family, which includes their three-year-old son, Seth, will return to Japan at the end of March to pastor one of the Mennonite congregations in southern Japan.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

and \$1.8 million, is planned for this spring, with a goal to complete them by summer 2009.

Steve Isaac, new pastor of United Mennonite Church in Black Creek, affirmed the ministry of church camps and said if everyone present pledged \$1,000, the project would be well underway. An impromptu offering of gifts and pledges raised just over \$20,000 to go towards the Camp Squeah building project.

Installation service

An installation service for incoming executive minister Garry Janzen and his wife Diane opened the annual delegate sessions. Janzen gave an overview of his vision for leadership in the coming years, saying he is excited by the multicultural dynamic of the church. Janzen stated that his goals included looking at creative ways to improve communication and planning to connect with every MC B.C. congregation through visits as soon as he can.

"I am not a lone ranger," he said in speaking of the shared nature of MC B.C.'s ministry. "We are different at times, but we hold a lot in common as well. Let us believe the best in each other and live it out in faithfulness."

New congregation

Continuing with the theme of newness, MC B.C. celebrated welcoming Vancouver Vietnamese Mennonite Church into membership, the first congregation in several years to join MC B.C. The group, which meets in the Sherbrooke Mennonite building, now has an attendance of about 40 people.

Looking to the future

Concluding the afternoon, the body affirmed the ministry of new and continuing committee members, commissioning them for service with the song, "Will You Let Me Be Your Servant?"

With some of the past difficulties behind them, MC B.C. executive members are now looking ahead to future opportunities in shared ministry that the meeting's theme summarized.

Said Gerd Bartel, "We're in a new place" also refers to the post-covenant part of our new vision and mission time and place." ❧

Smooth sailing ahead for Prairie conference

BY KARIN FEHDERAU
Saskatchewan Correspondent
SASKATOON, SASK.

Delegates to the 49th annual MC Saskatchewan session, held recently at First Mennonite Church here, set sail for new ports of call, as they dealt with major changes to the structure and vision of two much-loved organizations.

The area church itself completed the move to a new structure, and prison ministry Person to Person (P2P) is opening its arms to welcome other Christian groups. But both have the same goal: to accomplish more.

New vision, new structure

After a long, involved process, the task force for restructuring conference programs that was put in place two years ago gave delegates the final facts about the changes.

"We are changing the structure to fit with our vision," explained incoming moderator Renata Klassen who chaired the task force and likened the new structure to an old-fashioned sailing ship. High up in the

crow's nest, she said, will be the Vision and Wholeness group, a creation to help keep things on track. "It watches the direction of the ship," she said, adding, "[It will be] three people making sure we stay centred theologically."

At the helm will be a new council that acts as the captain of the ship. All the members of the boards and commissions will provide power to move the vessel forward, from manning the oars to swabbing the deck.

Ernie Epp, task force member, said in a later interview with *Canadian Mennonite* that the changes are to address some long-standing issues. Among other things, he said the executive

wanted to have more people involved in decision-making during the year and so that group is doubling in size. Two leadership assemblies drawing in a broad group of church leaders each year (not just board chairs) will also provide more time for deeper visioning and discernment than is available at the annual delegate sessions due to the business sessions held there.



/// Briefly noted

Peace Mennonite in Saskatoon closes its doors

SASKATOON, SASK.—Down to 15 members, the Peace Mennonite congregation that met in a school gym north of Saskatoon is now closed. A litany of closure to acknowledge its members' contributions and bid a formal farewell was held during the Feb. 22 worship service at the MC Saskatchewan delegate sessions.

Citing interviews she had with former members, church treasurer Ann Neufeld told delegates of a church that "encouraged diversity" and "welcomed new Canadians." The congregation never owned a building and met in a variety of places over its 20-year history, she noted.

In other church news, Warman Mennonite Church pastor Jay Hinds has resigned; he will complete almost three years of ministry by the time he leaves. Pastor Jack Dyck has resigned from Mount Royal Mennonite in Saskatoon and will finish there in June.

Intentional interns continue to aid small town churches in leadership transition: Ken Bechtel is at Hague Mennonite Church, and Henry Block will serve as interim pastor at Zoar Mennonite Church in Waldheim. Zion Mennonite in Swift Current is looking for a pastor.

—BY KARIN FEHDERAU

Some sadness existed over the demise of the 25-year-old Education Commission. Originally tasked with youth ministry, the commission is being eliminated in favour of a more streamlined approach. Youth minister Anna Rehan will now work with the Pastoral Leadership Commission, and remaining jobs will be picked up by other commissions or handled on a case-by-case basis.

Suggestions by delegates have encouraged short-term assignments, rather than two- to three-year commitments, to make it easier to find volunteers.

The MC Saskatchewan camps have been treated differently in the past since only one had a year-round program. Now, all three camping ministries are considered on the same footing since moving to some form of year-round programming.

P2P: New name, new members

The P2P prison ministry program moved in a different direction as more denominations—translating into more people—expand the simple visitation focus of the group. Five different church groups have been welcomed in. A new name, Restorative Justice Ministries Saskatchewan, and excitement over the greater impact came through in delegates' comments as the former P2P also arranges to work with church-based groups such as the Saskatoon Community Chaplaincy.

"This leads to increased opportunities for service," said Eric Olfert, adding the conviction that this move affords the group "potential to be better heard and in more places."

"We want to share with other Christians what we've learned," noted Pauline Steinmann, pastor of Wildwood Mennonite in Saskatoon.

Some, however, expressed concern about the change.

"Will we start pulling away and giving less because it's not completely ours anymore?" wondered Don Unger from the Hoffnungsfelder churches.

"I worry about our ownership diminishing," admitted Olfert. "Can we own this and still invite others to own it too?" he wondered.

PHOTO BY KARIN FEHDERAU



Liturgical dancing enhanced worship during MC Saskatchewan annual delegate sessions at First Mennonite Church in Saskatoon last month.

'Come, let us worship'

Gently persuasive and patiently fervent, Sven Eriksson is ending his term with MC Canada as he'd begun—as guest speaker at the MC Saskatchewan delegate sessions. Following the theme of the sessions, "Come, let us worship," Eriksson spoke about three types of worship, starting with lament. "Lament is a raw calling out to God, a desperate cry," he explained. Liturgical dancers dressed in black with only candles to light the room intensified the experience of sombre reflection.

He then spoke on worshipping in the light. "All worship is about light," he said. "God is there first; we respond to him."

Finally, in his last message to Saskatchewan Mennonites, he spoke about "worship in the in-between." Referring to living "between anxiety and hope," the sermon acknowledged a practical faith. "Our lives are lived in process; we are on a journey," he said.

The timing gave the MC Saskatchewan executive an idea for a farewell gift for Eriksson: a pair of bookends. ❧

Treat people like dirt

Delegates learn to grow faith in fallow soil

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU
Manitoba Correspondent
STEINBACH, MAN.

It's not often Mennonites are told to "treat people like dirt," but that's exactly what Ken Hawkley told the 156 delegates at the Mennonite Church Manitoba annual delegate session to do. Dressed in a straw hat and worn jeans, with a wheelbarrow of dirt in front of him, he told of how the soil needs care, management and preparation for it to bear fruit.



Hawkley

"Preparing the soil and planting seeds is what Jesus always did,"

Hawkley said. "Let's always be eager to care for and support one another, eager to see the good God has done in each one of us, eager to celebrate the harvests."

Steinbach Mennonite Church hosted the sessions on Feb. 22 and 23. Pots of newly sprouted barley, bright green with the smell and appearance of spring, greeted delegates everywhere. They were a visual reminder of the "Faith grows" theme and rekindled that longing for spring after the long cold of winter.

Young families a priority

A concern that resonated at many tables was how to keep from losing young people and young families. "How do we help families choose priorities that show church matters?" it was asked, while someone else noted, "Young people are leaving in droves. We haven't engaged them in asking why and what they need from us."

MC Manitoba recorded 94 baptisms and 154 deaths in 2007. "This ratio is too big," said one delegate. "How do we invite young families, nurture them and help them to grow in faith, especially when volunteerism

is slipping?" asked another.

Communities in the Steinbach area are growing at a rapid rate, but membership in some of the MC Manitoba congregations in that area is declining. Steinbach Mennonite has lost members to a thriving community church that holds services four times on Sundays to accommodate churchgoers. "How can we extend hospitality outside our cultural context?" asked a delegate.

Pat Polson, congregational leader at Riverton Fellowship Circle, which has been without pastoral leadership for many months, shared her great longing and hope for a minister. This small fellowship has a strong community presence, but struggles for pastoral leadership.

Congregational giving down

"Giving from congregations in 2007 was down 6.5 percent, leaving us \$100,017 short of budget," reported treasurer Tom Seals. Camp revenues also declined although an increase had been forecast. The financial picture was troubling for some.

"We need to contemplate reducing program spending or increase revenue," said executive director Edgar Rempel. At the 2007 fall delegate meeting, a congregational giving budget of \$766,045 was approved, but only \$651,008 was actually received last year.

There needs to be more interaction between the conference and the congregations, several delegates said, complaining of a disconnect between the two groups.

Doug Dyck from Covenant Mennonite Church in Winkler commented, "There are always times when people use withholding funds as a protest. We haven't done a good job of selling the positive aspects of MC Manitoba programs." He also suggested using specific projects for fundraising and having delegates come to the fall delegate sessions with a giving pledge from their churches, from which an area church budget can be calculated.

John Dyck of Sargent Mennonite Church in Winnipeg said, "We are heavily layered. If we don't address it soon, it will be our demise. We will end up with just salary and no programming."

Delegates wrestled with these challenging issues and several times expressed



need for renewed vision and for major change in the church. Afterwards, they carried away with them not only little bags of barley seeds but also the seeds of new ideas and perspectives to begin planting and nurturing in their congregations.

Henry Kliewer, who will begin his responsibilities as director of Leadership

Ministries on May 1, observed "a calling for renewed passion amidst tiredness and disillusion regarding the future of the church." He saw "a level of hope that this is the body of Christ."

