

# CANADIAN MEN'S MAGAZINE

October 18, 2010  
Volume 14 Number 20

Broaden your  
horizons

Focus on Travel pg. 27

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## EDITORIAL

# The narrative endures

BY DICK BENNER  
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

**T**he bad news: Our kids don't know their Bibles (page 4). The good news: They are probably practising it better than many of their elders.

If you take the time to talk with these reportedly biblically illiterate young people, you will find many of them much less materialistic than their biblically literate parents and grandparents, giving much higher priority to relationships than to socio-economic achievements, and living and savouring the present over being driven towards some "success" in the future.

Where did they get these spiritual qualities? Very likely, at some subconscious level, from those success-driven elders, who, although readily reciting the biblical law and wisdom literature, the Old Testament prophets, Jesus' parables and the instruction of the gospels and epistles, have been distracted with rapid acculturation.

Many of us "elders" were delivered from our religious and cultural provincialism through the excitement of new biblical insights taught by the Jim Reimers, John Howard Yoders and J. Lawrence Burkholders—competent, bright, charismatic teachers and modern-day prophets who radicalized a whole generation with this huge intellectual and spiritual advancement.

So where has all this biblically based excitement gone in the intervening generation? Probably from Wednesday evening Bible study to soccer practice,

from the Sunday school hour to Sunday morning hockey tournaments, from Vacation Bible School quizzes to summer basketball camp.

Why should we be surprised with a biblical illiteracy of this generation when the Bible is no longer front and centre, neither as a guidebook for living nor as the spiritual narrative upon which we base our core beliefs as self-identified Anabaptist Christians?

It is not the kids that concern me. They are, after all, a quick study. When they "catch" the excitement of the biblical narrative again from their elders, they will tune in. In due time, they will be tweeting favourite Scripture passages and sending numerous Facebook messages to their friends on a daily, even hourly, basis.

It is their elders who worry me more. Stuck in the new habits of the dominant culture, we might be too entrenched to change our ways, too driven by a success mantra, too embedded in a corporate/professional paradigm, too identified with self-serving political ideologies, to let the Bible speak anew to our day and time.

There are three hopeful remedies appearing on the horizon:

- First, a new spiritual formation is underway in many of our innovative congregations. This movement, more concerned with the heart than with the head-learning of our theology and practice, is focused on training "spiritual directors" to sort through the mysteries of life with

people in a trusting relationship.

With the biblical narrative as its textbook, this new discipline combines listening skills, the use of silence and the confidentiality framework of the social science field to help people identify more clearly not so much what they believe, but why they believe, and when and how their beliefs are shaped.

- Second, with new awareness of the cultural wealth of Canada's indigenous peoples through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings, we are being called back to an "inter-relatedness" that we have lost despite our highly developed rhetoric about "community" that often rings hollow in practice.

Our culture has placed a high value on self-sufficiency and individual expression, taking us away from the Hebraic notion of a "called-out people"—interdependent on each other for spiritual health, mutual aid and a prophetic vision that challenges the self-interests of the wider society. The aboriginal belief that each member of society is created to exist for, and benefit from, the community, is bringing us full circle to one of our core beliefs.

- Finally, outside voices such as Stuart Murray and James Davidson Hunter, in their recently published books on the neo-Anabaptists' role in a nihilistic, post-Christian era, is a clarion call to refurbish our core beliefs and refocus on what has sustained our belief system for more than 500 years. Read them, not defensively, but as students at the feet of these new teachers in the tradition and spirit of Reimer/Yoder/Burkholder.

The Bible is central to all of these winds of change blowing through our circles—the instructive textbook, the enduring narrative that does not change with cultural shifts and new paradigms. It's for young and old alike.

Take heart.



## ABOUT THE COVER:

**LaVonne Amstutz enjoys an ice-cream-sicle at the top of Switzerland's Sustenpass during TourMagination's European Heritage III tour in September. Focus on Travel section begins on page 27.**

PHOTO: WILMER MARTIN, TOURMAGINATION

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# Thy Word I haven't hid in my heart (but should have)

*Why do so many young people today not know the Bible?*

BY JOHN LONGHURST



Every year since 1995 Wheaton College—one of America's preeminent Evangelical post-secondary schools—has tested the Bible knowledge of incoming freshmen students.

These students are among the best and brightest of Christian youths in the U.S. Most come from strong churches and have a long history of involvement in Sunday school, youth groups, camps and mission trips. They are students “who are the most intentional about cultivating their faith,” says Wheaton New Testament professor Gary Burge.

Despite this, many do poorly on the Bible test. They can't put Bible events in order: they don't know that Abraham came before the Old Testament prophets, that the prophets preceded the death of Christ, or that Christ died before Pentecost.

They find it hard to identify biblical characters like the apostles, or name the thief released by Pontius Pilate. They struggle to locate stories like Paul's missionary travels in the Book of Acts or the Passover story in Exodus.

“We tend to assume that because they come from strong churches, they know the details of the biblical story,” says Burge. “But students tell me after they take the test that they didn't have a clue.”

Wheaton isn't the only school where students lack basic Bible knowledge; something similar is happening at Hesston College in Kansas. At Hesston, all new students are required to take a biblical knowledge test. As at Wheaton, many do poorly; on average, students only get half of the answers right.

“They know some individual Bible stories, but the majority don’t know how the whole story fits together,” says Michele Hershberger, who teaches in Hesston’s Bible and ministry department.

Their lack of Bible knowledge is “pretty startling,” adds Marion Bontrager, who also teaches Bible at Hesston. “Many are unable to sequence major characters or events, and they have no sense of how things are connected,” he adds.

Dan Epp-Tiessen, who teaches Bible at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Man., finds that things aren’t

*‘The problem starts at the church level. Bible instruction today is episodic, looking at a few favourite passages out of context; . . . most teaching is based on felt needs. They never get the storyline from front to back.’  
(Wheaton New Testament professor Gary Burge)*

much different in Canada. “Biblical literacy is pretty low,” he says of the students he teaches. “They don’t know the story.” He notes that students who attended Christian high schools know

more than others, but their understanding is still only “vague.”

**How did we get into this situation?**  
Burge believes most of the blame can be

## Why and how should we study the Bible?

*Ervin R. Stutzman reflects on the importance of Bible study*

*Ervin R. Stutzman, the new moderator of Mennonite Church U.S.A., loves the Bible. He recently shared his passion for knowing the Bible and its story with John Longhurst of Mennonite Publishing Network.*



**Stutzman**

**Longhurst:** *Why is it important to know the Bible?*

**Stutzman:** The Bible provides both a window and a mirror for us.

Through the window of Scripture, we see God’s will and purpose, both for the world and for God’s people.

In the mirror, we see reflections of who we are. The Bible stories do not shrink back from reflecting the reality and shortcomings of our human state, but they also hold up hope for what we could become in Christ.

Without continually being exposed to God’s revelation in Scripture, we will lose a biblical worldview. Unless we gain biblical literacy, we will eventually lose our way as a people of God.

**Longhurst:** *What’s been your experience with Bible study?*

**Stutzman:** My experience of Bible study has been shaped by my role as a dean at Eastern Mennonite Seminary for nearly a decade, and as an ordained minister and preacher for more than 30 years.

But another very important way it has been shaped

for me is by teaching a Men’s Bible study at Park View in Harrisonburg, Va. We meet weekly on Tuesday mornings for breakfast and a Bible study from September through May. The group averages about 60 men who come from a number of different congregations.

The goal of the group is formational: to help men be formed in the image of Christ. It creates a space for men to examine their relationship with God and others, and invites them to listen for God’s voice and to move toward God.

**Longhurst:** *What is needed to help people learn more about the Bible?*

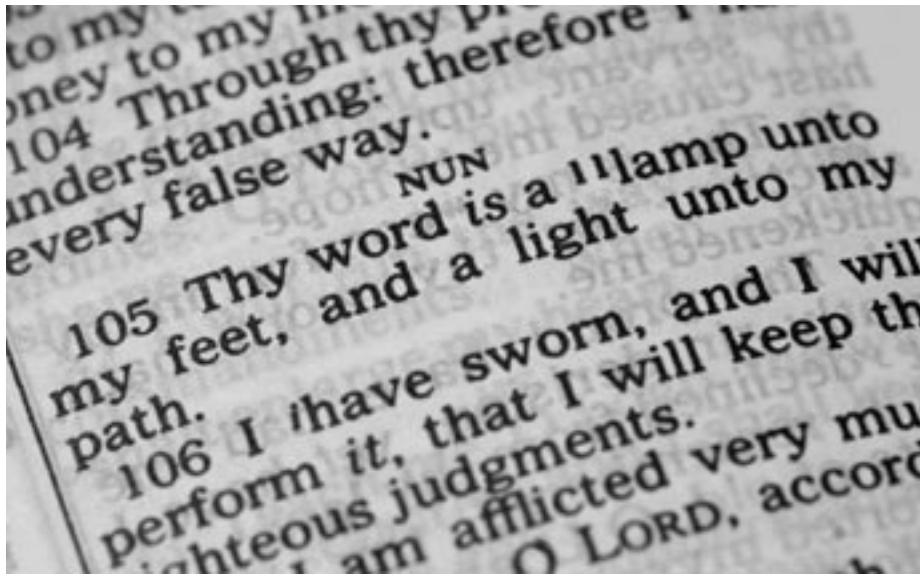
**Stutzman:** We need a curriculum to guide our study, but we also need teachers and mentors who can make the Scriptures come alive under the guide of the Holy Spirit.

We also need to change the way we view Bible study. Some only see the Bible as something to be discussed, debated and conquered through knowledge. I favour a formational approach that moves us toward seeing the Bible as an instrument in God’s hand to help us become different people, growing into the image of Christ.

