

CANADIAN MENNONITE

October 27, 2008

Volume 12 Number 21



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EDITORIAL

Lest we forget

TIM MILLER DYCK
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

When I was doing a year of Christian voluntary service in Europe after finishing high school, I was able to do some personal backpacking through that part of the world. I ended up spending a good portion of my time visiting Commonwealth war graveyards in the Flanders area of Belgium and in northern France.

I hadn't really planned to spend so many days doing this, but when I actually found myself walking slowly through row upon row of gravestones in several different cemeteries the experience was deeply moving. I

war graves. Perhaps these German teens, with whom I might have had distant blood connections through my German Mennonite ancestors, killed the Canadians also buried there. Other young men, who came from the country

I now called home, had, in turn, killed them. Either way, none of them made it back.

On the memorials at the graveyards, I often found the phrases "Lest we forget" and "To the glory of God." I certainly have not forgotten the sacrifices made: Each year at this time, the memories are renewed as I see "Lest we forget" printed everywhere.



But for what purpose are we remembering? Those who built cemeteries after World War I also carved the words 'Never again' onto their memorials.

had studied these events in high school history classes, and so knew something of the big picture. But it became much more personal as I read name after name of the young Canadians buried there, learning a bare few things about their lives and when they had died—shot, bombed or gassed on these now tidy green fields.

Like me, they had also travelled long distances to come to this place, and been far from home and their families. Adding up the dates, I could tell that many had been the same age I was then. So many young men, like me, all dead.

Sometimes, there were also German

But for what purpose are we remembering? Those who built cemeteries after World War I also carved the words "Never again" onto their memorials. They were speaking out of the wisdom of their first-hand suffering. My walks through their graveyards 60 years later left me in convicted agreement with those words.

At Passchendaele in Belgium, Canadian troops translated the name of the 1917 battle site into its English name, "Easter Valley." Part of the first Easter was the violent death of God's only and beloved son. At the time of his crucifixion, the Bible tells of darkness coming

over the land, the earth quaking and the rocks splitting. For me, this was part of God's grief at what his originally good creation—us—was doing to his ambassador to our broken world.

That God would be glorified in our killing of one another, for any reason whatsoever, is incomprehensible. As pastor Brent Kipfer writes in this issue's feature on this topic, "If we belong to Jesus, then we are sent into the world as ambassadors of the kingdom of God, carrying the good news of peace."

Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker Cheryl Woelk, one of this magazine's bloggers, wrote about one example of this in her personal blog late last year.

Kyong-su is a young Korean man who was researching Christian views on war, and he came across what Mennonites taught on this. In Korea, military time is mandatory and conscientious objectors automatically go to jail.

Inspired by what he found, he went to jail rather than join the military. "Thinking from the perspective of a peacemaker, he found it interesting to watch how conflicts begin, escalate, and how people deal with them. He also was challenged to act out his views on peace in the everyday details [of life in jail], which he commented is sometimes more difficult than choosing to be a conscientious objector!" she wrote after visiting him in prison.

It's been a long time since Canada's big wars, and most Mennonites who witnessed to their faith by becoming conscientious objectors are gone. However, Canada is at war in Afghanistan and young people are again being buried in military graves. Let's not forget the biblical call on us to be peacemakers both in our personal lives and in the actions of our government.

ABOUT THE COVER:

On Nov. 2, the Historic Peace Churches celebrate Peace Sunday—a week before the rest of the country honours Canada's war dead on Remembrance Day. For some Canadian Mennonites, this means deciding if they celebrate one or both of these events. Read "Lest we forget . . . why we are Mennonites," one minister's struggle with divided allegiances on page 4.

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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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PEACE SUNDAY REFLECTION

Lest we forget ... why

*One minister's struggle with divided allegiances
when the local Legion branch comes looking for a chaplain*

BY BRENT KIPFER

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

Adapted from a Remembrance Day 2007 sermon preached by Brussels (Ont.) Mennonite Fellowship pastor Brent Kipfer. He took as his text II Corinthians 5:11-6:2.

How would her fellow Legion members feel about having a chaplain who is a pacifist?

This summer, I received a gracious invitation from the Royal Canadian Legion branch in Brussels. They asked me to become their chaplain. The role would mainly involve officiating at Remembrance Day services, a Decoration Day service in the spring and leadership at the funerals of veterans.

I felt honoured to be asked. I did have a question for the Legion leader who contacted me, though: How would her fellow Legion members feel about having a chaplain who is a pacifist? I thought they might be offended by the fact I renounce all violence, including that done by the military. I could not support any kind of recruitment effort or program that supported violent action.

I was surprised by her response. She told me that my views as a nonresistant Christian would not be a problem. As long as I was not obnoxious about it, she saw no reason why this should be a barrier to my leadership as chaplain.

This put me in a dilemma. I asked for some time to consider the invitation. Let me tell you why I wanted to say yes:

1. I like veterans and I know that they are the last people who would glorify war. They know its horror first-hand. In most

we are Mennonites

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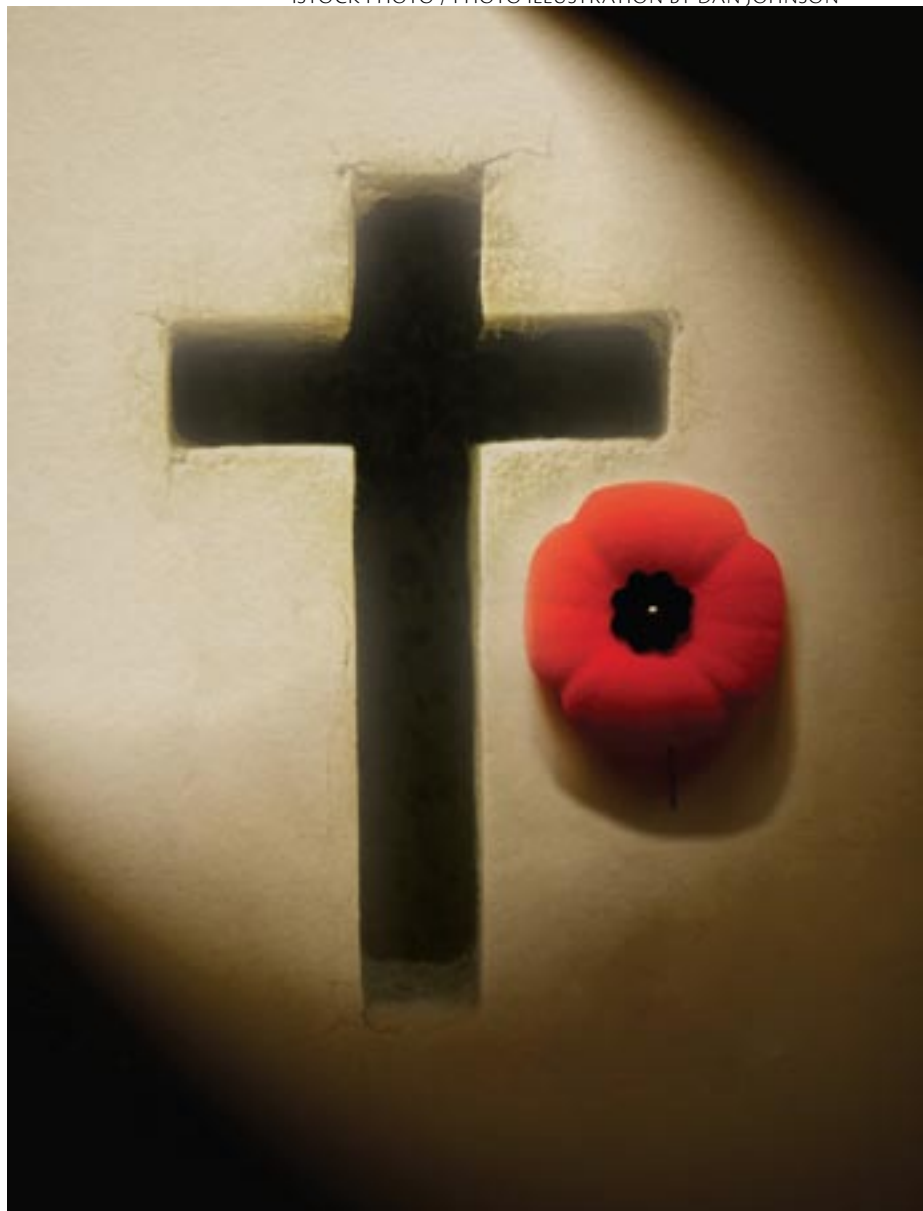
cases, they signed up for the military or accepted the draft believing it was the right thing to do. And many have paid a terrible price for it.

2. I was impressed that the Legion executive was willing to risk inviting a pacifist to be their chaplain. I had no doubt we could work well together.

3. The chaplaincy would open up fresh opportunities for ministry in our community, both in one-to-one relationships and in public leadership. This was the most compelling reason I could think of to say yes. As chaplain, I would have freedom to share the gospel of peace made possible by Jesus Christ.

I talked to a United Church pastor who is a Legion chaplain in another community. He is also a pacifist. I found it inspiring to hear his vision for inviting Jesus into honest conversation about war and its devastation. I respect his integrity and I can see the possibility of fruitful ministry with a veterans' organization. I am attracted by the challenge of building bridges in a setting that is foreign to me.

So with all these reasons to say yes, why would I hesitate?



Whenever I make a decision, I want to test it against my deepest commitments: How does it connect with my allegiance to Jesus Christ and the call I have received to give witness to his reign in the world? How does it fit with my roles as a husband, father and pastor?

If I were to become chaplain of the Brussels Legion, it would take some time. Not a huge amount, but at certain points of the year it would affect my schedule. It would have some impact on the time I have available for my wife Sarah, our children and the church, but it would probably be manageable. This was a consideration, but it was not the deciding factor for me in this decision. I think I could be chaplain without compromising my responsibilities as a husband, father and pastor.

That leaves two questions:

- **Would I honour the lordship of Jesus and his mission in the world by saying yes?**
- **Has God called me to do this?**

A story of divided allegiances

The Oct. 29, 2007 issue of *Canadian Mennonite* carried the story of Erwin

Cornelsen (“To remember is to act for peace,” page 4). Raised on a farm in Germany, he joined the Hitler youth movement when he was 17. It was 1938. Seven years later, the Second World War was in its final days. He was stationed with a Nazi unit in Norway, a master sergeant in charge of 200 men.

One day he was talking with a soldier who had attended a training workshop on how to boost morale in the army.

“What did you learn about the whole situation of war?”

Cornelsen asked him. “What have you learned and what does the government and officials say about it?”

The soldier reported, “We have no right to think or talk about the situation. We just have to follow Hitler blindly. He makes no mistake.”

Cornelsen crunched up his face, stiffened his body and, without thinking, uttered the line that should have taken his life. “No,” he said. “It’s only God who’s unfailing.”

The soldier stared into his eyes. Saying nothing, he turned and walked back out

of the office. Cornelsen stood with a blank stare draped across his face.

Some of his comrades overheard the conversation. “Keep your mouth shut,” one soldier said. “You will end up in the concentration camp.”

“I hadn’t been thinking; it just blurted out,” Cornelsen replied.

Erwin Cornelsen had made a decision to follow Jesus Christ when he was a teenager, but then he placed himself in

The cross of Jesus changes everything. Here, by faith, we see the universe shift.

a situation where his allegiance was far from clear. After years of serving Hitler, he came to understand that he could not serve two masters. Paul says, “*What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.*”

Jesus’ cross changes everything

With any decision I make, I want my identity as a disciple of Jesus to be plain. I want to avoid taking any role that could compromise who am I in Christ. Our situation may not be as dramatic as the



one that Erwin Cornelsen had to deal with, but we still face countless decisions about how plain we will stand before God and others.

Jesus gives us confidence. Because of his clear stand with Jesus, Paul does not need to justify himself to the Corinthians, but simply speaks with the freedom that our Saviour gives. He can say, *“Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”*

The cross of Jesus changes everything. Here, by faith, we see the universe shift. The creator of all things hangs limp from two rough pieces of wood—dying for his enemies, offering up his life as a sacrifice for our sin, giving himself in love. He died the death that should have been ours, a death that is effective for everyone who comes to him in faith (people of every tribe and language and nation).

This is how Jesus deals with evil in the world. This is how Jesus deals with evil in our lives. He could have called 10,000 angel warriors to kill the bad guys, but then none of us would have been left standing.

I do not want any confusion about who is my commander-in-chief or whose kingdom I am representing.

At the cross, all human equations crumble. The barriers dissolve. And we receive a new mission. Because Jesus has risen from the dead, our success is guaranteed. Now we are no longer driven by fear, but it is Christ’s love that compels us. We have new motivation for living, a new call, a new goal and a new way of getting there.

The old ways are exposed for what they are. In all their ugliness, they nailed Jesus to the cross. So, Paul says, *“From now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”*

A new creation

Jesus remakes us at the cross. We become part of his new creation. Nothing looks the same anymore. It changes the way we see our world. It changes how we see our friends. It changes how we see our enemies.

In the first three centuries of the Christian church it was common to lead new converts through a three-year process of learning before they were baptized and welcomed as members of the body of Christ. Candidates learned the stories of God, salvation history, the meaning of baptism and communion, and especially about the person of Jesus.

If a person was already in the military, they needed to promise not to kill. If a candidate joined the military, they were disqualified from baptism and could re-start the process of joining the church only if they renounced violence and left their army post. They needed to keep their allegiance clear.

Today, we also need to ask: How do we encourage each other to claim the new creation that is ours through Jesus?

As Paul reflects on the gift of new life in Christ, he gives credit where it belongs: *“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.”*

Ambassadors for God

God has begun a new movement, a work of peacemaking, healing and restoration. It is grounded in God’s radical act of saving sinners, of reaching out to us in our rebellion, of Jesus laying down his life. By grace, we are adopted into the family of God. By grace, Jesus whispers his call to us, saying, *“It’s your turn to go out, now.”* This is our mission. Paul says, *“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.”*

Ambassadors do not represent themselves, but the one who sends them. They

receive authority to act on another’s behalf. Their words speak for our whole country. Their actions reflect on all Canadians. They are given a mission. They have authority, but they are not free to set their own agenda. They carry out the business of the government that sent them. If we belong to Jesus, then we are sent into the world as ambassadors of the kingdom of God, carrying the good news of peace.

How could I say no?

So could I pursue this mission as a Legion chaplain?

As a chaplain:

- **I could invite people to be reconciled with God and claim the new creation that is theirs through Jesus Christ.**
- **I could take part in an honest remembering of the tragedy of war and invite Jesus to meet us in these memories.**
- **I could encourage Christ-like responses to conflict.**

In many ways, it would simply be an extension of the pastoring that I already do. How could I say no?

Well, there is one snag. As a Legion chaplain, I would need to represent more than Jesus Christ and his church. I would also be one of the public faces of the Legion. The Legion is separate from the military, but it plays a role in our culture that goes beyond offering support to veterans.

At a typical Remembrance Day event, there are a cluster of public symbols that evokes a complex mix of emotions and responses. A military bugle plays the *Last Post*. Canadian flags wave. *O Canada* is sung. There is marching, saluting, gun replicas hoisted over the shoulder.

On their own, there is nothing wrong with these things. When I was in Jamaica this past winter and I saw the Canadian flag, it brought back warm memories of home. When the national anthem is played at a hockey game, I get a tingle of pride.