The fall delegate session will be held on Oct. 23 at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. ❧

PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU



Ron Janzen of Steinbach Mennonite Church was one of 156 MC Manitoba delegates dealing with such weighty topics as the lack of young families in many congregations and decreasing area church revenues.

/// Briefly noted

MC Manitoba ministry initiatives highlighted at annual delegate session

STEINBACH, MAN.—Bob Wiebe, director of Camping Ministries, reported that David and Katherine Hogue have been hired as manager and host, respectively, for Camp Assiniboia. They will be starting this spring.

Norm Voth, director of Evangelism and Service Ministries, is planning for several young adults to attend "Refinery," a church planting program for urban multicultural settings in California. The hope is that these young adults will then be a resource to Manitoba congregations.

Voth also reported that 2008 is the 60th anniversary of Mennonite Pioneer Mission. A fall retreat for former workers is being planned, as is a history project. Other plans for celebration are being considered.

He also reported a significant need for urban aboriginal initiatives.

Harold Peters-Fransen, interim director of Leadership Ministries, said, "The next director will be a pastor to pastors. A small group has agreed to be a resource to congregations. This will give congregations more time and help than before, freeing the director to be more available to pastors."

Together with other area conferences, MC Manitoba is embarking on a study of "Pastors Thriving." It will address such questions as, "What makes pastors thrive in our congregations?" and, "Why have pastors left?"

Henry Kliewer will begin his duties as director of Leadership Ministries on May 1.

—BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

CMU PHOTO BY JOHN LONGHURST



Unlike the New England Patriots, who lost the Super Bowl, the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) women's volleyball team capped off its undefeated season by winning the annual Central Plains Athletic Conference (CPAC) championship by defeating Brandon's Assiniboine Community College on Feb. 9 in Winnipeg. Kathleen Vitt of CMU was named the tournament MVP, while Kalon Bergen and Dara Friesen were named to the women's all-star team. This is the second championship for the Blazer women, who won the inaugural Association of Christian College Athletics (ACCA) women's volleyball championship in Oklahoma City, Okla., last fall by defeating Dallas (Texas) Christian College.

PHOTO BY KAREN S. PETERS

Steinbach Mennonite Church's 493 chairs were gathered and cleaned by the Friendship Seekers fellowship group of 40-plus-year-olds during a recent service project. The chairs were vacuumed, scrubbed and polished; food particles and gum were coaxed out of their hiding places while candle wax and a variety of unidentifiable stains were removed. Roughly 53 hours of time were donated by the "chairpersons."



Rev. Werner Fast, front row centre, with his wife Marlene at his side, was honoured recently for his 50 years of ministry with Niagara United Mennonite Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. On behalf of the congregation, pastor Rudy Dirks, left, thanked Fast for his faithful service and wished him many years of joyous retirement.

Church snapshots

PHOTO



MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE ONTARIO PHOTO



On Jan. 20, outgoing Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario executive director Arli Klassen, left, was feted by staff and friends at a get-together at Breslau Mennonite Church, her family's home congregation. She is pictured with Wanda Wagler-Martin, Deborah Schlichter and Muriel Bechtel, whom she had lunch with every month; the three gave Klassen a shawl to help her remember their times together. Klassen begins her duties as executive director of MCC International in Akron, Pa., in the spring.

ch
nots

PHOTO BY KELLY KLASSEN



After 25 years of being involved in the annual Alberta Mennonite men's curling bonspiel in a variety of capacities, Herman and Irene Epp feel it's time for a change. "With the conclusion of the 2008 bonspiel, we will be turning over any further responsibilities to whoever wishes to step up to the plate and take over organizing next year's event," Herman wrote before this year's bonspiel that saw 16 teams compete. The last line on the bonspiel rule sheet states: "Have some coffee, have some pie, and have some fun." It's a worthy mantra for new volunteers to take into the next quarter-century.

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



Mary Shertz, left, professor of New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, watches as Mark Diller Harder, Josie Winterfeld and Don Penner act out the story of Zacchaus. (Of course, the tallest participant became the shortest character.) Shertz focused on the quest stories in Luke to explore how Jesus works for human fulfillment. The annual MC Eastern Canada School for Ministers was held Feb. 19-21 at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont.

'Converted' to MAX

After 140 years, Mennonite Aid Union now in the hands of MAX Canada

MAX Canada Release
BADEN, ONT.

At the end of December the four-and-a-half-year task of converting the Mennonite Aid Union (MAU) book of business to MutualAid eXchange (MAX) Canada Insurance Company was completed with the transition in British Columbia, the final province to experience "conversion."

The psychological shift in moving from a grassroots, volunteer-driven, informal organization such as MAU, to a more formal, regulated, contractually based insurance company was a major challenge for MAX Canada staff, agents and brokers as well as many former MAU members, according to Nelson Scheifele, MAU secretary-treasurer and director of constituency relations for MAX Canada.

"MAX Canada requires so much more information from people, as well as using a formalized process for determining actual replacement values for members' property," Scheifele explained. "Many people experienced this process as too intrusive and rigid."

"The fact that minimal coverage at an unrealistically low cost was no longer available was a disappointment to many," said MAX president and CEO David Wine. "There was a significant amount of 'sticker shock' for some."

Others, however, welcomed the change and felt it should have occurred much sooner, to ensure full and proper coverage for members.

"Today, we offer our members a far superior insurance policy with comprehensive coverages and proper wordings," said Dale Bauman, MAX's vice-president of sales. "People now have a much clearer understanding of what their policy covers."

MAX Canada is licenced provincially from Ontario to British Columbia, allowing it to serve an estimated 98 percent of the Anabaptist constituency in Canada. While MAU also provided coverage for the small clusters of Anabaptists in Quebec and the Maritimes, the low numbers made this economically unfeasible for MAX Canada.

With the completion of conversion to MAX Canada, MAU is being dissolved by mid-2008, after more than 140 years of history and service.

To memorialize the very important role of MAU in the history of the Canadian Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches, *We Bear the Loss Together*, a history of the Mennonite Aid Union, has been researched and written by Laureen Harder. A celebration to recognize the service of MAU to the church, along with a formal launch of the book, published by Pandora Press, will be held at the end of March. ❧

Sitting down at the global table

Mennonites join churches across the Christian spectrum to explore Jesus as reconciler

Mennonite World Conference Release
NAIROBI, KENYA

Mennonites and Brethren in Christ were represented at a historic first gathering of world leaders from virtually all branches of the Christian faith late last year.

Called the Global Christian Forum, it drew 245 invited church representatives from 72 nations to explore the theme, "Our Journey with Jesus Christ, the Reconciler." They ranged from Orthodox, Catholic and Anglican, to African Instituted, Pentecostal and Evangelical. By design, about half were from the latter two groups, who usually don't attend ecumenical events.

Mennonite World Conference (MWC) representatives were Danisa Ndlovu of Zimbabwe; MWC vice-president and president-elect Patricia Urueña of

Colombia, presently serving as a Mennonite missionary in Ecuador; and general secretary Larry Miller of France. Bill Winger of Canada, member of the Brethren in Christ Church and chief financial officer of the World Evangelical Alliance, participated as part of the WEA delegation.

"This was the first time since the early centuries of Christian history the whole spectrum of leadership in the Christian world sat at the same table," said Miller.

The event was neither a theological exchange nor a debate, but rather a forum where Christian groups could tell their stories about experiencing Jesus Christ as reconciler. Participants discussed how to promote further dialogue and cooperation on their common witness in the world.

A Global Christian Forum statement afterward praised the "new beginning" that was made despite differing views on ecclesiology, mission and the scope of evangelism. "We have been encouraged to move out of the familiar ground on which we normally stand, to meet each other on a common ground where mutual trust might flourish and where we might be empowered to celebrate, enter into dialogue and act together," it said.

For Ndlovu, the organized sharing of testimonies of conversion, ministry and discipleship was a clear highlight. "As we began to hear and see common threads in our stories we were inevitably drawn closer to each other," he said. While the theme of unity "echoed as a refrain" throughout the meetings, he said it was not a call for a single or universal church, "but a church that recognizes and respects its diversity in terms of its historic traditions and its mission to the world."

[T]his gathering will someday be viewed as a watershed in 21st century Christianity.'

"What was most impressive was that this process to bring all Christian churches to the same table, especially Evangelicals and Pentecostals, seems to be working," said Miller. "If it continues for a couple of decades, this gathering will someday be viewed as a watershed in 21st century Christianity." ❧

PHOTO BY MARY E. KLASSEN

Talking the walk

Mennonites needs to overcome their reluctance to testify with their words as well as their deeds

BY MARY E. KLASSEN

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary
ELKHART, IND.

Why are Mennonites reluctant to tell others about God's presence in their lives? How can they give testimony in ways that are meaningful both to themselves and to their listeners?

These were questions that participants and faculty explored at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary's annual Pastors Week earlier this winter.

Arthur Paul Boers, AMBS associate professor of pastoral theology, set the stage for the week by explaining, "Testimony is a narrative of events and a confession of beliefs. We tell what we have seen and heard, and we confess what we believe about what we have seen and heard." As well as walking the talk, Boers said, "Christians also must talk the walk. We need to tell the story."

As Christians tell their stories, they fit them into a larger framework—a metanarrative—that gives meaning to their lives, Boers told the 180 participants. "Christians



Dawn Bueckert, spiritual care coordinator of North Eastman Health Association in Manitoba (back to camera right), talks with other AMBS Pastors Week participants (from left to right): John Stoltzfus, Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Church; Rachel Siemens, First Mennonite Church, Wadsworth, Ohio (originally from Winnipeg); Ryan Siemens, Grace Mennonite Church, Prince Albert, Sask.; and Alissa Bender, First Mennonite Church, Calgary, Alta.

In Christian worship, the hymns that are sung, the prayers that are prayed, the sermons that are preached, the Scripture that is read, the rituals that are practised together, all provide learning tools for congregants to give their testimony. "Corporate worship provides the language and context for testimony and it elicits testimony—or it should," he said.

Referencing the book *Testimony* by Thomas Long, Ollenburger added, "We do not know fully what we believe until

be Christian. Later, the Enlightenment brought toleration of differing beliefs, and Christian faith become a private matter. Today, in "Mennonite Christendom," Kreider noted, "most of the people we have relationships with are Mennonite. If I want to break out of that, I have to work hard."