**Longhurst:** *Are you hopeful for the future of Bible study?*

**Stutzman:** I am encouraged to see that some congregations take seriously the task of engaging their youth groups in Bible study, and I sense that many churches are eager to be guided by Scripture. The recent experience of “Dwelling in the Word” in congregations and conferences across Mennonite Church U.S.A. is very encouraging to me.

And yet there is much more we could do. We need a comprehensive plan for study that involves our schools, churches and homes—a plan that keeps us engaged with, and learning from, Scripture over the whole span of life. I pray that God will show us new ways to teach the biblical story to our children and to let it guide our lives. ☞



laid directly at the feet of local congregations. “The problem starts at the church level,” he says. “Bible instruction today is episodic, looking at a few favourite passages out of context; . . . most teaching is based on felt needs. They never get the storyline from front to back.”

Bontrager agrees. “There’s a disjointed

it, “Just knowing information about the Bible isn’t transformative.” But, she adds, without knowing the basics of the faith, “we’re lost.”

#### **What’s the solution?**

Burge believes that churches need to take a “curricular approach that tells the story.”

*‘The key is the home. Students who said their parents read the Bible to them as children score highest on our test. (Marion Bontrager, Hesston College Bible professor)*

approach to learning about the Bible,” he says. “They are taught a bunch of individual stories without seeing how they connect to each other.”

Karen Jones, author of *Transforming Student Ministry: Research Calling for Change*, echoes those sentiments. “There are key passages and books that we faithfully teach [to youths], but large portions of Scripture that we overlook or only mention in passing,” she wrote in the May 8, 2006, issue of the *Southern Baptist Texan*.

Youths “rarely complete an in-depth study of the entire Bible,” she added. “Whether it is intentional or not, the result is the same; our teenagers often leave our ministries with an incomplete understanding of biblical truth.”

Of course, merely knowing certain Bible facts doesn’t make someone a better Christian. As Hershberger puts

Without such an approach, he believes young people won’t be able to assess the Bible and apply it to their lives. “They can’t do analysis about something they really don’t understand,” he states.

Hershberger agrees. At Hesston, professors walk students through the whole Bible story, beginning with the creation account in Genesis and ending in Revelation. Their goal is to help them answer this question: “How has God worked in history to solve the sin problem and bring everything under the lordship of Jesus Christ?”

Along the way they provide visual and mental “hooks” to help them remember not only the stories, but the sequence and how they fit into the big picture.

But helping youths learn the Bible is about more than better teaching in Sunday school, Hershberger notes.

Adults also play a role. “If we want to make the Bible come alive for youth, we have to make it a priority as adults,” she says. “If we are on fire about learning our faith, it will help youth to be more excited.”

Reading the Bible to young children is also important, Bontrager adds. “The key is the home,” he says. “Students who said their parents read the Bible to them as children score highest on our test.”

In 1999, Burge wrote a seminal article in *Christianity Today* entitled “The greatest story never told.” In it he recounted how he asked youth leaders whether their students were learning the content of the faith and the stories of the Bible.

“It is hard to find time,” one told him. “But I can say that these kids are truly learning to love God.”

“That is it in a nutshell,” Burge wrote. “Christian faith is not being built on the firm foundation of hard-won thoughts, ideas, history or theology. Spirituality is being built on private emotional attachments. Is it any wonder, then, that our young people and adults do not know the stories of the Bible? That they cannot

reason theologically?”

No one, he went on to say “is teaching them. No one is modelling it for them. No one is announcing that the biblical story is ‘the story’ that defines our identity and life in the church.” ❧



*John Longhurst directs marketing and sales for Mennonite Publishing Network ([www.mpn.net/curriculum](http://www.mpn.net/curriculum)), which produces Gather 'Round, a Bible-based curriculum for children and youths, as well as*

*Adult Bible Study and other Bible study and faith formation resources.*

# Should there be a test for citizens of God's kingdom?

BY JOHN LONGHURST

If I want to become a citizen of the U.S., I need to take a citizenship test. Something similar occurs in Canada when someone wants to become a citizen of this country. The Canadian citizenship test evaluates an applicant's knowledge of Canada, and includes questions about the government, elections, rights and responsibilities of citizens, and Canadian history and geography.

I'm not aware, however, that any such test exists for people who want to become members of a church—citizens of another kingdom—which is strange. If I need to pass a test to become a citizen of Canada or the U.S., shouldn't I need to do the same to be a member of the Christian community?

I know, I know. Salvation is free. Nobody needs to pass a test to be part of God's kingdom. But still, if someone wants to be a citizen of the Christian community, shouldn't they be able to demonstrate minimal knowledge about the Bible, biblical characters, and church history and beliefs?

In times past, that was known as biblical literacy. Today, however, Bible knowledge seems to have fallen out of favour in many places.

Of course, you can't mandate Bible knowledge. You can't make people go to Sunday school—the place where they will learn the most about God's story—if they don't want to. You can't enforce Bible reading or study, or reading books about the Bible, theology, church history or Christian living.

In the end, if people want to know more about the Bible, and how God has acted in history, they will do it because it is important to them. Which, when you think about it, is not unlike wanting to become a citizen of a temporal kingdom: If someone wants that bad enough, they will spend time learning about that country. They will learn names and dates and

places. They will study and prepare and memorize because the prize—Canadian citizenship—is so desirable and valuable.

Just like citizenship in God's kingdom, in other words. ❧

## Bible literacy quiz

BY ROSS W. MUIR

Managing Editor

### 1. Put the following biblical characters in chronological order.

A. Daniel / B. Adam / C. Moses / D. Paul / E. David

### 2. Match the quotes (A-E) with the speakers (1-5). Extra points if you know who each speaker was addressing.

A: "Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve. . . . but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

B: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

C: "Was it not three men that we threw bound into the fire? But I see four men unbound, walking in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the fourth has the appearance of a god."

D: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant."

E: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."

1: Mary / 2: Job / 3: Joshua / 4: Jesus / 5: Nebuchadnezzar

Answers can be found in the "Good Book."

## ❧ For discussion

1. How well would you score on a college entrance biblical literacy quiz? Do you know the answers to the quiz on this page? How/where did you gain knowledge about the Bible?

2. How has the curriculum used in Sunday school and Vacation Bible School changed in the last 50 years? What do you think has caused this shift? Do these changes indicate that our attitude towards the Bible has changed? Do we expect less of our children than our parents did of us?

3. Ervin Stutzman says that, rather than regarding biblical knowledge as something to be "conquered," he favours a "formational approach." What do you think he means? How important is it for Christians to know Bible facts and the storyline? What do you think of John Longhurst's idea of a test for new members of Christian communities?

4. How worried should we be about a decline in biblical literacy? Is the Bible less important to the Christian church than it was a century ago? What about 500 years ago? What could we do to improve biblical knowledge in our churches?

## 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](mailto: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.*

## ✉ Resident clarifies Bethany Manor management

**RE:** "WHERE WILL the children play?" Sept. 6, page 21.

In the second paragraph, your correspondent writes that the Bethany seniors complex is "run by 12 different Mennonite churches." As an informed resident of Bethany, I would like to offer some clarification of that statement.

Bethany Manor is owned and operated by a corporation called Saskatoon Mennonite Care Services Inc., which is incorporated under the Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995. The articles of incorporation provide that 12 Saskatoon and area Mennonite congregations each name one of their members as a member of the corporation. These 12 are also the directors of the corporation, and are responsible for Bethany's management.

The congregations receive periodic reports from their nominees, as well as from the board of directors. The congregations may, at times, make suggestions to their nominees about the affairs of Bethany, but they have no other ownership or management control of Bethany. The corporation must comply with the provincial legislation, but it is legally not accountable to any organized body.

It may surprise some members of the 12 supporting congregations that the pool from which to select leadership for Bethany consists of only 12 people. To date, Bethany has been fortunate to have found able leadership from among those nominated by the congregations. However, nothing guarantees that this will continue. Therefore, members of the 12 congregations might rightfully ask if steps are being taken to increase the number of members of the corporation, especially in view of its expansion plans.

**ERNIE BAERGEN, SASKATOON, SASK.**

## ✉ Mennonites are 'invasive species' to aboriginal Canadians

**RE:** "SHOULD WE confess to a national blight?" (Aug. 23, pages 4 to 12).

I once thought Mennonites had an affinity with Canada's First Nations because of their marginalization, persecution and exile in history. If this was once true, the present reality suggests a profound paradigm shift has taken place among Mennonites. Mennonite migrations—along with starlings and knap weed—represent invasive species that push indigenous species to the margins. First Nations continue to pay a heavy price for Mennonite participation in the colonization of Canada.

I find the "Should we confess to a national blight?" question on the cover confusing. If "blight" refers to the abuse at residential schools, Mennonites can "stick handle" their way out of complicity. However, if "blight" refers to the attitudes and conditions that promote and justify the shameful treatment of First Nations under internal colonization, Mennonites have ample cause for introspection and redemptive action.

I trust that the question of "How complicit are

## /// Corrections

- The photos of Liz Koop and Lois Mireau were inadvertently switched in the "Newness and movement evident at annual meeting" article from Mennonite Women Canada, Sept. 20, page 16.
- Rudy Wiens is no longer a pastor of Mississauga Mennonite Fellowship, Ont. Incorrect information appeared with his letter, "Aboriginals are deserving of Mennonite sympathy, understanding," Sept. 20, page 9.
- Marianne Harder led the centennial celebration service for Tiefengrund Mennonite Church at Horse Lake Mennonite Church on July 24. Incorrect information appeared in the "Tiefengrund Mennonite Church celebrates 100 years" article, Aug. 23, page 22. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the errors.

## /// Clarification

Besides being an intercultural educator, author and member of the Canadian Mennonite Publishing Services board, Joon-hyoung Park—who wrote "Essentials for building a multicultural church," Sept. 6, page 7—is also a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.



