

CANADIAN MENTORITE

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excitement
in Alberta

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EDITORIAL

Spiritual blindness

TIM MILLER DYCK

Editor/Publisher

I've been visiting congregations in different parts of the country over the past two months and have been inspired and strengthened by what I have seen and heard. I'd like to share one of those visits with you all, with other stories coming in future issues. It's such a privilege that my role at *Canadian Mennonite* brings me into the lives of so many people and congregations I would not meet otherwise. Thank you so much for your welcomes, for listening to me talk about this magazine's ministry and for sharing with me your feedback on it.

Scripture and the preaching of the Word left a powerful impression on me during my Sunday at Douglas Mennonite Church in northeast Winnipeg. Pastor Don Rempel Boschman preached on John 9 in both services, but took quite different approaches in each one. It was inspiring to hear how he deftly brought out two completely different messages from the same verses by looking at them from different points of view. I was fortunate to hear both sermons.

This chapter in John's Gospel describes how Jesus heals a man blind from birth and what the consequences are. In his first sermon, Don highlighted the work of testimony: what we do when we tell others of what God has been and is doing in our lives.

This man had his life completely

changed by Jesus. He was blind and now he can see. But surprisingly, his life actually gets worse in some ways after this blessing. First, people refuse to believe that he is who he is, then the Pharisees—the religious leaders who are feeling threatened by Jesus—put the man through an interrogation, pressuring him to stop giving Jesus credit for healing him. His own parents distance themselves from him and refuse to support him in front of the Pharisees. Finally, he is questioned again by the Pharisees who say to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man [Jesus] is a sinner. He answered, 'I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.' . . . They answered him, 'You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?' And they drove him out."

Now the healed man has never even seen Jesus, who just put mud on his eyes and told him to go wash them out. When he's being attacked by the authorities and left to stand alone by his family, Jesus is nowhere to be found. The healed man himself hardly knows anything about Jesus. But in his sufferings and in Jesus' absence, as he faithfully testifies to what little he knows about Jesus his understanding and faith grow. Finally, when he meets Jesus again—not even knowing yet what he looks like—his response is, "Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him."

As with Mennonites, our closest times with God are when we are going through hardship and persecution. Looking at the light hurts if our eyes have grown used to the dark—but once the light is seen, there is no going back to darkness.

In the second service, Don described this passage as the scariest verses in the Bible. In it, he reads about people much like him and much like us. They are committed to their faith and to the signs of living faithfully. They honour the Sabbath, meet together in the synagogue and seek to follow the teachings of Scripture. These people are the Pharisees.

Yet, despite all their energy and effort in studying Scripture, when they encounter the living Word of God, they are blind to it. They missed what God was doing right in front of their eyes. Speaking to the Pharisees at the end of the story, Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

Don closed with three areas of blindness he felt today's Mennonites have:

- First, we lack urgency in telling others about Jesus; our culture of keeping spiritual topics private leads us to ignore that all of us will need to face God someday.
- Second, we do very little to share our wealth with those who have less. How many of us cramp our consumerism with our generosity?
- Third, we miss out on the power of the Holy Spirit. It takes a quiet backseat in our congregational life. But the Holy Spirit is the powerful presence of God and brings blessing on those who are open to it.



ABOUT THE COVER:

Recent fundraisers for Camp Valaqua's \$250,000 building project—for an environmentally friendly residence to house camp directors and managers onsite—pushed the total collected to around \$150,000. Young Jeremy Wiens got into the spirit of the "building excitement" at the first fundraiser held at Edmonton First Mennonite Church. A second fundraiser was held at Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary.

PHOTO: DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD, CANADIAN MENNONITE

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

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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 May 12 issue will be posted by May 8.

Kids & communion:

Towards a more inclusive approach

BY ELSIE REMPEL

In 2005, Elsie Rempel, director of Christian Education and Nurture for Mennonite Church Canada, began engaging the topic of children and communion in the Mennonite Church. She looked at existing practices in Mennonite congregations as well as practices in other denominations. What follows are some of the insights she has gained, with suggestions on how to move towards the incorporation of children and youths in Mennonite communion services.

Over the last 500 years of western history, our thoughts and practices regarding children have undergone major changes. While the understanding that children become capable of rational thought at about seven years of age has remained fairly constant, 16th century attitudes that the will of the child must be

broken for it to learn perfect obedience have been largely replaced by attitudes that seek to discover and support the unique gifts of each child God has entrusted to us.

We have moved from attitudes that assumed corporal punishment was good and essential for shaping a well-disciplined person to serious questioning of—and often rejecting—its validity.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the Sunday school movement grew and significantly shaped how and where we nurture the faith of our children. During this period, Mennonites who were living in fairly closed and homogenous rural communities either moved into the cities or adapted to the broader rural culture around them.

That culture quite recently shifted from one in which we expected our public school teachers to read from the Bible and say the Lord's Prayer with their students to a society that defines itself as being secular and post-Christian.

All this impacts the way we now seek to nurture faith in children as we partner between homes and congregations. It also impacts how children participate in the broader worship and life of the church.

We are shifting from educational and churchly attitudes that expected children to learn from adults to attitudes that expect children to learn along with adults. In the church, we are shifting from the attitude that real faith is only possible once one understands and embraces the stories and beliefs about God and God's people, and then responds to the work of the Holy Spirit in one's life, to attitudes that affirm the beginning of faith and the intuitive response to the presence of the

MC CANADA FILE PHOTO BY LYNETTE WIEBE



Elsie Rempel, a former elementary school teacher, and the current director of MC Canada Christian Education and Nurture, often works with children to test material that is still in development.

consider just why communion participation is such an integral part of worship for those who are not yet baptized members of the church.

First of all, to echo a quote from Eleanor Kreider's *Communion Shapes Character*, it seems that God is working among us to renew our communion practice so it helps us "enter into this gift of Christian unity and go out with joy into the task of Christian mission." As communion becomes more prominent in our Sunday morning worship, its impact on all who have gathered to worship will increase.

Second, communion is where we enact the core of our faith. In our communion practice, we bring together word and deed, symbol and action, the visual and the tactile, and individual and communal spirituality in a holistic form that has great faith-nurturing potential.

Children are active, visual and intuitive. They experience and respond to all of life through their senses. An appropriately integrated communion service may be the church's best antidote to the lure of the sirens of consumerism and secularism. On the other hand, the message that Jesus' invitation to the table and a life of faith is only for those who are mature enough to undergo believer's baptism can be very excluding for children and youths who wonder if they belong—or want to belong—to this family of faith.

In *Children Matter* (Eerdmans 2005), Catherine Stonehouse advocates for children in the church with this powerful statement: "Wherever we are on the journey of faith, God has a place for us." This reminds me of our family tables, where all have a place. However, the

Holy Spirit long before we are capable of understanding and accepting beliefs.

James Fowler, who wrote the classic on faith development, *Stages of Faith* (HarperCollins, 1981), and other specialists in children's spirituality are helping us differentiate between faith, for which humans are programmed from our very beginnings, and belief, which requires cognitive processes that begin to mature at about age seven. In addition to this, the Sunday morning worship hour, in which children are now generally present, has become our main setting for building community, worshipping and celebrating communion.

This is just a partial illustration of how radically our context has changed from that of our Anabaptist ancestors. But it is enough to point out that, given our present context for faithfulness, we need to provide our non-baptized children and youths with strong identity-building messages and experiences of belonging to the family of faith as we worship and celebrate communion on Sunday mornings.

An increasing number of Mennonite

congregations are responding to this new context by inviting all who love Jesus to come and participate in the fellowship of the Lord's table, and they are finding many different ways of doing so. (See "How three churches offer communion," page 7.)

However, as Arnold Snyder wrote in an essay published in *Naming the Sheep: Issues in Church Membership* (Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 1997), "If we tug at the strands of the Lord's Supper, lots of other threads become undone as well."

Are some of the threads of our core convictions coming undone if we tug at these strands? If so, then this is a topic that deserves broad ecclesial discernment, so that our changing communion practice can nurture the faith of those who are on a journey towards baptism without damaging what is most precious about our past communion practices.

The importance of communion for children and youths

Before we look at actual changes in our communion practices, it is important to

places for young children are different; they find their places on our laps, or on booster seats, just like the places for frail senior members have cushions or back supports.

One of our distinctive Mennonite emphases about communion is the accountability we accept in radical discipleship as the body of Christ on earth to Jesus and to each other. We believe in a very “real presence” in communion—not the real presence in the bread, as more sacramental Christians do—but in the

[W]e need to provide our non-baptized children and youths with strong identity-building messages and experiences of belonging to the family of faith.

gathered and united body of believers. We, therefore, prepare for communion by doing what we can to live in peace with God and our brothers and sisters. During communion we renew our baptismal covenants to radical discipleship. At least, these are the three essential prerequisites for communion participation, as described in Article 12 of the 1995 *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*.

How, then, can children and youths who are good at making peace with others—but who are not covenanted members of the body of Christ—find the place God has for them at our communion tables? One way is by agreeing with Menno Simons, who expressed that the children of Christians “are saved, holy and pure, pleasing to God, under the covenant and in his church,” and that they are “already washed and baptized with the blood of Jesus Christ, which saves their souls,” although “the sign of baptism they shall receive at the appointed time, on the confession of their faith” (*Complete Works of Menno Simons*, Pathway Publishers, 1983).

We can affirm in contextually appropriate ways that, yes, they are children of the covenant unless they choose to leave this faith community, and, yes, there is still a new level of participation and accountability that will follow once they confess their faith through baptism. But

how can we come to agreement on this important aspect of incarnational theology in our congregations?

Other Protestant responses

After commissioning and discussing biblical and developmental psychology research papers during the late 1980s and early '90s, the Mennonite Brethren Church of Canada arrived at the decision to separate communion participation from baptism and membership.

The United Church of Canada has

implemented the widest invitation. Its official policy states: “Communion is a symbolic meal that is open to everyone. . . . Children aren’t viewed as adults-in-waiting, nor are they on display for the amusement of the adults.”

Similarly, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada’s approach includes an emphasis on helping children understand the doctrines surrounding communion and encourages the integration of children in the liturgy and broader worship life of the church.

MC Canada’s response

Practice is shifting in the direction of inclusion in our congregations. In 1997, several essays in *Naming the Sheep* addressed the topic. A survey revealed that 23 percent of churches included children at some level of participation, and 48 percent also included non-baptized adults in communion.

In 2002, Vol. 2 of *Vision*, a Canadian Mennonite University and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary journal, was dedicated to the topic, as was the June 14, 2004, issue of *Canadian Mennonite*.

In 2007, at least three of MC Canada’s area churches offered workshops for pastors on the topic of children and communion.

Communion services at the last number of MC Canada national assemblies

CANADIAN MENNONITE FILE PHOTO



While the adults at the 2006 MC Canada assembly in Edmonton were served communion during the final worship service, the children were given clusters of grapes.

have demonstrated ways of integrating children into the service without inviting them to partake of the elements, but we have not addressed this issue at the assembly level or moved in the direction of commissioning teaching resources on the topic.

According to John D. Rempel’s comments in the 2002 issue of *Vision*, our conservative communion practice has served as our incarnational theology for a ritual practice that may not have been sufficiently reflected on—or articulated—for much of Mennonite Church history. The growth of more liberal practices is leading us to a less conservative incarnational theology of communion. (*See Rempel’s response to this article on page 8.*)

Will our newer practices—of blessing children and youths as part of the communion service, of offering them grapes and crackers or pretzels, of acknowledging them as being on a journey towards their baptisms, or of welcoming them to full participation at the Lord’s Table—continue to lead our denomination’s theology in this matter? Or will we engage in deeper theological reflection

on this important topic?

Articulating a Mennonite theology of childhood faith that takes current research on faith development and the impact of our increasingly secular context on our children's identity formation into account would help lay the foundation for denominational discernment on this topic.

Tips for integrating children in church worship

As we engage in the needed discernment about children's participation in communion, there is much that we can do—and are, in fact, already doing—to show our children and youths that they are indeed a precious part of the community that gathers for worship on Sunday mornings. Available from the MC Canada Resource Centre, *Transforming Worship with the Children's Story* provides guidelines for a "children's time" that nurtures the faith children have and adds to, rather than detracts from, worship.

Intentionally integrating children and youths as apprentices in all aspects of the worship service, while pacing the service so that it incorporates regular opportunities for appropriate movement and congregational responses, can go a long way in helping children know they belong in worship. So can including anecdotes from the lives of children in sermons or petitions that connect with their concerns in congregational prayers. Beginning worship with singing that is accessible for all ages and musical skill levels is another aspect of worship planning that sends a message of inclusion.

Finally, we can remember that Jesus, our radically inviting and challenging Saviour, made a point of taking children on his lap and blessing them when his followers thought he was too busy with more important matters. As his body on earth we can commit ourselves to doing the same, and make a point of metaphorically and physically holding our children in the hearts and on the laps of our congregations as we worship with the Word and at our Lord's communion table. When we do, our children, our worship and our witness will all be blessed. ❧

How three churches offer communion

Lethbridge (Alta.) Mennonite Church

I told the children at a recent service that communion—the bread and grape juice—are signs of something we can't see but we know it is real or true, a sign of Jesus' death and resurrection. The deacons served communion to adults in the pews and I invited the children to receive a blessing from one of them by using sign language (crossing their arms and putting their hands on the opposite shoulders) to let the deacon know they wanted a blessing. Then I gave the children a bag of pretzels that I said are shaped like "hugs," to remind them of the sign for the blessing. There were two pretzels in each bag, one to eat when they went back to their seats and the other to eat when the adults were served communion. I prayed with the children, thanking God for loving us and for the signs of God's love—families, Jesus' death and resurrection, communion, the Bible, nature—and concluded by praying that these children might grow into the children that God would desire them to be.

—BY RUTH PRESTON SCHILK, PASTOR

East Zorra (Ont.) Mennonite Church

We decided to test the inclusion of children in communion. The invitation always notes that "all who are baptized are welcome to partake." We added grapes and crackers, and the invitation, "All who have not been baptized, but who love Jesus and who look forward to the day when they will be baptized, are welcome to receive a grape and cracker."

Feedback from the congregation has been overwhelmingly positive in several ways. The inclusion of children and unbaptized youth and adults as already part of the community has been well-received. Several parents have reported that their children, noting the difference between themselves and those who were baptized, asked about this. Parents were glad for the opportunity to explain baptism, adult decisions, and that the children, already part of the community, could look forward to making their own decision to belong fully in the future.

—BY DAVE ROGALSKY, INTERIM PASTOR

Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver, B.C.

Our decision was that we would invite those who are baptized believers. Our past practice was to have communion as a separate evening service approximately five times a year. It was clear to those who came to this special service that these were the expectations. Only when we began offering communion as part of the morning worship did this become an issue. Everyone is at the morning service—children, believers and unbelievers, baptized and unbaptized believers—thank God. We still serve communion five times a year, but now it is served three times in the morning service, while the special evening service happens twice a year.

The desire from those looking for change was to extend a greater gesture of belonging. We decided that, while the invitation would go out to baptized believers, we would offer grapes and crackers to all those anticipating baptism at some time in the future. Many felt that this gesture was compromising the deeper meaning of the bread and the cup, and so I don't know the future of the grapes and crackers.

It is interesting that the most holy moment of the Christian experience can become the most exclusive event that the church does. Yet at the same time, the Christian faith requires a serious decision to follow Jesus: a calling to "*repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins*" (Acts 2:38).

