

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

May 12, 2008

Volume 12 Number 10

Fair  
trade:  
Learning  
not to be like  
King Ahab

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# Our ongoing commission

TIM MILLER DYCK

Editor/Publisher

Two things stood out for me as I attended the Mennonite Church Eastern Canada annual delegate sessions at the end of April in Leamington.

The first was how multilingual the church body is. We worshipped God together and heard Scripture in many tongues. More and more churches in MC Eastern Canada use Lao, Hmong, Spanish or Amharic, as well as English, as their working languages. Given that the theme verse of the gathering was Jesus' command to "go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (from Matthew 28:19, called the Great Commission), this was quite fitting.

The second thing that really stood out was how many churches are being planted in this area church right now. A few issues ago, I shared the joy of pastor Thomas Pham at how God was multiplying the efforts of the Edmonton and Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite churches in Christian witness in Malaysia. I heard that same emotion a week ago in southern Ontario.

At the MC Eastern Canada sessions, mission minister Brian Bauman said that, in the past six years, four new member churches had been introduced in the Mission Council reporting time, although none were joining this year.

"But there is good news," he stressed. "We have eight church planters and new

churches with us this morning. Eight! "There are church planters, [people] going to be church planters, as well as congregations that have already begun and they have discovered the Mennonite faith. They've discovered our emphasis on community, on justice, on peace, on service and say that is who we want to connect with, that's who we want to be as a church."

There is Kingsfield/Clinton, a new faith community emerging from Zurich Mennonite Church; Markham Christian Worship Centre, a Tamil church desiring to be the first Tamil Mennonite Church (and growing in relationship with Wideman Mennonite Church and Hagerman Mennonite Church); a French/English church plant starting soon in Ottawa (see story on page 25); an English church plant starting this fall in St. Catharines; an Ethiopian and Eritrean church growing in downtown Toronto; two Spanish-speaking Mennonite churches in Quebec, one in Sherbrooke and one in Montreal; and an English Christian community emerging in Stratford.

What's also visible is the way churches in other parts of the world are sending workers to help us here. Lucy Roca, who is leading the two Hispanic Quebec churches, was commissioned and sent here by the Colombian Mennonite Church to plant churches in Canada.



Pastor Kassa Lemma, who started the Ethiopian and Eritrean church, was already a pastor for years in Ethiopia. Familiar with the Mennonite church there (after all, Meserete Kristos Church, the world's largest Mennonite church group, is there), he contacted Mennonite Church Canada to find out how to join together with Mennonites here in Canada. I spoke with him at the meetings in Leamington to learn more. "I need some more help. I have vision and have more plans for these new immigrants," he told me.

The story of the church he founded, Rehoboth Christian Fellowship, is quite astonishing and you'll read about it in a future issue of *Canadian Mennonite* as we continue our series highlighting emerging church plants.

Jim Loepp Thiessen, pastor at the Gathering Church in Kitchener, one of four new churches that recently joined MC Eastern Canada, also spoke to the importance of following Jesus' command to go and make disciples. He described how the church is God's outpost of mission in the world. Mission, as well as fellowship and service, is God's calling.

"When the church is engaged in its mission, it comes alive. If you are wondering, is this all there is to church, then I need to tell you one of the missing links is lives transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit: folks who don't know about Jesus and find out the power of Jesus to transform their lives," he said. "Trust me. If you aren't seeing people transformed by the power of Jesus, your needs aren't being met. The church doesn't make sense. It's a critical component of the church's DNA to watch people transform . . . into disciples and followers of Jesus Christ."

Jesus tells us to go, make disciples, baptize, teach and obey. The privilege to know and follow Jesus Christ is a gift intended for me, you and everyone around us.

## ABOUT THE COVER:

Members of the Manos Amigos (Hands of Friendship) artisan group in the Lake Titicaca region of Peru knit finger puppets that are sold through Ten Thousand Villages, the largest and oldest fair trade organization in North America. For more on fair trade, see pages 4 and 14.

PHOTO: JEANETTE EWERT, TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES

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# CANADIAN MENNONITE

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

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

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## **Electronic Delivery**

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# The temptations of Ahab

*The way this evil Israelite king covets his subject Naboth's vineyard is mirrored in the urges of unquestioning modern shoppers*

BY JUDY WILSON

MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY



*"Naboth's Vineyard" by Frank Adams.  
From the Bible Picture Book.*

It's hard to be objective about, let alone sympathetic to, King Ahab. He was an evil man, rotten to the core. The record of his succession to the throne prepares us for the details of his life by saying *"He did more to arouse the anger of the Lord, the God of Israel, than all of the kings of Israel before him"* (I Kings 16).

With that warning we know that every time Ahab makes an appearance he is the villain. After repeated readings of the story of Naboth's vineyard, however, I came to the sorry conclusion that I had more in common with Ahab than with either of the other two main characters. The temptations of Ahab bear an uncomfortable resemblance to the temptations faced by modern consumers.

The story, as recorded in I Kings 21, begins when Ahab, a man who already has more of everything than he possibly needs, sees a nice little piece of land. It's close to his palace and would be a wonderful place to grow vegetables. There's only one problem. It belongs to Naboth, and Naboth doesn't want to give it up. The land has been in his family for generations, and neither money nor another garden plot will make up for losing family property. So Ahab goes home and pouts. He faces the wall and refuses to eat—all because of a vegetable plot.

It's easy for us to see how petty this is, but I can also sympathize with Ahab. He has money and power. He is used to getting his way. And now he's forced to live next door to something he can't have.

We, too, have sufficient money and sufficient power to provide ourselves with most things we want. And yet, like Ahab, we are continuously being confronted by "more" and "better."

Think about it. When you grocery shop, can you claim immunity to the temptation of exotic fruits, the dozens of cereal choices, the newest flavour of ice-

cream? Changes in technology make our cell phones, computers, televisions, even cars, maddeningly outdated before we get them home. Vacation season is almost upon us and it's hard to ignore the allure of bigger, newer, shinier and more powerful toys to maximize our recreational experience.

We can easily see how childish, how ungrateful and how arrogant Ahab was in his desire for a specific piece of land. But, so far, he looks a lot like many of us.

Going only on what happens to Naboth next, we'd probably agree that Jezebel is the true villain in the story. She devises a scheme, forges letters that result in Naboth's untimely death, and then cheers up her husband with the news that the vineyard is now his to claim.

Our comfortable lifestyle comes to us—to some degree at least—from following Ahab's example of leaving the dirty work to others. Take food, for instance. We enjoy extremely cheap food in this country. According to the Alberta Farm Safety Centre, farmers are five times more likely to be injured on the job than workers in any other industry. Farmers and farm families are exposed to health hazards from the use of chemicals, dangerous machinery, infectious diseases, noise and stress. Much farm work is regulated by weather: When crops are ready and the weather permits, farmers frequently work extended hours. Harvesting of tender and fragile crops is frequently tedious and back-breaking work.

Or think of how much of the food we eat that now comes from outside the country. Consider imported produce: The mangoes and melons on our store shelves in winter months or the green asparagus shoots arriving astonishingly early in the year are actually travelling a long way to get here. In Manitoba, for example, the average food ingredient

travels 2,000 kilometres. The social costs of exploited farm labour; environmental impacts of pesticides, including ones banned for use in our own country; fuel consumption; and greenhouse gas emissions are out of sight and easily ignored.

Or think about carpets, paint, noxious household cleaners and intricate embroidery on fine clothing. How many of these come to us as a result of someone else's work in unpleasant, unsafe or unfulfilling labour?

At first glance, what amazes me most about Ahab is that he never once asked what had happened to Naboth. Even allowing for the passage of time, he can-

*[L]ike Ahab, we are continuously being confronted by "more" and "better."*

not have forgotten how attached to the land Naboth had been, nor how Jezebel had promised to get it for him. He had to have known that something was not quite right.

Not wanting to know may be our biggest temptation as well. We don't want to know about coffee labourers earning \$3 or \$4 a month, somewhat less than we pay for a single cup of specialty coffee. We don't really want to know how much the farmer gets paid when apples sell for less than a dollar per pound.

When buying a new rug, do we stop to ask how it was manufactured: Was child labour used? Did the workers work in a safe environment and did they get a fair wage? Do we wonder whether the young factory worker who put the logo on our \$175 running shoes walked barefoot to work? Do we think the seamstress who stitched the "hand-sewn quilt" priced at \$59.99 is feeding her family well on her share of the sticker price?

While trying to decide whether \$8 or

\$28 is too much to pay for another handy little gadget, do we stop to consider how many hands have touched that object, how many miles it has travelled, and whether anyone was hurt in its manufacture, shipping and marketing?

Like Ahab, we know somewhere deep inside of us that there's something wrong with the picture. But we don't want to know. We'd rather just take possession of the vineyard.

Even though we know Ahab was an evil man, the way he responded to the consumer challenges of his day highlights how easy it is to sin. First, we, like Ahab with the vineyard in full view of

his palace, are bombarded with images that incite us to want stuff. The whole mess started with wanting something that wasn't his. That may seem like the mildest offence, but isn't that how life is? "*Where do all the fights and quarrels among you come from?*" asks James in chapter 4 verse 1. The answer? "*You want things but you cannot have them, so you quarrel and fight.*"

It may be difficult to control our wants, but we certainly can lessen our exposure to them. Judith Levine, in *Not Buying It: My Year Without Shopping*, writes about trying to buy only essential groceries and a limited amount of gas for a full year. She wasn't entirely successful, but she learned a lot along the way. Among her conclusions is the simple observation that when you stay away from malls, restaurants or movies theatres, you lose interest in them. You find that you can get along just fine without exotic mushrooms, another pair of shoes, and even coffee shop coffee.

Second, we can do more of our own

*Carina Chaves Araujo, a member of the Manos Amigos (Hands of Friendship) artisan group, shows her daughter Elisa how to decorate their pottery creations. The arts and crafts made by the group are sold through Ten Thousand Villages stores in North America under a fair trade agreement.*



dirty work. We have lost contact with our food, our housing and even our clothing by allowing others to do the work for us. Small things like buying locally and doing more of our own food preparation can go a long way towards tipping the scale. It takes a little more effort to shop at the farm gate or farmers markets than at big box grocery stores. It takes more effort to knit a sweater than to choose one off the rack.

It's time more of us stood up to the corporate giants and said, "I no longer want you pushing people off their ancestral lands so I can have cheap coffee, mangoes all year round, or more tofu."

Third, we need to ask a lot more questions. Just because something is on display in front of us, just because it's convenient, and just because we can afford it, does not mean we should assume it's rightfully ours to purchase.

Asking questions can be costly, both in terms of dollars and emotions. Knowing how little coffee plantation workers are paid may lead to paying two or three times as much for our coffee. Knowing the history of exploitation that marks the discovery, development and production of chocolate may curb our cravings for that treat. There may be clothing labels that we no longer wear—even when purchased at the thrift store. Careful research may lead us to re-balance our investment portfolios.

We live in a world dominated by fewer and larger trans-national corporations. These companies are not specialists. The maker of your favourite chocolate bar

may also be feeding your pets, producing your laundry detergent and putting shoes on your feet. Cargill, for example, manufactures feed for dairy and beef cattle, poultry and pork; provides grain and oil seeds to other feed companies; manufactures 15 categories of food; and provides ingredients for health and pharmaceutical products, as well as oil, salt, starch and steel products for industrial applications. It takes considerable time and effort to know where our food, clothing and furniture come from and what values are driving their production.

Fortunately, we don't have to do all of the work ourselves. Standards have already been established to determine when a product has been fairly traded. When we buy coffee, tea, sugar, handicrafts, clothing or produce with the Fair

Trade Certified mark, we can be sure that the work being done on our behalf was meaningful work, done with dignity and rewarded with a fair price. Moreover, transparency is assured so that we may freely ask questions.

It is relatively easy to shop in a way that reduces global poverty and promotes sustainability for producers. The extra effort and money involved are minimal in comparison to the potential damage of taking the path of least resistance.

The sad story of Naboth's vineyard saga ends with the appearance of Elijah. Although God has given him a speech to deliver, the prophet doesn't have to open the conversation. Ahab sees Elijah and groans: "*Have you found me, oh my enemy?*"

No matter how much sympathy we may have recently developed for Ahab, his response to Elijah's appearance leaves no doubt as to whether he is guilty or innocent, even in his own eyes.

