



CANADIAN ENNONITE

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EDITORIAL

Practising the gospel

TIM MILLER DYCK
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

A few years ago, I spent many an evening sitting in hospital waiting rooms when my wife was ill. You meet all kinds of people in hospital waiting rooms while leafing through the old magazines.

One evening, a man sat down looking particularly worried and I felt drawn to express sympathy for his anxiety. We got into a conversation about his mother's health and medical care, and why I was there, and then a variety of things. Somewhere in that conversation, he asked me what I did during the day, and I told him that I helped produce a Christian church magazine called *Canadian Mennonite*. He perked up and told me he had heard about Mennonites. He didn't know much about them, but he had met a Mennonite before and remembered the word.

He then told me that not long before, he and his wife and children had moved into Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont. Shortly after moving, one of their children got quite ill and needed extended care at a hospital in Hamilton, Ont. He and his wife wanted to spend all their time there for a few weeks to be with their son, but didn't know how they would still care for their other children.

He was a teacher, and told some colleagues in the school lunchroom one day of their problem. One of his new co-workers spoke up and said that he and his wife would be happy to host the other children in their own home for the next

few weeks.

The man I was speaking with at the hospital was overcome with gratitude at this unasked for and unexpected gift of service from someone who had no reason to help him. He told me that he

learned that the man who helped his family was a Mennonite. Ever since then, all the people he meets who say they are Mennonites are good in his books.

When I tell people I encounter outside of church circles that I am a Mennonite Christian, some don't recognize the word "Mennonite" at all. But if they do, I generally get two reactions. I'm asked why I don't wear traditional black clothing (I explain that not all Mennonites dress that way) and I hear about how Mennonites help people in need. Some people know about the Mennonite Relief Sales held all over Canada. Others have heard of Mennonites doing aid work through Mennonite Central Committee or Mennonites doing disaster relief after hurricanes or tornadoes.

I'm so grateful for the long and strong tradition of service among Mennonites. It is a living-out of the gospel message that shows we really mean it. The people, like the man I met in the hospital, who encounter Christians living out God's love, will remember that witness in a way that's deep and meaningful.

If you are in high school, make plans to spend your first year away from home doing Christian service. It's a great way

to make a difference and it will change you for the better for the rest of your life. I delayed starting university by a year to do Christian voluntary service in Europe, and it was the best thing I could have done. That experience really helped me claim my own faith, made me a more generous person, and gave me a year of values-formation and maturity that I was grateful to have when I came back to Canada. It also led me to volunteer again later.

If you are a parent of a young person, help them find ways to serve, turning away from the career-building, money-making treadmill that society says is what matters. Moving away from home is a vital social development step in all of our lives, and doing so in the Christian companionship of others of like commitment to faith (but that are not one's parents) is a very healthy way to take that step of independence.

If you are retired (or perhaps have had unemployment forced upon you), think about how you can live out Christ's call with all your resources, including the energy and time we are used to giving to our jobs.

I John 3:16-17 is a great complement to John 3:16. The latter talks about what God has done for us. The former talks about how we need to respond: "*We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?*"

Upcoming visits: I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can in upcoming trips to Cedar Valley Mennonite Church in Mission, B.C., on Feb. 20-21; North Star Mennonite Church in Drake, Sask., on Feb. 27-28; and Altona Mennonite Church, Man., on March 7-8.



ABOUT THE COVER:

Westgate Mennonite Collegiate biology students take shelter under an ice fall during their winter field trip along a beaver trapline in Whiteshell Provincial Park, 100 kilometres east of Winnipeg, where they learn how beavers are trapped and harvested. Our annual Focus on Elementary and Secondary Education special section begins on page 24.

PHOTO: OZZIE REMPEL, WESTGATE MENNONITE COLLEGIATE

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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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What a stupid question: **WILL LOEWEN**

God did it: **DAVID DRIEDGER**

Voluntary service for a new

PHOTO BY BYRON THIESSEN



MDS volunteer Mark Heinrichs from Foothills Mennonite Church, Calgary, helps rebuild a home in Cameron, La.

21st century methods are needed to recruit 21st century volunteers, some of whom admit to a fear of commitment

BY AARON EPP

National Correspondent

When Kirsten Freed was looking for a job change, she decided service was the answer. Originally from Valleyview Mennonite Church in London, Ont., the 28-year-old considered serving with a Lutheran organization or the United Church of Christ before choosing Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure.

Freed says that moving to Winnipeg, one of four options available to young people looking to participate in the program in Canada, has been a rewarding experience. Working at Project Peacemakers, a local peace organization, has proven to be a good fit because it involves her interest in peace and social justice issues. And living with five other people, all from Germany—two-thirds of Voluntary Service recruits come from there—has also proven to be an opportunity to learn and grow.

“Everyone comes to this with different expectations and different life experiences, so it’s always challenging to work out how we live together,” Freed says. “But that in itself has been a rewarding experience: to think about [living] in intentional community, and how we build relationships in community.”

Freed isn’t an anomaly, according to Janis Thiessen, who teaches at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate in Winnipeg. Thiessen says that when considering their post-secondary options, the students in her classes aren’t just thinking about upward mobility. “There’s

generation

a lot of interest in choosing something that will have value beyond themselves,” Thiessen says.

But if young people from a Mennonite congregation in Canada want to pursue voluntary service, what are their options? And are the service opportunities that are

but only 245 in 2008—30 below MCC’s target.

“We are cash rich, but people poor,” said Ryan Showalter of Lancaster Mennonite (Pa.) Conference at the meeting.

If young Canadian Mennonites aren’t

in the 1920s as a way of providing food for Mennonites starving in what is now Ukraine, the organization soon realized it could help others as well, says Thiessen, who has a Ph.D in history from the University of New Brunswick.

That shift from an inward to an outward focus eventually spawned organizations like Mennonite Disaster Service, Mennonite Economic Development Associates and involvement with Christian Peacemaker Teams and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. In 2009, most Mennonites would still agree that service is an integral part of how they live out their faith.

“Voluntary service was valued in the community I grew up in,” Freed says. “A lot of people around me who I know, in some point in their life had spent some time doing [Voluntary Service], and most people, even if they hadn’t done an assignment, were active volunteers in the church community.”

DeLayne Toews, a 24-year-old Winnipeg resident, tells a similar story. “Volunteer service, as I saw it in my

‘Now that there are so many options, it almost seems more imperative to be in front of our people saying why we do service, what our biblical understanding of it is, and what the options are.’
(Brad Reimer)

available, many of which were created 20 or 30 years ago, still necessary?

If the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) binational board meeting in Waterloo, Ont., last June, is any indication, the answer could be yes. Ron Flaming, director of international program development, noted that staffing figures are in decline. In 1985, there were 496 MCC personnel serving overseas,

serving with MCC or Voluntary Service, what is the reason? And where are they serving instead?

A changing tradition of service

For many people, the words “Mennonite” and “service” are synonymous, with three-year service terms seen almost as a Mennonite rite of passage for a certain generation. When MCC started

AMBS PHOTO BY MARY E. KLASSEN



SOOP volunteers sing at AMBS.

Volunteer opportunities

Within your church, why not:

- Teach Sunday school
- Lead a youth group or children's club
- Be a mentor
- Help new initiatives and church plants
- Advocate for victims of injustice
- Promote peace
- Work at a summer camp
- Visit partner churches in other parts of the world
- Help out in the office by stuffing envelopes or filing
- Provide transportation to appointments and meetings

Support national and international work through:

- Learning about programs, workers and partners
- Praying
- Giving
- Setting up partnerships

—From MC Canada website

Volunteer websites

Mennonite Central Committee: mcc.org/service
 Mennonite Church Canada: mennonitechurch.ca/getinvolved
 Mennonite Volunteer Service Adventure: mvsa.net
 Mennonite Disaster Service: mds.mennonite.net
 Service Opportunities for Older People: mcc.org/SOOP

church and family [growing up], was held very highly," says Toews. In 2006, he served in Tanzania as part of Serving and Learning Together (SALT), an MCC program aimed at single Christian young adults from 18 to 27. "I wouldn't have gone on SALT if it weren't for a long tradition in my family, church and school that [sees] the work that MCC does as a faithful living out of the gospel," he adds.

A term longer than one year wouldn't have been a good fit, though. "Two or three years was too much to think about, having never been outside of Canada and the United States," he admits, although he would consider a three-year term in the future. "I'd probably want to be very specific about the work I was doing, and

knowing what you can look forward to when you come back."

Koop doesn't want to call it a fear of commitment, but Rachele Friesen, herself a young adult, speculates that's exactly what it could be. The 23-year-old spent a year serving in Bethlehem at the Wi'am Palestinian Conflict Resolution Centre. People her age who grew up in upper-middle-class homes want to keep their options open, Friesen says, because they have been told growing up that they can do whatever they want and that they should try a lot of different things to become well-rounded.

"Young people our age want to experience life," she says. "We realize we have endless opportunities and we want to

'I think the most resounding chorus, especially among more progressive or left-leaning students, was this huge fear of colonialism.'
(Dan Leonard)

finding something that was a very good match for me," he says. "I'd also want to be specific about the community I was going into."

Fear of commitment

Toews isn't alone, says Debby Martin Koop, who has worked with MCC on and off for 30 years and is currently the program director for MCC Manitoba. She believes the decline in people applying for volunteer positions could have something to do with today's job market, compared to the job market 30 years ago.

"There's less job security," Koop says, adding that students often have large debts when they finish school. "Two or three years seems like a long time to commit oneself [to] one thing and not

experience [them], but we have a fear of commitment, so we want to do it in short, fast, three-month [or] six-week [periods]."

Still, while many of her friends aren't serving internationally, they are getting involved in their home communities. And even though working in a soup kitchen or at a thrift store is important, service can mean more than that, Friesen says. "Phoning your MP and demanding justice. That's service," she says. "Or having a political discussion night or a letter-writing campaign. The best form of service is listening to people—listening to people, and standing up for things."

No more 'patronizing development'

Dan Leonard is the program co-ordinator for Seed, a two-year program MCC launched last month, composed of international teams of young adults aged 20 to 30. The group will go to Colombia, focusing on components of service, reflection and advocacy.

Leonard says that MCC consulted students at schools like Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont., and Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, about their feelings toward

service. His sense is that, for the students consulted, a three-year program would have been prohibitive. He echoes Friesen's sentiment that many young people today are involved in peace and social justice issues in their home communities, and perhaps see that as a greater priority than going to a different country—especially with the increased sensitivity in recent years to the negative environmental impact of flying.