Mennonites in Residential School Abuse?” (page 4) does not suggest that there are degrees of complicity that limit Mennonite liability. I have found Mennonites generally uninterested or apathetic to the suffering of First Nations who had their children “snatched” and alienated from family and culture. It was good to read that some Mennonite individuals and organizations do listen and respond in redemptive ways, and others are listening for the first time.

Janet Plenert’s article, “A first step towards healing” (page 8) strikes a positive theological note, but leaves

me wondering how many first steps have already been taken and how many more steps it will take to lead to fundamental change.

I wonder if any of us can really share the pain Deborah Froese suggests in “MC Canada shares the pain of Indian Residential School legacy” (page 9). I know uncritical empathetic listening is healing for the victims, but can we share the gut-wrenching agony of loneliness, alienation, self-loathing, and destructive thoughts and behaviours that put many First Nations lives in limbo?

## OUTSIDE THE BOX

# Which hill to die on?

PHIL WAGLER

I’ve entered that stage in life where something called a “teenager” meanders and groans its pimply way through our home. It’s interesting to watch and talk to. In this new challenge—which I’m loving, by the way—I’m learning the art of compromise.

It’s impossible to live in relationship and not compromise. But we often build Maginot Lines—or draw lines in the sand—to our own detriment, so let us learn to unearth our hardened embankments.

The local church, a goulash of saints with a cornucopia of opinions, oddities, tastes and redemption histories, is the perfect place to practise compromise. Unfortunately, this is not always done well.

We can twist the priesthood of all believers into a licence for everyone to get their way, on the one extreme, and majority rule democracy more intent on popular opinion than radical corporate unity and obedience, on the other. These distorted and culturally shaped understandings of the priesthood of all become twisted versions of a “my rights” culture hiding behind biblical language.

Trust me, if you wage uncompromising battles royal over trivial matters as a body, you will most likely abandon the more

weighty matters of justice, mission, truth and active love, and will find that you have also abandoned the priesthood of all believers in the process.

If I do that with my teenager, it’s a recipe for disaster. So, what should we be willing to compromise?

At an elementary level, anything that fits the category of taste. If it’s merely a matter of likes and dislikes, then we should be ready to not only compromise, but even be ready to completely surrender our way if a more effective mission strategy that is biblically faithful, kingdom-advancing, and Jesus-glorifying



*[N]ow we seem to only save such uncompromising zeal for music, buildings, politics and budget lines.*

is put forward. Ultimately, this will mean not just living on the shoulders of past compromises, but actually continuing to learn the art as a people.

Does it really matter what hairstyle my teen wants to torture himself with? He’ll have to moan over the pictures in 20 years—just like we did—and it’s really a matter of taste-testing self-identity. This is not a hill I will die on. Besides, I like my teen’s shaggy hair and whatever’s living in it, but maybe I’m just conciliatory out of envy over my own failing crop!

We must learn as churches to compromise and surrender our way forward. We were once a people ready to die for the sake of Jesus, now we seem to only save such uncompromising zeal for music, buildings, politics and budget lines. This is a bloody shame, because usually when we’re busy digging trenches around things we should meet in “no-man’s land” over, we unwittingly compromise what should never be abandoned.

Eugene Smith writes about the four major compromises of Christian mission over the centuries: with the state (which Anabaptists have led the way in rejecting marvellously); with the culture (which Anabaptists have been rather clumsy with); with disunity in the church (yeah, we’ve gorged ourselves like teen boys at a buffet on this one); and with money (which we can guard more religiously

than the gospel itself).

Every local church leans towards compromise in one of these areas. Which area of compromise is your fellowship most likely to succumb to? And, conversely, where are you learning the art of healthy compromise in new ways? Which hill are you willing to die on?

*Phil Wagler thanks God for his teenager and the hills they are climbing together. You can reach him at phil\_wagler@yahoo.com.*

The reality is that Mennonites and First Nations are trapped by a “national blight.” The natural and social ecology has been fundamentally poisoned by an unethical European invasion. The question becomes, “Are Mennonites and their organizations prepared to challenge their complicity in the colonial project

and commit to using their energies and resources to partner with First Nations to achieve reconciliation and justice?” To do less is to deny our theology and heritage.

JOHANN FUNK, ARMSTRONG, B.C.

## NEW ORDER VOICE

# From education to formation

WILL BRAUN

I hope no one will be too surprised or disappointed if I put aside my usual social justice subject matter to consider a more general question: How exactly do we become better Christians? I don't usually use such Sunday schoolish terms, but it's the closest I can come to what's on my heart.

I feel that in our pursuit of spiritual growth we Mennonites rely too heavily on the education paradigm. We have Sunday school, Bible college, Scripture lessons, sermons about texts, and pastors trained primarily at academic institutions. Stated another way, I wish less of church were aimed at my head. Much of it informs me or makes me think, rather than engaging my body and soul as well. Exceptions exist: music, art, communion, silence and service opportunities. But I often long for a less cerebral and educational approach.

The alternative is something I experienced at the Hermitage, a Mennonite-run retreat centre in Michigan, where I did two three-month internships in the 1990s. At the Hermitage they speak not of education, but of spiritual formation. The term is common in the contemplative tradition.

As I understand it, spiritual formation is a process of becoming, of living into a depth of spirit. It requires quiet, stillness,

rest, beauty and attentiveness to God. It can involve specific styles of journaling and reflection. It involves spiritual direction, a form of one-on-one spiritual accompaniment. It involves reading and thinking, but it is not education, nor is it about achievement.

Formation is less about striving than letting go. It is slow, even lifelong. The objective is to become more centred, prayerful, humble, patient and loving. I claim none of these qualities, but I do feel like I was given both specific practices and a general sense of how to nurture them in myself.

What I gradually began to experience at the Hermitage was a rhythm of life



*I would suggest a prohibition on song leaders suggesting we pay special attention to the words.*

that balanced manual work, collective morning worship (sans sermons), reading, journaling, silence, ping pong, good conversation and walks in the woods. I observed people who lived well, with uncommon care and joy. But formation cannot ultimately be transmitted in word.

I had not been exposed to this anywhere else in my Mennonite experience. Bible college, Yoder's writings and cross cultural service were all of great value to me, but they did not provide a structured, intentional and integrated path to

becoming a better Christian in the way the Hermitage did.

Spiritual formation is not entirely foreign to the church. Our seminary has a professor in spiritual formation and worship, Marlene Kropf. Profound spiritual growth happens in classrooms, during service assignments and in church foyers. Scattered folks go to spiritual directors. But I believe we would benefit from a shift in our church culture towards formation.

This could involve more silence, more ritual, more use of the Bible as spiritual balm, rather than lesson books and training manuals for worship leaders and pastors. And I would suggest a prohibition on song leaders suggesting we pay special attention to the words. Give our poor brains a break; let us get lost in the music.

In the broader church, service assignments could include a program of thorough, intentional and collective spiritual reflection. And conference pastors could

bring together the pockets of people already interested in formation to explore how to increase and promote spiritual retreat options. Young people should especially have these opportunities.

Education and sharp thinking are essential, but ultimately our world needs people of deeply rooted Christian character.

*Will Braun attends Hope Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, Man. He can be reached at [wbraun@inbox.com](mailto:wbraun@inbox.com).*

## /// Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

**Ballard**—Jayden Van Tri David (b. May 28, 2009), adopted by Robert and Sarah Ballard, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont. (May 9, 2010).

**Barkman**—Caleb Henry S. (b. June 13, 2010), to Elisa Suderman Barkman and Paul Barkman, Hope Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

**Beatson**—Taylor Rosanne (b. Aug. 23, 2010), to Trevor and Crystal Beatson, Breslau Mennonite, Ont.

**Bergen**—Greta Nicole (b. Sept. 28, 2010), to Adam and Stephanie Bergen, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

**Bergen**—Nixon Patrick (b. Sept. 7, 2010), to James and Shauna Bergen, Hague Mennonite, Sask.

**Blackburn**—Tilly Grace (b. Sept. 12, 2010), to Nick and Lisa Blackburn, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

**Braun**—Matoli De Groot (b. Aug. 27, 2010), to Jennifer De Groot and Will Braun, Hope Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

**Doerksen**—Tyler Dale (b. July 12, 2010), to David and Christine Doerksen, Blumenort Mennonite, Gretna, Man.

**Eyre**—Nolan Ryan (b. Aug. 31, 2010), to Sarah (nee Stewart) and Scott Eyre, Rouge Valley Mennonite, Markham, Ont.

**Falk**—Cate Mills (b. March 13, 2010), to Rachel Mills and Jamie Falk, Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

**Friesen**—Cooper Jacob (b. Sept. 1, 2010) to Shane and Kim (nee Falk) Friesen, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

**Friesen**—Lukas Michael (b. Aug. 23, 2010), to Mike and Anneliese Friesen, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

**Funk**—Kayden Michael (b. Sept. 8, 2010), to Cameron and Linda Funk, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

**Ivanov**—Jude Henry (b. June 27, 2010), to Merilee and Laurel Ivanov, Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite, Sask., in Wollongong, Australia.

**Klaassen**—Adam Garry (b. Aug. 12, 2010), to Tammy Tyrell and Roland Klaassen, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

**Krahn**—Lilith Sarah Penner (b. Aug. 7, 2010), to Trishia Penner and Dennis Krahn, Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

**Martin**—Lydia Miriam (b. Aug. 12, 2010), to Sarah (nee Hastings) and Taylor Martin, Elmira Mennonite, Ont.

**Meyer**—Diana Sofia Torres (b. July 2, 2010), to Marion Meyer and Ricardo Torres, Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., in South Africa.

**Pawlikowski**—Misha H el ene (b. July 25, 2010), to Ruth Plett and Krystan Pawlikowski, Community Mennonite, Stouffville, Ont., in Nairobi, Kenya.