—BY GARRY JANZEN, FORMER PASTOR

Covenants sealed and renewed:

A response to Elsie Rempel's proposal

BY JOHN D. REMPEL

Having read Elsie Rempel's master's thesis, I am impressed with her careful thinking, her respect for tradition and her passion for the inclusion of children in the whole life of the church. I find myself challenged by the reasons she presents for a major shift in our understanding of children and the fact that this shift needs to be taken into account in worship and nurture. As my competence lies in the field of theology, I will concern myself with the nature of the church and the Lord's Supper.

Mennonites have historically believed, as she says, that children are included in Christ's redemptive work until they are capable of an owned faith. Then they choose for or against the gift they have been given.

Our understanding of the church is that it is made up only of those who confess Christ's grace in their life and enter a covenant with Christ and his body. This covenant is sealed in baptism and renewed in the breaking of bread.

There are many stages of faith. Baptism expresses that stage of faith in which a believer is able to promise to live according to a new allegiance. To be sure, all of us who have been baptized know that we come to it with a trembling and partial faith. Baptism is not a confession that we have achieved spiritual maturity, but that we have surrendered to the gift of grace that makes us members of the body of Christ. Everyone in whom the Spirit works such a response is ready for baptism and its cyclical renewal in the Lord's Supper, whether they are 12 or 60. We base this understanding on the example and teaching of the New Testament and the aspiration of our Anabaptist spiritual ancestors to reclaim that teaching and example.

All practices "holding our children in the hearts and on the laps of our congregation" that are consistent with this understanding of faith are to be encouraged in relation to communion. The most important of these, in my view, is affirming whatever faith we see in a child as growth "on a journey toward their baptism." If offering children grapes and crackers during the Lord's Supper symbolizes that affirmation and anticipation, it fits with a Believer's Church model, but if doing so blurs the difference between an awakening and a covenanting faith, it goes against the church's grain.

A final response to her concern about the "excluding" nature of traditional communion practice. Is there not a place for "longing" as a dimension of each stage of life? There needs to be a balance between anticipation and gratification. Not having, but longing for communion with Christ and the church, and then having

We don't do our children any favours by shielding them from the truth that life in its fullness becomes ours only through choosing Christ above all other loyalties.

the promise of its fulfillment are steps along the spiritual journey.

Finally, although she does not espouse a totally open communion herself, I have concerns about where this could lead:

- **Evangelism.** I fear that one of the motives for unlimited inclusion is to get around the hard but life-giving truth that authentic belonging happens only when I take a chance on Christ and his community. We don't do our children any favours by shielding them from the truth that life in its fullness becomes ours only through choosing Christ above all other loyalties.



Elsie Rempel and John D. Rempel discuss children and communion at last year's missionary worship course at Peace Mennonite Church in Regina.

- **Some advocates of a completely open Lord's Supper unconsciously borrow the arguments of churches that practise infant baptism.** In those churches, open communion is based on two beliefs that we do not share: First, that an infant or child can be a full member of the church; and second, that in the parish model everyone living in a given place belongs and has a "right" to inclusion.
- **Separating baptism and communion is the final stage in the privatizing of faith and the dismantling of sacramental reality.** If I am the sole actor in the process of coming to faith, and I am free to decide on my own terms which aspects of the church's life I will be part of,

the covenanted community is bypassed as the place where God works salvation. The Spirit awakens faith in many ways, but we mark the gift of covenanting faith with the sign of baptism, in which the Spirit and the church confirm to the believers that they have indeed become members of the body of Christ. Without the objective sign of baptism, all that we have to go on is subjective experience. ❧

John D. Rempel is assistant professor of theology and Anabaptist studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart Ind.

Faithful unto death

How early Anabaptists viewed the ties that bind baptism and communion together

BY SEAN O'LEARY



For Anabaptists, baptism and communion were . . . primarily symbolic: baptism was an outward sign of an inward reality, and communion was above all considered a commemorative meal, often deemed “the Lord’s Memorial.”

Conrad Grebel . . . stressed that the supper provides “simply bread, yet if faith and brotherly love precede it, it is to be received with joy, since when it is used in the church it is to show that we are truly one bread and one body. . . .”

The Anabaptists asserted that the table was strictly for devout believers, and advocated and practised separation from the world. This is reflected in Article III of the *Schleitheim Confession* (1527): “[A]ll those who desire to break one bread in remembrance of the broken body of Christ and all those who wish to drink of one drink in remembrance of the shed blood of Christ, they must beforehand be united in the one body of Christ . . . by baptism. . . . So it shall and must be, that whoever does not share in the calling of the one God to one faith, to one baptism, to one spirit, to one body together . . . may not be made one loaf together with them, as must be true if one wishes truly to break bread according to the command of Christ.”

“Since now these ceremonies and signs have to do completely and exclusively with fraternal love,” declared Balthasar Hübmaier in *A Form for Christ’s Supper* (1527), “who can sit at the supper with a good conscience?” The answer, he wrote, is the one who senses inwardly and sincerely that the love of God, with the assurance of the holy word, “has so moved, softened, and penetrated [one’s] spirit and soul.” However, “to fulfill the law

it is not enough to avoid sins and die to them. Yea, one must also do good to the neighbour,” Hübmaier stressed.

As John D. Rempel observes in Vol. II of *The Complete Library of Christian Worship: 20 Centuries of Christian Worship*, “This is the gist of Hübmaier’s theology of worship and belief about the Lord’s Supper. The fulfilment of the sacrament is to pour out one’s flesh and blood for the other. Without this pledge, it is all hypocrisy.”

“Hübmaier’s community was apocalyptic in that the intensity of faith asked for by Hübmaier knew no limits,” Rempel writes. “Every baptized believer was asked to be faithful unto death. Just as Christ gave up his life for us, so we ought to give up ours for others in suffering love. That is the promise that makes the bread and wine into a true Lord’s Supper, according to Hübmaier.” ❧

Jacob Dircks, who was burned along with his sons in Antwerp, 1568, was one of many examples of early Anabaptist believers who took seriously the call to be faithful unto death.

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Excerpted and adapted from Sean O’Leary’s 2007 doctoral thesis, “Go Ye Therefore’ and ‘This Do’: Towards the Revitalization of Evangelical Eucharistic Praxis.” He earned his doctorate in theology from the University of Toronto’s Emmanuel College, a member of the Toronto School of Theology.

/// For discussion

1. How does your congregation include children in worship? Does the children’s time sometimes become “entertainment for adults”? Are children today treated differently than when you were young?
2. Do non-baptized children and youths feel excluded if communion is limited to those who are baptized? Does this exclusion discredit their experiences of faith?
3. Should we encourage our congregations to have a more open communion so that younger people can be included? Would that discourage young people from making a commitment? Does it take away the incentive for baptism?
4. If we encourage children to participate in communion without being baptized, does that weaken the idea of the church as a covenant community? Do you agree with John D. Rempel that it makes our faith more private and less corporate?
5. What ideas do you have for including children in worship?

VIEWPOINTS

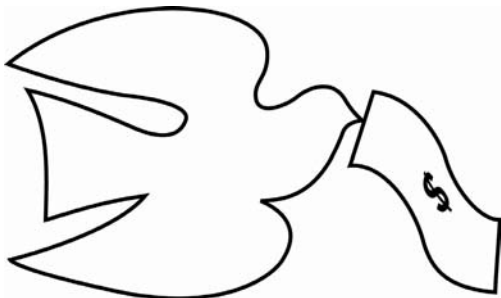
/// Readers write

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.

✉ Canada's war in Afghanistan sadly mirrors U.S. war in Vietnam

WE LIVED IN Elkhart, Ind., in 1968-69 when the U.S. was involved in Vietnam. At that time an article



Would you like the option of redirecting military taxes towards non-violent forms of security-building?

To find out more, visit CONSCIENCE CANADA at www.consciencecanada.ca, send a note to consciencecanada@shaw.ca, or call (416) 203-1402.

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appeared in the *Elkhart Truth* about a letter written by Air Force Major Victor Colasuonno to a Grade 4 class in Wichita, Kan., where his son was a student. The letter, which was read to the entire school after the major was killed in action in 1969, included the words, "War is all the horrible things a human being can do to another human being because he has not learned to love," and that if people learn to love, "there would be no wars, for man does not hurt what he loves."

The last statement by the major, "Perhaps your generation can accomplish this—it seems that mine has failed," came to my mind during these years of war in Afghanistan. I see little patriotism or any other legitimate motive for the present war. We are being duped by the manufacturers of armaments who find war a very lucrative business.

My way of seeing the whole matter is that war is being glamorized and we are worshipping the twin gods of Mars and Mammon.

—PETER UNGER, ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

✉ Too much farm money heads to the city and never returns

IN THE ONGOING discussion about farming and the problems associated with agriculture ("The state of Mennonite farming today," Nov. 12, 2007, page 4), the area of wealth and how it is retained—or not—in the region from which it is generated is given little attention.

Farmers generate a lot of money in gross dollars on their farms. However, the majority of the money that farmers create is spent on fixed and variable input costs—items such as machinery, fertilizer, fuel, crop protection, interest and insurance—items that often come from far away.

Most of that money goes to, and is then re-used, in cities, never to be circulated in the rural farm communities where it was generated. Because a city's economy is more diverse than a rural economy, the interest and insurance income that the banks earn is turned over several times within any given city. In a sense, this is free money for cities, or at least a transfer of wealth.

My intent is not to blame farmers or cities for the situation that agriculture is in. But in my mind, the transfer of wealth away from rural areas is a major contributor. Retaining more of those "gross dollars" down on the farm would, if nothing else, create some jobs in the rural area, so that if the farmer's son or daughter chooses not to farm there would be another opportunity for them.

BOB SIEMENS, ROSETOWN, SASK.

✉ Alternatives to not paying a Canadian 'war tax' suggested

IT IS COMMENDABLE for Benno Barg to be concerned about military activities being carried out on our behalf by our government ("Mennonites must quit paying for Canada to go to war," March 17, page 9).

To obtain effective political action on this issue, though, we need to draw in enough Canadian voters that our politicians begin to take note. Withholding 8 percent of our taxes will not achieve such a political end. It will be dismissed by other Canadians as a few pacifist wimps seeking a tax dodge.

To be credible, political action needs to demonstrate

that advocates for a cause are prepared to pay a price for their convictions. Going to court, paying a fine or being sentenced to jail for withholding war taxes is paying a price, but I am not convinced it would draw much public sympathy.

One alternative pursued by some is to reduce their taxable income to the point that no taxes are paid. This is commendable, but is not a viable option for most people with jobs and for people with defined pension benefits.

Another possible option is to inform the government and the public that we express our opposition to current war efforts by donating an additional amount to a cause engaged in peacekeeping. If such a cause can issue charitable donation tax receipts, each person

FROM OUR LEADERS

Come one, come all

PAM PETERS-PRIES

"At the crossroads: Promise and peril" is the theme—based on Deuteronomy 4:1-9—for a special event that will take place in Winnipeg this July. Following the annual Mennonite Church Canada delegate assembly, folks from across MC Canada and MC USA are invited to gather together for a "People's Summit for Faithful Living" (July 8-10).

The two-and-a-half days of the People's Summit are focused on worship, fellowship and learning.

There are no reports, budgets, elections or resolutions. (That all happens at the MC Canada delegate assembly that takes place immediately before the People's Summit.) While it would be stretching it to call the schedule "leisurely," there are generous meal and coffee breaks to catch up with old friends and make new ones. Late night activities and an afternoon festival and barbecue will also increase the fun and fellowship factor.

Anyone who is interested may register to attend. You do not need to be invited or appointed by your congregation or area church. There are no "delegates" at the People's Summit. We hope that

youths, young adults and older adults from all across Canada and the U.S. will come together at this important event. There is a Kids Assembly for children from nursery to junior high (completing Grade 8 this year). And while anyone can come, everyone must register in advance!

The worship speakers are Tom and Christine Sine of Seattle, Wash., (see "Christian futurists' to speak at People's Summit," on page 36); April Yamasaki of Abbotsford, B.C.; and Conrad Grebel



Late night activities and an afternoon festival and barbecue will increase the fun and fellowship factor.

University College professor Tom Yoder Neufeld from Waterloo, Ont.

The seminars at the People's Summit are organized into four learning tracks:

- Developing leaders for the church in today's world;
- Faith, family and life in challenging times;
- Current world issues and the church; and
- Bible study.

Participants may stay in one learning track for the entire People's Summit or choose seminars from a variety of tracks.

Seminar speakers include Elsie Rempel, Derek Suderman, Nelson Kraybill, Lee Schmucker, Harry Huebner, David Neufeld, Muriel Bechtel and Norman Meade.

The "Developing leaders for the church in today's world" learning track takes the place of the annual MC Canada ministers conference, which normally precedes the annual delegate assembly. While this track has been planned with pastors and other leaders in mind, pastors attending the People's Summit may choose seminars from any of the four learning tracks.

The MC Canada delegate assembly runs from July 7-8. The People's Summit opens after supper on July 8 and concludes with worship on the evening of July 10. All events take place at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg.

Information and registration forms for both the MC Canada delegate assembly and the People's Summit are available at mennonitechurch.ca (follow the link on the right side of the home page) or by calling toll-free 1-866-888-6785. The early bird registration deadline is May 15. Advance registration is required for all participants at both events.

Pam Peters-Pries is the executive secretary of support services at Mennonite Church Canada.

can work out the additional donation required to reduce taxes paid by 8 percent.

This form of sacrifice actively works for peace and has, I believe, a better chance of drawing in other Canadians to a worthy cause.

HENRY REMPEL, WINNIPEG

✉ Only reduction in demand will stop Alberta oil sands development

RE: LORNE BUHR'S Feb. 18 letter to the editor, "Is Alberta oil resource development a golden calf?" (page 10), written in response to the Jan. 7 feature article,

"The root of much good? A tale of Mennonite money" (page 4).

Although the oil sands are certainly leaving their mark on our environment, these companies are only responding to an insatiable need of North American people for oil. It is also the people who then complain louder with every extra penny we must pay at the pump. Only when we say we will pay the price for cleaner energy—or reduce our demand—will the market respond.

I believe that the contribution of Mennonite and other Christian employees of these companies have a much louder voice than those who simply walk away.

GOD MONEY AND ME

Life insurance . . . yes or no?

ED WEDEL

A number of years ago, evangelist Billy Graham was asked whether he believed in purchasing life insurance. His response was quick and sure, "I most certainly do," and he proceeded to quote I Timothy 5:8: *"If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."*

It has been said that there are only two certainties in life—death and taxes. If the time of death comes before old age, we will probably leave behind family members who need to be taken care of. Death does not relieve us of that responsibility.

Life insurance may be purchased for many reasons, including covering a debt like a car loan or mortgage. Most importantly, life insurance replaces a loss of income when a financial provider dies. Life insurance pays a tax-free benefit to the beneficiary that can be used to pay off debts or invested to provide income.

There are really only two types of life insurance: permanent and temporary. Permanent insurance comes in two types:

- **Whole Life** insurance includes two main components: protection and savings (referred to as cash surrender value). Typically, the premiums are guaranteed and the insurance company sets the rate of interest on the savings, which usually

tends to be quite low. The insurance company will also pay an annual dividend, which can be used to add to savings or purchase additional insurance. This tends to be the most expensive insurance.

- **Universal Life** insurance also includes protection and savings. However, the policyholder may choose from a number of investment options—from guaranteed investments to market-based investments like mutual funds. The policyholder must pay a minimum premium to cover the insurance portion, but can add additional amounts to build up the investment side of the policy. Investments



If the time of death comes before old age, we will probably leave behind family members who need to be taken care of.

within the policy grow tax-free as long as they remain in the policy. This insurance may also carry a higher price tag because of additional benefits and options.

Probably the simplest insurance to understand is temporary insurance, called term insurance:

- **Term** insurance is pure protection, no additional bells and whistles. It is purchased in yearly increments of one to 20 years or more. When you purchase a term of 10 years, you are fixing the premium cost for the 10-year period.