A scepticism toward the way North Americans have done development work in the past is also an issue. "I think the most resounding chorus, especially among more progressive or left-leaning students, was this huge fear of colonialism," Leonard says. "There was a fear that going was just perpetuating a very bad model of patronizing development."

That discomfort with serving internationally isn't necessarily a bad thing, Leonard believes. "I think we have some work to do in articulating to young people the value in going: the conversion that happens in ourselves and the communities there, not in an evangelical sense, but in a transformative sense," he says.

Tim Reimer, pastor at Danforth Mennonite Church in Toronto, has experienced the benefits Leonard speaks of. He and his family served with MCC from 1985-93, first in Winnipeg for three years, and then in Germany for five. "When we came back . . . we always knew our children had had an experience they could never have duplicated staying in Canada. . . . We had benefited immensely from living in a different culture. We never doubted that it had been the right thing to do," he says.

'Re-invent the model'

Twenty years ago, MCC and Voluntary Service were just about the only options for people. Today, the options both inside and outside the Mennonite Church are endless.

"Now that there are so many options, it almost seems more imperative to be in front of our people saying why we do service, what our biblical understanding of it is, and what the options are," says Brad Reimer, who was the co-ordinator

of the Voluntary Service program from 1994-2003, when it was a part of the programming coming from Mennonite Church Canada's head office in Winnipeg.

Freed agrees, adding that the church can never provide too much encouragement or support to people interested in doing voluntary service. "I'm not sure how many people told me I should do [Voluntary Service] before I did, but it was probably dozens," she says. "So I think it's really up to all of us in our church communities to be aware of what

opportunities there are out there, and to get to know our youth and young adults, and encourage what we see there."

And getting hung up on old ways of doing things isn't helpful, according to both Koop and Brad Reimer.

"If we are noticing a change in attitudes to voluntary service, our task is not to recruit people into that old model—it's to re-invent the model," Reimer says. "We can't be sentimental about it and say, 'Let's make it like it used to be.' There's no room for that [anymore]." ❧

MC CANADA PHOTO BY KATHARINA NUSS



MC Canada PrayerNet volunteers in Winnipeg help stuff envelopes.

/// For discussion

1. What have been your experiences with voluntary service? How were you (or others you know) changed by the experience? How do voluntary service programs impact the church?
2. Has the popularity of voluntary service changed in your congregation over the past 30 years? Why do you think fewer people are applying? Is fear of commitment a factor? Are there people in your congregation who should be encouraged to enter voluntary service?
3. Dan Leonard says that some young people are concerned that international development work can be patronizing or colonial. Is this a valid concern? How should voluntary service be structured for the 21st century? Can short-term mission trips do service effectively?
4. What opportunities for service are available in your community? What would you add to the list on page 6? If Mennonite Disaster Service called for volunteers because of a natural disaster in your community, what would be the response?

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.

✉ The Bible should make all readers uncomfortable about their sins

I READ WITH great interest the "Readers write" section of Dec. 15, 2008.

Thanks to Walter Bergen for his helpful letter ("Reject Christian Zionism as a theological heresy," page 9). All our positions need to be theologically sound, rather than based on current culturally determined ideas of what is right or wrong.

That brings me to the letter by Noreen Janzen ("Bible must no longer be used to point out people's sins," page 14); she suggests the Bible should not be used to point out people's sins because "the Bible can be used to prove any argument we want it to." This is a popular idea that is used to discount the Bible. In fact, though, the Bible cannot be used to "prove" any argument we want, but it can be misquoted. Even Satan used Scripture to try to tempt Jesus, but since Satan is the "father of lies" we can be sure that his exegesis was not correct.

The Bible is a very powerful book and so can be used for destruction, as can fire and water, but that is no reason to write it off as irrelevant. On the contrary, our response should be to read it with care in an effort to understand the message that is written. When the Bible is misused, we need to be able to provide sound theological counter-arguments, not arguments drawn solely from science or experience.

Janzen points out that the Bible should not be used to condemn other people. On the contrary, the Bible should first of all be used to condemn the one reading it. We should all feel a little uncomfortable when we read the Bible, which, like a mirror that doesn't lie, shows us warts and all! Then and only then can

we understand the gift of mercy (see reader David Shantz's letter, "Mercy is indeed a gift," page 11). The knowledge of our sin should not drive us to despair or fear or even guilt, but rather to rejoicing.

I realize that this sounds all very old-fashioned. Surely we have grown beyond this kind of thinking! However, I wonder how a discussion of sin might even bring together the two sides in the "great debate" that is dividing churches in North America. What would happen if we looked anew at sin and its place in the life of the believer? The lists of sins that are so common in the New Testament epistles are comprehensive, including not only acts but also attitudes (Ephesians 4:29).

What would happen if we began to talk about the sin of gossip. How many lives have been destroyed by the hateful spreading of lies and half-truths? Very little trust remains in a congregation where gossips go unchallenged and so community prayer times are reduced to a sharing of our various medical ailments while more pressing matters that cause just as much suffering and pain must be borne alone.

Another common sin of our era, greed, is compared to idolatry (Ephesians 5:5). What is our consumer-driven lifestyle, if not unbridled (but carefully explained away) greed? Where does our hope for the future lie: in God or in our retirement funds?

Is anyone uncomfortable yet? Maybe we all need to recognize the hold that sin has on our lives and our need for grace on a daily basis. Fortunately, God doesn't wait until we are "good enough" to shower us with love and mercy. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

NANCY FREY, COTONOU, BENIN

✉ We can show love without tolerating homosexual behaviour

REGARDING A TOPIC that has been pursued in our magazine for far too long, how can there be this wide divide between wanting to show love to presumed marginalized individuals or groups and not tolerating their behaviour?

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God," surely means that everyone is loved, regardless of their ability to conform to various standards of acceptable behaviour. Why then this urge to see homosexuality itself as acceptable behaviour? This tendency reminds me of a time when there was a serious attempt to have cigarette smokers accepted. It was recommended that one have an ashtray in one's house, to avoid the risk of having the smoker feel rejected.

Understanding churches as places where people are loved into a transformation into the image of Christ, I

would like to see our love to the homosexual (and anyone who feels rejected in some way) as so genuine and real, that there is no need to feel so urgently compelled to look for extraneous means of recognition other than as a child of God.

The Anabaptists in the 16th century were ready to die for Jesus Christ and for the brother and sister in Christ. It seems that same-sex attraction has a similar passion. While the latter may be radically different, yet is there some way for those to get some encouragement to make the transition from human love to divine love?

Regarding the comments on sodomy by Jacob Quiring in the Oct. 13, 2008, issue ("Mennonite

Church needs consistent sexual ethic," page 13), I sensed a red flag with his use of a secondary source, Mark D. Jordan, rather than a direct quote from our church fathers. My understanding from conversations with those who are well-versed in the church fathers and church history, is that, in general, the church fathers stressed that what is created by God (including our bodily parts) should be used for what they were intended, for their own proper purpose. For continued questions, I suggest a reading of pages 108-112 from *Your Body's Many Cries for Water*, by F. Batmanghelidj, M.D. (Global Health Solutions, 1992).

EUNICE YANTZI, TORONTO, ONT.

FROM OUR LEADERS

Supply, demand, finances and ministry

ROBERT J. SUDERMAN

It may sound strange to think of Christian ministry in terms of supply and demand. But in times of financial stress, it may be helpful to do so.

The classic assumptions of the financial marketplace are that when demand for a product increases, then investment will be cranked up, employment will go up, supply will be increased, and financial health will be strengthened. It further assumes that when this state of things is disrupted by circumstances, then



steps must be taken to address the cause of the disruption so that capacity and stability can be reinstated. Some steps often used in the financial world are adjustment of interest rates, availability of credit, manipulation of taxation rates, levels of government spending, bail-outs, consumer spending incentives, and stabilizing investments in the stock markets.

I have thought about how these assumptions apply—or don't—to the church and the ministry it offers. What if we would use the language of the

marketplace to describe what the church is facing today? Allow me to try.

Thinking specifically of Mennonite Church Canada, the "demand for our product" is very high. At home and around the world, the demand for what we often refer to as "the Anabaptist vision" is at an all-time high. To engage this vision in partnership with a church from

At home and around the world, the demand for what we often refer to as 'the Anabaptist vision' is at an all-time high.

Canada seems to have significant added value around the globe. The high demand is based on urgent need. The broad spectrum of social need that is addressed by this vision is daunting, and includes issues of poverty and hunger, community and isolation, violence and peace, forgiveness and revenge, honesty and corruption, compassion and coldness, justice and injustice, generosity and selfishness, equality and discrimination, health and sickness, and ultimately, the meaning of life and death. The fact that the "demand

for our product" is high is very real; it is something we face in our offices every day.

The other reality is that our capacity to increase, or even maintain, the "supply" to meet this demand is severely impacted by the financial stresses we face. In short, the experience of MC Canada is that the dramatic increase in demand for our "product" is not accompanied by parallel assumptions that our supply can, or should, increase. Practically, this means that we say "we're sorry, but . . ." a lot, followed by a "no." That saddens me.

I know that the coming of God's kingdom is not dependent on our capacities to supply partnerships. I also know that

many thousands of lives have been transformed because we have done so, and that our lives have also been enriched. God established the church for obedience and action.

Perhaps the laws of supply, demand and need should also motivate our commitment to gospel partnership. I am convinced that the world would be a better place if they did.

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

✉ **Today's Mennonites must also question the powers of this world**

WHEN DID WE hand over control of our lives and our world to the powers of the market and capitalism? Listen to the news and you will hear people attributing divine, unquestionable power to the almighty forces of big oil, the big banks and the stock market.

How far have we come from a time when the unquestionable power of the Catholic Church held sway over Europe? Our Mennonite predecessors questioned this power, often at their own peril. They put forth the idea that the people should form a priesthood of all believers. They stood up to say that the

time had come to reclaim power from the high priests of a religion that oppressed the people and distorted the will of God.

We are now witnessing a time when even the high priests of capitalism and the free market ideology are admitting that they got it all wrong. For far too long, we have stood aside and allowed the powers of cut-throat, free-market capitalism to run roughshod over the planet and its people, often to our own passive benefit. It has become crystal clear that this way of thinking and living are fundamentally flawed. Look no further than global warming and the market meltdown.

The time has come for us, the heirs to the

GOD, MONEY AND ME

Even a little light will do

SHERRI GROSZ

How do you feel when you're in the dark? When you can't see your hand in front of your face? If you were in the dark, wouldn't you be glad for the guidance of light to keep you safe?

As Christians, we are called to be a light to the world and to let our light shine. We may be only one small light surrounded by vast and sometimes overwhelming darkness. We may wonder what difference we could make. The good news is that one small light will act as a guide to anyone lost in the darkness of night.

"Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your



Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). Picture a candle in the window: it does not cast much light but it can serve as a beacon on a dark night.

In the midst of our economic turmoil, where headlines continually shout that it's bad and it may yet become worse, could we be light for each other and find our way together? Are we willing to risk sharing our stories of faith, hope and

struggle with each other? Is there a place where we could meet together to explore questions of how to live faithfully with our finances?

Do you live in a manner that's counter to our culture and resist the pull to spend and acquire more things? Are you a family that chooses to live on one income so that one spouse can have more time available for their children, family and community? Are you a young person giving of yourself for a year by volunteering

Do you live in a manner that's counter to our culture and resist the pull to spend and acquire more things?

and serving others?

Can we freely talk about our journey towards contentment, the knowledge that we do have enough and that God cares for us, regardless of our current circumstance? Have you decided to give regularly to your church, even though it means you must give up extras like restaurants and movies? Are you a businessperson who tries to balance decisions

based on what is best for your employees, customers and company, rather than solely on profit?

Are we willing to risk sharing stories of our struggles, doubts and fears? Perhaps you are the person who struggles with the feeling you won't have enough. Do you fear looking at your bank or credit card statements? Are you struggling with how to manage household finances in a godly manner?

Are you willing to take a risk and share your story, your hopes and your fears? Are you willing to provide a safe space for others to share? Mennonite Foundation of Canada has resources that can help start these conversations. They are free for any of our conference churches and their members. Let's discover what the Bible teaches about faith, money and

contentment, and be a light to each other and to the world.

Sherri Grosz is a stewardship consultant at the Kitchener, Ont., 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.

courageous legacy of the original Reformers, to start our own reformation of society. We have the opportunity to turn this historic tide. Let the Mennonites who live at this dawn of a new millennium be remembered by history as reformers who challenged the powers that be. Let us be remembered as the people who had the courage to change our lives and the society around us to come in line with the will of God. Let us be part of the great cloud of witnesses who mean it when we pray “thy kingdom come.”

SCOTT MORTON NINOMIYA,
ST. JOHN'S, NFLD.

✉ Article inspires another ‘refugees helping refugees’ story

AFTER READING THE “Refugees past helping refugees present” article (Nov. 10, 2008, page 26), I want to share with the larger church body about some refugees in Lusaka, Zambia, who are heavily involved in assisting more recent refugees to integrate into the local society.

Just as the article states, “At the end of the day, our objective is to fully integrate newcomers, so that they feel included in a diverse society,” we are inspired and

FAMILY TIES

Dance lessons a metaphor for life

MELISSA MILLER

A few years ago, I succeeded in dragging my husband to ballroom dance lessons. This was no small feat. My partner’s interest in, and enjoyment of, such activity was similar to his response to cleaning the toilet or prepping for a colonoscopy. I, on the other hand, bought wholesale the dance club’s promotion, which declared that dancing is good exercise and fun! It also promised to strengthen our relationship along with our calf muscles.

We’ve met dance couples where both partners are equally keen, and others where the woman is the reluctant partner. Often, though, it’s the woman who initiates the move to dancing; ironic, given that ballroom dance is structured on a male lead. Gentle ribbing about leading and following is a part of the class.

One male novice moaned, “I’m a man and I can lead, if I have to. . . I guess.”

Our instructor told one couple, “When I watch you dance, it looks like your arms are wrestling with each other for control!” They laughed and told him he was right.

Since joining the club, my husband and I have attended regularly, trying to learn

the precise footwork of dances like the foxtrot, waltz and tango. Such dancing depends on clear messages communicated not with verbal instructions but through the body—the hands, arms and feet—and especially a firm “frame” in each partner. A frame is formed by the positions of the arms, shoulders and upper body, and, when done well, provides a solid, responsive message centre. In our years of dancing, we’ve stepped on each other’s toes a lot—communicating our



[D]ancing depends on clear messages communicated not with verbal instructions but through the body.

miscommunication! We’ve also learned some other things about communication, things about leading and following.

In the first years, Allan the teacher preached the male lead, saying, “Women, if you don’t give him the lead, then you’re going to become a better leader than he is, and that won’t help your dancing.”

But after we had a year or two of lessons, he surprised us by a variation on the rule. “Actually, guys,” he said, “you have to follow her.” When we asked him to explain, he said that the man tells his

partner what to do. What happens next depends on their communication: how clearly the man has instructed and how well the woman has interpreted and followed his move. If she accurately receives and negotiates the move he has led, then he continues with his plan. If she doesn’t, then he adjusts to what she has done: he follows her lead.

“Wow!” I thought. “That’s a metaphor for lots of relationships.” Parents might instruct a child, and then adjust their instruction according to how the child responds.

Or siblings might have a pattern of how they lead and follow; then comes a day when one of them initiates a change. Perhaps the one who follows begins to be assertive and sets a new direction. It might take a while for the change to move past being awkward and uncomfortable, but the dance improves when

the partners adjust to each other’s steps.

The mutual submission of Ephesians 5 and 6 comes to mind.

Now if I could just figure out what Ephesians says about dragging your husband to dance classes, and then writing publicly about his least favourite activity!

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.

PHOTO BY MATTHEW SAWATZKY



Congolese refugee Issa Sadie Ebombolo, who is instrumental in helping other Congolese refugees integrate into their new life in Zambia, holds his daughter Faraja.

delighted with the work that Issa Sadie Ebombolo and his friend Kiota, both Congolese refugees, are doing in working towards the same objective. They have established peace clubs, both in schools and communities here, with support from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

Issa fled the Democratic Republic of Congo in early 1997 after war broke out there the year before. He ended up in a northern Zambia refugee camp and became a teacher at the school in the camp for five years. He has always had a heart for other refugees, as they are often traumatized by the experiences they suffered in their home country prior to making the difficult decision to actually leave their home, their work and their communities.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Bergen—Gavin Jacob (b. Aug. 3, 2008), to Jeremy and Katherine Bergen, Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Bergman—Jonah Riel (b. Nov. 9, 2008), to Dustin and Julia Bergman, Springstein Mennonite, Man.

Dueck—twins Anand Chander and Jayan Chander (b. Dec. 3, 2008), to Greg and Rani Dueck, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Dyck—Jacob Wyatt (b. Oct. 27, 2008), to Eric and Sandra Dyck, Springstein Mennonite, Man.

Froese—Marcelo Joel (b. Dec. 11, 2008), to Peter and Gisela Froese, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Funk—Ardous Ray (b. Nov. 2, 2008), to Abe and Nici Funk, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask., in Fort Saskatchewan, Alta.

Harder—Greta Rose (b. Dec. 3, 2008), to Marvin Harder and Natanya Nerenberg, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask., in Montreal, Que.

Jeffares—Oliver Timothy (b. Oct. 11, 2008), to Larissa and Tim Jeffares, First Mennonite, Edmonton.

When they arrive in their new host country, they are at a loss as to finding work, housing, schooling for their children, and the list goes on. Issa connected with the Peace Centre in Lusaka, a drop-in centre for refugees run by the Archdiocese of Lusaka.

Here he met Kiota, also a refugee from Congo, and over time their interest in assisting refugees with integration issues grew. Issa was able to attend an MCC-sponsored Africa Peacebuilding Institute, which provided a six-week peace and peacemaking course. It was after this course that he began to establish peace clubs in several schools in 2007. He has been very encouraged by the continued interest and growth in the clubs, as well as an interest by some schools to incorporate a peace curriculum into their regular class schedules.

KATHY FAST, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

Kathy Fast is a co-representative for MCC Zambia.

/// Clarification

The e-mail address for Bev Patkau, who is collecting basket block quilt squares in Canada (see “Calling all quilters: Basket block quilt squares wanted,” Dec. 15, 2008, page 37), is lpatkau@shaw.ca. The first character is a lowercase letter “l,” not the numeral “1.”

Koslowsky-Wiebe—Elia Grace (b. Aug. 13, 2008), to Pat and Ursala Koslowsky-Wiebe, Springstein Mennonite, Man.

Monteith—Cheyenne Brooklyn (b. Dec. 29, 2008), to Chad and Pam Monteith, Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

Pitchko—Alexandra Marie (b. Nov. 21, 2008), to Ashley Krahn and Cory Pitchko, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Raymer—Nathan Justin (b. Dec. 29, 2008), to Andrew and Heather Raymer, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.

Rempel—Kathryn (b. Sept. 12, 2008), to Garret and Melissa Rempel, First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Thiessen—Koen Hunter David (b. May 21, 2008), to Philip and Wenona Thiessen, Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Baptisms

Darren Derksen, Ryan Derksen, Andrew Plesniarski, Carol Remmert, Garret Rempel—First Mennonite, Winnipeg, Nov. 30, 2008.

Denny Schlichting—Springstein Mennonite, Man., Jan. 4, 2009.

Marriages

Barnes/Lawley—Michael Barnes and Meghan Lawley, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Aug. 26, 2008.

Berard/Rempel—Dan Berard and Jaimee Rempel, Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite, Man. June 21, 2008.

Bueckert/Driedger—Dustin Bueckert and Amanda Driedger, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Jan. 11, 2009.

Epp/Sawatsky—Elizabeth Epp and Grant Sawatsky, Eigenheim Mennonite, Rosthern, Sask., at Shekinah Retreat Centre, Waldheim, Sask., Dec. 6, 2009.

Deaths

Bergen—Isaac C., 86 (d. Nov. 10, 2008), Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Dahl—Gerald, 62 (b. Oct. 12, 1946; d. Nov. 11, 2008), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Dyck—Abram, 83 (b. Oct. 17, 1925; d. Dec. 7, 2008), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Enns—Helen (nee Wiens), 78 (b. March 3, 1930; d. Sept. 21, 2008), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Friesen—Eva, 96 (d. Nov. 22, 2008), Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Friesen—George, 82, (b. April 8, 1926; d. Dec. 3, 2008), Blumenort Mennonite, Gretna, Man.

Froese—Henry, 90 (b. March 7, 1918; d. Sept. 19, 2008), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Harder—Glenn, 51 (b. Jan. 29, 1957; d. Jan. 4, 2009), Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

Harms—Kaete (nee Bergen), 82 (b. April 9, 1926; d. Sept. 17, 2008), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Klassen—Peter, 83 (b. May 27, 1925; d. Jan. 5, 2009), Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont.

Kuli—Steve, 66 (b. Feb. 17, 1942; d. Jan. 3, 2009), Faith Mennonite, Leamington Mennonite, Ont.

