

CANA N MENN ITE

November 2, 2009

Volume 13 Number 21

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A HOME

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EDITORIAL

Food as a wedge issue

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Food, for all practical purposes, has one primary function—nourishment. Caught in the indulgences of two Thanksgiving celebrations (Canada and U.S.), I have come to realize, though, how complex a matter food has become.

Psychologically, it is loaded with symbolic and metaphorical meanings. Part of our Mennonite ethnic and cultural identity is tied to food. What Russian Mennonite gathering would be complete without *rollkuchen* (deep-fried pastry fritters), *zwieback* (buns) and *borscht* (beet soup)? But this central core of hospitality in one geographical setting can also be divisive or off-putting in another, as Scott Bergen pointed out in a recent article about non-German Mennonites. “In Paraguay, he wrote, “most indigenous Mennonites eat *guiso* (meat and vegetable stew) and *sopa* (cornbread) on a regular basis. They couldn’t tell you what *borscht* is.”

Taking communion is a sacred practice of our worship. The Lord’s Supper is full of spiritual symbols representing the hallmarks of our faith: commitment, forgiveness and spiritual bonding, both vertically and horizontally.

Potlucks, that 21st century icon of our gatherings, bring us together for church business meetings, small groups, anniversaries, weddings, funerals—what have I missed? How in the world would we manage these activities without the catalyst of food around which to organize our corporate life together?

Food has become an art form, the most culinary among us taking their cues from such classics as *Mennonite Community Cookbook*, *More with Less*, *Simply in Season* or *Fix-it and Forget-it*. Shared recipes often span the generational divide.

“This is the way my mother made it” is just about as binding and authoritative as saying you believe in adult baptism.

Food can be a sensitive matter with the development of eating disorders. “A person dealing with anorexia, bulimia or compulsive eating may struggle with inner judgment and self-loathing,” says Joanne Klassen, a psychotherapist and director of Recovery of Hope in Winnipeg. Such diseases “set up inner conflicts that need resolution through compassion, acceptance, growth and inner change, usually over a long period of time and with many supports.” Congregations and caregivers can provide this support to family and friends struggling with these eating issues.

Food has become highly politicized with the introduction of mass production, leading to a whole crusade for local growing and consuming. Such recent movements as the 100 Mile Diet are a result of the consciousness-raising of such critics as Michael Pollan, who has taken on the processing food industry with a vengeance. When going to the supermarket, he advises, avoid the processed food aisles completely because they are full of high-fructose corn syrup products, an ingredient showing up in almost everything



because the government has “subsidized the corn crop.”

His advice: “Simply don’t buy any food you’ve ever seen advertised. Ninety-four percent of ad budgets for food go to processed food. The broccoli growers don’t have money for ad budgets. So the real food is not being advertised. And that’s really all you need to know.”

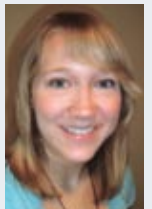
Finally, in a land of plenty, the distribution and availability of food worldwide is highly disproportionate. “At last count,” observes Rebecca Joyce Stoltzfus, director of Cornell University’s Program in International Health, who just returned from poverty-stricken Tanzania, “there were 40 different varieties of Oreo cookies on North American grocery shelves.”

“Whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, do unto the glory of God,” the Apostle Paul told the Christians at Corinth. “Give no offence to Jews or Greeks.”

Was this the beginning of food becoming a wedge issue?

Bergen succeeds Epp

Rachel Bergen, a fourth-year student in communications and media at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, is the new national correspondent for *Canadian Mennonite*, succeeding



Aaron Epp. Bergen began her duties on Nov. 3. A member of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C., she thinks it is “critical for believers not to be separated because of denominational differences, but welcoming in diversity and dialogue.” From her base in Winnipeg, she will cover events and people from the local scene as well as across Canada. Epp has taken a position as managing editor of *The Uniter*, the University of Winnipeg campus newspaper.

ABOUT THE COVER:

Five Mennonite youth groups from Western Canada and Pennsylvania spent the summer helping to transform the former Occidental Hotel in downtown Winnipeg into Red Road Lodge that will eventually be home to 44 tenants. See story on page 17.

PHOTO: EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU, CANADIAN MENNONITE

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

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

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In keeping with the theme of our semi-annual Focus on Books&Resources section, we present two book excerpts. The first, from *Jesus Matters* by **DAVID W. SHENK** and **JAMES KRABILL**, makes the case that Mennonites—and others—need to take another look at the one 'who reaches out his nail-pierced hand to each of us with a warm and engaging call of invitation: "Believe in me and follow.'" The second is a meditation by **WILMER MARTIN** from his book *Building Bridges*, inspired by his many trips with TourMagination.



From Amish to Mennonite 15

On Sept. 20, Mapleview Mennonite Church in Wellesley, Ont., celebrated its 150th anniversary. Over the years, the congregation has morphed from conservative Amish Anabaptist to more progressive Mennonite.

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Through the auspices of MDS, five Mennonite youth groups learn about life in the inner city of Winnipeg while refurbishing a former hotel that will become home to 44 tenants looking for a better life.



Pilgrim returns home 21

Popular Mennonite author, prof and pilgrim **ARTHUR PAUL BOERS** returns to Canada as the R.J. Bernardo Family Chair at Tyndale University College and Seminary in Toronto.

Focus on Books&Resources 22

Opening with a two-page feature on the most recent Mennonite/s Writing conference by **MIKE DUERKSEN**, our semi-annual series includes the popular Book List and a reflection on the state of publishing in the economic downturn by Mennonite Publishing Network executive director **RON REMPEL**, plus book reviews and publishing news.

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New blog postings

[at canadianmennonite.org/blog/](http://canadianmennonite.org/blog/)

After virtue—Part II: **DAVID DRIEDGER**

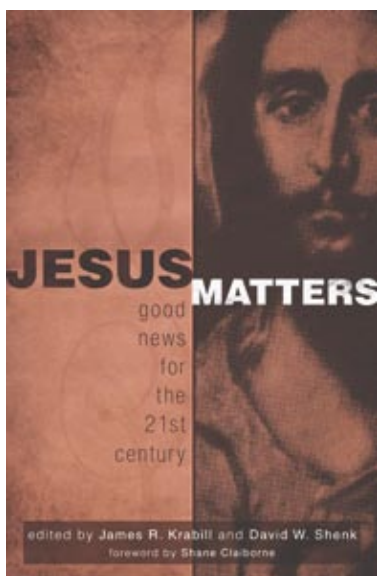
Backyard stories: **CHERYL WOELK**

Crash and bang: **PAUL LOEWEN**

BOOK EXCERPTS

Mennonite/s write:

As our Fall Books&Resources List on page 24 shows, Mennonites write on a wide range of topics: from theology and spirituality, to history and biographies, among many others. To whet your appetite for some winter reading, Canadian Mennonite presents excerpts from two recent publications. The first is theological in nature (the importance of Jesus), while the second is a meditation based on overseas travel that stresses that we are blessed so we can, in turn, be a blessing.



Does Jesus still matter?

BY JAMES KRABILL AND DAVID W. SHENK

Adapted from the introduction to Jesus Matters: Good News for the Twenty-First Century by James Krabill and David W. Shenk (Herald Press).

The story is told of a university student who, running to catch a two-hour final exam in chemistry, encountered the campus chaplain in the hallway. Breezing by without missing a beat, the student blurted out, “Will you pray for me at 4 p.m.?”

“Of course,” replied the chaplain, calling after her. “But why do you want me to wait until then?”

“My exam begins at 3,” she shouted back, “and I’d like an hour to see if I can do it on my own.”

Does Jesus, or the God he proclaimed, have any relevance to our modern situation, or to the pending exam of the college coed? In a society that venerates self-reliant heroes, rugged pioneers, crusty cowboys and

Our Saviour and service

hard-boiled entrepreneurs, it should not surprise us that our capacity for commitment to God is seriously diminished and under-developed. What people want and feel they need in a context shaped predominantly by self-centred individualism is a personalized, custom-built religious experience—a natural outgrowth of the mix 'em, match 'em cafeteria-style consumer culture in which we live.

Charles Strohmer, a lecturer on con-

persons put these elements together in exactly the same way, he says, since each is striving to design a spiritual “product” that suits his or her individual needs.

The result is that we now encounter not just one, or even several, but many stories about “truth”—as many stories in fact, as there are people to develop them—and all are considered of equal veracity, weight and value.

music scene and the sports world, to tattoo art and the fashion industry, with its popular line of T-shirts.

But where and when Jesus lived and what he said and did are virtually absent from most of these popular depictions. If one takes the time to dig a bit deeper and explore what 21st century North Americans actually know or think about Jesus, one will encounter quite a spectrum of responses:

- **Legend.** A recent survey in Britain and some parallel research being conducted among youths in the U.S. reveal that a high percentage of those interviewed believe Jesus to be a fictitious figure who never actually existed.

- **Lost.** He did actually exist as a living person, but there is, unfortunately, no way to peel off the multiple encrusted layers of what others have said and thought about him.

- **Ludicrous.** It is possible, perhaps even likely, that Jesus was a wonderful first-century teacher, but much of his ministry and message is unintelligible in our

If Jesus is non-existent, unworthy, inaccessible or unreliable in any way, then nothing much about him ultimately matters.

temporary religious trends and author of *The Gospel and the New Spirituality*, calls this “The New Spirituality”: a swirl of practices and beliefs inspired by elements of eastern religions, New Ageism, self-help and pop psychologies, the occult, and “a dash of western optimism” reinforced by “whatever current scientific theories can be assumed.” No two

What a trend we have in Jesus

Into this mix comes the Jesus story, elements of which appear in today’s culture to be more popular and trendy than ever. Dozens of films have featured Jesus in recent years, and Jesus also makes frequent television appearances. There is virtually no area of pop culture that remains untouched by the Jesus factor, from the

modern scientific age.

• **Likeable.** There are parts of Jesus' message that are indeed appealing: his emphasis, for example, on peace, kindness, dignity, justice and freedom. It's the "Son of God," "forgiveness of sins," "I am the way," and "final judgment" stuff that

If... Jesus is what he said, said what he meant, and meant what he said, then he could well be—in our lives and in the world—the only reality that ultimately matters!

create distance between us and people of other religious traditions.

• **Lunatic.** The question isn't whether Jesus was sincere. But was he misguided or, at times, excessively full of himself?

Time to take another look at Jesus

Every one of the questions raised above deserves attention. To do so, we need to take another look at Jesus, to return to the biblical text—our primary written source for encountering Jesus—to listen once again to the captivating narrative which unfolds within its pages, and to remind ourselves anew of the remarkable relevance of Jesus to our 21st century circumstances.

Such an exercise does not necessarily answer all of the questions we might have. Yet, as we explore the biblical story and learn more about the passionate convictions of the first New Testament faith communities, we find ourselves intrigued and strangely drawn to this Jesus for whom they abandoned all, and for whose cause they were willing to die. In the process, we begin to discover that this carpenter from Nazareth is as disturbingly relevant for us in our North American world today as he was for Palestinian peasants and villagers living two millennia ago.

The picture of Jesus presented to us by these early witnesses is not an exact photograph in high-definition detail. Neither is it an indistinct abstract painting. Rather, it is more like a portrait, reliable and trustworthy in its representation, with more than enough detail for us to ask serious questions and find life-giving answers about who this Jesus was and is, and how, hailing from a dumpy,

back-water town in northern Palestine, he has become the most famous, transformative person in all of human history.

In many ways, it comes down to something as simple as this: If Jesus is non-existent, unworthy, inaccessible or unreliable in any way, then nothing

much about him ultimately matters. If, on the other hand, Jesus is what he said, said what he meant, and meant what he said, then he could well be—in our lives and in the world—the only reality that ultimately matters! Nothing, of course, is more counter-intuitive to most people in our world today, yet these issues remain central to the journey we are on.

Lesslie Newbigin, a life-long missionary and former bishop in the Church of South India, takes this to another level when he writes:

"If, in fact, it is true that almighty God, creator and sustainer of all that exists in heaven or on earth, has—at a known time and place in human history—so humbled himself as to become part of our sinful humanity and to suffer and die a shameful death to take away our sin and to rise from the dead as the first-fruit of a new creation; if this is a fact, then to affirm it is not arrogance. To remain quiet about it is treason to our fellow human beings."

Newbigin's bold affirmation urgently invites us to ask hard questions about what, finally, we will do with Jesus—this same Jesus who reaches out his nail-pierced hand to each of us with a warm and engaging call of invitation: "Believe in me and follow!" ❧

Blessed to be a blessing

BY WILMER MARTIN

Wilmer Martin is president of TourMagination. The excerpt is from Building Bridges: Meditations by Wilmer Martin (Masthof Press, Morgantown, Pa., 2009).

Usually in the last devotional before a tour concludes, I ask, "What do we do with the knowledge we have gained from our experiences while on tour?" Back home, people always say, "Tell me about your tour. What was it like?" We have a choice whether to tell people about the disappointment of a hotel or about the beauty and the people we met in the country we visited.



For a devotional on a tour in Israel, I chose to use the words in John 21, where Jesus asks Peter if he loves him, and then tells him, "Feed my lambs. . . Tend my sheep. . . Feed my sheep."

In our pilgrimage in Israel, we learned about the rich history, culture and setting where the Bible was written. We

were in awe of the ministry of Nazareth Village, a first-century village created to interpret the life and teachings of Jesus.

When we recognize in our life's journey that we have been blessed, we are reminded that there is a responsibility that goes with that blessing.

Nazareth Village is only 500 metres from where Jesus lived as a boy. In Nazareth Village, we took the Parable Walk and heard a number of parables and stories, such as the one about the woman at the well, and we heard how the staff tells the teachings of Jesus through everyday activities. Biblical stories come alive when they are shared in the culture in which Jesus lived and walked with his disciples.

We were told of a young executive who works for Microsoft in Tel Aviv, who came with his wife and two colleagues to visit Nazareth Village. On the Parable Walk he was overcome with curiosity. He said as he left, "I never heard of this Jesus of Nazareth before. I am very curious. I want to come and bring more of my staff and talk with you to learn more about this Jesus of Nazareth of whom you speak."

It is hard for us to imagine an executive with university training, in his 40s, living in the country of Israel, never having heard of Jesus of Nazareth. As tour members, we were grateful for the opportunity to participate and learn about the ministry of Nazareth Village. When we arrived home, we had the choice of sharing this visit as a highlight with those who asked us to tell them about our tour.

When we recognize in our life's journey that we have been blessed, we are reminded that there is a responsibility that goes with that blessing. Jesus said that if you love me, then you will care for those around you; you will offer support and love. Our prayer at TourMagination is that our tours will encourage people to be a little more informed about the issues facing our world, to be a little more loving and caring because of a deeper understanding, and to be open to share some of that knowledge with those who have not had the experience.

Back home, we can ask people to join us in pondering the question of the Zimbabwean pastor whose congregation includes many orphans and AIDS victims: "Why has God placed this tremendous challenge on our church in Zimbabwe and you in North America do not have to face this challenge?"