Upon renewal, the premiums will go up. It is best to consider term insurance that is "convertible," so that if you were to become uninsurable later in life, you would have the option to convert it to a permanent plan. Term insurance is the least expensive type of insurance.

One concept that is taught in many financial planning books is to buy term insurance in order to keep your costs down, and invest the difference you would have paid to purchase a higher-cost permanent policy. This way, when you don't have a lot of savings, you "rent" money from the insurance company until you have had a chance to build up a nest egg over time.

Of course, there are many reasons to buy life insurance that I have not touched on here, including estate planning or charitable gift options, to name just two. I

recommend that you explore life insurance for yourself and your family; speak with an insurance broker who has the ability to shop the insurance market and provide the best individualized solution for you.

Ed Wedel is a stewardship consultant at the Abbotsford, B.C., office of Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For stewardship education and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit mennofoundation.ca.

This is the most effective method, in my opinion, to be a good steward.

MATTHEW BLATZ, EDMONTON

✉ Celebration of a drug-free Easter banquet rates a 'hallelujah'

I WOULD LIKE to share my experience at an Easter banquet I attended this year:

Most of the guests are recovering from drug addiction. They have collectively brought their nine small children along to help celebrate not only the risen Christ who redeemed but also freed them from their

slavery to drugs.

No alcohol or foul language was needed for this party to be a success. It seemed like a church banquet.

The people gathered from many parts of the world—from China, Japan, the Philippines, Fiji, Trinidad, from Canada's First Nations, and one who was smuggled out of the former Soviet Union many years ago.

The cook, a former restaurant chef, made a most delectable meal. After coming clean of drugs, he became a builder.

The hostess was a nurse. Since leaving drugs, she has worked at the famous Vancouver east side Insite

FAMILY TIES

A three-strike day

MELISSA MILLER

It's good that the rules of baseball aren't applied to my marriage.

Especially the one that goes "Three strikes and you're out!" Recently I had just such a three-strike day.

Strike one occurred when I kindly but firmly informed my husband that I was unwilling to accommodate his preferred activity for an upcoming weekend afternoon. I felt his unhappiness, but let it slide past me, convinced I had other obligations I needed to fulfill.

Later that day, he told me he was hungry and wondered how late the nearby grocery store was open. Confidently, I assured him it was open till 10. Sometime later he trudged back into the house, treat in hand, gloomily informing me the grocery store had closed at 9:30, and he'd had to visit two other places to satisfy his craving. Strike two.

The final strike involved an awkward conversation about the whereabouts of his hiking boots, which went something like this:

Husband: Honey, have you seen my hiking boots?

Me (wincing as a glimpse flickers through my brain, a glimpse of the contents of the last box I took to the thrift

store): Uh . . . there were some boots like that in the basement, but I thought they were too small to be yours. I'll go check to see if I can find them."

After my basement search came up empty-handed, I reported back to him, "I may have taken something like that to the thrift store."

For better or worse, it was late evening by then. I was glad the day was coming to an end. I mean, what happens if you have four strikes?

The experience left me wondering about what rules do get applied to close family relationships. What guides our behaviour when there are disagreements,



I was glad the day was coming to an end. I mean, what happens if you have four strikes?

disappointments or conflicts?

Apparently humour, adaptability and the ability to control emotions are effective "rules" to put into place, according to marital researcher John Gottman and others.

First of all, a wife approaches her husband with humour and "low intensity," meaning she speaks of the matter lightly, with a calm tone of voice. For his

part, the successful conflict-management husband allows himself to be influenced by his wife; he takes into consideration what his wife is saying and adjusts his behaviour accordingly. Furthermore, he contains his own emotions in the face of his wife's displeasure. He is able to stay cool with his own anger or defensiveness when his wife is upset.

From a Christian perspective, forbearance comes to mind as related to the above characteristics. According to Webster, to forbear means "to hold oneself back from, especially with an effort of self-restraint." In older versions of the Bible, we find the word "forbearance" used in Ephesians 4:2 as a means to cultivate unity. Forbearing (in love) is right in there with humility, gentleness and patience as qualities that demonstrate Christians "lead[ing] a life worthy of the calling to which [we] have been called."

Holding oneself back and practising

self-restraint are good rules to put in place in the games families play. Better than three strikes and you're out, that's for sure!

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

centre, where drug users have access to clean facilities and clean needles.

Fortunately, none of these people have been in jail. Then the story could have been quite different; they could have become hardened criminals because prisons are filled with drugs. They might not have made new friends and thus would have missed the party.

As we got ready to eat and give thanks, all was quiet in solemn reverence. When I said "Amen," 10 powerful voices responded with a resounding "Amen!" For the meal, and to be rid of the drugs. Hallelujah!

LEONARD W. FRIESEN, SURREY, B.C.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Balzer—Owen Nicholas Eldon (b. Feb. 3, 2008), to Ian Balzer and Lauren Woodcock, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont.

Cairns—Calvin James (b. March 29, 2008), to Carrie Snyder and Kevin Cairns, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Dyck—Michaela Heather (b. April 2, 2008), to Alan and Amy (Thom) Dyck, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Funk—Alexander Dietrich (b. April 2, 2008), to Cameron and Linda Funk, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Funk—Turner Jacob Clark (b. Jan. 17, 2008), to Jason and Michelle Funk, Laird Mennonite, Sask.

Riedl—Elliott David (b. July 18, 2007), to Dave and Kristy Riedl, Calvary Church, Ayr, Ont.

Ropp—Ava Gloria (b. April 1, 2008), to Nicole and Ryan Ropp, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Baptisms

Craig Friesen—Osler Mennonite, Sask., March 23, 2008.

Pieter Van Der Kruis—Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., April 6, 2008.

Doug Roeder, Evan Shantz, Diane Worgan—Calvary Church, Ayr, Ont., July 8, 2007.

Marriages

Goerzen/Pross—Michael Goerzen and Kayla Pross, Bergthal Mennonite, Didsbury, Alta., March 29, 2008.

Deaths

Bechtel—Ruth (nee Snyder), 79 (b. Oct. 25, 1928; d. April 6, 2008), Wanner Mennonite, Cambridge, Ont.

Friesen—Jacob, 82 (b. Jan. 26, 1926; d. March 12, 2008), Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

Froese—Margaret (nee Brown), 76 (b. Oct. 1, 1931; d. Jan. 9, 2008), West Abbotsford Mennonite, B.C.

Krahn—Agatha (nee Redekop), 97 (b. Oct. 7, 1910; d. March 29, 2008), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Reimer—William, 66 (b. Jan. 14, 1942; d. March 11, 2008), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont.

Ropp—Stanley, 83 (b. March 10, 1925; d. April 1, 2008), East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Schowalter—Hanna (nee Cornelisen) (d. Feb. 27, 2008), Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, B.C.

Snyder—Sheila, 54 (b. Feb. 28, 1954; d. March 28, 2008), St. Jacobs Mennonite, in Kamloops, B.C.

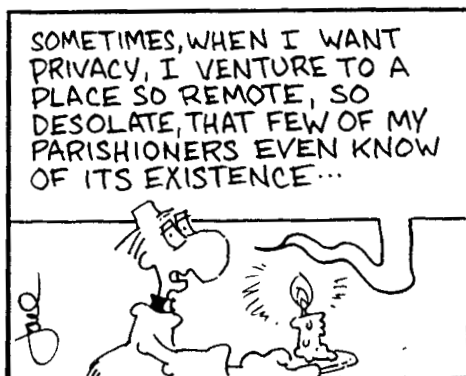
Spenler—Erma (nee Schultz), 78 (b. March 14, 1929; d. March 5, 2008), Poole Mennonite, Ont.

Unger—Helen (nee Sawatzky), 87 (b. March 5, 1921; d. March 28, 2008), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Van Zandwyk—Luella, 74 (b. Feb. 7, 1934; d. April 2, 2008), Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

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.

Pontius' Puddle



LIVING WITHIN LIMITS: PART VI

A biblically indefensible society

PAUL FIEGUTH

Money is a difficult and complex topic. At some level we understand that money is not ours, in that our skills, insights and abilities are thanks to the gifts God has given us. However, even more literally, much of the money we earn really isn't ours. Do we really believe that it is merit or skill that allows someone flipping burgers in Canada to earn 10 times the salary of a Bangladeshi labourer?

A significant fraction of western wealth stems from the leverage with which technology and energy allows one person to accomplish things that would otherwise require many people. A backhoe operator—plus a backhoe and some diesel fuel—does what 20 people with shovels once did.

Yet despite the great wealth of western countries, we are in the midst of a debt and mortgage crisis. The West overspends even the great wealth that it has. More than anything else, this makes it so clear how people and governments have an inability, or a lack of desire, to live within limits, whether ecological or financial.

Ironically, money is one of the few things that is not actually limited. The Canadian dollar is known as a fiat currency, meaning that it doesn't actually possess inherent value. The government has to decree that this little piece of paper has value, as opposed to a currency backed by something "real," such as gold, land or oil. Money is unlimited because the government can choose to print it in unlimited quantities, as happened during periods of hyper-inflation in Germany, Hungary and Bolivia, and currently in Zimbabwe.

In this light it is interesting to contemplate the price gyrations of oil. It is not so much that the price of oil has gone up. It is that people are more inclined to buy oil—something physical, useful, in finite supply—rather than pieces of paper with no inherent value and possibly limitless supply.

Indeed, energy is slowly becoming the new currency. In contrast to paper money, energy is emphatically not fiat. No one actually declares oil, gas or electricity to have value. However, oil does have inherent value because it can



We have enjoyed a century of unprecedented prosperity, subsidized by cheap, plentiful energy and by the subjugation of the rest of the world.

do things—run a car, power a tractor, lubricate a joint. In many ways, the price of oil has not gone up; it's just that the value of most paper currencies has dropped in comparison, decayed by moth and rust, so to speak.

Why the focus on energy as currency? In an industrialized world, energy is a proxy for what we can do. Whether it's the mining of raw resources, the production of fertilizer to grow food, keeping the Internet computer servers running or the transportation of goods, all of these require energy. It doesn't matter how many dollars you have; what matters is how many litres of gasoline or barrels of oil those dollars can buy.

However, seeing energy as currency or wealth has implications. Rich individuals, kings and nations have long sought to acquire wealth by conquering, and to hold it by hoarding or through military

defence. We can see the war in Iraq, and the terms in NAFTA to guarantee U.S. access to Canadian oil, as examples of the former; and strategic oil reserves and frantic buying of long-term oil contracts as examples of the latter.

We have enjoyed a century of unprecedented prosperity, subsidized by cheap, plentiful energy and by the subjugation of the rest of the world. In no way is the state of our society biblically defensible. There is no question that we have become highly dependent on energy, leading to an anxiety in future energy supplies. But Jesus said, "No servant can serve two masters. . . . You cannot serve both God and money." Similarly, we have built up a massive, advanced infrastructure to cater to our needs, but Jesus warned us, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth. . . ."

Really, we should welcome a change

to this situation. Both the environmental costs of energy and the social/moral costs of subjugation are costs for which we should not want to bear responsibility. A future with reduced financial and energy resources is not necessarily bad. People the world over have lived wonderful, fulfilled, meaningful lives in the absence of these. The more we are all able to let go of our energy treasures, the less anxious the future becomes.

Paul Fieguth is an associate professor in systems design engineering at the University of Waterloo, Ont., and a member of Waterloo North Mennonite Church. For expanded versions of these articles, resources or to contact him, visit ocho.uwaterloo.ca/limits or e-mail pfieguth@uwaterloo.ca.

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

New denominational minister announced

By DEBORAH FROESE

Mennonite Church Canada
WINNIPEG

Karen Martens Zimmerly has been appointed to the position of denominational minister with Mennonite Church Canada. She brings to this role the wisdom and experience of more than 20 years of ministry.

A Saskatchewan native, Martens Zimmerly grew up in what she describes as the active, vibrant congregation of Fiske Mennonite Church, where everyone was encouraged to play a role in church life. "I was always involved," she says. "I preached my first sermon at 17."

Still, entering ministry was not a conscious goal at the time. She received her bachelor of education degree from the University of Saskatchewan and taught school for three years before beginning theological studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Throughout her ministry, Martens Zimmerly has co-pastored with her husband Terry. They spent five years at West Abbotsford (B.C.) Mennonite Church and almost 16 years with their current congregation, Grace Mennonite Church in Regina. Sharing a ministry allowed them to respond to their calling and to care for their growing sons, now aged 16, 18 and 20. "It was wonderful for family life," she says.

Walking with people through celebration and challenge, mentoring individuals and working with church leaders at every level to realize the mission of God's church, bring her personal satisfaction. "The most rewarding aspect of ministry for me is relationships with people and seeing God at work," she says.

Martens Zimmerly is looking forward to her new role, but leaving Grace Mennonite won't be easy. Although sharing the news of her appointment with the church was an emotional experience, she received strong

affirmation for her decision.

"We're pleased for Karen and for Mennonite Church Canada. Karen has some real gifts," says Peter Neufeldt, Grace Mennonite's congregational chair. "We're sad to lose them, but at the same time pleased for them and this opportunity for their careers, and for MC Canada."

Dave Bergen, executive secretary of MC

Canada Christian Formation, welcomes Martens Zimmerly, saying she brings "a churchly wisdom gained through significant participation in area church revisioning processes, and a passion for growing a church whose leaders are attuned to and prepared for leadership in the challenging cultural environment of the 21st century." ❧



Martens Zimmerly

'The most rewarding aspect of ministry for me is relationships with people and seeing God at work.'

Well-attended gathering celebrates Low German language heritage

Mennonite Heritage Society
of Saskatchewan Release
OSLER, SASK.

"I never knew *Plautdietsch* was such an old and interesting language," said Vera Falk after attending a weekend gathering at Osler Mennonite Church where this version of Low German was studied and enjoyed. She echoed the sentiments of many of the 265 people who came out to enjoy the expressive Low German poems and stories on March 7 and 8 at the annual sessions of the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan.

Osler Mennonite's Chris Cox, a graduate linguistics student at the University of Alberta, used a PowerPoint presentation to show the development of the language from its origins in antiquity to the present. "The language has adapted to its surroundings and has borrowed words from a dozen other languages," he said.

Dick Braun, who has travelled to most Latin American countries where Mennonites speak *Plautdietsch*, gave practical examples of these adaptations to geography and local culture.

Historical society president Jake Buhler gave examples of the rich metaphors in



PHOTO BY JACK DRIEDGER

Anne and Hank Neufeld of McGregor, Man., performed at this year's Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan gathering that focused on Plautdietsch. They set all their Low German lyrics to folk and religious melodies. Hank has been dubbed the Johnny Cash of Low German.

Low German proverbs and expressions. Then teaming up with brothers Wilf and Ben, the trio sang, "*Kommt schmaekt onse Mama ehre*," a medley of folk and sacred songs they had composed.

Eighty-year-old Jacob M. Fehr from Swift Current, Sask., read a number of his original poems, and Jack Driedger, a retired school teacher who grew up near Osler at Blumenheim, used his language fluency to muse on the common situations people find themselves in. ❧

Coming to a new home

Orthodox Mennonite community adjusting to life in rural Manitoba

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
GLADSTONE, MAN.

Light snow dusts the country roads as we drive north of Gladstone, a small town 160 kilometres northwest of Winnipeg. No phone calls or e-mail contacts were possible to arrange our visit. We just followed some sketchy directions to find this new settlement of “horse and buggy” Mennonites to see how they managed through their first prairie winter in Manitoba.

We suddenly spot a very large house overshadowed only by a massive barn. We pass about a half-dozen similar yards, some still under construction and some where families are still living in old house trailers. Outside a small building, a group of children in dark clothing are playing. It must be the schoolhouse.