**Shane**—Cali Brooke (b. Sept. 23, 2010), to Chris and Amber Shane, Hague Mennonite, Sask.

**Stucky**—Kaybryn Gloria (b. Sept. 22, 2010), to Jeff and Cindy Stucky, Hague Mennonite, Sask.

**Sungura**—Isabelle (b. Sept. 14, 2010), to Garant and Charlie Sungura, Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal, Que.

### Baptisms

**Paul Plett**—Danforth Mennonite, Toronto, Ont., June 20, 2010.

**Silvie Kroeker**—Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., June 20, 2010.

### Marriages

**Bauman/Norris**—Michael Bauman (St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.) and Alli Norris, at Hauser Hall, Heidelberg, Ont., Sept. 11, 2010.

**Bekker/Logan**—Heinrich Michael Bekker and Faith Beth Helen Logan, at Grace Mennonite, Regina, Sask., July 1, 2010.

**Burkholder/Wideman**—Richard Burkholder (Wideman Mennonite, Markham, Ont.) and Amy Wideman, Aug. 21, 2010.

**Day/Koop**—Jennifer Day and Brendan Koop, Ottawa Mennonite, Sept. 5, 2010.

**Doucet/Janzen**—Mary-Jo Doucet and Jakob Janzen (Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.), at Bathurst, N.B., July 24, 2010.

**Guptell/Janzen**—Lisa Guptell and Mark Janzen, Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, B.C., at South Delta Baptist, Delta, B.C., Aug. 7.

**Inglis/Martin**—Luke Inglis and Carly Martin (Breslau Mennonite, Ont.) at Cambridge, Ont., Aug. 29, 2010.

**Mamchuk/Voth**—Corey Mamchuk and Kerensa Voth (Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.), at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Sept. 18, 2010.

**Peters/Wiebe**—John Peters and Nettie Wiebe, at Gretna Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Sept. 18, 2010.

### Deaths

**Andres**—Walter, 87 (b. March 27, 1923; d. Aug. 24, 2010), Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite, Sask.

**Andres**—William (Bill), 85 (b. Aug. 2, 1925; d. Sept. 23, 2010), Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont.

**Bender**—Elva (nee Yoder), 95 (b. April 19, 1915; d. Sept. 23, 2010), East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

**Bergen**—Hans, 71 (b. Jan. 18, 1939; d. Sept. 25, 2010), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

**Blatz**—Elaine (d. Aug. 30, 2010), Lowe Farm Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

**Burgetz**—Luella (nee Kropf), 94 (b. Oct. 13, 1915; d. Aug. 25, 2010), Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

### Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones

*announcements within four months of the event.*

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



## VIEWPOINT

# Quenching thirst with justice

BY LYNSAY MOLLINS KOENE

This summer, the United Nations General Assembly recognized access to clean water and sanitation as a human right, a move applauded by water advocates. After 15 years of ongoing debate, 122 countries voted in favour of a resolution enshrining the right, although Canada, the U.S., Britain, Australia and 37 other nations abstained.

According to UN officials, the abstentions

The Canadian government doesn't have to look too far to identify the First Nations communities across Northern Ontario that have been battling water issues for decades. This year alone, more than 114 First Nations across the country were under drinking water advisories, with 49 First Nations' water systems classified as high risk.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)

*It was sadly ironic to learn that on the day of the UN vote, that Constance Lake First Nation had declared a state of emergency as 900 residents in the remote Northern Ontario community had been without water for eight days as a thick layer of blue-green algae had formed over the lake.*

tions leave 884 million people without access to safe drinking water, and more than 2.6 billion without basic sanitation. The UN states that approximately two million people die every year from diseases stemming from contaminated water and poor sanitation, most of these children.

Ontario has been working with First Nations in Northern Ontario for close to two decades, and has been witness to the "terminal" conditions of water flowing through communities as far west as Grassy Narrows and as far east as Kashechewan, which have led to lengthy evacuations, chronic disease and death.

It was sadly ironic to learn that on the day of the UN vote, that Constance Lake First Nation had declared a state of emergency, as 900 residents in the remote Northern Ontario community had been without water for eight days after a thick layer of blue-green algae formed over the lake. Testing by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Health Canada determined that the water was undrinkable.

Chief Arthur Moore and the Constance Lake band council demanded urgent action from federal Indian and Northern Affairs Minister Chuck Strahl to address the water crisis. The community is requesting resources to construct a new water treatment facility.

Moore spoke passionately about the situation: "Access to a safe and usable water supply is the right of every person living in this country. My community has suffered. . . . No one should have to live in these conditions."

I promised to continue to stand with communities advocating for access to clean water, because the people of Constance Lake First Nation and First Nations across the province and the country are thirsty for clean, safe water—and thirsty for justice.

*Lyndsay Mollins Koene is Mennonite Central Committee Ontario's Aboriginal Neighbours coordinator.*

## ALL SAINTS DAY REFLECTION

# Why we remember the dead

BY PAM PETERS-PRIES

**W**hy do we remember the dead? We remember simply because we loved them, and we long to see them again. We remember because we can't help it.

Things remind us of them. A particular colour brings to mind a favourite shirt or dress. Fall air laden with diesel fumes and grain dust brings back harvests spent bumping along in the truck. The buzz of an electric razor; the rattle of pills in a bottle; a favourite piece of music; that milky, powdery baby smell; a pint jar of jam; the heft and smooth wood handle of a hammer; a flat of tomato seedlings; a red backpack; a La-Z-Boy recliner; a copy of *Rejoice!* stuffed inside a worn Bible; Old Spice cologne; the jingle of change in a pocket. Ordinary things remind us of those who have become extraordinary in their absence.

We remember the dead because we know that we will also die. We confront the mystery of the end of life and wonder what it was like for those we loved and what it will be like for us. What will it be like in the moment that our spirit leaves the hospital room, the wreckage of an accident scene, the clamour of the family gathered around the table, or a warm bed in the middle of night?

What will it be like to be in heaven, to be with God? To be free of pain and sorrow? Will we see our parents, our spouse, our friends who have gone before us? Will we be able to look down and keep an eye on those who are dear to us, or watch them gather around our own casket and listen to them tell stories about us over raisin buns and squeaky cheese? Will such earthly things still interest us? Do such things still interest our own dearly departed?

We remember the dead to honour their lives and to learn how to live. To

demonstrate that although they no longer walk with us, sit with us or talk with us, the impact of their lives on ours is not forgotten, nor is it finished. We hear the axioms and aphorisms needled into our brains by our parents and grandparents come out of our own mouths. We nurse the pain of hurts that were left unresolved and conversations that were left unfinished. We find strength from the grace and courage so often displayed during a long illness. We marvel at the steadfastness of faith. We wonder what they would have done or what advice they would have given. We try to face up to what we wish we—or they—had been like.

We remember the dead, but we know that death is not the end. In the film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* there is a striking scene where a small procession of people on a riverbank becomes a great crowd of people clothed in white, coming down to the river singing. Whether these were earthly beings preparing to encounter God, or angels come down to earth, was not immediately clear to me. What did immediately come to mind were the words from Hebrews 12 about the great cloud of witnesses:

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who, for the sake of the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God"* (Hebrews 12:1-2 NRSV).

I watched those white-robed figures and listened to those beautiful voices, and I remembered the witnesses, living and dead, who surround me, who show

PHOTO COURTESY OF PAM PETERS-PRIES



*Pam Peters-Pries grew up next door to her grandparents, John and Elizabeth Peters, of Aberdeen, Sask. Her grandfather died in 1992 and her grandmother passed away in 2008.*

me that the way I live my life matters, who help me to believe that God not only exists but cares what goes on in this world, who assure me that God will bring an end to pain and suffering, and that it is worth the effort for me to lend God a hand.

We know that God has taken away death's power and sting, and that our daily task is to live as though that is the case, and thus to make it be so. In the same moment that we remember death, we remember God's great force for life. Because God works for life, we know that healing and hope are possible. We pray for our own losses to be healed, and for us to bring healing and hope to others. We give thanks for our own little cloud of witnesses and for the riveting example of Jesus, who came to show us that this really is God's way.

We remember the dead, their lives, the goodbyes we shared or wish we had shared. We remember for all of the reasons that are important to us, and we say goodbye again.

*Pam Peters-Pries is a member of Prairie Wind Mennonite Church, Blumenort, Man., a congregation that marks All Saints Day on the Sunday closest to Halloween, remembering loved ones who have passed away.*

## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

# Small company, big story

*Mennonite Mutual Insurance celebrates half-century of service to Albertans*

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD  
Alberta Correspondent

The 50th anniversary of the incorporation of the Mennonite Mutual Insurance Co. (Alberta) Ltd. passed in understated Mennonite fashion, with cake and fellowship at the company's annual meeting. The quietness belies the significance of this uniquely Albertan success story that has fingers in the past and present, while pointing into the future.

Begun as a mutual aid endeavour among farmers in southern Alberta, for many years the company was run by church volunteers.

Ken Ritchie, general manager at MMI, says, "I think that everywhere Mennonites have settled in North America, they have done mutual aid in some shape or form. There were pockets of it around Alberta. . . . We have documented records going back almost 100 years."

In 1960, incorporation allowed the company to be recognized by Canadian banks, and larger farm purchases could be insured. The first full-time employee, Larry Jantzi, was hired in 1982 as secretary/bookkeeper. Currently, the company has 15 staff at the head office in Calgary, three at the La Crete branch, three exclusive agents and approximately 170 volunteers in the member churches.

MMI's purpose—to "bear one another's burdens, and in this way you shall fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2)—remains at the core of operations, even though the market niche has changed. Policy-



*The Mennonite Mutual Insurance Co. (Alberta) Ltd. celebrated its 50th anniversary this summer with fellowship—and cake.*

holder demographics have moved from mainly rural to urban, and there are now many other insurance options available. Expectations for increased professionalism and services have spurred changes, such as the hiring of licensed staff, addressing issues of market standards, and expansion into products such as auto insurance.