We may not find an answer, but we can challenge people to respond. We can tell

PHOTO COURTESY OF NAZARETH VILLAGE



how a 40-voice youth choir in a packed church in Siberia at a Thursday evening service inspired us and that the octogenarian minister and labour camp survivor said that what we witnessed was possible only because the women didn't stop being the church when the men were taken from the village. "God has blessed us with young people to take the church into the next generation," he said.

Tremendous energy builds in one's

spirit through travel, fellowship and discovery with other tour members and the people one encounters in various cultures around the world. These experiences have opened doors we never realized were possible. As we return home, we remember the fellowship we enjoyed, our new experiences and new friends, and we remember that Jesus said that the most important commandment of all is to love God, your neighbour and yourself. ❧

/// For discussion

1. The Pontius' Puddle cartoon (page 14) suggests that church libraries are not well used. Is that true in your congregation? What role do books play in the life of the church? Have books become obsolete with the rise of electronic media?
2. In the excerpt from *Jesus Matters*, the editors suggest that the story of Jesus' life has become a trend for popular books and movies. Can you think of some examples? What do they teach about Jesus' life and ministry? How relevant is Jesus to the student asking for prayer before an exam?
3. Wilmer Martin's book, *Building Bridges*, is a collection of meditations. Do you prefer to read a book in short snatches or in one long sitting? What types of books do you read? Why do some people find movies more appealing than books? Should we be organizing book clubs in our congregations?
4. At a recent Mennonite/s Writing conference held in Manitoba, Rudy Wiebe and Al Reimer suggested Mennonite writing could eventually disappear (page 22-23). Do you agree? What is Mennonite literature? What do we do with Amish romance novels?

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.

✉ MDS executive member defends organization's tornado response

THE "BLOWN AWAY by grace" article, Sept. 21, page 14, is a good example of how God puts us in situations as Christians to give us the opportunities to respond to the needs around us and in this way serve him.

A few clarifications and one correction are required, however.

The tornados that struck the Durham and Vaughan areas of Ontario occurred on Aug. 20, not on Aug. 13.

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) is also mentioned and I feel portrayed in a negative light, in what is stated: "While Mennonite Disaster Service looked into setting up a command centre in Durham, by the time they arrived to evaluate the situation, clean-up was well underway."

MDS typically is not a first responder in a disaster, but rather a post-disaster responder, in the long-term recovery phase. In many cases, it is more effective directing our volunteers to other government agencies and non-governmental organizations like the Red

Cross, cooperating with and assisting them. The MDS Ontario executive had members on site at both locations by the next day, investigating the disasters and making contact with the other agencies involved.

In the Durham situation, it was agreed to direct volunteers under the Ontario Emergency Social Services banner. This did not keep many Anabaptist volunteers from getting involved directly on their own, just like non-Anabaptist volunteers.

In the Vaughan area, the situation was different, being a large urban centre, where clean-up assistance from MDS was not requested. MDS continues to work with the Red Cross in Vaughan, however, responding to the cases directed to MDS for assistance.

It is important to note that Ontario is blessed with governmental and non-governmental agencies that are well versed in responding to disasters. The many volunteers who come forward to assist on their own or through faith-based and non-faith-based agencies are to be commended.

NICK HAMM, VINELAND, ONT.

Nick Hamm is the vice-chair of MDS Ontario.

✉ Laity, clergy need to be on the same page

IN HIS BOOK *Heaven and Hell*, Tom Harpur states that there is a communication gap between the pulpit and pew. I wonder if this is because of vocabulary. To professional church people and to the laity the same words can mean entirely different things.

Take the word "individualism." Martin Luther, an educated Catholic priest, is admired because he expressed the courage of individualism when he defied the pope's edicts. The Anabaptists, led by well-educated young scholars, introduced to the world ideas about freedom of thought in religion.

We now consider it quite acceptable for our well-educated theologians to come up with new ideas. But what about the "common herd"? It appears that, to the clergy, individualism is practically a sin unless it is expressed by those who have had proper theological training. Are we supposed to just "toe the line" and not rock the boat?

Many years ago, a group of people at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont., dared to question the church's rules about proper dress for women and expressed their individualism by refusing to comply with conference requirements. They were excommunicated for their disobedience and went out and started the independent Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church.

Now, Stirling members belong to Mennonite



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Church Eastern Canada along with those from First Mennonite, and both churches, as well as the conference, have probably benefited from what once appeared to be very harmful to the church.

Am I permitted to come up with some different kind of thought or action even though I am not properly trained? Can any good come out of Nazareth?

Yet Matthew tells us that Jesus of Nazareth called a little child to him. “*Believe me, he said, ‘unless you change your whole outlook and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven’*” (J.B. Phillips translation).

Just what did he mean? And how many more words are there in the Christian vocabulary that only add to our confusion?

ANNE MILLAR, KITCHENER, ONT.

✉ ‘Mennonite’ a linguistic—not cultural or religious—term

RE: “MENNO WOULDN’T approve of ‘cultural Mennonites,’” Sept. 21, page 9.

The debate surrounding who can rightfully call him/herself a “Mennonite” may be misguided, if inevitable.

FAMILY TIES

Lessons about work

BY MELISSA MILLER

The smell of sawdust always carries me back to childhood and to memories of my father. His first line of work was carpentry, a trade he learned from his father. Sometimes on a weekend he would pack up the family and take us to the job site, sketching with his big hands what the building would eventually look like. He was proud of his work, and eager to show off the fruits of his labour to his family. He was grateful for work, too, for there were some seasons when work was scarce.

My mother’s work was based at home. Her accomplishments astound me, particularly when I remember the effort she put into food production and preservation. There’s a litany of her typical summer achievements: 100 quarts of peaches, 100 bags of frozen corn, 200 quarts of tomato juice, the list went on and on.

While I didn’t appreciate it at the time, I now value the way she involved her daughters in the tasks of “putting up food.” She set up a sink and stove in the cool basement, and a television as well. On hot afternoons we would work through the mounds of peas or beans or peaches, with soap operas keeping us company.



From both of my parents, I absorbed family values associated with work. Whether the work was done outside or inside the home, it was done with discipline, with steady commitment and with a sense of teamwork. We were in it together. They also taught us to be grateful for our work, and to trust God to provide for us.

Such memories came back to me this fall as I visited some prairie farm families during harvest. I am privileged to be a pastor in a church where people make a living by growing wheat, oats, flax, canola and soybeans. I get invited on combine rides, and included in tailgate picnic suppers. We pray for the harvest, for the

They also taught us to be grateful for our work, and to trust God to provide for us.

safety of the farmers working long hours, for the family members who bring meals and offer support to the crew in the fields.

This season, the harvest is hard, “miserable” say some farmers. The whole growing season has been difficult—too much water in the spring, too cool in the summer, and a fall that hasn’t been warm enough for the crops to ripen or dry enough to get big equipment on the land.

As I write, farmers are watching up to 40 percent or more of their crops deteriorating in the fields, unable to do anything but wait until conditions allow them to complete the harvest.

Always, prairie farm family members pull together. Everyone pitches in, working when they can—swathing, combining, driving the grain cart or a truck, fixing equipment, making meals and delivering them to the fields—and waiting it out when they can’t. Many times this fall I’ve heard farmers say, “I have so much to be thankful for,” and then they list some of those things. I imagine they’ve learned from their parents how to work, how to roll with the good times, how to be patient and trusting with the bad.

In Paul’s instructions to parents in Ephesians 5, he reminds them to bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. When parents show children their work, demonstrate

how to manage the challenges and rewards of work, and teach them how to work, they give them lifelong tools, especially when their work is framed in grateful trust to God.

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

There are some cultural/ethnic names that attach to nations: German, French, British, Colombian, for instance; and there are some that don't: Jew, gypsy, Mennonite, for instance. Names, in effect, belong to others as a means of identifying us. If a person moves in next door, it wouldn't be unusual to hear that person identified as Swedish, Ukrainian or Mexican. It's a step in understanding our neighbour, although very approximately, I hasten to add.

If the one who moves in next door is named "Epp" and the neighbour says to him, "You're a Mennonite, I'm guessing," this qualifies as a legitimate ethno/cultural tag. For the people who descended from the Anabaptist persecutions and forced displacements, there is no alternative tag, is there? Whether or not

this "Epp" attends church is not central to the comment, "You're a Mennonite, I'm guessing." It's equivalent to saying, "You're Taiwanese, I suppose."

We have a similar conundrum surrounding the nominative "Christian." When some Evangelical Christians use this designation, they mean, "He's a born-again person like us, [as compared to a Catholic, Lutheran, United, agnostic, etc]." The Hindu world's use of the word "Christian," meanwhile, would be far more inclusive.

And so it's not an issue of ethnicity, faith or nationality; it's a question of linguistics. How do we arrive at the words we use to describe one another? Would we feel better if we let "Mennonite" refer to our ethnicity—our *vereniki*, etc.—and called ourselves

GOD, MONEY AND ME

Living on the edge

SHERRI GROSZ

Imagine for a moment that you lie awake night after night, the anxiety keeping you from restful sleep. You put on a smile and pretend things are fine while your stomach churns. You pray daily that God will intervene and there will be no extra expenses this week. For many Canadians, this isn't something they need to imagine; this is life.

About six out of every 10 Canadians would have trouble paying their bills if their pay cheque was delayed by one week, according to a recent Canadian Payroll Association survey. Living

pay cheque to pay cheque has become a lifestyle—sometimes through overspending or poor decisions, and sometimes through circumstances beyond our control. Not surprisingly, both single parents and those aged 18 to 34 say they would feel the greatest pinch if a pay cheque was delayed.

As long as you stay healthy and employed, and nothing breaks, you can manage to coast and break even each week. But should your car need new brakes, the fridge go on the fritz, or you receive a lay-off notice, you could quickly be in financial and emotional crisis.

While we handle money every day, many of us didn't receive any formal training in personal finances. We may have little idea how much we spend and whether or where we could trim expenses. Many of us don't understand compound interest or the long-term impact of making only minimum payments.

How can your church support people who are struggling with their finances?



While we handle money every day, many of us didn't receive any formal training in personal finances.

- Talk about money and its challenges on a regular basis;
- Ask about financial stresses or strains during pastoral and elder visits;
- Have a benevolent policy in place to help those in dire financial need while making sure that credit counselling or budget training is also taking place;
- Contact your local non-profit credit counselling agency for resources and for referral information;
- Offer basic personal finance teaching on a regular basis. "First Things First" is a free resource available from every Mennonite Foundation of Canada office

and can easily be used in Sunday school classes or with small groups.

If you are aware of someone who is struggling, stay in touch. A phone call, a visit or sharing a meal can help them feel cared for and loved. Together, you could explore resources and options that are available to help them deal with their particular financial situation. You can support and walk with them as they work toward financial health.

It often takes a crisis to force us to review our finances closely and accept our financial reality. Part of being the family

of God is supporting one another during our struggles, whether they are physical, emotional, spiritual or financial. If you are in financial difficulty, seek support from your pastor, elders and church. If you are financially stable, offer thanks to God, and pray for and support those around you who struggle.

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.

“Simonites” when talking about our Anabaptist faith? Would converts to our brand of faith have been “simonized”?

I doubt that our neighbours would grasp these distinctions, and, after all, “a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.”

GEORGE EPP, ROSTHERN, SASK.

✉ War recalled during Peace Sunday service

ON OCT. 5, Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship celebrated our Peace Sunday. Some of our families have been profoundly touched and even violated by war.

Two of our members spoke: one a veteran from Germany and the other a veteran from Canada; both are now worshipping together as brothers.

War criminals are the soldiers on the losing side and war heroes are the soldiers on the winning side. Both are told they are defending their country, both are taught to kill, both obey orders.

Ike Sawatzky spoke of being in Canada’s medical corp as a conscientious objector to killing. Even though he was not yet 20, he enlisted as a medic, serving most of his term in Montreal, working with and listening to severely wounded soldiers share their painful stories and emotional stresses. He concluded by giving thanks that he now lives a life of peace.

Helmut Lemke told his story, noting that God was his protector. He either had to join the German military forces or be shot; alternative service was not an option in Germany at that time.

He summarized his experiences on the front by recounting the day he was stationed 20 kilometres east of his home village, assigned to defend it from the anticipated Russian assault in February 1945.

From his foxhole he saw Russian tanks and several helmeted Russian soldiers. He knew he was supposed to kill rather than run, yet he knew at 18 that it was wrong to kill. He suddenly realized that the two Russian soldiers within his gun’s range were also made in God’s image. He instinctively realized that a mere handful of lightly armed soldiers could not take on tanks or that killing two men would not change the war, so he made the decision to retreat, as trained. He now gives thanks that he did not kill anyone and that he does not have to live with that memory or guilt.

As Christians, we know we are challenged by Scripture to love our enemies, yet powerful governments still declare war. Sometimes it seems that all we can do is pray for peace and that governments stop engaging in war.

J. EVAN KREIDER, VANCOUVER, B.C.

✉ Is God really calling you to Africa?

IT WAS WITH a great deal of interest that I read the article “‘Vacationary season’ is upon us” in the July 6 edition of *Canadian Mennonite*, for I have a somewhat unique perspective on giving and needs in a country like Kenya.

Twenty-three years ago I met and eventually married a student from Kenya. We live a relatively comfortable life in Calgary, while his entire family is in Kenya—a very large family, some of whom are much wealthier than we will ever be, but most of whom struggle to put food on the table. I have spent four summers there myself, most recently in 2007.

The first time I went to Kenya I experienced severe culture shock and resented the beach-and-safari tourists who didn’t have to see reality. Now my frustration is reading and hearing about some of these “vacationaries,” the well-intentioned North Americans who spend billions on short-term mission projects that have no long-term benefits.

My biggest problem is with individuals who spend thousands of dollars each to build or paint an unnecessary building, or, if it is needed, who then take away employment opportunities from the locals. While I do believe that everyone should travel to a Third World country to have their eyes opened, the idea that a country like Kenya needs North American countries to send over people to build a church or school is absurd. The Christian church there is well established and, in many cases, is being run and pastored locally.

We need to question the motives of people who seek support to do “mission” work in a foreign country, particularly the short-term projects. I cringe when I think that my son may have been part of one of those six youth groups that painted the same Mexican church six times the same summer. It is hard to argue with the statement that “God is calling me to Africa,” but anything less than a very careful examination of motives and needs is poor stewardship.

LADONA AHENDA, CALGARY, ALTA.

/// Clarification

Manitoba freelance writer Elmer Heinrichs wrote the “Picnic marks Glencross community history” article, Sept. 21, page 18. His byline was inadvertently left off the article. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the omission.

YOUNG PROPHETS

Confessions of an irrational fearmonger

BY MICHAEL BUECKERT

Our society is running out of energy. But in the crucial quest to find the right energy source for Saskatchewan's future, our hands have been tied. The "powers that be" have chosen nuclear power as their preferred fuel of the future, and have pushed aside debate on other options. We need to revise how we discern nuclear energy's appropriateness in our communities, by drawing on the wisdom of the agrarian author Wendell Berry:

"I am, moreover, a Luddite, in what I take to be the true and appropriate sense. I am not 'against technology' so much as I am for community. When the choice is between health of a community and technological innovation, I choose the health of the community. I would unhesitatingly destroy a machine before I would allow the machine to destroy my community."