Some necessary steps, he suggested, are to develop relationships and friendships. This requires the stability of being in a location long enough to learn to know people, and to enter their world. Focusing on hope more than on faith is another key that Kreider emphasized. Then he encouraged pastors to find people in their congregations who have the gift to be evangelists and encourage them.

Rebecca Slough, AMBS academic dean and associate professor of worship and the arts, told participants to "just start talking. We are so careful about what we want to say that we end up not saying anything," she said. "We can get at what we know deep inside by talking without thinking." ❧

'Christians live by the biblical metanarrative. Being and becoming Christian means adopting and being adopted by God's story.'

live by the biblical metanarrative," he said. "Being and becoming Christian means adopting and being adopted by God's story."

Learning this larger story and the language for telling their own stories happens in the church, Ben Ollenburger, AMBS professor of biblical theology, suggested.

we express that belief." When Christians express their faith, it helps form their faith, he emphasized.

Alan Kreider, AMBS associate professor of church history and mission, suggested that when Christianity was accepted by the Roman Empire, there was no need for testimony; everyone was assumed to

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Church declared the solution to social ills in South Africa

By DAN DYCK

Mennonite Church Canada
PIETERMARITZBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

In 1994, many South Africans were making plans to leave the country, fearing a violent political upheaval in the aftermath of the country's first democratic elections. That this did not happen remains a miracle, says Charles Mahlangu, principal of the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa and a graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College (now Canadian Mennonite University).

Although South Africa has made democratic progress, Mahlangu says the outlook for much of the African continent is bleak. He contends that only the church can reverse it. "Our government acknowledges that we don't have a future without the church coming up with some kind of solution," he says. "But this government has said that it is the church that will come up with the solution. And they are right!"

While the evangelical zeal of church planters and the western mission enterprise has been explosive, there has been a price to pay, says Mahlangu. "Numerically it looks fantastic . . . [but] the churches remain perpetually untaught. [A significant] number of churches that have been planted are led by people with absolutely abysmal biblical-theological training."

Mahlangu recalls a powerful bishop from the African Independent Church he met at a symposium in 2006. The bishop oversaw a ministry with thousands of members and with radio and TV broadcasts. With his seminary brochures in hand, Mahlangu delivered a sales pitch trying to convince the bishop to send his pastors for theological training. Finally the bishop said, "You don't get it, Mahlangu. This is

for me. I have never had any theological education!"

That theological education is beneficial is widely accepted. But a long history of racial divide has meant that biblical and theological training has been unattainable by many non-whites. So Mahlangu is not only on an evangelical mission, but also on a mission of normalization. "If you are called to the ministry, you are going to get the best of theological education," he declares optimistically. "What has been normal for centuries in other continents,



Charles Mahlangu, principal of the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa, urges North American Mennonites to come to his country as teachers and professors to help raise up the next generation of leaders.

PHOTO BY ED DOELL

in Africa now has to be normal."

More than money, Mahlangu says he needs trained and qualified teachers and professors. Years of African independence messages requiring foreigners to possess a deep understanding of local language and culture to qualify for employment is an illusion, he says, even outright deceit.

"It doesn't matter that you can't speak Zulu. It doesn't matter that you don't understand the [South African] context. You have what is desperately needed in this country, in this church, and has been needed for ages. . . . That someone from Ontario who is Mennonite . . . could not possibly fit into [our] context because they have never been through our history, therefore the theological transmission is not going to be effective, that's rubbish."

And so Mahlangu continues his labours

to find and convince partners to join the seminary in its nondenominational ministry. "The opportunities are great—probably greater than ever, and in South Africa, the greatest. In a country that has been perceived to be the most progressive, theologically we probably are the one that needs [the most] help and direction and partnering, because we are positioned to play a major role [on the continent]."

Dan Nighswander and Yvonne Snider-Nighswander are Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers in Pietermaritzburg. He has taught classes in New Testament, while she uses her background in library sciences to volunteer part-time in the seminary library. Through their presence, Mahlangu has found refreshed inspiration for his work.

Mennonites, in particular, can fill a strategic gap. "In this continent that is ravaged with blood and abuse and decaying sexual morality, [Mennonites] have the edge," Mahlangu states. "Because what country in the world does not scream out and cry out when they ask what is going to be done to reverse the

curses? [Mennonites] are coming in to say that this is what Jesus Christ stood for. This is one place, like many parts of the world, where they would be natural candidates for speaking for peace. Our president . . . is known throughout the world for being the most prolific leader who stands for peace, but he is not a pacifist.

"Mennonites have that contribution to make to the church of Jesus Christ worldwide. They do not have to be apologetic. In my continent, they have the edge over many other faiths and many other backgrounds, because they don't have to apologize. They have been brought up in what we are desperately seeking and praying for—for peace."

"C-o-m-e," he slowly spells out one letter at a time. "I'm talking about you coming and partnering with us in producing the next generation of leaders." ❧

The price of fame

Victim of attack befriends offenders who just wanted to be on YouTube

BY GLADYS TERICHOW
Mennonite Central Committee
CALGARY, ALTA.

When a Calgary youth threw an egg at a convenience store clerk who was working the night shift, his friend recorded the incident with a video camera.

Their plans to submit this video to the popular video-sharing website, YouTube, ended abruptly with an arrest, as a bystander had called the police when he saw the young men, aged 16 and 17, covering their faces in the parking lot before entering the store. The boys were arrested in the parking lot and were charged with assault with a weapon.

Zenebe Gebrewold, the unsuspecting victim, said his initial reaction was anger and thoughts of revenge. But after meeting the young offenders and hearing them express genuine remorse for their actions, he told them, "We weren't enemies before this happened. We don't have to be enemies now."

This face-to-face meeting between the young offenders, their parents and Gebrewold was facilitated by Calgary Community Conferencing, a restorative justice program started in 1998 and supported by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Alberta, Calgary Youth Probation Services, the Calgary Board of Education, the City of Calgary, Calgary Family Services and the John Howard Society.

The goal of community conferencing is to reduce youth crime by helping young people acknowledge and address the consequences of harmful behaviour, says conference facilitator Darrel Heidebrecht, who also represents MCC Alberta in this program.

A conference is a structured process that gives victims of crime or harmful actions

the opportunity to ask questions—an opportunity not available under the centuries-old retributive model of justice, in which offenders are passive and victims largely ignored.

"We don't do conferences without victims; without the participation of victims there is no point to it," says Heidebrecht, adding that conferences take place in churches, schools or community centres in neighbourhoods where victims work or live.

"This is getting tough on crime," he says. "We are asking kids to do things that are way more challenging than facing a judge in a courtroom. Victims typically have a lot of questions and we try to help young people answer these questions.

We want this to be a positive learning experience for kids, but we also want them to take full responsibility for their actions. Our program is a grassroots attempt to resolve conflict in a meaningful way."

The conference concludes with offenders developing an agreement or action plan that addresses the needs and concerns of victim. "We work towards a youth-initiated agreement—what do they think they should do to repair the harm," explains Heidebrecht. "Some things can't be undone, but they still need to be addressed."

Action plans suggested by offenders are usually creative and effective, says

Heidebrecht. The action plan developed by the offenders during this conference was that they would meet Gebrewold in a restaurant for coffee; a meeting to help see Gebrewold as a person, and not just a store clerk.

When the youths appeared in court a few months later, the impact of the conference was taken into consideration by the judge, who sentenced them to a period of probation with the conditions including their offer to meet with the victim for coffee.

Gebrewold says he wanted to participate in the conference because "I was curious to hear why the boys decided to do this." He was surprised to learn that the motivation for this offence was

a few minutes of fame on YouTube.

A teacher in Ethiopia, Gebrewold moved to Canada three years ago. When the youths met him for coffee, he talked about his experiences in Ethiopia and told the boys how fortunate they are to live in Canada. "They have so many opportunities in Canada in comparison to what young people have in Africa," he says. "I asked them why they were doing this unnecessary stuff."

One of the youths was so impressed with his meeting with Gebrewold that he returned to the store just a few weeks ago to have his girlfriend meet him. ❧



Gebrewold

/// Briefly noted

MCC Ontario introduces new creation care newsletter

KITCHENER, ONT.—The first issue of *Creation Care Crossroads* rolled off the presses (and the Internet) last month. The quarterly creation care newsletter is produced under the auspices of Darren Kropf, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario's Creation Care Program coordinator. Kropf's goal is for the four-page periodical to "encourage . . . the ongoing transformation of the church as we seek to restore broken relationships between humanity and God's creation. We are at a crossroads; with our eyes on God, we'll head in the right direction." The initial issue, which has been sent to churches and may be copied as necessary, contains creation care book listings, an events calendar, a theological reflection by Mark Brubacher of Hawkesville (Ont.) Mennonite Church and a profile of the fledgling carbon offset program at Rockway Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont. For more information, or to contribute local church stories on creation care, e-mail Kropf at darrenk@mennonitecc.on.ca.

—BY ROSS W. MUIR

An unlikely alliance

Soldier, citizen meet at Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute

Mennonite Church Canada Release
 DAVAO CITY, PHILIPPINES

It used to be very difficult for Elwyn Neri to trust a military officer or trooper. He has too often witnessed military troops destroying homes and farms of the alleged rebels in the conflicted region of Mindanao. He has been exposed to too many Muslim and Christian families displaced because of military operations. He grew so antagonistic it became impossible for him to work with the people in uniform.

Colonel Pedro Soria, the commanding officer of the 602nd Infantry Brigade of the Philippine Army, on the other hand, used to think that maintaining “peace and order” meant “more highly trained military troops and more firepower.”

Neri is a field worker in the peacebuilding ministry established by Daniel and Joji Pantoja, Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers in the land-conflicted region of Mindanao. The couple and their indigenous partners work to bring Muslims, Christians and indigenous peoples together in dialogue and to teach holistic peacebuilding skills.

Soria met Neri when he enrolled in the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute in Davao City last summer. Both men were



Military antagonist Elwyn Neri, left, and Philippine army colonel Pedro Soria became colleagues in peacebuilding at the 2007 Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute.

personally transformed by their meeting. Soria’s thinking was influenced by John Paul Lederach’s writings, while Neri learned to treat and respect all participants in the Mindanao conflict as human beings and not to demonize the Philippine army.