Although centuries have passed and much has changed, much more has stayed the same. We face many of the same marketplace challenges that confronted Ahab so long ago. May God grant us the courage not to fall into the same traps he did. ☸

*Judy Wilson lives near Nanaimo, B.C. She was previously employed by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute.*

### /// For discussion

1. Judy Wilson suggests that modern consumers are similar to King Ahab, who coveted Naboth's vineyard. Do you think this is a fair comparison? Do you think Ahab was aware that Jezebel used unscrupulous means to make the vineyard available to him?
2. Have you ever experienced not being fairly paid for your work? How did you feel and how did you deal with it? Do you think producers in your local area are fairly compensated?
3. When you purchase food, clothing or furniture, do you think about how it was produced? Does it matter to you who made it, in what conditions and how far it has travelled? What criteria do you use in deciding what you will purchase?
4. Wilson suggests that not wanting to know under what conditions something is produced "may be our biggest temptation." Do you agree? Is searching for a good bargain a temptation we should resist?

## 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.*

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### ✉ Homosexuality forum should have included other key voices

CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY (CMU) set an excellent example for its constituent churches by hosting the recent forum on homosexuality, and I appreciate the thorough coverage given the event by *Canadian Mennonite* (March 3, page 14).

The report on this important event did raise some questions in my mind, though. It would appear that not all the key voices that need to be heard at such a forum were invited to come. The voice of a gay man deeply connected with change ministries and who is now involved in an opposite-sex marriage, and the voice of a caring mother struggling for a time to come to terms with the reality of having a lesbian daughter (also now married to an opposite-sex partner), were heard at the forum. But there was no voice speaking for the typical Canadian Mennonite gay or lesbian person.

Having been involved over the years with many dozens of gay persons, male and female, and being the proud father of a lovely lesbian daughter, it is my observation that by far the majority of Mennonite persons with a same-gender attraction have comfortably come to terms with their gayness, are often involved in a long-term loving relationship with a partner of the same sex, and more and more frequently live in middle-class suburbs in our larger Canadian cities while quietly raising a family.

Contrary to what may be the wishful thinking of our Mennonite congregations, most Mennonite gay persons do not end up in marriage relationships with someone of the opposite sex. In fact, for most gays

to do so would not be a good idea, as it would mean being untrue to themselves and to the God who made them the way they are.

The sole criteria of modern marriage ought to be love and compatibility. Val Warkentin, the parent of a lesbian daughter and a presenter at the forum, put it well: "Gender has no place in the realm of love." Modern times and new understandings of homosexuality call for new traditions and new accommodations to new realities. Perhaps that is why the Holy Spirit builds God's church out of new wineskins, not old ones.

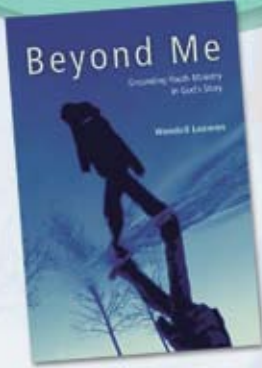
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### ✉ Mennonites must use Scripture to discern environmental wisdom

I BEGAN READING the column by Paul Fieguth, "A God who loves the whole world," (Feb. 18, page 11), with great anticipation. While there is much to agree with and applaud, I would like to respond and respectfully disagree.

I, too, wish to claim my Anabaptist-Mennonite identity and pacifist values as a starting point. In 1992, I completed a degree in theology and environmental

# New



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philosophy. My reflections come out of years of reading and contemplation, and more recently as a practising farmer.

I believe that we Anabaptist-Mennonites should be very careful when we seek to bring into service a way of thinking that is not first examined carefully in the light of Scripture and before our community of faith as a whole.

My fundamental concern with Fieguth's direction is in his use of the Scientific Principle. I agree

that the earth has a finite carrying capacity and finite resources. But we do not yet know what that carrying capacity is. And we do not yet know in what creative ways human beings may continue to live, lightening their footprint as they continue to live on the earth.

English economist Thomas Malthus, whom Fieguth mentioned, has all the credibility of Hal Lindsey, who predicted the end of the world in 1988 in his best-selling book, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, while the Club of Rome, an international think tank that was also

## NEW ORDER VOICE

# So he gave them over to oil

WILL BRAUN

A year ago, I polled a couple Mennonite organizations about their efforts to address climate change. I found them poised for action. Given their enthusiasm, I promised to check back in a year. Here's what I found.

The first thing Pam Peters-Pries, executive secretary for MC Canada's Support Services Council, points to is that the denomination will use compostable dinnerware at the annual assembly this summer. It has also gone to primarily online registration and paperless promotion for the event. In addition, the event facilities and most of the lodgings are at the same site, thus reducing the need for transportation.

Our conversation was much longer than that. There are resolutions, a "plan to develop a plan," and theological rigour, but when you distill it down to actual actions that reduce actual greenhouse gas emissions, the above list is it.

Over at Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada, Heidi Koole, who sits on the binational Caring for Creation Task Force, says some Winnipeg staff have opted out of certain fly-in meetings and they compost lunchroom refuse. Roughly half the staff has pledged to walk or bike to work at least some of the time, and

they are significantly expanding their community garden, turning lawn into garden for staff and neighbours. Again, there is more activity in the works, but in terms of tracking the actions that reduce emissions, this is about what it looks like.

I could go on about plans for hiring help, passing more resolutions and doing energy audits, which have been talked about at the MCC office in Winnipeg since at least 2001. But too rarely does the climate conversation focus on the bottom line: actions that actually reduce



*But too rarely does the climate conversation focus on the bottom line: actions that actually reduce greenhouse gas emissions.*

greenhouse gas emissions. On that count, the above list—though laudable in some ways—surely amounts to less than Kyoto-strength reductions, which would have to be considered the barest minimum.

Peters-Pries admits the MC Canada initiatives are also "fairly nominal" compared to the impact of just getting everyone to the assembly.

Climate change has galvanized the global conscience like nothing before. But the movement is failing at the one thing that ultimately matters most: a

reduction from current levels of annual global emissions. We are unable to translate our intentions into actions of the sort so obviously required. We don't know how to live on substantially less energy. We don't know how to be a national or international church family without lots of flying.

The extent to which we seem stuck in our energy dependence makes me think of the biblical notion found in Psalm 81:12, and elsewhere, where God says of the beloved Israelites: "*So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts, to follow their own counsels.*" Our churches are so completely mired in the energy-addicted culture that sometimes I wonder if God has said, "Okay, if that's what you really want, go for it and see how it turns out."

It's time to beg for mercy. Maybe MCC could call a month-long travel moratorium as a sort of fast for mercy and prayer

for creative courage. Maybe MC Canada could cancel the 2009 assembly. Then staff could use the time they would have spent planning the event on implementation of concrete greening initiatives, and the rest of us could spend that weekend in home group meetings to beseech God for mercy and talk about why it's so bloody hard to give up oil.

*Will Braun attends Hope Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. You can reach him at [editor@geezmagazine.org](mailto:editor@geezmagazine.org).*



quoted, continues to suggest regulations that increase the power and scope of governments to govern their citizens, instead of empowering their citizens.

If one is to ask an economic theorist to serve an Anabaptist-Mennonite environmental ethic, perhaps a better choice is Hernando de Soto, a Peruvian economist. He argues that when citizens of the developing world are able to access civic services—including land title, law-abiding banking services and appropriate credit—they then go about arranging their affairs to stimulate the growth of communities without the need for external investment that makes them vulnerable to

mature global capital markets. De Soto is remarkably creative. His thinking is grounded in both historical research and praxis on several continents. Using the success he has had in the developing world may be an avenue to explore as we seek to live as stewards in creation.

My hope is that brothers and sisters in Canada and around the world will explore new and creative environmental avenues that will honour God and live peaceably with creation.

WALTER BERGEN, ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

#### FROM OUR LEADERS

## From witness to 'witness'

GEORGE SCHMIDT

For the past 37 years, Kinghaven—a treatment centre for men addicted to alcohol and drugs—has been the next-door neighbour of West Abbotsford Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

Although there were questions and concerns on the part of leaders and members regarding the rather unusual and possibly fearsome new neighbours in the beginning, there was no serious objection to their arrival. As a matter of fact, the women of the church were soon heavily involved in refurbishing the dormitory rooms, equipping the kitchen and stocking the pantry.

The church realized quite early that “God had not made a mistake” in planting Kinghaven right on its doorstep; this was obviously an invitation and a challenge, and it responded. But that’s not to say the church didn’t make some. It reached out in the way most Christians reach out, by trying various approaches to get these “outsiders” to come “inside” the church to hear how God can be found. Except for an annual banquet, most attempts didn’t work.

This picture changed very quickly when the Lord provided leaders who

saw that church is not primarily about member services, but rather about the recruitment, training and deployment of members for demonstrating practically the relevance and power of the gospel, and for allowing people to meet “Jesus in work clothes.”

The understanding grew that most people are “loved to the Lord” by believers who dare to leave the safety of the “fortress,” and that they become much



*It also became clear that new insights are of little use unless they are intentionally put into action.*

more willing to try new things—like going to church—if they are accompanied by a helpful, trusted friend.

It also became clear that new insights are of little use unless they are intentionally put into action. The answer to “Where do we begin?” was a no-brainer: With the nearest neighbours at Kinghaven, of course. “What do we do?” was answered initially by “What do they need” and “What do we have to offer?”

Since the Twelve-Step Program permeates Kinghaven’s overall approach to

addiction recovery, West Abbotsford Mennonite realized it has the resources to make the God of the Bible a clear and attractive option at Step Three, where clients commit to a choice of a “higher power.”

First, a Spiritual First Steps gathering at the church was cleared with Kinghaven’s administration and a growing stream of men participated enthusiastically; some even committed to following Jesus after a short time.

It also did not take long before more and more began attending church services and other gatherings. Because they found warmth and acceptance, they invited new clients. This intentional ministry was soon followed by a Bible discussion group right at Kinghaven, then two Alpha courses per year and,

more recently, by a Next Steps program for graduates from Kinghaven and Alpha.

West Abbotsford membership now includes a growing number of these former “outsiders.” We are grateful and excited about the Lord’s work among us.

*George Schmidt is the founding chair of Kinghaven and member of West Abbotsford Mennonite Church. He is also the chair of the MC B.C. Evangelism and Church Development Committee.*

**✉ Mennonites who benefited from war mustn't refuse to pay for it now**

RE: "MENNONITES MUST quit paying for Canada to go to war" letter by Benno Barg, March 17, page 9.

If special interest groups were to start running a country, we would create fractious chaos. Imagine if Mennonites were to selectively hold back 8 percent of their taxes that now go to the military. Agnostics and atheists might, in retaliation, lobby the government by refusing to subsidize organized religion, which depends on tax receipts. Or imagine if the elderly, who often protest paying the education portion of their

property taxes, expanded that to include the portion of provincial and federal taxes that support public education.

We, by choice, immigrated to this country after Canada—through war—helped save us from Hitler and Stalin. Now, after 60 years of benefiting from this gift, are we going to become tax rebels in our own land? I abhor war, but becoming a taxation rebel is illegal and immoral.

PETER SIEMENS, EAST ST. PAUL, MAN.

**✉ Abbotsford Mennonite clarifies position on MC B.C. covenant**

THROUGH VARIOUS ARTICLES and letters in *Canadian Mennonite*, information and opinions have been presented about the Mennonite Church B.C. covenanting process. As noted, four congregations chose not to sign the covenant. Two of these congregations have since withdrawn from MC B.C. From the letters it seems understood that all four non-signing congregations, including Abbotsford Mennonite Fellowship, are dissenting congregations.

We would like to clarify this misperception. We are not one of the congregations expressing a desire to leave either MC Canada or MC B.C. We continue to be supporters of MC Canada and MC B.C. We contribute financially, attend meetings and have a member serving on a conference committee.

We chose to abstain from voting on the covenant, neither supporting it nor opposing it. We simply had some difficulty around the dynamics on which the covenant process was based. In spite of those differences we affirmed our support as a member congregation of MC B.C.

We do want the wider Mennonite community to know that we are a supporting congregation of both MC Canada and MC B.C. We are not dissidents.