Recently, I attended a public consultation on uranium development in Saskatoon. These meetings are being brought to a dozen Saskatchewan communities to gauge public support for the Uranium Development Partnership Report, commissioned by the provincial government and spearheaded largely by nuclear industry representatives. The biased report—an appeal for expanding mining, enrichment of uranium and, ultimately, nuclear power—is clearly not the independent assessment of Saskatchewan's energy future that we need. The consultation process is flawed; the question posed is not whether nuclear development will occur, but how. This means that a wider range of options, including energy efficiency and renewable sources, are essentially off the table.

The positive side of the consultation process is that, across the province, most



in attendance have been critical of the proposed development. Citizens have been very vocal in their concerns for their communities, and I picked up on two alternative options that came up again and again:

- Reducing overall energy consumption through voluntary simplification and energy efficiency; and
- Decentralizing power sources with small-scale renewable energy projects.

Too often, these voices have been dismissed by nuclear proponents as "irrational fearmongers" or anti-nuclear lobbyists trying to disrupt the natural and

inevitable flow of industry, to the detriment of hard-working citizens everywhere. But the truth is that alternatives to nuclear power are not being discussed seriously, and the consultation process itself seems to have the aim of silencing any meaningful debate.

Further, it seems that the pro-nuclear position requires a heck of a lot of faith. It requires too much faith in the future technological development of waste disposal (we still don't know how to dispose of radioactive waste safely); faith that our reserves of uranium will last long enough (some predictions range from 40 to 80 years); faith that the health impact of exposure is minimal to the environment and, therefore, to the health of our own bodies; faith in the ability to recover the costs involved in start-up; faith that the industry will not be used to further the proliferation of nuclear weapons; and, ultimately,

faith in our ability to avoid ecological collapse without a reduction in growth.

This is a faith that I do not have. As I was reminded by several pro-nuclear speakers, capitalism requires investors to take risks, and we must do so if Saskatchewan is to remain competitive. This seems absurd, as the potential benefits of nuclear power are so hastily given priority over the security of our community's well-being.

On the other hand, asking for a critical examination of all of our options, as the "fearmongers" are doing, is essential if we are actually interested in our health. Nuclear may be the "cleanest" energy source that can fully maintain our addiction to electricity, but arguably weaning ourselves from mass consumption is exactly what our communities, both social and natural, need.

The economics of growth dictate that our health concerns cannot take priority over the will of industrial progress. But many Christians are now coming to realize that this kind of prioritization goes against biblical values such as justice,

[A]sking for a critical examination of all of our options, as the 'fearmongers' are doing, is essential if we are actually interested in our health.

peace and stewardship. Instead, the technologies and worldviews that put economics before health, and dismiss legitimate claims as "irrational," must be resisted. We should continue to champion the needs of our community—that is, creation itself—against the needs of an abstract future economy and the needs of our public and private corporations. Otherwise, we will simply acquiesce to the technologies of an ideology that is destroying us all, supposedly for our own benefit.

I hope that the public outcry against the uranium consultation process in Saskatchewan will lead to a meaningful examination of the impact of nuclear development, so that we can finally set our priorities straight. ❧

Michael Bueckert is an intern at MCC Saskatchewan and a student at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg.

VIEWPOINT

New rhymes for pandemic times

BY ELSIE REMPEL

Many of us grew up with simple rhymes like, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away,” or, “Cleanliness is next to godliness.” Rhymes often grow out of situations where advice is needed. Their sing-song nature sometimes makes the advice more palatable and memorable.

As we enter an era of heightened pandemic awareness, will we respond by writing rhymes to help our children live with new realities? Perhaps our Kindergarten teachers are already chanting, “Many washes every day helps keep the flu away,” or, “Cleanliness is next to healthiness.” But are there more substantial things we can do than washing our hands and learning to sneeze into our elbows?

We need to respond to children’s deeper questions about the spiritual side of living with illness and the social disruption of a pandemic. Questions like, “Why does God let people get sick and die?” or, “God won’t let me get sick and die, right?”, are already being asked by our children, and will come with increasing frequency.

These deep questions about life and death, or about God’s role in illness and recovery, often force parents to face these questions for themselves. Children can handle an honest response like, “I think about that, too. Let’s both think some more and talk about it again tomorrow.”

Because many of us in the affluent West have grown accustomed to good health, a pandemic catches us off guard. We haven’t learned to place much reliance on the providence of God because we’ve been well fed and vaccinated. Now H1N1 is breaking through some of those insulating layers.

Perhaps the time has come to stop taking good health for granted, even

as we do what we can to prevent viral infections. Perhaps the time has come for us to trust more deeply that God is always with us, and to remember that we can depend on God to sustain and guide us regardless of the situation. In this area, adults have much to learn from their Christian brothers and sisters who radiate Christ’s love in more vulnerable contexts. And as we learn to deepen our faith in God and the church, we will be better equipped to help our children face and express their fears.

A new children’s book by Rebecca Seiling and Cindy Snider, *Don’t Be Afraid: Stories of Christians in Times of Trouble*, (Mennonite Publishing Network [MPN], 2009) can help families with young children travel this road together. Reading this book with younger children will not only help them understand good health as a gift from God, it will also open doorways for discussing fears related to a pandemic or other crisis. It will also help parents affirm for their children that our faith communities provide loving, caring, compassionate people whom God works through to ease our doubts and fears.

Sharing our faith and our concerns with children can help ease their doubts and fears about the H1N1 flu virus.

It is also time to remember that God expects us to reach out to our neighbours in healing ways, to prepare ourselves to respond to their fears and physical needs as a pandemic challenges the patterns of our work and community lives. *Beyond Our Fears: Following Jesus in Times of Crisis*, (MPN, 2009), a book and study guide by Pam Driedger for adults, may also help parents confront some of their uncertainties.

Reading and discussing such books with other parents could help us learn how to model a responsible, relaxed and courageous response to living with H1N1, and to understand and use this situation as a ministry opportunity, like African and other Christians who are boldly ministering to people with AIDS in our day, or like the Christians in Carthage in 250 AD, who, as a plague killed many in their city, organized care for the sick, even those who hated them, and believed that “God will reward you when you give yourself in service to others. Surprisingly, the church grew during this terrible time of sickness and death,” Seiling and Snider write in *Don’t Be Afraid*.

God is with us, always, and works among us in redemptive ways, no matter our situation. This is good news that children and grown-ups can grasp and cling to whether or not it is reduced to a pithy rhyme. ❧

Elsie Rempel is Mennonite Church Canada’s director of Christian nurture.

PHOTO BY DEBORAH FROESE



/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Birch—Emily Ann (b. July 11, 2009), to Oren and Christine Birch, Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont.

Dyck—Dianna Maeve Helena (b. Oct. 17, 2009), to Korey Dyck and Wendy Barkman, Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, in Dublin, Ireland.

Friesen—Christopher Tiger Dimitri (b. Sept. 10, 2009), to Ken and Maria Friesen, Elim Mennonite, Grunthal, Man.

Froese—Tyson Walker (b. Sept. 22, 2009), to Jared and Kim Froese, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Funk—Nicholas Jordan (b. Aug. 25, 2009), to Amy and Steve Funk, Altona Mennonite, Altona, Man.

Griffioen—Jack Markus Franklin (b. Oct. 10, 2009), to Stephanie and Mark Griffioen, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Hecht-Enns—Joseph Wade (b. Sept. 9, 2009; adopted Oct. 8, 2009), by Albert and Melinda Hecht-Enns, Waterloo North Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Klaassen—Miles Jay (b. Aug. 9, 2009), to Jenelle and Matthew Klaassen, Hagerman Mennonite, Markham, Ont.

Reimer—Serafina Tamsin (b. Oct. 6, 2009), to Shoshanna and Thomas Reimer, Rockway Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

Smith—Houston James (b. June 7, 2009), to Maybelle (Janzen) and Jimmy Smith, Rosemary Mennonite, Alta.

Baptisms

Kathryn Rebecca Boschmann—Arnaud Mennonite, Man., Sept. 20, 2009.

Don Hagle, Dylan Steckle, Devon Steckle—Zurich Mennonite, Clinton, Ont., Oct. 4, 2009.

Marriages

Albrecht/MaLaren—Pamela Albrecht and David MaLaren, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 10, 2009.

Boese/Curtis—Blake Boese and Allison Curtis, at Tofield Mennonite, Alta., Oct. 10, 2009.

Chapman/Witzel—Naomi Chapman and Dave Witzel (East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.), in Calgary, Alta., Sept. 19, 2009.

Corriveau/Friesen—Caroline Corriveau and Thomas Friesen, Ottawa Mennonite, Oct. 3, 2009.

Cory/Driedger—Rian Cory and Krista Driedger, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Aug. 29, 2009.

Enns/Hargesheimer—Nicole Enns and Lars Hargesheimer, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Oct. 10, 2009.

Falk/Henkenhaf—Joel Falk and Tracey Henkenhaf, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., Oct. 10, 2009.

Joy/Kathler—Kimberly Joy and Jonathan Kathler (Arnaud Mennonite, Man.) in Winnipeg, May 15, 2009.

Koormneef/Tiessen—Jolene Koormneef and Benjamin Tiessen, Ottawa Mennonite, Oct. 3, 2009.

Krause/Tiessen—Bernhard Krause and Katie Tiessen, at Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Oct. 10, 2009.

Sawatsky/Yantzi—Erin Sawatsky and Dustin Yantzi, at East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., Aug. 15, 2009.

Stephens/Warkentin—Joan Stephens and Duff Warkentin, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Aug. 8, 2009.

Deaths

Dreher—Herman, 62 (b. March 2, 1947; d. Sept. 30, 2009), Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Dyck—Bob, 42 (b. Oct. 20, 1966; d. Oct. 5, 2009), Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Friesen—Annie, 85 (b. Dec. 11, 1923; d. Sept. 24, 2009), St. Catharines United Mennonite, Ont.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones announcements within four months of the event.

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

Pontius' Puddle



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

From Amish to Mennonite, Mapleview builds for the future

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WELLESLEY TOWNSHIP, ONT.

Only a few hushed conversations took place in the half-hour before the celebration service on Sept. 20. The sanctuary was quiet even though it was crowded with members, former members and neighbours from sister churches of liberal and conservative flavours. Mapleview Mennonite Church was showing its Amish roots.

The congregation was founded 150 years ago by Amish Anabaptists, followers of Jacob Amman's strict interpretations, who had come to North America from Alsace-Lorraine and Bavaria beginning in the 1820s. Their expanding families had begun settling in the area in 1854, moving north and west from Wilmot and East Zorra townships.

At first, they worshipped in houses and barns, as they had in Europe. Construction of the first worship building in 1886 precipitated a division in the community between those who favoured a permanent worship space and the "Homesers,"

who didn't. This division resulted in the "Homesers" becoming the Old Order Amish and the others becoming Amish Mennonite and eventually the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference, which joined Mennonite Church Eastern Canada in 1988.

The divisions between more conservative members and others has continued through the years, most markedly in the early 1900s, which spawned a group associated with the Beachy Amish in the U.S.; again in the middle of the century, with the advent of the Conservative Mennonite congregations; and then again in the late 1980s, when Faith Mennonite was formed. In attendance on Sept. 20 were leaders who had left in the 1980s to join or found more conservative congregations.

Bruce Sawatzky, the current pastor, noted that Mapleview co-operates with Faith Mennonite in many ways, most recently in a tent crusade held in the community and through the use of Faith's large



"Frieda's Girls" sing during Mapleview Mennonite Church's 150th anniversary celebrations on Sept. 20.

new building for some of Mapleview's anniversary celebrations.

The anniversary year included the issue of an extended history book, regular "Then and Now" segments in worship about how the congregation has changed through the years, and singing old hymns from previous hymnals, including *The Church and Sunday School Hymnal* and *The Church Hymnal*.

The weekend itself featured three worship services and multiple occasions for eating both modern and traditional foods. Sunday afternoon's final celebration included both a lively children's choir and "Frieda's (Lebold) Girls," a choir that was formed from Grade 6 girls in 1956 and that sang for three years, touring around southern Ontario and into New York State, where many in the area have family relations. Speeches by seven former pastors and several lay leaders were given before the group broke for dinner.

The afternoon was capped by tours of the unfinished building the congregation hopes to move into in 2010. Costing around \$3 million and covering 1,950 square metres on one level, the facility will make room for all the congregation's members.

The building permit includes a requirement that the present building, erected in 1928, be demolished. Sawatzky noted that, while there is sadness about this, the congregation needs the room for parking and an expanded cemetery.

While the past few years have been focussed on the building, long anticipated by some, Sawatzky said that now there will be a renewed vision and goals for the congregation. ❧



Bruce Sawatzky, left, the current pastor at Mapleview Mennonite, poses with former pastors Glen Yantzi, Jim Whitehead, Ray Erb, Victor Dorsch, Allan Nafziger, Jake Roes and Steve Gerber in the unfinished entranceway to the new church building, expected to open in 2010.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

O what fellowship!

BY REBECCA PHAM

SPECIAL TO *CANADIAN MENNONITE*

EDMONTON

Almost 400 people attended this year's North American Vietnamese Mennonite Fellowship Conference hosted by Edmonton Vietnamese Mennonite Church at the beginning of August. And what fellowship there was, as participants from Edmonton, Calgary, Alta., Vancouver, Saskatoon, Sask., Winnipeg, Philadelphia, Pa., and Malaysia, Cambodia and Vietnam created a closeness that you can only find in the church.

Powerful songs were led by worship groups from both the Edmonton and Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite churches. "*Gie-xu chieu roi!*" (Shine Jesus shine!), the congregation sang as if no one was listening but their Father in heaven. Hue Bich Do of the Edmonton worship team said, "O, singing and leading worship

for the conference was so great! It felt so moving."

Parents brought along their youngsters to the conference. Children's pastor Carol Saunders taught a lesson comparing their teeth to human lives and sin to tooth decay. She portrayed God as the dentist who was able to get out the decay and cavities as long as they were willing to let him.