In his testimony before Muslim, Christian and indigenous Lumad civilians attending a community-based peace conference in December 2007, Soria said, “My understanding of my job as an army officer was to pacify and to neutralize armed rebel elements within my area of operations. Before [the peacebuilding institute], when an armed conflict happened within my

area of operations, I would immediately send armed personnel carriers and tanks to deal with conflict. Today, I would seek to listen to all the conflicting parties. I hope they are willing to listen as well. Though

‘I am learning this complementary role as a peacebuilding leader.’

I am very clear about my primary role as a military officer defending the constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, I am learning this complementary role as a peacebuilding leader.”

During that peace conference, Muslims, Christians and Lumads signed a community-based peace agreement. Soria and Neri both signed on. Daniel Pantoja and Bill and Marianne Thiessen from Canada signed as international witnesses to the agreement.

After the peace conference, Soria led a tour of the military base under his command. “The commissioned officers and the enlisted personnel of the 602nd infantry brigade are your allies in peacebuilding,” he said. ☸

"CMU nourished my interest in theology and social and political issues. It prepared me for my work with MCC."

Rebecca Bartel, 2002 graduate, now working as a Policy Analyst and Educator for Mennonite Central Committee.

**What do you want to do with your life?
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PHOTO BY AARON EPP

Holding the G8 accountable

Power politics of world's wealthiest countries includes self-interest, MC Canada leader warns

BY AARON EPP

National Correspondent
WINNIPEG

G8 leaders believe a better world is possible—and Canadian Christians can help them make it happen. That was the message given by John Kirton during a lecture at the University of Winnipeg on Feb. 25. Kirton is head of the G8 Research Group based at the Munk Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto's Trinity College.

Every year at their annual summit, the G8 leaders make commitments to themselves and the world. They have made 23 promises that come due in 2010, which fall into eight categories: reduce HIV infection and offer universal treatment for AIDS, reduce the prevalence of tuberculosis and malaria by half, eradicate polio, double aid to Africa, reduce greenhouse emissions, reduce the rate of loss of biodiversity, increase capacity of African forces to solve conflict, and build peace support capabilities around the world.

The lecture was part of a five-city tour of educational events organized by the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) to raise awareness of what Canadians can do to challenge and encourage the G8 to move towards fulfilling the commitments.

"We're falling behind in various degrees in all of the big eight," Kirton said. For example, the G8 promised in 2006 the world would be polio-free by 2010, and member countries would give \$130 million per year to make it happen. In 2007, only \$70 million was given. Another example Kirton gave was climate change; even though the G8 has promised to reduce carbon emissions by 2010, they have gone up.

Kirton went on to suggest there are three things that Christians can do in response:



John Kirton, right, head of the G8 Research Group based at the Munk Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto's Trinity College, speaks with Barrie Webster, a retired University of Manitoba professor, during a recent Canadian Council of Churches tour that included a stop in Winnipeg.

discern which of the commitments made should be done first, pray, and share their concerns about what should be done first with family, friends, neighbours and colleagues.

Youths invited to come in 'out of the cold'

BY ROSS W. MUIR

Managing Editor
KITCHENER, ONT.

Five Mennonite churches in southwestern Ontario have banded together to ensure that homeless teenagers in Kitchener-Waterloo don't have to spend at least one night of the week outside during winter's stormy blasts.

Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church in Kitchener opens its doors to 16- to 19-year-old youths every Tuesday night from November to April.

The impetus for such a program grew in the heart and mind of Peter Nijp of Wellesley Mennonite Church three years ago after hearing the lament of a 17-year-old girl who was denied access to one of the church shelters operating under the Out of the Cold banner. While the rule that only those 19 and older could access the program was clear to Nijp, he says it was "not

"It's not simple," Kirton concluded. "It's complex and there is no easy answer. We're in this for the long haul."

Robert J. Suderman, general secretary of Mennonite Church Canada, attended the lecture. He said it's positive to see the CCC working to bring Christians together for the sake of the well-being of everyone, but he is not convinced that the G8 has the same primary objective. "The power politics of the G8 is not entirely without self-interest," he said.

Suderman went on to say that for MC Canada, the G8's promise to build peace support capabilities around the world is a priority. "That would be very high on the list in terms of a longer-term goal, but then there are some shorter-term goals which could, and should, be done virtually immediately," Suderman said, citing the promise to offer universal treatment for AIDS. "It's already in our capacity to do it. What is really lacking is the political will to do so." ❧

in keeping with my Christian conscience."

Within two weeks, a youth version of Out of the Cold had the support of not only Wellesley Mennonite, but also that of Maple View Mennonite (just outside of Wellesley), Crosshill Mennonite, Faith Mennonite in Leamington, and Stirling Avenue Mennonite in downtown Kitchener.

Volunteers from the five congregations were recruited to cook supper for the young visitors, make up their beds, play games and talk with them, act as "shepherds" during the overnight shift, and provide breakfast the next morning.

While this season is nearly over now, Nijp encourages people from other area congregations to consider volunteering next fall. Potential participants can call one of the five churches for more information or speak with Nijp himself by calling 519-656-3331. ❧

GOD AT WORK US

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Outtatown in South Africa

CMU program combines international travel with learning experiences

BY DEANNA DRUDGE

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
STRANDFONTEIN, SOUTH AFRICA

The author sent the following update to her home congregation, Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont., in early February. She will be flying back to Canada on April 9 with the rest of the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) Outtatown team, a one-year program for students who want to spend a year learning while travelling the world.

Outtatown... I don't even know where to begin.

First semester was spent travelling across western Canada. While 30 great friends and I were having a blast on our canoe trip, snowboarding the Rockies, caving, swimming in the freezing cold Pacific, cruising on houseboats, and competing against each other on the go-kart track, we still had classes in which we learned about poverty, South African history, knowing ourselves, the Old Testament and the dynamic church, to name a few topics.

We did inner-city work in Winnipeg and Vancouver, where we learned about poverty and homelessness in both cities. We were challenged to leave our "comfort zones" and interact with the homeless and come up with our own ways of helping out these communities. We also spent a week in Chehalis, an aboriginal community in British Columbia, learning about

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEANNA DRUDGE



the history and struggles of Canada's First Nations.

Our last week of first semester was spent up in the mountains in beautiful Canmore, Alta., debriefing about the last three months and trying to get in as much quality time with our new friends before we had to be torn apart for five weeks over Christmas.

Second semester is spent in South Africa, where I am currently. I have been here for just over a month now and my schedule, like first semester, is packed full of adventure and learning.

The first week we spent in Soweto, a poverty-stricken town just outside of Johannesburg, where we learned about the struggles of life during apartheid and visited a few museums.

Later that week we were placed with different organizations to help them out. I was at a place called Refilwe, which is one of the most amazing organization I have ever seen. This community takes in orphaned children, divides them into "families," and provides housing for each family; it has a school and community centre for the children and is in the process of building a medical clinic. The week was spent helping to clean up the site, plant trees and hang out with the kids.

The next week was spent in Pretoria,

a rich Afrikaans community, where we moved in with host families. It was a difficult transition coming from a place of poverty caused by the white government, and then moving into a wealthy white community. But we all received tons of love and hospitality. The families were a blast to hang out with and they did everything they could to make us feel right at home.

We visited sites in Pretoria and had professors from different racial groups talking about what apartheid was like from their varied perspectives. It was very interesting to see the different points of view and how much the three major racial groups in South Africa really don't understand each other.

After Pretoria we piled into the bus with all our luggage for the long 26-hour drive to the ocean for fun in the sun after a week of rain. The first week of our two-week stay in Simon's Town—located just outside of Cape Town—was spent hanging out on the white sandy beach, exploring Cape Point (the southern-most tip of Africa), diving into the ocean with great white sharks, paragliding off a mountain, and hiking two hours up Table Mountain.

Week two was spent inside with a teacher talking about conflict resolution and hanging out on the beach, jumping off huge boulders into the water, and laughing at the penguins with whom we shared the beach. What amusing creatures!

This week, we are in Strandfontein living with coloured host families, helping out at the local schools, talking to the classes about Canada and allowing them to ask us questions. It's been interesting to learn what it's like for a teenager to grow up in South Africa.

So that has been the awesome time I have had so far. Before I close—and for bragging purposes and to scare my mother—I will be jumping off the highest bungee jump in the world on Feb. 24! Sorry, Mom; I love you.

Also, I would like to thank you for all your prayers, I really appreciate it. And keep enjoying the snow. Just thought I'd rub it in. ☺

Happy birthday, Lindy

Medical student welcomed to new life in Christ with a proper Christian birthday party—a baptism

BY PHILIP BENDER
Mennonite Church Canada
CHONGQING, CHINA

On Dec. 23, 2007, Lindy (pseudonym) celebrated her birthday. Not, however, her natural birthday. That comes on Aug. 11. Rather, two days before Christmas, Lindy was born anew through the waters of baptism in Agape Church of Chongqing.

A 22-year-old senior English major at Chongqing Medical University, Lindy's baptism illustrates Jesus' kingdom parables of seeds growing silently and leaven working invisibly. Those seeds were first planted by her grandmother's stories about Jesus when Lindy was seven. "Jesus loves you," she told me," Lindy says. "You can pray when you feel sad and when you are sick. And because I liked her, I believed her." And Lindy did pray. "I was very sick at my grandmother's home. I prayed, not knowing if it would work. But when I left her home, I had recovered."

Today, Lindy reflects on those childhood prayers. "I think it was not right to remember Jesus only when I needed him," she says. "I think I should always think about him, feel his love, remember his love."

Growing up in the Chinese countryside, Lindy did not go to church. None were close by. So the seeds of her faith lay dormant until Christmas Eve, 2005, when she attended Agape Church's Christmas program. Her English teacher, Julie Bender, had invited students to come along to help several Mennonite Partners in China teachers sing an English Christmas carol. Seven volunteered, one of them being Lindy.

"I enjoyed the joy from Jesus that evening," Lindy recalls. "I prayed for my friends, for their good study and healthy bodies. After that, I wanted to go to church."