But as these symbols come together, they present a strong call to those gathered. In part, it is a call simply to take responsibility as a citizen of our country. But at a deeper level, they also issue a summons of allegiance. They call us to

stake our faith and hope on a nation-state called Canada. They also imply that, if necessary, it is our duty to take up arms to defend our country.

As wonderful as Canada is, it cannot be our first priority. Jesus will tolerate no competition for our loyalty. In Christ, we are citizens of the kingdom of God before we are citizens of any nation on earth. That is why we do not have a national flag in our sanctuary.

As Christians, we believe that evil is conquered not through violence but through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The military does not believe that. It is also not the position of the Legion.

When Canadians talk about the significance of soldiers dying in warfare, there are certain phrases that usually crop up:

- **“They died for us.”**
- **“We owe our freedom to them.”**
- **“They made the supreme sacrifice.”**

I understand the desire to believe that their deaths were not in vain, but this language treads on territory that belongs to Jesus alone. These phrases build up a myth that calls us to trust in the blood of soldiers rather than the blood of Jesus. It is true that both shed blood, but there are crucial differences:

- **Jesus died for his enemies.**
- **Jesus leads us in the only war that truly will end all wars.** But, as Paul says, it is not a battle *“against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in all the heavenly realms.”*

A line in the sand

I do not want there to be any confusion about which battle I am fighting. I do not want any confusion about who is my commander-in-chief or whose kingdom I am representing. So I have said no to the Legion’s offer.

I have offered to assist the Legion at public events, to offer pastoral support and to take part in the funerals of veterans. I believe that I can pursue the mission of Jesus Christ in these settings. But I am not ready to join an organization that represents a different faith than I have. I believe that we can have a good

relationship. I respect those who are involved in the Legion, but I want my allegiance to be plain before God and the world.

Your own decisions to make

I have spent quite a bit of time telling you about a decision I needed to make. You have your own set of decisions to make, situations that test your allegiance, and your faithfulness to the mission of Jesus. And you may see things differently than I do.

But the Bible gives us a number of anchor points, short summaries of the mission that God has given us. Paul wants to lead the Corinthian believers to a fuller understanding of Jesus and his mission, so he writes, *“We make it our goal to please [Jesus]. . . . For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive what is due them for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”*

We place our faith in a crucified Messiah—Jesus—whose body was broken for us. What does it mean to claim him as our master? Well, he is the one who gives us our marching orders. We have no greater authority than Jesus. And if we are marching to the beat of our risen Saviour, we are going to be out of

step with the world. We take our cues from a Nazarene carpenter whom the world does not accept. At the very least, that means we should be prepared to make decisions that may seem odd to our neighbours.

Paul goes on: *“Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade people.”*

Everybody fears something. Some fear going hungry. Some are afraid of what other people think of them. Only one fear frees us, though, and that is a fear of the Lord. Fear of Jesus breaks all other fear. It sounds strange to talk about fearing Jesus, since he is the one who loves us. He is the one who died for us. He is the one who became weak so we could be strong. He is the one who suffered so we could be healed. He is the one who took on hell so that we could receive heaven. If he is the one who receives our fear (by which the Bible means our ultimate respect), if he is the one who receives our honour, if we care about his opinion more than any other, then other fears are broken.

This changes our motivation, our reason for doing the things we do. Instead of fear, we are motivated by love to be his ambassadors and walk together in the gospel of peace—even in the Legion hall. ☸

☸ For discussion

1. What experience have you had with the Royal Canadian Legion? Would you have the same concerns as Brent Kipfer in accepting a position as branch chaplain for the Legion? Do you think he made the right decision?
2. Do you wear a poppy for Remembrance Day? Why or why not? How important are symbols such as poppies, flags and national anthems? How much of a statement does wearing a poppy or singing the national anthem make?
3. Kipfer says his allegiance to Christ meant he was unable to accept the position of chaplain for the local Legion. What are some other situations where our allegiance to Christ means we are out of step with the broader society? Where are we tempted to split our allegiances?
4. Kipfer suggests that the language of sacrifice used to describe soldier deaths creates a myth that “calls us to trust in the blood of soldiers rather than the blood of Jesus.” Do you agree? Are Mennonites tempted to buy into this myth? What should the church’s attitude be towards the Canadian military?

VIEWPOINTS

/// Readers write

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

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

✉ MCC defends its role in Middle East and talks with Iranian president

I WAS A participant in the Canadian church leaders' tour which Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) sponsored in April and which prompted the letter from the Wiesenthal Center, "Mennonite agencies charged with bias against Israel," Oct. 13, page 8.

Rabbi Adlerstein and Mr. Adler take issue with MCC, Mennonites in general, Christian Peacemaker Teams, and with the writing of Alain Epp Weaver, former MCC director in Jerusalem.

My response is limited to MCC's role.

MCC has worked in Palestine/Israel for over 60 years, engaging in refugee relief, employment creation, agricultural extension, water recycling, and peace and justice advocacy. Our advocacy arises out of the long history of relationships with Israelis and Palestinians. Like all the places where MCC is active, our motivation arises out of Christ's call to care for the needy, to seek justice for the oppressed, and to pursue peace through nonviolent means.

MCC works together with Israeli and Palestinian partners who are committed to nonviolence and to a future of peace, justice and reconciliation for both peoples. Among these partners are Jewish groups that are deeply committed to seeking security in the land for Israelis and Palestinians, whether they are Jews, Muslims or Christians. We met a number of these groups on our tour.

MCC is deeply critical of all violence, whether that violence is carried out by Israelis or Palestinians. We especially deplore violence inflicted upon civilians.

MCC acknowledges that the land is precious to both peoples and that both should be able to live there in safety and security. Our hope and prayer is for a political arrangement that enables Palestinians and Israelis to experience Micah's vision of all people sitting securely under vine and fig tree.

Regarding the special meeting of Iranian president Ahmadinejad with religious and political leaders in New York on Sept. 25, MCC agreed to co-host it because of our commitment to Christ's call to seek peace and love all people, including those who may be deemed our enemies. Our meeting with Ahmadinejad was not about honouring him or agreeing with all of his perspectives. Indeed, at the meeting MCC's director challenged the president on his views on the Holocaust, the State of Israel, nuclear weapons and other sensitive topics. Rather, the meeting was an attempt to build bridges of peace and understanding between countries that are divided by animosity.

Adlerstein and Adler ask, "Why doesn't MCC meet with the leaders of the State of Israel?" MCC staff would be very happy to meet with Israeli leadership and any other groups who desire peace in Palestine/Israel.

DONALD G. PETERS, OTTAWA

Donald G. Peters is executive director of MCC Canada.

✉ CPT challenges charge of bias in Middle East peacemaking

RE: "Mennonite agencies charged with bias against Israel," Oct. 13, page 8.

This Simon Wiesenthal Center, which has been tireless in confronting anti-Jewish incidents and tracking the perpetrators of the Holocaust, says that Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) "never fails to highlight the misdeeds of a small number of hot-heads in the settler population—that are condemned by the vast majority of the Israeli population . . ."

However, vast resources of the Israeli state and army are used to support these "hot-heads" as they create "facts on the ground" and attack Palestinians with impunity.

The centre perpetuates the claim that Palestinian schools spread hatred, which has been shown as unfounded by many studies.

The centre then makes the claim that Arabs urinated next to the Tomb of the Patriarchs at the start of Ramadan. This tomb is just as sacred to Muslims as to Jews, and if this ever happened it would be an outrage to both faiths.

Finally, the centre says that Mennonites have been silent about rocket attacks against southern Israel. In

fact, CPT has visited Sderot and reported on these attacks in 2007.

In defending so vigorously the State of Israel and its occupation of Palestine, the centre ignores the human rights of half the people in the region.

DOUG PRITCHARD, TORONTO

Doug Pritchard is co-director of Christian Peacemaker Teams.

✉ God's kingdom is within us, not the State of Israel

RE: "DEFINITION OF Zionism," Sept. 15, page 6.

I have the highest regard for intellectual inquiry, but in trying to define "Christian Zionism," the use of the words "premillennial dispensationalism" are not helpful. On a topic that will generate a lot of emotional energy, it is important to keep the language accessible. It is important to explain the terms that we use.

FAMILY TIES

While making ratatouille

MELISSA MILLER

"Are you going to use hot peppers?" my husband asked as I chopped and sautéed zucchini, onions and eggplant for ratatouille. Inwardly I winced at the suggestion. Wouldn't the spicy pepper overtake the gentler flavours of thyme, oregano and basil? I murmured a noncommittal reply. "I hope so," he added before departing the kitchen, leaving me to my musings.

The kitchens of our childhood—bustling production centres of sturdy Pennsylvania Dutch meals—never created ratatouille. I'm pretty sure I never saw an eggplant in my mother's kitchen. My fondness for this French stew began a few years ago when an abundance of zucchini and peppers appeared in our farm co-op bin. I settled on a recipe that promised "the best ratatouille" and, after my first attempt, I was inclined to agree. Now each fall, as coloured leaves outdoors reflect the change of seasons, I stir up a huge flavourful pot of purple eggplant, green zucchini, golden onions and red peppers.

Since my husband and I share similar culinary roots, we had no previous ratatouille options to compare. In fact, our tastes were very similar when we first met more than 30 years ago. We both

liked almost every kind of food we knew, and shared the same dislikes (no anchovies on the pizza, please). In my sentimental youth, I took pleasure in knowing we both declined coffee, but drank tea in exactly the same way—with one-and-a-half spoons of sugar and no milk. The food similarities we shared were part of the love bond we formed.

Over the years, tastes change. We both learned to take our tea unsweetened. Like many couples of our vintage, we were led by the *More with Less* cookbook into wonderful foods from other countries and ethnicities: stir fries, vegetarian meals and curries. Although some of his tastes were spicier than mine, for the most part these excursions have been mutually satisfying.



Would we want the intervening years and experiences to have left no change in our character, our thoughts, our tastes?

In other matters, there has been more divergence. I dabbled in all manner of herbal drinks, some of which he disdains as "hippie weed teas." Somewhere along the line, to my chagrin, he started to drink coffee. Then a cappuccino machine—a freebie discarded from a niece—moved into our home, and now

takes up valuable real estate on our limited counter. Plus it's noisy! With its intense hissing rush of air, it can displace a morning's mellow mood abruptly.

How to manage these differences, these minor changes? And what about the major changes? How do we respond when we, or our family members, demonstrate personality or value changes, or experience mental or physical health adversity? A beginning point is to recognize that it is unlikely that a person can remain unchanged over decades. Most of us would say that's even undesirable. Can we be who we were 30 years ago? Would we want the intervening years and experiences to have left no change in our character, our thoughts, our tastes?

In family relations with spouses, siblings, parents and children, sometimes it's a challenge to figure out how to respond to the changes, how to adjust, how to make room at the table for an odd-smelling tea or a hissing coffee machine. "Live by the Spirit," Paul urges the Galatians (Galatians 5:16a). He goes on to list the fruit of the Spirit as love, joy, peace, patience and kindness, along with other qualities (5:22). It's good advice in

the kitchen and in other places where family members sort out their differences.

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

I would encourage discussion that does not exclude those who do not meet an academic threshold.

While Christianity finds its roots in the Jewish tradition and the geography of the Middle East, the message is universal and inclusive. Christian Zionism finds its fulfillment and meaning in the support of an assertive Jewish state. Not all Christians subscribe to this ideology.

I personally do not need to find the meaning of Jesus' teachings in a political entity or the re-emergence of Israel. To me, Jesus' teachings are fulfilled in the present. In terms of the establishment of the kingdom of God, Jesus taught that the kingdom of God is within us or in our midst. This fundamentally means

that the experience of closeness to God is not about being in a special place. God is where I am.

I take the words "holy land" as synonymous with sacred ground, referring to the place where God dwells. This "holy land" is the place where we respect God's will—the place where we are now.

I am satisfied with the kingdom of God in which I now live and do not need to find it fulfilled at any future time, through any political entity or the rebuilding of a temple. When we describe something as the fulfillment of prophecy, then it becomes too easy to overlook injustice. The kingdom of God cannot be built upon injustice.

ALFRED REMPEL, KITCHENER, ONT.

GOD, MONEY AND ME

Downsizing by choice

EDWIN FRIESEN

Recently, seeing no "smaller appetite" options on the restaurant menu, I asked the waiter if I could order a smaller portion of a featured meal, believing that would still be fully adequate. The waiter protested, saying he would have to charge me for a full-sized serving. I told him that wasn't the point. To reinforce my request, I offered to pay more than the menu price if I could get a smaller meal. This was even more confusing! I ended up ordering a less desirable menu item.

In many different ways we are being pushed to live super-sized lives. From fries and drinks to "monster" trucks and homes, big is

in. We need large homes to house our accumulated possessions. We need large closets to store the clothes we wear and the ones we no longer wear but can't get ourselves to give away. We need large garages to store our outdoor "toys" and "no-longer-used" household items. We have games and puzzles we haven't touched in a decade.

Lil and I have been empty-nesters for a number of years. We have a wonderful two-bedroom house, of which one bedroom also serves as a home office, a

spacious garage with a workshop, and a large yard. Periodically, Lil fills a box or two of stuff we no longer need and takes it to the thrift store where she works as a volunteer. (None of my stuff had passed the expiry date as far as I can tell.) Here, customers practically fight over our cast-offs, which they see as their good fortune. And then, after her shift, Lil saunters through the store and finds some really neat—cheap—stuff to bring home. And so the cycle continues.



In many different ways we are being pushed to live super-sized lives. From fries and drinks to 'monster' trucks and homes, big is in.

To downsize voluntarily seems to go against not only our culture, but also against our basic human nature. We have been conditioned to believe that happiness is found in things and if you want to be really happy, you need to accumulate many things. Maybe it's time once again to turn up the volume on some words of Scripture. Solomon, who spoke from considerable life experience, said, "Those who love money will never have enough. How absurd to think that wealth brings true happiness" (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

Sometime later, Jesus spoke to the culture of his day—as well as ours—when he said, "Don't be greedy for what you don't have. Real life is not measured by how much we own" (Luke 12:15). Things temporarily enhance our enjoyment of life, but if we look to them to find lasting fulfillment, they will disappoint us. Ultimate security and happiness are found in God, not things.

So go ahead. Go through your home and look for things that have not been used in the last year or two. Pack them up and head off to the nearest thrift store. Should you ever miss the item, which is highly unlikely, you can always go back to

the same store and re-buy your donated items, at least if they are still on the shelf. It may help to remember that the profits from the store go to a very worthwhile cause.

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

✉ 10,000 Mile Diet better for poor Third World farmers

MORE THAN A few of us Mennos have embraced the ideals of the “100 Mile Diet” without assessing the larger picture of how this involves turning our backs on many of our other neighbours, the poverty-stricken farmers in Third World countries.

The global village picture that we cannot ignore contains ugly statistics: North American farm incomes will exceed \$400 billion this year, with most of that, as usual, immediately being absorbed by farm expenses for seed and fertilizer, transactions that have brought

unprecedented profits to many agri-business corporations and we, their shareholders. And yet farm subsidies, amazingly, continue to gush from Washington and Ottawa, much of this targeted at dumping our surplus production elsewhere in the world.

We have all heard the stories of container shipments of used clothing from here leading to the mass unemployment of tailors in countries like Haiti. Unless they're very carefully rationed into a local economy, even emergency food shipments like those of the Foodgrains Bank programs can lead to the collapse of an indigenous agricultural market—and more starvation rather than less.