For the Sunday service, about 20 English-speaking youths and young adults came to listen. Pastor Tuyen Nguyen spoke with the group on a friendly level, telling them the story of King Solomon's desire only for wisdom from God. He told them to ask for four things from God in prayer: the fear of the Lord, wisdom, patience and love. He encouraged them with the words of Psalm

37:4: "*Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.*"

Although the conference is primarily meant for church reports and prayer, it showed me more of what the body of Christ was like. Everyone was especially inspired to hear about the growth in the Vietnamese church in Philadelphia. Over the course of a year, about 180 people from all different backgrounds decided to put their faith in Jesus Christ as the result of the work that God was doing in that church. It was especially inspiring to hear about their work for the homeless. ☸

☸ Briefly noted

Rosthern Mennonite focusing on outreach, renewal

Rosthern Mennonite Church, Sask., had an encouraging start to its new year of programming. Two weeks into a sunny warm September, the church held a carnival for the community. "There were 14 different stations with religious themes," explained co-pastor Barb Froese. The idea, she said, was inspired by Jim Loepp Thiessen, a pastor she met in March while visiting China through an MC Canada Witness opportunity, who also presented a workshop at Rosthern Mennonite in early June. "He encouraged us to do things in our community; to show the love of Christ," said Froese, who, together with husband Wilmer, farms part-time in the Laird district and pastors part-time in the large Rosthern church. The morning event drew young families and children from the town. The following week, Froese was pleased to see 10 new faces in the Sunday school wing. The church is also beginning a new style of teaching children using the "rotation" method. Last year, Osler Mennonite made the switch to the rotation model, which uses three brightly painted theme rooms to teach Bible stories with different hands-on activities like painting, drama, puppetry and cooking. The adult Sunday school class will focus on spiritual disciplines, said Froese, noting that "renewal is our theme."

—BY KARIN FEHDERAU

NORTH AMERICAN VIETNAMESE MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP PHOTO



Chau Dang, pastor of the Calgary Vietnamese Church, is the outgoing president of the North American Vietnamese Mennonite Fellowship. The new president is pastor Tuyen Nguyen of Philadelphia.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

COVER STORY

Everyone deserves a home

MDS summer program offers inner city experience for youths

STORY AND PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG

The Occidental Hotel on Winnipeg's beleaguered Main Street, whose seedy, rundown reputation is infamous across Canada, is undergoing remarkable changes. Built in 1886, it was originally an upscale stop for people arriving on the train, but over the decades it became the hub in a dangerous and deteriorating neighbourhood.

This summer, youth groups from five different Mennonite churches each spent a week with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) helping renovate the old hotel as it becomes a home for the homeless, complete with a new name: Red Road Lodge.

The groups came from Blumenort Mennonite Church, Gretna, and Altona Sommerfelder Mennonite, both in Manitoba; Coaldale Mennonite, Alta.; Osler Mennonite, Sask.; and Erisman Mennonite, Lancaster, Pa.

"They were absolutely remarkable," says Beverly Roberts, who oversees programs at the lodge, of the youths. "They brought so much positive energy to the place. They would come in singing and work hard."

"They literally moved mountains," she adds. "The second week a group tackled the mountain of junk behind the lodge and over the summer turned the serious junk heap into a beautiful garden."

Rebecca and Michael Enns, project directors for the MDS summer program, arranged for opportunities for the 67 youths to learn about social conditions in the inner city. The groups stayed at the local Vineyard Church, a five-minute walk from the lodge.

In 2001, Richard Walls, a developer with an interest in heritage architecture, bought an adjacent butcher shop and converted it into The Edge Gallery, with eight suites for

low-cost housing for artists. The idea was to have a place where artists could come to create and show their works and generate a positive energy in the community that is mostly known as a hotbed for crime.

"But he soon realized that it couldn't be successful with the Occidental next door operating the way it did, so he bought it out as well," Roberts explains.

Although it would have been far more profitable to retain the bar, the video lottery terminals and the vendor sales, Walls decided in 2004 to close down these revenue streams.

"I couldn't continue to see people's lives ruined," he says.

The transformation of the Occidental into Red Road Lodge has been a "moving target" for Walls. "I have a passion for old buildings," he says.

Thirty years ago he brought that passion to the Exchange District of Winnipeg and was instrumental in the renewal of that area. It was that same passion that brought him here, but each step towards rebuilding has brought him face-to-face with human lives. From restoring old architecture, his focus has shifted to restoring human lives.

Instead of pursuing the dream of a youth hostel or a 'boutique hotel' for the Occidental, Red Road Lodge (an aboriginal reference to "the path of healing") has become a clean, safe, dry environment for people trying to break free of the negative cycles in their lives.

The former bar is now an art studio with a free drop-in art program for residents and people living on the street. There is also a woodworking studio and a performance space. Plans are in the works for a community kitchen, where cooking skills can be taught.

Red Road Lodge rents space to the "Bicycle Dump" in the back, where volunteers teach people how to fix and build bikes. A church brings its "Feed My Lambs" program, which includes breakfast, every Sunday morning and another group holds Saturday morning Bible studies.

Several residents already make their home at the lodge, which will eventually be a home for recovery for 44 tenants. ❧

MDS summer program coordinator Beverly Roberts shows off Red Road Lodge's backyard garden that various Mennonite youth groups created out of a trash pile this summer.



PEACE SUNDAY REMINDER

'To remember is to work for peace'

After two decades a modest message endures

BY AMANDA THORSTEINSSON
Mennonite Central Committee Release
WINNIPEG

Nan Cressman is astonished at the success of the small, red Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) peace button she helped create 20 years ago in Ontario.

"I just thought they were a small addition to our usual peace work," says Cressman about the button, which reads, "To remember is to work for peace."

Yet the button—created as part of MCC's Peace Sunday initiative and pinned on clothing and bags around Remembrance Day on Nov. 11—resonates so strongly with people that it has spread from churches in southern Ontario throughout Canada and beyond.

"I am thrilled that has happened," says Cressman. "I never dreamed [the buttons] would travel that far."

On Remembrance Day Canadians traditionally pause and remember those who

have died in military service. Many wear small red poppies distributed by the Royal Canadian Legion in schools, workplaces and public gathering places.

So in 1989 a number of Mennonite churches in southern Ontario began expressing their discomfort with the emphasis such campaigns put on military service, including the expectation that people should wear a poppy. They brought their concerns forward to Cressman, who, at the time, was in charge of the newly created peace program at MCC Ontario.

The need for an alternative to the poppy struck a chord with Cressman, who, along with her colleagues, began brainstorming another way that people of peace could show respect for all victims of war.

"While Remembrance Day acknowledges the suffering that happens during war, it also affirms that wars are necessary," says Esther Epp-Tiessen, MCC Canada's peace program coordinator. "Our faith teaches us to love our enemies, to seek the well-being of our neighbours, and to do so through peaceful, nonviolent means."

The button's effect on Mennonite faith communities has been profound.

"The button has helped us to realize that we Mennonites have a message to share," says Epp-Tiessen. "Historically, as conscientious objectors we did not proclaim peace loudly. The button has provided a way for Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in Canada to witness towards a peaceful alternative in the broader community."

However, the simple but profound message has found a place within a variety of cultures and contexts far beyond that of Mennonites in Canada. In northern Uganda, some people whose lives have been torn apart by the bloody civil war waged by the Lord's Resistance Army wear the button as a daily reminder that the best way of honouring those who died is by working for peace.



Cressman

The button has also moved into the ranks of Canada's parliamentary system. On a plane ride around Remembrance Day in the late 1990s, Tom Snowdon, an MCC worker from Winnipeg, found

himself seated next to Alexa McDonough, who was the federal New Democrat leader at the time. After thanking her for publicly questioning Canada's support of militarism, McDonough commented on how much she appreciated the small red button he was wearing, which Snowdon promptly removed and gave to her.

For some, the button is controversial.

Although Tim Schmucker of MCC Ontario rejects violence as a means of resolving conflict, "at the same time I don't want to minimize the sacrifice of the soldiers nor the pain of their permanent absence," he says.

The button originated at a time when Canada was not at war. In 1989, the Cold War was ending, and hopes for peaceful resolutions of similar conflicts were high.

Today, Canada is embroiled in a conflict that has killed more than a hundred Canadian soldiers, the largest number since the Korean War.

"Some people take offence at the peace buttons these days," says Epp-Tiessen. "Questioning Canada's war effort is equated with being unpatriotic. However, our intention is not to undercut the sacrifice made by so many people. But we want to remember all who suffer because of war, not just our own soldiers. And we want to challenge the idea that war is necessary." ❧

MCC PHOTO BY ALISON RALPH



Wearing peace buttons are Jaron Friesen and Kate Schellenberg, students at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg.

PEACE SUNDAY REMINDER

Principles of peace gaining broader recognition

By DEBORAH FROESE

Mennonite Church Canada Release
WINNIPEG

What if peace was held as the organizing principle for society? What if nonviolent conflict resolution, rather than defence and offence, shaped national and international strategies for peace? What if military “boot camps” for soldiers focused on intensive training in violence prevention, mediation and reconciliation, instead of physical prowess, aggression and weaponry?

Mennonite Church Canada is taking an active role in promoting a culture of peace, including nonviolent conflict resolution, within Canada and abroad. A Private Members Bill tabled in the Canadian House of Commons on Sept. 30 calls for the creation of a Canadian Department of Peace, headed by a Cabinet-level minister.

Tabled by MP Bill Siksay (Douglas-Burnaby, B.C.) and seconded by MP Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough-Agincourt, Ont.), Bill C-447 describes the intended department’s work as that which is “dedicated to peacebuilding and the study of conditions that are conducive to both domestic and international peace.”

“It is a long, long way from being passed in the House of Commons,” says Janet Plenert, executive secretary of MC Canada Witness, although she is encouraged by the bill. “We know from the experience of the Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation bill, that such a bill will likely need to be reintroduced multiple times over many years.”

Despite her pragmatic view of Bill C-447’s potential in its current form, Plenert is hopeful that it will initiate ongoing discussions about peace as a viable alternative to war and a fundamental approach to societal behaviour and response. She says that a strong and vocal grassroots movement supporting the principles of the bill will give it more weight and increase the potential for future implementation.

Bill C-447 arrives at a time when MC Canada is taking deliberate steps to bring concepts of nonviolent peace into the

public arena. Over the past year-and-a-half, general secretary Robert J. Suderman has addressed the Canadian Council of Churches twice on the topic of “Peace in the public square” to favourable response. Delegates to this summer’s annual assembly voted to support a proposal of the same name, which encourages congregations across the country to share the message on a larger, more public scale.

“If each congregation initiates one act of peace in the public square over the next four years,” says Suderman, “we will have 1,000 acts of peace.”

Additionally, a new Mennonite Church Canada website to share ideas and news about making biblical peace a reality is under development. ☘

PATTISON OUTDOOR ADVERTISING ART



In an effort to begin taking “Peace to the public square,” Mennonite Church Alberta is poised to offer messages of peace like the one pictured on billboards and light rapid transit posters beginning in mid-November.

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Donations for victims of Asian disasters sought

By LINDA ESPENSHADE

Mennonite Central Committee Release

In response to the needs of flooding and earthquake survivors in Asia, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is increasing its appeal for donations from \$100,000 to \$250,000.

The additional \$150,000 being sought will allow MCC and its partners to respond to extensive flooding damage in southern India and Cambodia, and to provide permanent housing for people in Indonesia, where earthquakes devastated entire villages.

Already included in the initial \$100,000 campaign is relief for flooding in the Philippines and Vietnam, caused by September's Typhoon Ketsana. Short-term relief efforts and temporary housing for Indonesian earthquake survivors were also included in the initial amount.

In India, heavy rains in late September caused flooding in the Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka districts, killing at least 226 people and leaving about a million more homeless, according to Church's Auxiliary for Social Action, an MCC partner. Indian news sources also reported extensive destruction of crops and some livestock in these farming communities.

MCC also will work through its

partner, Mennonite Christian Service Fellowship of India, a service and fellowship organization of the six Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in India.

In Indonesia, MCC will rebuild homes in the village of Guci, where about 95 percent of the dwellings were destroyed, and in the city of Padang. MCC's partner, Mennonite

Diakonial Service, is currently providing health care, trauma healing exercises and locally purchased relief packets of food and other necessities.

Cambodia is included in the updated Asia Disasters appeal because it also experienced destructive flooding from Typhoon Ketsana. The storm killed more than 40 people and destroyed tens of thousands of rice paddies there. MCC representatives

in Southeast Asia are working with potential partner organizations to determine the best way to help flooding victims recover.

In Vietnam, assessment of the need continues in cooperation with potential partners.

Donations to MCC should be designated "Asia Disasters." ❧

ACT PHOTO BY RAINER LAING



Large machinery is staged in Padang, Indonesia, ready to begin removal of rubble after heavy earthquake damage on Sept. 30 and Oct. 1. MCC representatives are also in Padang, assessing how MCC can be most helpful.

Ten Thousand Villages provides earthquake aid

Ten Thousand Villages Canada has been able to provide \$12,000 in direct financial assistance to victims of the Sept. 2 Indonesian earthquake, thanks to the efforts of Pekerti, a partner organization whose staff are working in the field to offer relief to those affected.

"We are pleased to be able to offer financial support to Pekerti in its efforts to ease the burden of the earthquake victims," says chief executive officer Bob Berg, "and are proud that the relationships we have established with our artisan groups allow us to support the meaningful work being done in their communities."

Pekerti, an artisan co-op that supplies products to Ten Thousand Villages Canada while offering skills training and small business funding in Indonesia, has been instrumental in providing aid to those affected by the

disaster in the form of monetary assistance. Tents and blankets are also required immediately, and a long-term housing program is being planned.

However, Pekerti lacks the finances and personnel to provide the necessary relief, and requested additional aid from its western partners. The store in Edmonton and the Crowchild Trail store in Calgary have each contributed, with additional funds being donated by Ten Thousand Villages' headquarters.

"At Ten Thousand Villages Canada, we believe that true success has been achieved when our international partners have been empowered to address the immediate and long-term needs within their own regions, particularly in the face of tragedy," Berg says.

—Ten Thousand Villages Release

GOD AT WORK IN US

Pilgrim returns home

Arthur Paul Boers returns to roots and Canada to teach

DAVE ROGALSKY
Eastern Canada Correspondent

Arthur Paul Boers has come home. After teaching at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), he and his wife Lorna agreed that they wanted to come back to Canada.

Boers has accepted a position in research and teaching at Tyndale University College and Seminary in Toronto. Tyndale, an intra-denominational evangelical school, is also “home” for Boers, in that Evangelical spirituality and practice have been part of his life since adolescence. He found it hard to find others who were interested in daily prayer and Scripture reading, even though he grew up in a Christian home and church. Not until he came in contact with Inter-School Christian Fellowship (ISCF), a high school wing of Inter-Varsity Fellowship, did he find others who practised as he did.

And so was born his Mennonite connection—many of the students he met with in ISCF were Mennonites. Eventually, he says he began attending the local Mennonite Brethren congregation, with a “very Anabaptist” pastor, including a strong “peace position and concerned with the impact of gospel on social justice.” The tension sometimes found between Evangelicalism and social justice caused him to search for a place in the Mennonite world where he fit, eventually ending up at AMBS, where he earned an MA in peace studies, and later a master of divinity degree.

As he tells it, his life has been a series of calls, each of which surprised him. First, he was called to ministry, then to Mennonite ministry at Bloomingdale Mennonite (near Kitchener, Ont.) that included time to write. It was also at Bloomingdale that the congregation noted his gifts of teaching, which eventually brought him back to AMBS on staff, teaching in the areas of leadership, spiritual direction and Christian formation.