But she didn't return until Christmas Eve, 2006, when Julie again invited students to help sing (see back cover, Jan. 22, 2007, Canadian Mennonite). And slowly, those early seeds of faith began to sprout.

Last August, a personal crisis led Lindy

back to Agape Church and her first Sunday morning worship service. Afterward, she sought out the pastor.

Lindy recalls their conversation: "Why did you come to church?" the pastor asked. I said, 'I just want to find some peace, some comfort.' He then asked me whether I believed in God. Before I went to church, I thought believing in God was against science and technology. But now I was find-

Her voice quickens as she continues her story: "People who wanted to follow Jesus stood in a row. I felt my heart beat fast. I prayed in my heart, 'Jesus, I know you love me, and I know you love all the people. I want to receive the baptism. I have decided to follow you. Please teach me how to do your will. I want to be a person who is more like you.'

"Then the pastor baptized me. I was very glad, very happy. He said to us, 'Today is your birthday. Congratulations!'"

As she embarks on her Christian walk, Lindy faces sceptical family and friends. "I wanted to share my good news with my mother and sister, but they couldn't accept it," she notes with a tinge of regret.

MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA PHOTO



Lindy, at left, was baptized at Agape Church of Chongqing on Dec. 23, 2007, after getting re-acquainted with the Christianity she had encountered in her childhood. She describes her church singing group as "a family which is full of love."

ing some people who had education also believed in God."

Encouraged, Lindy began to attend the church's Sunday evening worship service. She also joined a young adult musical group. The commitment was demanding—Friday evening and Sunday afternoon practices, which also included Bible study.

But through her church involvement, a new birth was stirring in Lindy's heart. "I was getting so much," she says. "Jesus was teaching me how to be a good person, how to deal with relationships between people. I was also feeling the love of Christians for each other."

On Dec. 20, 2007, the Agape Church pastor invited those wishing to be baptized to be present the next week. Rushing to the worship service after her Sunday morning tutoring job, Lindy arrived just in time.

Meanwhile, most of her university friends, reflecting their schooling, think Lindy's Christian faith is foolish. But in her singing group Lindy finds understanding and fellowship. "I like staying with them. It is a family which is full of love," she says.

And the key member of her new family is Jesus. "Jesus is love," Lindy says with conviction. "I often hear this sentence from the pastor. And I can feel that."

And then Lindy takes out her MP3 player and begins listening to her favourite English song—a praise chorus about Jesus entitled "Love You So Much." ❧

Philip and Julie Bender teach English to medical students in Chongqing, China, with support from Mennonite Church Canada Witness in partnership with Mennonite Partners in China.

/// Briefly noted

Klassen miraculously survives crash

WINNIPEG—Lisa Klassen, sister of Canadian Olympic speed skating champion Cindy Klassen, survived a horrifying accident Feb. 5 when her Jeep plunged over the side of a Winnipeg bridge and smashed into the frozen Red River below. Two local men risked their lives to free the 23-year-old from her vehicle and save her from drowning. The media says it's a miracle she isn't paralyzed and that she suffered no brain damage. Klassen agrees. "I don't believe in luck," she said during a news conference. "It was God's hand, obviously. It wasn't my time." The event has given family members an opportunity to express their faith, not just in the winner's circle, but during a time of suffering. Cindy Klassen cut short her racing season to return home to be with her sister.

Said McIvor MB Church pastor Gerald Hildebrand, where the Klassen family attends, "[The media] hear so often of people praising God or trying to have a spiritual voice when things are good. People wondered if that's what Cindy's faith was all about. Now they're seeing her express that same faith in crisis."

—LAURA KALMAR

Reprinted from the MB Herald.

Always at home with God

BORABU, THAILAND—After three years of general study at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Leah Buermeyer recently embarked on a trip to Thailand, where she will participate in a four-month internship assignment, a joint appointment through Mennonite Church Canada Witness and the university's practicum program. She will be serving at the Living Water Church in Borabu, teaching

English and working closely with Witness workers Pat and Rad Houmphan. Being immersed in unfamiliar surroundings can be difficult. During her first Sunday morning church service, Buermeyer felt overwhelmed—until the singing began. "They were singing in Thai, of course, but some of the songs I knew in English. As I was singing quietly in English, I had this sudden feeling of being home. I realized that even though I am halfway around the world, I am always at home with God. We were all praising the same God, one who understands all languages, and different ways of praising and expression. [It's] a feeling I will never forget."

—Mennonite Church Canada Release



Buermeyer

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CMU PHOTO BY JOHN LONGHURST

ARTBEAT

Stepping stones

First-time author weaves tale of broken engagement that ultimately leads to happiness with God's help

BY BARB DRAPER

Books and Resources Editor
NAIRN, ONT.

For Ruth Smith Meyer, a member at Nairn (Ont.) Mennonite Church, writing her first book was an amazing experience and a healing time. She felt as though this was something God was nudging her to do and says, "The book came through me in spite of, rather than because of, my ability."

Meyer had always dreamed of writing a book and even had the kernel of a story in mind. The year that her husband Norman Smith died, she visited a friend on Salt Spring Island, B.C., for a month, planning to do some writing.

"I thought I might tell the whole story in 10 pages and then wonder, 'Now what?' But for the rest of my time on the island my fingers flew over the keyboard from 9 in the morning until at least 9 at night, stopping only for meals and a quick walk. I could scarcely type fast enough to get my thoughts on paper. Even at night, I would wake up in delight, knowing where the next part of the story had to go."

Writing the story was also a time to reflect on her own life. "Many of the experiences of the characters were ones with which I could identify," she remarks. Her own feelings of grief were real and raw, and she believes the story rings true because of that. "There were many times I paused and had a good cry before I could go on," she says. "It brought back many memories of my own journey, with its sudden waves of grief; the thinking that



Emily Dyck, right, recently donated art canvas and stretcher frames to the Canadian Mennonite University School of Music and the Arts so young Winnipeg children like Nik Gockel can pursue artistic dreams that her husband Jacob never realized. "Jacob always enjoyed art, and even took art classes when he was younger," says Emily of her husband. "But then he entered medical school and became a doctor." Jacob, a member of Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, now lives in a personal care home due to a stroke. The canvas and frames were given to the Dycks by a relative, but were never used by Jacob. When a move to a condominium required downsizing, Emily tried to think of the best place to donate the items. For Arlene Kroeker, who directs the CMU school, the donation is very welcome. "I really appreciate the gift," she says. "It's a unique opportunity for the children to get a feel for what it's like to paint on canvas." The first groups to use the canvas and frames were the Grades 2-4 and 5-8 acrylic painting classes taught by Winnipeg artist Tanya Olfert.

you were getting used to it, just to have it surprise you with a vengeance."

Inspired by a real person, *Not Easily Broken* is the story of a young woman in the 19th century who broke her engagement—at her parents' request—to marry her brother-in-law so that her dead sister's children would not lose their connection to their maternal family. For Meyer, the main message of the story is that, "even situations in life that seem impossibly hard and

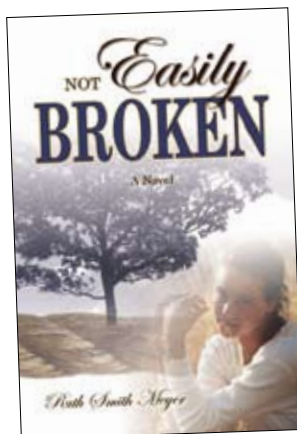


Smith Meyer

absolutely unreasonable can become stepping stones, instead of stumbling blocks, if one sets the mind toward that direction and asks for God's help."

Meyer thought promoting her self-published book (through Word Alive Press) would be hard, but she has received much positive feedback and has been told how people have been helped, so she feels confident it was meant to be shared. "Sometimes I feel shamelessly enthusiastic about what can be accomplished in spite of who or what I am, or am not," she admits.

Not Easily Broken is available at NotEasilyBroken.book@gmail.com. ☺



BOOK REVIEW

Incomparable witness

Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy. Donald B. Kraybill, Steven M. Nolt, and David L. Weaver-Zercher. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007. 237 pages.

REVIEWED BY ARTHUR PAUL BOERS

With shocking regularity, lone gunmen massacre people in the U.S., often at schools like Columbine and Virginia Tech. Media invade for “in-depth coverage.” We learn intimate details about victims. Perpetrators are scrutinized. Soul-searching considers whether this might have been avoided. Memorial services are witnessed. Then attention moves away, awaiting the next bloodbath.

In October 2006, a group of Christian victims rewrote predictable scenarios. The Amish are often sentimentalized, exploited for tourism or mocked by popular culture, but they prefer to avoid attention. Imagine the discomfort then, when within 24 hours Nickel Mines, Pa., was taken over by hordes of reporters, television vehicles and media helicopters. This was the biggest historical event in all the centuries of Amish history and what a witness they presented!

Within a day—informally by word-of-mouth—they offered forgiveness. And then they acted, visiting the shooter’s widow and sharing donations with her, and showing up at the perpetrator’s burial, all the while claiming there was nothing remarkable about forgiveness. They just did what Jesus commanded. Forgiveness—its strangeness and inexplicability—suddenly became the major focus of Nickel Mines media accounts. The “good news” made headline news.

Three leading scholars on the Amish and other Old Order groups—Donald Kraybill, Steven Nolt and David Weaver-Zercher—were quickly drawn into the media maelstrom. They were called upon to answer and interpret all kinds of questions about

these mysteriously plain people and to theologize on the meaning of forgiveness. From that experience emerged this remarkable book.

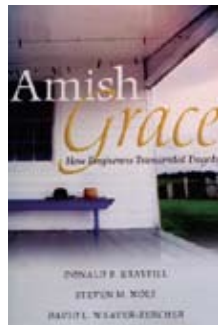
The authors show how this unexpected (to us) turn of events flowed naturally from Amish life: their immersion in the martyrs’ experience of the 16th century, a disinterest in lawsuits, their repetition of the Lord’s Prayer numerous times each day and in every worship setting. In short, they acknowledge that the Amish “extension of grace was neither calculated nor random.”