WALTER PAETKAU

*Walter Paetkau is vice-chair of Abbotsford Mennonite Fellowship, Abbotsford, B.C.*

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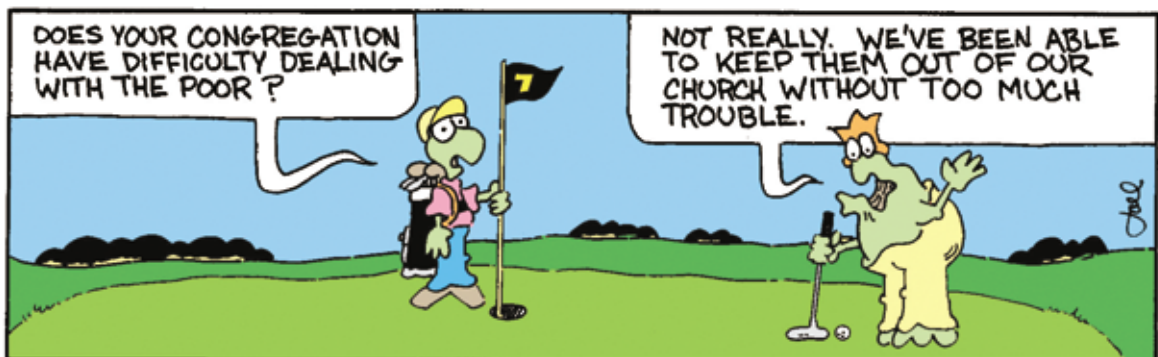
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Communitas Supportive Care is a Christian organization that supports those who have disabilities and seniors in the community. Communitas hires on the basis of merit and is committed to employment equity. We encourage all qualified persons to apply for employment with us; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.



**Pontius' Puddle**



## /// Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

**Blackburn**—Daelia Faith (b. April 4, 2008), to Lisa and Nick Blackburn, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

**Brenneman**—Bailey Jesse (b. April 1, 2008), to Amanda and Mark Brenneman, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.

**Browning**—Samuel Mark (b. March 28, 2008), to Mark and Petra Browning, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

**Cressman**—Daniel Richard (b. April 15, 2008), to Daryl and Rosalynn Cressman, St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.

**Dubé**—Sarah Nicole (b. April 9, 2008), to Nancy and Zach Dubé, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

**Fast**—Charles Werner Gerster (b. April 11, 2008), to Marnie Gerster and Paul Fast, Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont.

**Gingerich**—Rachel and Levi (b. April 18, 2008), to Monica (Gingerich) and Rich Gingerich, Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

**Goodwin**—Michael David (b. March 13, 2008), to Lynne Dueck and Richard Goodwin, Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

**Heide**—Reid Benjamin (b. Jan. 26, 2008), to Ben and Lisa Heide, Whitewater Mennonite, Boissevain, Man.

**Leis**—Emilie Gabrielle (b. March 18, 2008), to Erin and Jerome Leis, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

**Martin**—Ethan Sky (b. Feb. 20, 2008), to Roxanne and Steve Martin, Avon Mennonite, Stratford, Ont.

**Nickel**—Ashley Taylor (b. March 19, 2008), to Erik and Jessica Nickel, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

**Neufeldt**—Kenley Brinn (b. Feb. 13, 2008), to Krista and Marty Neufeldt, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

**Siemens**—Sage Helena (b. Feb. 23, 2008), to Carolyn and Cale Siemens, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

**Thiessen**—Carly Jean (b. March 26, 2008), to Janet and Mark Thiessen, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Williams**—Adrian John (b. Jan. 12, 2008), to Lilli and Stuart Williams, Home Street Mennonite, Winnipeg. An incorrect name appeared in the April 14 issue.

### Baptisms

**Ryan Camey**—Hunta Mennonite Church, Ont., April 20, 2008.

### Marriages

**Balzer/Gingerich**—Wolfgang Balzer and Fern Gingerich, Breslau Mennonite, Ont., April 5, 2008.

**DeAbreu/Tiessen**—Natasha DeAbreu and Scott Tiessen, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., March 19, 2008.

**Janzen/Loewen**—Nettie Janzen and Henry Loewen, Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, B.C., April 26, 2008.

**Kuli/Tetzlaff**—Stacey Lynn Kuli and John Paul Tetzlaff, Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont., Feb. 23, 2008.

**Marcovecchio/Willms**—Jason Marcovecchio and Melissa Willms, North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., April 19, 2008.

**Neufeld/Willerton**—Charlene Neufeld (Whitewater Mennonite, Boissevain, Man.) and Marc Willerton (The Lighthouse Church), in Winnipeg, Dec. 22, 2007.

### Deaths

**Braun**—John J., 84 (d. Feb. 3, 2008), North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Fast**—Katie, 87 (d. Oct. 10, 2007), Whitewater Mennonite, Boissevain, Man.

**Harder**—Marilee, 36 (d. April 11, 2008), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

**Houston**—John Patrick, 58 (April 14, 2008), Avon Mennonite, Stratford, Ont.

**Hunsberger**—Wilson, 88 (d. April 22, 2008), Rockway Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., in Victoria, B.C.

**Janzen**—Eleanore, 89 (d. March 12, 2008), Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

**Laskowski**—Gordon, 87 (b. April 4, 1921; d. April 26, 2008), North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

**Martin**—Irvin, 72, (b. Aug. 28, 1935; d. April 18, 2008), Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

**Martin**—June (nee Witmer), 78 (b. March 28, 1930; d. April 3, 2008), Shantz Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

**Martin**—Lloyd S., 79 (b. July 20, 1928; d. April 20, 2008), St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.

**Mathies**—Abram D., 85 (d. April 17, 2008), North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Tiessen**—Helen (nee Schellenberg), 96 (d. April 17, 2008), North Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Unger**—Anne, 80 (d. April 19, 2008), Whitewater Mennonite, Boissevain, Man.

**Wong**—Joyce, 46 (b. Feb. 25, 1962; d. April 21, 2008), Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

**Yantzi**—Nancy, 60 (b. Oct. 6, 1947; d. April 22, 2008), Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.

### Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones

*announcements within four months of the event.*

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

## LIVING WITHIN LIMITS: PART VII

## No more excuses

PAUL FIEGUTH

**W**ealth and conflict have long gone hand-in-hand. So it is now with oil in Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Sudan, Angola.

Being a pacifist can no longer just mean not being willing to go to war. To refuse to use a gun is a relatively straightforward position. However, wars are fought for complex and subtle reasons, and frequently fought in complex and subtle ways. To be a committed pacifist must also mean to live in such a way as to prevent the need for using a gun from arising in the first place.

If energy is the blood keeping modern societies alive, then a threat to energy supplies is essentially an attack on the modern society. Indeed, the Carter Doctrine of the United States made this interpretation explicit: "Any attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States . . . repelled by any means necessary, including military force."

By being participants and consumers in a modern society, we participate in and benefit from such military threats. For the majority of Mennonites, our employment, vacation plans, lifestyle and financial savings rely on the continued running of a cheap-energy society. We may openly deplore the war in Iraq, but we still want gas for our car from somewhere. While we may not be willing to physically fight or kill for energy, are we willing to either turn a blind eye (having someone else fight for us), or to fight economically (to keep paying for energy, depriving poorer people of their share)?

Most pacifists would probably declare themselves unwilling to fight physically, whether implicitly or economically. However, despite decades of documentaries, books and awareness-raising,

most North Americans—including many Mennonites (the author included)—have managed only the most trivial and modest lifestyle changes. If anything, since the 1960s we have become much more relaxed about consumption, as air-conditioning, regular air travel and multiple-car families are much more prevalent now than then. So the evidence suggests that we are, in fact, willing to fight implicitly and economically.



*We buy the airplane ticket and somewhere in oil-producing regions of Sudan, Iraq or Nigeria people are suffering terribly . . . .*

In the past five years, oil prices increased from around \$20 per barrel to \$110, with only the slightest change in consumption. In economic terms, our willingness to pay varies only very little with price. The same cannot be said, however, for many of the world's moderately poor. What exactly are we waiting for? How explicit do the documentaries need to get, how widespread do energy and food riots need to be, before we think harder about the Sermon on the Mount, the prayer of St. Francis, or Menno Simon's statement on true evangelical faith?

The wisdom of the Amish or Old-Order separation from a dependence on modern society suddenly becomes clear. Pacifism means changing our lifestyle—in ways that are not necessarily easy or comfortable. I see basically two alternatives, which I figuratively refer to as the "Noam Chomsky" and "Amish" approaches:

- **Noam Chomsky**, an American political activist and author: You go to considerable effort to be highly informed, to know how to control your impact, to be aware of the many subtleties in how your choices affect other people.

- **Amish**: You significantly change your lifestyle to avoid making an impact.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of us are doing neither of these; we're making an impact and we're uninformed. We buy the bananas and somewhere in Central America a family struggles to eke out an existence on a plantation. We buy the airplane ticket and somewhere in oil-producing regions of Sudan, Iraq or Nigeria people are suffering terribly, or ecological damage on an unimaginable scale is taking place in our tar sands.

Perhaps we make the connection, or perhaps not—enjoying our tropical fruit on a flight around the world. Regardless of whether we consciously make the connection, the connection is made: Our

desire to purchase is asserted, and somewhere someone is willing to fight on our behalf, and the consequences follow.

As a pacifist, I can no longer pretend that my status quo lifestyle is unconnected with conflict in other parts of the world. If I want to participate in the benefits of globalization, then I also have to bear the responsibility of my influence on the globe. No more excuses. Our energy consumption is far above the world average, and wars are being fought over our energy supplies. Jesus' lifestyle was, after all, emphatically not status quo, and for many of the same reasons that ours shouldn't be.

*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](http://ocho.uwaterloo.ca/limits) or e-mail [pfieguth@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:pfieguth@uwaterloo.ca).*

## YOUNG PROPHETS

# A farmer without land

BY DEREK FUNK

Every once in a while I like to escape into a world of fantasy through the computer game, John Deere American Farmer, as a stereotypical farmer named Hank. This romanticized fantasy of becoming the supreme ruler of crops and livestock while turning a pretty penny is the closest thing I have to our family-run vineyard back in Jordan, Ont., where I spent the first 20 years of my life.

Today, these rolling hills and vineyards seem distant, and I feel a disconnection from the land that pains my soul. Now living in the heart of Winnipeg with my wife Sarah, we occupy a tiny one-bedroom apartment on the second floor of a house built in 1892. An older home to be sure, but the woodwork and hardware are rich and reminiscent of an era I can only imagine. It's an era when both the Red and Assiniboine rivers would have been visible from our front window. Gardens, trees, wildlife and maybe a shed would have inhabited the yard, instead of gravel, miscellaneous junk, cars and surrounding buildings.

I find myself longing to connect with the land in ways Hank can't provide. I long to smell the freshly tilled soil, to see the new buds of spring painting the landscape in shades of pink and green, to work with my roughed-up, dried-out, calloused hands with dirt tracing

*I hope to expose our youths to a life where the uncertainty of weather patterns and crop health throughout the growing season is commonplace.*

the cracks in the skin and jammed deep under my nails, to work with the tools necessary to put food on the table.

Maybe I am romanticizing my memories, and maybe I should just go home to my

vineyards and rolling fields. But I'm afraid. I am concerned that if I do there will be another voice lost that seeks to connect our youths and people in urban settings to places where, for many of us, life and faith were produced from hard work, from creation and from the direct influence of the land.

This summer, I am excited to be leading our church's youths on a journey back to the farm, to connect with the land and God's creation. Together, we'll learn about modern agriculture and the food process, as well as getting to test some of our skills.

I hope to expose our youths to a life where the uncertainty of weather patterns and crop health throughout the growing season is commonplace. I am inviting them to understand that farmers are not just simplistic creatures who play in the dirt, but are intelligent and hard-working despite the negative stereotypes. I want us to see that the decisions we make about food directly impact our rural neighbours, and to see that the family farm is rarely the family farm anymore, but—willingly or not—a part of the multinational corporate system strategically taking over the countryside. Finally, I want the youths to see that it's possible

to acquire a work ethic, knowledge, skills, wisdom and faith not taught in academic institutions or the concrete jungle.

I am young, and hopefully have many more years to walk the path of life. I have no idea what potholes and curves my path will reveal. But I believe the best way to enjoy the path is to keep moving forward, stopping every once in a while to smell the roses and take a bite from some of the fruits I find along the way.

Returning physically to what was, is never the remedy to an emotional or mental disconnect. Instead, healing and moving on require us to take what we have learned, apply it to where we are now, and move forward with a well full of experience, wisdom, knowledge and faith.

I don't know if returning to the farm permanently is part of my path, but I hope to find harmony and understanding between my roots on the farm and my present life as an urbanite and minister. In the meantime, I can always load up Hank for a superficial fill and continue to work at ways I can take responsibility for my personal impact on farmers. I plan to continue encouraging myself, our youths and our churches to be creative in connecting with God in ways that take us to the frontier of our faith.

Maybe this is where the harmony is found.

*Derek Funk, 26, considers himself a farmer without land. He is associate minister at First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEREK FUNK



*Derek Funk is leading his church's youth group on a trip to his family's farm this summer, to learn about modern-day agriculture and reconnect with God's creation.*

## FOCUS ON FAIR TRADE

# A short history of fair trade

BY AARON EPP  
National Correspondent

“All things good and fair” are at the heart of fair trade, says Ingrid Heinrichs Pauls, education and media coordinator for Ten Thousand Villages, which markets fair trade products, handicrafts and coffee. “Our main focus is not profit; it’s about creating income for people who would otherwise not have a fair income,” and treating those people “the way we expect to be treated when doing business.”