Loewen—Anne, 88 (b. Nov. 20, 1920; d. Dec. 18, 2008), Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Nafziger—Roy, 90 (b. March 27, 1918; d. Nov. 9, 2008), St. Agatha Mennonite, Ont.

Pauls—Gertrud (nee Braul), 97 (b. May 5, 1911; d. Dec. 25, 2008), St. Catharines United Mennonite, Ont.

Penner—Ernie, 83 (b. Oct. 11, 1925; d. Nov. 11, 2008), St. Catharines United Mennonite, Ont.

Reimer—Kaete (nee Kroeger), 95 (b. Jan. 16, 1913; d. Dec. 21, 2008), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Rempel—Valentine (nee Quiring), 89 (b. July 24, 1919; d. Sept. 4, 2008), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Shantz—Milo, 76 (b. May 21, 1932; d. Jan. 6, 2009), Waterloo North Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Sommerfeld—Art, 81 (d. Jan. 2, 2009), Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask.

Steckle—Seleda (nee Shantz), 101 (b. Sept. 2, 1908; d. Jan. 4, 2009), Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

Steckly—Ernest, 91 (b. July 4, 1917; d. Dec. 20, 2008), Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

Thiessen—John, 84 (b. Sept. 16, 1924; d. Oct. 18, 2008), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Wagler—Verna (nee Boshart), 82 (b. Jan. 4, 1927; d. Jan. 8, 2009), Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Wall—Hilda Sara (nee Zacharias), 73 (b. Nov. 18, 1935; d. Jan. 3, 2009), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Wiens—Jacob F. 96 (b. July 30, 1912; d. Jan. 3, 2009), Glenlea Mennonite, Man.

Wiens—Maria (nee Friesen), 97 (d. Jan. 6, 2009), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg.

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



PASTORAL TRENDS SURVEY REPORT: PART II OF IV

Learning pastors, learning congregations

BY SUE C. STEINER

Some missiologists claim that Canada is now one of the toughest mission fields in the world. They describe the changes in our culture over the last 40 years as “almost unfathomable.” Often what has “worked” in congregational life and mission doesn’t anymore. Some of us lament this, while others are energized by new possibilities.

In any case, we find ourselves in a learning mode as Mennonite congregations. As always, we’re called to be the church, listening together for the Spirit’s leading. Like the Israelites in the desert, we’re called to trust God in new ways. Like the Jewish exiles in Babylon, we’re called to learn new ways of relating to our culture while strengthening our ground-

*‘Pastors need to be models of countering a busy culture.’
(Jerry Buhler)*

ing in God and our life in community. Like the early church, we’re called to engage an increasingly pluralistic culture with the reconciling gospel of Jesus.

Encouraging ongoing learning

One of the major findings of Mennonite Church Canada’s Pastoral Trends Survey re-enforces this emphasis on learning: Pastors need to be life-long learners grounded in Christ. In fact, pastors and congregants need to be life-long learners together. So how might congregations encourage pastors to flourish, learn and grow for the sake of the church’s mission? Here are some suggestions from the staff persons in our area churches who relate to pastors:

1. Promote rhythm in life. “Allow the

pastor the freedom to experience the rhythms of work and rest. Pastors need to be models of countering a busy culture,” suggests Jerry Buhler, area church minister for MC Saskatchewan.

2. Provide for sabbaticals. An extended time away “encourages pastors to take space to pray and reflect on their congregation’s and their personal overall direction in depth,” says Henry Kliewer, director of leadership ministries for MC Manitoba.

Jim Shantz, conference pastor for MC Alberta, notes the importance of a congregational attitude that values “time and space for a pastor to grow as a person.” This, he assures us, will help ensure congregational health as well.

3. Give permission to learn from mistakes. Muriel Bechtel, conference minister for MC Eastern Canada, challenges us to foster an environment that “encourages the pastor to take risks, allows for mistakes, and provides support and resources to reflect on what happened, make changes and try again.” Such permission is equally important for lay leaders. It creates a setting for the whole congregation to develop its gifts and to experiment with responses that fit its setting.

4. Establish a Pastor-Congregation Relations Committee. Garry Janzen, executive minister for MC British Columbia, highlights the positive role of this type of well-functioning committee. It’s important for the committee to take the initiative, he says, “in hearing both the congregation and the pastor as to how things are going in the church.”

This committee can be a place to negotiate and then support manageable expectations for the pastor, thus alleviating a major stressor. It can provide a venue for small issues to be dealt with quickly,

before they mushroom into something larger or go underground and then explode in a pastoral review. A challenge for pastors is to grow in the ability to receive feedback without becoming defensive; a challenge for congregations is to grow in the ability to give feedback in ways that can be heard.

Suggestions for pastors and lay leaders

As pastors and lay leaders learn to minister and work through issues together, they will find new energy released for their church’s mission. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Attend workshops and short courses together, then share what was learned with the congregation. Discover more about the marks of a healthy congregation, or how to uncover your church’s particular gifts, or how to see your community with the eyes of Christ.

2. Resolve to face conflict in healthy ways. Ask for resources from the area church before conflicts become entrenched. Commit to unlearning patterns of blame that may have taken root. Discover more about the core values of the congregation by listening carefully as people agree and disagree.

3. Foster a collaborative spirit by building a track record of trust. Welcome each other’s contributions. Encourage an environment where it’s safe for all views to be heard, so the congregation can move forward together.

4. Above all, foster a spirit of respect and care for one another. The pastor is not a hired hand employed to provide services. Rather, the pastor is called to help the congregation listen for God’s call to us in this time and place, explore that call together, and live it out together.

How does your church encourage its pastor to keep learning and growing? How are your congregation and pastor learning and growing together? ▮



Sue C. Steiner, Waterloo, Ont., chairs the Christian Formation Council of MC Canada. She has served six diverse congregations as pastor or interim pastor.

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

Home-grown pastor takes over at Sherbrooke

Vancouver congregation celebrates 40 years

BY WALTRUDE GORTZEN
WITH AMY DUECKMAN
VANCOUVER, B.C.

James Wittenberg, a native son of Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, was installed as senior pastor of the congregation on Jan. 11.

Officiating at the service was Garry Janzen, Mennonite Church B.C. executive minister, with a message from Ephesians 4:1-16: "Growing together in Christ." Wittenberg had been baptized by Janzen in 1999 when he was serving as Sherbrooke's senior pastor. The two had also served together on the church staff

when Wittenberg was Sherbrooke's youth pastor from 2003-05.

After all the hugs and encouraging words, a celebratory potluck lunch concluded the festivities.

The congregation has another reason to celebrate. Sherbrooke Mennonite, which started out as an overflow location for First United Mennonite Church of Vancouver,

has just celebrated 40 years of ministry. It began as a German-speaking congregation full of immigrants from Russia, Germany and South America.

As the years went by, slowly the English language was integrated, bringing with it many struggles. With much patience and understanding from elderly and German-speaking members, it became evident that in order to be a church in the city, the English language was not an option, but a necessity, to thrive.

Over the years other changes have taken place. Sherbrooke Mennonite is no longer only a Caucasian German/English-speaking church. Vancouver Vietnamese Mennonite Church began meeting at the church in 2001, followed by Sherbrooke Korean Mennonite Fellowship in 2004. On Sunday mornings there are now four separate services, starting with one in German which is followed by Vietnamese, Korean and English services. ❧

PHOTO BY WALTRUDE GORTZEN



James Wittenberg, left, is installed as senior pastor of Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver, B.C., by MC B.C. executive minister Garry Janzen, who had baptized Wittenberg 10 years ago.

/// Briefly noted

'Conflicted congregations' offered help

WATERLOO, ONT.—The myth that Christian churches shouldn't have conflict within them was challenged by Conrad Grebel University College professor Tom Yoder Neufeld and mediator Betty Pries during a course called "Biblical and theological perspectives for conflicted congregations," held late last fall. Fourteen pastors and lay people, representing four different denominational perspectives, spent time unpacking how the Bible has provided the church with significant insight into dealing with disagreements. Group members also grappled with the issues of forgiveness, mercy and justice; in each case, they looked at biblical insights and practical case studies in wrestling with these themes. The event was co-sponsored by Mennonite Church Eastern Canada and Conrad Grebel.

—BY AL REMPEL

/// Briefly noted

Eben-Ezer Mennonite celebrates 45 years

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church held its 45th anniversary worship service on Nov. 23, 2008. Church members found the theme, "Remember your journey," remarkably fitting, as many are from refugee families who fled Ukraine in 1943 and, with the help of God and Mennonite Central Committee, immigrated to Canada. Many of these refugees found a new home in the Fraser Valley and joined West Abbotsford Mennonite Church. In the early 1960s, when Mennonite churches were increasing their use of English in worship, a group not fluent in English decided to start a new church that would emphasize the German language. In 1963, Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church was born, with Jake and Erna Tilitzky serving as the pastoral couple. The church has grown and given birth to two new congregations: Emmanuel Mennonite and East Abbotsford Community Church. The anniversary program included a ladies choir and mixed choir, historical reflections by Rudy Nickel and participation by present and former pastors: Artur Bergen, Ron Braun, Jake Tilitzky and Abe Buhler. A festive meal, followed by individual testimonies, brought the anniversary festivities to a close.

—BY JOHN SCHELLENBERG

PHOTO COURTESY OF PHILIP BENDER



Mennonite Church Witness/Mennonite Mission Network worker Philip Bender, centre, was one of 24 English teachers (out of more than 2,000 in the Chinese municipality of Chengdu) to receive a “2008 Excellent Foreign Teachers in Chongqing Award” on Dec. 18, 2008. Bender, whose position is facilitated by Mennonite Partners in China, was nominated for the award by Chongqing Medical University. Bender is flanked by Yang Hong, university foreign affairs director, left, and Sandy Wang, foreign affairs assistant.

LEAMINGTON MENNONITE HOME PHOTO



snaps

from far and near

Nearly 400 guests who attended the 2008 Leamington Mennonite Home gala, “Walk on Broadway,” enjoyed musical selections from many famous shows performed by various quartets and bands. The gala, together with donations, raised \$50,100 for the renewal of the home’s chapel. Over the past seven years, the galas have raised more than a quarter-million dollars for the work of the home in Leamington, Ont.

PHOTO BY DAN DYCK



A new “Who are the Mennonites?” display that was first discussed 10 years ago was dedicated at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Archives and Art Gallery in Winnipeg on Dec. 16, 2008. At the dedication, director Alf Redekopp, centre, who provided leadership to the project, explained that about 75 percent of visitors to the centre have never visited before, prompting many questions about Mennonites. Visitors include genealogy researchers, students and art patrons. “We pray that you may all be able to make use of this exhibit when you have guests that have [‘Who are the Mennonites?’] as their question,” Redekopp told a gathering of Mennonite Church Canada and Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) staff, faculty and friends. Gallery curator Ray Dirks, left, designed the display, while John J. Friesen, right, a retired CMU professor, researched and wrote the text. The project was funded by private donors.