There is a wealth of information to glean here about the Amish: their selective use of technology, friendships with the “English” (outsiders), volunteering with local fire departments, a recent move to private schools (when the American system moved away from local institutions), and their relatively low experience of crimes.

And in this story the Amish themselves learned a lot. They were overwhelmed by the generosity of strangers near and far. And they were grateful for, and surprised by, the prompt and compassionate actions of police officers.

The story of the crime itself is told briefly and with only enough details to show the horrors and terrors involved. The courage of those in the classroom is moving. One victim, a 13-year-old, volunteered to be shot first, hoping to spare her classmates.

Still, this is not mere hagiography. The authors test what forgiveness means and how it differs from reconciliation and forgetting. They acknowledge that it is a lengthy process, not an easy one. They explore whether Amish shunning and



excommunication practices contradict the Nickel Mines witness. The lessons of this deeply countercultural community’s practices are not easily transferable to broader society, with its individualist and consumerist assumptions.

Yet it is a story we cannot ignore, especially as Mennonites who share roots with the Amish. In a culture preoccupied with fear and apathetic about violence, it’s hard to imagine that we will see another comparable witness any time soon. ❧

Arthur Paul Boers teaches pastoral theology at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and is the author of *The Way is Made by Walking: A Pilgrimage Along the Camino de Santiago*.

Anabaptist prayer book published by Herald Press

BY BARB DRAPER

Books and Resources Editor
SCOTTDALÉ, PA./WATERLOO, ONT.

After three years of testing and revising online, *Take Our Moments and Our Days: An Anabaptist Prayer Book* has been published by Herald Press in a leatherette cover. This book of daily prayers has been an ongoing project of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and has been prepared by Arthur Paul Boers, Barbara Nelson Gingerich, Eleanor Kreider, John Rempel and Mary H. Shertz.

It is designed to assist families, small groups or individuals in developing habits of prayer by providing a four-week cycle of morning and evening prayers for Ordinary Time. This edition, with its ribbon markers and solid binding, is designed to see lots of use.

These prayers are also available on the seminary website at ambs.edu/prayerbook.

A second volume of Anabaptist prayers is now in draft form on the website as well. These prayers are intended for use from Advent and Christmas through Easter and Pentecost. Like the process used for the first volume, users are invited to give feedback to the editors. ❧

BOOK REVIEW

Coping with change in the 20th century

Diaspora in the Countryside: Two Mennonite Communities and Mid-Twentieth-Century Rural Disjuncture.
Royden Loewen. U of Toronto Press, 2007.

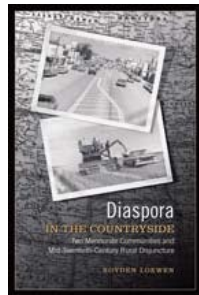
REVIEWED BY BARB DRAPER

Although the title sounds academic and a bit forbidding, readers who enjoy Mennonite history should find this book interesting. Loewen presents a fascinating case study of how rural Mennonites in Manitoba and Kansas scattered to small towns and cities throughout the 1950s and '60s.

Like other Canadians and Americans, the number of Mennonites living on farms plummeted between 1950-70. In the face of new economic and social forces during these decades, Mennonite communities fragmented. Some Mennonites adopted mainstream evangelical fundamentalism while others tried to maintain a community by withdrawing from society and moving to Mexico.

Loewen compares the Mennonites of Meade County, Kan., with those of the area around Steinbach in southern Manitoba—two communities that lost their sense of unity through these decades. In Kansas, where the Mennonites were a minority of the population, people tended to move into town and become assimilated into the broader culture. In the Steinbach area, a conservative *Kleine Gemeinde* group (part of a denomination that changed its name to the Evangelical Mennonite Church) moved to Mexico in 1948 in an attempt to preserve a strong rural community.

The '50s and '60s also saw tremendous changes in gender roles, as farms became specialized and mechanized. Women, who had traditionally tended the cows and chickens, and were an integral part of the subsistence farm, became homemakers and then began to work in town.



Men's roles also changed, as they specialized in dairy or egg production, or moved off the farm altogether. As young people moved to larger towns and cities, the Mennonite communities changed still further.

Loewen approaches the history of these rural Mennonites from an academic and cultural

perspective. He suggests that theological changes came as a result of economic and social forces, but he does not always differentiate between Mennonite denominations. He gives a detailed description of changes in theology in the *Kleine Gemeinde*, but I was left wondering how other Mennonite churches in Steinbach responded to these economic and social forces.

I was captivated by Loewen's description of Mennonite religious practices in rural Manitoba before World War II because it allowed me to compare them to those of the Swiss Mennonites of Waterloo Region in the same time-period. A comparative history of Steinbach, Man., and Elmira, Ont., would make another fascinating study. ❧

Barb Draper is Canadian Mennonite's Books and Resources editor.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CONRAD STOESZ



Peter Letkeman, left, addressed a crowd of more than 100 people who gathered at the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Winnipeg last fall for the launch of his book, *The Ben Horch Story*. Among the Horch family members present was Esther Fast, right, a granddaughter from Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont. The launch of the book and a DVD by the same title was held on the 100th anniversary of Horch's birth in Ukraine. He moved to Canada as a very young child and by age 20 he was conducting the choir at the North End Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg. He went on to teach at various Mennonite church schools and conducted church choirs and orchestras. He also worked with various radio stations, including a 13-year stint as producer with CBC Radio. *The Ben Horch Story* is available from the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies.

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Briefly noted

A year after tragic accident that claimed five players, Bluffton ball team gets rematch with EMU Royals

SARASOTA, FLA.—A year after the Bluffton University baseball team experienced an accident that would forever change the lives of the players, coaches, their families and friends, and the Bluffton campus community, the team played the game it never got a chance to play last March. On March 2, 2007, the Bluffton baseball team was travelling to Sarasota, when its charter bus plunged from an overpass in Atlanta, Ga., killing four ball players, the bus driver and his wife, and injuring 28 others. A fifth player died a week later. The nine-inning game between the Bluffton Beavers and the EMU Royals earlier this month ended in a 4-3 victory for the Royals, but the day was not about winning and losing. "In so many ways, this game has deep meaning and significance," said Bluffton president James M. Harder. "It's a game played in the presence of many parents, friends, alumni and well-wishers who have come to show their support. It's also a game played in the memory of five from the Bluffton team . . . whom we will always hold close to our hearts." The Beavers spent the remainder of the week in Ft. Myers, Fla., playing in the Gene Cusic Classic.

—Bluffton University Release

New CMU business program appoints first professor

WINNIPEG—Craig Martin of Elmira, Ont., has been appointed the first faculty member for the new Business and Organizational Administration program at Canadian Mennonite University. Martin, who is a Ph.D. candidate in agricultural economics and business at the University of Guelph, Ont., was a research associate and lecturer in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Business at that university from 2001-03. For Martin, "business is a part of life," and so is his Christian faith. "We can operate businesses and take our beliefs to work with us and still make a profit," he says. "A strong moral and ethical background is an important part of how we do business." Martin is especially interested in how business, finance and government policies affect international development. A member of Elmira Mennonite Church, Martin is looking forward to teaching at CMU because "it's a place where I will be able to more openly talk about Christian beliefs and how they influence the way we approach our lives at work."

—Canadian Mennonite University Release

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CANADIAN WOMEN IN MISSION

Women walking together in faith

'Lucking out' in the workplace

BY EV BUHR

When I reflect on my life, I usually feel like I “lucked out” and landed in a good situation that allows me to combine work outside the home with my commitment to parenting two young children. But in reality it’s my faith journey that led me to an unexpected doorstep and over the threshold into a totally unanticipated way of living.

I grew up on a farm watching my mother work hard taking care of all of us—cooking, sewing, gardening, cleaning, knitting and driving the tractor or combine as necessary. She was a tremendous example to me of a woman of faith as I grew up. For her, being a Christian and living a life of faithfulness was just the way it was.

I was also influenced by the fact that Mom never worked outside the home/farm and was always available for us. As a young adult I was encouraged to get further education, and, although it was never stated that my place was in the home, I always assumed that when I was married and had children that’s what would happen.

But when our first child, Tommy, was born, my husband Pat was working at a local non-Mennonite Bible college while I was working at Southview Child Care, a daycare located in our church (First Mennonite, Edmonton). While Pat was frustrated with his job, I was anxious to continue with mine, while at the same time feeling angst about leaving our son in someone else’s care.

Finally, Pat said that he would try staying home with Tommy and look for some part-time evening and weekend work so that I could continue getting the daycare well-established. Talk about a total 180-degree turn from my preconceived notions of what my role as mother would be! After much prayer and discussion, we decided this was the best course of action and soon found a healthy balance that allowed us to see each other once in a while.

When Tommy turned two, he was old enough to attend daycare and came to work with me every day. That meant he spent time with me while I was teaching and he also learned to deal with situations he might otherwise not have met until school.

Was it my good planning that led to all of this? Or was it the hand of God?

One of the benefits of working in the daycare—besides spending time with our son—was the opportunity to be an example to other parents who came from various ethnic, faith or non-faith backgrounds, by offering a role model of good parenting skills and living out my faith in my workplace.

I recall numerous conversations with parents who knew that I went to the “church upstairs” and who wondered what Mennonites were. Many times their children got to play a little longer as we discussed faith issues and I noted their particular interest in our pacifist beliefs.

After our second child, Natalie, was born I decided that I could not continue to work full-time at the daycare and still have enough energy for two children at home. Again, Pat and I prayed for guidance and, sure enough, another door opened for me. One of our church office administrators was moving away and there was an opportunity to work two days a week in the office. I also had a friend who was returning to work and needed care for her son three days a week. Could it all work out? Amazingly it did!

Currently, I work three days a week in the church office, care for a friend of Tommy’s before and after school, and have two others over one day a week. I am able to keep in touch with the daycare staff I used to work with, and I can go downstairs and see Natalie as often as I want.

In addition to the usual office activity, I find it a challenge to be a listening ear to people who phone the church, whether they are looking for help, wonder what a Mennonite is or just need to talk about their day.

So when all is said and done, through faith my “workplace luck” has turned into a blessing!

Ev Buhr is the president of Alberta Women in Mission. She works as office administrator at First Mennonite Church in Edmonton, and when not caring for her own and others’ children she is involved in many capacities at her church. CWM page coordinated by Leona Dueck Penner.