That includes ensuring gender equality, no child labour and caring for the environment.

FINE—a group of four worldwide fair trade networks—defines fair trade as “a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, which seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers—especially in the South.”

Ten Thousand Villages had its beginning in 1946 when



*Hilda Espinoza is a member of the Manos Amigos artian group whose goods, including the clay figures, pictured, are sold through a fair trade arrangement with Ten Thousand Villages.*

Edna Ruth Byler served with MCC in Puerto Rico with her husband. She met women doing quality needlework, but they had nowhere to sell their work and were living in poverty. Byler took some of the needlework home to Akron, Pa., and began selling it out of the trunk of her car. Soon, she began selling items made by artisans in Haiti and the West Bank. The endeavour proved to be so successful that MCC eventually took it over.

“It started from just a tiny little vision to make a little bit of difference,” Heinrichs Pauls says, “and now it continues to grow phenomenally.” Ten Thousand Villages’ 50 stores earned \$16 million last year, a 10 percent increase from the year before.

TransFair Canada is a non-profit certification and public education organization that licenses its registered trademark, Fair Trade Certified, to NGOs, groups and individuals to promote, advocate, market and sell Fair Trade Certified products in Canada. According to a spokesperson from the group, as of last year there were 632 Fair Trade Certified producer groups in 59 source countries. Fair Trade Certified goods worth \$120 million were sold in Canada last year, up 48 percent from 2006.

Still, just because the movement is growing doesn’t mean it doesn’t have any faults, says Gavin Fridell, an assistant professor of politics at Trent University in Peterborough, Ont.

In his recent book, *Fair Trade Coffee: The Prospects and Pitfalls of Market-Driven Social Justice*, Fridell argues that a market-driven fair trade model has emerged as large corporations such as Starbucks have begun promoting fair trade products.

Only 6 percent of the coffee Starbucks sells is, in fact, fair trade, Fridell says, but that allows Starbucks to claim fair trade status “and confuse the consumer, and more generally give themselves an image of being a fair trade company.”

The fair trade movement has shown that people will pay more for ethical products, Fridell says, and he encourages people to keep shopping for fair trade items so long as they remember the difference between Ten Thousand Villages and Starbucks.

“[F]air trade is only a small percentage of world trade,” says Diana Mounce, communications and research coordinator for Ten Thousand Villages, “but at least it’s something tangible people can do that has direct results.”



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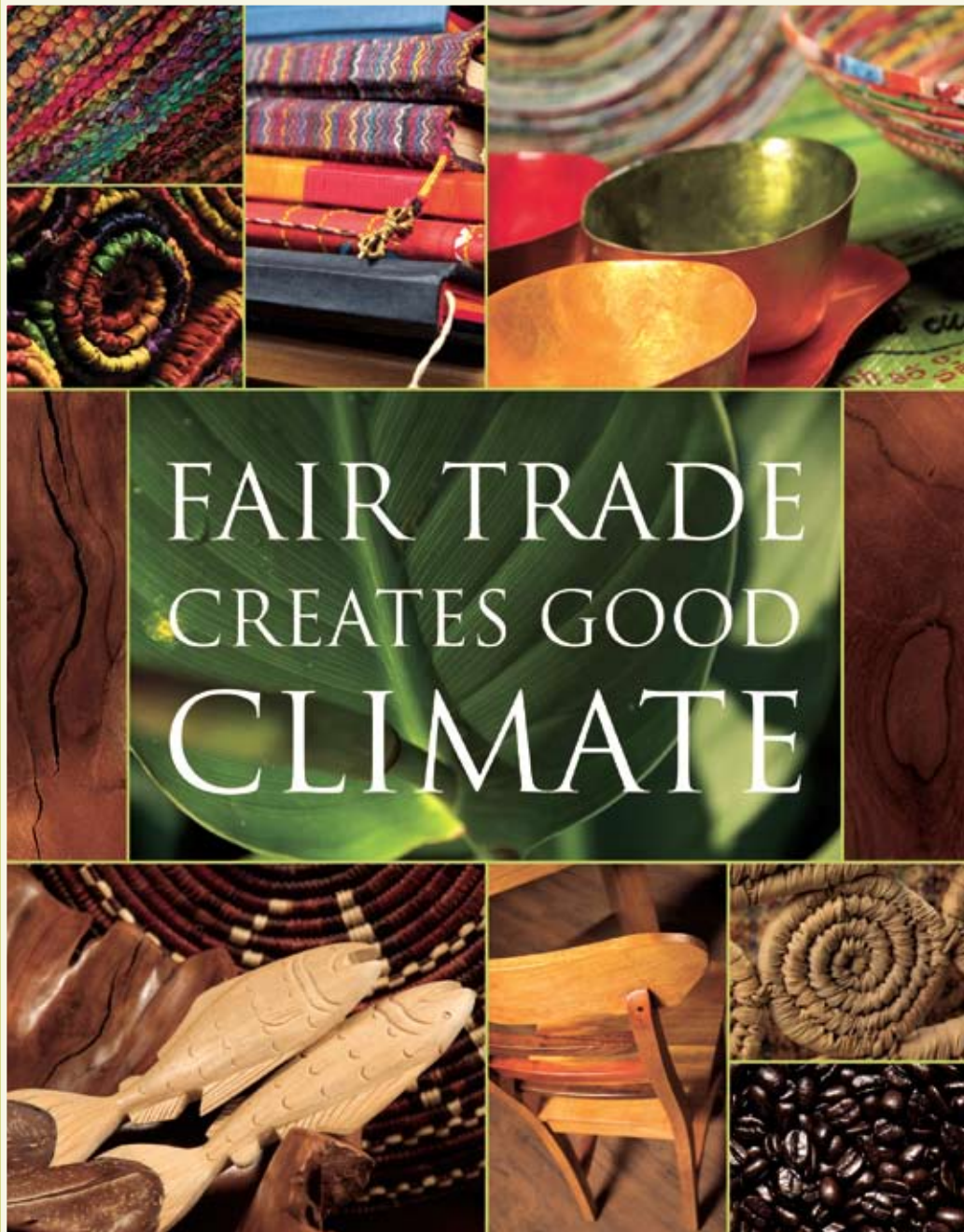
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## GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

# Hungry mouths may go unfilled

*Rising food prices put a crimp in Canadian Foodgrains Bank's ability to meet Third World demand*

BY AARON EPP

National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG

Canadian Foodgrains Bank will be forced to feed at least 25 percent fewer people this year than last, due to rising food prices.

A spokesperson for the international food aid organization says that unless donors and the government come through with increased funding, it will not be able to meet the growing demand for its services. "It's an extra challenge, but we hope it's a challenge we can find a solution for," says Manitoba regional coordinator Harold Penner.

The price of food staples such as wheat, rice, corn, soy, milk and meat has risen dramatically in the past year, causing riots and social unrest in several countries including Indonesia, Ethiopia, Egypt and Haiti (see "MCC staffer victim of carjacking during Haitian food unrest," April 28, page 23).

Maureen Fitzhenry says the reason for the price increases is because five of the world's top wheat exporting nations have experienced two years of bad weather in a row. "In a nutshell, we have a shortage of wheat in the world right now," says Fitzhenry, the media relations manager for the Canadian Wheat Board, a marketing

agency for western Canadian wheat and barley growers. She adds that the rising price of other foodstuffs is happening for the same reason.

Bad weather isn't the only reason, though, according to the Foodgrains Bank. The agency names "a complex set of factors," beginning with the fact that over the past decade almost every year the amount of cereals consumed globally has exceeded the amount produced by farmers. Although the amount has been small, it has gradually reduced global food stocks from about five months of consumption in 1998 to less than two months in 2006. This, together with "several relatively sudden changes or shocks" that have occurred in the last two years, has caused food prices to increase abruptly.

These changes include rising consumption of meat and dairy products in emerging economies like India and China, the use of cereals and oilseeds to make bio-fuels and increased speculation by financial markets.

Penner says it is not clear yet how long, and to what extent, food prices will rise, describing it as a mixed blessing. Higher commodity prices are good news for farmers in developed countries, he says, but they make it difficult for the most vulnerable people in the developing world to access food.

"In North Korea, for example, a bag of rice that feeds a family for just a few days costs more than 30 percent of a month's salary," stated Willie Reimer of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in a prepared statement. Reimer is director of MCC's Food, Disaster and Material Resources programs, and MCC is one of the 15 Canadian agencies the Foodgrains Bank represents.

Since its inception in 1983, the Foodgrains Bank has provided \$531 million in food aid and services in 77 countries. Last year, it collected a record \$8.4 million in grain and cash.

The Foodgrains Bank's fiscal year began April 1, and by the end of the month the agency had received more requests for aid than it believed it would be able to handle all year.

Still, Penner says the staff at the Foodgrains Bank is optimistic. "I'm sure we will appeal to



our donors," he says, "and we're hopeful that CIDA [Canadian International Development Agency] will also come through with increased funding." ❧

*With files from MCC.*







*A woman in Bangladesh carries a sack of rice from Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Rising commodity prices may be good for Canadian farmers, but they are having a negative impact on the ability of agencies like the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to meet the rising demand.*

#### CROSS-COUNTRY CHECK-UP

## Sowing optimism alongside of fear

*Rise in grain prices a boon to some farmers, a death knell for others*

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU  
Manitoba Correspondent  
CANADA

**T**wo years ago, farmers were losing money on grain production. Since then, grain prices have doubled and wheat has reached its highest price in three decades.

"The last time the market spiked like this was about 1974," says Abe Elias, a grain farmer from Sperling, Man., who is looking

at this planting season with renewed optimism. But that optimism is tempered by fears that the increase in fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, equipment and land may be with the farmers longer than the now-spiralling grain prices. "For the price of wheat to go back to what it was, would be catastrophic," he says.

Peter Froese, a grain farmer from Roland, Man., speaks with cautious optimism. "[Our optimism] is always tempered," he says. "Input costs have also gone up, in some cases doubled. It costs me \$1,000 to fill my tractor with fuel."

"There is optimism this year, but I'm not sure it is all warranted," cautions Mark Reusser, who sits on the board of directors of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and mingles with farmers from every sector of the business and every area of the province. He sees the situation for cattle farmers as being the bleakest. "The margins for beef cattle farmers are terrible," according to him. Reusser has heard of cattle farmers in more northern parts of Ontario considering plowing up their pastureland for crops.

This is also happening in parts of Manitoba and Alberta, where cattle farmers see greater profitability in plowing their marginal land for growing crops rather than raising cattle.

John Kuhl, a Mennonite cattle farmer near Graysville, Man., feels the pinch. "Cattle are a drain instead of an asset," he says. He is hoping to put more of his pastureland into cash crops this year and move the cattle onto community pastures, where room has opened up as other cattle farmers are getting out of the business.

Last summer, Lyle Brown, an Alberta cattle farmer, had 600 head on grain feed and kept waiting for the sale price to improve, but the market only worsened instead, as he continued to feed them expensive barley. Finally, he sold them at a \$150,000 loss.

This year, his feedlot stands empty. He will plant canola and barley, and take advantage of the high grain prices, although, like in other parts of the country, drastically increased input costs tighten that margin. Nevertheless, "we're optimistic," Brown says. "We've got to be." ❧

*The rising price of grain is a double-edged sword for Canadian farmers. Grain farmers, like those pictured below in southern Manitoba, are somewhat optimistic, while beef farmers who feed their cattle the expensive feed are reeling.*



## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

# Up the creek with paddles

*Church secretaries help Camp Squeah Paddle-a-thon set a new fundraising record*

BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent  
HOPE, B.C.

The coldest April weekend in recent memory couldn't squelch the enthusiasm of 35 paddlers who braved the waters of the Fraser River from Hope to Ft. Langley in the 10th annual Camp Squeah Paddle-a-thon.

In one canoe were some first-time rowers, one retired and three current Mennonite Church B.C. secretaries who decided to stretch their comfort zone from

*MC B.C. office administrator Janette Thiessen wanted to celebrate a milestone birthday by participating, and invited other church support staff to join her.*

the office to the great outdoors. MC B.C. office administrator Janette Thiessen wanted to celebrate a milestone birthday by participating, and invited other church support staff to join her. Despite chilly wind and a leaky canoe, the women found warm fellowship as they battled fatigue and sore muscles to show their support for Camp Squeah.