FROM OUR LEADERS

Discerning God's mission today

ANDREW REESOR-MCDOWELL

My interest in the life of the broader church goes back a long way! When I was 10, I remember being with my family at a wider church conference where important issues were being discussed. I became quite interested and later asked why we did not discuss these issues at home. I now know that this church conference was working through some difficult issues as members tried to discern God's purposes.

I understand the church to be people gathered in the name of Christ to discern and participate in God's mission. In Mennonite Church Canada, this happens in families, more than 225 congregations and five area churches; at the national level; internationally as Mennonite World Conference; and with 28 partner organizations.

Discernment is one of the primary tasks of the church. A question I ask as MC Canada's new moderator is: Do the parts and the system of MC Canada demonstrate health so that we can continue

the important task of discernment? My observations are that the relationships among the parts of MC Canada are healthy and productive.

As moderator, it is my hope to provide leadership in an environment where delegates can speak faithfully and with conviction while listening carefully to each other. For the General Board to function in a spiritually healthy way, I am asking that we pray for each other daily, that the meeting environment reflects trust and respect, and that we choose to believe the best of each other. It is also my hope that we will be grateful for, and

[I]t is my hope to provide leadership in an environment where delegates can speak faithfully and with conviction while listening carefully to each other.



recognize, each other's gifts. This will help our efforts to bring clarity of vision for the church.

We are fortunate to have such gifted and dedicated staff. The executive staff are at each General Board meeting and play a crucial role in implementing the vision through important programs and

services.

We are fortunate to have the “Vision: Healing and Hope” statement as an inspiring and helpful guide for MC Canada at this time. Our purpose and identity statement nicely focuses on calling, equipping and sending. The three priorities are “forming” a people of God; “becoming” a global church, and “growing” leaders for the church.

I believe MC Canada has chosen a good governance/decision-making model and it is functioning well. The General Board, which includes representation from all five area churches and the national church, has the responsibility to ensure the system is working. There is strong vision, role clarity and healthy organizational relationships.

I am very pleased to be a part of Mennonite Church Canada. My prayer is that, as our church rightly discerns gospel-related issues, we will be holy,

hospitable, faithful and gentle. It is my hope that, as the General Board contributes its part to the discernment of God's intent, we can say, “*it seemed good to the Spirit and to us.*”

Andrew Reesor-McDowell is the incoming moderator of Mennonite Church Canada.

A Christian response to this would be to carefully target our own purchases of staples like sugar, rice, dried fruit, coffee and vegetable oils, in an effort to bring more of God's justice to a global food economy now largely controlled by predatory multinationals. We can create wealth where it is needed so badly, and perhaps even save ourselves money in the process, by following the model that's been so successful for Ten Thousand Villages. Our representatives in any one of our non-governmental organizations can provide us with "fair trade" information on a variety of foodstuffs, and help us understand the political- and corporate-driven brutal imbalances in trade that our western countries have engineered for themselves.

Perhaps a focused 10,000 Mile Diet can be far more ethical and neighbourly than a 100 Mile Diet!

KARL DICK, KENILWORTH, ONT.

/// Obituaries

Janzen, Erwin Johannes

Age 70, passed away Friday, Aug. 1, 2008 at the Royal University Hospital, Saskatoon. He is survived by his loving wife Elaine, three children and their families: Karen (David) Alden, Aldergrove, B.C., Gregory (Cristel)



Janzen, Caleb, Sharon, Daniel and Nathan, Winnipeg, Man.; Trevor (Jen) Janzen, Cate and Abby, Laird, Sask.; three siblings, Elmer (Beulah) Janzen, Ottawa, Ont., Lorene (Arnold) Nickel, Saskatoon, Sask., and Art (Ute) Janzen, Cologne, Germany, and sisters-in-law Elsie Janzen, Prince Albert Sask., Laura Lawson, Noterh Battleford, Sask., Helen Denton, Calgary, Alta., Jeannine Burrows, North Vancouver, B.C., and step-sister-in-law, June Loe, St. Albert, Alta., as well as numerous nieces and nephews. Erwin was predeceased by his parents, brother Arnold, sister-in-law Isabel, and nephew Glenn. Erwin was born to Elma (Regier) and John D. Janzen on May 22, 1938. He attended school in the Hamburg and Tiefengrund School Districts and graduated from Rosthern Junior College in 1957. He worked for Monarch and later Revelstoke Lumber in various locations within Saskatchewan and Manitoba. On Sept. 28, 1963 he married Elaine Peterson, settling in Winkler, Man., and later in Wawanesa, Man. In 1967, after almost 10 years of retail employment he registered to follow his dream to farm. For five years he rented and lived on his Uncle A.E. Regier's farm. In 1972, Erwin, Elaine and family moved to the family farm where they lived and farmed for 32 years. In 2004 a new home was built in Laird, Sask., where they lived until the time of Erwin's passing. Family was very important to Erwin. He was a loving husband, gentle father and a wonderful grandfather. He was involved in community life and

he loved farming. Music and singing were an integral part of his life. He always tried to focus on the positive. Erwin was a quiet man and lived his faith through his service and kindness to others. During his last hours he reminded his wife and family, "don't forget to pray, God will pull you through." In memory of Erwin, donations may be made to Royal University Foundation, Cardiac Care Fund, towards the Electrophysiology Lab (Erwin's life was prolonged six years through this technology). A celebration of Erwin's life service was held on Aug. 6, 2008 at 3:00 pm at the Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite Church, 7.5 km NE of Laird, Sask., with pastor Lorne Epp officiating. Interment of Erwin's ashes took place at the Tiefengrund cemetery following the celebration service.

/// Correction

The photographs of the stained glass windows in the "More than a 'visiting chamber'" article on pages 16-17 of the Sept. 29 issue and of the Lord's Prayer etchings on the back page of the same issue were taken by Paul Suderman. The photograph of stained glass artist Alvin Pauls on page 17 was taken by Edgar Klassen. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the errors.

MSCU Regional Meetings

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St. Catharines Branch
Thursday, November 6,
2008
St. Catharines United
Mennonite, St. Catharines

Aylmer Branch
Wednesday, November 12, 2008
Aylmer Evangelical Mennonite Mission
Church, Aylmer

Registration: 7:15 pm
Meeting: 7:30 pm



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/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Bauman—Emily Madison (b. Sept. 27, 2008), to Randy and Jackie Bauman, Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite.

Bergen—Seth Peter Steinmann (b. Oct. 3, 2008), to Rebecca Steinmann and Jeremy Bergen, Toronto United Mennonite, in Kitchener, Ont.

Boese—Joel David Thomas (b. Oct. 3, 2008), to Scott and Aimee Boese, Tofield (Alta.) Mennonite.

Dueck—Hunter Lightning (b. Aug. 17, 2008), to Jennifer and Stephen Dueck, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man.

Falk—Cyrus Angela Mackenzie (b. Sept. 16, 2008), to Cody and Jaime (Fehr) Falk, Blumenort Mennonite, Gretna, Man.

Hartman—Erik James (b. Sept. 21, 2008), to Adrian and Lori Hartman, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.

Heidebrecht—Lily Marlene (b. Sept. 28, 2008), to Rick and Andrea Heidebrecht, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Klassen—Oliver Jacob (b. Aug. 31, 2008), adopted by Russ and Julia Klassen, Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, B.C.

Martin—Zachary James (b. Aug. 28, 2008), to Doug and Heidi Martin, Avon Mennonite, Stratford, Ont.

Rorke—Mathew Robert (b. July 28, 2008), to Joel and Janine Rorke, Preston Mennonite, Cambridge, Ont.

Schroeder—Amy Louise (b. Aug. 4, 2008), to Philip (Avon Mennonite, Stratford, Ont.) and Saori Schroeder, in Japan.

Marriages

Bergen/Dueck—Lindsay Bergen and Anthony Dueck, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., at the Bergen home, Aug. 16, 2008.

Hansen/Jones—Amy Hansen and Ryan Jones, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., Oct. 11, 2008.

Hildebrand/Penner—Travis Hildebrand and Ashley Penner, Blumenort Mennonite, Gretna, Man., July 19, 2008.

Hohl/Witzel—Doug Hohl and Sherry Witzel, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., Sept. 20, 2008.

Loewen/Rempel—Fred Loewen and Rachell Rempel, Blumenort Mennonite, Gretna, Man., July 27, 2008.

Maagdeleyn/Normandeau—Jennifer Maagdeleyn and David Normandeau, Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite, Sept. 20, 2008.

Peters/Schellenberg—Rhonda Peters and Chris Schellenberg, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., at the Morden (Man.) Golf Course, Sept. 6, 2008.

Toews/Wall—Anita Toews and Abe Wall, Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite, Sept. 6, 2008.

Deaths

Baan—Catharine, 94 (b. Jan. 18, 1914; d. Oct. 2, 2008), Brussels (Ont.) Mennonite.

Braun—William, 87 (d. Aug. 25, 2008), Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man.

Dyck—Edward, 76 (b. Dec. 13, 1931; d. Sept. 27, 2008), Waterloo-Kitchener (Ont.) United Mennonite.

Epp—Agnes (nee Franz), 96 (b. Oct. 12, 1911; d. Oct. 3, 2008), Tofield (Alta.) Mennonite.

Kasdorf—Leo, 76 (b. Nov. 22, 1931; d. Sept. 25, 2008), Saskatoon (Sask.) First Mennonite.

Wiebe—Ertman G. (Edd), 82 (b. Sept. 5, 1926; d. Sept. 25, 2008), Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones

announcements within four months of the event.

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

Pontius' Puddle



YOUNG PROPHET

Get angry

BY JOHN WRAY

Anger creates passion, passion creates determination, and determination creates change. We rarely talk about anger and we need to because it's part of the Christian peace position. Often we dismiss anger for not being "Christ-like," but it is a valid emotion that can lead to change. And there are plenty of things to get angry about.

First, a history lesson. Bananas have been around for a long, long time. Today we find bananas at almost every grocery store, yellow, pretty and bug-free. Beginning in the 1960s, Dow Chemical and Shell Chemical invented Nemagon, which helps keep those bananas looking their best and they exported it all over the world. Then, in 1979, some adverse health effects were acknowledged, so Nemagon was banned from the U.S., but export continued to other countries for at least the next decade.

Now for the medical lesson. Nemagon has been linked to infertility, poisoning, skin discolouration and death. No wonder it was banned in the United States!

In many Central American countries, vast plots of land are owned by multinationals for fruit production. These multinationals, including Dole and Delmonte, are profit-driven and take advantage of Third World wage laws and lax health standards. They used Nemagon in Third World countries for another decade after its ban.

I had the amazing chance to go to Nicaragua a few years back with a group of youths. We went to build houses, learn about the culture and to come back with awareness of some of the injustices afflicted on the Nicaraguan people. Nemagon was one of those injustices.

I saw 3,000 banana workers camped in the city park, living under tarps, hammocks and blankets, protesting their government for help. On one corner of their camp I saw 20 or 30 crosses, each with a name depicting lost comrades who

died on the long march to the capital city. I heard the workers speak of their plight, of those who had died, and of those who were ill and poor due to large medical bills and lost wages. I saw a man unbutton his shirt to show us his discoloured body. These workers were all victims of Nemagon.

What is your reaction to the plight of these banana workers? You might be feeling compassion, you might be feeling sad for the workers and you might be feeling sympathy.

Do you feel anger? If not, why not? Too often we dismiss anger as not being Christ-like, yet anger may be necessary for change in some cases. Moses got angry and this anger motivated him to keep pressing for the freedom of his people. Peter,

when Jesus asked him for the third time if he loved him, got a little angry—and then Peter started the church. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, was clearly angry at their conduct and this likely motivated them to change. And when Jesus saw the state of the temple, he got angry and overturned tables.

It is not good to stay angry. Jesus didn't. It is not good to be full of rage, but to get angry once in a while is good, as Jesus was. Jesus saw the temple and got angry. When he got angry, he got passionate. When he got passionate, he took a whip, overturned the tables and drove the moneylenders out. He created change. If

we let anger lead to passion and determination, change will happen. Change will happen for banana workers. Change for the AIDS epidemic. Change for the environment. The Christian peace position needs to accept anger as an agent for change.

Change should not come through violence. Picking up an AK-47, strapping a bomb to your body or invading another country are inefficient means to an end. What does work is determined people committed to change, who, through acts of civil disobedience, awareness campaigns and persistent petitions, lobby for justice. Awareness is a simple start in the journey of world justice. When you are in the supermarket, be aware of the products you buy.

Those banana workers in Nicaragua

were pleading for help from their government. They had sued the major companies like Dole and Shell for health costs and lost wages due to the effects of Nemagon, and had won \$490 million. But the companies were counter-suing the work-

CONRAD GREBEL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE PHOTO



John Wray, right, is presented with a cash award of \$225 for his second-place speech by Lowell Ewert, director of peace and conflict studies at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont.

ers for misfiled claims and fraud in the order of \$17 billion. Think about it: The rich multinationals, were counter-suing poisoned workers over paperwork! Five years later, the companies have still not paid a dime to the workers. It says a lot about our world, doesn't it?

Injustice is out there. It's time to get angry about it. ❧

John Wray is a student at Conrad Grebel University College. This speech, entitled "Banana workers and involving anger in the Christian peace position" came second in last year's binational C. Henry Smith Oratorical Contest.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Responding to criticism

MC Canada general secretary answers critics who opposed meeting with Iranian president

BY AARON EPP

National Correspondent
NEW YORK

Protesters with signs that read “No feast for the beast” greeted about 300 international religious and political figures, including Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who gathered in a Manhattan hotel Sept. 25 for a dialogue organized in part by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

“Ahmadinejad represents a rejection of everything these religious groups stand for,” Abraham H. Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said in a prepared statement on Sept. 10. “His speech at Columbia University a year ago showed the futility of attempting to dialogue with a dictator who makes crystal clear his antipathy towards the West, who denies the Holocaust, and who defends the Iranian regime’s willful neglect of basic human rights.” He added that the religious organizations sponsoring the dinner “have tarnished their reputations as peace-seekers and bridgebuilders.”

Ahmadinejad’s denial of the Holocaust and comments about “wiping Israel off

the map” have made him a controversial figure in the West. MCC sponsored the dialogue with American Friends Service Committee, Quaker United Nations Office, Religions for Peace and the World Council of Churches in consultation with the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations. The purpose of the dialogue, which followed a meal, was to discuss the role of religion in responding to global challenges and building peace and understanding between societies.

During a radio interview with Golden West Broadcasting in southern Manitoba at the beginning of October, Mennonite Church Canada general secretary Robert J. Suderman spoke about his experience attending the event. While he did address the criticism surrounding the meeting, Suderman focused his comments on how unhelpful it was to have Christians insulting other Christians as they entered the hotel. “To have Christians speak publicly about Christians in the way that we experienced there is hurtful,” he said, adding later that “the placards and the chants of the crowd were quite, I would say, vicious.”

When asked if the meeting was the right thing to do, Suderman responded that it was. “I think witnessing to persons in power, and teaching and instructing them about the potential of a different path, is always the right thing to do for a Christian and for the Christian church.”

He pointed to Ephesians 3:10, where the Apostle Paul says that God’s plan always has been that those in power will hear about an alternative way of doing things through the church. “It’s a very clear statement that the task of the church is to instruct the powers in the ways of Jesus,” Suderman said, adding that that’s what happened during the meeting in New York.

This is the fourth time Mennonites and other historic Peace Churches have met at such an event. Although official diplomatic

MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PHOTO



While Christian and Jewish protesters marched outside, Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad addressed a multi-faith gathering of religious leaders in New York City on Sept. 25.

ties between the U.S. and Iran have been severed for nearly 30 years, MCC has had a relationship with the country since 1990, when the organization responded to an earthquake by providing material aid.