Ritchie has overseen many of the changes and acknowledges that some policyholders worried that the company would become just another big insurance agency. "When I started four years ago, and we started making some of these changes, there was some pushback at first," he says. "I started meeting with people one on one . . . and started explaining what we were doing, trying to keep the faith component, and that we exclusively insure people who attend our member churches. So we've kept the faith component very real and important, but we've added some professionalism."

Ed Janzen, a member of Springridge Mennonite Church, Pincher Creek, has volunteered at MMI for 37 years as a church representative. He greatly values the continued importance volunteers have within the organization. "It's a company run by people that particularly care about the policyholders that they serve," he says.

That personal connection; the fact that money stays in Alberta, with 20 percent of

profits donated to the Mennonite Central Committee; a compassion fund for member churches to access for local needs; and investment in ethically selected organizations are all reasons MMI remains a relevant part of the Alberta Mennonite landscape.

This coming January, the MMI board of directors will meet for a time of review and strategic planning. The future holds both challenges and opportunities.

From his perspective of 28 years on staff, Jantzi sees one challenge as the changing understanding of church membership, as more people fall into the adherent—rather than member—category at their places of worship. This presents insurance eligibility questions that need to be addressed.

He says an understanding of the philosophy of mutual aid should not be assumed. "We need to be accountable to each other and not just thinking what's in it for me," Jantzi says. "Churches aren't just full of people with Mennonite heritage anymore. We need to continually educate our people."

Jantzi has a positive outlook for the future of MMI, though. "I have been amazed at God's ongoing provision with young people joining and supporting our program," he says. "It certainly has a promising future." ❧

## 'Fraternal visit' affirms Lutheran, Mennonite reconciliation

By DEBORAH FROESE

Mennonite Church Canada Release  
WINNIPEG, MAN.

During a visit to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada office in Winnipeg last month, Ishmael Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, met with representatives from four Mennonite denominations, Mennonite Central Committee Canada, Lutheran World Relief and Susan Johnson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

This visit was Noko's first to Canada since the historic service in Stuttgart, Germany, in July, which marked reconciliation and unity between Lutherans and Mennonites following centuries of official condemnation of Anabaptists by Lutherans and misrepresentation of the history by both sides.

Noko described his trip to Canada as a "fraternal visit," and said he feels at home and relaxed when he is here.

*'His encouragement now is that we all seek ways to make this global process real in local congregations.'*  
(Janet Plenert)

"He is clearly very personally invested in the Mennonite reconciliation with Lutherans, and has committed great energy to seeing this entire process come to fruition," says Janet Plenert, executive secretary of Mennonite Church Canada Witness and vice-president of Mennonite World Conference. "His encouragement now is that we all seek ways to make this global process real in local congregations."

MC Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada are jointly preparing a study guide later this month, that is designed to stimulate congregational involvement and awareness of the process, and make church members of both denominations aware of their calling to live, work and witness together as reconciled people. ❧



*Janet Plenert, executive secretary of Mennonite Church Canada Witness and vice-president of Mennonite World Conference, chats with Ishmael Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, during what he described as a 'fraternal visit' to this country in September.*

FAITH PEACE  
Mutual Aid compassion Faith trust peace  
Social Justice INTEGRITY  
stewardship  
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tradition of trust

# Celebrating our Common Values

This fall, join MSCU at our branches for our **Fall Member Events** from 11am – 2pm.  
We welcome the opportunity to share mid-year updates and chat with our members and community partners.

<b>Aylmer</b> Tuesday, November 9th	<b>Milverton</b> Monday, November 8th
<b>Elmira</b> Friday, October 29th	<b>New Hamburg</b> Wednesday, October 27th
<b>Kitchener</b> Friday, November 12th	<b>St. Catharines</b> Thursday, October 28th
<b>Leamington</b> Thursday, October 21st	<b>Waterloo</b> Wednesday, November 10th

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# A homecoming of faith

BY JEANETTE HANSON

Mennonite Church Canada Release

Jonathan Yin, recently ordained for ministry, called his encounter with Anabaptist theology more than a decade ago a “homecoming of faith.”

While pastoring in Beijing, a fellow Chinese pastor in Sichuan told Yin to “check out these Mennonites. I think you could get excited about what they are teaching.”

Yin connected with Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers and was given the opportunity to study at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind. After graduating in 2003, he says, “I knew I belonged to the church.” Paraphrasing Paul from I Corinthians 9:15,16, he says, “Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. I am simply discharging the trust committed to me.”

Yin says that his studies at AMBS caused him to see “an Anabaptist vision of the church that really fit with Jesus’ teaching.” He feels drawn and committed to this teaching, and refers to himself as an Anabaptist Mennonite pastor, even though

PHOTO COURTESY OF JONATHAN YIN



Pastor Jonathan Yin is pictured with his 100-year-old grandfather, Yin Jizeng, who was a pastor himself until he was 85.

none of the churches he works with have “Mennonite” written on their doors.

Yin works in Beijing with Mennonite Partners in China, a partner ministry of MC Canada. He helps manage logistics for the educational and cultural exchange program, and works with Chinese partner churches within a growing Chinese congregational network that invited Yin to be ordained for service in China. The developing network is designed to facilitate mutual support and sharing as pastors build missional congregations in China.

Yin says he has thought seriously about ordination in the years since he first graduated from seminary. “I feel a very strong call to follow God in church ministry, so this fits so well with that call on my life,” he says of his ordination. “It also feels like I am following in the footsteps of my grandfather.”

After leaving the Brethren church, Yin’s grandfather, Yin Jizeng, became an independent indigenous church leader in Beijing. When the churches were closed during the Chinese Cultural Revolution in the 1960s, his ministry was temporarily derailed and he was sent to a labour camp as a farm worker.

In 1972, when the first church reopened in China, Yin’s grandfather saw it as a chance to get back to the work he loved. Other churches eventually reopened too, and Yin Jizeng pastored at several of them before his retirement at the age of 85, 15 years ago.

Yin says that many Chinese intellectuals today see a disconnect between Christian faith and life, calling it a hypocritical religion with followers who ignore Jesus’ teachings.

Christianity and western imperialism are still closely linked in the minds of many Chinese. To correct a huge trade imbalance in the 1800s, western gunboats forcibly opened Chinese ports to accept trade and the missionaries who, at times, actually rode in on those

gunboats. Anabaptist rejection of “gunboat power” presents a new and different view of Christian faith that is attractive to Christians and non-Christians alike.

“Belief and actions, faith and life, must be congruent,” says Li Ou, a Peking University graduate and professor of comparative culture. “We don’t see the ‘crook with a good heart’ hero in our movies. We just can’t admire someone like that.”

Author Derk Bodde writes in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, “It is ethics [especially Confucian ethics] and not religion [at least not religion of a formal organized type] that provided the spiritual basis of Chinese civilization. All of which, of course, marks a difference of fundamental importance between China and most other major civilizations in which a church and priesthood have played a dominant role.”

A modern theological emphasis in the Chinese church focuses on sacrifice, atonement and forgiveness, concepts borrowed from western theology. But this approach does not resonate well in Chinese culture, where people monitor their actions through the perspectives of others. A focus on ethics and on the life of Jesus in Christian teaching is more in accord with Chinese thinking.

Wang Ying, a former Mennonite Central Committee International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP) volunteer and founder of the Peace in China non-governmental organization, says, “One thing I and other young Christians I knew struggled with was how ‘Christian’ nations could participate in wars, when we saw something so different in Jesus’ teachings. In IVEP, I discovered believers from around the world, including those from so-called ‘Christian’ nations, who were trying to follow Jesus in the way of peace.”

Yin, Ying and other church leaders are urging Mennonites to provide the larger church in China with this perspective of Christianity so that many more will experience coming home to faith. ☸

*Jeanette Hanson, her husband Todd and two children are Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers in China, where they have served since 1994.*



## /// Briefly noted

### New Camp Elim lodge welcomes winter guests

Camp Elim, a Mennonite Church Saskatchewan camp located in the southern part of the province near Swift Current, is entering its first winter season with a new lodge. Elim Lodge was completed this past spring and is now open for year-round rental, says onsite director Gary Frostad. But renters will need to bring some type of stove because the units have no stove top. "People can bring a hotplate, barbecue or indoor grill," says Frostad, who explains that the lodge is set up like a hotel: Each room comes with a bathroom and beds. There are also fridges and microwave ovens. Sleeping quarters are available for up to eight adults. If guests want to go ice-fishing, someone will shovel snow off the lake.

—BY KARIN FEHDERAU

### Bethany Bible College partners with Bethany Manor

SASKATOON, SASK.—In early October, residents of Bethany Manor began to reach across the generations and touch hearts with students from Bethany Bible College in rural Hepburn. Once a week, a four-person college team drives into Saskatoon to spend a few hours playing games or chatting with the residents. Jerry Letkeman, student ministries director, explains that the service component of the college course is required, but students can sign up for different assignments according to their interests and abilities. Last year, the students were placed individually in their service assignments, but now the college allows students to go out in groups called service and learning teams. "We look for faith-based institutions," says Letkeman, adding, "We want to make our students aware of issues around senior adults." For their service at the seniors complex, the four will plan activities and projects for the residents, says Letkeman, possibly even sharing computer skills with them or getting involved in spiritual care.

—BY KARIN FEHDERAU

Frances Wilms presents a quilt she made to Camp Squeah during a retreat of Kelowna (B.C.) First Mennonite congregants this fall. Retreat participants were told to "look back and thank God" by Harry Loewen, "look forward and trust God" by Garry Janzen, and "look out and serve God" by Wayne Bremmer.