Cheryl Dyck, secretary of Cedar Valley Mennonite Church in Mission, said she took part because "God had placed a desire in me to do something for a ministry that was meaningful to me." She garnered financial support by wearing her lifejacket and bringing a paddle to church for several Sundays.

Also in the canoe with Dyck and Thiessen were Charlotte Epp, retired secretary of Peace Mennonite Church in Richmond and the oldest participant, and Belinda Rempel of First United Mennonite, Vancouver.

PHOTO BY LEN DYCK



*A group of MC B.C. church secretaries helped make the 10th annual Camp Squeah Paddle-a-thon the most successful ever, raising \$71,500 to assist volunteer summer staffers with their post-secondary education costs.*

"It was an awe-inspiring trip," said Epp, noting that the scenery on the river gave a much different perspective than travelling the highway.

Squeah executive director Rob Tiessen expressed thanks for the "overwhelming sense of blessing at the amount of support received through bursary money raised, goods and services donated, and volun-

teer ground crew support so generously offered."

This year's paddle-a-thon was the most successful ever, raising \$71,500, a huge increase over last year's total of \$50,000. Funds help volunteer summer student staff with post-secondary education costs. ❧

## Three men and a canoe

BY KARIN FEHDERAU

Saskatchewan Correspondent  
SASKATOON, SASK.

It's a simple equation. Three men plus two winters equals one canoe.

Two years ago, Scott Fischer from Wildwood Mennonite Church in Saskatoon

had an idea to build a canoe. Friends Paul Funk and Don Epp, also from Wildwood, teamed up to help him. Each had something to contribute to the cause. Funk had the space for the project—an extra big garage—and Epp had built a kayak before and knew the basics of boat-building.

Together, the three friends decided to take their weekly "guy's night out" and turn it into a chance to hone their woodworking skills and learn something new.

"We had a goal to learn a new skill," says Epp.

But the story didn't stay centred in Saskatoon. Epp's cousin, a retired home-builder in B.C., donated the cedar to build the canoe. He shipped it to Edmonton and Epp drove there to pick it up.

"It was destined to be firewood," admits Epp, a maintenance worker at Bethany Manor Seniors Housing.

Using eight-foot strips of cedar, the trio took its time over two seasons. Originally destined for last year's Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Relief Sale, the canoe wasn't finished in time. But the men felt better when another canoe was offered to the sale to be sold.

For now, a mini-workshop set up inside their church, complete with a series of photographs Fisher took during the construction process, allows people to see how it was all done. Next, it is off to this year's Relief Sale in June—and then the open water with the highest bidder on board. ❧

PHOTO BY LEILA OLFERT



*Wildwood Mennonite Church members Paul Funk, left, Scott Fischer and Don Epp spent the last two winters building a cedar-strip canoe that will be up for auction at this June's Mennonite Central Committee Relief Sale in Saskatoon.*

# Jeremy Reesor: Quizzer of the Year

*Markham B team tops  
annual MC Eastern  
Canada competition*

BY BARB DRAPER

Editorial Assistant  
KITCHENER, ONT.

**B**ible quizzing was especially competi-  
tive this year, with many buzzers going  
off before the questions were finished.

For the first time ever, the planning committee chose a “Quizzer of the Year,” but it was a difficult decision because so many of the young people knew the stories of I Samuel so well. In the end, the award was given to Jeremy Reesor of the Markham B team, which was victorious over the Markham A team in the final. The win was well deserved, as Markham teams have been strong for the previous two years, but somehow victory always eluded them.

The first round of Bible quizzing was held on March 29 at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont., where each team competed in five matches. Youths from at least 17 different congregations were involved in the 12 teams from Breslau, Elmira/Floradale, Hawkesville, Listowel, Mapleview A and B, Markham A and B, Steinmann, Waterloo-Kitchener, the Wilmot churches and Zion Mennonite. The top six teams went on to further matches at First Mennonite Church in Kitchener on April 13.

Bible quizzers are passionate about what they do and some of them go on to become judges and quizmasters. The dedicated quizzers studied for months, and some regularly listened to recordings of I Samuel around home, almost driving their parents crazy. Jeremy Reesor confessed that he even had I Samuel playing while he slept. “I don’t know if it helped, though,” he admitted.

MC Eastern Canada conference minister Muriel Bechtel said that Bible quizzing not

PHOTO BY BEV RAIMBAULT



*Jeremy Reesor, a member of the winning Markham B Bible quiz team, was named the 2008 “Quizzer of the Year.” He received a \$500 scholarship from his choice of Conrad Grebel University College or Canadian Mennonite University.*

*The dedicated quizzers studied for months, and some regularly listened to recordings of I Samuel around home . . . .*

only encourages Bible study in an exciting setting, it also develops leadership skills. This year’s Quizzer of the Year was offered a \$500 scholarship to either Conrad Grebel

University College or Canadian Mennonite University because these schools believe that a top quizzer is someone the church should invest in. ❧

## /// Briefly noted

### **Mennonites escape serious injury in church floor collapse**

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—Youths from Living Hope Christian Fellowship in Surrey were among those who were injured when a portion of the sanctuary floor of Central Heights Church collapsed during a Christian rock concert there on April 25, plunging dozens to the floor below. The accident happened during the second song by Starfield as groups of young people gathered at the front of the stage in a “mosh pit,” clapping and jumping in rhythm with the band’s music. Witnesses described seeing a lighting scaffold fall just before the floor’s collapse. Most of the Living Hope youths were seated at the front of the church and about a dozen were caught in the fall. Also attending with her young son was Karen Heidebrecht Thiessen, pastor of West Abbotsford Mennonite Church and vice-moderator of Mennonite Church B.C. The Thiessens narrowly escaped injury when they chose to sit in the balcony instead of the main floor. “We had planned to sit in the front row and would have been victims ourselves except for some considerate teenagers who advised us things could get a bit crazy in the mosh pit,” Thiessen said.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

### **Squeah worker praised for 12 years of service**

HOPE, B.C.—LaVern Klassen, administrative assistant at Camp Squeah since 1996, completed 12 years in the Squeah office as of April 30. During that time Klassen worked with two different executive directors and three program directors. Changes to the camp have included the addition of an Outdoor Education program, expansion of the camp’s rental retreat season and upgrades to its facilities. Camp executive director Rob Thiessen acknowledges that Klassen was an invaluable member of the Squeah team, saying, “She is a big reason why so many of our guests walk away with such a positive Squeah experience.” For the foreseeable future Klassen looks forward to being a stay-at-home mom, but knows her connection to the camp will not end. “I look forward to the future and the new ways that we will connect to the incredibly important, life-changing ministry and the people who make it so,” she says.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

# Thriving pastors, thriving pastorates

*Pastoral trends survey indicates fewer and older Mennonite Church ministers*

BY DEBORAH FROESE  
Mennonite Church Canada  
WINNIPEG

Understanding what makes pastors thrive was at the heart of an event looking at a pastoral trends survey sponsored by Mennonite Church Canada last month. Close to 30 participants, including pastors, area and national church ministers, representatives of Mennonite educational facilities and MC Canada staff, met to discuss the results of a survey conducted by MC Canada in late 2007.

Social psychologist Dieter Schoenwetter, who gathered and interpreted the data, stressed caution in interpreting numerical results of the survey, but was able to identify some significant trends emerging among Mennonite pastors. Comparing the current survey demographics with

information gleaned from a database of pastors who served from 1975-2007, he highlighted key issues such as a declining number of new pastors, an aging pastoral population, more associate pastors and fewer youth pastors. He then examined the possible impact these trends could have on pastors, congregations, area churches and the denomination.

The survey showed that pastors leave



Social psychologist Dieter Schoenwetter presents the results of the 2007 Pastoral Trends Survey to a meeting of church leaders last month in Winnipeg.

their positions for numerous reasons, including negative motivations such as leadership or congregational conflict, disillusionment and burn-out, but Schoenwetter noted that more pastors leave for positive reasons such as continuing education, geographical moves, career advancement, church plants and maternity leave.

The most powerful motivation demonstrated for continuing in pastoral ministry was spousal support, followed by an engaged, supportive congregation, and then personal development opportunities.

The survey and ensuing discussions identified the vital role congregations play in calling people to ministry and the positive impact of “shoulder-tapping” or personal invitation. The phrase “culture of

Survey results revealed a common desire for training beyond initial pastoral education, including access to mentors and spiritual coaches. Although significant instruction is available for pastors in liberal arts, the survey indicated a strong call for tactical education in areas such as leadership, the mentoring process, teamwork development, time management, conflict resolution and dealing with emotions.

Over two days of discussions, participants identified three primary criteria required to develop and maintain a healthy pastoral population: platforms for calling people to ministry, access to education, and support systems designed to sustain pastors over the long-term.

The gathering was affirming for Doug Klassen, lead pastor at Foothills Mennonite Church in Alberta. “It reinforced for me the need to be working very deliberately at leadership training and ministry involving the whole congregation, and to stop looking to the schools as the only place where that can happen,” he said.

MC Canada executive secretary Robert J. Suderman noted that there was a direct relationship between a vibrant pastorate and the health of congregations. While the focus was on “how to strengthen pastoral leadership,” he said it is “equally important to ask how pastoral leaders will strengthen the vocation of the church, [which] is to engage the world.” ❧

*[M]ore pastors leave for positive reasons such as continuing education, geographical moves, career advancement, church plants and maternity leave.*

call” peppered conversations, clearly indicating the importance of forming definitive ways to invite people into ministry.

“In the past, congregations called pastors, but the more recent trend has been to let schools do this,” said Sven Eriksson, MC Canada’s recently retired denominational minister. “We need to reconsider the significance of congregations in pastoral formation.”

# Nurturing a 'culture of call'

BY AARON EPP

National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG

Conversation at a presentation organized by Mennonite Church Canada to discuss the results of its Pastoral Trends Survey (see story on previous page) concentrated on how the church calls people to pastoral ministry, and whose job it is to call them.

"We are focused today on a priceless commodity for our church," Robert J. Suderman, MC Canada's general secretary, said in his opening remarks. Being a pastor is "not easy," nor is it "a quaint or simplistic vocation."

MC Canada hosted the event at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) last month. Attendees included MC Canada staff, pastors and representatives from CMU as well as Conrad Grebel University College, two of the post-secondary educational institutions MC Canada supports.

"We're not talking about getting people into the pastorate, we're talking about how they can survive," James Pankratz, academic dean at Conrad Grebel, said at one point. While many thought that would be the case, the discussions that took place over the course of the day-and-a-half-long

event focused exactly on getting people into the pastorate.

Calling people to pastoral ministry is the responsibility of congregations and not just academic institutions, Muriel Bechtel, conference minister of MC Eastern Canada, said in a reflection on the survey she had prepared for the group.

Dan Epp-Tiessen, associate professor of Bible at CMU, noted the importance of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in the education of survey respondents, as well as the decline in Canadians enrolled at the Elkhart, Ind.-based campus.

He questioned if the three Canadian schools MC Canada supports—Columbia Bible College, CMU and Conrad Grebel—should be cooperating more when it comes to the programming they offer, asking, "Is it worth the time? Who would organize it? Should MC Canada provide leadership?"

Pankratz noted that in order to answer those questions, MC Canada would have to decide what exactly it was looking for in people called to ministry.

Suderman responded by saying, "There needs to be a passion for the church, and that passion for the church needs to be present in the mentors, and in the pastors, and in the professors, and in the parents."

Bechtel challenged those in attendance to think about how congregations can nurture a "culture of call" and process of discernment when calling people to pastoral ministry.

At the end of the event, participants were asked to make a commitment about what they would take from the gathering. They then shared their commitments.

Among other things, people were especially drawn to the idea of a culture of call, saying they would go back to their respective churches and academic institutions and work to nurture leaders.

Jointly sponsored by MC Canada and CMU's Institute for Theology and the Church, the pastoral trends survey was designed to provide insight into trends in pastoral retention and attrition.

Dieter Schonwetter, the project's director, will give a report and analysis of the results at the MC Canada and MC USA People's Summit for Faithful Living from July 8-10 in Winnipeg. ❧

## /// Briefly noted

### Farewell to pastor; fundraiser successful

SASKATCHEWAN—Hague Mennonite Church held a farewell celebration for its associate pastor and his wife, Jeff and Jennifer Siemens. The couple has completed two years at the church. Siemens will be taking a job as associate director at Redberry Camp. A replacement for the position is being sought. In other Mennonite Church Saskatchewan news, a Rosthern Junior College Auxiliary fundraiser in March netted the school \$12,000. Using music and food, supporters bid on pies and took in the musical flavour of the all-male singing group known simply as A Buncha' Guys. The money raised will help the school to "refurbish dorm lounges and fund tuition for one student," noted a school press release.