In order to promote dialogue, MCC is meeting in Winnipeg with Jewish groups that have opposed Christian connections with Ahmadinejad. No further information about this meeting was available at press time. ☺

Meeting Needs Together



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MCC B.C. PHOTO BY ANGELIKA DAWSON



Matthew Kuepfer, left, Natasha Bruce, Jennifer Lim, Diana Lim, Michelle Ng and Gabriella Epp-Yusuf manned the Peace Mennonite Church "Peace Maker" booth at this year's Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) B.C. Festival in Abbotsford, B.C., where they sold prayer bracelets and "hug bug boxes" that they had made. The \$1,500 contribution from the Richmond, B.C., church group helped raise in excess of \$650,000 for MCC refugee relief programs around the world. The traditional, symbolic auctioning of a loaf of bread brought in a total of \$205,000 from a multitude of bidders, the highest of which was \$25,000. The quilt auction raised more than \$20,000, as did the penny booth. The donations booth did a brisk business, accepting more than \$177,000 from those who didn't find anything to buy or bid on, yet simply wanted to be generous.

Community snapshots

PHOTO BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD



The mural adorning the side of the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers building resulted from the joint efforts of a diverse group of immigrant artists. The centre, which became operational in July and which celebrated its grand opening on Sept. 23, exudes welcome to immigrants looking for language help, employment support, family services and other assistance.

PHOTO COURTESY OF EDEN FOUNDATION



Thirty-three antique tractor enthusiasts took to the highways and byways of southern Manitoba on Aug. 16 in the inaugural "Visit the Villages Tractor Trek," a fundraising event organized by the Eden Foundation. The event raised more than the goal of \$40,000 for regional mental health programs, according to organizer Armin Ens.

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

From justice to communion

MC Manitoba, Youth With A Mission pursue church-plant partnership

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU
Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG

For seven years, Norm Voth, director of evangelism and service ministries for Mennonite Church Manitoba, had been praying about and pursuing the dream of planting a church. For almost that long Jamie and Kim Arpin-Ricci had been living and doing mission outreach in a core area of Winnipeg. Nearly a year ago they found each other.

As police cordon off a neighbouring street and sirens wail, Arpin-Ricci explains how he and his wife came to this West End neighbourhood in 2002 as Youth With A Ministry (YWAM) workers. "We chose this community on the invitation of Harry Lehotsky," he says, referring to the activist pastor who worked tirelessly to improve the lives of people in the West End until his death last year. "He insisted that we live in the community and the wisdom of that is proving itself over time."

The West End neighbourhood has a large first nations population and a growing immigrant community.

"I can stand on the street and in a couple of hours I can hear a dozen different languages," says Arpin-Ricci. "It's an inexpensive area and there is a high concentration of poverty," he adds.

As YWAM workers, the couple has established a team of five workers who all live in the community and who are required to raise their own mission support. Living in the community is central to their work.

As part of their ministry, they offer a mission adventures program to groups who want to participate in inner city ministry for a short term. Another program is a discipleship training school, which involves

three months of training in the community followed by two months in international outreach work.

By planting themselves in a neighbourhood, the Arpin-Riccis are hoping the context will shape the local ministry. They have partnered with churches in the community, but over the last few years "several of the churches have moved or died," he says.

"Some of the churches were getting too small and some of the immigrant churches have moved to the suburbs."

But he has been encouraged by the relationships they have begun to establish through their presence. In early 2008, they opened The Dusty Cover, a non-profit used bookstore.

"In addition to being a good source of used books at great prices, our comfortable lounge is an excellent place to enjoy a hot cup of fair trade coffee," the store's website discloses. It has become a place where they can establish new relationships and build on others.

"Out of these growing relationships we see the seeds for a new church plant," he says, noting, "We are strong on the mercy and justice ministries, but need more help with the ministry of worship."

That's when Voth entered the picture, reading about Arpin-Ricci's goals on his blog.

"Given our emphasis on peace and justice issues, and trying to model community living, the connection with the Mennonite community seems a good fit," Arpin-Ricci

says.

Earlier this year, Arpin-Ricci and Voth met with representatives from three or four of MC Manitoba congregations in the vicinity, "to make introductions and share information, and to invite them to connect in ways that made sense to them," says Voth. "I felt affirmation from these congregations."

"These partnerships are critical," Voth adds. "I have no doubt we can supply them with some of the resources they need. . . . I think we at MC Manitoba need to invest some money in this, but not by adding it to the budget. I plan to look for other ways."

Don Rempel-Boschman, pastor at Douglas Mennonite Church, has visited the project several times. "I think it is a great idea," he says. "Jamie is a quality individual bringing a fairly rare entrepreneurial bent to ministry. . . . All we have done so far in our church is put articles in the newsletter and spoke to a number of individuals. I would like to eventually see some volunteers from our congregation."

Tym Elias, pastor at Home Street Mennonite Church, also supports the efforts of Arpin-Ricci and forming a ministry partnership. "In terms of having an organizational response, we are not there yet. It is still in the exploratory stage."

Kathy Giesbrecht, youth pastor, is encouraging the young people from Home Street to volunteer at the bookstore. "I hope we can support their building of relationships with the people in the neighbourhood," she says. "For me, this is exciting." ❧



PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Norm Voth, director of evangelism and service ministries for Mennonite Church Manitoba, left, and Jamie Arpin-Ricci consider how Youth With A Mission and MC Manitoba can partner together in planting a church in Winnipeg's West End neighbourhood. The Dusty Cover Used Bookstore would be the site of this new church plant.

The feet of those who bring good news

Breslau congregation attempts to 'walk across Canada'

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
BRESLAU, ONT.

Sept. 21 was a beautiful day for a walk. The Breslau Mennonite Church sanctuary buzzed with noise as people clipped pedometers to their belts. Parish nurse Karen Good had hers on already.

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" Good quoted from Isaiah 52:7 to the congregation before listing many of the benefits of walking. The goal of the church's health cabinet and parish nurse ministry was to get the congregation to cumulatively walk across Canada—more

than 8,500 kilometres—from Sept. 21 to Oct. 12.

People walk to slow down and enjoy a more relaxed pace while talking with a friend, Good said. Families and friends hike together, exploring the nature of the great outdoors. People walk for pleasure, or to get in shape or stay in shape. Some use walking as therapy for injured muscles or troubled feelings. All-in-all, walking has lots of health benefits, including reducing elevated blood fats and blood pressure, improving digestion and strengthening bones. People's carbon footprints are reduced when they walk to the grocery store instead of driving.

Ten thousand steps a day is considered necessary for a healthy life style. With 1,300 average steps to the kilometre, the congregation had a lot of stepping ahead on that first Sunday. But with lovely weather outside and a soup fundraiser lunch in

the offing, the congregation stepped out to get a head start.

In the end, Breslau congregants walked a total of 4,850 kilometres, a little short of their goal, but Good's real hope is that they will develop patterns of walking that they can keep up in the months and years to come. ☺

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



Pastor Darrel Toews walks with parishioner Heather McGill as Breslau Mennonite Church begins its 'cross-Canada' walk.

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!Exploring ministry

North American youths consider the cost of church ministry

BY AARON EPP

National Correspondent
ELKHART, IND.

This past summer marked the fifth year of !Explore, a program at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) aimed at youths who are exploring church leadership.

"I think it's a gem. It's a real one-of-a-kind experience, and it was perfectly timed and placed in my life," says Max Kennel of Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden, Ont. Kennel was one of five



Kennel

/// Briefly noted

Congregations still seeking permanent leadership

SASKATCHEWAN—Of the three MC Saskatchewan churches looking for a senior pastor, all are still in a state of transition. Zion Mennonite in Swift Current has hired Anita Janzen until the end of December in an interim position while looking for a full-time pastor. Mount Royal Mennonite in Saskatoon has announced a pastoral team to help with interim ministry needs; Bill and Helen Kruger will be performing the work of visiting and preaching, while Menno Epp is responsible to work on finding an intentional interim and Ken Bechtel stands alongside Epp in an advisory capacity. Grace Mennonite in Regina is also looking for a senior pastor; it is the most recent MC Saskatchewan congregation to join the hunt for available leadership.

—BY KARIN FEHDERAU

'!Explore doesn't necessarily provide you with an answer as to what your calling is, but it gives you resources to test out your gifts.'
(Deborah-Ruth Ferber)

Canadian participants in the program.

In total, 15 youths aged 16 to 18 from across North America participated in !Explore this summer. The program consists of two components: an 18-day stay at AMBS during which the participants concentrate on living in Christian community, leadership development and spiritual disciplines. They are also introduced to seminary life and explore a theological topic of their choosing through independent study, group discussion and conversations with professors.

Kennel used the opportunity to explore prayer. "I realized that every prayer gets answered, but some prayers are answered with silence," he says. "Sometimes God will provide a very clear response and sometimes God will provide a very unclear response, and sometimes God will just leave you to it."

While some people believe there is only one path their life can take, Kennel believes that his life can go in any number of directions, "and each one of them would be God's will for my life." The 17-year-old hopes to study to become a pastor when he graduates from high school next June. "!Explore didn't really change that [desire], it just enhanced it," he says.

During their time in Elkhart, the group also served in the local community. In the past, participants travelled to Chicago to work at an inner-city ministry, but this year the service component took place in Elkhart. This was so that participants could experience doing service in a setting more similar to their home cities, says !Explore director Andy Brubacher Kaethler. The hope was that participants would begin to see service and attentiveness to the needs of others as a part of everyday life, he says, as opposed to "something you do one week a year with your youth group."

Following their time in Elkhart, participants returned to their home congregations for five-week internships, working with a pastoral leader in various ministries.

Deborah-Ruth Ferber of North Leamington United Mennonite Church in Leamington, Ont., led Vacation Bible School, preached two sermons and led worship on two Sundays. In the end, she found she enjoyed doing chaplaincy the most. "I think that in chaplaincy I saw . . . how the relationship between the patient and the chaplain is developed," the 17-year-old says.

Like Kennel, she hopes to go into ministry after she graduates. "I think the most important thing that !Explore taught me is that [a] calling isn't something that you know right away. It's a gradual thing," Ferber says. "!Explore doesn't necessarily provide you with an answer as to what your calling is, but it gives you resources to test out your gifts."

What stands out the most for both Ferber and Kennel was getting to know their fellow participants.

"I think it was incredible to sit there with 14 other youths, people my age, and talk about the things we talked about," Kennel says. "It's really nice to be in community, even if it is only for 18 days, with people who have the same purpose."

Next year, !Explore will take participants to the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Paraguay. "There does seem to be, across the church as a whole, a new interest in forming young leaders," says Brubacher Kaethler, "but more important is that there are young leaders who are hearing the call and checking it out. I think that's genuinely exciting."

The other Canadian participants in the 2008 !Explore program were Ben Borne (Wildwood Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Sask.); Rachel Driedger (Zion Mennonite Fellowship, Elmira, Ont.); and Krista Loewen (Langley Mennonite Fellowship, B.C.).



Ferber

A century of women's service

BY ELIZABETH RUDY

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
KITCHENER, ONT.

A hundred years after Berlin Mennonite Church formed a "Sisters' Aid" group in July 1908, the Women's Mission and Service Commission (WMSC) of First Mennonite Church in Kitchener—the Berlin congregation's successor—held two meaningful celebrations.

The current commission executive planned the Sept. 28 worship service, which was devoted to a recognition of the centenary. The congregation joined in some of the favourite hymns sung by the women's groups of past years, such as "There Shall be Showers of Blessing," and a small group sang "Our Best" during the offering. Participants wore period costumes.

A worship centre—including flowers in a stone jug, a coal-oil lamp, the original 1908 record book from the archives, and a

100-year-old quilt—reconnected worshippers visually with the past. As a response to pastor Catherine Hunsberger's message, "Remembered in the works of their hands," a litany of thanksgiving was shared.

The first centenary celebration took place on May 13 during a regular Tuesday WMSC workday. An invitation was issued to those who had been a part of former women's groups at First Mennonite over the years, and 60 women gathered for a joyful day. The program included a performance by a local school choir, readings from

past record books and a short skit of an imaginary meeting of the first executive.

Pat (Snyder) Janowski acted the part of the first president, Barbara (Bowman) Shuh; Ruby Schmitt played Mary Ann (Mrs. M.C.) Cressman; and Karen (Jutzi) Balmer took the role of Mary Snider, the matron of the Berlin Orphanage.

Current WMSC members gained many insights from the dedication of these pioneer women, whose original purpose was stated as "to aid the poor and distressed and to do general mission and charitable work," and they feel challenged to continue in their tradition. ❧

/// Briefly noted

Burns Lake church to sign MC B.C. covenant

BURNS LAKE, B.C.—First Mennonite Church of Burns Lake decided to sign the covenant affirming membership and shared ministry in Mennonite Church British Columbia at a congregational meeting on Sept. 21. With this decision, the church joins 30 other MC B.C. congregations that signed the covenant at a joint worship service on Pentecost Sunday 2007. First Mennonite was one of four MC B.C. congregations that chose not to sign the covenant on that occasion. Two congregations later withdrew from the area church, and MC B.C. leadership have been in discussions with the other two. Executive minister Garry Janzen and church health committee member Dave Friesen and his wife Doris had travelled to Burns Lake in September to meet with church leaders and clarify their plans for future direction. As a result of discussions over the past year and these meetings, the church voted to sign the covenant. The signing will take place at a special worship service on Nov. 23 with several representatives of MC B.C. present. As a small congregation in a remote area of the province, First Mennonite of Burns Lake requests the prayers of fellow Mennonite Church Canada friends as it searches for pastoral leadership.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

Pastoral transitions in Alberta

ALBERTA—Jake Unrau was installed as half-time pastor advisor at Calgary Chinese Mennonite Church on Sept. 12. Unrau and his wife Dorothy have returned to Alberta after doing missions work in Ukraine from 1998-2003, and in Niedergoersdorf, Germany, from 2003-07. Jason Besserer was installed as the English pastor at Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite Church on Sept. 21. Arlene Davies-Fuhr was installed as half-time associate pastor at First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, on Sept. 28. Joseph Letuwon Kiranto of Kenya, who is in Canada for a year with Mennonite Central Committee's International Visitor Exchange Program, is spending half of his time as a pastoral intern at Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary, where he assists with preaching, worship planning, visitation and youth groups, and attends meetings as his time allows. Terry Lesser, pastor at Springridge Mennonite Church in Pincher Creek, has resigned effective Dec. 31.

—BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

PHOTO BY ROSS W. MUIR



During the Sept. 28 celebration of a century of women's mission service work, First Mennonite Church WMSC work committee member Pat Janowski presents a children's time that included "show and tell" of current quilting and sewing projects.

Understanding cultural differences in church

Sunday school addresses church's multicultural make-up

By **MILLIE GLICK**
Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
EDMONTON

Pastor Werner De Jong stands in front of the adult Sunday school class dressed in a colourful African shirt and casual western pants. His attire symbolizes a study series on cross-cultural differences within Holyrood Mennonite Church. The congregation is made up of a mix of nationalities, with the African contingent the largest.

Holyrood Mennonite is serious about understanding and bonding as a faith community, reflecting a central theme of its new mission statement about sharing "God's abundant hospitality."

The class discussion on cultural themes is guided in part by David Maranz's book, *African Friends and Money Matters*, which acknowledges that there are also many cultural differences within Africa. The class is a forum that allows for clarification of the workings of Canadian and African cultures. Discussion is jovial, serious and animated, with an openness and freedom to share.