PHOTO BY JACQUELINE NEUN



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROB WIEBE

Mennonite Church British Columbia executive minister Garry Janzen, left, officiates at the June 6 ordination and ministry affirmation ceremony for Eve Isaak, co-pastor of First Mennonite Church of Burns Lake, while her husband and co-pastor Helmut looks on. Speaking at the service were John Unrau, Isaak's former pastor in Surrey, B.C., and Janzen. Unrau spoke about "The making of a pastor," saying that a person called to pastoral ministry best learns how to pastor by getting to know the Good Shepherd in a very real and intimate way. Janzen followed with a challenge, "The making of the congregation," suggesting that it takes the congregation and pastors working together to "live a life worthy of the calling we have received" (Ephesians 4:1). A ring of clasped hands and bowed heads then circled the sanctuary while prayers of dedication and protection were offered for the Isaaks' ministry at First Mennonite.



### Take Your Place

new recording by Kim Thiessen & Darryl Neustaedter Barg available now!

**Take Your Place CD/DVD** is a compilation of folk and traditional songs, and is a collaboration with Maasai choirs from Najile, Kenya. Also included is a DVD capturing the recording in Kenya, as well as MCC's AIDS work in Kenya and worldwide. Take Your Place is \$20 each. All proceeds from sales of the CD raise funds for MCC's AIDS work with the Generations Program.

CDs available at MCC offices, or online at [takeyourplace.mcc.org](http://takeyourplace.mcc.org).

## New Mennonite major now offered by U. of Winnipeg

University of Winnipeg Release  
WINNIPEG, MAN.

For the first time since its inception in 1978, the Mennonite studies program at the University of Winnipeg is offering an academic major. In pursuing a major in Mennonite studies, students will take courses in Anabaptist and Mennonite history, and the history of peace and nonviolence.

Students with a bachelor of arts degree in Mennonite studies will have a wide variety of career options, while majoring in Mennonite studies will also prepare students for graduate work in any branch of history and prepare them generally for further study in any one of the humanities.

Enabling the new major is an increase in the number of faculty teaching Mennonite studies courses at the University of Winnipeg. Joining Royden Loewen, Ph.D., who continues to direct the program and teach a wide variety of courses in Mennonite and peace history, are a permanent part-time appointee in Mennonite studies, Hans Werner, Ph.D., and Janis Thiessen, Ph.D., a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council post-doctoral fellow, who is visiting the university's Mennonite studies program for two years.

Werner has published books on the history of Mennonites in Manitoba, and in Germany and Russia. He is also the executive director of the recently formed D.F. Plett Historical Foundation, which supports research on Old Colony Mennonites and other Mennonites with roots in Manitoba of the 1870s.

Thiessen is using her time with the program to write a history book on the relationship of Anabaptist faith values and conflict in the workplace. The scope of her work covers the entirety of North America. ☞



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## GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

# 'Swimming against the current'

*One young Colombian's description of working for peace in a violent context*

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent

What does peace look like? "In my context, working for peace is to swim against the current," writes Alejandra Romero, a Colombian who helps school children with conflict resolution in a country where violence is prevalent. "It is not easy to commit to live in peace when there are people willing to harm you."

Romero was one of 10 international young adults involved in peace work brought to Alberta by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Alberta for an initiative called "Planting peace: How do we stop killing each other?" The internationals—from Nigeria, Uganda, Israel/Palestine, Jordan, the Dominican Republic and Colombia—spent a week with teens at Camp Valaqua, held a public event at Calgary First Mennonite Church, and then participated in several days of peace-building workshops with Canadian young adults at a Calgary retreat centre, all from late August to early September.

The initiative was inspired by a Ugandan program called "Living with shalom," which brings people from conflicted tribes together to learn to understand one another. MCC Alberta staff members Abe Janzen and Kim Thiessen enlarged the idea of "tribe" along international lines, and came up with the "Planting peace" event.

Kari Enns, an MCC staffer and interim director at Camp Valaqua, said participants learned "how to dialogue and listen to each other to break down our assumptions and stereotypes that come from not knowing each other. That's why there were people from so many corners of the Earth and from Alberta and Saskatchewan and Manitoba, to talk about our poverty and injustice and peace issues here, too."

MCC Alberta designated Nigerians Gopar Tapkida and Sani Suleiman

to facilitate the workshops. Tapika, a Christian, and Suleiman, a Muslim, have a wealth of experience building bridges of peace and understanding between their faith groups.

Camp counsellor Brent Retzlaff related a story about the effect Tapkida and Suleiman had on the group. "One of the campers in my cabin especially benefited from his relationship [with Suleiman]," he said. "This particular camper was filled with anger at the world and would not hesitate to use violence against other campers if he felt that they had done him some kind of wrong. I spent much of my week attempting to convey the love of God and the possibility of peace to him, but he was not willing to listen to me.

"He took very well to Sani and there was a particularly moving time during a chapel when Sani called my camper up and got him to sing a song about peace with him," Retzlaff added, noting, "My camper was changed at that time. There was a noticeable difference in the way he behaved around other people and I noticed him trying to avoid violence. This was a radical change for this camper."

The experience was also valuable for camp staff.

"I found it very beneficial and I learned a lot about different places in the world," said counsellor Kevin Stoesz. "I enjoyed sitting down and talking with the internationals individually and sharing Canadian culture with them, while they shared their culture with me."

Cara Baergen, freshly home from a year serving with MCC in Tanzania, was already familiar with building cross-cultural relationships when she attended the Calgary workshops. The most impactful event for Baergen was a tour of downtown Calgary

MCC ALBERTA PHOTO



*Alejandra Romero, a Colombian, enjoys the "sky swing" at Camp Valaqua, Alta., during this summer's 'Planting peace: How do we stop killing each other?' event that brought together 10 international young adults and a group of their Canadian counterparts.*

given to the group by a former homeless man from Alpha House, an organization that works with issues of addiction and homelessness.

"It was interesting to see the internationals' reaction to the fact that there are poor people here," Baergen said. "Our issues are generally out of view. We push the conflicts away from us."

As with any first time event, "Planting peace" has a few bugs to work out of its system.

"Although there were fairly obvious benefits to the camp program, it was also a huge hassle to have 10 extra adult-age children walking around with no sense of time," Retzlaff pointed out.

Thiessen agreed the camp program needs work for next year. "It is critical that we have a First Nations voice at the table, and we didn't," she said. "That would be one thing we would focus really hard on." ❧

# Tools help Congolese refugees rebuild livelihoods

BY MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE STAFF

Kasika, Democratic Republic of Congo

**H**oes, rakes, forks and machetes are more than gardening tools for 635 families in the Democratic Republic of Congo. They are keys to rebuilding the lives of refugees who were forced from their homes in Kasika, Eastern Congo, last spring because of conflict between military groups. As the refugees started returning home last fall, many found their homes destroyed and their belongings gone.

To help the families get re-established, the Church of Christ of Congo planned and implemented a distribution of farming tools, supplied by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). The Church of Christ of Congo, a Protestant ecumenical organization, is a long-time MCC partner. A second stage of the program included providing seeds and a limited supply of food to help people cope until harvest.

## Building relationships on Flores Island

BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent

**“A**-hou-saht-going?”—a fun play on words—accompanied by a welcoming smile and a twinkle in the eye, are some of the many ways that the Ahousaht First Nations people make visitors to their community feel welcome.

An intergenerational group from First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, B.C., led by Anthony and Shelley Dyck, spent a week in August with the Ahousaht, who live on Flores Island, B.C.

The Dycks have had a longstanding relationship with the Ahousaht people and have taken groups to the remote community—accessible only by boat or float plane—since 2006. This year the team members were billeted in people’s homes, rather than staying together in a house.

“Living in people’s homes helped team members feel part of the Ahousaht community and gave an opportunity for deeper relationships to form,” says Shelley, noting that the First United Mennonite members were able to attend family birthdays, pray together, help with household chores, go fishing and eat plenty of sockeye salmon.

Each morning the Vancouver team ran a Vacation Bible School for the village

children, and in the afternoon picked berries, and explored the village or beaches with their host families.

One evening several team members had the honour of attending a naming ceremony, at which two children and adults in the community received new aboriginal names. The evening included a salmon dinner and speeches, along with drumming and singing.

Drug and alcohol abuse, tragic deaths, suicide and experiences at residential schools have impacted the lives of the Ahousaht people for generations, but the First United Mennonite group came back with an understanding that the next generation can break the ongoing cycles and rise above them with God’s help.

God is doing exciting things in the Ahousaht community, observe the Dycks: “More and more people are putting their faith in Jesus Christ, and are going to him for strength each day. [Our church] feels blessed to be a part of this exciting work, as they continue to grow in their relationship with the Ahousaht community and learn about their culture and their cultural expression of Christian faith.” ❧

Eastern Congo has been plagued with war and the displacement of more than two million people over the past 16 years. The 1994 Rwandan genocide brought hundreds of thousands of refugees to the area, including fleeing combatants.

Kasika, located near the town of Mwenga about 100 kilometres to the southwest of the provincial capital of South Kivu, was the site of a major massacre in 1998, when more than a thousand civilians were reportedly killed by invading armies. Many families have had to abandon their homes on multiple occasions.

Currently, this part of the province is relatively secure, allowing the tool recipients, who are mostly women, to begin planting.

Niminenge Bondo, one woman who received implements, was asked how soon she would start to prepare her fields. Without hesitation, she replied, “Tomorrow.” ❧

MCC PHOTO BY TIM LIND



*Loading new tools on their backs, women from eastern Congo head to their homes to begin preparing their fields.*

# Donations to MCC for Pakistan flood relief now top \$700,000

BY GLADYS TERICHOW

Mennonite Central Committee Release  
WINNIPEG, MAN.

Following weeks of disruptions, loss and trauma, people in flood-stricken areas of Pakistan are facing enormous challenges as they struggle to rebuild their lives.

“How does a family regain its footing after it loses everything?” ask Donna Fernades and Chris Herlinger, writers for Church World Service (CWS) in a recent report.

Although Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) does not have its own programs or personnel in Pakistan, it is working through organizations such as CWS that are responding to emergency and humanitarian needs there. MCC also worked through CWS after the devastating earthquake in Pakistan in October 2005.