—BY KARIN FEHDERAU

### Story and song are ways to energize worship services

WALDHEIM, SASK.—Woven together into worship and praise, the creative forces of story and song became tools for presenting new and innovative approaches for worship services at the Prairie Winds music retreat held early this year at Shekinah Retreat Centre. More than 100 people from across the country came together to sing, celebrate and share ideas for three days, invited by Mennonite Church Saskatchewan, Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg, and Shekinah. The retreat focused on engaging the arts in worship. "We want to encourage a dialogue within the different art forms and also with each other," said resource person Marilyn Houser Hamm of CMU, adding, "A retreat such as this provides an amazing opportunity to then channel all of this into worship and to nurture spirituality within individual churches." Retreat participants were challenged to incorporate new ideas into their churches.

—Shekinah Retreat Centre Release

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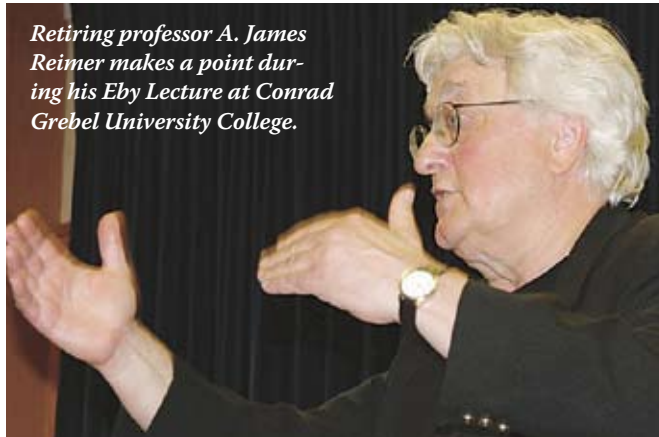
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# Faith, doubt and grace

*Eby Lecturer says theology has to flow from and be praise of God*

BY DAVE ROGALSKY  
Eastern Canada Correspondent  
WATERLOO, ONT.

A last minute change from the smaller chapel to the Great Hall heralded the importance of this year's Eby Lecture at Conrad Grebel University College this spring. A. James (Jim) Reimer gave his final class lecture on April 9 and is retiring at the end of the academic year.



*Retiring professor A. James Reimer makes a point during his Eby Lecture at Conrad Grebel University College.*

As academic dean James Pankratz noted after the lecture, Reimer covered and synthesized many of the themes of his more than three decades as a theologian. He began teaching at Conrad Grebel in 1978 and has concurrently taught at the Toronto School of Theology and directed the

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre, both at the University of Toronto.

For Reimer, what is at stake in Christian

theology today can be summed up by following the faith-life of the apostle Peter. Beginning with a faith tradition, each generation needs an "existential encounter with a living God," he said. Peter's Jewish community prepared him to meet Jesus on the lakeshore and follow him, but this meeting needed to be formed into what Reimer called "dogma, the grammar of faith," which led to Peter's exclamation "You are the Christ, the Son of God."

Theology needs doubt and denial, as exemplified by Peter's denial, Reimer suggested, noting, though, that "grace covers faith and doubt." Theology is in a constant dialectic with Scripture and the Spirit, drawing generation after generation to divine reality, he said.

Denial and doubt led Peter to systematic thought. Peter's Pentecost Sunday sermon had in it all that the early church would agree as central to the faith, Reimer said, adding that those conclusions would serve him well when he encountered God at work in the non-Jew and non-Christian Cornelius, the Roman centurion.

Reimer spoke of how his life and piety have been enriched by his participation in the Mennonite-Shia Muslim dialogue. While his faith has grown to respect all Christians and others beyond Christianity, Reimer feels called to remain in his community as a non-sectarian, ecumenical Mennonite.

He saved his greatest passion for his final point—the need for theology to both flow from and be praise of God. Mennonite theological ethics are rooted in the command to love and praise God, the very roots from which Peter's faith sprang. ▮

## /// Briefly noted

### Churches make use of extra day this Leap Year

WINNIPEG—Local congregations took advantage of the extra day on Feb. 29 to come together in unique ways. Bethel Mennonite Church held an evening of storytelling. Gerald Warkentin, church custodian and chair of the Community Life Committee, collected 25 stories that were read while pictures were projected on a screen. "We heard wedding and honeymoon stories," he said. "There were stories of trips all over the world dating back as far as 1948 to Paraguay." Home Street Mennonite Church held an event that included musicians, young people sharing their talents, some stand-up comedy and young adults who perform in bands around the city. About 50 people came to enjoy the relaxing evening around tables in the church basement. The deacons at Charleswood Mennonite Church organized a progressive supper on Feb. 29. Said deacon Suzie Guenther, "We have a Korean-speaking congregation and an English-speaking congregation in our church and so we wanted to create an opportunity for fellowship between the two groups. We received a lot of positive feedback about the mixing of the two languages."

—BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

### Youths to learn 'what not to wear' at Junior Impact retreat

HOPE, B.C.—Youths who went to the Junior Youth Impact retreat at Camp Squeah here from April 25-27 learned about "What not to wear," this year's theme. This will be the third year for middle-school-age youths to hold a spring retreat at Camp Squeah. Erik Olson, youth pastor at West Abbotsford Mennonite Church, was the resource person. Originally from Stanwood, Wash., Olson is a graduate of Columbia Bible College and does commercial salmon fishing in the summer. Exploring the theme included looking at how people try to fit in with everyone else around them and, consequently, "wear fear, stress, complacency, hate and lies," according to the planners. "Jesus teaches another way. . . . Jesus suggests a new fashion line-up that could take the world by storm."

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

# Voluntary simplicity empowers students

*Students keep Sabbath, give up cell phones and stoves in an effort to simplify their lives*

BY AARON EPP

National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG

Keeping the Sabbath is difficult—at least, that's what Jenny Johnston has found.

*Another young woman cut her wardrobe down by 80 percent, to see what it's like to wear the same clothes more often.*

Johnston, a student at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU), chose to keep the Sabbath as part of a voluntary simplicity course she took last semester. The instructor, Aiden Enns, required each student to incorporate some aspect of voluntary simplicity into their lives during the course.

For Johnston, a social science major from Vancouver, that has meant not

doing schoolwork or running errands on Sundays. Instead, she uses the time for attending church, being with friends, and for “settling down and remembering that life is about taking it slow, one day at a time.”

It has been difficult to organize her time to keep Sundays free, Johnston says, but there have been benefits. She is more relaxed, and has realized that although school is important, “it's not everything. I need to have a day to think about other things, or not think about anything.”

Ashley Cole, an international development studies (IDS) major from Calgary, chose to take time to sit in silence and do nothing for 10 minutes each day. Like Johnston, Cole has found the practice difficult. Still, it has taught her that living simply isn't only about what you do physically. “It means considering your motives, your perspectives, and your reasoning behind what you're doing,” she says.

The course examined the concept, theory and practice of voluntary simplicity as a means of development for people seeking alternatives to consumer values and culture. It explores the historical roots and modern expressions of voluntary simplicity, emphasizing its relevance to building emotional well-being, vibrant community, sustainable environment and social justice.

Enns admits to being surprised and intimidated by the experiments the students attempted. One student vowed not to use her stove. Enns says she has made lasagna and rice outside over an open flame in her

backyard—in Winnipeg in February, no less.

Another young woman cut her wardrobe down by 80 percent, to see what it's like to wear the same clothes more often.

Another gave up her cell phone. Enns says it has put a strain on some of her friendships, but she is thinking about continuing without now that the course is finished.

“That's courageous,” he says, adding many students decided to adopt two or three practices. “I look at my life and I want to keep up with them [but] it's hard.” ❧

## ❧ Briefly noted

### CwM welcomes new staff, reports on strategic planning

MANITOBA—David and Katherine Hogue of Springstein will be joining the staff at Camp Assiniboia, he as the camp manager and she as the guest group coordinator. The Hogues have an extensive background in business, having operated a candle factory for many years. They have also been active in church and community life and leadership. The Camp Planning Committee, which met in February for a strategic planning retreat to discern direction for camping ministry over the next several years, identified three key priorities for the new year. They include:

- Implementing a facilities upgrade at all three camps;
- Creating a business plan; and
- Initiating fundraising to support the proposed facilities upgrades.

Members of the Camp Planning Committee include Tom Wiebe, Loretta Friesen, David and April Braun (Camp Moose Lake); Ron Hildebrand and Ben Heide (Camp Koinonia); and Ed Unger and Egon Enns (Camp Assiniboia). The committee also includes Yvonne Stoesz, Emmy Wiebe, Sara Jane Friesen and Eric Froese as members at large, and staff Matthew Heide, Will Martens, David Hogue, Bob Wiebe and Tom Seals.

—BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

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## All aboard!

*Train theme a fitting tribute to Trinity Mennonite's first 25 years of ministry*

BY DORIS DALEY HAYSOM

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*  
DEWINTON, ALTA.

Cries of "all aboard" rang out throughout the weekend of April 12-13 at Trinity Mennonite Church as the congregation commemorated its silver anniversary.

Celebrations took on a train theme, echoing the real-life train that regularly thunders by Trinity's new rural location near the historic Alberta hamlet of DeWinton. Phrases like "get on board," "we're on a journey," "all are welcome on this train," and, "this train is bound for glory," seemed a perfect fit as Trinity "passengers" recalled the accomplishments of the past 25 years.

In 1983, 20 families committed to a new southside Mennonite church in what was then a city of 620,000 people. Many of those original members are still actively involved at Trinity, as are their children and grandchildren, and the average attendance on a Sunday morning varies from 90 to 120. Trinity is the only Mennonite congregation between Calgary and Lethbridge, and attracts members and visitors from nearby Calgary as well as from Okotoks, High River and Turner Valley.

With bunting, lanterns, travel trunks and



*Reg Lowndes, one of the founding members of Trinity Mennonite Church in DeWinton, Alta., dressed as a conductor as the congregation celebrated its silver anniversary with a train theme. It seemed appropriate that the freight train in the background blew its whistle while the congregation was gathered for its anniversary banquet on April 12.*

benches, the sanctuary was transformed into a train station. As if on cue, at Saturday night's banquet and party, a freight train rumbled by and blew its whistle.

Special guest Marilyn Houser Hamm joined the "train" for the weekend, leading in music at both the Saturday night festivities and the Sunday morning praise service. A retrospective skit provided laughter and memories; both senior and junior choirs praised God through music; and Herman Walde of First Mennonite and Mike Beriault of Foothills Mennonite brought greetings from the two Calgary churches that helped to get the fledgling Trinity train out of the station 25 years ago.

Trinity's first pastor, Bruce Wiebe, was unable to come, but succeeding pastors Jake Froese and Hugo and Doreen Neufeld were in attendance.

Mennonite Church Alberta conference

minister Jim Shantz likened Trinity's journey to the train tunnels that go through the Rocky Mountains. "Sometimes it's dark in the middle of the tunnel, but a passerby driving by on the road can see that the front of the train has already emerged into the light," he said. "Trinity has endured its share of tunnel times, wandering from location to location, years where there was no paid leadership, building set-backs. But this church has not only survived those times, but thrived. Trinity is a church that loves each other. Not only that, this church knows how to have fun!"

Besides the celebration weekend, anniversary projects included a pictorial directory, a commemorative history book, junior worship activities, special bulletin boards and a "Train of Thought" children's banner. ❧

EDMONTON CHINESE MENNONITE CHURCH PHOTO

**Edmonton Chinese Mennonite Church** has started a class to teach computer and Internet skills; it is taught by pastor Ken Tse. By using a Chinese character recognition pad, users write out the Chinese character on the pad and that character appears on the screen. Because this new technology is so user-friendly and the knowledge to be gained via the Internet is so enormous, Tse is encouraged that more members of his church are now using the Internet to research biblical references and information, and using e-mails to encourage each other. Some members are also learning English online. The class has attracted 16 students, half of whom are non-believers. That's exactly what the church wants to accomplish with this class: education and outreach.





# Affirmed in mission



*Couple receives widespread support as they plant a new Mennonite congregation in Canada's capital*

BY BARB DRAPER

Editorial Assistant  
OTTAWA

When Stefan Cherry left his development work in Africa to study theology in Canada, he always assumed he would return some day. So he was surprised to hear God call him to plant a Mennonite church in Ottawa instead.