Boers was invited to apply to Tyndale to fill the R.J. Bernardo Family Chair of Leadership, an endowed position created to research and teach leadership both to pastors and to lay people in leadership positions in business and society. The position is two-thirds teaching and one-third writing and research in the leadership centre, as well as “helping the seminary pay attention to leadership in all curricula.” Tyndale has also recently launched a Doctor of Ministry degree with a leadership focus.

Boers wants to make it clear that he is “not competing with Menno institutions.” Mostly he is “looking forward, trying to figure this leadership stuff out more systematically,” and he hopes to “write and speak about this, also in interaction with brothers and sisters in the Mennonite church.” He thinks there is “merit for Mennonites to pay attention to the Evangelical world.”

In a telephone interview, he said, “I



Arthur Paul Boers

sense that mainline [church] leaders feel dispirited. Evangelical leaders seem more entrepreneurial, willing to fail, learn from failures. There seems to be more of a grace theology versus a perfection theology” often found among Mennonites. As his spiritual mentor Henry Nouwen used to tell him, “Here in the monastery we fall down, we get up, we fall down, we get up.”

Boers underlines the point that “leaders learn from failures and from reflection on failures.”

A faith crisis at the time of his sister’s untimely death when he was 20 has made him open to the need for leaders to not have all the answers, to be teachable, to learn from crises and difficult experiences, key abilities in these postmodern times.

In the meantime, Boers continues his focus on spirituality, melding Evangelical, Anabaptist, and Roman Catholic elements.

His most recent book, *The Way is Made by Walking*, reports on the learning he did on a pilgrimage along the Camino de Santiago in Spain. ❧

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FOCUS ON BOOKS&RESOURCES

Manitoba and beyond

Mennonite writers gather to discuss the past, present and uncertain future of their particular literary genre

BY MIKE DUERKSEN
Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
WINNIPEG

Manitoba's vast and expansive prairie landscape may be known as the stomping ground for Mennonite settlers, immigrants and close-knit communities, but the fertile soil also has something else to offer.

Over the last 60 years, it has proven to foster a rich and vibrant Mennonite writing fraternity that was celebrated during the fifth international Mennonite/s Writing: Manitoba & Beyond conference at the University of Winnipeg (UW). The event, organized through the partnership

of UW and Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., ran from Oct. 1-4. It featured the presentation of scholarly papers, readings and panel discussions about the past, present and future of Mennonite literature, and culminated with a scenic bus tour visiting the bucolic landscape and sights that inspired the writings of many famous Mennonite prairie authors.

"The real place of literary fertility are the Mennonite communities in southern Manitoba," said Royden Loewen, co-organizer of the event and chair of Mennonite Studies at UW. "There's probably no other place in North America that has such a concentration of nationally renowned Mennonite writers."

Award-winning authors like Al Reimer, Rudy Wiebe, Sarah Klassen, Di Brandt and David Bergen interacted with the crowd of about 100 throughout the weekend.

Although Manitoba writing was at the core of the event, the conference had a larger threefold goal. "The purpose was to keep memories alive among Mennonites, to use the skills of literary interpretation

to understand Mennonites better, and to convey our traditions by speaking to the wider world," Loewen said.

Uprootedness and suffering

Much of the writing discussed came out of past suffering and tension: either Mennonite immigrants meeting Canadian culture and trying to manage it, or people finding themselves on the margins of their church communities.

"There's an uprootedness. If you look at really good Canadian literature, it tends to be

written by immigrants who feel uprooted," said Loewen.

Al Reimer can identify. Growing up with Russian immigrant parents in rural Manitoba, the famed author recalls being embarrassed by his heritage. "I was ashamed of being Mennonite. I wanted to be a natural Canadian. The Mennonites weren't part of the mainstream Canadian society," Reimer said, adding, "They had their own unique religious customs and they didn't speak the language of the country."

After a trip to Russia in 1971, Reimer confronted his heritage and changed his attitude. He embraced the Mennonite faith and started writing the historical novel, *My Harp is Turned to Mourning*.

Rudy Wiebe paved the way for Mennonite writers early on with the 1962 publication of his *Peace Shall Destroy Many*, but it wasn't until the late 1980s and early '90s that other writers came out of the woodwork.

That's when Winnipeg-based Turnstone Press began publishing the works of Reimer, Klassen, Brandt, Armin Wiebe and others—writings that often grappled with larger spiritual questions previously avoided by the church.

Coming from an oral storytelling tradition, imaginative self-aware Mennonites started realizing their potential as purveyors of the written craft.

"There was a flourishing of the concept of multiculturalism in Canada, and a growing understanding of what Canadian



Wiebe



Reimer

PHOTO BY HILDI FROESE TIESSEN



Participants on the Mennonite/s Writing bus tour through southern Manitoba gather at the site of the first landing of Mennonite settlers in western Canada, ready to listen to David Bergen read from one of his books.

PHOTO BY HILDI FROESE TIESSEN

culture was all about, and that everybody could contribute to it," Wiebe said in an interview. "Becoming a writer was not an odd thing to do anymore."

A complex love

Since then, the Mennonite writing fraternity has grown into a veritable force on the Canadian literary landscape. Known for confident and questioning voices, Mennonite authors like Miriam Toews and Bergen are now considered among Canada's best novelists.

However, the writings have changed. Current Mennonite writers have left the rural communities of their parents and grandparents, and moved to the city.

"They look back at their upbringing in those close-knit communities, and there's a certain pathos they identify," said Loewen. "There's kind of an attraction and repulsion at the same time. There's a love with a certain complexity."

According to Reimer and Wiebe, there is also a detachment from their church and their heritage.

"More and more, Mennonite writers are not living Mennonite ethnic lives. They want to be known as Canadian writers more than Mennonite writers," Reimer said.

"One of the things that's obvious among Mennonite writers nowadays is that many of them don't have that particular commitment to a particular church anymore," Wiebe said. "The concept of being 'Mennonite' is in some ways disappearing more and more."

A bleak future?

A key part of the conference was a panel discussion and roundtable aimed at discussing the future of Mennonite writing in Canada.

In the face of a growing trend to subvert traditional values in the Mennonite narrative, the writing fraternity seems to have hit a fork in the road. Different engagements of writing leave some authors worried about the fate of Mennonite history in literature.

According to Loewen, subversion is just another way of keeping the memories alive. "Just by naming it, by keeping it in our conversation, no matter how the conversation



Author David Bergen reads from his work at the site of the first landing of Mennonite settlers in Western Canada.

goes, we are maintaining the Mennonite heritage," he said. "The moment you debate something, you keep it alive."

Wiebe, however, offered stark, sobering comments. "The future looks pretty bleak to me," he said in a panel discussion. "If we stop exploring our ancestors, what is there left for us?"

He added his concern for the complete disappearance of Mennonite heritage: "The kind of unique world we have talked about so far is in danger of disappearing in our multicultural world."

Reimer is also apprehensive.

"It's just a matter of time before Mennonite writing disappears as such," he said. "It is a rich heritage, and I think there will still be people in a couple of generations that will look back—but they won't be living the ethnicity any more."

Others, like Mennonite historian John J. Friesen, see a niche in the collective lived Mennonite experience not yet explored. "The stories of South American Mennonite immigrants remain largely untold," he said in the panel discussion. "There's powerful stories that could be told there." ❧

Fall 2009 Listing of Books & Resources



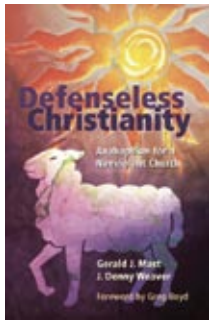
Herald Press, 2009, 211 pages. Marian Franz, who worked tirelessly at conscientious objection to military taxes, is remembered in this book. It includes many short essays by Franz herself, as well as essays by her colleagues.

Theology, Spirituality

Defenseless Christianity: Anabaptism for a Nonviolent Church.

Gerald J. Mast and J. Denny Weaver. Cascadia Publishing House and Herald Press, 2009, 135 pages.

Mast and Weaver present their case that nonviolence is basic to the Christian life. The attitude of defencelessness taught by the Anabaptists is still necessary for Christ-followers today.



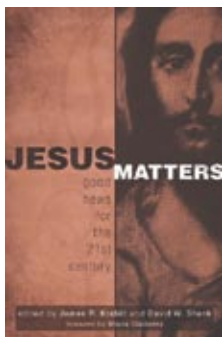
First Be Reconciled: Challenging Christians in the Courts.

Richard P. Church. Herald Press, 2009, 232 pages. Church declares that how Christians resolve disputes is an important witness to the world. He examines the traditional Mennonite interpretation of I Corinthians 6 and suggests that all Christians should try to avoid using the courts to settle disputes.

Jesus Matters: Good News for the Twenty-First Century.

James Krabill and David W. Shenk. Herald Press, 2009, 250 pages. This collection of essays by well-known teachers in the Mennonite Church explores

why Jesus matters for us today. The writers were paired with youths and young adults, so that it is a conversation across generations. Questions are included in each chapter and the book can be used for young adult discussion groups.



Kingdom Culture: Growing the Missional Church.

Phil M. Wagler. Word Alive Press, 2009, 157 pages.

In 11 chapters, Wagler outlines what a congregation should be and do in order to be missional and oriented toward God's kingdom. Each chapter has questions for reflection and discussion. The book is designed to develop maturity among Christian congregations.



Mutual Treasure: Seeking Better Ways for Christians and Culture to Converse.

Harold Heie and Michael A. King, eds. Cascadia Publishing and Herald Press, 2009, 205 pages. The 10 essays in this collection reflect on how Christians interact with the culture of the world around them.

Nightwatch: An Inquiry into Solitude.

Robert Rhodes. Good Books, 2009, 202 pages. From 1995-2002, Rhodes and his family were part of a Hutterite colony. He reflects on his own spiritual journey, which drew him to join the colony, and provides insight into Hutterite spirituality.



A Persistent Voice: Marian Franz and Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation.

David R. Bassett, Steve Ratzlaff and Tim Godshall, eds. Cascadia Publishing and

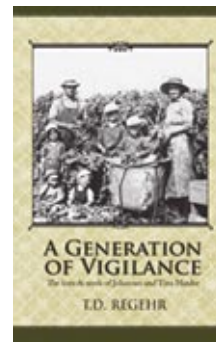
History

Felix Mendelssohn: Out of the Depth of His Heart.

Helen Martens. Annotation Press, 2009, 346 pages. Martens, a retired professor of music at Conrad Grebel University College, has translated thousands of Mendelssohn letters from old Gothic German. She has written a biography of the composer showing the accomplishments and struggles of his personal life.

A Generation of Vigilance: The Lives and Work of Johannes and Tina Harder.

T. D. Regehr, CMU Press, 2009, 335 pages. This biography is the fourth major project of the Yarrow Research Committee. Johannes Harder led the Yarrow Mennonite Brethren Church in British Columbia from 1930-48 and was very active in the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church.



A Glorious Disaster: A.D. 1100 to 1300, The Crusades: Blood, Valor, Iniquity, Reason, Faith.

Ted Byfield, ed. The Society to Explore and Record Christian History, Edmonton, 2008, 288 pages. Volume VII of *The Christians: Their First Two Thousand Years* is a large, hardcover book with many illustrations in colour. The Christian History Project is intended to describe the history of Christianity in 12 volumes. Visit ChristianHistoryProject.com.

The Schoenbrunn Chronicles: 75 Years in the Paraguayan Chaco.

Compiled by Agnes

Balzer and Lieselotte Dueck (2005), translated by Henry and Esther Regehr. Sweetwater Books, 2009, 363 pages.

When the village of Schoenbrunn in the Fernheim Colony celebrated its 75th anniversary, a collection of stories, poems and pictures was published. Henry and Esther Regehr translated the book into English so that others could access this excellent history of Mennonite life in Paraguay. It is available at hregehr@sentex.net or by writing the Regehers at J-512 Albert St., Waterloo, ON N2L 3V4.

Worship at 'George Street': A History of our Transitions at W-K United Mennonite Church, 1924-2008. Karl Dick. Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church, 2008, 270 pages.

This large hardcover book contains a comprehensive history of the congregation and includes many illustrations and anecdotes.

Why Little Abraham Came to Canada: Tracing the Long Journey of our Mennonite People. David Suderman. Privately published, 2008, 168 pages.

Suderman tells the story of Mennonites coming to Manitoba in the 1870s so that his family can know its roots. Using an informal style, he connects the Mennonite story to world events at the time. Copies can be ordered from David Suderman, Box 1664, Carman, MB R0G 0J0.

You Never Gave Me a Name: One Mennonite Woman's Story. Katie Funk

Wiebe. DreamSeeker Books, Cascadia Publishing and Herald Press, 2009, 279 pages.

Katie Funk Wiebe reflects on the story of her life as a writer, beginning with her student days at Mennonite Brethren Bible

College in Winnipeg and her childhood in Saskatchewan. Throughout her years as a wife and widow, she struggled to find her own voice in what she considered a man's world.

Other Books

Building Bridges: Meditations by Wilmer Martin. Wilmer Martin. Masthof Press, 2009, 156 pages.

Many of the meditations in this collection are based on incidents from Martin's life, either his growing-up years, his years as a pastor in Pennsylvania and Ontario, or from his travels in his work with Habitat for Humanity and TourMagination.

The Emerging Millennials: How Canada's Newest Generation is Responding to Change & Choice. Reginald W. Bibby. Project Canada Books, 2009, 233 pages.

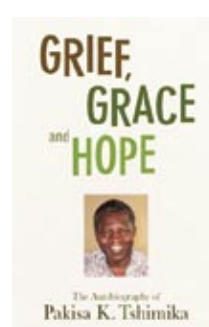
Bibby reports on his 2008 research on today's teenagers and compares them to the Baby Boom generation. Although the world has changed dramatically in some ways, Bibby believes the news from today's teenagers is positive.

Flying Canada: Fifty Years of Flying the Northland and Beyond. Clair Schnupp. Privately published, 2009.

Schnupp reflects on his years of flying in the Canadian north to teach biblical counseling. He is the founder of Northern Youth Programs, a Mennonite organization that works with aboriginal communities. Call 807-

937-4421 or e-mail nym@nymministries.com.

Grief, Grace and Hope: The Autobiography of Pakisa K.



Tshimika. Pakisa K. Tshimika. Good Books, 2009, 208 pages.

Tshimika was born in Kajiji, Congo, the son of a Mennonite Brethren pastor. Today, he lives in California and works for Mennonite World

Conference. His life has not been easy, but he lives with grace and hope as he works for God's kingdom.

He Flew Too High. Ken Yoder Reed.

Winepress Publishing, 2009, 350 pages.