Some differences between African and western culture are dramatic. The fact that Africans wear their colours prominently while westerners put it on their walls or fashion accessories doesn't really take much adjustment. However, in African culture resources are to be used or shared, not hoarded, whereas in western culture personal saving is encouraged. In wealthy western societies, money and things are seen as individual possessions, whereas in societies of scarcity they are generally

regarded as community resources. "It is very helpful to consider how people of different cultures view such things as social use of resources, budgeting, friendship," comments class participant Helena Ball. "My hope in attending these classes is to come away with a better understanding of the African culture that will enable me to interact in a more positive and deliberate way." ❧

PHOTO BY RON TANIGUCHI



Holyrood Mennonite Church pastor Werner De Jong leads a Sunday school class that is working to build better cross-cultural relationships and understanding between the congregation's African and Canadian members.

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GOD AT WORK IN US

Making friends

Calgary couple enthusiastic about their experience welcoming Colombian refugees into their home

By DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent
CALGARY, ALTA.

Alice and Erwin Unrau are learning about loneliness. While the retired Calgary couple has no lack of family and friends, some of their friends are immigrants from Colombia. The Unraus discovered that, among the myriad challenges facing newcomers to Canada, loneliness is one of the most critical, desperate issues, and one of the most difficult to overcome.

After going to an international day at a school where immigrants learn English, Alice noticed this problem. "That is the one thing that they all commented on," she says. "They said, 'We are so lonely. People say hello on the street, but nobody will do more than that.' They don't get into people's homes to get friends. And they are just extremely lonely. . . . That is, I think, the biggest problem that they have."

Even in the context of a welcoming church community, immigrants often are unable to develop meaningful friendships, she says, adding, "Although the situation was bad in Colombia, they are so lonesome here that at times they wish they could go back."

The Unraus' experience with Colombian immigrants is up close and personal, and has enriched their lives in many ways. In late 2002, when Foothills Mennonite Church helped Yiriam Moyano and her then three-year-old daughter, Lina, move to Calgary from Colombia, the Unraus opened their home until an apartment was ready.

Surprised and concerned to find out Moyano was expecting a second child soon, the Unraus invited her to stay with them. "After David was born, she stayed at our home for three weeks and then went to her apartment once again," Alice says.

"By this time we had established a close relationship and we felt like she was our daughter and her children were our grandchildren. And that relationship remains until today."

Relating closely to immigrants and their struggles with language, finances, cultural differences and establishing community, has taught the Unraus many things. "We have opened up our minds to other cultures," Erwin notes. "We're a lot more sensitive to people who come here who are immigrants from any country. . . . I appreciate what I've learned from them. And

sensitive to their needs and be available," Alice says, adding, "The other thing I would suggest is that people not give [new immigrants] too much to begin with. . . . It gives the impression that there is a bottomless pit of things to be had, and then after a year there is nothing and they wonder what happened"

Even loving Canadians like the Unraus cannot erase the need for newcomers to have a circle of friends. These are hard to find, largely because established communities often do not reach out to newcomers. Language and cultural misunderstand-

PHOTO COURTESY OF ERWIN AND ALICE UNRAU



In 2002, when the Moyano family first came to Canada from Colombia, they stayed with the Unraus in Calgary. Now they are like family to each other. Pictured from left to right: Alice Unrau, David Moyano, Lina Moyano, Erwin Unrau and Yiriam Moyano.

you know what? The people in Colombia and us are not that much different really. . . . Those folks that come here really want to be Canadians and do well."

The Unraus listen to the news in a different way now as well. "One thing we learned about the conflict in Colombia is that we think there is fighting in the whole country, but that isn't the case," Alice explains. "Many people live in the larger cities and near the tourist resorts, where life is very normal."

The couple has some observations about helping newcomers to Canada.

"If churches are planning to sponsor refugees, something that they should remember is that . . . it may not be a one-year commitment," Alice notes. Over the years, the local school would call the Unraus if Moyano's children were sick while she was at work, and they were available when she just needed to talk. "It is important to be

ings are well acknowledged barriers, and there are others.

Alice believes that being an affluent society might be part of the problem: "One thing is that I think we've got too much money, so that people are busy doing things and having their kids involved in a lot of things. . . . Everybody is busy with their lives and it's much more comfortable to be with the friends you know really well than to have somebody as an outsider."

The Unraus enthusiastically encourage established Canadians to reach out to newcomers, both for what they can give and what they will receive.

"Erwin and I have learned so much from this experience," Alice says. "We are always aware of immigrants and make a point to speak to them. . . . We invite them to our home so they can learn about us and our customs. And best of all, we have gained so many Colombian friends." ❧

FOCUS ON BOOKS&RESOURCES

Uncovering literary gifts from God

Novelist/poet Barbara Nickel on 'confinement and release'

BY ANGELIKA DAWSON
Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
YARROW, B.C.

It's been exactly six years since I last sat down over a cup of tea with Barbara Nickel to talk about her life and her writing. Much has changed for Nickel in those years. She and her husband Bevan now have two young boys. They've moved from one small community to another, choosing to settle in Yarrow.



And Nickel has gone from doing a variety of things to making writing her full-time focus. When she thinks about the changes and accomplishments that have happened in that time, she says that perhaps the biggest change has been in her confidence.

"I think of myself as a writer," she says. "I think I've moved from being an emerging writer to an established one."

Making that transition hasn't always been an easy one. She says closing the doors on teaching opportunities "took a lot of courage," and having children has also changed how she works and how she thinks about time. Publishing often leads to readings, and workshop and teaching invitations, which she finds very rewarding. The trick, she says, is finding the balance between doing that outward work and taking time to go inward to make strides in her writing.

In the last six years, she has worked with an agent, had a novel published by a major

publisher, and written and published another book of poetry.

Hannah Waters and the Daughter of Johann Sebastian Bach (Penguin, 2005) is a young-adult novel that won the BC Book Prizes' Sheila A. Egoff Children's Literature Prize and was short-listed for the Governor General's Award.

Her latest release is a poetry collection titled *Domain* (Anansi, 2007), a collection she was working on when we last spoke. "When it comes to poetry, I'm a slow cooker writer," Nickel says, describing the experience. "The process for *Domain* was unique. I was working on the sonnets, but other poems kept coming up and I knew they'd be in the book. I used images that I'd been collecting in my 'images books' for years."

Domain is a collection of poetry built around a crown of sonnets in which the last line of each of seven sonnets becomes the first line of the next one, making a complete circle. Each sonnet, named for a room in her childhood home, becomes the basis for a small

collection of poems. And while the poems are structured around the framework of a house, the poems are really about containment and release, the tension between what is concrete and what is fluid.

"The idea comes from the baggage we all carry. None of us is completely free," she says. "I grew up with a strong sense of faith, family, rules. My whole life was a play between confinement and release."

Nickel reflects that this theme could come from being a musician, always working within a framework and structure, but having the desire to improvise. But part of it could also come from being a Mennonite, she acknowledges.

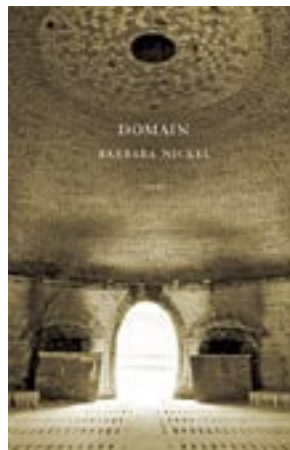
"There's such a history, baggage," says Nickel, a member of Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Abbotsford. "Part of you can't live without it because it's your roots. But part of you wants to throw it all off and be completely free. I'm always playing with that."

Nickel enjoys being a multi-genre writer. She has an adult novel in the works and is currently working on a children's picture book that she's writing in verse and about which she is very excited. "Writing a picture book is a very difficult form," she says. "It has to be the perfect balance between what's seen and what's said."

But it's that newfound confidence that gives her the courage and enthusiasm to take on this challenge. "I feel so confident about it, about doing it in verse. That's what gives me a unique voice," she says.

While many Christian writers see their faith as infusing their work, Nickel turns that view on its head. "I would say that often the writing life helps to build my faith,

rather than the other way around," she says. "When I write, I learn to be quiet for long periods of time and listen and wait for God in the silence, in the mysterious ways that words can come together and speak of something much larger than anything I could ever dream of. It's a crazy process of giving myself away, of trusting and of being led, and of finding truth in the most unexpected places." ❧



Soul deep

An invitation to those who have lost the joy of poetry

BY D.S. MARTIN

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

When we were very young, we were delightfully drawn into the playful world of poetry. Remember Winnie the Pooh's whimsical "Rum-tum-tum-tiddle-um" or Sam-I-Am's absurd "Would you eat them in a box? Would you eat them with a fox?"

Then there came the teen years, when, alone in our rooms, we tried to write poems or songs (even if we told no one), and studied lyrics from our favourite records for "truths" we couldn't find anywhere else.

Afraid of ambiguity

But many no longer make room in their lives for poetry.

Fear is what hinders people from appreciating poetry, says Sarah Klassen, an award-winning Mennonite poet from Winnipeg, "fear of not getting it. Many

with mystery. "Can we say we comprehend completely when we participate in the Eucharist?" she asks.

The late Margaret Avison wrote in her final book, *Momentary Dark*: "Poetry is always in / unfamiliar territory," suggesting that it helps us to get at what isn't readily accessible through linear reasoning.

Rediscovering delight

I believe some people have had poetry stolen from them by academics. If you've felt excluded, here's an invitation to rediscover the joys of poetry.

I suggest trying authors whose work carries profound observation in simple, well-crafted lines. Google the following poets to sample their style, then order one of their books so that you're able to immerse yourself in their poetry:

- Mary Oliver: *Thirst* (or her new collection, *Red Bird*)
- Jane Kenyon: *Otherwise*
- George Whipple: *Tom Thomson and Other Poems*
- Luci Shaw: *What The Light Was Like*

Before long, you'll find particular styles, ideas, and topics appeal more to you.

"Readers are attracted, I think, to poems in which their own experience is reflected," says Klassen. "In addition, many readers are attracted to poems that raise questions or, in some way, challenge them intellectually."

The lure of the lyric

I asked Toronto's poet laureate, Pier Giorgio Di Cicco, a Catholic priest, what attracts people to poetry. His answer: "It is

the language of their soul disposed to God. It is the metaphors that are windows onto the timeless."

Consider John Terpstra's poem "Beach" in which he speaks of those sunning themselves on the beach as a congregation: "A man throws a tennis ball. / His young, long-haired Labrador bounds into the waves / and swims to shore holding in his jaws the fuzzy yellow pearl / it is clear he would gladly sell everything he owns / to retrieve."

In such lines we are shown the familiar in a different light that hints of deeper truths: Di Cicco's "windows onto the timeless."

Deep spirituality

But society has lost patience for anything that isn't instant. We don't want to reflect or do any work. This is why both poetry and spirituality—beyond the shallow and fluffy—are often neglected.

Christians shouldn't have this same impatience. We should always be conditioning ourselves to pay attention: "*Watch and pray*," we are told. Since poetry is the form God has chosen for much of Scripture, there must be something in its reflective nature that enhances our ability to listen to him. Much of what we read in the Bible is in the form of metaphors, since kingdom truths often refuse to be limited to arithmetic-like thinking.

"God draws us closer to him by poetry," says Di Cicco. "He makes a poem of life. . . . Poetry is not a genre, it is a way of seeing, living. . . . God shows himself."

I wrote in a recent review of Anna Kamienska's book, *Astonishments*, "Perhaps poets are the most susceptible to the wooing of the Holy Spirit, because they have trained themselves in attentiveness."

Through the pleasures of reading poetry I believe we can all become more attentive—more susceptible. ❧



D.S. Martin is a poet, and has written music reviews for Canadian Mennonite. His new collection, Poema, is published by Wipf & Stock. This article was originally published in Christian Week. Reprinted by permission.

'Many readers don't understand that it's okay simply to savour the poem, taste its words on the tongue . . .'
(Poet Sarah Klassen)

readers don't understand that it's okay simply to savour the poem, taste its words on the tongue, hear its music with the ear, feel the rhythm in the body, even if they don't comprehend everything the poem has to say.

"If readers are uncomfortable with ambiguity, that would be another deterrent," Klassen says, "since poems are often open-ended and do not offer clear answers or conclusions."

But we shouldn't be afraid of such ambiguity.

"For at least the last 300 years, western Christianity has been influenced by linear, logical thought," says Hannah Main-Van der kamp, an Anglican poet from Vancouver Island. Such thinking has its place, but we need to also be comfortable

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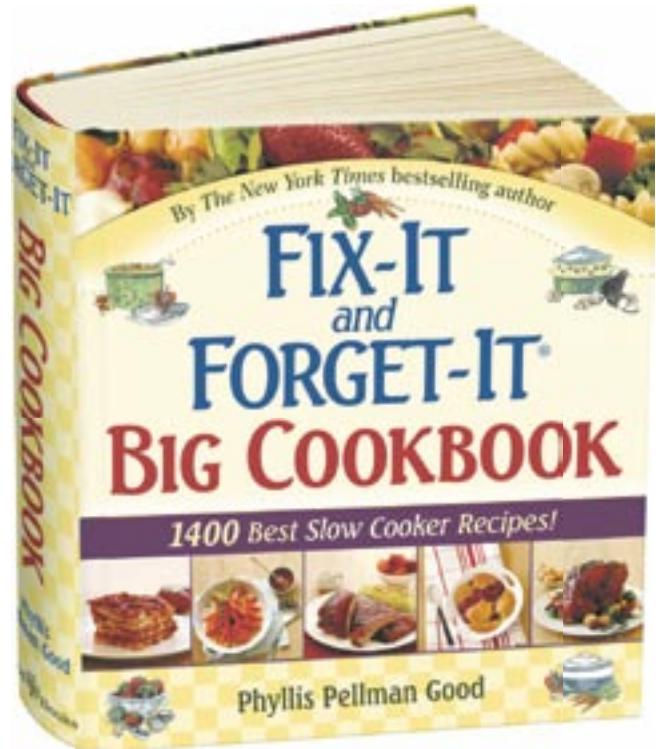
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Fall 2008 Listing of Books & Resources



Theology, Spirituality

All Right Now: Finding Consensus on Ethical Questions. Timothy J. Geddert. Herald Press, 2008, 230 pages.



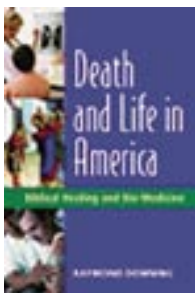
Geddert, a professor at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, reflects on how we should approach the Bible to find guidance for such ethical issues as money, sexuality and divorce.

Cast of Characters: Common People in the Hands of an Uncommon God. Max Lucado. Thomas Nelson, 2008, 226 pages.

Using characters from the Bible, Lucado whimsically imagines the scene surrounding the biblical story. Each of the 23 chapters comes with questions for reflection and discussion.

Death and Life in America: Biblical Healing and Biomedicine.

Raymond Downing. Herald Press, 2008, 150 pages.



Downing, a physician who works in Kenya, explores suffering and healing, life and death, from a spiritual perspective because he believes western biomedical healthcare ignores spiritual reality.

The Evolution of Terrestrial and Extraterrestrial Life: Where in the World is God? Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Goshen Conference on Religion and Science. Ted Peters, Carl S. Helrich, eds. Pandora Press, 2008, 221 pages.