Cherry finished a four-year term with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Mozambique in 2004. Over the next three years he studied at Conrad Grebel

*Stefan Cherry and Pascale Tranchemontagne will begin a new Mennonite Church Eastern Canada church plant in Ottawa this summer.*

University College and Tyndale Seminary in Toronto while serving as youth pastor at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church. In 2006 he married Pascale Tranchemontagne who, like him, had been raised in the French Canadian Roman Catholic tradition.

Six months after their wedding, the couple spent time in silent retreat, both praying that God would show them their next steps. They were surprised when



independently they sensed God calling them to Ottawa. For the next while they held this call loosely, but their vision began to materialize after Cherry met with Brian Bauman, missions minister for Mennonite

*Six months after their wedding, the couple spent time in silent retreat, both praying that God would show them their next steps.*

Church Eastern Canada, who was excited about the possibility.

By the summer of 2007, Cherry and Tranchemontagne were ready to test their call. They arranged a weekend of fasting and praying, and met with close friends and mentors for a time of discernment. After a time of worship and an hour of praying separately, the group came together to share what members had heard God say, and the couple felt overwhelmed by the strong affirmation. They also felt very blessed when Ottawa Mennonite Church shared their excitement about having a new Mennonite church in Canada's capital.

The bilingual couple plan to move to the French-speaking Vanier area of Ottawa in June. Just to make life interesting, their first child is due in May!

Besides working on the church plant, Cherry will also work part-time as domestic policy analyst in the MCC Canada Ottawa Office. The couple are trusting that God will lead them as they step out in faith to establish a new MC Eastern Canada congregation. ☿

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GOD AT WORK IN US

# Gallery curator doubly honoured

BY DAN DYCK

Mennonite Church Canada  
WINNIPEG

In the past two months, Ray Dirks has found himself the recipient of two prestigious local awards.

Although the long-time curator of the Mennonite Heritage Centre Art Gallery and visual artist has been given mugs and pens in the past in recognition of his efforts, most recently he had a \$10,000 Above and Beyond Award bestowed upon him. The Manitoba Foundation for the Arts gives out five monetary prizes every two years to honour “artists who go above and beyond their daily professions to use their art in ways that enhance the cultural and community life in our province, through volunteerism and outreach.”

Dirks’ work is all about raising profiles, but definitely not his own. His work and his passion are about promoting the work and lives of immigrants and those from developing countries. “This is what I am called to do and what I can do,” says Dirks. “There is nothing wrong with art for art’s sake, but my own art or the art we feature here is something that can be used for the greater good of the community.”

Earlier this year, Dirks was recognized as a global ambassador to local school students, winning the 2008 TEAL (Teachers of English as an Additional Language) Award. Through the visual arts, he works to bring global perspectives to local people.

It all began when Dirks was invited to “help instill confidence” in English as an Additional Language (EAL) students at Gordon Bell High School in Winnipeg’s core in 2005. The experience led Dirks to invite students to the gallery and meet guest artists from Africa, who served as role models. “Eventually, we had a core



PHOTO BY DAN DYCK

Ray Dirks, curator of the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg, is the recipient of the 2008 TEAL (Teachers of English as an Additional Language) Award “for outstanding community service in the teaching of English as an additional language in Manitoba,” pictured, and a \$10,000 Above and Beyond Award from the Manitoba Foundation for the Arts.

group of EAL students come to the gallery on a regular basis after school to work on art-related projects,” says Dirks. Today, he spends about three to four weeks each year in classrooms, adjusting his presentations to appeal to varying audiences and age groups.

His core message to kids remains consistent.

“I talk a lot about cultural and religious differences, differences that result from material wealth or lack thereof, and that we all have things we can learn from each other,” he says. “Many differences are neither right nor wrong. We should get to know each other and understand our differences, rather than fear them.”

Dirks is clearly making a positive impact, according to teachers, who consistently remind him that no one else is doing what he does. And since schools—teachers, administrators and students—are becoming increasingly multicultural and multi-faith, they need to hear what he is saying.

“Mainstream kids often say they never knew there were positive stories to tell about Africa,” he notes, adding, “African and other refugees and newly arrived students say the presentations make them feel proud to be who they are.”

The feedback he gets from students also affirms his message. Anuoluwapo Okunnu, a Nigerian-born Grade 6 student, wrote to Dirks after a presentation: “[A]s soon as you left, people started seeing things at a different angle and seeing each separate [African] country as both unique and different in its own way, instead of being one continent where everything was the same. I’m very glad you came because you opened a new window of understanding that we would likely not have ever known.

I’m very happy you chose to do this. Thanks again from the bottom of my heart.”

Dirks is modest about the commendations. “I’m just doing what I love to do and what I sincerely feel called to do. I’m not much good at anything else. But I can tell stories, take photographs, get close to people I stay with overseas, and come back here and try to make connections, create awareness and make kids feel good about themselves.”

*With files from Manitoba correspondent Evelyn Rempel Petkau.*

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## PERSONAL REFLECTION

# Back from the brink

*Budding gymnast learns too late how to fall . . . but lives to tell about it anyway*

BY GERHARD NEUFELD

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*  
WINNIPEG

It was on a sunny Sunday afternoon in the late 1950s or early '60s when something happened to me.

At the start of our gymnastic "career," my two cousins and I were practising summersaults, handstands and other things that aspiring amateur gymnasts do on their front lawn. As one of my cousins and I were throwing each other over our backs, I slid down his back and landed on my head.

Excruciating pain shot up my back as a thousand needles seemed to pierce it. My



## Photo Contest

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Young adults in our churches

Send them to:

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our Flickr photo pool  
or by postal mail.

Details on prizes and judging are at our  
website, [canadianmennonite.org](http://canadianmennonite.org).

**CANADIAN  
MENNONITE**

hands involuntarily clamped into hard fists. Never had I experienced anything like it. I found I was able to get on my feet without too much difficulty and we walked a few blocks to a self-taught "chiropractor," and after a few visits to him things got back to normal and I resumed my acrobatic activities.

While competing in a judo match some time later I broke a fall improperly and experienced similar pain as I had had that Sunday afternoon—but not nearly as severe. I did not seek any medical advice and I chalked up the incidents as experiences and forgot about them.

For a number of years I was athletically very active and enjoyed good health, with no inordinate amount of back pain or headaches.

Fast forward to the spring of 2007. That winter I had fun raking snow off the roofs of houses. That activity made me strain my neck more than usual and I developed a nagging and persistent neck pain and headache. It was more the persistent part—and not the severity of it—that made me go and see my doctor. He asked me a few questions and sent me to have my neck X-rayed.

In due time I was called back to see him. As he entered the room he asked, "When did you break your neck?"

"I did what?" I replied.

"You have a broken neck," he repeated. He explained that the little bone that protrudes from the second vertebrae and joins with the first one was broken off.

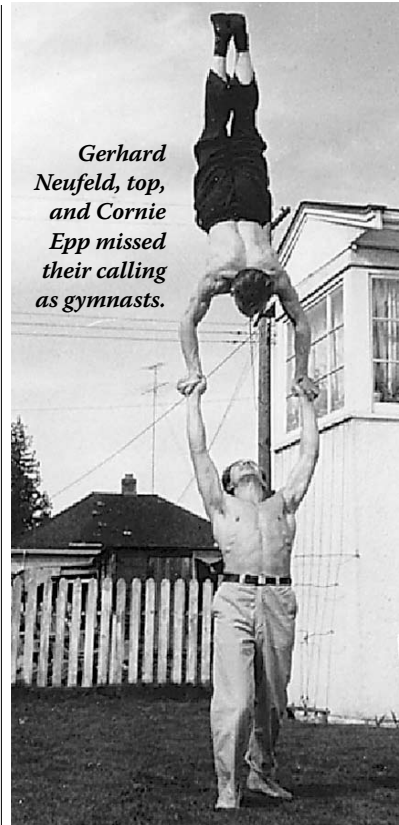
"This is what happens when they hang people," he explained further. When this bone breaks, it severs the spinal cord and the person dies. He said this could be a recent or an old injury.

Instantly, I recalled the incidences from 50 or so years ago. When I described them to him, he said, "That's it. That is when it happened."

To make sure we were not barking up the wrong tree, he sent me to have a CT scan and to see a neurologist. He, in turn, ordered an MRI scan and it positively confirmed that the little bone that protrudes out of the second vertebrae and joins the first one was broken off, and that there were some scars on the spinal cord.

My doctor told me that in all of his medical practice, no person had ever walked

PHOTO COURTESY OF GERHARD NEUFELD



*Gerhard Neufeld, top, and Cornie Epp missed their calling as gymnasts.*

into his office with a broken neck. The neurologist had told him when he had seen the X-ray that I had used up one of my "nine lives." And when I then asked my doctor if perhaps I had used up an additional "life" with my heart problems, his immediate response was, "You used up more than one."

I recently read Philip Yancey's book, *Where is God When it Hurts?* In it he deals at length with two people who had become quadriplegics and I said to myself, "There but for the grace of God, here am I."

The thought that I could—no, should—have been a quadriplegic is very unsettling. How incredibly different my life would have been! How would I have handled it? Where would I have come out? The answer to these questions I will never know.

However, I have an even more important question left. Since I'm not a quadriplegic, has my life turned out the way God wanted it when he saved me from that fate? How can I know? How often have I—or you—been this close to the "brink" and never knew it? ❧

*Gerhard Neufeld is a member of Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.*

CANADIAN WOMEN IN MISSION  
—A place to belong

WOMEN WALKING  
TOGETHER IN FAITH



## A new normal in uncertain times

BY KATHLEEN REMPEL BOSCHMAN



When someone very close to us is diagnosed with a terminal or serious illness, the adjustment is extremely difficult. It usually takes time and effort to come to terms with what is happening. For everyone involved, there is a very real sense that “normal” is changing and we don’t know the future as we once thought we knew it. Here are a few suggestions to help ourselves and our loved one at this time:

- Share your hopes, thoughts and feelings with your loved one. Remember that what you are feeling, the person is probably feeling just as profoundly, perhaps more so.
- Respect the privacy of the ill person and allow him or her as much control as possible when making decisions about personal care and activities.
- Make some good memories. Don’t stop celebrating special events like birthdays or anniversaries.
- If the illness is terminal, remember that many people have the need to say “I love you,” “thank you,” “forgive me,” or “I forgive you,” and “goodbye.”

### Take care of practical matters and stay healthy

- You can help yourself and your loved one by putting his or her affairs in order by preparing a will and living will, straightening out finances and making funeral arrangements.

*I don't know how I lost sight of my own well-being, but I had, and it took a visit from my sister to finally realize what was happening.*

- Set realistic goals for what you can accomplish each day.
- Accept help from others who want to be involved and with whom you feel comfortable.
- Get regular exercise. Some people practise deep breathing and relaxation techniques. Others go for a massage.
- Eat healthy food regularly even when it seems you are too busy or too tired.
- Set aside time for the other loved ones in your life, even if that means scheduling a time to be with them.
- If crying is a release for you, give yourself permission to cry.
- Take a leave of absence from work if necessary.

### Stay healthy spiritually

- Ask people you respect spiritually to pray for and with you regularly.
- Journalling can be a wonderful way to pour out your soul to God.
- Talk to your pastor or someone you respect spiritually.
- Read the Psalms or another favourite part of the Bible.

## Carrying each other's burdens

BY MARGE WARKENTIN

In their book *Staying Connected While Letting Go: The Paradox of Alzheimer's Caregiving*, authors Sandy Braff and Mary Rose Olenik write: “I don’t know how I lost sight of my own well-being, but I had, and it took a visit from my sister to finally realize what was happening. She not only let me know that I looked a wreck, but also insisted that I promise her that I would do something about it.”



How a person deals with Alzheimer’s disease or any other dementia in a loved one is determined in large part by the support they receive from their community and their networking circle of friends. So if you are a friend of someone who is caring for a family member or friend with dementia, it is important to understand the disease and then stay connected with both the person with the diagnosis and the one who is providing care.

Building a continuous, supportive relationship will communicate to both the person with Alzheimer’s disease and the caregiver that they are both valued. It is important to find ways of connecting that are meaningful: sharing food, music, touch, reading, walking, helping with specific tasks, or bringing a treat. This will reduce their feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Communication is probably the most crucial element in maintaining this relationship. Take time to listen. Let them know you are available when they feel frustrated or overwhelmed, and just need to talk with someone.

Paul tells us in Galatians 6:2 that we should “*carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*” For a person or family facing the never-ending challenges of Alzheimer’s disease or another dementia, any support you can provide along the way will be appreciated.