The band Moglee entertained more than 60 youths, sponsors, and Conrad Grebel University College students at the end of a youth event called Mission Impossible held at Grebel in Waterloo, Ont., on Nov.

23, 2008. Each youth group was given a map of the University of Waterloo campus with locations where Grebel students were stationed. The winning youth group from Toronto United Mennonite Church completed the scavenger hunt tasks, avoided the obstacles, and got back to Grebel ahead of the other groups.



CONRAD GREBEL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE PHOTO

PHOTO BY DAN DYCK



Five volunteer resource advocates—Maurice Martin (Eastern Canada), left, Alissa Bender (Alberta), Heidi Epp (British Columbia), Marion Bueckert (Saskatchewan), and Don Engbrecht (Manitoba)—are in place and eager to help guide congregations to Christian-Anabaptist teaching and learning resources. Resource advocates serve as an extension of the Mennonite Church Canada Resource Centre and Mennonite Publishing Network, acting as personal contacts for pastors and congregants who are seeking print, audio and video materials to help them grow spiritually and enhance the worship and education experience in local congregations.

Church life cycles

MC Eastern Canada leaders learn about congregational renewal tool

By **DAVE ROGALSKY**
Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

All institutions go through life cycles from birth to the potentiality of death. Healthy institutions keep on re-inventing themselves, finding paths to renewal of their roots and vision.

Betty Pries of Associates Resourcing the Church (ARC), recently taught the use of the Alban Institute's Life Cycle of a Congregation tool to a group of mostly MC Eastern Canada leaders. She suggested that congregations may be renewed at any point in their life cycle from "conception" (the idea of a new congregation), to "birth" (the gathering of like-minded people), to "creative formation" (beginning to fulfill the ideas members had at conception), to "performing stability" (full-fledged programs and structures that carry out the vision that birthed the new congregation), to "protective maintenance" (keeping the programs going, forgetting the vision, merely filling job descriptions), to "crisis and confusion" (failing to keep things going, people leaving, cutting back on the program), to "dissolution."

So long as congregations keep on asking such questions as "Who is God?" "Who are we?" "Who is our neighbour?" "Why are we here?" and "What shall we do?" then congregations can keep from falling into

/// Briefly noted

Flooding at Bethany Manor, Mennonite Trust

SASKATOON, SASK.—Just before 5 a.m. on Dec. 15, 2008, a two-inch pipe burst right above a well-used lobby near the main office at the Bethany Manor Seniors Housing complex in Saskatoon. Water flooded the lobby, administrative office, gift shop, conference room, Fellowship Centre (a large social area), library and one suite. Water also ran through the floor into the rooms below, narrowly missing valuable archives of the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan. The lobby was empty at the time and no one was hurt. Mennonite Trust, located in the same building, was also flooded, but experienced very little damage. Bethany Manor executive director Teresa Isaac detailed the needed repairs: "Two-foot wall sections will be removed from the floor up in all areas to allow complete drying and wall repair." Replacement costs will be covered by insurance, according to Isaac, noting in her report that the cost will be "in the tens of thousands [of dollars]." Three weeks after the incident, the entire floor of the Fellowship Centre has been removed and Bethany Manor is waiting for the work to start.

—By **KARIN FEHDERAU**

protective maintenance, where programs—rather than God's priorities—become the basis for meeting, working and being, according to Pries.

The further along the cycle a congregation is, the more difficult the work of renewal becomes, and the further along a congregation is, the more pastors need to keep on grounding themselves in their personal answers to the questions.

Pries strongly encouraged pastors to keep on rooting themselves in their call and pastoral identity. The work of renewal needs pastors who focus on teaching congregations who God is, what congregations are, and what God's mission is in the world. She also noted that congregations at the

protective maintenance or crisis and confusion stages might try to short-circuit the process by going back to the performing stability stage, but that this is not possible. Renewal means going back to the creative formation stage, to rediscover the congregation's specific vision and its part of God's work in the world, and then doing it.

In the discussion that followed Pries's presentation, Pieter Niemeyer of Rouge Valley Mennonite Church in Markham, Ont., wondered where the North American church as a whole was at in its life cycle, and what kind of work might be necessary to bring the whole church back to "creative formation." //

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



Sue Steiner and Betty Pries, both of Associates Resourcing the Church, discuss the life cycle of congregations with Peter Niemeyer, right, pastor of Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Markham, Ont.

Meeting Needs Together



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BY MARK MORTON

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
KITCHENER, ONT.

In 2001, husband and wife Carlos Gonzales and Martha Aguado fled with their children from Palmira, Colombia. They could no longer endure the threats and beatings they received from the guerilla fighters who were extorting nearly \$2,000 a month from their successful bakery and restaurant.

The family lived with a relative in Texas for a few months, but feared deportation. They then moved to a refugee support house in Detroit before entering Canada in 2003.

After moving to Kitchener, Gonzales and Aguado sought assistance from the congregation at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, which listened to their tribulations and welcomed them.

"We were surrounded by people who wanted to hear our story, to support us," says Aguado. "That was the door that God was opening for us."

The Stirling congregation guided the couple through the immigration process and supported them as they welcomed two new children into their family.

Most recently, Stirling Avenue congregants helped Gonzales establish a new bakery, a dream he had since leaving Colombia. Twenty-six families in the congregation donated \$1,000 each as start-up money for the business.

"I'm really happy with the support I've received from the Mennonites," Gonzales says through a translator. "Without them, I wouldn't have this bakery."

As for the opportunity to become Canadians, the couple is full of gratitude.

"I'm at peace here. This is my home," says Aguado.

Gonzales agrees. "Ever since I came to

Canada, I loved it here," he says.

The family bakery, called Carlito's, specializes in Latin American products such as empanadas, bunuelos and tamales. It has already established an enthusiastic clientele among recent Latin American immigrants and long-standing Canadians alike. The bakery is located at 825 Weber Street East, Kitchener. ☘

PHOTO BY MARK MORTON



Members of Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church crowd into Carlito's Bakery in Kitchener, Ont., for its official opening and blessing on Nov. 16, 2008.

☘ Briefly noted

Saturday night service a boon to Grace Mennonite worshippers

Since last September, Grace Mennonite Church in Winkler, Man., has been holding two worship services every week. "Our strongest reason was that we saw a need in our community for a different style and time of worship other than Sunday morning," explains lead pastor Herb Franz. The church building was stretched for space and this was "another way to create space but not upset the Sunday morning schedule," Franz adds. To reach those in the community who found Sunday morning attendance impossible, especially because of their work, Grace Mennonite now holds worship services on Saturday evenings as well as Sunday mornings. "Our Saturday service has a very different feel to it. It is more informal and has more contemporary music," Franz says, adding that the response has been supportive. "Almost every week a new person from the community is at the Saturday service," he says. "Often they return and some are in church now that were not before." The additional service has created at least one challenge: finding enough volunteers. "We don't want to wear people out," Franz says, adding, "We have deliberately chosen that the volunteers for Saturday are not responsible for the same job on Sunday, although the same sermon is usually delivered at both services." Grace Mennonite has three full-time pastors and membership is around 425.

—BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

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GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Medical peacebuilding

Enemies come together for peace and medical mission

BY ELWYN NERI

Mennonite Church Canada Release
MINDANAO, PHILIPPINES

Meeting the needs of war victims through medical ministry—from teeth extractions to minor surgeries—is an important way for Peacebuilders Community Inc. to bridge relationships in the Philippines.

Peacebuilders, a ministry supported by Mennonite Church Canada Witness, recently held a healthcare training and medical clinic in Central Mindanao, where armed conflict between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine government has been ongoing since last July. Partnering with Reach International

Healthcare and Training, the team was able to treat 113 patients over two days in early December 2008.

A patient said of the treatment, “We are so thankful because we don’t have enough money to go to the hospital to remove this cyst. And now you do it for free!”

Twenty-one students from Southern Christian College, a partner of Peacebuilders, helped out. Some of these students are members of Peacebuilders’ peace and reconciliation team. Together, they represent the tri-people of Mindanao: the Bangsamoro Muslim people, the indigenous Lumads, and mostly Christian migrants from the northern Philippines. When the three people groups—who are on opposite sides of the armed conflict—work together in a peacebuilding effort, it is a significant event.

The medical mission was an effective way to build trusting relationships between the groups, according to Christina Bartel Barkman, a Peacebuilders intern from Canada, who noted that further clinics have been requested. ☞

Elwyn Neri is a field worker with Peacebuilders Community Inc.

Ontario lays groundwork for reducing poverty

Province seeks advice from MCC Ontario, advocacy coalition

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

On Dec. 4, 2008, the Ontario government released its poverty-reduction strategy. According to a report by Deb Matthews, chair of the Cabinet Committee on Poverty Reduction, Minister of Children and Youth Services, and Minister Responsible for Women’s Issues, the government’s goal is a 25 percent reduction in child poverty in five years.

However, Greg de Groot-Maggetti, poverty advocate for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario, is concerned that, while “a clear target and timetable for

reducing poverty in Ontario” has been set, this target only focuses on children and not on “seniors, women, people with disabilities, newcomers to Canada and aboriginal people.” He worries that these groups are discussed in the paper, but without goals for reducing or eliminating poverty among them.

On the other hand, he praises the government’s plan to “hire more employment standards enforcement officers and a pledge to upgrade employment standards legislation to tighten up rules on temporary employment agencies . . . to help make

☞ Briefly noted

Church members host lunch for local Muslims

RICHMOND, B.C.—Members of Peace Mennonite Church hosted a worship service and potluck lunch on Nov. 9, 2008, with a dozen Muslim neighbours as guests. “We have done some inter-faith conversations in the past, and we are not sure where this will lead,” says pastor Tim Kuepfer, “but we are simply getting together to see each other at worship, to talk together about where we agree and where we are different, and to have a meal together.” Keeping in mind Muslim dietary requirements, the Peace Mennonite hosts prepared some special meat dishes with help from a Muslim butcher shop down the street. The hope is that the dialogue between members of the two faiths will continue.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

sure that workers receive just recompense for their efforts.” The plan to enshrine this strategy in legislation also means that it will outlast a single government, he notes.

“The foundation has been laid,” de Groot-Maggetti writes, adding, though, that “a substantial amount of work remains to reach the poverty reduction targets laid out in the strategy, especially in the face of the economic downturn.”