At the 2007 Religion and Science Conference at Goshen College, Peters explored ideas such as whether atheists can disprove God's existence, whether there is

such a thing as moral evolution, and the theological implications of extraterrestrial life.

I Am Not a Social Activist: Making Jesus the Agenda. Ronald J. Sider. Herald Press, 2008, 213 pages.

In this collection of essays, Sider gives personal reflections on a wide variety of subjects about the Christian life and faith, including family, social action, evangelicalism, wealth, peace and politics.

A New Climate for Theology: God, the World and Global Warming. Sallie McFague. Fortress Press: Minneapolis, 2008, 198 pages.

McFague, a theologian at the Vancouver School of Theology, explores the human view of God and nature, and concludes that our basic attitude to nature needs to change so that there can be hope for the future of creation.

On the Way With Jesus: A Passion for Mission. Richard Showalter. Herald Press, 2008, 150 pages.

Using easy-to-read short chapters and personal anecdotes, Showalter reflects on various aspects of Christian mission, including the importance and purpose of mission, how mission happens and what the future may hold.

Religion-and-Science as Spiritual Quest for Meaning: Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Goshen Conference on Religion and Science. Philip Hefner. Pandora Press, 2008, 127 pages.

Hefner suggests that there is a complex relationship between the natural world and the spiritual world, and as humans strive to find meaning in life they need to recognize the extent of that complexity.

States of Exile: Visions of Diaspora, Witness and Return. Alain Epp Weaver. Herald Press, 2008, 216 pages.

Weaver uses examples from the experience of Palestinians in this exploration of the theology of exile. The writer worked with Mennonite Central Committee in the Middle East for 10 years.

The Work of Jesus Christ in Anabaptist Perspective: Essays in Honor of J. Denny Weaver. Alain Epp Weaver and Gerald J. Mast, eds. Cascadia Publishing and Herald Press, 2008, 430 pages.

J. Denny Weaver, a well-known Mennonite theologian, taught at Bluffton University for many years, advocating a consistent peace theology. Many of the essays in this collection respond to his book, *The Nonviolent Atonement*.

History

The Steppes are the Colour of Sepia: A Mennonite Memoir. Connie Braun. Ronsdale Press, 2008, 214 pages.

Using old photographs, Braun recounts the tragic story of her father's life, from his birth in Ukraine under Stalin's regime, through the difficult war and refugee years, to his arrival in Canada.

The Fugitive: Menno Simons. Myron S. Augsberger. Herald Press, 2008, 398 pages.

This is an historical novel about the life of Menno Simons, the 16th century Anabaptist leader. Although it is fiction, the book provides an accurate portrayal of Menno's life and work in a narrative format.



Like a Mustard Seed: Mennonites in Paraguay. Edgar Stoesz. Herald Press, 2008, 250 pages.

This book outlines the various Mennonite

migrations to Paraguay from Canada and Mexico in the 1920s and from post-World War II Europe in the 1940s. In 2009, these now-prosperous communities will host Mennonite World Conference.

Mennonite Women in Canada: A History. Marlene Epp. University of Manitoba Press, 2008, 408 pages.

Epp explores the role of women across the broad spectrum of Mennonite groups in Canada, examining how women's roles have changed in the family and in the church.

One Body, Many Parts: The Mennonite Churches in Paraguay. Gerhard Ratzlaff (trans. Jake K. Balzer). Privately published, 2008. 307 pages.

First published in German in 2001, this book describes the diversity of Mennonite communities and how they came to Paraguay. It is available from the MC Canada Resource Centre.

A Usable Past: A Story of Living and Thinking Vocationally at the Margins. Paul Peachey. Dreamseeker Books, Cascadia Publishing, 2008.

Peachey reflects on his life and career, weaving together insights on his personal experience, the Mennonite Church and theological issues of the 20th century.



Other books

118 Days: Christian Peacemaker Teams Held Hostage in Iraq. Tricia Gates Brown, ed. Christian Peacemaker Teams, 2008.

Twenty-three writers have contributed to this collection of stories about the kidnapping of four CPTers in 2005.

The Carol of Christmas: The Life Story of Christmas Carol Kauffman. Marcia Kauffman Clark. Digital Legend Press,

Honeoye Falls, NY, 2008, 300 pages.

Christmas Carol Kauffman's daughter has written this story of her life. Kauffman, a Mennonite, wrote *Lucy Winchester* in 1945 and wrote many other books and short stories.

The Emerald Angel. Wilma L. Derksen. Herald Press, 2007, 200 pages.

Set in southern British Columbia, this book is told from the perspective of a child. The story explores Mennonite family dynamics in a previous generation.

Hot Apple Cider. N. J. Lindquist and Wendy Elaine Nelles, eds. That's Life! Communications: Markham, Ont., 2008, 295 pages.

This anthology of primarily non-fiction pieces is written by a wide variety of Canadians who are Christian. The authors are all members of The Word Guild.

Hope Indeed! Remarkable Stories of Peacemakers. N. Gerald Shenk. Good Books, 2008, 120 pages.

Shenk has put together a collection of stories about ordinary people from around the world who bring hope because they have worked for peace.

Lost Sons. Judy Clemens. Herald Press, 2008.

Clemens has written a compelling story that explores the life of Clayton Kratz, a Mennonite who disappeared in Ukraine 85 years ago, and the relationship of pacifists and today's military families.

Northern Lights: An Anthology of Contemporary Christian Writing in Canada. Byron Rempel-Burkholder and Dora Dueck, eds. John Wiley and Sons: Mississauga, Ont., 2008, 256 pages.

This collection of writing by a wide variety of Canadian Christians includes poetry, fiction, memoirs and meditation. Rempel-Burkholder is a publisher for Mennonite Publishing Network and Dueck is a former

/// Briefly noted

“Understanding Iran” study series available

LOUISVILLE, KY.—“Understanding Iran,” a three-part study series that introduces the people, culture, history, politics and religion of the Islamic Republic of Iran, is now available from The Thoughtful Christian, an ecumenical, online resource centre of studies for adults and youths maintained by Westminster John Knox Press, the publishing house of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The series raises timely and urgent questions about the relationship between the United States and Iran, the purported development of nuclear weapons by Iran, the distinctives of Shia Islam that dominates Iran, and the need for better understanding and respect between Christians and Muslims. The series was written by Richard A. Kauffman, who travelled to Iran with a Mennonite Central Committee-sponsored learning tour. Kauffman is senior editor of *Leader* magazine, a Mennonite Church Canada/MC USA publication for lay and ordained leaders, and senior editor and book review editor for *Christian Century* magazine. The study series, which is geared for adult Christian education classes, small groups and other study settings, is accompanied by a leader's guide. “Understanding Iran” can be purchased online from thethoughtfulchristian.com.

—By Canadian Mennonite Staff

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

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

associate editor of the *Mennonite Brethren Herald*.

Rider of the Clouds: Faith, Survival and Just Plain Hanging On. Diane Sims. General Store Publishing, Renfrew, Ont., 2008, 123 pages.

Diagnosed with MS at age 17 and a survivor of ovarian cancer, Sims has courageously faced her share of pain and fear. She reflects on how faith has sustained her over the years. Sims attends Avon Mennonite Church in Stratford, Ont.

Rosanna of the Amish: The Restored Text. Joseph W. Yoder. Herald Press, 2008, 358 pages.

This reprint of the classic story of an Irish girl raised in an Amish home was first published in 1940. This edition comes with an introduction by Julia Spicher Kasdorf, which sets it in its historical and cultural context.

Resources

Beyond Me: Grounding Youth Ministry in God's Story. Wendell J. Loewen. Faith & Life Resources, 2008, 167 pages.

Youth ministry can be challenging in this postmodern culture. Loewen describes some of the struggles faced by modern youths and provides suggestions of how to do youth ministry effectively.

Bouquets: Intentional Relationships in Making Disciples. Bruce Hamsher. Herald Press, 2008, 88 pages.

Hamsher, pastor at Berlin (Ohio) Mennonite Church, uses biblical references to reflect on relationships in 11 short chapters. The book includes a study guide with questions for six sessions.

From Grateful to Generous: Stewardship Sermons by John H. Neufeld. Mennonite Foundation of Canada/Mennonite Church Canada, 2007, 54 pages.

These six sermons come with questions for discussion or reflection.

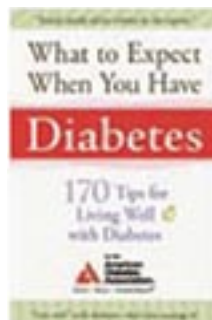
Living Together: Myths, Risks and Answers.

Mike and Harriet McManus. Simon and Schuster (Howard Books), 2008, 234 pages.

Written by the founders of the Marriage Savers organization, this book explores why those who live together before marriage have such a high divorce rate. It contains suggestions for pre-marital counselling so that churches can foster strong marriages.

What to Expect When You Have Diabetes: 170 Tips for Living Well with Diabetes. American Diabetes Association. Good Books, 2008, 220 pages.

The question-and-answer format of this book provides a lot of information about managing this chronic disease.



DVDs

Bending Spears: Stories of Hope and Forgiveness. Rick Gamble and Dave Klassen. Across Boundaries Multi-Faith Institute, 2008.

In spite of a brutal, two-decade civil war in Northern Uganda, there are amazing stories of hope and forgiveness. Klassen, the producer, served in Uganda with MCC for many years. Contact bendingspears.com.

A Season of Hope. MCC. 2008, 22 minutes.

MCC has been working in Southern Chad to provide hope in spite of stresses on land, water and food supplies, and conflict between farmers and herders.

In the Name of Christ. MCC. 2008, 10 minutes.

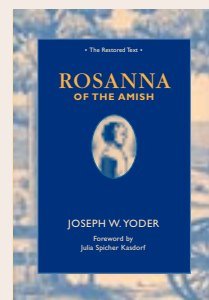
Available in English, Spanish, German and French, this DVD documents some of the work of MCC in Canada, Chad, Colombia, Kenya, Nepal, Sudan and the United States.

/// Briefly noted

Rosanna of the Amish now classed as early Mennonite fiction

WATERLOO, ONT.—For half a century it was assumed that Joseph W. Yoder's book, *Rosanna of the Amish*, was based on true facts, but today scholars would call it fiction. According to Yoder's biographer, Julia Spicher Kasdorf, Yoder wrote the book because he had grown "disgusted with the unflattering and inaccurate representations of the Amish people" as they appeared in popular literature of the 1930s and '40s. By the turn of the 21st century, more than 400,000 copies had been sold. Herald Press, the publisher, had no reason to believe it was anything other than factual. For years there had been rumblings about the accuracy of certain points in the story, such as the names of her brothers and whether or not her parents were born in Ireland. Kasdorf, a professor at Penn State University, wrote a new introduction to the most recent edition of *Rosanna*, saying that Yoder's book about his mother's life was "based on fact" only "in a figurative sense." Herald Press has released a new "restored text" edition of this 1940s classic, but it is now presented as an example of American Mennonite literature.

—BY BARB DRAPER



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INTERVIEW

Redeeming our superheroes

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent
CALGARY, ALTA.

This summer, Canadian Mennonite ran the three-part “Tales From Avalon City” graphic novel serial by Steven “Reece” Friesen. To gain an insight into the novelist/artist and his creative process, Alberta correspondent Donita Wiebe-Neufeld interviewed Friesen about his first full-length graphic novel, Pax Avalon: ConflictResolution, for our Focus on Books&Resources special section.

CM *What is a graphic novel?*

Friesen: A graphic novel is a collection of two or more comic books and usually contains a complete storyline. Comics like to end an issue with a cliff-hanger, while a graphic novel includes everything from the beginning to the conclusion.



CM: *What audience are you aiming for?*

Friesen: A wide one! No seriously, *Pax Avalon: ConflictResolution* is intended to entertain and challenge, and in that I think it has something to offer a wide range of people, from the secular reader to the Christian,

from the theologian to the comic geek—and the few of us who are both.

CM: *How did you become interested in this genre?*

Friesen: I grew up with it. My cousins were into comics and I loved reading them when I went over to their house. Eventually I started collecting my own and began experimenting with drawing them.

CM: *Aren't graphic novels associated with rather dark/violent sorts of superhero stories? How did you come up with the idea of using this genre for telling stories of faith?*

Friesen: Guilt! You see, I loved superheroes, but I knew that the life they lived would really, really displease God in the real world. As I grew older, I began praying to God that he would either take away these desires or somehow make them into something good.

It turns out he's a lot more creative than I originally gave him credit for. He gave me the concept for *Pax Avalon* and the ability to offer it to people who love comic books.

CM: *What is the storyline behind your book?*

Friesen: *Pax Avalon* follows the adventures of Juliana “Pax” Embry as she tries to bring peace to Avalon City. For this monumental task she is equipped with a special gift—or superpower, if you will. She can take the injuries and afflictions of others on herself. She's also a former Olympic gymnast, so there's plenty of acrobatics going on as well.

Anyway, she joins up with four specialists—a police officer, firefighter, doctor and city engineer—to deal with various crises within the city. In short, it's a visual exploration of the ways we choose to deal with problems, particularly violence and injustice.

CM: *Describe your creative process of creating a graphic novel?*

Friesen: Well, the story has been bouncing inside my head for years. Every once in a while a new idea would come up and I'd add it to the mental notepad. Eventually

I put it down on paper in a panel-script format and then it was simply a matter of pencilling, inking, lettering, colouring and editing it. But I cannot begin to describe to you how much I am understating the latter part of the process. Each page takes about 10 hours from start to finish!

CM: *Tell us about your hopes and dreams for this novel.*

Friesen: That it would challenge people to think things through. Most of the problem behaviours in our lives go unaddressed because we mentally shield them from scrutiny.

Let me give you an example from the book. There are a group of terrorists who kidnap some people and bomb a building. They're the bad guys. You know they are. I mean, hey, they're terrorists! You hate them. You don't mind if they get shot. It would serve them right, you say to yourself. Then two of them start talking about their home-schooling. They're sitting there with their guns, watching the hostages, and they start talking about their families. Suddenly, you're not so sure you want them to get shot.

What happened? Well, they became real people. We don't want people with faces and names and families to get hurt. That's a fate reserved for the faceless. Only now, you're starting to wonder just who is faceless.

When we connect with people, they cease to simply be our enemies. So who's left to hate? Now that's the kind of reaction I'm looking for with *Pax Avalon*.

CM: *Is there anything else you'd like to say about your work, faith, the church?*

Friesen: The church is God's chosen instrument on earth. We've been given freedom and creativity. Whatever each of us has to share, we need to bring it to the church and lay it down as an offering.

Hey, I'm a comic book artist. What could be weirder in the church than that? But this comic book is a tool of the church, under it and subject to it.

What creative and wonderful thing do you have to bring? ☘

Pax Avalon: ConflictResolution can be ordered online at heraldpress.com.

'Listen for the loons'

Mennonite writers inspired by wilderness retreat

BY KATHY LANDIS

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
ELY, MINNESOTA

“We all seemed to arrive with generosity and openness,” said Julia Spicher Kasdorf when reflecting on the writer’s retreat held at Wilderness Wind.

Kasdorf, a teacher and director of the graduate program in creative writing at Pennsylvania State University, and Ann Hostetler, professor of literature and creative writing at Goshen (Ind.) College, provided input as the resource people for the “Listen for the loons” retreat.

Twelve participants from diverse communities across Canada and the United States gathered in refurbished log cabins along a quiet lakeshore in northern Minnesota this summer.