PHOTO BY FRAN AARNOUTSE



Ev Buhr and her daughter Natalie enjoy lunch together in the daycare centre at First Mennonite Church, Edmonton.



Calendar

British Columbia

April 16-19: Mennonite Educational Institute spring production.

April 19: Columbia Bible College commencement.

April 19-20: Camp Squeah Paddle-a-thon for staff bursary fund. Visit squeah.com or call 604-869-5353 for details.

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

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

May 8: Communitas Supportive Care fundraiser dessert evening with Ukrainian dancers and Dr. Lucy Romanenkova from Ukraine speaking at Bakerview MB Church, Abbotsford, 7 p.m. Order tickets at CommunitasCare.com/store.

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

March 29: Canadian Mennonite banquet featuring western/cowboy poet Doris Daley at Foothills Mennonite. Email foothillsmennonite@nucleus.com to reserve tickets.

April 12-13: 25th anniversary celebration at Trinity Mennonite, Calgary. Call 403-256-7157 for more information.

May 2-4: Alberta Women in Mission retreat at Camp Valaqua, "Relax, refresh, renew." Contact evbuhr@awm.mennonitechurch.ab.ca to register.

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

April 5: MC Sask Songfest at First

Mennonite, Saskatoon.

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

April 8: Information meeting with Glenn Witmer about a tour to Israel and Palestine at Wildwood Mennonite, 7:30 p.m.

April 12: Saskatchewan Women in Mission Enrichment Day, "Service and Song" at Battleford United Church, North Battleford.

April 12: Camp Elim fundraiser at Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon.

April 17: MC Sask Equipping Conference at Forest Grove Community Church, "Being a good neighbour: How the church responds to victims of crime."

April 19: MC Sask touring Mission Fest.

April 20: RJC spring dessert theatre.

April 23: CMU Chamber Choir and RJC in concert at Osler Mennonite Church, 7:30 p.m.

April 23: MEDA Connecting Faith and Business banquet at the Travelodge hotel with Wally Kroeker from Marketplace magazine.

June 1-3: Alban Seminar for pastors and church leaders at Shekinah Retreat Centre sponsored by MC Sask.

June 13-14: MCC Relief Sale at Prairieland Park.

Manitoba

March 28: CMU Campus Visit Day. Visit cmu.ca for more information.

March 29: Winnipeg MCC Festival and Relief Sale banquet.

April 12: MCI fundraising banquet and concert at MCI, Gretna, 6:30 p.m.

April 13: CMU Outtown graduation.

April 15: MCI fundraising concert/dessert evening at Laudamus Hall, CMU, Winnipeg, 7 p.m.

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

April 19: CMU Celebration Dinner with speaker Dr. John Foerster, 4:30 p.m. and Spring Concert at Loewen Athletic Centre.

April 20: CMU graduation at Loewen

Athletic Centre with Arli Klassen, new executive director of MCC speaking, 2:30 p.m.

April 22: MCI fundraising concert/dessert evening at Bay Ave. Mennonite in Killarney, 7 p.m.

May 14: Westgate work day.

May 19-23: School of Writing at CMU.

May 24: The Church Made Strange, a symposium at CMU to mark the retirement of Professor Harry Huebner. More information at cmu.ca.

May 26-30: Youth Ministry Course at CMU: Canada's Teens—Sociological and Theological Reflections.

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

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

June 11-14: 16th annual Believers Church Conference at CMU. Theme: "Congregationalism, denominationalism and the body of Christ." Visit cmu.ca/church-community/02_BelieversChurchConf.html for information.

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

Ontario

March 26: "Faith communities and the local food movement—who's involved and how to get involved!" sponsored by Greening Sacred Spaces, at 99 Regina St., Waterloo, Room 508. Register by Mar. 21 to jsnyder@faith-commongood.net or 519-747-5139.

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.

March 29: Pax Christi Chorale presents a Hymn-a-thon fundraiser with non-stop singing 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church. Come anytime; lunch available. Visit paxchristichorale.org for more details.

March 30: Carl Hiebert will talk about his journey across Canada on a tractor, hosted by Gathering the Farm Community in Hope at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, 7:30 p.m. Dessert and fellowship to follow.

April 5: Allan Reesor-McDowell and

Rouge River Connection benefit concert for House of Friendship and MCC at Mannheim Mennonite Church, 7:30 p.m.

April 5: MCC Relief Sale promotion dinner at Niagara United Mennonite Church with Adrian Jacobs speaking on "A First Nations Question" at 6 p.m. Order tickets at 905-934-4595.

April 11: Coffee House hosted by Menno Youth Singers at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, 7-9 p.m. Free admission.

April 11: Rescheduled Benjamin Eby lecture with A. James Reimer at Conrad Grebel Chapel, 7:30 p.m. Reception to follow.

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

April 13: Conrad Grebel Convocation, 2 p.m., Theatre of the Arts, University of Waterloo.

April 14: Mennonite Savings and Credit Union annual meeting with guest speaker John Siebert of Project Ploughshares at Waterloo MB Church; registration begins 6:30 p.m.

April 18: WMCEC Spring Enrichment Day at Vineland United Mennonite, 10:15 a.m.–3:30 p.m. Speaker: Melodie Shantz. Register by April 8 to Florence Jantzi, 14 Nightingale Cres., Elmira, ON N3B 1A8, or 519-669-4356.

April 21: New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale promotion dinner at Bingeman Park Lodge, Kitchener. Guest speaker: Brandon Thiessen and MCC Burundi. Order tickets at 519-745-8458 or 1-800-313-6226.

April 24: Shalom Counselling Services Open House, 9 Avondale Ave. S., Waterloo, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. with dedication at 5:30 p.m.

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 10: Shalom Counselling fundraising breakfast and annual meeting featuring John Ruth at Crosshill Mennonite, 8:30-11 a.m. Order tickets at 519-886-9690 until May 5.

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

May 24-25: 25th anniversary celebration of St. Clair O'Connor Community, Toronto. For more information contact s.gallant@scoc.ca.

May 30, 31: New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale at New Hamburg fairgrounds. Check nhmrs.com for more information.

June 3: Lebold Fundraising Banquet

with April Yamisaki at Conrad Grebel, 6:30 p.m.

June 4: Golf Tournament for Rockway Mennonite Collegiate at Willow Valley Golf Course, Mount Hope. Call 519-342-0007 ext. 3011 for information.

June 7: Willowgrove Golf Tournament, dinner and auction at Angus Glen Golf Course, Markham, 1:30 tee-off, best ball format. For information contact 905-640-2127 or ron@willowgrove.ca.

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

June 21: Willowgrove and Glenbrook Day Camp 40th anniversary celebration.

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.

Advertising Information

Contact *Canadian Mennonite*
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519-745-4507
advert@canadianmennonite.org

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Employment Opportunities



MENNONITE BENEVOLENT SOCIETY
www.mennoplace.ca

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
Mennonite Benevolent Society (MBS)

Menno Place is a well-established, growing campus of care in Abbotsford, BC, currently serving about 600 residents and employing a staff of 570. We provide residential complex care at Menno Home and Hospital (both accredited through the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation), as well as supportive housing and assisted living at Menno Pavilion, Menno Terrace West and Terrace East. Current plans include construction of another 105 supportive housing suites, and planning for major site redevelopment in the coming years.

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) will play a key role in building on the successful growth of the past 55 years, while helping to position the organization to meet the challenges of the future.

Reporting to the CEO, you will be a key member of the MBS Leadership Team, providing overall direction to Financial Operations/Capital Planning as well as Information Management systems at Menno Place.

Qualifications and characteristics of a "best fit" for the position:

- CA, CGA or CMA credential
- Proven financial management skills in a senior accounting position, preferably in a healthcare setting
- Experience in design/implementation of Information Management systems involving networks and software
- Consultative style and an ability to deal with complex issues in a dynamic work environment
- Commitment to bringing a Christian values-based perspective to the organization's programs and services

To explore this exceptional employment opportunity, please respond by April 18, 2008 to:

Art Beadle at A. R. Beadle & Associates
1-888-330-6714 • E-mail: art@arbeadle.com

ASSOCIATE PASTOR POSITION

Mount Royal Mennonite Church – Saskatoon, SK
Mount Royal Mennonite Church is inviting applications for the position of Associate Pastor. The Mount Royal congregation was established in 1963 and is one of several Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Saskatoon. The person(s) in this full time position will become part of a pastoral team with responsibilities particularly relating to ministry to youth in a multi-generational, multicultural congregation of about 250 members. Anabaptist faith orientation and training are strongly preferred. This person will have the skills, attitude, and vision to bring a leadership role to working with the Youth Ministry Team. Interested persons are invited to visit our website for a complete job description and to submit a resume to:

MRMC Associate Pastor Search Committee
610 Avenue O North
Saskatoon, Sask. S7L 2V3
Or Attn. Len Andres at lbandres@shaw.ca
www.mount.sasktelwebsite.net

Applicants are to respond by April 25, 2008. Start date is negotiable.

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 or phone 204-727-7344.

OTTAWA MENNONITE CHURCH is inviting applications for an

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

We are a growing congregation of approximately 225 people, situated in Canada's national capital. The primary responsibilities of the Associate Minister position involve relationship building and program development/coordination in connection with youth and young adults. The position also includes various elements of broader congregational ministry. Applicants should have post-secondary education in Christian theology, and a degree at least at the Bachelors level. For the complete position description and statement of qualifications, please visit our website at www.ottawamennonite.ca

This is a full-time position, commencing in July 2008. Applications will be accepted until April 14, 2008.

Please direct applications and inquiries to:
application@ottawamennonite.ca
phone: 613-733-6729



Ten Thousand Villages is Canada's largest retailer of unique, fairly traded products from around the world, with 50 locations across the country. We are starting our search for a new Chief Executive Officer to help carry forward our mission to provide vital, fair income to artisans in developing countries. You will be highly skilled in managing people, finances and processes within a dynamic and complex retail environment. As our organization continues to experience rapid growth, we offer committed professionals the distinct opportunity to make a difference through Fair Trade.