Of government spending in an economic downturn, he notes that “every dollar of new income in the hands of low-income households is spent in the local economy. Every dollar invested in community infrastructure—for things like building new affordable housing and repairing existing housing—achieves the dual goals of housing security and creating good jobs.”

De Groot-Maggetti is pleased that the government’s poverty-reduction strategy is the result of consultation with organizations like MCC Ontario and 25in5, a network of poverty advocacy organizations. The government “learned that the consultation process could be, and was, a positive experience to gather input into the poverty reduction strategy,” he says. ☞

Scam alert

Warning issued in light of Mennonite victim of international e-mail fraud

By **ROSS W. MUIR**
Managing Editor

A Jan. 14 cbc.ca story and accompanying CBC News broadcast about a Leamington, Ont., Mennonite man who was bilked out of \$150,000 in an e-mail scam has prompted church officials to respond.

David Martin, executive minister of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, offers these observations about online solicitations:

- The poor grammar and spelling often betrays the presence of a scammer.
- Anyone wanting to give a person or organization a large amount of money would make contact in person and not via e-mail.
- Receiving money or estates are legal matters and require the involvement of a lawyer, and the notification of estate bequests are normally sent by a traceable, bona fide lawyer. Consult broadly with family, friends, faith community, and legal and financial professionals when you receive any offer that sounds too good to be true.

In this particular case, John Rempel, a 22-year-old Old Colony Mennonite, opened an e-mail in 2007 that he thought would leave him set for life, after he was told that a distant relative in London, England, had died and left behind \$12.8 million. The e-mail was from someone claiming to be his late relative's attorney, and who couched his e-mail in Christian terms, leading Rempel to believe they shared a faith in God.

Over the next year or so, Rempel was badgered into sending the scammer \$150,000, starting with a request for \$2,500 to cover "some fees," Rempel told CBC. "After that . . . it never stopped." He even flew to London, where he said he handed over \$10,000 in cash behind a motel. When he ran out of his own money, he borrowed it from his parents and extended family

members, and friends.

Early this year, Rempel waited at a New York airport for the men and his money to arrive, but they never came. It was then that he contacted police.

However, Leamington police Constable Kevin O'Neil told CBC News there isn't much investigators can do: "There's no doubt that they're probably not even using proper names, so to try to track these people down would be almost impossible."

Of his situation, Rempel says, "Got them broke, got myself broke, got my family broke, and I can't believe how those kind of people, how they can do that to people. This is a bunch of money. . . . It's like a mortgage, a big house mortgage people work for 25 years."

Individuals like Rempel aren't the only ones who receive such dubious e-mails, however. Both MC Eastern Canada and

Canadian Mennonite have received similar solicitations offering to share large sums of money with the organizations in order to spread the gospel.

"The language is often framed with key Christian terms and theology," Martin says, "but is frequently a little over the top in terms of how 'pious' it comes across."

As an example, *Canadian Mennonite* was told by a supposedly dying woman that "there is a deep secret I want to share with you in full confidentiality as a co-worker in God's vineyard. . . . I feel it will be legally proper to donate this fund to you to utilize in propagating the word of God and in building orphanage homes for less privileged people."

When Jim Shantz, conference pastor for Mennonite Church Alberta, hears of such stories, he advises people "to create a healthy suspicion of anything that comes our way by the Internet." ❧

MCC rep ends 'fast for peace' in Gaza

By **ROSS W. MUIR**
Managing Editor

Seventeen days after beginning his "fast for peace" that began when Israeli troops entered the Gaza Strip, Daryl Byler has called it off.

"This is a fragile ceasefire at best," he writes in an e-mail dated Jan. 20, "and perhaps one of the strangest in the history of human conflict. Each side has declared a unilateral ceasefire on its own terms, while refusing to talk to the other or acknowledge the other's terms."

When Byler, the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) program representative in Palestine, began his liquids-only fast, he noted on the MCC website that "it may be some days before I eat again. More importantly, it may be many days yet before the children of Gaza have enough to eat, a warm place to sleep and a safe place to play."

While his fast is over, Byler says the war produced no winners, "save for those who manufacture weapons," despite claims by

both Israel and Hamas to the contrary.

According to him, "[A]ny security Israel may have gained by diminishing Hamas's military capacity and by receiving new U.S. assurances of assistance, has been more than offset by its loss of international standing. And by the political drubbing that Israel has taken among Arab and Muslim nations, whose anger is palpable."

Conversely, he adds that "any prestige Hamas may have gained by surviving one of the world's most formidable military powers, has been more than offset by the crushing loss of civilian lives, homes and infrastructure in Gaza. Today, Gazans are sifting numbly through the rubble, counting and mourning their losses."

Byler ends on a hopeful note, saying, "Some day, Israel and Hamas will talk face to face and commit to a common future built on justice and peace. . . . I pray that day is soon," he adds, suggesting that "until they do, nothing will change." ❧

PERSONAL REFLECTION

The East and West of language

BY WILL LOEWEN

Mennonite Church Canada Release
SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

When Ana and I made the move from West to East in 2007, we were determined to learn Korean quickly so that we could go about our daily life independent of translators. When we began serving at Jesus Village Church in Chuncheon, we were assured that we didn't need to learn a lot to get by, as most Koreans know at least a little English.

Despite our best efforts to learn Korean more fully, the process has slowed. A large part of our responsibility here in Seoul is teaching English and we've found people would much rather practise their English with us than help us practise our Korean.

With the impact of globalization and the dominance of western powers, the English language has seeped into almost every aspect of life in Korea. Some might say this is another negative impact of neo-colonialism, that a culture is being destroyed by an external power—but language has always been fluid. It adapts and changes to meet new realities.

Even English developed over time, as speakers of German and French dialects melded their vocabularies with the lavish expressions of local Latin-speaking priests, scholars and nobility. This convergence begins to explain why English is so difficult to learn and also to teach.

In addition, new experiences and commercial products require new words, which are often created by melding English words with another language's pronunciation style. This happens all

over the world, developing new sub-languages. In Korea, people call that sub-language *Konglish*.

As it turns out, *Konglish* is everywhere. I hear it on the soccer pitch. When the ball leaves the playing field, players cry *ah-oo-teuh* (out). When a player wants the ball, he yells *pa-seuh* (pass). And when a player has performed well, his teammates say *nah-ee-seuh* (nice).

Near our apartment there are a number of *seuh-keuh-reen goal-peuh* (screen golf) locations, where customers can tee off for an indoor simulated golfing experience. Even the nation's rallying cry has a familiar ring: *hwa-ee-teeng* (fighting).

Not to be outdone, the business world is equally full of blended expressions. There are a number of western-style restaurants where the words for menu items are essentially the same as back home. Almost every convenience store name contains the word *ma-teuh* (mart), apartment complex names include the word *hah-ee-cheuh* (heights), and restaurants advertise their food as *weil bing* (well-being).

In the local music scene, three recent popular songs are "One More Time," "U-Go-Girl" and "Nobody But You," which are sung almost entirely in Korean except for the English title words that are repeated in the chorus.

Despite the fact that TV news broadcasts and almost all other aspects of Korean life are littered with *Konglish*, the Korean Bible and Christian songs are

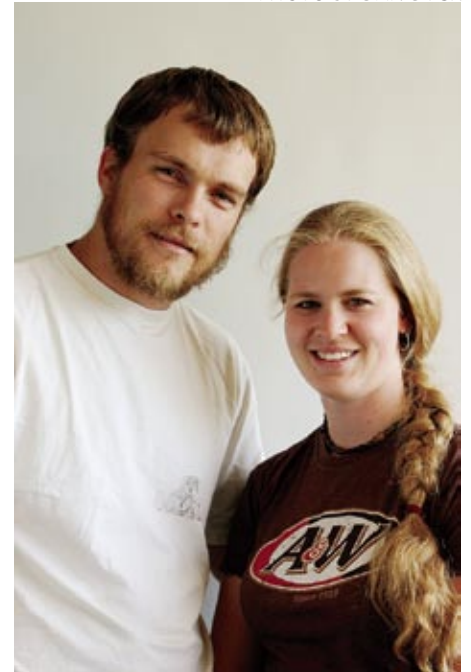


PHOTO BY DAN DYCK

Will and Ana Loewen

void of it. Even the sermons preached from Korean pulpits are virtually unaffected. When western missionaries introduced the Christian faith and its Scriptures here more than a century ago, they did so in the Korean language. Koreans use words like "hallelujah," "Jehovah" and "Israel," which may sound English to us because they are so familiar—but they are all drawn from the original Hebrew form. In the church, Bible book titles, characters and expressions are part of a vocabulary that exists outside of native culture.

This over-arching concept regarding biblical language parallels our faith. While our ancestral roots may spring from different places, we have all since been grafted into the same life-giving vine. But just as everyday language cannot be controlled by a central governing body, the story of God's people will not be limited by politics, national borders or language.

Truly, in Christ there is no East or West. ☞

ARTBEAT

A 'generous magic'

Young artist publishes first children's picture book

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba correspondent

Jane Heinrichs, an art student in London, England, has published her first children's book. *"Magic at the Museum* is a story about courage and generosity and the idea that the smallest generous action can have lasting impact," says Heinrichs, who was interviewed by e-mail.

Heinrichs was inspired to write *Magic at the Museum* several years ago, when she caught sight of children skating and laughing on a rink in the courtyard of the Courtauld Gallery in London. She began working on the story immediately and was already negotiating a deal with Random House when she received word that her father had died suddenly. That put the project on hold, but two years ago, at her mother's urging, she pulled it out again and began preparing it for publication by Wide Horizons Ink Publishing, a company the mother and daughter team formed in 2008.

In *Magic at the Museum*, a young girl named Anne receives a beautiful necklace for her birthday. On a visit to the Courtauld Gallery, she falls asleep and in her dreams the paintings jump out of their frames and lead her on an adventure around the gallery's skating rink. One of her newfound "friends" falls and hurts her elbow, and Anne gives the girl her necklace in sympathy. When the paintings run back to their frames, the necklace enters a painting and stays there for eternity. "In actuality, there is a necklace in that painting, but I wanted to tell an old-fashioned fable of 'how the necklace came to be in the painting,'" she explains.

"Jane's delightful imagination and her wonderful artistry have created a work of real magic," writes Deborah Swallow, the director of the Courtauld Institute of Art, on Heinrichs' website (janeheinrichs.com), from which the book can be ordered.