“The mix [of writers] and the talent of the two presenters promised to be perfect,” said Connie Braun from Abbotsford, B.C. “For those few days, it was exactly what I needed. I was challenged by Ann’s concept of spiritual memoir. The retreat followed an intense deadline for my upcoming book, and the concluding paragraph was inspired and created at the retreat.”

Retreat sessions included: sustaining a writing practice, writing spiritual memoirs, individual conferences with Kasdorf and Hochstetler, group discussions to share and reflect on each writer’s work,

meditation and celebration, and free time to write and reflect.

In addition, the group journeyed back in time and place to visit Sigurd Olson’s Listening Point. The writers were welcomed to Olson’s place of retreat as they stepped into his Finnish-scribed, dovetail cabin whose ambience and belongings exude much of the spirit in which he left it more than two decades ago.

Olson, a Minnesota wilderness writer, who died in 1982 while snowshoeing near his home, wrote of his Listening Point abode: “There, I have sensed the span of uncounted centuries and looked down the path all life has come. I have explored on this rocky bit of shore the great concept that nothing stands alone and that everything, no matter how small, is part of a greater whole.”

“As I sit on these rocks and note the antics of the loons, one is quieted enough to see the direct correlation between wilderness and the spiritual health of humanity,” commented Joetta Schlabach of Minneapolis, Minn.

The four mid-July days proved the perfect time to gather for reflection and inspiration, allowing for lingering conversations as the lake changed colours from

sunrise to sunset. Meals were touched by the succulent harvests from local gardeners, and the waters warmed for afternoon refreshment.

Paul Krahn of Altona, Man., a *Canadian Mennonite* board member and co-editor of the literary journal, *Rhubarb*, said of his time at the retreat, “The . . . setting offered a welcome removal from the haze of one life into the clean air of another. In addition, [the presenters] gave me a gift that has carried on into a more confident and steady writing habit”

“I returned home full and ready to write,” exclaimed Dagmar Wirch from Brandon, Man. “The good conversations offered many ideas from which to write the poem and story that I have submitted to the Poetry Institute of Canada.”

“We listened to one another’s poems and stories, and marvelled at the tiny, turquoise-bodied dragon flies . . . such gifts! How did this group come together so quickly and write such good and interesting work?” pondered Kasdorf. Perhaps, as we listen in the quiet, the loons will offer an answer. ♪

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PHOTO COURTESY OF KATHY LANDIS



Paul Krahn of Altona, Man., left, and Erwin Braun of Abbotsford, B.C., soak up the ambience of the late wilderness writer, Sigurd Olson, during a writers retreat in rural Minnesota this summer that included spending time at Olson’s rustic writing cabin.

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A rare piece of Anabaptist history

BY TYLER FALK
Goshen College Release
GOSHEN, IND.

To add to its already extensive list of original Anabaptist writings, the Mennonite Historical Library and Goshen College have recently purchased a rare book of Anabaptist martyr accounts and hymns that pre-dates *Martyrs Mirror* (first edition, 1660)—the famous 1,290-page book that documents Anabaptist martyrs.

The 1567 fourth edition copy of *Het Offer des Heeren* (*A Sacrifice Unto the Lord*) is only the second known copy in the world; the other can be found in the Amsterdam Mennonite Library. Its anonymous editor gathered together descriptions of the suffering of Dutch Anabaptist martyrs, along with letters they wrote to future

generations, eyewitness accounts and hymns written by imprisoned Anabaptists and others describing their deaths.

“Given the central, almost iconic, role that the *Martyrs Mirror* has held in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition, it makes sense that we would go after the books that helped to shape that text,” says history professor John D. Roth, the director of the Mennonite Historical Library. “Unlike *Martyrs Mirror*, the 1567 version of *Het Offer des Heeren* appeared at a time when Anabaptists were still being martyred. So this is a book that was intended to encourage Christians in the midst of suffering; this is a book that literally survived the era



PHOTO BY JODI H. BEYELE

Joe Springer, curator of the Mennonite Historical Library, holds the 1567 fourth edition copy of Het Offer des Heeren, a recently acquired rare book for the library's collection.

of martyrdom.”

The book, which is small enough to fit in a pocket, describes itself and its contents as including “many lovely examples of men and women who sought Christ Jesus and eternal, everlasting life with faithful and pure hearts, and who have feared God with their innermost souls.”

Along with the 1570, 1578, 1580 and 1595 editions of *Het Offer des Heeren*.

“Having multiple editions of the same title makes it possible for researchers to trace the evolution of a book, to see what new material or new martyr names have been added or to track shifts in emphasis,” Roth explains.

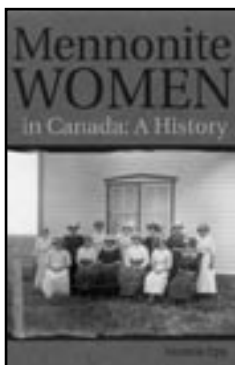
It is especially helpful to scholars because it includes a martyrology—a catalogue of martyrs—in the same book as a collection of about 25 hymns.

Outside the Netherlands, the Mennonite Historical Library on the Goshen College campus is a primary collection where scholars come to do in-depth research on topics relating to Dutch Anabaptists, says Joe Springer, the library's curator. “The [library] . . . has the largest collection of writings about Mennonites in the world,” says Springer. “[This book] is one more piece researchers can use here.”

The purchase was made possible through special funding from Goshen College and individual donors. ❧

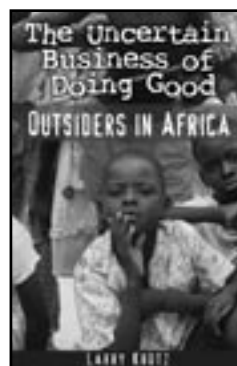
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BOOK REVIEW

'Let every heart prepare him room'

God With Us.

Edited by Greg Pennoyer and Gregory Wolfe. Paraclete Press, 2007.

REVIEWED BY D.S. MARTIN

Last November I was fortunate enough to attend a launch event for the book *God With Us*, at the Berkeley Church in Toronto. This event was presented by the Canadian arts group Imago, Regent College, and the American journal, *Image*. That night Kathleen Norris, one of the major contributors to the book, gave a talk, "Remembering, waiting and hoping: The counter-cultural pursuits of Christmas," which was a topic well-suited to the evening.

God With Us is a book designed to help us focus on the significance of the incarnation.

The book has a clear Canadian connection, as it was first envisioned by Greg Pennoyer in a small church in Ottawa, and includes contributions by two who are on staff at Regent College in Vancouver, B.C.

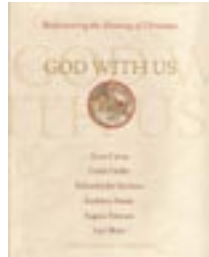
The book is dominated by four sections, written by four prominent Christian writers, one for each of the four weeks of Advent. Within these sections readers will find scriptures to read for each particular day plus a meditation which emerges from the passage.

Week one is written by Richard John Neuhaus, a Catholic priest and founding editor of *First Things*. He begins the reading for the first Tuesday of Advent: "Will it really happen that one day the wolf will lie down with the lamb, and the leopard with the baby goat, and the lion with the calf, and 'a little child shall lead them'? Such says the prophet Isaiah, is the promise of the Peaceable Kingdom."

The second week's reflections are written by poet Scott Cairns; week three is by Regent's writer-in-residence, Luci Shaw; while Norris, the author of *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography*, wrote week four.

God With Us is a gorgeous book, generously filled with prints from famous artists to further reflect upon. These full-colour reproductions are classical painters, including Bosch, Giotto, da Vinci and Giovane, and more recent artists such as Chagall and Gauguin.

After musing on the miracle of birth in general, Eugene Peterson, in the introduction, expresses why so much attention is given to this particular birth: "The brief answer is that this wasn't just any birth. The baby's parents and first witnesses were

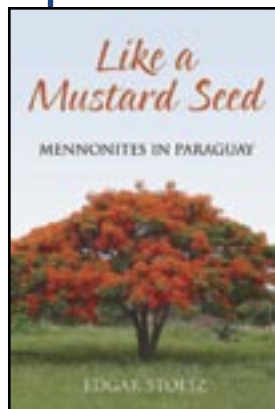


convinced that God was entering human history in human form. Their conviction was confirmed in angel and Magi and shepherd visitations. . . ." This is why the incarnation is so worth reflecting upon, and this is why these pictures were painted, and these writers contributed their reflections.

The book is a good resource in another sense, too; it also includes histories of each of the feast days from Dec. 6—the Feast of Saint Nicholas, through to Jan. 6—the Feast of the Epiphany.

Paraclete Press has made this book to be something that will be pulled out every Christmas, along with all the decorations, to be used year after year. *God With Us* is ideal for those who want to think deeply about the significance of Christ's birth, so despite our hectic lives we'll be encouraged to, as the carol says, "Let every heart prepare him room."

The reflections are deep, and are quite suited to an individual's personal quiet time, but are not quite right for a family, since the readings are a couple pages long and often expect rather lengthy readings of the Bible as well. ☸



Like a Mustard Seed Mennonites in Paraguay

Edgar Stoesz tells the inspiring story of the Russian, Canadian, and Mexican Mennonites who, beginning in 1927, emigrated to Paraguay and made a new homeland out of the jungle wilderness. This is a fascinating story that deserves a prominent place in the annals of Mennonite history. Coming in November.

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—Donald B. Kraybill, author, *The Amish: Why*

They Enchant Us

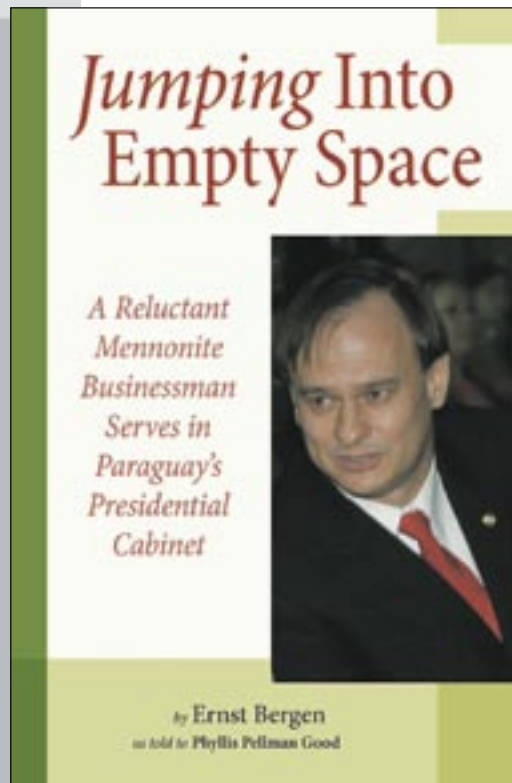
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**Mennonite
Central
Committee**
British Columbia

**Mennonite Central
Committee BC invites
applicants for the following
positions:**

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is a church based international relief, development and peace agency that seeks to demonstrate God's love by serving among people suffering from poverty, conflict and natural disasters. In British Columbia we support international relief and development efforts by sending funds, personnel and material aid, and we also have local programs that assist people in need here in BC. Qualified candidates for the following positions need to share the mission and beliefs of MCC as well as the specific qualifications for the position.

Please check the website www.mcc.org/bc or call for a detailed job posting on these and other positions. MCC values diversity and invites all qualified candidates to apply.

Executive Assistant

The Executive Assistant provides support to the Executive Director in day to day activities by assisting with special events, board meetings, annual general meetings, taking minutes at board and management meetings, keeping official records, general filing, correspondence, church relations, alumni activities and a variety of other duties. Specific qualifications include several years of experience in a similar role and excellent skills related to written and verbal communications, inter-personal relations, computer literacy and being well organized. This is a full-time salaried position based in Abbotsford.

Thrift Shop Positions: Driver/Shipper/Receiver at Abby East Thrift Shop located in Abbotsford, BC.

This is a full-time salaried position. Required to drive the thrift shop's one ton vehicle for pick ups and deliveries, must be able to lift and move heavy objects safely, possess good customer service skills, and ability to multi-task are required. Satisfactory driver's abstract and criminal record check required. Assistant Manager, Vancouver Thrift Shop. This is a part-time (.6 FTE) position located in East Vancouver. This position includes assisting customers, organizing displays including furniture, strong interpersonal, communication and computer skills. Swamper, Vancouver Thrift Shop. This is a part-time (.4 FTE) position located in East Vancouver. Responsible for assisting truck driver in all aspects of loading and unloading furniture, appliances and other items. Must be able to lift and move heavy objects safely. Must be proficient in English. Interim Assistant Manager, Clothing Etc. Thrift Shop This is a full-time interim position working in the receiving and sorting area. Ability to lift and move heavy objects is required. Strong organizational skills and ability to relate well to volunteers and customers. Responsible for the flow of donated items through the sorting and pricing process and onto the sales floor.

To apply please send a cover letter and resume to:

Attention: Marie Reimer, Human Resources Director (confidential)
MCC BC Box 2038, 31414 Marshall Rd., Abbotsford, B.C. V2T 3T8
By fax: 604-850-8734 or by email to hrdirector@mccbc.com
For more information call 604-850-6639 or check www.mcc.org/bc

Interviews will continue until qualified candidates are selected. All applicants are appreciated, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Yellow Page Business Directory

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Calendar

British Columbia

Nov. 13-16: Fraser Valley Arts and Peace Festival, at CBC.

Nov. 14-16: MC B.C. senior youth IMPACT retreat at Camp Squeah.

Nov. 15: MCC B.C. annual general meeting, at CBC.

Dec. 6-7: Advent Vespers with Abendmusik Choir at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford 8 p.m. (6) and Knox United Church, Vancouver, 8 p.m. (7). Donations to Menno Simons Centre.

Alberta

March 27-28, 2009: MC Alberta annual delegate sessions at Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite Church.

April 18-19, 2009: First Mennonite, Edmonton, will celebrate its 50th anniversary with worship, a program, social gathering and barbecue supper. Direct inquiries to Anne Harder at 780-470-0868 or aeharder@telusplanet.net.

Saskatchewan

Nov. 14, 15: Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan re-presents the "Mennonite Great Trek to Turkistan" conference, at Bethany Manor.

Nov. 14-16: "Enlarging Our Practice of Prayer" event with CMU prof Gerry Ediger, at Zoar Mennonite Church, Waldheim.

Nov. 15: Eigenheim Mennonite Church fundraising arts, crafts and bake sale, at Rosthern Elementary School, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Nov. 15, 16: Evangelical Anabaptist Fellowship presents "Christian Discipleship and Peacemakers" events featuring Hutterite choirs and storytelling, in Saskatoon (locations TBA).

Nov. 22: MC Saskatchewan leadership assembly.

Nov. 26: MEDAffinity breakfast, at the Saskatoon Club, at 7:30 a.m.

Dec. 6, 13: Buncha Guys concerts, at Knox United Church, Saskatoon (6), and at Shekinah Retreat Centre, at 7:30 p.m. (13).

Dec. 14: RJC chorale performance at Knox United Church, Saskatoon.

Dec. 19: RJC Christmas concert, at RJC.

Jan. 30-Feb. 1, 2009: Senior high youth retreat.

Feb. 27-28, 2009: MC Saskatchewan annual delegate sessions, at North Star Mennonite Church, Drake.

June 5-7, 2009: MC Canada annual delegate assembly, Saskatoon.

July 6-10, 2009: MC Canada youth assembly, Caronport.

Manitoba

Nov. 7-9: Quilting Retreat II at Camp Moose Lake.