Set in a fictitious Mennonite community in Pennsylvania, this novel tells the story of how Saul MacNamara tried to bring a spiritual revival to the Mennonite

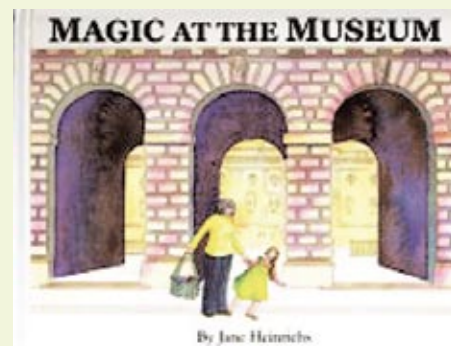


Briefly noted

Winnipeg book store hosts reading by Mennonite author/illustrator

On Sept. 10, Jane Heinrichs had a reading and signing of her recently released children's book, *Magic at the Museum*. "It has long been a dream of mine to have a reading at McNally Robinson Booksellers in Winnipeg," said Heinrichs, whose book was short-listed for "Best Illustrated Book" at the Manitoba Book Awards 2008. Now that dream has become a reality. "I read the book aloud, and then I revealed some of the original sketches and illustrations, as well as a few secrets about the book," she told *Canadian Mennonite*. "The event had a magical story-time atmosphere." Following the launch and signing, *Magic at the Museum* jumped to the top of the Winnipeg book charts, making it an exciting time for Heinrichs.

—BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU



Church in the 1950s. Although he was married to the bishop's daughter, his efforts were not received with enthusiasm by the church leaders.

A Hundred Camels: A Mission Doctor's Sojourn and Murder Trial in Somalia.

Gerald L. Miller, with Shari Miller Wagner. Cascadia Publishing and Herald Press, 2009, 228 pages.

In the early 1970s, Miller and his family spent a year in East Africa while he served as a mission doctor in Somalia. Many years later, he reflects on his discoveries about Somali culture and how he responded to an accusation of murder.



A Piece of Forever. Laurel Dee Gugler. James Lorimer & Co., 2008, 164 pages.

This story, designed for children aged six to 10, explores the feelings of a young Mennonite girl who searches to understand peace and non-resistance.

Resources

Beyond Our Fears: Following Jesus in Times of Crisis. Pam Driedger. Faith & Life Press, 2009, 96 pages.



This book is intended to help congregations prepare for a flu pandemic, but it can also be used by individuals or for a group study. A leader's guide is also available.

Just One More Day:

Meditations for Those Who Struggle with Anxiety and Depression. Beverlee Buller Keck. Kindred Productions, 2009, 212 pages.

The 40 short chapters in this book are written as meditations in which the author speaks from her personal experience in dealing with anxiety and depression. Scripture passages, action steps and journal pages for personal reflection are also included.

What is Iran? A Primer on Culture, Politics and Religion. Laura Blanton Pierce. Herald Press and MCC, 2009, 96 pages.

This book outlines Anabaptist involvement in Iran, providing insight into the historical, religious and political situation there.

DVDs

Bridging the Gap: Conversations on Befriending our Gay Neighbours. New Direction Ministries, 2009, 2 discs, 3 hours.

This resource of four sessions, designed for groups to discuss how Jesus wants us to treat our gay neighbours, comes with a facilitator's guide. The DVD avoids the extremes in this debate, but wrestles with the issue, using stories from Christians who have experienced same-sex attraction. Among the commentators are Tony Campolo and Bruxy Cavey.

From Harm to Hope: Standing with Cluster Bomb Survivors. MCC, 2009, 21 minutes.

As well as identifying what cluster bombs are, this DVD tells the story of how MCC has been assisting victims of cluster bombs. Available in English or Spanish, it is suitable for viewers from Grade 9 to adult.

Pax Service: An Alternative to War. Mennonite Media, 2008, 43 minutes.

This DVD tells the story of 1,200 young men who chose alternative service rather than military service and served with the Pax program in 40 countries from 1951-76. It comes with a discussion guide and is suitable for viewers from youth to adult.

Restorative Justice: Rooted in Respect. MCC U.S., 2009, 20 minutes.

This DVD explores how perspectives about victims and perpetrators of crime and violence have changed, and describes the importance of restorative justice in building community and restoring relationships.

Taking Action Against AIDS. MCC, 2009, 20 minutes.

As well as stories about people affected by HIV and AIDS, this DVD describes the work MCC is doing with youths in Uganda, Zambia, Swaziland and Nepal who educate their peers. It is suitable for viewers from Grade 11 to adult.

—Compiled by Barb Draper,
Books&Resources editor

/// Briefly noted

Submissions wanted for new book on living simply and sustainably

WATERLOO, ONT.— The authors of a new Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN) book, *Simply Sustainable*, want to know what people are doing to make the world a better and more sustainable place to live. "This book will be more than learning how to lessen one's ecological footprint," says co-author Mark Beach. "The book will encourage readers to make choices based on a value system firmly rooted in a spiritual commitment, connectedness to others, and a sense that we all are part of something greater than ourselves." Beach and Mary Beth Lind, who co-authored the *Simply in Season Cookbook for Children* (Herald Press, 2006), are working together again. "Using local seasonal foods was just one step on a longer journey," Lind says. "It continues with thinking about how we carry the principles of caring for creation and community into all of our lives—not just food. *Simply Sustainable* is that next step." Categories people can write about include food, cleaning, energy conservation, fair trade, money and barter, and recycling, as well as physical, spiritual and mental health and other topics. *Simply Sustainable* is scheduled for release in the fall of 2010. To offer a submission, or to learn more about the book, visit www.simply-sustainable.org.

—Mennonite Publishing Network Release

VIEWPOINT

Publishing in tough times

BY RON REMPEL

Two years ago we invited people across our church to join us in celebrating the final payment in a long journey of debt elimination by Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN). In a period of about six years, MPN, through a combined effort involving many people, repaid a debt of more than \$5 million. We still feel deep appreciation for the support and contributions

sales. We set what we believed to be realistic sales targets.

We also put in place measures to stimulate sales: hiring a director of marketing and sales, and planning for an expanded version of *Simply in Season* accompanied by an extensive marketing and sales plan this fall. We scheduled a range of new resources and books to be released in the spring, in time for the

private.

We are stepping up marketing efforts by improving the usability and searchability of the MPN web store, planning for greater use of e-mail to notify congregations and members of new and existing resources, and establishing gift certificate capability. Resource centres and conference-based resource advocates are being creative in highlighting new resources wherever possible, resources produced by MPN and also by other parts of our church.

We hope these measures will prove to be sufficient. If not, we will take additional measures to remain financially viable so we can continue to fulfill the publishing mission mandated by the church: to help equip the church to experience and share the gospel of Jesus Christ from an Anabaptist perspective.

We are sharing these challenges in order to be transparent about MPN's financial picture and to invite your prayers and support. Amidst the sea of books and resources available to you and your congregation are those produced by your own denominational publisher. As you consider resources for your church to use, please look first at what is available from MPN.

Take advantage of opportunities to provide feedback and counsel on what is most needed to help you and all members of your congregation to be grounded in the faith, and to share God's good news at home, in your congregations, across the street and around the world. ☯

[T]he economic downturn is hitting us—and many other publishers—harder than anticipated. So far this year, sales of congregational resource materials are slightly above budget, but sales of books have continued to decline and are about 20 percent below budget.

of individuals and congregations during that time.

We were optimistic as we prepared the budget for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2009. In response to a board request to start building reserves, we developed a budget with a projected reserve of 1 percent of sales. For the first six months of the year, we got close to sales targets and it looked as though we would end the year with a small reserve.

Then the recession hit in the summer and fall of 2008. Sales softened on all fronts, but particularly through the book retail outlets. We ended the year with an overall loss of \$270,500 on total sales of \$3.28 million. About half of the loss was due to non-cash charges such as depreciation and inventory adjustments. The remaining portion of the loss decreased MPN's cash reserves.

In January of this year, as we finalized the budget for the current fiscal year (Feb. 1, 2009, to Jan. 31, 2010), we knew the year would be tough. In this year's budget, we cut overhead costs by eliminating some positions and trimmed expenses we believed were the least likely to affect

Mennonite Church Canada assembly in early June and the MC USA convention in early July. The enthusiastic response and robust sales at both events confirmed the timeliness and relevance of these materials.

However, the economic downturn is hitting us—and many other publishers—harder than anticipated. So far this year, sales of congregational resource materials are slightly above budget, but sales of books have continued to decline and are about 20 percent below budget. Given MPN's limited reserves, we are particularly concerned about an extremely tight cash situation as we set limits on how far to draw on a line of credit.

This fall, we are taking several short-term measures to cut costs and to bring in extra cash, while waiting for longer-term sales stimulus measures to take effect. For example, all staff are taking a two-week "pay furlough" (two weeks off without pay). We regret having to institute measures such as this. At the same time, we're aware of similar steps being taken by other church agencies and by other companies, whether public or



Ron Rempel is executive director of Mennonite Publishing Network, the publishing agency of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA.

Engaging readers with God's story

Sharon K. Williams and Carol Duerksen begin new assignments with 'Adult Bible Study,' *Purpose* in October

BY JOHN LONGHURST

Mennonite Publishing Network Release
WATERLOO, ONT. AND SCOTTDALE, PA.

Sharon K. Williams believes that Bible study is an important part of Christian life and discipleship. That's why she's looking forward to her new assignment as editor of "Adult Bible Study," produced by Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN).

For Carol Duerksen, being named editor of *Purpose* magazine is an "exciting opportunity to help people find ways to make their faith practical for their daily lives."

Williams and Duerksen replace the retiring James E. Horsch, who had edited "Adult Bible Study" and *Purpose* since 1984. They began their new assignments in October.

"Studying the Bible with fellow believers in the faith community is an important spiritual discipline for Anabaptists," says Williams. "My goal is to assist leaders and Bible study groups as they engage with God's story and vision, challenging their personal lives and congregational mission."

Williams, of Norristown, Pa., holds a double degree in Christian education and music from Messiah College and a master of divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. She has served two co-pastorates and as a conference staff person for Franconia Mennonite Conference, and currently is the minister of worship at Nueva Vida Norristown New Life Mennonite Church. She is also a member of the congregation's Stand Together Ministry Team, which works at deepening the church's understanding of anti-racism and cultural bias to strengthen its mission.

Duerksen, a member of Tabor Mennonite Church, edited *With Magazine* for 18 years,

and is a writer and editor for Gather 'Round, as well as other Christian education curricula. She is the co-author with her husband, Maynard Knepp, of nine self-published Amish novels and two children's books, and she co-authored a devotional book, *Now It Springs Up*, with Michele Hershberger and Laurie Oswald Robinson.



Duerksen



Williams

"Adult Bible Study" provides a quarterly study of the Bible from an Anabaptist perspective. Lessons are based on the "International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching" by the Committee on the

Uniform Series. In addition to weekly lessons, "Adult Bible Study" also offers daily Bible readings, a weekly online essay and suggested resources for additional study.

Founded in 1968, *Purpose* is a monthly magazine that features inspirational articles, illustrations and poetry that encourage Christians in their daily walk with Christ, along with regular columns on food, peace, humour and resources for faithful living. ❧

/// Briefly noted

Martyrs Mirror continues to find new readers

The goal of every publisher is to make sure there are new books for readers to buy—books that address current issues, topics and situations. So it may come as a surprise to learn that one of the most popular books from Herald Press, the book division of Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN), is almost 350 years old. *Martyrs Mirror* is a timeless classic about the persecution and martyrdom of Christians from the time of Christ to the 16th century, with a special emphasis on the suffering of Anabaptists in Europe. Published in 1660 in Holland by Thieleman J. van Braght to strengthen the faith of other believers, the book graphically recounts the torture and death of more than 4,000 Christians. Altogether, MPN has sold more than 72,000 copies of *Martyrs Mirror*, including an order for 500 this year from Pathway Publishers, a distributor and publisher in Ontario that serves Amish and conservative Mennonite communities. Since 1995, Pathway has ordered more than 7,000 copies of the book. But it's not just people from those groups who buy the book; almost 800 copies have been sold through Amazon.

—Mennonite Publishing Network Release

Historical society establishes publication fund

The Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario is establishing a fund offering financial assistance for publication of research projects that enhance the study of Mennonite history in Ontario. In 1992 the society initiated the J. Winfield Fretz Awards for studies in Ontario history, offering monetary awards for essays based on original research. Fretz, the first president of Conrad Grebel College, was the instigator and the first president of the historical society. Over the years, various essays received awards, but the range of contributors seemed limited, and so the society has decided to take a new approach to illuminating the experiences of Mennonites in Ontario while still honouring the name of J. Winfield Fretz. The fund is available to individuals or charitable organizations planning to publish research as a book or film. Proposals will be assessed by the society and normally a maximum of \$2,000 will be available per project. Inquiries should be submitted to mhso@watserv1.uwaterloo.ca.

—Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario Release

BOOK REVIEW

A subtle negativity towards Evangelicals

Through a Lens Darkly: How the News Media Perceive and Portray Evangelicals.

David M. Haskell, Clements Publishing, 2009, 289 pages.

REVIEWED BY BARB DRAPER

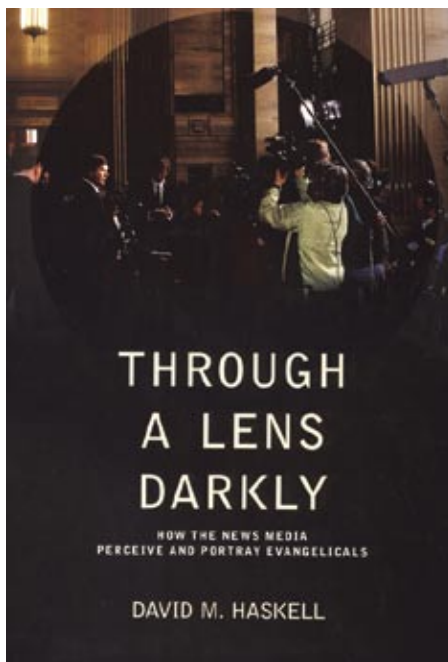
David Haskell's research into how the Canadian media portray Evangelicals brought him to the conclusion that journalists tend to be negative about Evangelicals and that "the majority of news personnel characterized the specific religious beliefs and social positions of Evangelicals as foreign at best, and offensive at worst" (page 161).

Haskell, who teaches journalism at the Brantford, Ont., campus of Wilfrid Laurier University, analyzed 11 years of news reports from CBC, CTV and Global. He also cites many other studies of journalism and religion in Canada. He found the negativity towards Evangelicals—Mennonite Church Canada is a member of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada—to be very subtle, and suggests that it is because journalists tend to have a different worldview than Evangelicals. Journalists value pluralism and tolerance, but ironically they have trouble being tolerant of the "absolute truth" espoused by Evangelicals, he writes. They are most negative when "Evangelicals' beliefs and values directly contradicted their own heart-felt convictions about what constitutes right and wrong within a just society" (page 171).

Although Canadian journalists are taught to be objective, they lose that objectivity when they are reporting on a group whose values are so different from their own, writes Haskell. He cites many examples of how journalists cover good

news stories about the charity work of Evangelicals, but they rarely include the motivation for why the work is done.

Haskell has done a thorough job in presenting his research, complete with a variety of graphs and charts. Some of the information is technical and some readers may want to skip the chapter that explains in detail the framework of his research; however, the book has an easy-to-read style as it describes how and why most journalists in Canada do not understand Evangelicals. ❧



Journalists value pluralism and tolerance, but ironically they have trouble being tolerant of the 'absolute truth' espoused by Evangelicals.