When we come to the last house in sight two young girls are in a wagon pulled by a team of horses. They stop, smile and offer a friendly greeting and direct us to the minister’s house. The driveways are very muddy and only passable with horse-drawn wagons.

The minister and his wife graciously allow us in to sit around the warm wood stove in the kitchen.

“Yes, we survived the winter,” says the minister. “It’s colder here, but it is a drier winter. We have no reason to think we won’t like it here.”

Thirteen Orthodox Mennonite families moved here from southern Ontario last

year. Construction on their homes and barns had begun two summers earlier, but this was their first winter in Manitoba. The minister, who requests that his name not be used nor pictures taken, explains that the Orthodox Mennonites are a very small group in Ontario. “We are very similar in doctrine to the Amish,” he says.

“We are at the conservative end of the Mennonite family,” he says, describing the Orthodox Mennonites as being more conservative than the Old Order Mennonites, “which is the largest horse and buggy group in Ontario.” He notes that in Ontario there are many different horse and buggy groups and some are considerably more progressive, some even using electricity.

The minister, who was born in the Elmira, Ont., area to an Old Order Mennonite family, explains that the group needed more land but land prices are very high in southern Ontario, precipitating the move.

The municipality of Westbourne became their chosen home. They were able to purchase three farms totalling 1,100 hectares, the minister says, adding, “We were looking for a town with most of the basic business and service places that was in horse-and-buggy distance.” Gladstone, about 10 kilometres or a half-hour drive away, met that need.

“We have very good neighbours here, offering advice and help on adjustments we need to learn,” he tells us.

“In Ontario, no one would think of keeping cattle outside in winter, but here everyone does it.”

They also learned about dugouts to retain water, which were unfamiliar, and they are still getting used to having fewer frost-free days than in Ontario, as well as the wide open spaces of rural Manitoba that offer a very different horizon.

The Orthodox Mennonite community has its own small school. An unmarried

woman teaches the children to Grade 8. They are instructed in English and once a week High German is taught. High German is used in their worship, reading and singing, while Pennsylvania Dutch is spoken in their homes. The schoolhouse is being used as their meetinghouse until a permanent structure is built.

Each family is independent, but the community practices mutual aid rather than investing in insurance. What makes the

‘As a group we make decisions about what technology we will allow.’

Orthodox unique is that “we work together a lot more,” the minister says. “Part of our faith is to work together.”

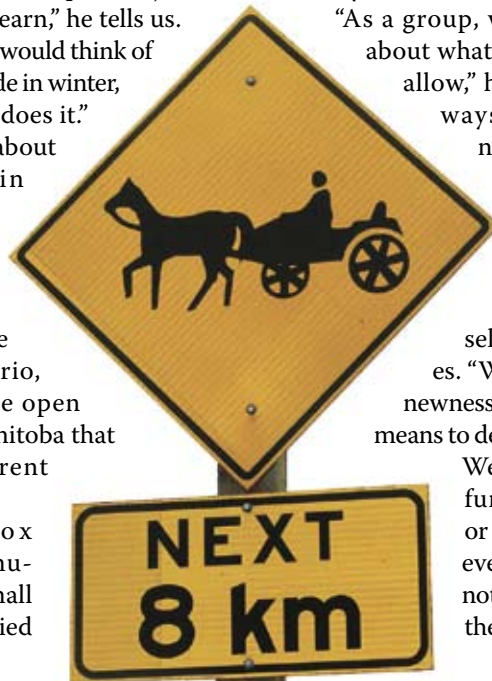
The vagaries and challenges of learning about a new land have not compromised their solidarity or their faith. Since the busload of families came to stay a year ago, they have accomplished a tremendous amount without the aid of electricity, plumbing or modern technology. New businesses such as furniture and buggy shops have been established.

Two Hutterite colonies are among their neighbours, “but our lifestyles are very different, almost opposite each other,” the minister says. “How we understand Scripture and not being conformed to the world, and how we apply it in every day life, is very different.”

“As a group, we make decisions about what technology we will allow,” he says. “We are always discerning. It is never easy and it has caused church splits because people do not always agree.”

“Scripture teaches self-denial,” he stresses. “We are to walk in the newness of life and new birth means to deny our sinful nature.

We take that meaning further than adultery or stealing. It means in everyday life to choose not to follow the path of the world.” ❧



Being faithful

New Quest Christian Community counts the cost of following Jesus



By DAVE ROGALSKY
Eastern Canada Correspondent
ST. CATHARINES, ONT.

Quest Christian Community is a lot like its planned meeting place in spiritual director Troy and Tammy Watson's basement. While the major contours are present in Watson's mind, what the finished project will look like is not.

"We're trying to figure out what it means to be faithful to God in our affluent, post-modern, post-Christian, 21st century, Canadian cultural context," he says, maintaining, "Something is askew."

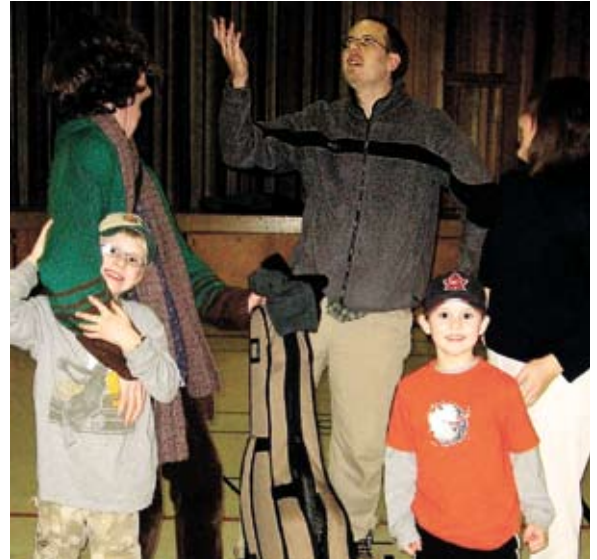
Watson says that "people want to meet the really real. Who does God instruct us to be? We need to step back from our assumptions about church and hear what God is calling us to be," as individuals, and as a community and as "a movement."

[S]piritual disciplines form a significant part of their life together and apart, as they think of themselves as 'pragmatic mystics'....

Between 12 and 20 adults have been meeting at Grace Mennonite Church in St. Catharines since September of last year. They have yet to launch publicly, but instead have been developing a core group. Grace, Niagara and Bethany Mennonite churches all support the effort.

Quest members also meet on alternative Mondays in a pub to discuss faith and life, inviting others there to join them in the discussion. The idea of "third space"—between home and work—interests them as they think about what their core mission will be. As a group, members want to "go deeper," Watson says, understanding what the costly price of following Jesus will mean for them in faith and lifestyle, as

Members of the Quest Christian Community currently meet at Grace Mennonite Church in St. Catharines, Ont., pictured, and at a local pub, but have plans for a permanent meeting space in the basement of spiritual director Terry and Tammy Watson's basement.



individuals and as a community.

Currently in the "deconstructive" part of understanding their faith community, spiritual disciplines form a significant part of their life together and apart, as they think of themselves as "pragmatic mystics," looking to the early Anabaptists who thought that believing should change behaviour.

As they question and discuss their

collective future, the need for Canadians to know God, to live justly and in harmony with the earth, to be holistic and to keep Christ pre-eminent in all things, guide their construction process. But just like the basement meeting space, they don't know what God wants Quest Christian Community to look like yet. ❧

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- MWC #2 - CHILE, URUGUAY, PARAGUAY (July 5-20)
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GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Post-election tension remains

Mennonite organizations supporting Zimbabweans awaiting the results of national elections in March

By TIM SHENK

Mennonite Central Committee
BULAWAYO, ZIMBABWE

Zimbabweans are anxiously awaiting the official results of national elections conducted on March 29, according to Dumisani O. Nkomo, the chief executive officer of a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) partner organization monitoring the voting process.

"There is a lot of tension," Nkomo said from Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second-largest city, on March 31. "People don't know whether to celebrate or not, because the [electoral] commission is releasing results bit by bit, and they are only releasing results where the ruling party has always got strongholds."

MCC provided \$10,000 to Habakkuk Trust, a Zimbabwean Christian advocacy organization, to help monitor the electoral process in and around Bulawayo. Habakkuk Trust trained and organized 60 volunteers to monitor electoral centres before, during and after the voting process.

Nkomo said election monitors from Habakkuk Trust and other organizations are reporting that opposition candidates won by a wide margin in the Bulawayo area. He said the electoral commission appears to be delaying the release of results in areas where opposition candidates defeated the ruling party, the Zimbabwe African National Union—Patriotic Front.

Under the presidency of Robert Mugabe, the ruling party has been in power since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. Since

2000, Zimbabwe has suffered an economic collapse, with sky-high inflation, widespread unemployment and the mass emigration of working-age adults. Basic services such as health care have deteriorated dramatically, Nkomo said.

Nkomo said that many Zimbabweans believe Mugabe rigged a previous bid for re-election in 2002, and that the current delay in releasing results is creating fear that vote totals are being altered to ensure another Mugabe victory.

"For the first time in years, people have had hope," he said. "But as time goes on, hopelessness is creeping in, tension is creeping in."

Zimbabwe's Brethren in Christ (BIC) Church also organized 20 volunteers to monitor the elections, and an MCC staff person served as an election observer from the Swaziland Council of Churches, according to Bruce Campbell-Janz, MCC Africa co-director.

However, four election observers from South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia sent by Mennonite World Conference (MWC) at the invitation of the BIC Church were denied accreditation.

"The [Mugabe] government is generally keen at accrediting those groups that they believe are friendly to them. The church

is often viewed with suspicion," explained Danisa Ndlovu, MWC president-elect, adding that political leaders also know that the church represents a significant constituency that cannot easily be ignored.

Without accreditation, these observers could not enter polling stations, but they did visit polls in Harare and several rural areas. They talked with people going in and out of the polling stations and to police who were on hand to maintain order, and it was felt the quiet presence of the MWC observers made a positive difference in the election process.

The BIC Church saw the response of MWC to its invitation to send observers as "another practical effort by the worldwide family of faith to walk alongside their brothers and sisters at a very crucial time of seeking to discern God's will," said one of the unaccredited observers.

A change of government should give Zimbabweans new hope and a better economic situation, noted Ndlovu, but it will take time. "We have not crossed the bridge yet!" he warned. "We call upon the church around the world to be in prayer for Zimbabwe at this important time." ❧

With files from MWC news editor Ferne Burkhardt.

PHOTO BY KAREN S. PETERS

Steinbach (Man.) Mennonite

Church junior youths gathered donations during the church's February Relief Kit Challenge. The challenge pitted those 45 and older against the younger members of the congregation, including, from left, Dunley Funk, Elvis Bergen and Devin Reimer. Those over 45 collected enough soap, shampoo, laundry detergent, toothpaste, toothbrushes, towels, hairbrushes, combs, fingernail clippers, bandages, sanitary pads and other items to fill 44 Mennonite Central Committee relief kits, while the younger generation, whose idea the challenge was, filled 23 kits. The junior youths and their sponsors then transported the material to the MCC Canada office in Winnipeg, where they packed the 67 23-litre pails of relief supplies while learning about the struggles people in Kenya are facing.



Canadians serving with MDS receive blessing

By SCOTT SUNDBERG
Mennonite Disaster Service
DIAMOND, LA.

“We are thankful and we praise God for the people he has sent,” pastor George Reno said of Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) volunteers, many of them from Canada. “They not only built us a house, but they spent many hours visiting. We can say now ‘thank you, God’ for [Hurricane] Katrina.”

On Feb. 20, the Renos’ new house was filled with well-wishers who came to the dedication celebration. Reno is a Mennonite pastor who has been serving

in Louisiana virtually his whole life.

About 3,500 work hours were spent on their home by Canadian and American volunteers. Among those serving long-term with MDS in Diamond are eight Canadians, including Elmer and Mary Friesen from Halbstadt Bergthaler Mennonite Church in Manitoba.

The Friesens have served on MDS projects as long-term volunteers in several locations over the last eight years. These terms of service have included two times in North Carolina, responding to Hurricane Floyd. They have also volunteered long-term in Texas after flooding; in Jackson, Tenn., after a tornado; and twice in Arcadia, Fla., after Hurricane Charley. Most recently they have served long-term twice after 2005’s Hurricane Katrina, in Alabama first and now in Diamond.

“We enjoy serving. If anybody receives the blessings, it’s us,” Mary said recently at an evening meal after a long day of painting.

“This project has been good because we’ve been able to do everything, start to finish,” Elmer added, referring to their work in Diamond. ❧

MDS PHOTO

Mary Friesen from Halbstadt Bergthaler Mennonite Church in Manitoba spends her days as a long-term Mennonite Disaster Service volunteer in Diamond, La., painting clients’ homes, among other tasks. “We enjoy serving,” she says of herself and her husband Elmer Friesen.



CMU students Jotham Penner of Kitchener, Ont., left, in Mobile, Alabama.

Discouragement tu

CMU students learn the value of giving

Canadian Mennonite University Release
MOBILE, ALA.

Alexandra Ventura had a lot of expectations for her trip to Mobile, Ala., as a volunteer with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS). But one thing she didn’t expect was to be discouraged.

Ventura, of Winnipeg, went to Mobile with eight other students from Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) during reading week to help repair homes damaged by Hurricane Katrina nearly three years ago.

While some students took shingles off the roofs of the houses they were working on, and others put up drywall, she was scraping dried mud off the floor. It didn’t seem like very important work. At first, she admits to feeling “very unaccomplished.” But then she remembered something the homeowner, Angie Jones, had told the group.

“She said that each week she gets a new group of people that come to work on her house, and each time she keeps a part of them with her,” says Ventura. “She said that even though we were there for just one week, she would cherish us. When I remembered that, it made those moments more fulfilling. What I was doing was putting the finishing touches to complete the house.”

See back page for m



t, and Noelle Koop of Winnipeg work on a roof

urns to fulfillment

ng a week in the service of others

For Ventura, it's the attitude of homeowners like Jones that stick with her. "Angie had the most positive attitude and had such a passion for God," she says. "I thought to myself, 'How is it that they can be so happy with so little, and in spite of everything that's happened to them?' Here are the rest of us, and it seems that we're always asking for more, like we're never happy."

After the trip, Ventura says she is "more thankful for the days that God gives me. I've come back with a stronger passion to serve God through others."

Daniel Epp, also of Winnipeg, feels the same way. The trip, he says, "left me with a grateful heart, and a heart to serve others."

He was especially inspired by seeing people of different ages and stages in life "come together for a common goal" of helping people rebuild homes destroyed by the hurricane. A key lesson he learned is that "love means doing."

This was the third year in a row that students from CMU have gone south during reading week to serve with MDS. In 2006, students travelled to Bayou la Batre, Ala. Last year, they travelled to New Orleans, La., where they also participated in emergency tornado clean-up after one touched down in the Westwego area of the city while they were there. ❧

more MDS coverage

Three-way service partnership celebrated

MEDA, MCC, MDS have working agreements in place to help coordinate major disaster-relief efforts

BY KARIN FEHDERAU

Saskatchewan Correspondent
SASKATOON, SASK.

Bethany Manor was the site for a celebratory banquet on Feb. 27, to acknowledge a three-way partnership that was forged following the devastating hurricanes that tore apart the U.S. Gulf Coast in 2005.

The process began when Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) was asked to work in the devastated region of New Orleans, La., after two hurricanes ravaged the area that fall. What staff and volunteers experienced there as they worked concerned them.

"We could see as we were starting to build and repair that this was way beyond [our] mandate," said Ed Buhler of MDS.