The estimated number of people affected by the floods has increased to 21 million, with 10 million displaced and eight million in need of immediate assistance, says Willie Reimer, director of MCC’s food, disaster and material resources programs.

By the end of the second week of September, more than \$700,000 had been

donated to MCC for the Pakistan flood response.

Responses supported by MCC currently include:

- Temporary shelter for 550 households (through the Anglican Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund);
- Food for 12,200 households (through Canadian Foodgrains Bank); and
- MCC relief kits for 2,000 households.

Most of MCC’s longer-term support will be implemented by CWS, notes Reimer, explaining that CWS is planning to focus its disaster recovery efforts on agriculture and livestock, housing and trades training. About 5,000 patients have already been treated at mobile health units operated by CWS in Mansehra, Kohistan and Swat.

During a recent visit to some communities devastated by the flooding, Fernades and Herlinger met Said Qamar, his wife Pareena Bibi, and their family of eight children and four nieces and nephews.

“Said Qamar recalled that the thunder,

torrential water and rains, and resulting landslide of July 27 came with little warning,” Fernades and Herlinger write. “There was, though, just enough time to evacuate the family to higher ground.

“When he returned to the homestead and small plot of land in a riverbed area that had been in his family for a century, Qamar saw his property—a small plantation that had borne bananas, guavas, melons, apricots and peaches, potatoes and chillies—laid waste, covered with rocks and boulders.

“Though a few trees are still left standing, Qamar’s livelihood is now essentially gone. He is contemplating a move either to one of Pakistan’s urban areas, or, if there is a way to salvage the farm, perhaps nearby, to begin anew—though living in a safer place, away from a river.”

Qamar acknowledges that neither move will be easy, noting that his family and other villagers are traumatized: “When it rains now, we’re afraid of what could happen. Could this happen again?”

The loss of livelihoods is among many concerns facing people in flood-affected areas. CWS operates mobile health units, and in reports CWS staff express concern about the lack of adequate facilities for pregnant women and their newborn children. Within the next three months, about 100,000 babies are expected to be born in flood-affected areas. ❧

CWS PHOTO BY CHRIS HERLINGER



*A father and his ill son consult with a Church World Service (CWS) health team worker in Pakistan. Donations to Mennonite Central Committee will help support the CWS Pakistan flood response.*

## ‘Shattered’

*Shannon Moroney shares her unique perspective on restorative justice at Grebel’s International Day of Peace lecture*

STORY AND PHOTO  
BY RICHARD ALBRECHT  
Special to *Canadian Mennonite*  
WATERLOO, ONT.

Shannon Moroney’s life was changed forever when, in 2005, her husband kidnapped two strangers and violently sexually assaulted them in the home that they shared—while she was out of town.

During her Sept. 21 lecture at Conrad Grebel University College, whose guests included about 80 Grade 11 students from six local high schools, Moroney talked of shattered lives, strained family relations and the loss of her career as a guidance counsellor. Even as the losses piled up, though, Moroney made a choice.

“From the very beginning, I vowed to myself that I would let this experience shape my life, but not control it,” she told the audience. “Every day since then I worked toward restoration and one day at a time I became whole again.”

Art played a significant role in her recovery and was shown during her talk.

“In this new conversation with God, I found an outlet for emotions that overwhelmed me and a safe space for the extremes of rage, grief and frustration,” she said. “The only questions I never asked were ‘Why?’ or ‘Why me?’, because I knew I would never get an answer. Instead, I asked God, ‘What do you want me to do?’ And I prayed for the strength to do it.”

The path to Moroney’s healing has led to speaking tours and post-graduate studies



*Shannon Moroney uses art as a backdrop to tell of her remarkable journey towards acceptance and peace after her husband was declared a dangerous offender for kidnapping and raping two strangers in 2005. She is pictured with her collage, ‘Shattered’, last month at Conrad Grebel University College, where she spoke at the International Day of Peace lecture.*

in restorative justice.

“Shannon’s experience reveals the challenge and costs of personal peacemaking that ripples out to positively impact her community, living out the power of hope and restorative justice,” said Lowell Ewert, director of Grebel’s peace and conflict studies program.

Moroney’s lecture was part of the Waterloo Region’s sixth annual Days of Peace and Nonviolence that ran from Sept. 21 to Oct. 2; other events included a movie night, creation of a human peace sign, a craft day and music night, and a peace walk/concert. ☘

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# MCC snapshots

PHOTO BY ADAM BERIAULT



*Golf tournaments in two Alberta communities raised more than \$165,000 for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) last month. The La Crete tournament, held on Sept. 11, featured 32 golfers and sponsors, raising in excess of \$65,000 for MCC projects in Africa, Asia and Central America. Funds from a tournament in Tofield the following week topped \$100,000 (thanks to a \$50,000 matching donation from Edmonton area businessman Frank Flaman). Pictured at the Tofield event, from left to right, are: Carthryn Heslop, Doug McLaughlin, Aron Froese and Abe Janzen, MCC Alberta executive director.*

PHOTO BY RICHARD ALBRECHT



*Mennonite Central Committee Ontario held its inaugural reunion for service workers at Floradale Mennonite Church, on Sept. 25. In attendance were MCC service alumni from the 1950s to the present. Alf Koop of Vineland, Ont., spoke to the 85 participants about his two service trips to Bolivia, the first as a single man in the 1960s, and the latest with his wife from 2002-05. MCC Ontario hopes to add additional alumni reunions in the future, possibly in Leamington and Ottawa.*

PHOTO BY RICHARD ALBRECHT



*A community-building event to support recent Palestinian refugees to Waterloo Region—and find sponsors for more (to assist with family reunifications)—was hosted by First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont. Over the past six years, Mennonite Central Committee Ontario and local Muslim organizations have operated a joint sponsorship program that has landed 36 Palestinians in Canada who had sought refuge from Iraqi persecution in a refugee camp on the Syrian border. Pictured: The Abukhousa family with sponsors from East Zorra and Steinmann Mennonite churches.*

GOD AT WORK IN US

# The train that never was

*Model railroader adds MCC box cars to his collection*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent  
NEW HAMBURG, ONT.

Ross Shantz, chair of the New Hamburg (Ont.) Mennonite Relief Sale, is an ardent model train enthusiast, so when he and his wife Sandra were on holiday in Phoenix, Ariz., this past winter, they went to a model train show. “What should I look for” among all the train cars, engines and memorabilia? Sandra asked her husband, who suggested Canadian cars, since “they might have something different here than at home.” Some time later, she called him over, exclaiming, “Look at this!” It was a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) box car.

Shantz bought it and brought it home to show Willard Martin, another model train collector with an encyclopaedic memory. Martin explained that the model was not based on a real car, but on a story by Jan Gleysteen in the September 1959 *Words of Cheer*, a Mennonite Sunday school paper. Gleysteen designed an MCC box car to match those of the Friendship Train, an American relief effort in 1947 that filled 280 box cars with goods to send to Europe.

While Gleysteen supplied paper cut-outs to paste onto model trains, the idea was

soon picked up by Walthers in Milwaukee, Wis., which made decals to mount on model trains. Eventually, Rules Hobby in Mannheim, Pa., took over the project.

In the ensuing years, other model train cars have been made, some by friends of MCC like Loren Neufeld of Houston, Tex., described by John Longhurst, a former MCC volunteer, in a model train blog as “an accomplished model railroader.”

Longhurst also noted in the blog, “In 1995, when MCC celebrated its 75th anniversary, I worked with others (Willard Martin, David R. Dyck, Ken Epp, Frank DeFehr and Loren Neufeld) to make versions of this car to raise money for the agency’s relief and development work around the world. Four cars were made: Two in HO [scale] and two in N [scale]. One car was a [15-metre] version with the agency’s modern logo; the other was a version of the original Train-Miniature car. The artwork for the cars was created by Loren . . .”

Shantz’s set-up at home is not extensive, but after the 2010 Relief Sale this past

summer it had yet another MCC box car. Dennis Swinger Sr. from Lind, Wash., the creator of the MCC box car sold as the Great Northern, brought several along to the New Hamburg sale, and Shantz, who was busy throughout the day, asked him to bid on a car for him at the auction.

When they met later, Swinger asked if Shantz still wanted the car. It seems someone heard that the car was being bid on for him and the price went over \$100. Shantz gladly paid up and added the car to his collection.

“I’ll donate to MCC one way or another,” he told *Canadian Mennonite*. ❧



*The original Walther’s Mennonite Central Committee model box car.*



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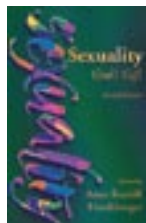


*Ross Shantz shows off his Arizona purchase of a Mennonite Central Committee model box car.*



## ARTBEAT

# Helping Christians talk about sexuality



Sexuality: God's Gift *emphasizes need for true intimacy*

Anne Krabill Hershberger is editor of the second edition of *Sexuality: God's Gift* (Herald Press, 2010). In July, she spoke to John Longhurst of Mennonite Publishing Network about why it's hard for Christians to talk about sexuality, and about the nature of true intimacy.

**Longhurst:** *Sexuality: God's Gift* first came out in 1999. What is the difference between then and today?

**Hershberger:** Some things have not changed: Christians still struggle with the place and meaning of sexuality. But other things have changed. Unhealthy sexual attitudes and behaviours are even more pervasive and evident in all aspects of our culture today: the media, movies, ads, books, music, Internet.

While we all have to deal with these messages, young people are under particular pressure when it comes to sexuality—things like the “hook up” culture, which

promotes the idea of engaging in sexual activity without any emotional attachment or sense of commitment.

Then there is the idea of living together before, or instead of, marriage. That is not new, but it is more prevalent today, including among Christians. If you love each other, why not live together, especially if you plan to be married? As it turns out, cohabitation outside of marriage has not proven to lead to more stable lives and has hurt many. In fact, the divorce rate is higher among those who cohabit before marrying than among those who marry first. There is no such thing as a “trial marriage.”