Nov. 8: Westgate 50th anniversary mass choir concert at Jubilee Place, Winnipeg. Rehearsals on Oct. 25 and Nov. 1 at First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg. Interested singers can register online at westgate50th.com.

Nov. 8-9: Crystal City Mennonite Church 60th anniversary. Coffee house at Crystal City Community Hall (8); worship service at 10:30 a.m. (9).

Nov. 9: Evangelical Anabaptist Fellowship presents "Christian Discipleship and Peacemakers" event featuring Hutterite choirs and storytelling, at Grace Mennonite Church, Steinbach, at 10 a.m.

Nov. 13: Evening with the Arts at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, at 7:30 p.m. Bring submissions to the school by Oct. 30.

Nov. 14-15: MCC Manitoba annual meeting.

Nov. 14, 15: MCI alumni and community drama presentation, Gretna.

Nov. 29: North Kildonan Mennonite Church Quartet's annual Advent concert and introduction of its new CD, *Near to the Heart of God*, at North Kildonan Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

Nov. 29, 30: Faith and Life choirs Advent concerts; at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg at 7 p.m. (29), and at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church at 3 p.m. (30).

Dec. 18, 19: MCI Christmas concerts, Gretna; 7:30 p.m. (18), 1:30 p.m. (19).

Jan. 3, 2009: Westgate 50th anniversary basketball tournament, at Westgate.

Jan. 16-18, 2009: MMYO Junior High Retreat at Camp Koinonia.

Jan. 22-24, 2009: CMU Refreshing Winds conference. Theme: "Worship: Come to its senses." Keynote speakers:

Don Saliers, retired theology and worship professor at Emory University; and Doug Gay, lecturer in practical theology at the University of Glasgow.

Jan. 23-24, 2009: MMYO Senior High Retreat at Camp Koinonia.

Feb. 6-8, 2009: Manitoba Mennonite Young Adult retreat at Camp Koinonia.

Feb. 6-March 29, 2009: Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery exhibit of curated works from the Westgate 50th anniversary art show.

Feb. 13-15, 2009: MMYO Junior High Retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

Feb. 14, 2009: Westgate 50th anniversary celebration dance on Valentine's Day, at the Gateway Community Club, at 8 p.m.

April 23-29, 2009: Westgate senior high musical.

May 13, 2009: Westgate work day.

May 27, 2009: Westgate Grades 7-9 spring concert, at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.

May 28, 2009: Westgate Grades 10-12 spring concert, at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.

July 6-12, 2009: Westgate 50th anniversary camping trip along the Bow River, Kananaskis Country, Alta.

Ontario

Nov. 5-8: Annual Ten Thousand

Villages Festival Sale at Vineland United Mennonite Church; 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. (5-7), 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (8). Tea room open each day.

Nov. 9: MC Eastern Canada "Junior Youth Breakaway" for students in Grades 6 to 8 and their Sunday school teachers, at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener. For more information, or to register, visit mcecc.ca. Registration deadline: Oct. 27.

Nov. 11-15: Ten Thousand Villages Handicrafts and Arts Sale, at the Old Town Hall, Aylmer; 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. (11,12), 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. (13,14), 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (15). For more information, call 519-765-3020.

Nov. 14: Spirituality and aging lectures at Conrad Grebel University College with Rev. James Ellor: "Caring for the Spiritual Lives of Seniors," from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; "Using Spiritual Assessment to Facilitate Spiritual Care," from 1:45 to 5:15 p.m. Pre-register at infocguc@uwaterloo.ca.

Nov. 21: Eby Lecture at Conrad Grebel University College, at 7 p.m. Speaker: Marlene Epp.

Nov. 22: Nithview Auxiliary Christmas Tea and Bake Sale, from 2-4 p.m., at Nithview, New Hamburg.

Nov. 22, 23: Mennonite and Brethren Marriage Encounter annual general

UpComing

Nidus Festival re-launching in new location

TORONTO—Nidus 2006, which debuted in Kitchener, Ont., with more than 1,100 participants from over 30 denominations, is moving east. Hopes for a yearly festival in Kitchener were stymied by insufficient money and energy, says Bruce Voogd, the new board chair. The plan is to re-launch in the Greater Toronto Area from Aug. 14-16, 2009, with, he says, a focus on the "environment—an issue of immediate and deep concern to Christians." Artistic director Douglas Romanow promises, "Under starry skies, we will mix hip hop, folk, gospel, rock and bluegrass and more. We plan to dance, paint, move and shake our way through a weekend of many art forms, towards a better understanding of our place and mission in God's world." The move to Toronto is fuelled by the nearness to major transportation hubs as well as a location where the planners will have more control over food services, including making them more environmentally sound. More than just a theme, care of the environment is something the planners want lived out at the event.

—BY DAVE ROGALSKY

meeting, at Hawkesville Mennonite Church, at 10:30 a.m.

Nov. 22, 23: Soli Deo Gloria Singers present "Praise God's Holiness," a concert that will include Advent and Christmas music; 8 p.m. at Leamington United Church (22) and 3 p.m. at UMEI (23). For tickets, call UMEI at 519-326-7448. Proceeds to UMEI.

Nov. 24-26: Church leadership seminar: "Theological perspectives on conflict resolution," in Waterloo.

Nov. 25: Willowgrove annual general meeting, at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Markham. Reception at 6 p.m., followed by members' dinner at 6:30 p.m. (members please RSVP). Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 905-640-2127.

Nov. 26: Church leadership seminar: "Understanding the congregational life cycle," in Waterloo.

Nov. 28, 29: Nairn Mennonite Church, Ailsa Craig, presents "Spirit of Christmas" craft show with live music; 7 to 9 p.m. (28), 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (29).

Dec. 6, 7: Pax Christi Chorale presents Haydn's *Creation*, at Grace Church-on-the-Hill, Toronto; 7:30 p.m. (6), 3 p.m. (7). With full orchestra and soloists. For tickets, call 416-491-8542.

Dec. 13: Mennonite Mass Choir presents Handel's *Messiah*, featuring the K-W Symphony Orchestra, at the Centre in the Square, Kitchener, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets available at local MSCU branches or online at mennosingers.com.

Jan. 24, 2009: MC Eastern Canada young adult volleyball tournament, in Kitchener.

Jan. 30-Feb. 1, 2009: MC Eastern Canada winter youth retreat, in Cambridge.

Feb. 6-8, 2009: MC Eastern Canada winter youth retreat, in Cambridge.

March 7, 2009: Church leadership seminar: "Hope for the small church," in Waterloo.

March 26, 27, 2009: Bechtel Lectures in Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies at Conrad Grebel University College.

Speakers: Ched Meyers and Elaine Enns. Topic: "Restorative Justice and Theology."

April 18, 2009: MC Eastern Canada youth Bible quizzing competition (first round).

April 24-25, 2009: MC Eastern Canada annual church gathering, in Kitchener.

April 25, 2009: MC Eastern Canada youth Bible quizzing competition (finals).

April 25, 26, 2009: Pax Christi Chorale present Bach's Mass in B minor, at Grace Church-on-the-Hill, Toronto; 7:30 p.m. (25), 3 p.m. (26). With full orchestra and soloists.

May 5, 2009: Church leadership seminar: "Transforming the culture of the congregation," in Waterloo.

May 5-6, 2009: Church leadership seminar: "Leading the church through times of conflict and change," in Waterloo.

May 16, 2009: MC Eastern Canada "Ministering to the chronically mentally ill and their families" event.

June 4-8, 2009: Sound in the Lands II, a festival/conference of Mennonites and music at Conrad Grebel University

College.

Paraguay

July 14-19, 2009: Mennonite World Conference assembly, Asuncion.

Registration materials available at mwc-

cmm.org.

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

Classifieds

Employment Opportunities

THREE-QUARTER-TIME PASTOR

The Nairn Mennonite Church is a small rural congregation, 30 minutes northwest of London, Ont. The community is home to many persons who commute to London. The church has a membership of 62 with a large percentage of seniors in the congregation. We hope that an interested candidate would be interested in living in the community and helping us reach out to an expanding area population. The church can be quite flexible around other employment a candidate might seek in the area. Chaplaincy in a senior's care facility begun by the congregation is one distinct possibility.

Please apply to:

Muriel Bechtel, Conference Minister
Re: Nairn Mennonite Church
4489 King Street East
Kitchener, On. N2P 2G2

Vice President External Relations



Canadian Mennonite University invites applications and nominations for the Position of **Vice President External Relations**. Reporting to the President the VP External Relations is responsible for providing overall leadership of CMU's public relations, including communications, alumni and church relations, and is a key member of the CMU leadership team.

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For further information on CMU and this position check the CMU web page (www.cmu.ca) or contact the President (ggerbrandt@cmu.ca).

Processing of applications and nominations will begin immediately, and continue until the position is filled. Please reply via mail or e-mail to: Canadian Mennonite University; Susan Warkentin, Director of Human Resources; 500 Shaftesbury Blvd.; Winnipeg, MB R3P 2N2, or swarkentin@cmu.ca

UpComing

Saskatchewan historical society happenings

SASKATOON, SASK.—The Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan is sponsoring the "Mennonite Great Trek to Turkistan" conference at Bethany Manor on Nov. 14-15; the historiography sessions will involve speakers such as Walter Klaassen and John Sharp. In other news, the society recently appointed Victoria Neufeldt, a retired lexicographer, as the new editor of *The Historian*. And the society, which presently houses its constantly-growing archives at Bethany Manor, has begun the search for more space. Fundraising for the project is next on the society's agenda.

—BY KARIN FEHDERAU

Project Peacemakers **PROGRAM COORDINATOR**, a full-time MENNONITE VOLUNTARY SERVICE position in Winnipeg. Applicants will have a strong commitment to faith, peace and justice issues, as well as experience in writing, researching, public speaking and volunteer coordination. Contact 204-775-8178 or info@projectpeacemakers.org.



The Gather 'Round curriculum project seeks additional experienced writers. Active membership in a Brethren or Mennonite congregation is preferred, as is teaching experience. Send a letter of inquiry, including information about writing and teaching experience, to Gather 'Round, gatherround@brethren.org or 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120. Gather 'Round Sunday school materials are published for the Church of the Brethren, Mennonite Church Canada, and Mennonite Church USA, and are also used by other denominations.

Hope Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man., a congregation of about 60 people, worshipping in an inner city neighbourhood, is searching for a **HALF-TIME PASTOR**. Hope seeks a pastor with appropriate educational and leadership qualifications, who is enthusiastic about working with the congregation to articulate vision and vocation while encouraging the use of the inherent gifts and talents within the congregation. We are a member of MC Manitoba and MC Canada, and follow MC Canada salary guidelines. For further specifics regarding this opportunity and/or to submit an application, please be in touch with:

Pastoral Search Committee
c/o Bruce Guenther
7-821 St. Paul Ave.
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E-mail: bruceguenther@yahoo.ca

FULL-TIME LEAD PASTOR

Toronto United Mennonite Church



Toronto United Mennonite Church is an Anabaptist-Mennonite community of faith united in a call and desire to follow Jesus in life. We are a vibrant urban congregation of 200 members, located in the Beach neighbourhood of Toronto, North America's most multicultural city.

We seek a lead pastor beginning February 2009, to provide a balanced ministry of worship, preaching and teaching; to provide pastoral care and help the congregation care for each other; and to do required administration. The successful candidate will have minimum M.Div., preferably 10 plus years of pastoral experience, the ability to work with a collegial ministry team and strong lay leadership. S/he will have strong preaching skills, effective communication skills and be comfortable working in a community of considerable diversity while maintaining a strong commitment to the Mennonite Church.

For additional information please visit our website at www.tumc.ca. Please direct applications and inquiries to Muriel Bechtel, MCEC Conference Minister, at muriel@mcec.ca, or 519-650-3806 or 1-800-206-9356.

PART-TIME (0.5 FTE) ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Avon Mennonite Church is located in Stratford, Ont., a picturesque city that features unique shops and the world-famous Stratford Shakespeare Festival. We are a welcoming congregation with an average of 120 attending the Sunday morning worship service. The Associate Pastor will serve, lead and enable the congregation through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, particularly in areas involving children, youths and their families, and will provide significant input into the Youth and Christian Education programs. The successful candidate will be committed to Avon Church's covenant, as well as to Anabaptist theology and will be licensed and ordained, or willing to work toward it. This position will begin on or before January 2009. Applications with references are requested by Nov. 14, 2008, and can be submitted to: Muriel Bechtel, Conference Minister, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, 4489 King Street East, Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2, or muriel@mcec.ca.

CANADIAN MENNONITE

EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Canadian Mennonite is seeking an editor/publisher for the bi-weekly periodical, based in Waterloo, Ontario.

Canadian Mennonite is one of the primary communication vehicles in Mennonite Church Canada and its five area conferences. Owned and operated by Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service, *Canadian Mennonite* works in a relationship of trust with the church, seeking to provide fair and accurate information, faith profiles, inspirational articles, news, and analysis of issues facing the Mennonite church. *Canadian Mennonite* is guided by the church's Confession of Faith and a representative Board.

The editor/publisher is accountable to the board, guides and directs the magazine, provides a vision and strategy for growth, accomplishes goals, and has overall responsibility for the publication.

Applicants should have strong commitment to and knowledge of the Mennonite faith community and for *Canadian Mennonite's* ministry and mission; a commitment to our Confession of Faith; membership in a Mennonite church; communication and listening skills; denominational knowledge; administrative and personnel skills; knowledge of publishing; a journalism degree or related experience; computer competence; and be self-motivated.

Please direct inquiries and resumes by contacting the search committee via:

Henry Neufeld
Tel: (604) 946-3961
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Upcoming Advertising Dates

Issue Date	Ads Due
Nov. 24	Nov. 10
<i>Focus on Mission and Service</i>	
Dec. 15	Nov. 25
Jan. 5, 2009	Dec. 16
<i>Focus on Finances</i>	

away

up and

Up

*Children's book release
celebrated with
hot-air balloon ride*

Good Books Release
INTERCOURSE, PA.

Lively Amish farm boy Reuben is back in the new children's book, *Reuben and the Balloon*, from the bestselling duo of author Merle Good and artist P. Buckley Moss.

Moss and Good appeared at the P. Buckley Moss Gallery in Intercourse on Sept. 19 and 20 to sign copies of their new book and prints of artwork from the book.

Three fans of the series took a hot-air balloon ride at sunrise on Sept. 20 to celebrate the book's release. The three readers, chosen from a drawing at the gallery, enjoyed the ride over the beautiful Lancaster County landscape.

To commemorate the release of *Reuben and the Balloon*, Moss has created two new paintings entitled "Balloons Aloft" and "Balloon in Our Orchard." The paintings have been published as limited-edition prints and were released at the show. Moss met collectors and signed the prints purchased during the show.

In *Reuben and the Balloon*, the fourth in the series, Reuben loves to watch hot-air balloons glide above his Amish farm, but he never imagines that a balloon might actually land in a nearby field.

Will Reuben get a chance to ride in the balloon? What will the farm look like when he's up in the sky? And what will his bossy sister, Annie, say about his latest adventure?

Good's story takes the reader into the wonderful world of Amish children. Warm, rich illustrations from Moss bring to life the joy and activity of this farm and family.

The previous three children's books by the same team have sold more than 135,000 copies.

For more information, or to order the book, e-mail kgood@goodbooks.com.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GOOD BOOKS

Artist P. Buckley Moss, left, and author Merle Good, right celebrate the launch of their new children's book, Reuben and the Balloon, with a hot-air balloon ride. Stan Hess of the United States Hot Air Balloon Team is also pictured.