Heinrichs was born in Swaziland in 1982, when her parents were on assignment with Mennonite Central Committee. After studying art at Steinbach (Man.) Junior High, she went on to study art history and the classics at the University of Manitoba. Heinrichs completed a master of arts degree in art history at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London and is presently working on a master of arts degree in illustration from London's University of the Arts.

During a tour of London's many famous churches, she discovered Westminster Cathedral, the main Catholic cathedral in England. "It is a beautiful unfinished building," she says. "Every Sunday one can see a new mosaic that has been added or a new piece of furniture. I love that sense of continuous construction. It feels like a

metaphor for my life."

Even though she attends a Catholic church, Heinrichs still sees herself as a Mennonite with Mennonite convictions. "Sometimes it serves to strengthen those convictions by learning the traditions of another Christian denomination," she says. Heinrichs continues to be active in her home congregation, Grace Mennonite, whenever she is back in Steinbach, Man.

"I suppose I never questioned whether or not I should paint and write stories," says Heinrichs, who sees her talent as a gift from God. "It is humbling to open my hands and say, 'Creator God, lead me to the next project, show me how to draw, help me write stories.'"

Heinrichs is already working on a second book, an archaeological mystery for older children. "A priceless artifact goes missing on a Roman archaeological dig. It is a story about trust and family," she explains, adding, "I hope to continue painting and telling stories. I always have more ideas than I can hope to accomplish. If I can get even a fraction of my paintings and stories finished, I will feel very satisfied."

Of her success to date, she says, "It is very encouraging when people are touched by my work. It makes me feel that I am living out my calling to the full." ❧

PHOTO COURTESY OF JANE HEINRICHS



Jane Heinrichs, a member of Grace Mennonite Church, Steinbach, Man., is currently living in London, England, where she is studying illustration at the University of the Arts. She published her first children's picture book, Magic at the Museum, last fall.

FOCUS ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

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Education + faith + service = Rockway

BY TERRY SCHELLENBERG

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
KITCHENER, ONT.

I am occasionally asked why I work at a private school. My response is that I don't. I work at a church school serving a public good. The distinction, sometimes perceived as mischievous, inevitably raises eyebrows and opens fruitful conversation.

In contrast to the Ontario government's designation of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate in Kitchener, Ont., as a private school serving private interests, we define ourselves as a church school serving very public interests. The calling of our church is to public ministry—living the good news and wholeness of Jesus Christ within the marketplaces of our world. The church does not exist for private ends, nor do church schools. In fact, infusing a vibrant school community with faith convictions and life-giving questions shapes leadership and involvement in both the church and world.

Since its inception 63 years ago, Rockway's mission has been to extend the Christian educational ministry of the congregations we serve into the community. We nurture this partnership through congregational worship and leadership in a variety of church-related programs, having students share in seniors homes, community-based service projects, creation-care initiatives and peace teaching, along with opening students to cross-cultural



learning, a range of chapel guests and a vibrant tradition of church music.

Over the past year, Rockway teachers have sharpened the vision and language of our calling. We have identified a core vision for our work rooted in "Forming Faith... Building Character." Teachers are focused on

four key virtues underpinning this vision. Our shared vision focuses not on how "smart" students are, but rather on how responsible they can become in their learning. Our vision is not to isolate students from their world, but to foster their globally minded openness. This vision is not about "me," but rather about "we," as students practise compassion in the service of others and creation. Finally, our core vision moves students beyond head knowledge to the wisdom of the heart, as they become reflective and open to life's sacred mystery and God's presence in their lives.

This vision undergirds a Rockway diploma that students can earn and receive upon graduation. It includes renewed religious studies courses at each grade level, which expose students to a clear biblical focus and spiritual disciplines, along with Anabaptist stories of witness, connections with other faiths, ethical

issues and enduring faith questions. Teachers have also written a new Grade 12 "encountering faith" course shaped around key questions of faith and life frequently raised by high school students.

In addition, our diploma incorporates a required service component for all students. Our goal is to nurture a spirit of service through class-based experiences with our younger students, or in connecting with a wide range of community options through high school. We have also created a program entitled I-Serve, inviting students to link their own interests and passions with needs in the community. Finally, we are committed to infuse the learning of students with cross-cultural awareness and connections. As an example, the religious studies program of our Grade 8 students involves exchanges with peers at the Cambridge Muslim School—an exercise in building friendship and understanding. Beyond many local initiatives, our cross-cultural learning opportunities with First Nations communities, as well as in Quebec, France, Germany, China and Guatemala, open students to see themselves and others anew.

As a school of the church, we cannot do the work of faith and character formation on our own. Over the past months Rockway

has actively sought to renew and solidify partnerships with our church body, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, and with Mennonite Central

Committee, as well as with Conrad Grebel University College and Canadian Mennonite University.

Our shared calling with young people is precious and complex. When working together, congregations, families and church schools hold great potential to invite young people to form faith and build character. Indeed, I am convinced that our church schools not only help steward a younger generation, they also serve as partners in the church's public ministry in the world. ☸



Our vision is not to isolate students from their world, but to foster their globally minded openness. This vision is not about 'me,' but rather about 'we,' as students practise compassion in the service of others and creation.

Terry Schellenberg is the principal of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ont.

Westgate celebrates half-century of learning

Online survey to look at Mennonite school's future in historic upscale community

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent

WINNIPEG

Westgate Mennonite Collegiate is celebrating 50 years, but the years have not been without their challenges. From a handful of students, the school is now at capacity in its present facility. In 1964, the Mennonite Educational Institute board decided to purchase the Convent of the Sacred Heart at 86 Westgate in Winnipeg for its growing student body and adopted its present name.

This school year, Westgate is hosting a variety of celebratory events to mark its 50 years of growth and of nurturing young lives. Beginning with a homecoming weekend last fall, the anniversary is being celebrated with many events that reflect the varied programs as well as the values of the school, including worship, sports, music and art.

Westgate, tucked into a bend of the Assiniboine River, is the only school in the central Armstrong Point neighbourhood. Over the years, the school has taken steps to develop and nurture a good neighbour policy in this historic upscale residential community.

"Generally, the neighbours agree the school is good and the students are great, but we find ourselves bumping elbows once in awhile," principal Bob Hummelt acknowledges. "The students buy into our good neighbour policy, but if a pop can is found on the boulevard, it is always attached to our school. When we have had special events at the school, parking has irritated our neighbours."

Over the years, the old convent has undergone significant renovations and modest expansion, but today the Grade 7-12 school has reached its capacity of 321 students. With overlapping uses of space, the school was recently seeking to change and expand

the worship, choral music and band space.

After a long process of discussions with neighbours, seeking their input and showing them exactly what the plans were, "we lost our appeal last July," says Hummelt. "Several of our students come from the neighbourhood, and those families understand, but the lion's share [of Westgate's neighbours] are opposed to our proposition."

Community members spoke out publicly through the media and at the hearing, voicing their objections to Westgate's

PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU



Westgate Mennonite Collegiate is currently conducting an online survey to determine, among other things, whether it is time to move the campus.

plans. "We have worked very hard to meet their concerns, but at this point dialogue has broken off," Hummelt says.

"How to deal with people who don't want us here, while others are fearful we might leave, continues to be one of the challenges the school faces," says Hummelt, who has



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WESTGATE WEBSITE PHOTO



Westgate's varsity girls team competes in the provincial AAA basketball tournament.

been with the school since 1982.

Another challenge is a changing demographic in Mennonite churches. Twelve supporting Mennonite congregations own Westgate and the school is committed to 50 percent of its students coming from these congregations.

"Where we used to have 82 kids to draw from, we now have only 62 potential Grade 7 students to draw upon for next year from the supporting churches," Hummelt notes.

While the outside community increasingly looks for alternatives to the public school system, and contributes names to Westgate's growing waiting list, Sunday school enrolment in several of the supporting congregations has fallen.

In the face of these challenges, Westgate is working at creative recruitment.

"We are working hard at recruiting without being annoying, having open houses, private tours with families preferably when classes are in session, developing our website, promotional DVDs, advertising, emphasizing the virtues in Christian education," says Hummelt.

A steering committee is working at coming up with a strategic plan for Westgate's future. Through an online survey on the school's website (www.westgatemennonite.ca), the committee is hoping to learn whether the school should stay where it is or find another location, what the school size should be and what part of the student ratio should belong to the supporting churches. ▄



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PERSONAL REFLECTION

Confessions of a Christian school coach

BY KARL LANGELOTZ

Sport has the ability to build community—to unify a group of people—not unlike what religion can do. Unfortunately, I have also seen the opposite happen. I have seen sport encourage an “us vs. them” mentality, where the opposition is viewed as an enemy and victory at all costs is the goal.

I have personally experienced the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat. I have seen the best of me come out, in terms of co-operation, discipline and work ethic, as well as the worst of me, as my cockiness, anger and even aggression have shown themselves.

When I started coaching as a 17-year-



old, my self-worth was often determined by how well my team played. I pushed them hard to play well, because if they won, I won. And if I won, I was somehow a better person than the other coach.

With God’s help I have tried to move beyond this immature stage in my life, to a point where I view my opposing coaches and their teams as worthy adversaries, as fellow educators hoping to teach young people about the benefits and beauty of sport. I have made a point to try to get to know my opposing coaches better and even ask about their families and interests when we meet.

This, I hope, humanizes sport in a way that respects fellow competitors and encourages respect and caring, rather than the dehumanizing and demonizing of opponents that sometimes still happens in sport (and in religion as well).

I still struggle with many aspects of coaching at a Christian school. How do I justify unequal playing time that damages the self-esteem and self-worth of my players? Am I doing right when my game strategy takes advantage of an opposing player’s weakness? Not to mention the fact that the many hours spent practising and playing seem like a waste of time when I consider other volunteer opportunities in which I could participate.

But I believe that sport can be a positive force in our world, that the lessons we learn on the playing field can be translated to the rest of our lives, and that sport can teach us how to lead more Christ-like lives as well. ❧

Karl Langelotz teaches Christian studies, physical education and German at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, Winnipeg.

Am I doing right when my game strategy takes advantage of an opposing player’s weakness?

❧ Briefly noted

Rockway principal to be new CMU vice-president

WINNIPEG—Terry Schellenberg, principal of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate in Kitchener, Ont., has been appointed vice-president external of Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg. He will assume his duties at CMU in August following the end of the current school year. Schellenberg was previously the principal of Menno Simons Christian School in Calgary and has worked as a teacher. In his new role at CMU, Schellenberg will be responsible for all institutional public relations, including communications, church and alumni relations, and resource generation. He has an M.A. in theology and ethics from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, a B.A. from the University of Manitoba and a bachelor of theology degree from Canadian Mennonite Bible College. He is a member of Breslau Mennonite Church, Ont. For Schellenberg, education offered by the church should provide quality academics for students—and more. The special gift and role of Christian schools, and of Mennonite schools in particular, he says, is to “cultivate core Christian values and convictions,” to foster “soul-fullness, or attention to the things of the Spirit,” and to be places that “nurture compassion, servanthood and peace.”