What was obvious to all was that this was not just about patching roofs and gutting homes. There was much more to the disaster response effort than immediate relief of blankets and a bowl of hot soup. Residents, having lost everything, faced complex spiritual struggles about why God allowed this to happen. Businesses had lost most of their customer base when a half-million people were evacuated from New Orleans and only half of them returned. People's old jobs had disappeared when schools shut down or businesses closed their doors. Those left behind were stymied in their search for work because there were no daycare services and massive retraining

was needed.

"In the intensity of responding to that, it spurred MDS and Mennonite Central Committee [MCC] to work very hard at verifying our partnerships," said MCC Saskatchewan director Bruno Baerg, who explained to the crowd of retirees and seniors that, although MDS had grown out of MCC, the two had separated for legal reasons and had become separate legal entities. "[Hurricanes] Katrina and Rita pushed us to clarify those relationships," he said.

MDS then asked MEDA to help with economic recovery projects that will last until later this year.

"We began a back-to-business project effort in February 2006," explained Paul Thiessen, MEDA's provincial coordinator, emphasizing that MEDA worked with local groups that had the same goals of helping small businesses recover.

A memorandum of understanding was signed early this year between MEDA and MDS, to help define the parameters of their working relationship, similar to one signed in 2001, outlining which organization takes the lead in certain regions where disaster has occurred.

Said Baerg of the agreements: "We have different foci, different styles and approaches. But it's a complex world, there are lots of problems [and] we all have something to contribute." ❧

PHOTO BY KARIN FEHDERAU



Paul Tiessen, left, Bruno Baerg and Ed Buhler spoke glowingly at a recent banquet of the collaborative efforts of Mennonite Economic Development Associates, Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Disaster Service to help the people of New Orleans recover from 2005's hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Say no to war

MCC raises concerns about Canada's military mission in Afghanistan

BY GLADYS TERICHOW
Mennonite Central Committee
WINNIPEG

Lasting and sustainable peace in Afghanistan cannot be achieved through war, says Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada executive director Don Peters.

A letter from MCC to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations in Canada raises concerns about Canada's military role in the Afghan mission and urges congregations to advocate for non-military means of peacebuilding.

Canada, says Peters, has given limited encouragement to diplomatic and political solutions and to grassroots peacebuilding initiatives. He would like to see congre-



Afghan children in Kabul receive educational support from Le Pelican, a Mennonite Central Committee partner organization that provides educational, recreational, vocational and medical support.

gations encourage the Canadian government to change course and give its greatest energy and attention to supporting a comprehensive peace process involving diplomacy, dialogue and peacebuilding initiatives at all levels of society.

MCC's long-term experiences in areas of conflict around the world show that lasting peace and reconciliation can only happen as people on all sides of the conflict are given opportunity to voice their grievances and play a part in resolving them. This dialogue needs to include people at the grassroots level, as well as at the political and diplomatic levels.

'To call for peaceful initiatives in Afghanistan at this present time is not to say that we have all the answers to the ongoing violence.'

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"To call for peaceful initiatives in Afghanistan at this present time is not to say that we have all the answers to the ongoing violence," the MCC letter acknowledges. "It is to say that Christ calls us to pray for, witness to, and speak out for a better way?" Esther Epp-Tiessen, MCC Canada's peace ministries coordinator, says that, despite NATO's efforts to bring stability to Afghanistan, there is a growing consen-

coordinated insurgency. The report states that the last few months have seen major suicide bombing attacks as well as increased attacks against international humanitarian workers delivering food aid.

At last year's national assembly Mennonite Church Canada delegates took a similar stance, when they unanimously passed a resolution lamenting and opposing "the imaginations of our church and society [that] are increasingly captivated by confidence in military solutions to human problems." The resolution also called on God to "grant us wisdom to discern and grace to act in ways that promote God's will for peace on earth." ❧

With files from MC Canada.

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MCC staffer victim of carjacking during Haitian food unrest

By **TIM SHENK**

Mennonite Central Committee
PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI

Joseph Saingelus, a Haitian staff person of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), was carjacked by armed men on April 8 in Port-au-Prince. The carjacking took place during several days of public unrest surrounding demonstrations against high food prices in the nation's capital.

Saingelus was driving home in an MCC Land Cruiser when armed men seized the vehicle and forced him to lie in the back, according to MCC Haiti representative Charity Coffey. The men used the Land Cruiser to kidnap another woman and rob her before releasing Saingelus unharmed along with the vehicle, Coffey said. MCC has filed a police report.

Several MCC workers observed the

demonstrations in their neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince. Marylynn Steckley, an MCC policy analyst from Waterloo, Ont., said protesters took to the street in front of her third-floor apartment on April 8 and 9. Some protesters demonstrated peacefully, singing and dancing, she said, while others threw rocks at storefronts and looted shops.

"I think everybody is protesting the cost of food, and some are doing that in a violent way because they're hungry, the food is too expensive, and they feel like they have no other way of communicating with the government or of their voices being heard," Steckley said.

She believes Haiti's high food prices are caused by a global rise in food prices and by

Haiti's heavy reliance on imported foods. She and her husband Joshua Steckley are working on an MCC-supported project to promote Haitian agriculture. The project, called Support Local Production, creates and airs advertisements on Haitian radio and TV stations promoting Haitian agricultural products. MCC also supports agricultural development work in rural Haiti.

Steckley said that Haiti's farmers are

Some protesters demonstrated peacefully, singing and dancing... while others threw rocks at storefronts and looted shops.

growing less—and often migrating to the cities—as urban Haitians purchase rice, beans and corn meal from the United States. "As people migrate to the cities, they can't find jobs, they become frustrated," she said. "I definitely think it's a national problem." ❧

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GOD AT WORK IN US

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Witness to our existence

BY KATRYN DE SALABERRY

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
KITCHENER, ONT.

For the past six months, I have been engaged in a student placement at a shelter for homeless women. I practise a ministry of presence, in keeping with the philosophy of Jean Vanier. The majority of my time is spent sitting in the front lounge making myself available. My pastoral supervisor calls this “holy loitering.” When I first began this ministry, I found myself restless. I felt that somehow there must be something else I ought to be doing. It took me several months to settle down and simply open myself to what presents itself that day.

Being open means that I let go of expectations and prepare myself to be flexible because the circumstances of the residents’ lives are very unpredictable. When I walk through the doors of the shelter on Monday morning, I do not know whom or what I will encounter.

The un-anxious, non-judgmental nature of my ministry invites a response of trust and I have the humbling honour of

receiving that when a woman tells me her story. Occasionally, a resident will ask me about the work I do. Once, following a very interesting conversation with a young woman, she reflected, “You are witnessing to our existence. So often our lives are invisible.”

Why do I show up at a women’s shelter several hours a week? The first answer is that I feel called to do this. I regularly ask God where I might be of service and where I might put my gifts to use, and I take this placement to be God’s answer at this time in my life.

Over the months I have been at the shelter I have discovered that the experiences I encounter there manifest what I can only describe as “the fullness of being,” and this is the second reason that I am drawn to return. As I am welcomed into the lives of these women, I touch what author Alice Munroe describes as the “marvellous, shattering absurdity” of life. Freed from much of the trappings we have come to associate with what makes a person, life in the shelter seems to be distilled to its essence. Pain and loss are evident, but so is levity and touching acts of generosity and kindness.

Without title, power or material goods, how does a woman express her personhood in a world that looks to these factors as necessary to our identity? A resident I’ll call Viv answered this for me quite unexpectedly. Viv had been able to raise her daughter Bonnie (a pseudonym) in her child’s early years, but Viv’s drug addiction



De Salaberry

made it necessary for Bonnie to be removed from her care later.

When I met Viv, she had not seen Bonnie, who is now 18, for three years. Viv had succeeded in arranging a visit in which child services would bring Bonnie, who is living in another city, to the shelter to see her. Viv had the extraordinary task of conveying a sense of her personhood to her child—all in one hour.

Think about it. She cannot welcome Bonnie into a family network that would give her a sense of connectedness and history, nor can she receive her daughter in the personal space we know as home, a place that reflects one’s taste and individuality. She does not have a kitchen in which she can prepare something special for her daughter and she has no money to take her out.

Viv described to me how she envisioned the visit. She wished to receive her daughter in the room that she shares with two other residents. She wanted to leave the door open so that women who know her could drop by and “tell my daughter something about me.” Viv had identified her relationships as a valuable reflection of her identity.

I was there when Viv greeted her daughter and it was a wonderful moment. The residents and the staff had all participated in their own way in Viv’s anticipation of Bonnie’s visit. When it finally happened, there was a collective delight in seeing Viv’s prayer answered.

Viv gave herself to her daughter through hugs and words, but what really stayed with me was the importance of our presence to this moment. Our presence spoke to Bonnie of her mother’s life, and our witnessing their reunion somehow made the whole event more real.

Viv needed us there to witness the existence of her daughter and to witness her as a mother. I believe that our memory of this event will serve as a source of sustenance and identity for Viv as she continues her journey. ❧

Katryn de Salaberry is pursuing a master of theological studies degree at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont.

PHOTO BY DEBBIE SANDLAND

Now in her 80s, Mary Goerzen of Calgary, has been “one of those quiet workers who has been serving MCC [Mennonite Central Committee] all her life,” says her pastor, Doug Klassen of Foothills Mennonite Church. From 1963-65, she worked for MCC as a nurse in Newfoundland. And since moving back to Alberta, Mary and her sister Elsie have been avid quilters, averaging nine per year in their younger days. And for many years, she also worked with the hand quilters at the MCC Thrift Shop every Wednesday. She would sew the tops at home and bring them in to be put together by the group of ladies. Mary’s handwork is evident everywhere in her apartment, from the tiny stitches in the petit point on the walls to the hardanger pillows and, of course, the quilts, one of which she is wrapped in.



OBITUARY

Grebel mourns death of founding board chair

Milton R. Good, 1911-2008

Conrad Grebel University College Release
WATERLOO, ONT.

With both great sadness and deep gratitude, Conrad Grebel University College mourns the loss of its founding chair, Milton R. Good, on March 3.

Born in 1911 in Waterloo Township, Good completed a commercial course at Kitchener-Waterloo Collegiate and Vocational School, then worked for the Royal Bank for 21 years. In 1948, he joined H. Boehmer and Company, where he became president and general manager.

Good was a driving force behind the inter-Mennonite initiative that led to the establishment of Conrad Grebel College

on the campus of the University of Waterloo in 1963. He served for 21 years on the board of governors (1961-82), the first eight of those as founding chair. Good was instrumental in the construction of the original building, which included the chapel and residence, and was actively involved in each of the subsequent building projects. On his 91st birthday, he happily participated in the groundbreaking for the most recent addition.

After an event in May 2004 celebrating Grebel's 40th anniversary, college president Henry Paetkau recalls Good commenting with satisfaction, "I've made many investments in my life, but this is the best one!"

Paetkau says of Good, "Conrad Grebel has lost not only a 'founding father,' but also an enthusiastic ambassador and supporter. As a strong proponent of education, Milt was thrilled about the opportunity of establishing a Mennonite college on a university campus and enthusiastic about the mediating role of the college between the church and the academy."

Good was also involved in the founding



Good

of Fairview Mennonite Home, Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Mennonite Mutual Aid and Eastwood Mennonite Community Homes Inc.

He is also responsible for reviving the former *Canadian Mennonite* newspaper into the

Mennonite Reporter (the precursor to the current *Canadian Mennonite* magazine); his firm provided office support for mailing, accounting and administration until the *Mennonite Reporter* could set up its own offices.

In 1974, he established the Good Foundation, which has supported numerous local charities. He was an active member of Erb St. Mennonite Church in Waterloo.

He is survived by his wife Margaret, and sons Jim (also a former college board member and chair), and his wife Eva, and John, who has worked faithfully in the Conrad Grebel library for more than 30 years. ☿

With material from Waterloo (Ont.) County Hall of Fame and Aaron Klassen.



Photo Contest

Enter your photos on:
Caring for God's creation, or
Young adults in our churches

Send them to:
cmcontest@canadianmennonite.org,
our Flickr photo pool
or by postal mail.

Details on prizes and judging are at our
website, canadianmennonite.org.



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FOCUS ON BOOKS & RESOURCES

Keepers of the land

Carl Hiebert and Deb Cripps celebrate Canadian farmers in their new self-published coffee table book

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
BADEN, ONT.

More than 200 people gathered together in Steinmann Mennonite Church's new multipurpose auditorium recently to hear music by the Greenwood Hill Bluegrass gospel band and eat apple crisp and homemade ice cream.

They also came out to hear much-published photographer and author Carl Hiebert, together with his partner Deb Cripps, present an overview of their 2006 trek across Canada. Cripps made the trip in their motor home while Hiebert drove a 1949 McCormick tractor, modified with hand controls. (Hiebert has limited use of his legs after a 1981 hang gliding accident.)

Together they told the story of their trip,

Deb Cripps and Carl Hiebert, seated, creators of Keepers of the Land: A Celebration of Canadian Farmers, their 2007 self-published book, chat with Mark Erb at a recent event at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont., to support local farm families and promote food localism.



PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

focusing on each of the 39 families who are portrayed in the photographs in *Keepers of the Land: A Celebration of Canadian Farmers*, their 2007 self-published book. Stopping approximately every 160 kilometres from White Rock, B.C., to Newfoundland-Labrador—while driving through pouring rain, blistering sun and miles of Canadian forest—Hiebert and Cripps came to treasure their subjects. What most impressed the couple were the Canadian farmers' entrepreneurship and their tenacity in changing economic times, as well as the importance of farm "value-added" components to food production, and the economic and ecological sense of food localism, most commonly portrayed in Mennonite circles by the 100 Mile Diet and Mennonite Central Committee's

Simply in Season cookbook.

The event was sponsored by "Hope for the Family Farm," a group of pastors and lay people from the New Hamburg (Ont.) area that has planned a variety of events to both equip and encourage farm families. Promoting food localism and generosity, everything about the evening—from the speakers and musicians to the food—was donated.

Money raised from the evening was given to House of Friendship (HoF), a Kitchener-Waterloo aid agency supported by Mennonites over the years. In accepting the donation, HoF's Tony Bender used the opportunity to advertise the most recent publication of Foodlink, a non-profit organization in the Region of Waterloo promoting food localism.

Last month in Waterloo, Ont., Mennonite Aid Union (MAU) celebrated its total conversion to MutualAid eXchange with a banquet, the focus of which was the publishing of *We Bear the Loss Together*, a history of MAU's 140-year history by Kitchener historian Laureen Harder. Agents and board members from across Canada gathered at Conrad Grebel University College for the event. Pictured, MAX Canada's director of mutual aid ministries Nelson Scheifele, standing, chats with Henry and Tina Petkau, Old Colony Mennonite agents in Stratton, Ont., near Rainy River. MAX Canada Insurance Company serves 27 Mennonite, Brethren and historic Peace Churches and their constituents in Canada.



PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Spring 2008 Listing of Books & Resources

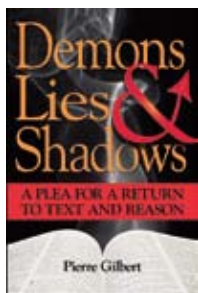
Theology, Spirituality

The Altars of Ahaz: How a Therapeutic Culture Has Blinded Us to the Claims of the Gospel. Evangeline A. Thiessen. VMI Publishers, 2007, 400 pages.

Thiessen argues that the Christian church's acceptance of counselling and the therapeutic culture has been destructive because it is an altar based on human knowledge rather than dependence on God.

Borders and Bridges: Mennonite Witness in a Religiously Diverse World. Peter Dula and Alain Epp Weaver. Cascadia Publishing House, 2007, 185 pages.