MENNONITE PUBLISHING NETWORK PHOTO



Wendy Hammond of Grand Rapids, Mich., has a new blog, "Simply Me: A year of eating locally, mindfully and simply," that chronicles her goal of making every recipe in *Simply in Season* (Herald Press, 2005) in a year. She began in August. Averaging four to five recipes a week, she notes, though, that "this isn't a competition. It's about learning to eat locally, mindfully, and simply. It's also supposed to be fun, and a way to encourage other people to consider using *Simply in Season*." Visit Hammond's blog at wendypchef.wordpress.com.

BOOK REVIEW

Novel offers believable view of Mennonite life circa 1950s

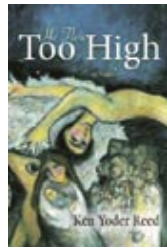
He Flew Too High.

Ken Yoder Reed. Winepress Publishing, 2009, 350 pages.

REVIEWED BY BARB DRAPER

This novel, written by the author of *Mennonite Soldier*, is set in a fictitious Mennonite community in Pennsylvania in the 1950s. Saul MacNamara grew up in a military family, but was attracted by Mennonite beliefs so he joined the Mennonite church and married the bishop's daughter. The novel describes his struggles to find his way within a staunch Mennonite community.

The main character feels called by God to preach in the Mennonite church after he



has a profound spiritual experience. The title comes from the Greek myth in which Daedalus warns Icarus not to fly too high because the heat is scorching. When Saul tries to lead a spiritual revival in the Mennonite church he finds that flying too high leads to disaster.

The characters and setting of this novel are very believable. The reader will wonder exactly where in Pennsylvania the Kittochtinny Valley is located because the characters and descriptions of the Mennonite community are so convincing. While the book is advertised as a "suspense novel," the plot is not as strong as the characters and setting. The novel

The reader will wonder exactly where in Pennsylvania the Kittochtinny Valley is located because the . . . descriptions of the Mennonite community are so convincing.

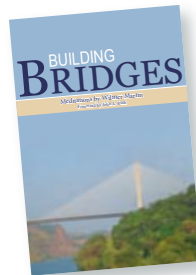
He Flew Too High

A New Suspense Novel set in the Pennsylvania Dutch Country by the author of the classic novel, Mennonite Soldier
Ken Yoder Reed

(See Review in this paper)

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explores some interesting themes, such as how the Mennonite church of the 1950s struggled to deal with leadership issues, the shift away from cultural seclusion and manifestations that some believe came from the Holy Spirit. Reed successfully shows the emotional impact of these and

other issues.

Readers who understand Pennsylvania Dutch will find the few words in that language really bring out a Mennonite flavour. Others will be puzzled because Reed does not provide English translations. The picture on the front cover is also puzzling, as

it gives no hint of its Mennonite contents. This book is well worth reading, though, if only because it gives a good picture of Mennonite life in the 1950s. ❧

Barb Draper is the Books&Resources editor for Canadian Mennonite.

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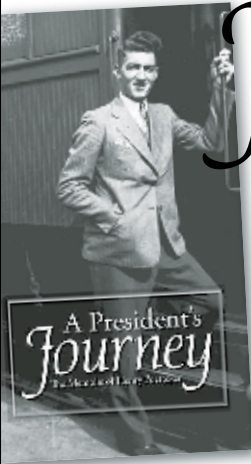
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GERALD GERBRANDT, PRESIDENT,
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2009; 230 pages; \$26.50

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w i n d o w

A M B S

Seeking to form missional leaders

David B. Miller, D.Min.

“As the Father sent me, so I send you ...” (John 20:21). Over the last decade, the language and priorities of the missional church have been embraced and promoted by both Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. On more than one occasion I have been asked, “Is this simply a new form of mennospeak?” Not so. A quick search of Internet sources reveals that this language and vision has entered the speech, identity and priorities of most Christian traditions in North America.

Others ask if missional church is simply the latest fad language adopted in an attempt to reinvigorate religious fervor and prevent the demise of old institutions. To the contrary: Missional church vision begins by acknowledging ways the church has domesticated its witness since the time of Constantine when it made significant compromises as it gained imperial favor. As a result, the church has too often served as “chaplain to the culture,” demonstrating little by way of transformation nor radical participation in the gospel. This critique, articulated early by Lesslie Newbigin (*Foolishness to the Greeks*), continues to raise

hard questions for the church.

Missional church vision is also constructive. The church finds its reason for being in the heart and mission of God whose purpose is to seek, to heal and to reconcile humanity and the whole created order. To this end, God sent the Son to announce and embody the good news of the reign of God in the world. Jesus continued this sending in his commissioning of the disciples who are commanded to breathe in and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (John 20:22) as the energizing and directing power of their apostleship. The life and teaching of Jesus

demonstrate the means of our witness. The church, the fruit of this Spirit-led apostolic witness, continues to exist—not as a religious shelter or fortress—but as a demonstration and signpost of the reign of God. All functions of the church are part of this witness in order that “the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.” (Ephesians 3:10)

AMBS faculty have been at the center of both denominational and ecumenical articulation of missional theology and vision. Through the larger missional church conversation, what we (continued on page 2)

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Volume 20 Issue 1

- 2 **Missional leadership: What we are learning**
- 3 **Congregations reach out to their neighborhoods**
Your gifts at work
- 4 **President's Window**
Shaping missional theology



Virginia Gerbrandt, student from Winnipeg, Man., talks with David Miller about her assignment as an intern at the Elkhart County jail.

Peter Ringenberg

Missional leadership: What we are learning

Lois Y. Barrett, Ph.D.

Since the book *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Darrell Guder et al., Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998) was published, many churches have caught the missional church vision and have been experimenting with missional change in congregational life. Here's a sample of what we have been learning in the past 11 years.

We aren't in Christendom anymore.

Christendom—that alliance between church and state, or church and culture—wasn't such a good idea in the first place. But in most of North America and many other places in the world, it isn't possible any more. The church can no longer expect special favors from government or from cultural norms. The number of North Americans of religions other than Christianity—or of no religion—has increased. We are beginning to see North America as a mission field. So, we're learning to apply the same tools of contextual analysis to the North American context that missionaries have been applying to overseas contexts for years.

Being missional is not just about outreach; it's also about congregational life.

We are learning that being missional is not just about proclaiming the reign of God in the world; it's also about being a sign of the reign of God "before the watching world." The church is called to

demonstrate, by the practices of its life together, what God's future will be like. A church that practices forgiveness or caring for the poor in its midst is a witness to the world.

We can be missional with the Spirit's guidance.

Discovering our missional vocation as a congregation isn't simply a matter of surveys and strategic planning. It involves listening to Christ's Spirit among us and entering into a process of spiritual discernment together. We are learning to be on the lookout for God's actions and messages in the present and we are pointing them out. We are learning to lay aside our pet projects and preconceived notions and say to God, "Not my will, but yours be done."

We can learn best with other congregations.

There are a few highly innovative congregations

that are able, on their own, to make the major change that becoming missional often requires. We learn best when we are involved in collaborative processes together with other congregations where there can be mutual encouragement and accountability. This is the point at which church agencies, schools and regional church bodies now have the opportunity to make a difference in making missional change a reality—by developing the kinds of collaborative processes so that congregations can become missional together.

*Lois Y. Barrett is director of the AMBS–Great Plains Extension in North Newton, Kan., and associate professor of theology and Anabaptist studies at AMBS. She is coauthor of *Missional Church* (Eerdmans, 1998) and *Treasure in Clay Jars; Patterns in Missional Faithfulness* (Eerdmans, 2004). ●*



Lois Barrett (right), a member of Mennonite Church of the Servant in Wichita, Kan., talks with Audrey Barrett, her mother, after a recent church service. Lois has been instrumental in shaping missional church theology for many years.

Seeking to form missional leaders

(continued from page 1)

may have been tempted to describe as "Anabaptist distinctives"—discipleship, visible community, reconciling service and Christian peacemaking—are being revisited and embraced across Christian traditions. In turn, this larger conversation has challenged Mennonites to break out of ethnic enclaves, to refuse isolationism and to engage the culture by being living witnesses to the gospel.

Perhaps AMBS's greatest contribution comes as we seek to live out our stated mission to serve ...

the church as a learning community with an Anabaptist vision, educating followers of Jesus Christ to be leaders for God's reconciling mission in the world. (AMBS Mission Statement)

Here we seek to form missional leaders, in classrooms and supervised ministry experiences, in the daily disciplines of Christian community and spiritual friendships, to lead the church's witness in the world.

This is our identity and our calling.

David B. Miller joined the AMBS faculty in summer as associate professor of missional leadership development. In this role, he directs the missional leadership development programs of AMBS and works with students doing ministry internships. Most recently David was pastor of University Mennonite Church, State College, Pa. See more about David at www.ambs.edu; select Academics, then Faculty, then the page for David. ●

Congregations reach out to their neighborhoods

Listening and Reflecting

Jim S. Amstutz, Akron Mennonite Church, Akron, Pa.

One of the challenges of missional leadership is always to be listening. We listen to one another, to God and to potential partners in mission. Then we reflect and ask the deeper questions. This summer, Akron Mennonite once again organized the popular Marketplace 29AD summer Bible School experience. Different this year was the fact that 50 of the 70 children who attended were from the local community. In the past, the numbers would have been reversed.

What made Marketplace so compelling that our members were willing to go out and invite 50 community children to attend? One answer is all the time and effort that more than 100 AMC adults were investing. In our culture of economism, we want a good return on our investment. This is a familiar framework of marketing the church and attracting others to us.

Was there more? A parent asked, "Don't we do this for our children because we believe it's important, no matter the numbers?" Another said, "We've never had to worry about having enough kids come before." We discovered how receptive community children were to the invitation.

Instead of seeing Marketplace as an event primarily for our children, we began exploring what might be repeatable, transferable and sustainable as we also reach out to our local context. Where is God leading? What are we learning?

Jim S. Amstutz, co-pastor of Akron Mennonite Church, Akron, Pa.; Master of Divinity, AMBS, 1987; Doctor of Ministry in Missional Leadership, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2008.

Music, food and fun in a Vancouver neighborhood

Ingrid Schultz, First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, B.C.

For several years our Outreach and Service Committee has planned a community BBQ to thank the community for being good neighbours and to let them know about the church's programs. This year the committee decided to partner with other south Vancouver churches and Kingcrest, an organization that brings five of our churches together to welcome newcomers to our neighbourhood. We offered English as a Second Language classes, a "Meaning of Life" class and an international dinner. We organized a block party where we had food, live music from musicians from all of our churches, tables letting people know about our churches' programs and activities for children provided by the young adults who run our after-school drop-in centre. Three hundred neighbours came, ate, visited and enjoyed the music. We all had a great time and once again saw the benefit of working together with other churches in reaching out to our neighbours in this diverse south Vancouver neighbourhood.

Ingrid Schultz, pastor at First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, B.C.; Master of Divinity, 1992. ●



Children in the neighborhood of Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church outnumbered children of the congregation at summer Bible school when they experienced Marketplace 29 AD.



Members of First Mennonite Church, Vancouver, B.C., mingle with neighbours at a summer barbecue hosted by churches in the south part of the city.

Your gifts at work

Forty-one percent of the seminary's support comes from donations, and most of these come from individuals, congregations and conferences. Ninety-five students (61 percent of our student body) are relying on these donations as they receive financial aid or scholarships totaling \$134,152 for fall semester.

One form of aid is a matching grant program. When a congregation or conference supports a

specific full-time student, AMBS matches the support, dollar for dollar, up to \$750 per semester, and matches additional support on a one-to-four basis up to the cost of tuition. This fall, 49 students are receiving aid directly from congregations and conferences. Undesignated gifts to the AMBS annual fund allow us to match the church and conferences gifts with \$27,233 this fall. ●

One of the principal changes in North American Mennonite reality in the last century is the re-awakening of the mission consciousness so characteristic of early Anabaptism. In the first half of the 1900s, mission was something "out there" which had limited impact on the sending congregations. On the home front, the church remained relatively separate from the outside world.

In the recent half century, since World War II, mission consciousness has gradually pushed us to more engagement with the larger world. Now mission is a two-way conversation in which the church itself is changed by the encounter. This is expressed in the current emphasis among us on the need to transform our established congregations into greater missional consciousness and mode of action.



At AMBS we are committed to support the vision of our constituent denominations to be missional churches. Our mission statement says we are about the task of "educating followers of Jesus Christ to be leaders for God's reconciling mission in the world." To that end we have, for example, called David B. Miller to a faculty position in Missional Leadership Development.

To be a missional church has its own challenges. To engage the world of unbelief and materialism is to raise the burning issue of

who is going to influence whom. Is our commitment to a counter-cultural gospel going to be a catalyst by which the Spirit transforms unconverted lives? Or will the spirit of the age with the allure of the world's values subvert the church?

The writers of in this issue of *AMBS Window* allude to another challenge. The mission of which we speak is not first of all the church's mission. It is God's mission and, therefore, in some sense that mission is larger than the people, structure and program of the church. Yet the church is, or at least should be, the primary sign of God's missional activity in the world. We don't just look beyond our walls to discern what God is doing "out there." If we cannot say, "Look to the people of God as the ideal for humanity," we are lacking in authenticity or nerve, or both. —George R. Brunk III ●

Shaping missional theology

The following faculty, past and present, have been influential in shaping missional theology for AMBS and the wider church.

- **John Howard Yoder**
The Politics of Jesus and *Body Politics: Five Practices of the Christian Community Before the Watching World* by John Howard Yoder have been essential to missional church thought and practice.
- **Wilbert Shenk**
Wilbert, a former professor of missiology, is widely recognized for leadership in fostering

the Gospel and Culture conversations in North America.

- **Alan and Eleanor Kreider:**
The Kreiders have helped to develop the missional conversation in United Kingdom. Alan is a retired professor and Eleanor serves periodically as sessional faculty.
- **Lois Barrett**
Serving as associate professor and director of AMBS—Great Plains, Lois was coauthor of *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Eerdmans

1998) and editor/coauthor of *Treasure in Clay Jars: Patterns of Missional Faithfulness* (Eerdmans 2004).

- **Walter Sawatsky**
Walter travels widely in Europe and Russia as a consultant. As director of the Mission Studies Center at AMBS he edits *Mission Focus: Annual Review*, a journal that fosters theological discussion and sharing of missional vision among scholars and mission workers. ●

Jerry Holsoffe (Master of Divinity 1987) is a Fulbright Scholar, teaching at LCC International University in Klaipeda, Lithuania, for the 2009–2010 year. He is professor of visual and communication arts at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Paul Heidebrecht (Master of Arts: Theological Studies 2000) is director of Mennonite Central Committee Canada's Ottawa (Ont.) office. In fall 2008, he earned a Ph.D. in religious studies from Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisc. He and Carmen Brubacher (MDiv 2000) and their family live in Ottawa.