—Canadian Mennonite University Release



Schellenberg

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ROSTHERN JUNIOR COLLEGE PHOTO



The third annual Pennies for Poverty campaign is in full swing at Rosthern Junior College, Sask. The \$2,611.71 figure pictured has since been surpassed, with the latest total topping \$4,000. The school is divided into three fundraising teams—staff, girls and boys—with the winning team getting a “dress-code-free day” and the right to eat first at lunch, while the third-place team will have to do the dishes! When the campaign closes, several students are to deliver the proceeds to a Mennonite Central Committee daycare project in Guatemala City, Guatemala, during their two-week service and learning trip there in mid-February.



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(Middle School at Bedson)

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1-3:30 p.m. & 7 p.m. (presentation at 7 p.m.)
WMES Agassiz: Thursday, February 12, 2009
1-3:00 p.m. & 7 p.m. (presentation at 7 p.m.)

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Yellow Page Business Directory

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Mennonite & BIC Resource Centre
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Calendar

British Columbia

Feb. 20-21: MC B.C. annual general meeting, at Cedar Valley Mennonite Church, Mission.

Feb. 27,28, March 6,7: MCC B.C. fundraising banquets; Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond (27); South Langley Mennonite Brethren Church, Langley (28); Bakerview Mennonite Brethren Church, Abbotsford (6); Sardis Community Church, Chilliwack (7). For more information, call 614-850-6639.

April 4,5: Lenten Vespers with Abendmusik Choir. (4) Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford; (5) Knox United Church, Vancouver; 8 p.m. both evenings. Donations to Menno Simons Centre.

Alberta

Feb. 20-22: Senior high snow camp at Camp Valaqua. For grades 10 to 12. Call

403-637-2510 for more information.

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

April 18-19: 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

Feb. 25: MEDA dinner at Bethany Manor, Saskatoon, 5:30 p.m. Speaker: Nigel Motts from Waterloo, Ont., MEDA office.

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

March 13-14: MC Saskatchewan Songfest at First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

March 25: MEDA affinity breakfast, at the Saskatoon Club, 7 a.m. Speaker: Marlene Froese. Topic: "How business

and service relate."

April 5: MCC fundraiser evening of quartets, Forest Grove Community Church, Saskatoon.

April 19: Menno Youth Café, Wildwood Mennonite Church. The event is a youth assembly fundraiser.

April 29: MEDA affinity breakfast at the Saskatoon Club, 7 a.m. Topic: "Balancing family and business."

Manitoba

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

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

Feb. 20-21: MC Manitoba annual delegate sessions at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

March 6-8: Peace, Pray and Praise-It-Together (PIT) at CMU's Shaftesbury campus. Theme: "Face your fears." Speaker: Tony Campolo. For more information, visit cmu.ca.

March 12-14: MCI's presents "Ann and Gilbert; Buhler Hall; 7:30 p.m. each night.

March 16-17: CMU annual apologetics lectures with author and radio host Michael Coren. For more information, visit cmu.ca.

April 23-29: Westgate senior high musical.

Ontario

Feb. 16: Willowgrove Family Fun Day, Stouffville; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. A range of winter activities for the whole family, including snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and wagon rides (weather permitting). Refreshments available.

Feb. 16: Family Day at Hidden Acres Camp. For more information, call 519-625-8602 or e-mail info@hiddenacres.ca.

Feb. 20: Ontario Mennonite Relief Sale Inc.'s 28th annual heifer sale; Carson Auction Facilities, Listowel; 11 a.m. All proceeds to MCC relief, development and peacebuilding programs. For more information, or to donate a heifer or cash, call Clarence Diefenbacher at 519-669-2164.

Feb. 28: Menno Singers presents Mozart's Requiem, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, 8 p.m. Tickets available at Music Plus, MSCU and at

the door.

March 6-7: Engaged Workshop, Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank. For more information, contact Denise Bender at 519-656-2005 or denise_bender@yahoo.com.

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

March 7: DaCapo Chamber Choir presents "Water: Holding mystery, destruction and healing—Music inspired by snow, flood and rain" by Glenn Buhr, Murray Schafer and Eric Whitacre; St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener; 8 p.m.

March 21,22: Grand Philharmonic Choir presents "Felix Mendelssohn and the Romantic Choral Heritage," featuring the GPC Chamber Singers, Howard Dyck conducting. (21) First United Church, Waterloo, 7:30 p.m.; (22) St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Cambridge, 3 p.m. Tickets for both shows available at 519-578-6885.

March 26,27: Bechtel Lectures in Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies at Conrad Grebel University College. Speakers: Ched Meyers and Elaine Enns. Topic: "Restorative Justice and Theology."

April 10: Grand Philharmonic Choir presents J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the KW Symphony Orchestra, Howard Dyck conducting. Centre in the Square, Kitchener, 7:30 p.m. Tickets available at 519-578-6885.

Paraguay

July 14-19: Mennonite World Conference assembly, Asuncion. Registration materials available at mwc-cmm.org.

Ukraine

Oct. 9-11: Celebration weekend featuring the unveiling of a monument to "Mennonite victims of tribulation, Stalinist terror and religious oppression" in the main square of the one-time village of Khorotitsa, Ukraine. For more information, visit mennonitememorial.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.

UpComing

Bylaw changes slated for B.C. delegate sessions

Approving new bylaws for Mennonite Church B.C. will be on the agenda when the area church holds its annual delegate sessions on Feb. 21. The meetings will take place at Cedar Valley Mennonite Church in Mission, B.C. A leaders, elders and deacons (LEAD) conference will take place on Feb. 20, also at Cedar Valley, with the theme "Old coat, new cloth: Fashioning the future for MC B.C.," based on Matthew 9:16-17. Young adults will share about what they see as the future of the church, and several speakers will help the group reflect on the implications for MC B.C.'s future. Despite the name, anyone is welcome to attend the LEAD sessions. For more information, contact the MC B.C. office at 1-604-850-6658 or e-mail admin@mcbc.ca.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

Eigenheim Mennonite to welcome Colombian speaker

Eigenheim Mennonite Church, Rosthern, Sask., is hosting Amanda Valencia for three weeks in May and June. Valencia is the co-ordinator for displaced families at Eigenheim Mennonite's sister church in Ibague, Colombia. She will be speaking to Saskatchewan congregations during her stay, including the Mount Royal Mennonite Spanish-speaking group in Saskatoon on June 13 and at Eigenheim on June 14.

—BY KARIN FEHDERAU

Classifieds

Employment Opportunities

Woodland Christian High School invites applications for definite and possible **TEACHING POSITIONS** for the 2009-2010 school year. Teachers who are qualified to teach in the following areas are encouraged to apply:

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Mathematics

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beginning the spring or summer of 2009

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- ✧ support and nurture a team model of working with the youth pastor and lay leadership
- ✧ be comfortable preaching, teaching, and providing pastoral care

Seminary education is preferred; pastoral experience is desirable.

Please reply to:

Joe Neufeld
Search Committee Chair
Grace Mennonite Church
2935 Pasqua Street
Regina, SK S4S 2H4

Announcement

YOU'RE INVITED

To: Edmonton First Mennonite Church 50th Anniversary Celebration

Theme: Jubilee

When: Registration 2:00-3:30 p.m. April 18, 2009. Followed by festivities, a 5:30 BBQ, and early evening program. Worship service and potluck lunch on April 19. A DVD featuring stories and six decades of history will be available for purchase.

Contact: Please RSVP by March 1 to: ms.n.harder@gmail.com or 1-780-470-0868.

CANADIAN MENNONITE

Notice of the 2009 Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service Annual Meeting

The 38th annual meeting of Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service (CMPS), the non-profit corporation that publishes *Canadian Mennonite*, will be held at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 7, 2009, at Altona Mennonite Church, Altona, Man.

On the agenda are votes on board actions and financial statements for the past year, and elections to fill any open CMPS board positions. The meeting is public, but voting is limited to CMPS members (who are all those who donated at least \$25 in the past year), and all current board members (see names and nominating bodies on page 3). Members who are unable to be present may complete the proxy voting form below and mail it to *Canadian Mennonite*, 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 6H7 before the meeting.

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

Proxy Voting Form

As a member of CMPS, I hereby appoint:

_____ as my proxy to attend, act and vote on my behalf at the CMPS Annual Meeting on March 7, 2009.

_____ Member's Name

_____ Member's Address

Upcoming Advertising Dates

Issue Date **Ads Due**

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Focus on Camps and Summer Christian Education

MANITOBA
MENNONITE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



celebrates 50th anniversary

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MANITOBA MENNONITE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Mennonite circle games brought fun and laughter to the meeting of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society meeting in Winkler on Nov. 21.

BY LAWRENCE KLIPPENSTEIN AND CONRAD STOESZ

Special to Canadian Mennonite

Fifty years ago, Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach, Man., was simply a dream, but work began when a group of individuals gathered in April and November of 1958 and organized as the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society.

Throughout 2008, various celebrations recognized the organization's 50th anniversary. On March 15, papers were read at Canadian Mennonite University, recalling the progress of the society and the construction of Mennonite Heritage Village on the former East Reserve. The first buildings appeared in the early 1960s.

On June 22, the historical society heard about the contribution of John C. Reimer, a founding member of the Heritage Village, as well as choirs from the Crystal Springs Hutterite Colony and the Sommerfelder Mennonite Churches Choir of Manitoba.

Thirty people came together in Winkler on Nov. 21 for an evening of Mennonite circle games led by Werner and Marlene Ens. Adolf Ens, a professor, talked about the history of circle games and hypothesized as to their origins. With lots of activity

and laughter, people ranging in age from five to 85 joined in the games with songs such as "Dusty Miller," "Here Comes Topsy" and "Bingo."

Circle games were accepted in some Mennonite communities and often happened as part of summer wedding celebrations. Frank and Irene Kehler met at one of these circle games and eventually got married, explained Irene during a lull in one of the songs.

The historical society now looks forward to another 50 years of research, writing and games. Some deep concerns remain, however, as board members are hard to find and the museum has struggled with staff turnover and financial problems in recent years. Both the society and museum plan to push for new members and support in the years ahead.

To learn more about the society, visit mmhs.org.

Lawrence Klippenstein and Conrad Stoesz are members of the historical society's board of directors.