*These reflections are gleaned from talks at the 2007 Manitoba Women in Mission retreat.*

## Calendar

### British Columbia

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

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

### Alberta

**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.

### Saskatchewan

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

**June 8:** Prairie Falcon motorcycle rally, fundraiser for MCC.

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

### Manitoba

**May 2-June 14:** "Discover Hutterite Art" exhibition at Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery.

**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 8:** Fundraising concert for the Mennonite Family Centre, Ukraine, at First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, with sacred and secular music by First Mennonite mixed choir and two Winnipeg Ukrainian choirs, 7 p.m.

**June 9-11:** Workshop for pastors, "Never Call Them Jerks: Healthy 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 20:** World Refugee Day at Central Park, Winnipeg, with music, dancers and special guests, 4-10 p.m. For more information call 475-3816.

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

### Ontario

**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 1:** "Shaped note singing from the *Harmonia Sacra*," at Detweiler Meeting House near Roseville. Call Sam Steiner

at 519-884-1040 for more information.

**June 3:** Lebold Fundraising Banquet with April Yamasaki 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 10:** Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp chicken barbecue and pie auction, 5:30-8 p.m. Order tickets at 519-625-8602 or info@hiddenacres.ca.

**June 12-14:** Write! Canada, Christian writers' conference, for beginner to professional writers in Guelph. Visit www.theworldguild.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 or visit nairn.on.ca.mennonite.net for more information.

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

### U.S.A.

**June 21-23:** Reschley reunion, Mount Pleasant, Iowa. For details contact sueg2345rr@lisco.com.

**July 25-27:** Southern Africa reunion for alumni of MCC and mission agencies at Bethel College, North Newton, KS. Contact Norma Johnson at 316-283-4018.

**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

### Homecoming part of Zurich Mennonite's centennial celebrations

ZURICH, ONT.—A homecoming weekend event is planned for June 20-22, and friends and former members of Zurich Mennonite Church are invited back to help celebrate. Pre-registration is encouraged; for more information, call the church office at 519-236-4933. Zurich Mennonite turned 100 on March 27 and a year of special events is planned to celebrate God's faithfulness and blessings to the church. Celebrations began on March 30 with a retro worship service that was meant to mirror the first worship service held in 1908. Some of the old customs observed that day were a capella singing, kneeling for prayer, all-male leadership, and segregated seating with men and boys on the right side of the church and women and girls on the left. Pastor Phil Wagler and guest speaker Clayton Kuepfer presented challenging messages and deacon Don Gingerich affirmed the message.

—Zurich Mennonite Church Release

## Classifieds

### 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 kaecee@rogers.com.

For Rent: Basement suite in west Hamilton near university. Available Sept. 1. Female preferred. Call 905-627-4482 or e-mail corniesp@interlynx.net.

For rent: Dunromin Cottage. 3-bdrm cottage at Red Bay on Bruce Peninsula. Nestled among maple trees. Short walk to sandy beach and small park. Rear deck. Available June 28-Aug 23. Phone 519-746-4920.

For Rent: Sleepy Hollow Cottage. All-season, 3-bedroom home in a peaceful wooded valley in the heart of the Niagara region. Small retreat centre or family accommodations. Bruce Trail. Shaw Festival, Wine tours. Phone: 705-476-2319 or email: shcottage@sympatico.ca for complete brochure.

### Wanted

**Looking for Mennonite cookbooks.** Historian doing research on cookbooks would like information about Mennonite church or community groups that have produced cookbooks from 1950 to the present. Please contact Marlene Epp, mgepp@uwaterloo.ca. 519-885-0220 x 24257.

### Advertising Info

Ad Representative  
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### Employment Opportunities

Jubilee Mennonite Church (a dual conference church) in Winnipeg, Man. is seeking a full-time **LEAD PASTOR** to shepherd our congregation of about 100 people. We desire a spiritually mature leader who can help us continue to fulfill our mission to: "Reach Out, Serve, Know One Another, Grow, and Worship." Preference will be given to the candidates who have a minimum of four years Senior Pastor experience, a graduate or seminary degree from an accredited institution, demonstrated gifts in preaching, teaching, evangelism/church growth, and caring. Interested candidates are encouraged to submit their resumes by mail or email, along with a brief personal ministry and vision statement to: Search Committee, Jubilee Mennonite Church, 365 Edelweiss Cresc., Winnipeg, MB, R2G 2B6, email: jubmen@mts.net, phone 204-668-9933, fax 204-669-4296.

#### FAMILY PHYSICIAN REQUIRED IMMEDIATELY

Settled into the rich agricultural land of South-Western Ontario, Tavistock Community Health Inc. (TCHI) is a progressive medical practice of six physicians serving the town of Tavistock and large catchment area. As a Family Health Team, it supplies a supportive work environment including a 1 in 9 on-call rotation. TCHI offers a financial incentive pkg. similar to the Ministry of Health under-serviced designation. This clinic acts as a teaching facility for both the University of Western Ontario and McMaster Universities.

An industrious community with German roots, Tavistock provides solid education facilities and affordable housing – a great place to raise a family. It provides the feel of a small town while offering close access to the amenities of medium sized cities. Extensive shopping and recreational opportunities including the Stratford Shakespearean Festival are a short commute away..... Tavistock is only 90 minutes West of Toronto.

Contact Betty Blasdell at 519-655-2322, or for more information about TCHI visit [www.tchi.ca](http://www.tchi.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](http://www.connexus.co.kr/english).



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

- 1) West Europe – Bonn, Germany (accepting applications until June 13, 2008)
- 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

View job descriptions on the web at: [www.mcc.org](http://www.mcc.org)

#### DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is a church-based relief, development and peace organization with international and local programs that seeks to demonstrate God's love by serving among people suffering from poverty, conflict and natural disasters. MCC BC has approximately 100 workers, over 2,000 volunteers and an operating budget of approximately \$10 million. The Director of Finance and Administration for MCC BC reports to the Executive Director and is responsible for planning, organizing, reporting and directing all accounting functions including the supervision of accounting staff and ensuring compliance with MCC policies, government regulations and general accepted accounting principles. This position is also responsible for administrative functions including the management of office equipment, information systems, buildings, insurance and administrative staff. This is a full-time position based in Abbotsford.

MCC workers share a personal commitment to Christian faith, active church participation and non-violent peacemaking. Other qualifications for this position include; support for the mission of MCC, familiarity with MCC and our supporting churches, certification in a professional accounting association, 5 years of related experience in a management role, knowledge and experience related to the not-for-profit charitable sector, proficiency working with computer systems and accounting software, experience with policy development, ability to work effectively in a collaborative team environment, and strong inter-personal and administrative skills.

Please send a cover letter and resume to:

Attention: Marie Reimer, HR Director (confidential)

MCC BC, Box 2038, 31414 Marshall Rd., Abbotsford, B.C. V2T 3T8

Or fax to: 604-850-8734 or e-mail to: [hrdirector@mccbc.com](mailto:hrdirector@mccbc.com).

Interviews will start in June and will continue until a qualified candidate is found. Check the website [www.mcc.org/bc](http://www.mcc.org/bc) for more information on MCC and a detailed job posting on this and other positions.

**FULL-TIME ASSOCIATE PASTOR**

Trinity Mennonite Church is located in the rolling foothills of the Rocky Mountains between Calgary and Okotoks, Alta. We are a growing congregation with a current membership of 104 believers. The successful candidate will profess an Anabaptist Mennonite faith and willingness to learn and grow under the mentorship of the Lead Pastor and through congregationally supported formal education opportunities. We are active members of MC Canada and MC Alberta. Please apply to:

Associate Pastoral Search Committee,  
C/O Search Committee Chair  
PO Box 48082, Midlake PO  
Calgary, AB T2X 3C7

<http://trinity.mennonitechurch.ab.ca/>  
Email: Search@Trinity.MennoniteChurch.ab.ca

**ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION**

Waterloo North Mennonite Church

Waterloo North Mennonite Church is inviting applications for the half-time position of Associate Minister of Christian Formation. The Waterloo North congregation was established in 1986 in Waterloo, Ontario and is a vibrant congregation which enjoys a growing children's ministry of approximately 100 children from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8. Our congregation seeks to support parents in raising their children to know, love and serve Jesus Christ. The Associate Pastor of Christian Formation will work closely with the Nurture Committee to equip, nurture and develop leaders and volunteers for this task.

Key requirements for this role are:

- Anabaptist faith orientation, graduate level theological training and family-based ministry experience are strongly desired.
- a passion for promoting Christian Education and working with children to help them explore their faith in a safe and loving environment;
- strong leadership skills and the maturity to appreciate the strength and tradition of existing programs, along with the vision to lead change and implement new programs;
- outstanding relationship building and communication gifts, public speaking skills and the ability to lead, teach and coach children as well as adults and;
- excellent organizational skills.

The Associate Pastor of Christian Formation will be accountable to the Lead Pastor and will be part of a ministry team working with leaders, parents and volunteers within the congregation.

Applications will be accepted until May 31, 2008. Interested candidates are invited to visit our website for a complete job description at [www.waterloonorthmc.org](http://www.waterloonorthmc.org) and to contact:

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



**DONOR DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR** to develop, maintain and grow the financial donor support base.

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](http://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](mailto:dbartel@mccs.org). Applications considered until May 23, 2008.

On the Journey .....

**West Abbotsford Church**


West Abbotsford Mennonite Church is seeking to hire a half-time associate **MINISTER IN DISCIPLESHIP AND MENTORING**. This person would provide leadership in the areas of discipleship and mentoring with particular emphasis on our work with men and women who are recovering from substance addiction. The position begins August 2008.

**Qualifications**

- A minimum of two years of post-secondary Christian education
- A demonstrated ability to lead, teach and mentor formally and informally
- A demonstrated ability to organize and implement ideas
- Familiarity and support of Alcoholics Anonymous philosophy
- Baptized as an adult
- Agreement with the Mennonite Confession of Faith

**Experience**

- Prior employment as a church minister is desired

**Character**

- An active, growing disciple of Jesus
- Flexible and innovative
- Ability to resonate with the larger vision of the church and to implement that vision in the area of discipleship and mentoring

For a full job description see [www.westabbotsford.com](http://www.westabbotsford.com). Please submit a letter of application and resumé to [applications@westabbotsford.com](mailto:applications@westabbotsford.com). © 2008 West Abbotsford Mennonite Church

**Upcoming Advertising Dates****Issue Date    Ads Due**

June 9            May 27

June 23          June 10

*Focus on Children's Books & Resources*

July 7            June 24

**Relative Search****SEARCHING FOR A RELATIVE**

On behalf of my grandfather, in Germany, I am searching for his uncle, Heinrich Duerksen his wife Margareta Bock and their son Jakob H. Duerksen who was born in the Slavgorod area in about 1923 and married Sussana Janzen on 11th March 1951. Heinrich and Margareta immigrated to Canada and lived in Alberta. If you know about them or Jakob Duerksen who also have a daughter Ronda Lynn Duerksen born 21st July, 1952 in Gem, Canada, please contact me, Alina Schesler at [alinaschesler@web.de](mailto:alinaschesler@web.de).

CMU PHOTO BY JOHN LONGHURST



## First Hutterite graduate of CMU prepared for career as a teacher

WINNIPEG—“If your experience at CMU [Canadian Mennonite University] doesn’t make you a better Hutterite, we’ve failed you!” That’s what one Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) professor said several times over the past year to Jesse Hofer, the first Hutterite to graduate from the university. “Far from failing me, CMU has gifted me with a renewed commitment to my roots and new tools to both challenge and appreciate my tradition,” says Hofer, a member of the Silverwinds Colony near Rosenort, Man. Hofer’s journey to CMU began when his colony called him to become a teacher. “Unlike other students, I did not choose to go to university,” he says. “For Hutterites, university education is an assignment based on the needs of the community. Silverwinds needed a teacher, so I was asked if I’d be willing. Of course, I agreed.” Hofer will now go on to education studies at the University of Manitoba to become a teacher at the colony.

—Canadian Mennonite University Release

# Graduation Day

CONRAD GREBEL PHOTO BY SUSAN FISH



*Graduates of the 20th master of theological studies program class at Conrad Grebel University College include, from left to right, front row: Nancy Mann, Anne Champion, Sarah Pinnell, Anna Wiens and Barb Smith-Morrison; and back row: Dalinda Reese, Jean Lehn Epp, Keith Regehr, Ryan Wiens and Andrew Martin. Not pictured are: Zohreh Abdehodaie, Sungyoul Park and Lori Guenther Reesor. The two-year interdisciplinary program prepares students for ministry or further graduate work, or provides personal enrichment. The 13 students make up the largest graduating class ever, and bring to 70 the total number of graduates. About half of all grads are in ministry, a quarter have entered or completed doctoral studies in theology, and the rest are in a variety of professions.*

**Watch the next issue for more end-of-school news**