The doctoral dissertation of **Weyburn W. Groff** (Bachelor of Divinity 1954; former faculty) has been published by the Institute of Mennonite Studies and Herald Press. The book is titled *Satyagraha and non-resistance: A comparative study of Gandhian and Mennonite nonviolence*.

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The purpose of *AMBS Window* is to invite readers to call people to leadership ministries, and to provide ways for readers to become involved with AMBS through financial support, prayer support and student recruiting.

Editor: Mary E. Klassen
Designer: Nekeisha Alexis-Baker

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Glenn Edward Witmer brings a deep sense of justice, the richness of Judaism, and appreciation of the biblical sites and stories with passion and insight. This is a rare combination in the Middle East. **Professor, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Virginia**

Glenn's wide range of personal contacts, both Israeli and Palestinian, made him an invaluable and exceptional guide.

Lecturer, Theology Department, Concordia University, Montreal

His reading of the Scriptures by the Sea of Galilee or the Jordan River, and places throughout our journeys, brought them to life, putting them in their historical setting.

Minister, United Church of Canada

Glenn has a wonderful ability to teach the Bible in the context of the Holy Land. He is also deeply knowledgeable about the life of the people living in the Holy Land today, both Israeli and Palestinian. **New Testament professor, Waterloo Lutheran University, Ontario**

After browsing through glossy travel brochures,

sometimes
the **Word** is Worth
a Thousand
Pictures

*Join me on a MennoJerusalem
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Calendar

British Columbia

Nov. 20-22: Youth Impact retreat at Camp Squeeah.

Dec. 5,6: Advent Vespers with Abendmusik Choir; Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford, 8 p.m. (5); Knox United Church, Vancouver, 8 p.m. (6). Donations to Menno Simons Centre.

Until Jan. 3, 2010: "A Common Thread: Textiles from Stolo First Nation, South Asian and Mennonite Communities" exhibition at the Reach Gallery, Abbotsford.

Alberta

Nov. 17-20: Church Planting Congress at Center Street Church, Calgary. MC Canada Witness encourages congregations to send reps; MC Alberta Missions Committee can help subsidize church costs. For more information, e-mail info@churchplantingcanada.ca.

Nov. 21: Menno Simons Christian School's 25th annual "Sweet Interlude" fundraiser; 6:15 p.m. Featuring High Valley, a contemporary Christian country group, before and after the cake auction. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call the school at 403-531-0745.

Nov. 22: Cowboy Church at Trinity Mennonite Church, Calgary. Join Doris Daley, Bryn Thiessen and many other cowboy friends for cowboy poetry, music and worship. For more information, call 403-256-7157.

Saskatchewan

Nov. 21: MC Saskatchewan leadership assembly.

Jan. 15-16, 2010: Prairie Winds worship and music retreat, "Encountering the unsung Jesus" at Shekinah Retreat Centre with Marlene Kropf and Ken Nafziger. Contact www.shekinahretreatcentre.org for information.

Feb. 12-13, 2010: MDS all unit meeting and gathering. Focus is on MDS's 60th anniversary through stories and worship. Visit mds.mennonite.net to register after Nov. 15, or call 1-866-261-1274. Daytime meetings at Warman Bergthaler Mennonite Church; banquet and program at Valley Christian Academy, Osler (12).

June 5-6, 2010: Aberdeen Mennonite Church centennial celebration.

Manitoba

Nov. 9: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate annual general meeting, at Westgate, 7 p.m.

Nov. 9: Mennonite Collegiate Institute annual general meeting.

Nov. 13-14: MCC Manitoba annual general meeting, "Caring in the Name of Christ for our Neighbours and God's Creation" at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg.

Nov. 13-15: Mini-quilting retreat at Camp Assiniboia.

Nov. 16: MC Manitoba fall delegate meeting, at Grace Mennonite Church, Steinbach, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Nov. 18-21: Meat canning for MCC in Winkler.

Nov. 19-21: Mennonite Collegiate Institute presents *Oliver Twist*.

Nov. 22: North Kildonan Mennonite Church Quartet presents its Advent concert, at the church, 7 p.m. *Near to the Heart of God* CD will be available at the concert.

Nov. 22: Mennonite Community Orchestra fall concert, featuring selections by Brahms, Haydn and Mendelssohn; CMU south campus; 3 p.m.

Nov. 29: Winnipeg First Mennonite Church Choir and Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Choir present Vivaldi's *Magnificat* and *Gloria*; First Mennonite Church; 7 p.m.

Dec. 3-5: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate senior high drama.

Dec. 7: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Christmas concert, at Westminster United Church, Winnipeg, 7 p.m.

Dec. 13: Join MCC Manitoba at Sam's Place, 159 Henderson Hwy, Winnipeg, for presentation and discussion "Christmas around the World."

Dec. 17, 18: Mennonite Collegiate Institute Christmas concert, (17) 7:30

p.m.; (18) 1:30 p.m.

Jan. 15-17, 2010: MMYO senior youth retreat at Camp Koinonia.

Jan. 22-24, 2010: MMYO junior youth retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

Jan. 28-29, 2010: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate junior high presentation of three one-act plays, at the Franco-Manitoban Centre, Winnipeg.

Feb. 3, 2010: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate open house, 7 p.m.

Feb. 5, 2010: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate and Mennonite Collegiate Institute gala event, at Westminster United Church, Winnipeg.

Feb. 5-7, 2010: MMYO junior youth retreat at Camp Koinonia.

Feb. 7, 2010: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate and Mennonite Collegiate Institute gala event, at Buhler Hall, Gretna.

Feb. 12-14, 2010: Young adult retreat at Camp Koinonia.

Ontario

Nov. 8: "Building bridges, not walls," featuring keynote speaker Bishara Awad, president of Bethlehem Bible College and a former MCC worker in Palestine, plus Palestinian music and the local Inshallah Choir; at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener; from 6-8:30 p.m.

Nov. 10: "Aging and faith: A peace

that endureth or a cry in the desert?" Keynote speaker: Dr. Marianne Mellinger, coordinator of spirituality and aging at the RBJ Schlegel-University of Waterloo Research for Aging; at Greenwood Court Auditorium, Stratford; 7 p.m. For more information, call 519-662-2718.

Nov. 10-14: Ten Thousand Villages sale, Old Town Hall, Aylmer; 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. (10, 11), 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. (12, 13), 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (14). For more information, call 519-765-3020 or e-mail anni@mcson.org.

Nov. 13: "Spirituality and palliative care: An interdisciplinary approach to the end of life"; Keynote speaker: Dr. Pippa Hall, University of Ottawa; Conrad Grebel Great Hall.

Nov. 14: MCC Ontario annual meeting at Eden High School, 535 Lake St., St. Catharines. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Colombia fundraising dinner at St. Catharines United Mennonite Church, 6:30 p.m. To register, visit mcc.org/ontario or call 905-646-3161.

Nov. 14: Foundation Christian School, Winterbourne, presents "Winterbourne Wonderland" Christmas tea and marketplace; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, e-mail onarock.ca.

Nov. 14: Marriage Encounter annual meeting, Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church, 5 p.m. Potluck supper.

Nov. 14, 15: DaCapo Chamber Choir presents "Cry out: Music of lament and the struggle for hope" and the release of the choir's latest recording, *ShadowLand*; St. John the Evangelist Church, Kitchener; 8 p.m. (14), 3 p.m. (15).

Nov. 21: Mennonite genealogy seminar, "The Mennonite DNA Project," at Vineland United Mennonite Church, 2 p.m. For more information, call Henry at 519-669-5552.

Nov. 21: Nithview Auxiliary annual Christmas Tea and Bake Sale, Nithview Home, New Hamburg; 2 to 4 p.m. Features include tea room, crafts, home baking and apple dumplings.

Nov. 21: Grand Philharmonic Choir presents "Advent in Leipzig; St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener; 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 27: Benjamin Eby Lecture, Conrad Grebel chapel; 7:30 p.m. Keynote speaker: Laura Gray. Topic: "The idea of 'North': Sibelius, Gould and imaginary

landscapes."

Dec. 5, 6: Pax Christi Chorale presents "Christmas Splendour" at Grace Church-on-the-Hill, Toronto, 7:30 p.m. (5), 3 p.m. (6).

Dec. 5: Grand Philharmonic Choir presents Handel's *Messiah*; Centre in the Square, Kitchener; 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 6: Steve Bell performs with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra, Centre in the Square, 6 p.m. Featuring music from Bell's *Symphony Sessions* CD and new arrangements of songs for Advent and Christmas.

Dec. 13: Menno Singers present "Christmas: Lessons and Carols," St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, 3 p.m. For more information, visit mennosingers.com.

Jan. 16, 2010: Grand Philharmonic Choir present Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*; Centre in the Square, Kitchener; 7:30 p.m.

March 6, 2010: Menno Singers present Rachmaninoff's "Vespers," St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, 8 p.m. For more information, visit mennosingers.com.

March 20, 2010: Grand Philharmonic Choir presents "A Springtime Choral Potpourri" with the Grand Philharmonic Chamber Singers; St. George Hall, Waterloo; 7:30 p.m.

March 25-26, 2010: Bechtel Lectures in Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies; Conrad Grebel Great Hall; 7:30 p.m. each evening. Keynote speaker: James Harder, Bluffton College, Ohio, president. Topic: "Mennonites and development: The impact of the current economic crisis on our communities, countries and churches."

April 2, 2010: Grand Philharmonic Choir presents Bach's *Mass in B Minor*; Centre in the Square, Kitchener; 7:30 p.m.

April 24, 25, 2010: Pax Christi Chorale presents Mozart's *Requiem* at Grace Church-on-the-Hill, Toronto, 7:30 p.m. (24), 3 p.m. (25).

May 8, 2010: Grand Philharmonic Choir presents Verdi's *Requiem*; Centre in the Square, Kitchener; 7:30 p.m.

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 Advertising Dates

Issue Date	Ads Due	
Nov. 30	Nov. 17	<i>Focus on Mission and Service</i>
Dec. 21	Dec. 1	
Jan. 11	Dec. 29	<i>Focus on Finances</i>
Jan. 25	Jan. 12	<i>Focus on Post-Secondary Education</i>
Feb. 8	Jan. 26	<i>Focus on Elementary and Secondary Education</i>
Feb. 22	Feb. 9	
March 8	Feb. 23	<i>Focus on Camps and Summer Christian Education</i>
March 22	March 9	
April 5	March 23	<i>Focus on Summer</i>

UpComing

New AMBS president coming in 2010

ELKHART, IND.—Sara Wenger Shenk has been named president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) effective on or before Oct. 1, 2010. Wenger Shenk has been a member of the faculty and administration of Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., since 1995, having served most recently as associate dean. She is the author of numerous books and articles, including *Thank You for Asking: Conversing With Young Adults About the Future of the Church*, *Anabaptist Ways of Knowing*, *Coming Home* and *Why Not Celebrate!* Having earned a B.A. from Eastern Mennonite University, she pursued study at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif., and completed a master's degree at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, Ill.; she received her doctor of education degree in 1999. From 1977-83 and 1986-89, she served on a study-service appointment with Eastern Mennonite Missions and Mennonite Central Committee in the former Yugoslavia. She serves as the Virginia Mennonite Conference representative to the MC USA Constituency Leaders Council and the Binational Worship Council.



Wenger
Shenk

—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary Release

Classifieds

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Meet God on the Mountain next summer! Check out a five-day overview of Mennonite Publishing Network's VBS 2010 at www.mpn.net/offer.

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Employment Opportunities

LEAD PASTOR

Calgary First Mennonite Church, located in central Calgary, invites applications for a full-time **Lead Pastor** position. Our congregation seeks an applicant with a commitment to Mennonite theology and to the practices of the Mennonite Church. We seek a spiritual leader with the gifts of preaching, teaching and pastoral care. Related education and experience in pastoral leadership is a priority.

Please direct resumes to our Pastor Search Committee
Contact: Marguerite Jack – mjack@netkaster.ca.



Associated
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Biblical
Seminary

LIBRARIAN

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary invites applications for a .08FTE position, **Access and Digital Services Librarian**, to begin July 2010. This librarian will supervise circulation and lead the library's efforts to use current and emerging technologies in the provision of information services and resources. A master's degree from an ALA-accredited program is required, with further training in theology highly desirable. See a position description at www.ambbs.edu/employment. Applicants should submit a resume and letter of interest to Eileen Saner, esaner@ambbs.edu; AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517. Review of applications begins Dec. 7, 2009.

LEAD PASTOR

Glenlea Mennonite Church, located 10 minutes south of Winnipeg, Man., invites applications for a **LEAD PASTOR**, starting in the summer of 2010. The time commitment is negotiable between 0.75 and 1.00 FTE. We are a well-established, active, caring community of about 100 people. Our church currently has an intentional interim minister after the retirement of two long-serving pastors. We are prayerfully seeking a pastor committed to the Anabaptist faith with demonstrated gifts in preaching, teaching and providing spiritual leadership for all age groups. GMC is a member of Mennonite Church Manitoba and Mennonite Church Canada.

To apply, please send a cover letter and resume to Jonathan Regehr, Search Committee Chair, P.O. Box 3, St. Adolphe, MB R5A 1A1, or regehr.jon@gmail.com.



Mennonite Central Committee Canada (MCCC)

MCCC is recruiting for the following salaried position:

* DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PROGRAMS – MCC Canada

The Director of National Programs will direct the Coordinators for the following MCC Canada programs: Aboriginal Neighbours, Peace Ministries, Refugee Assistance, Restorative Justice, Victims' Voice, the Ottawa Office, the Low German Program and Canadian IVEP. The Director of MCC Canada's programs in Eastern Canada also reports to the Director of National Programs. The successful candidate will take the lead in developing a strong and effective partnership with provincial MCCs with respect to programs across Canada. In response to anticipated new initiatives, the Director of National Programs must be flexible, adaptable, open to and inviting of change. He/she will participate as a member of the MCC Canada Management Team. Fluency in French is an asset.

Application deadline: Nov. 16, 2009

MCC requires all workers to have a personal Christian faith, be active members of a Christian church and be committed to the teaching of nonviolent biblical peacemaking.

For more information and to apply, please contact Marsha Jones at the MCC Canada office, phone (204) 261-6381 or e-mail mj@mennonitecc.ca.

For a complete assignment description, see the MCC website at www.mcc.org.

PHOTO BY ELMER HEINRICH



Relief for sale

One of the big draws at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Relief Sale and Auction in Morris, Man., this fall was a large produce tent where patrons could purchase vegetables like corn, spaghetti squash, beans and much more. The Morris sale, always a success, raised some \$130,000, which is earmarked for MCC's "Coming Home: Sudan" project and other initiatives.

PHOTO BY DENISE REESOR



Members of the Toronto New Life Centre Church sell Latin American foods at the Black Creek Pioneer Village Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Relief Sale, held on Sept. 19. Just under 3,000 people attended the daylong fall festival in north end Toronto, which included the relief sale component. About 150 volunteers worked all day, with many more preparing food, crafts and quilts in advance. Paul Reesor, chair of the Black Creek Village Relief Sale board, noted that the committee plans to send \$50,000 to MCC this year, the same as in 2008.