As a program of Mennonite Central Committee, individuals considering employment with Ten Thousand Villages Canada should be able to exhibit a commitment to MCC's core values. This position is based out of New Hamburg, Ontario, Canada.

Interviews are likely to be held in late April – early May 2008. For further information, contact Hazel Douglas at our recruitment consultants, Oxford HR, hdouglas@oxfordhr.co.uk and www.oxfordhr.co.uk

Winnipegosis Mennonite Church seeks a part-time or full-time **PASTOR** with a theology of grace and peace. This person should enjoy relating to rural people. Pastoral experience is preferred but not required. Gifts in preaching, visitation, and counselling would be appreciated. Starting date is negotiable. Please contact the Pastoral Search Committee at lotrf3@gmail.com, or call Len Bergen at 204-657-2244 or Susan Buhler at 204-657-2353.



MCC Canada seeks applications for the position of: **SENIOR POLICY ANALYST**, MCC Canada in Ottawa, ON – 1.0 FTE

The role of Senior Policy Analyst will include providing expertise and assistance to the activities of MCC Canada (MCCC) and its constituencies relating to the government. This includes listening and responding to federal government legislation and action relevant to MCCC's priorities, interpreting government issues to the constituency, being proactive in developing various types of communication to government on issues that are important to MCCC, and acting as a consultant to constituents who desire to speak to the government. This is done in the context of regular communication and relationships with all parts of MCC (domestic and international), other Mennonite agencies, and related coalitions. The goal of MCCC's involvement with the government is to find ways in which MCCC and its constituency can participate in the struggle for justice within Canada.

This position is accountable to the Director of National Programs of MCCC.

The job description may be viewed on the web at www.mcc.org. All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership, and nonviolent peacemaking. For further information contact Marsha Jones at 204-261-6381 or e-mail: mgj@mennonitecc.ca.

Applications will be considered until April 30, 2008.

Foothills Mennonite Church invites applications for the position of **ASSOCIATE PASTOR** with primary responsibility in the areas of youth and family ministry. Those interested, please indicate so by contacting Foothills Mennonite Church at: Phone: 403-289-7172; E-mail: foothillsmennonite@nucleus.com. The job description can be viewed at <http://foothills.mennonitechurch.ab.ca>. Remuneration in accordance with MC Canada guidelines.

Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church in Abbotsford B.C. is inviting applications for the position of **ASSOCIATE PASTOR** starting Sept. 1, 2008. The successful candidate will be a team player, working with several other team members under the direction of the lead pastor and the elected congregational boards. The candidate will have a heart for prayer, embrace Anabaptist theology, and have an ability to preach and teach with integrity, addressing the issues of our culture in the 21st Century. Associate Pastor's responsibilities will primarily focus on, but not necessarily be limited to, Family Ministries— children, youths, young adults and their parents. Our multi-generational and multi-lingual congregation of about 400 members includes many recent and even more former immigrants. Applications will be accepted until we find a successful applicant.

We invite you to submit a cover letter and resume to:
 Search Committee Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church
 2051 Windsor Street, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6L9
 Phone: 604-850-8422
 Fax: 604-850-8455
 E-mail: eadmin@telus.net

CHILDREN'S PASTOR AND JUNIOR YOUTH PASTOR

Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church is seeking to fill the following positions:

- Children's Pastor (0.7FTE)
- Junior Youth Pastor (Grades 7-9) (0.4 FTE)

For further information and position descriptions, please see our website, www.fgmb.ca.

If an applicant is interested in both positions, the church would consider combining the 2 positions into 1 full-time position.

Responses will be received until April 25, 2008 and may be directed to:

Search Committee
 Fort Garry MB Church
 1771 Pembina Highway
 Winnipeg, MB R3T 2G6
 Or you may email info@fgmb.ca



*Associated
 Mennonite
 Biblical
 Seminary*

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary seeks an **ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT** to raise funds for the annual budget, endowment and special projects of the seminary and to build strong seminary-church relationships. Qualifications include knowledge of MC USA and MC Canada, proven track record in development or marketing, strong organizational skills, willingness to travel, and Christian commitment and passion for the mission of AMBS. This position is full-time with the possibility to advance to director in the future. To apply, send letter of application, resumé and names of three references by April 15 to Leroy Saner, director of development, AMBS, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, IN 46517, or Isaner@ambs.edu. See a full job description at www.ambs.edu/employment.

Christian Alliance International School (CAIS) in Hong Kong invites applications from teachers possessing a minimum B.Ed. (or equivalent) and a relevant major. The School is registered with the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan and utilizes a Western Canadian curriculum. CAIS offers an attractive salary and benefits package.

TEACHER VACANCIES:

- Primary (several grades)
- Primary French (K- G.5)
- Middle years (grades 7 – 9) science
- High school science (chemistry, biology and general science)

DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION:

- M.Ed. (Curriculum and Instruction) is required

Further details about the positions and the application process may be found on the school web site at <http://www.cais.edu.hk>.

Closing Date: March 15, 2008

Please send applications to:

Christian Alliance International School
 ATTN: Mr. A. Enns, Headmaster
 2 Fu Ning Street
 Kowloon City, Kowloon
 Hong Kong

Fax: 852-2760-4324 Email: jobs@cais.edu.hk

Personal data will be used for recruitment purposes only.

Connexus (Korea Anabaptist Center ministry in Seoul) seeks **ENGLISH CONVERSATION TEACHERS**

Opportunity for Christians with university degrees to learn, serve, teach, travel, earn and make friends! For more information, visit www.connexus.co.kr/english.



WE ARE:

Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches." In a community surrounded by orchards and vineyards, we at Bethany live with the organic image of:

...growing God's goodness...

This vision grows like different varieties of fruit as we open our lives to spiritual gifts God has given us as a community of faith.

Focusing on the love of Jesus we become branches of God's goodness for the community and the world.

WE PRAY:

For God to nudge a person, knowledgeable in and committed to the Anabaptist belief tradition, to join our Pastoral Team. As Associate Pastor their primary function will be to engage with the youth and young adults of the postmodern generation, both within the Congregation and in the community.

WE INVITE:

All those whom God may nudge to call Ken Janzen at 905-685-4537 (evenings), or email to his attention at bethany@vaxxine.com, or write to his attention at Bethany Mennonite Church, Box 249, Virgil, Ontario L0S 1T0 to learn full details.
www.vaxxine.com/bethany

CANADIAN MENNONITE

An Invitation to the Canadian Mennonite Annual Fundraising Banquet in Calgary on March 29

Canadian Mennonite would like to invite you to a dinner and evening out starting at 6 p.m. on **Saturday, March 29**, at **Foothills Mennonite Church**, 2115 Urbana Road NW, Calgary, Alta.



Cowboy poet **Doris Daley** will be our dinner speaker/poet and a group of musicians will provide musical entertainment on a Celtic theme.

Proceeds from ticket sales and donations will go to support *Canadian Mennonite's* ministry. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at the door, but please reserve them by contacting foothillsmennonite@nucleus.com.

Thank you!

Notice of the 2008 Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service Annual Meeting

The 37th annual meeting of Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service (CMPS), the non-profit corporation that publishes *Canadian Mennonite*, will be held at 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 29, 2008, at Foothills Mennonite Church, 2115 Urbana Road NW, Calgary, Alta.

On the agenda are votes on board actions and financial statements for the past year, and elections to fill any open CMPS board positions. The meeting is public, but voting is limited to CMPS members (who are all those who donated at least \$25 in the past year), and all current board members (see names and nominating bodies on page 2). Members who are unable to be present may complete the proxy voting form below and mail it to *Canadian Mennonite*, 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 6H7 before the meeting.

The annual report and audited financial statements will also be posted at *Canadian Mennonite's* website after the meeting.

Proxy Voting Form

As a member of CMPS, I hereby appoint:

_____ as my proxy to attend, act and vote on my behalf at the CMPS Annual Meeting on March 29, 2008.

 Name

 Address



Ministry to young children is part of the work of the Mennonite Church Eastern Canada-sponsored church plant in Sherbrooke, Que.

Colombian church planter Lucy Roca begins house churches in Quebec

BY DAVE ROGALSKY
Eastern Canada Correspondent
SHERBROOKE, QUE.



Lucy Roca, together with her sister-in-law Betty Roca, has begun two Spanish-speaking house churches in Quebec: in Sherbrooke, southeast of Montreal, and in Montreal itself, with a third set to begin.

“Their gifts really complement each other,” says Brian Bauman, MC Eastern Canada mission minister.

When Peter Stucky of the Colombian Mennonite Church contacted MC Canada with the potential for Lucy and her family to come to Canada to work as church planters, there was some necessity in the request. Having

already fled from her home to Bogotá, her sense of safety was shattered with the assassination of her brother, and she qualified for refugee status in Canada.

The Teusaquillo congregation in Bogotá, Colombia’s capital, where she was at-

tending and where Stucky is pastor, commissioned her to begin to work in Quebec among the many Colombian refugees who already lived there.

MC Canada contacted MC Eastern Canada, and Bauman had a new, passionate church planter to support. “It’s an incredible privilege to work with a global church missionary,” Bauman says. “Lucy is a gift to the larger Mennonite world. It’s what the global church is doing for us, what it means to be Mennonites and Anabaptists. It’s refreshing. They bring a core of Mennonite belief and practice with none of our ‘Mennonite’ culture.”

Betty had been living in the Montreal area for four years and had many contacts among Colombian refugees and immigrants. “Three weeks after our arrival,

we began weekly meetings of singing, study, prayer and fellowship,” Lucy notes.

The congregation is already sending monetary support back to Colombia to help a new congregation there. Lucy is identifying, training and encouraging leaders to grow more congregations.

Bauman sees in her the “owning the unknown” trait common to church planters who look to the unknown-but-hopeful future as an interesting and exciting challenge. ☺

From death threats to church planting

MC EASTERN CANADA PHOTOS



Pictured, left to right, are Mennonite Church Eastern Canada mission minister Brian Bauman, sisters-in-law Lucy Roca and Betty Roca, centre, spiritual leaders of the Sherbrooke, Que., church plant, and Noé Gonzalía, pastor of Kitchener (Ont.) First Mennonite Church.