These case studies of individuals and institutions building bridges between people of different faiths are based on the experiences of Mennonite Central Committee personnel and come from all parts of the world.



Demons, Lies and Shadows: A Plea for a Return to Text and Reason. Pierre Gilbert. Kindred Productions, 2008.

Gilbert, associate professor of biblical studies and theology at Canadian Mennonite University, argues that

demons are real entities, but that they have no powers in the physical universe. He uses the Bible to show that magic or occult forces are empty shadows.

The End of Religion: Encountering the Subversive Spirituality of Jesus. Bruxy Cavey. NavPress, Colorado Springs, Col., 2007, 263 pages.

Cavey, the teaching pastor of The

Meetinghouse, a Brethren in Christ congregation in Toronto, declares that traditional Christian religion has missed the point of Jesus' teachings.

Good Punishment: Christian Moral Practice and U.S. Imprisonment. James Samuel Logan. Eerdmans, 2007, 272 pages.

Logan critiques the American obsession with imprisonment, declaring that the present system increases, rather than decreases, criminality. He wants to see alternatives to incarceration.

Jesus for President: Politics for Ordinary Radicals. Shane Claiborne and Chris Haw. Zondervan, 2008, 370 pages.

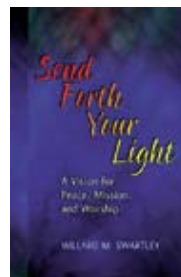
Claiborne and Haw examine how the modern Christian church has become politicized and no longer takes Jesus' words about peace seriously. They suggest that if Jesus is our president, we should have a new kind of church.

The Peace Church and the Ecumenical Community: Ecclesiology and the Ethics of Nonviolence. Fernando Enns, translated by Helmut Harder. Pandora Press and World Council of Churches Publications, 2007, 360 pages.

Enns is a Mennonite pastor and director of the Institute for Peace Church Theology at the University of Hamburg in Germany. This is an English translation of his doctoral thesis previously published in German. He calls for churches to work together to overcome violence.

Send Forth Your Light: A Vision for Peace, Mission and Worship. Willard M. Swartley. Herald Press, 2007, 350 pages.

Swartley, professor emeritus of New Testament at Associated



Mennonite Biblical Seminary, shows how mission, worship and peace are intertwined.

Stricken by God? Non-Violent Identification and the Victory of Christ. Brad Jersak and Michael Hardin, eds. Fresh Wind Press, Abbotsford, B.C., 2007, 527 pages.

This collection of essays examines the doctrine of atonement in Christian theology, offering alternatives to the penal substitution theory.

Stumbling Toward a Genuine Conversation on Homosexuality. Michael A. King, ed. Cascadia Press, 2007, 311 pages.

Part one of this essay collection was published in *DreamSeeker Magazine* (Winter, 2006). The essays discuss the homosexuality issue in the Mennonite Church, covering a wide range of perspectives.

Take Our Moments and Our Days: An Anabaptist Prayer Book, Ordinary Time.

Arthur Paul Boers, Barbara Nelson Gingerich, Eleanor Kreider, John Rempel and Mary H. Schertz. Herald Press, 2007, 392 pages.

This book of morning and evening prayers, with a four-week cycle, comes out of an online project of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. The services are designed for families or small groups; the prayers are virtually all from the Bible.

The Way is Made by Walking: A Pilgrimage Along the Camino de Santiago. Arthur Paul Boers. InterVarsity Press, 2007, 219 pages.

Boers reflects on the new spiritual insights he gained while walking an 800-kilometre pilgrimage in Spain.

What We Believe Together: Exploring the 'Shared Convictions' of Anabaptist-Related Churches. Alfred Neufeld. Good Books, 2008, 160 pages.

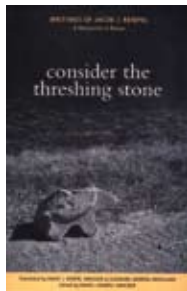
This book, commissioned by Mennonite World Conference, reviews the core beliefs and practices of Mennonites around the world. The writer is from Paraguay.

History

Consider the Threshing Stone. Jacob J. Rempel, translated by David J. Rempel Smucker and Eleanore (Rempel) Woollard, edited by David J. Rempel Smucker. Pandora

Press, 2008, 179 pages.

Jacob Rempel reflects on his life as a medic during World War I and the devastation he experienced during the lawless years after the Russian Revolution. His writings have been translated and edited by his grandchildren.

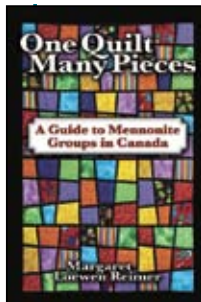


This collection of memoirs of 16 retired Mennonite academics and church leaders gives a glimpse into the history of the Mennonite Church in the 20th century.

One Quilt, Many Pieces: A Guide to Mennonite Groups in Canada.

Margaret Loewen Reimer. Herald Press, 2008, 139 pages.

This fourth edition again gives up-to-date information of all Mennonite groups in Canada. It includes a brief history and description of what makes each group distinctive.



Canada, a Mennonite insurance company.

Other Books

Changing Paradigms: Punishment and Restorative Discipline. Paul Redekop. Herald Press, 294 pages.

Redekop declares that punishment is not effective for healthy families or society. He believes that restorative justice is a better alternative.

Emma: A Widow Among the Amish.

Ervin R. Stutzman. Herald Press, 2007, 406 pages.

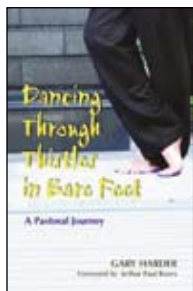
Stutzman tells the story of his mother in this sequel to *Tobias of the Amish*, published in 2001. The story is set in an Amish community in Kansas in the mid-20th century.



Dancing Through Thistles in Bare Feet: A Pastoral Journey.

Gary Harder. Herald Press, 2008, 168 pages.

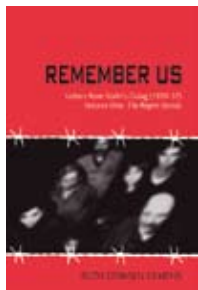
In this memoir, Gary Harder reflects on his life as a pastor. He juxtaposes reflections on Scripture passages with personal anecdotes.



Remember Us: Letters from Stalin's Gulag (1930-37), Volume I: The Regehr Family.

Ruth Derksen Siemens. Pandora Press, 2007, 407 pages.

The letters written by the Jasch and Maria Regehr family as they suffered in a Soviet

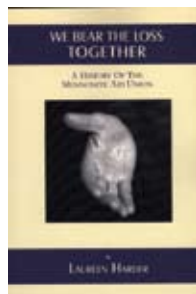


gulag in the 1930s, request relatives in Canada to "remember us." These are only some of a collection of letters discovered in an attic in recent years.

We Bear the Loss Together: A History of the Mennonite Aid Union.

Lauren Harder, Pandora Press, 2008, 125 pages.

For 140 years, Mennonite Aid Union allowed Mennonites to help each other in the event of loss by fire or storm. Because of ever-increasing risks, it is now part of MAX



Fix-It and Enjoy-It Diabetic Cookbook: Stove-Top and Oven Recipes—for Everyone. Phyllis Pellman Good. Good Books, 2007, 284 pages.

The American Diabetes Association assisted Good in selecting these recipes and supplied nutritional analysis.

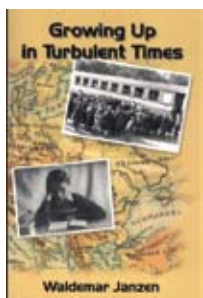
I Am Hutterite. Mary-Ann Kirkby. Polka Dot Press, Prince Albert, Sask., 2007.

The author grew up in the Fairholme Hutterite Colony in Manitoba. Her story gives a glimpse of Hutterite life and the major challenges of adjusting to life outside the colony. The book is a national best-seller.



Growing Up in Turbulent Times: Memoirs of Soviet Oppression, Refugee Life in Germany, and Immigrant Adjustment to Canada. Waldemar Janzen. CMU Press, 2007, 290 pages.

Janzen provides a detailed account of how he and his mother coped in difficult situations in Ukraine and as refugees. After their arrival in Waterloo, Ont., Janzen completed high school and studied theology before teaching at Canadian Mennonite Bible College.



Making Sense of the Journey: The Geography of Our Faith.

Robert Lee and Nancy V. Lee, eds. Anabaptist Center for Religion and Society, Eastern Mennonite University, 2007, 336 pages, distributed by Herald Press.

The Bookshop at PANDORA PRESS

We attempt to stock all books written by Mennonites as well as books by Mennonite publishers:

Pandora Press, Cascadia Publishing House, Good Books, Herald Press, and Faith & Life.

Not Easily Broken. Ruth Smith Meyer. Word Alive, 2007.

Inspired by a real person, this is the story of a young woman in the 19th century who married her brother-in-law to keep her dead sister's children connected to their maternal family.

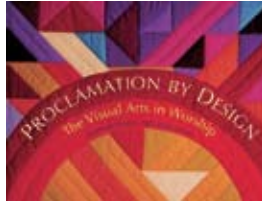
Resources

Listen Up! Messages from God. Herald Press, 2008.

This Vacation Bible School material is based on the prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jonah, Amos and Daniel. It includes various resource books as well as a music CD. It could also be used for camps or clubs.

Proclamation by Design: The Visual Arts in Worship. Karmen Krahn and Leslie James. Faith & Life Resources, 2008, 144 pages.

With practical tips and stories from congregations, this book explores the how and why of visual arts in worship.



DVDs

Through the Red Gate. Moyra Rodger and Ruth Derksen Siemens. Out to See Entertainment, Vancouver, B.C., 2008.

This 45-minute documentary tells the story of letters found in an attic in 1989 and translated into English. Some of those letters have been published in *Remember Us: Letters from Stalin's Gulag (1930-37)*.

Next group of writers trained for Gather 'Round curriculum

BY ANNA SPEICHER
Mennonite Church Canada
MILFORD, ILL.

A new group of writers has completed a week of training and has begun writing for the 2009-10 year of the Gather 'Round curriculum. These Christian education materials are published for Mennonite Church Canada, MC USA and the Church of the Brethren, and are also used by congregations in at least a half-dozen other denominations.

The writers for the fourth year of Gather 'Round include Canadian Michelle Stoesz of Winnipeg. Each is writing fall, winter and spring sessions for one age level of the curriculum. Several are writing for the summer quarter as well.

At the writers' conference, held at Camp Alexander Mack in Milford, writers spent significant time exploring the texts for the fall 2009 quarter, using Bible insight essays written by Old Testament scholar Derek

Suderman of Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont. The background essays for winter and spring are written by Sue C. Steiner, chair of the MC Canada Christian Formation Council, and essays for summer will be written by Christina Bucher of Elizabethtown, Pa.

The Gather 'Round curriculum uses the same Bible texts for all age levels, making it possible to expand learning outside the Sunday school hour. The Bible essays, which appear in the teacher's guides for all groups, help leaders grow in their own personal understanding of the Bible story. The essays are also included in "Connect," the parent/caregiver resource, which means that many adults in a congregation are studying the story in depth at the same time.

Gather 'Round is a project of Mennonite Publishing Network, the publishing agency of MC Canada and MC USA, and Brethren Press, publisher for the Church of the Brethren. ☺

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BOOK REVIEW

A classic 'bait and switch'

The Mennonite Handbook.
Herald Press, 2007.

REVIEWED BY FRED W. MARTIN

Hmmm. I think they're serious. This was my first response as I thumbed through *The Mennonite Handbook*. The Miss Manners format, the 1950s-era diagrams and Menno sporting a ball cap on the cover all create the aura of a fun and satirical look at Mennonites. However, this is really a bait and switch. Readers are tricked into thinking they are picking up a humorous book, but instead find a handy reference manual that provides answers where there are no questions.

The handbook is indeed "genre busting," as it is a weird combination of the spiritual, practical and the inane. Examples include

advice about how to sit through a sermon without air conditioning and tips on trimming toenails before footwashing.

It's easy to respond with puzzlement at



The intended market for this publication... is not clear... If it is an evangelical tool, we won't need to worry about church growth.

the advice offered in the handbook. With respect to church splits, it simply advises, "Choose your side carefully." This section begs for sarcastic punchlines like "Choose the group with the best potlucks," or "Go with the group that

uses real wine for communion?"

The preface confesses that the book is based on a Lutheran handbook. It is indeed like a Boy Scout guide, full of very practical and simplistic information. The "How to resist temptation" section and the chapter on "How to identify and avoid evil" advise readers to simply "stay vigilant" and encourage them to "tell the devil to go back to hell!"

The intended market for this publication—which one pastor called "the weirdest thing I've ever seen"—is not clear. If the audience is ecumenical, it's a bit of an embarrassment. If it is an evangelical tool, we won't need to worry about church

growth. If it is meant for a Mennonite audience, they may simply scratch their heads and file the book next to the VCR manual. However, *The Mennonite Handbook* could make a good wedding present for a groom new to the Mennonite community who is not clear on the difference between *verenike* and *kochkäse*.

It could also prove helpful for middle-aged folks who have forgotten details of the articles of faith taught in adolescent faith exploration classes. It may function nicely as a quick reference guide for pastors who may need a refresher on the church calendar. It may be useful in catechism to introduce the *Schleitheim Confession*.

The Mennonite Handbook is not an updated *Muppet Manual* (Emerson Leshner, 1985), a book that, unlike this one, was filled with self-deprecating humour and witty insights.

Perhaps the best use may be to offer the movie rights to Joshua and Jonathan Steckley, the creative team that gave us the *Crokinole* movie. That could be seriously funny.

Fred W. Martin is director of development at Conrad Grebel University College.

/// Briefly noted

New songbook helps to teach African music to western congregations

HAARLEM, THE NETHERLANDS—The Dutch Mennonite Mission is publishing a bilingual Dutch and English book of African songs. *Yoyo Mama Yo: An African Songbook* by Jan Marten de Vries and Herman Heijn became available in April. The book includes stories and pictures as well as church songs from Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ghana and South Africa. The stories and explanations of the songs make this book suitable for teaching African music in a western context. In Africa, the sound of the language is an important musical element and so the original language is kept as much as possible. Because a literal translation almost always makes the music westernized, some songs have been "translated on sound" with some surprising results. The authors travelled to Africa several times to document this religious music and to take photos. De Vries is a choir leader with the Mennonite Church in Haarlem and served on the Music Committee for the 2003 World Conference. Heijn is a Mennonite minister and chair of the Dutch Mennonite Mission. For information about ordering, e-mail janmartendevries@hetnet.nl or Dutch Mennonite Mission at info-dzr@doopsgezind.nl.

—Dutch Mennonite Mission Release



BOOK REVIEW

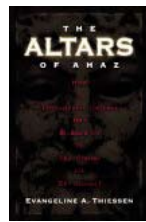
‘That’s what we’re trying to get away from’

The Altars of Ahaz: How a Therapeutic Culture Has Blinded Us to the Claims of the Gospel.
Evangeline A. Thiessen. VMI Publishers, 2007.

REVIEWED BY GLENN BRUBACHER

Evangeline Thiessen rebukes the Evangelical Church for its eager and misguided use of what she calls “the therapeutic.” In her judgment, when Christians adopt the insights and practices of the “therapeutic” in ministering to people enduring pain and trials, they have chosen the approach of King Ahaz, who ordered the construction of an altar of sacrifice from Assyria and put it into the centre of Israel’s sacred place of worship, pushing the altar of sacrifice to Yahweh to one side (II Kings 16:10-16).

Thiessen writes out of a profound



personal struggle. Her depression, deeply disruptive and lingering, is the horizon within which she writes. The answers to her struggles provided by the Evangelical Church in which she grew into adulthood proved to be empty. Faith, as she learned it there, was accepting right “propositional” beliefs about God, Jesus and the Bible. She failed to learn the experiential reality of God’s helping presence.

Her tour into therapy proved equally unhelpful in her quest for health and faith. Through her reflections and reading she discovered that her profound inner longings were really yearnings for God. In her quest she engaged many authors and her patient husband finally protested the many books stacked about their home. Her own book demonstrates the scope of her reading, which served to clarify both the healing way to life and the pitfalls offered by the therapeutic.

Near the end of her book she tells a story which vividly expresses her rebuke of the Evangelical Church. When she became aware that a pastor’s approach to a deeply depressed woman was a referral to a therapist,

she asked the pastor’s wife about God and prayer. She was distressed by the reply: “That’s what we’re trying to get away from.”

The Evangelical Church has forfeited the gospel by adopting therapeutic strategies to help people with practical personal problems. While the many varieties of therapy all seek to strengthen the “self,” the gospel calls for surrender of the “self” to God. Therapy cannot help humans find their soul or God. Indeed, it stands in the way. For Thiessen, the mystical tradition and ancient spiritual disciplines are the ways to the saving experience of God.

Freud, Fromm, Jung, Rogers—all psychological writers of note—come under Thiessen’s critical scrutiny. She explores a whole range of crucial and debated issues, including: Biblical faith is narrative, not propositional; depression is longing for God, not illness; the unconscious does not introduce us to God; and wounds need redemption, not cure.

At one point Thiessen writes, “Psychology, in its study of man, does come up with a lot of useful truths,” but this book is not an exploration of that insight.

May one critically comment on a personal testimony of such scope, eloquence and passion? Our awareness of the practical presence of God in the midst of life is often eroded by “atheistic utilitarianism,” and Thiessen’s protest is significant. However, what she did not research is how the truths of psychology can assist people of living faith cope with life’s difficulties. That, too, is essential. ❧

Glenn Brubacher is a retired pastor and pastoral counsellor.

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/// Briefly noted

From faith book to literature, Dutch views on the Bible change

DOORN, NETHERLANDS—Church attendance may be falling in the Netherlands, but the Bible is still held high in public esteem, according to a Dutch researcher. “Despite the secularization of the past decades, the possession and use of the Bible have not declined but remained stable. The Bible continues to stand its ground,” researcher Gert de Jong said at a conference organized by the Netherlands Bible Society in Doorn. What has changed, de Jong noted, is the nature of people’s esteem for the Bible, which is shifting away from its being seen as forming the basis of religious faith towards being valued as world literature.

—Ecumenical News International Release

BOOK REVIEW

Bearing witness to terror

Remember Us: Letters from Stalin's Gulag (1930-37), Volume One: The Regehr Family.
Ruth Derksen Siemens. Pandora Press, 2008, 407 pages.

REVIEWED BY HELEN ROSE PAULS

When Ruth Derksen Siemens became aware of a collection of letters written by Mennonite prisoners in Stalin's gulag in the 1930s to relatives in Saskatchewan, she knew that she had come across something unique. Although many families have letters from Russia during the difficult years after the revolution, few originate in the 1930s, perhaps the darkest years in Russia, and fewer still are written from the prison camps.

The letters were discovered in 1989 by Anna and Peter Borgen in a Campbell's soup box in their attic. The late Anna Borgen carefully translated the scraps of letters and her husband Peter edited them and put them together for their extended family.

"Remember us as we remember you," was the plea to distant relatives from a father imprisoned with his family. Siemens attempts to do this in this first volume of letters written by the Regehr family. The letters contain heart-rending pleas for food and money; they describe the fierce cold of winter with inappropriate clothing, the unrelenting work, the lack of food, the huge labour quotas, and constant news of disease and death. It has been estimated that as many as 60 million people died in Russia during those years.

What makes the letters even more poignant is that they reached a family in Saskatchewan who tried to respond with aid in spite of their struggle as new immigrants in Canada during the Depression. The letters are disheartening and difficult to read, but there remains a pull to continue. Especially interesting are the last chapters, in which Lena and Maria wrote their memories for Peter Borgen, who found them living in Cologne, Germany,

in 1989.

For some reason, the world has remained silent about the atrocities of Stalin. "The



*'Remember us as we remember you,'
was the plea to distant relatives from a
father imprisoned with his family.*

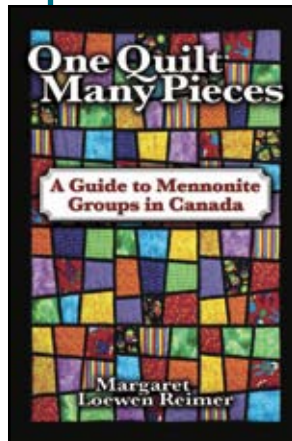
gulag and the millions who died, must enter our public consciousness," Siemens reminds us. This book should serve to begin that process.

A documentary on DVD, *Through the Red Gate*, which premiered at Bakerview Church in Abbotsford, B.C., in February, along with the book, also tells the story of these letters.

The Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. which sponsored the premiere, was asked to keep the evening "secular and academic," but when Joel Stobbe began to play "*Wehrlos und Verlassen*" on his cello at the conclusion of the event, there was no restraining the crescendo of voices joined in harmony, as the force of memory, nostalgia and faith overcame the listeners, leading some to wonder if this was how faith was

sustained during the dark times of life in the gulag.

More information about the book and DVD can be found at gulagletters.com. ☘



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"Margaret Loewen Reimer's much-anticipated new edition of *One Quilt Many Pieces* is an indispensable map of the Anabaptist/Mennonite landscape in Canada. Especially useful are the introductions to the smaller, conservative groups that are less well-known and understood than the visible Old Orders and large national denominations."

—Sam Steiner, *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*

"Reimer makes it easy to navigate the maze of Canadian Mennonite groups. An indispensable handbook to the Mennonites of Canada."—Donald B. Kraybill, co-author, Anabaptist World USA

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BOOK REVIEW

Bridging the gap of misunderstanding

A Thousand and One Egyptian Nights: An American Christian Among Muslims.
Jennifer Drago, Herald Press, 2007, 302 pages.

REVIEWED BY BETTY L. DYCK

Before Jennifer and Brad Drago left for a three-year assignment in Egypt with their children, they asked themselves, “Could our family in a small way bridge the gap between Americans and Arabs, between Muslims and Christians?”

In 2003, when the family decided to take on this commitment, they had been living in rural Georgia, in an intentional Christian community called Jubilee Partners. As committed Christians, it was important for them to be associated with a church-based organization, and they chose Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). The Dragos were given an assignment in Beni Suef. Located 140 kilometres south of Cairo in one of Egypt’s poorest areas, Beni Suef is an area of high unemployment due to a shortage of arable land. In Egypt, Christians are outnumbered nine to one by Muslims.

In *A Thousand and One Egyptian Nights*, Drago writes about conditions and experiences in a journal-like style. During their stay, besides the constant attention they received as foreigners, the family learned to cope with crowded living conditions, unsanitary surroundings, hair lice and an almost total lack of privacy—all part of the Egyptian lifestyle in Beni Suef. When visiting homes they had to decide between hygiene and hospitality—whether to take their water bottles or to drink from the communal cup. And shopping for food meant buying vegetables, fruits, poultry and fish from vendors’ produce spread out on newspapers on the street.

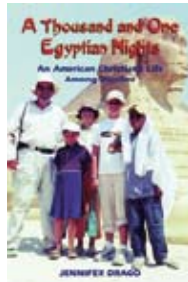
As a resource teacher in a school where MCC had provided English classes off and

on for 20 years, Drago got to know the Egyptian educational system. Whereas girls are basically taught to be good wives, she explains that pressure is put on high school boys to pass exams, as marks determine their field of study and future career.

From her visits to the homes of Muslims and Coptic Orthodox Christians, Drago shows how women’s “freedoms” depend less on what is written in the country’s constitution than on their fathers, brothers and husbands. Daughters of enlightened fathers and wives of trusting husbands enjoy endless privileges. On the other hand, if the men in both Christian and Muslim households are uneducated, suspicious and traditional in their beliefs, women’s lives are filled with many rules, including being required to wear the hijab, undergoing female circumcision and becoming the victims of physical abuse.

The Dragos’ sojourn in Egypt will in a small way “bridge the gap” of understanding for readers, as the story illustrates the huge differences in religion and lifestyles between Americans and Arabs. Drago’s easily readable story introduces how religion is woven into the fabric of Egyptian daily life: “Arabs raise their children to depend on family for basic needs and in discerning choices, because the family, and not the individual, is held responsible for the outcome,” she writes. “Americans raise children to be independent, self-sufficient and to deal with the consequences.”

Both sides claim the right to defend their values—*in’shallah* (God willing). ❧



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Briefly noted

CMU hosts ecumenical worship workshop

WINNIPEG—At the Meeting Place, a Mennonite Brethren church, they use lots of technology in worship services, in an effort “to be irresistible to people,” said Brian Krause. At Transcona Memorial United Church, they follow a traditional order of service, but also utilize clowning and dramatic dialogue. For Jeff Cook, pastor at Transcona, worship is a time when “people come to find themselves in God’s story, put their life in perspective, and remind them who they are.” But, he added, that doesn’t mean that worship can’t also “be fun.” St. Benedict’s Table is reaching back into the Anglican tradition, employing bells, incense and other symbols—and no PowerPoint at all. For pastor Jamie Howison, “worship is the hub on which everything turns. . . . It’s countercultural—providing space to breathe and stillness.” The “Three Ways of Doing Worship” panel discussion was part of a Winnipeg Centre for Ministry Studies master’s level class on critical issues in worship taught by Christine Longhurst. The centre is an inter-Mennonite partnership at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) that offers graduate and professional theological education.

—Canadian Mennonite University Release

‘Spirituality of service’ speech wins annual Grebel Peace Speech contest

WATERLOO, ONT.—Conrad Grebel University College student Leah Reesor is the winner of the college’s annual Peace Speech contest. Reesor, a fourth-year student in Peace and Conflict Studies and political science, spoke on “Giving and receiving: Exploring the spirituality of service.” In her speech, she reflected on lessons learned through her experience as a peace intern in Jamaica. She will receive an award of \$300 from Conrad Grebel in recognition of her accomplishment and will represent Conrad Grebel’s Peace and Conflict Studies program in the bi-national C. Henry Smith Oratorical Competition in May. Last year, Grebel student John Wray won second-place in the bi-national oratorical contest, which receives speeches from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ universities and colleges across Canada and the United States.



Reesor

—Conrad Grebel University College Release

Calendar

British Columbia

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.

May 9-10: Smarter Families Canada Conference, "Equipping the Church for Marriage, Parenting and Recovery Ministries" at Trinity Western University. Visit smarterfamiliescanada.ca for information.

May 10: B.C. Mennonite Historical Society, "Contributions of *Der Bote* and *Mennonitische Rundschau*," with Helen Franz and David Ewert at Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, 3 p.m.

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

May 9: Pre-workday youth event at Camp Valaqua for senior high youth and sponsors, at 7 p.m. Bring overnight gear and work clothes. To register call Rita at 403-289-7172.

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

June 3-4: Theological studies event at Camp Valaqua, "Our Money Talks" with Bryan Moyer Suderman, designed for church leaders. To register call Doug Klassen at 403-289-7172 or Jim Shantz at 403-485-2518.

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

June 10-12: Heritage retreat for seniors at Camp Valaqua with Hugo and Doreen Neufeld. To register contact Dave at 403-335-8649 or Kurt at 403-271-7477.

July 4-5: MCC Relief Sale and Auction at Millennium Place, Sherwood Park.

Saskatchewan

June 1: Prairie Falcon motorcycle rally, fundraiser for MCC.

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.

June 28: Southern Valley Foodgrains Bank charity sale near Hague.

Manitoba

May 14: Westgate work day.

May 15: Special opening (featuring a Hutterite choir) for "Discover Hutterite Art" exhibition at Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery, 7:30 p.m. The exhibition will run May 2 to June 14.

May 16-18: Camp Moose Lake work-a-thon.

May 16-18: Fundraising Ultimate Frisbee tournament at Camp Assiniboia. Team registration by May 1 at Camp Assiniboia (204-864-2159) or Camps with Meaning (204-895-2267).

May 19-23: School of Writing at CMU.

May 23-25: Birding retreat at Camp

Koinonia.

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

May 24, 25: Faith and Life Choirs spring concerts, TBA (24), Mennonite Collegiate Institute (25).

May 26-28: Plus-55 Retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

May 26-30: "Interpreting Youth Culture: Global and Canadian Youth Culture in Theological and Sociological Perspective" youth ministry course at CMU. Visit cmu.ca to register.

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.

May 31-June 1: Hope Mennonite Church 20th anniversary celebration. For more information contact 204-786-5077 or office@hopemennonite.ca.

June 9-11: Workshop for pastors, "Never Call Them Jerks: Healthy

Christian 'futurists' to speak at People's Summit

BY JUNE GALLE KREHBIEL

Mennonite Church Canada
WINNIPEG

Discovering the good life. That's the way futurists and authors Tom and Christine Sine from Seattle, Wash., describe their mission. Not the "wealth-is-good" life that marketers for the new global economy depict. And not the limiting life of a "Sunday-only" theology. The Sines challenge Mennonites and others to discover the good life that celebrates God's kingdom all day every day.

"Rediscovering the kingdom of God is a new reason to get out of bed on Monday," says Tom. "It's a new vision of good life and better future that is not the individual pursuit of happiness, but one found in the paradoxical teachings of Jesus. Only in losing life in service of God and others will we ever find the good life of God."

That message lies at the centre of Anabaptism and it's a theme the couple will speak on during opening worship at

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SINES



Futurists and authors Tom and Christine Sine will speak on the "good life" at the "People's Summit for Faithful Living" to be held in Winnipeg this summer. The event is a joint-effort of MC Canada and MC USA.

the joint-MC Canada-MC USA "People's Summit for Faithful Living," July 8-10 at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, immediately following the MC Canada annual delegate assembly.

The summit will also provide a North American launch for Tom's latest book, *The New Conspirators: Creating the Future One Mustard Seed at a Time* (InterVarsity Press, 2008). The book describes God's work through new leaders more deeply committed to missional lifestyles and congregations.

"What we will talk about at the summit is some of the daunting challenges that face us as we move into an uncertain future with increasing global challenges and rapidly declining North American church," he says. "If we believe that [all are called to serve], then we owe it to everyone in the church to help them change giving patterns, to change time priorities . . . to shift the equation—to change priorities from people inside the building to those outside. We need to raise the bar on what it means to be church."

The couple head up Mustard Seed Associates in Seattle, Wash., and teach at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif. ❧

responses to Difficult Behaviour" with Arthur Paul Boers at CMU. Visit cmu.ca or call 204-953-3865 for more information.

June 11-14: 16th annual Believers Church Conference at CMU.

Theme: "Congregationalism, denominationalism and the body of Christ." Visit cmu.ca for more information.

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

June 21: Camp Koinonia fundraising golf tournament at Winkler Golf Club.

Ontario

May 3: Menno Singers concert at the Church of St. John the Evangelist, Kitchener featuring works by Parry, Elgar and Vaughan Williams, 8 p.m.

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 10: Springfest at Niagara United Mennonite Church with bake sale, garden centre, barbecue, silent auction, kids' stuff and live musical entertainment, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

May 10: DaCapo Chamber Choir concert, directed by Leonard Enns at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener, 8 p.m. Visit dacapochamberchoir.ca for tickets.

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

May 15: MCEC pastors' workshop, "Energized for Ministry While Preparing for Retirement." Visit www.mcec.ca for more information.

May 22: MEDA breakfast at the Stone Crock, St. Jacobs, 7:30 a.m. Speaker: Dale Bauman, VP Sales, MAX Canada.

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

May 27-30: Quilts for the World at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church with guest artists Needle Sisters, Elmira, 10 a.m.-8:00 p.m. (27-29), 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (30).

May 28: MCEC retired pastors and spouses retreat at Hidden Acres, "Reinvesting: Life in Retirement." Bring a sack lunch. 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

May 30-31: New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale at New

Hamburg fairgrounds. Visit 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 6-7: "Intersect '08: Bringing Effective Communication to Real People" workshop led by Gayle Goossen at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate for church-related agencies and congregations. Register by May 15 at www.mcec.ca.

June 7: Mennonite Historical Society meeting and bus tour featuring Conservative Mennonites. Andy Martin will speak at Grace Mennonite near New Hamburg, 10 a.m. Bus tour at 1 p.m. Call 519-669-1884 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 12-14: Write! Canada, Christian writers' conference, for beginner to professional writers in Guelph. Visit www.thewordguild.com or call 519-886-4196 to register.

June 19: MEDA breakfast at the Stone Crock, St. Jacobs, 7:30 a.m. Speaker: Dave Erb, president, Erb & Good Family Funeral Home.

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

June 20-22: Mennonite and Brethren Marriage Encounter weekend at Futures Inn, Cambridge, 7:30 p.m. (20) to 4 p.m. (22). Call Marjorie at 519-669-8667.

June 22: 60th anniversary celebration at Nairn Mennonite Church. Call 519-232-4425 for more information.

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.

Briefly noted

Run for Relief fundraiser in New Hamburg

NEW HAMBURG, ONT.—This year will see the introduction of the first-ever Run for Relief at the New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale. In addition to raising funds to benefit the work of Mennonite Central Committee, the Run for Relief strives to bring a new aspect of fun, fitness and healthy living to the annual events of the sale. The Run for Relief will feature a five-kilometre run and two-kilometre fun run/walk for people of all ages. Both runs will begin at 8 a.m. on May 31 at the New Hamburg Fairgrounds. Registration forms and sponsor pledge forms will be available at nhmrs.com soon or can be obtained by e-mail at runforrelief@gmail.com. Pre-register before May 23 or register on race day. Run for Relief 2008 T-shirts are guaranteed to the first 100 entrants.

—New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale Release

Workshop to build peace in congregations

WINNIPEG—Pastors, denominational staff and lay leaders are invited to the "Never Call Them Jerks: Healthy Response to Difficult Behaviour" workshop, to be held at Canadian Mennonite University from June 9-11. Arthur Paul Boers, associate professor of pastoral theology at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, will explore how to respond to conflict situations in congregations and how to deal with criticism and difficult behaviour. The workshop is presented by Congregational Peacebuilding Partners, a project of CMU's Institute for Community Peacebuilding. Visit cmu.ca or call David S. Pankratz at 204-953-3865 for more information.

—Canadian Mennonite University Release

Classifieds

Employment Opportunities

Mount Royal Mennonite Church (Saskatoon, Sask.) is inviting applications for the position of **HISPANIC PASTOR**. The Mount Royal congregation 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 and will assume responsibilities relating to ministry to a Colombian immigrant Hispanic group in a congregation of about 250 members. Anabaptist faith orientation and training and some previous pastoral experience are strongly preferred. This person will speak, read and write Spanish fluently and have the skills, attitude, and vision to bring a leadership role to working with Spanish-speaking new Canadians. Familiarity with Colombian culture would be an asset. Interested persons are invited to visit our website for a complete job description and to submit a resume to:

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Rockway Mennonite Collegiate invites applications for full and part-time **TEACHING POSITIONS** in French (grade 7-10); German (grade 10-12) and Mathematics (grade 9 - 12). Teaching certification required. To inquire or apply, please forward a resume c/o Principal, Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, 110 Doon Road, Kitchener, ON, N2G 3C8; Fax 519-743-5935; Email principal@rockway.ca



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This is a unique opportunity for someone with vision, energy and a desire to capitalize on the immense opportunities offered by a strong, supportive and diverse Saskatchewan constituency. The full job description is on the web at mcc.org/sask.

This position requires a person with a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and non-violent peacemaking. Qualifications include: proven success in donor development or equivalent in a related field; knowledge of planned giving instruments and relevant tax implications; strong human relations and motivational skills and ability to deal with a wide variety of people; a team player.

Contact Dorothy Bartel at 306-665-2555; e-mail: dbartel@mccs.org. Applications considered until May 23, 2008.



Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan Board invites applications for the position of **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**.

MCCS serves in Saskatchewan and engages people and resources from the province in the ministries of MCC around the world to provide relief, to promote community development, and to pursue peace and justice in the name of Christ.

The Executive Director is to lead the organization in such a way that, as people come together for this work, they are drawn into the passion and hope represented by the church of Jesus Christ and become actively engaged in its ministry. It is a full-time position with a three year renewable term. The start date is negotiable.

The Board is seeking an individual who exhibits a commitment to a personal Christian faith, active church membership and non-violent peacemaking. Additionally, the person should have 5+ years in an organizational leadership position and a university graduate degree (or undergraduate degree and related life experience).

The successful applicant will be a humble servant-leader with proven ability to lead MCCS in planning, program development, public communications and resource generation in close collaboration with the Board, staff, partners, volunteers and supporting constituency.

A full position description is available at www.mcc.org or upon request.

Applications will be accepted until May 30, 2008. Send a letter of application along with a resume outlining how you meet the MCCS faith criteria and qualifications for the position to:

John Elias, Chair
MCC Saskatchewan Search Committee
600 - 45th Street West
Saskatoon, SK S7L 5W9
or email to: elias@shaw.ca

Bethel Mennonite Church, Langley, B.C.

PASTOR OF STUDENT MINISTRIES

Located in the beautiful Fraser Valley, 1 hour from Vancouver, the community of Langley is a mix of rural and suburban areas of rapid growth.

Bethel was established in Langley over 50 years ago. We are now surrounded by a community of different faiths, backgrounds and heritages, and are striving to be relevant to not only those of Mennonite tradition but to reach out in love to all others in the community that surrounds us.

We seek a Pastor of Student Ministries commencing the summer of 2008. This position is supported and overseen by the Senior Pastor and the Ministerial Council. An active Education Committee also provides additional support and guidance. The successful candidate will:

- Administer and provide leadership, direction, and planning to student ministries, specifically, senior youth, junior youth, and children's programs.
- Ensure educational programs are comprehensive and grounded in biblical truths.
- Develop and provide leadership to student ministries, by participating in the selection, training and deployment of lay leadership within these ministries and also in the development of a process of evaluation for these leaders.
- Provide spiritual direction for programs and counselling to participants in student ministries.

For further information contact the church by phone 604-856-8454 or e-mail Bethelchurch@telus.net.

Please forward resume to:
Search Committee
Bethel Mennonite Church
24687 - 56 Avenue
Langley, B.C. V2Z 1B9

For Rent

Retreat cottage for rent on the Little Mississippi River near Bancroft, Ontario. Wood stove, hydro, running hot and cold water, shower and flush toilet. Ideal for year round getaway. Call 519-471-3309 or kaceee@rogers.com.

For Rent: Basement suite in west Hamilton near university. Available Sept. 1. Female pre-

ferred. Call 905-627-4482 or e-mail corniesp@interlynx.net.

For Sale

HOME OR COTTAGE FOR SALE CHESLEY LAKE (Birchcrest) Lake front - totally winterized 1860 sq.ft.finished living space. Contact - 519-934-2758 or e-mail ccschott3@aol.com, or visit us on our web site at www.greybrucelistsings.com.

CANADIAN MENNONITE

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Canadian Mennonite is seeking a half-time Graphic Designer for our national church magazine. A resume, design samples and references should be submitted by May 12, 2008. The salary scale, benefits, and a full job description are available on request. The position begins in June.

Duties include issue design and layout using our established design templates, helping solicit and select artwork, creating and placing ads, troubleshooting any ad or print problems, and online distribution of issue contents on our website and by e-mail. Applicants should have good skills in electronic page design using Adobe InDesign, in image editing using Adobe Photoshop, in prepress issues (using a cold-set web press) and in basic HTML. Some training is available to get applicants up to speed in unfamiliar areas if needed.

Location is preferably at our Waterloo office, but we will also consider remote arrangements. However, the designer needs to be reachable during business hours of production days to work with staff on the layout. The standard Graphic Designer work schedule is five days on followed by five days off.

Applicants should have a passion for the church and for *Canadian Mennonite's* ministry and mission. Come to serve and build up the church in this exciting way!

Direct inquiries and applications to:
Tim Miller Dyck, Editor/Publisher, *Canadian Mennonite*
490 Dutton Dr., Unit C5, Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7
Phone: 1-800-378-2524, ext. 225
E-mail: editor@canadianmennonite.org

Is God leading you to work with young people?

Can you love and care for teenagers, and help them find and grow in Christian faith?

Do you relish leading youth Bible studies and missions trips?

Are you interested in testing your calling as you attend one of many colleges/universities in the Guelph/Waterloo area?

Community Mennonite Fellowship (Drayton, ON) is seeking a ½ time **YOUTH PASTOR/WORKER** dedicated to shepherding the youth of our church and community, and willing to work with an excellent team of volunteer youth sponsors.

For a full job description and further information please contact: Gavin Brockett at 519-638-5456 or brockett@uniserve.com.



DEVELOPMENT OFFICER: Mennonite Heritage Village is seeking a half-time fund-raising professional to plan and implement an immediate and long-term strategy to meet various funding goals. Details available upon request. Send resume to: President - Mennonite Heritage Village, 231 PTH12N, Steinbach, MB R5G 1T8, or president@mhv.ca.

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.



MCC urgently seeks applicants for **MCC PROGRAM REPS:**

- 1) West Europe – Bonn, Germany
- 2) Former Soviet Union (FSU) - Zaporozhye, Ukraine

MCC Reps provide the program leadership for MCC's international work. They have primary responsibility for bridge-building, collaboration and liaison work with the various Mennonite and other churches in the region. They manage distribution of material aid, develop opportunities to enhance peace programming and provide support for MCC workers in the field.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership, and nonviolent peacemaking.

Contact your local MCC for more information.

Call Toll Free in Canada: 1-888-622-6337

Call Toll Free in US: 1-888-563-4676

E-mail: Karen Grace-Pankratz <karengrace-pankratzt@mennonitecc.ca> or Marsha Jones <mgj@mennonitecc.ca>.

View job descriptions on the web at: www.mcc.org.

Executive Director. Menno-Hof in Shipshewana, Indiana, is a vibrant Amish/Mennonite interpretive center celebrating 20 years of successful operation. Looking for an **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** to exhibit creativity and work with the board of directors to expand and refine vision for the future. Desired qualifications: strong knowledge of the Anabaptist faith tradition; ability to communicate issues of faith and culture passionately. Complete job description at www.mennohof.org. Send resumes or inquiries to Leanne Farmwald c/o Menno-Hof, 510 S Van Buren St, Shipshewana, IN 46565 or lfarmwald@aol.com.



- Interested in being part of a dynamic pastoral team with a vision?
- Would you enjoy guiding youth in their spiritual and life journey?
- Are you excited about encouraging a life of Christian service?

North Leamington United Mennonite Church, a rural congregation of about 350 people south of Windsor, Ont., is looking for a full-time **YOUTH PASTOR** to help our congregation integrate young people into the faith, life, and mission of our church.

To find out more about NLU MC visit our website at www.nlumc.com. Interested applicants, please contact:

Muriel Bechtel
MCEC Conference Minister
muriel@mcec.ca
1-800-206-9356

Upcoming Advertising Dates

Issue Date	Ads Due
May 26	May 13
<i>Focus on Seniors</i>	
June 9	May 27

PERSONAL REFLECTION

One nail at a time

Calgary youth group helps rebuild homes, restore hope for hurricane victims

BY BYRON THIESSEN
Foothills Mennonite Church
CAMERON, LA.

PHOTO BY BYRON THIESSEN

Fourteen youths and five adults from Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary travelled to Cameron with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) last month on a service trip organized and led by youth pastor Rita Heidebrecht.

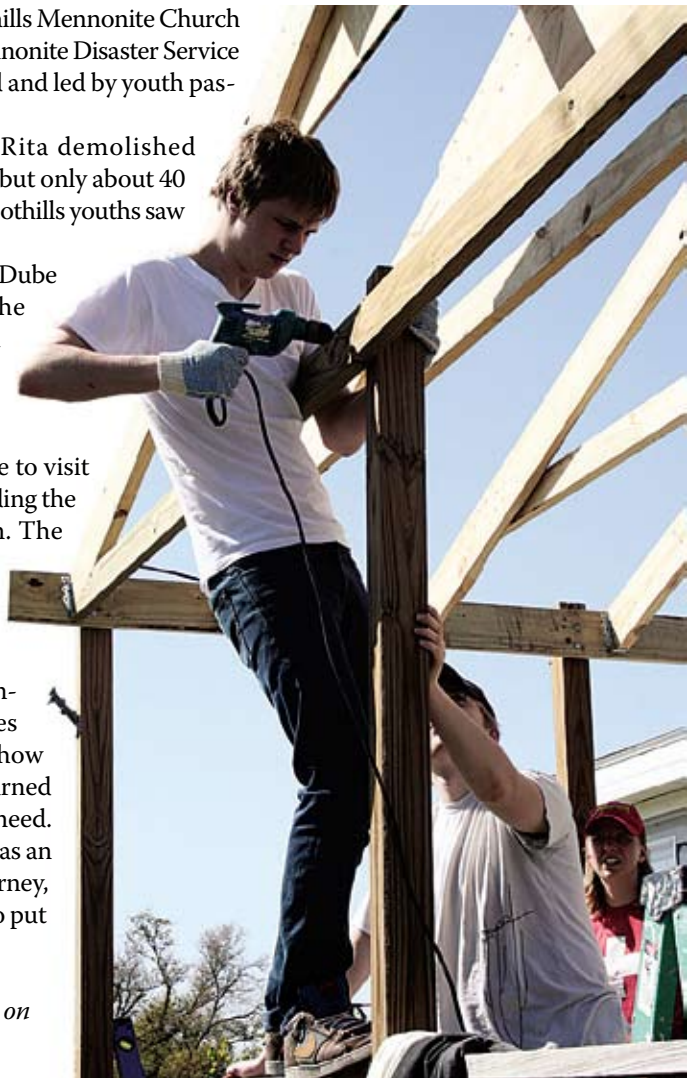
More than two years after Hurricane Rita demolished Cameron, the town is trying to rebuild itself, but only about 40 percent of the residents have returned. The Foothills youths saw first-hand the damage caused by the storm.

The MDS regional directors Carl and Laura Dube and several long-term volunteers made the Foothills group very welcome. Each day for a week we were assigned a group to work with as we built porches, roofs, decks and ramps, installed windows and cleaned yards.

Along with the work, the youths were able to visit with many of the residents of the town, including the people whose homes they were working on. The stories they heard were filled with trauma, sorrow, fear and now hope. The residents were all so thankful for the work of the youths.

It was a great learning experience for the entire group. During daily devotions and times of reflection, the youths and adults shared how they were impacted by the experience and learned about the importance of service to people in need. Each member will remember this experience as an important step in his or her personal faith journey, and a concrete way in which they were able to put their faith into action. ☸

Byron Thiessen served as an adult chaperone on the trip to Cameron.



Mark Heinrichs, foreground, helps rebuild a home in Cameron, La., that was damaged in the fall of 2005 by Hurricane Rita. He was part of a short-term Mennonite Disaster Service team from Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary, Alta., that travelled to the U.S. Gulf Coast in March.