We promote the idea that [heterosexual] marriage is a prerequisite for sexual activity. That is an old-fashioned view for many today. But we believe it is important, even if that is very different from what many others are saying today about the search for true intimacy.

**Longhurst:** *What is true intimacy?*

**Hershberger:** True intimacy is loving and showing concern for the other person, being faithful and true, communicating with each other, showing affection—not just meeting the urges of the physical body whenever and however we want. It is an intimacy based on friendship, respect, acceptance, equality, trust, shared values and commitment. It is non-exploitive, and it takes time to develop.

**Longhurst:** *Why is it important for Christians to talk about sexuality?*

**Hershberger:** I think it is important to have a countercultural response to the constant bombardment of fake messages about sexuality. But how can the church be countercultural in the area of sexuality if we do not talk about it? If we do not talk about it, we cannot help youth and each other develop healthy Christian perspectives on sexuality, perspectives that counter the inappropriate messages coming at us from society today.

**Longhurst:** *Why is it hard to talk about sexuality in church?*

**Hershberger:** It is very personal and therefore uncomfortable to discuss, for one thing. For another, we have few models for how to talk about it. That is why this book exists. We want to provide a model

## Let the dialogue on sexuality 'break forth'

BY YOUTHIA C. HARDMAN-CROMWELL

Excerpted from the foreword to *Sexuality: God's Gift*

Those who believe in a creating God must acknowledge that a bodily existence—our sexuality—and our spiritual essence—our souls—are both part of God's creative action in bringing forth into existence human beings.

We are human because we are embodied souls. Jesus was incarnated, becoming an embodied spirit, and, thereby, fully human.

Our sexuality and spirituality are both gifts from God integrated in our being; they cannot exist in us as separate entities. But this is not what the church has emphasized historically. Its teaching has encouraged the idea that

somehow our bodily and spiritual existences are separate, that the one is superior in worth and value over the other, the spirit over the body. Hence our sexuality has not been emphasized in our teaching and preaching. So a void of silence has been created in which a number of negative societal issues have emerged and been allowed to flourish unaddressed and unchallenged by the church.

This need not be. To our detriment, we neglect to wrestle in Christian communities with what it means to be gifted with both soul and body, inseparably integrated, as we live as disciples of Jesus Christ and believers in our creating God. The silence must be broken and the dialogue opened up. *Sexuality: God's Gift* is a doorway through which those who fear the conversation, or who do not know where to begin, or who even deny the need for it, can enter the struggle and begin the dialogue.

This book is an important contribution in helping Christians connect their spirituality and their sexuality. May the dialogue break forth among all Christians! ❧

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for churches to use.

The other reason it is hard to talk about is because we are afraid of the topic of homosexuality—a subject that often comes up when we talk about sexuality. Although it is a very small part of all the areas of sexuality that need our attention, it is very divisive in the church.

**Longhurst:** *What is the book's approach to that subject?*

**Hershberger:** Our approach is to try to set the stage for reasonable and helpful conversation. The book promotes taking a Christ-like stance of humility, sensitivity and compassion. There is still much we do not know about this issue, but what we do know is that it is a sensitive subject, and that so many of our brothers and sisters have been badly hurt by some existing attitudes and behaviours.

**Longhurst:** *What is different in this new edition of the book?*

**Hershberger:** The new edition looks at sexuality across the lifespan, from childhood through aging. It is a mistake to think that this is a subject only for youth; it is an important topic for older adults, too. People are living longer and healthier into old age today. So while there are new chapters on sexuality and children, adolescents and aging, we also have new chapters on singleness and grief.


Unfortunately, we also felt the need to enlarge the sections on pornography and sexually transmitted infections, and on sexual addiction and sexual abuse of children.

**Longhurst:** *Any final thoughts?*

**Hershberger:** We live in a culture that is obsessed with sex. We are bombarded by messages about sex and sexuality everywhere we turn. Yet most of the messages miss the point of what is truly healthy and wholesome about our sexuality. They equate our genuine need for intimacy with sexual intercourse. This has caused massive confusion and heartache for many people.

This book makes the case that the two are linked, but are not synonymous. True intimacy needs to be experienced by everyone at every stage of life; sexual intercourse may never be a part of it. The key is to know that we matter to another human being. ❧

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## FOCUS ON TRAVEL

# Consider travelling with a group

BY SUSAN FISH

TourMagination Release

While we each appreciate different aspects of travel, many people assume travelling with a tour group is not for them. They associate tour groups with older people or a lack of flexibility.

While this may sometimes be the case, there are times when joining a tour group is a great fit for nearly every traveller.

Travelling on your own and discovering sites along the way, can be a romantic idea, but as Leonora Paetkau, who recently led a TourMagination tour to Israel/Palestine, notes, "There are countries in the world where you very much appreciate having an

*Travelling with a tour group is also an excellent opportunity to strengthen relationships.*

experienced guide to help you safely negotiate the intricacies of language and culture."

Herb Epp always planned his own holidays, but when he decided to explore his roots in Russia, he joined a tour to benefit from the expertise of tour guides who knew the country and spoke the language. When he fell ill on tour, he was particularly glad to have someone else negotiate the medical system on his behalf.

A recent TourMagination tour to Egypt was described as "going behind the veil," because, in addition to visiting major tourist sites, tour members enjoyed the opportunity to worship with, and visit in the homes and workplaces of, local Egyptian Christians. During an upcoming tour to Portugal, tour members will visit with Portuguese Mennonites over lunch and




*During a stop of the Lehman homestead in the Jura area of France, TourMagination travellers check out a family chart.*

will tour Habitat for Humanity sites.

TourMagination tours balance activity with leisure. While most days will be spent being expertly conducted to important sites, tourists also have the opportunity to follow their own interests and to explore at their own pace on free afternoons. Many times, tour members can customize tours to include personal interests like antiquing,

exploring museums, mountain climbing or relaxing on the beach.

**Burkina Faso**  
2011 Learning Tour  
February 17 – 28, 2011

 Mennonite Church Canada  
[www.mennonitechurch.ca/getinvolved/lt/BFTour.htm](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/getinvolved/lt/BFTour.htm)

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August 26, 2011

For tour details contact tour host:

**Len Loeppky**

14 Springwood Bay

Steinbach, MB, R5G 2E8

[aloepky@mts.net](mailto:aloepky@mts.net) or 1-204-326-2613

[www.holiday-travel.ca](http://www.holiday-travel.ca)

## FOCUS ON TRAVEL

Travelling with a tour group is also an excellent opportunity to strengthen relationships. Families travelling together leave arrangements to the experts and instead focus on enjoying time together. Single people enjoy the companionship of a larger group. A strong bond of

friendship develops as tour members get to know one another. ❧

*Founded in 1970 to share the Mennonite story in Europe, TourMagination has now led faith-based tours to more than 50 countries on every continent.*

# Visit Europe the Mennonite way

Mennonite Heritage Tours Release

Starting next summer—the year of celebration for Dutch Mennonites—Mennonite Heritage Tours will offer four new heritage tours for Mennonites from all over the world.

Mennonite Heritage Tours is based in the Netherlands and was founded by a Dutch Mennonite, Ayold Fanoy, a son of Dutch Reformed (Calvinist) parents who

was baptized as a child. In his 20s, Fanoy joined the Dutch Mennonites, called the Doopsgezinden, having been attracted by the Mennonite peace stance, believer's baptism and their way of following Jesus in daily life.

Having discovered that nobody in Europe is offering a tour program to the global Mennonite family, Fanoy decided

to develop a tour program himself.

Individual travellers can book either a youth hostel heritage tour that covers Holland, North Germany and Poland, or one of three hotel tours: one to Holland, Germany, France and Switzerland; another to Holland, North Germany and Poland; or a third to South Germany, France and Switzerland.

These tours will not only focus on the Dutch heritage, but on European Mennonite heritage as well.

The tours from Holland to Poland will follow the footsteps of the 16th- and 17th-century Dutch Mennonites who first emigrated to Germany and later on to Poland. Tour members will visit the Berlin city centre and learn about the Iron Curtain that divided the city into East and West not long ago, and the Auschwitz concentration camp to learn about the World War II horrors that occurred there.

To learn more about Mennonite Heritage Tours online, visit [mennoniteheritagetours.eu](http://mennoniteheritagetours.eu), or e-mail Fanoy at [ayoldfanoy@zonnet.nl](mailto:ayoldfanoy@zonnet.nl). ❧

## ✠ ✙ ✚ MennoJerusalem Programs

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**Bookings:** [amitours1@rogers.com](mailto:amitours1@rogers.com)

More tour itineraries and dates at:  
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JAMAICA - ITS PEOPLE, NATURAL BEAUTY & FRUITS  
(January 28 - February 6)

CHURCHES & SAFARIS IN KENYA & TANZANIA  
(February 7 - 18)

PANAMA CANAL CRUISE TOUR  
(February 23 - March 5)

EXPLORE SOUTH AMERICA (March 20 - April 2)  
MEDA IN MOROCCO (March 25 - April 5)

ISRAEL/PALESTINE WITH PASTOR JAMIE GERBER  
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ICELAND COUNTRY TOUR (June 14 - 23)  
EUROPEAN HERITAGE WITH JOHN RUTH  
(June 23 - July 6)

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MENNONITE STORY IN POLAND (August 9-17)  
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## Calendar

### British Columbia

**Nov. 7:** Vancouver Peace Choir concert at Langley Mennonite Fellowship, at 7 p.m. The concert is part of the annual Arts and Peace Festival.

**Nov. 19-21:** Senior Youth Impact Retreat at Camp Squeah.

**Nov. 20:** Vancouver Peace Choir concert at Chapel of the Epiphany, Vancouver School of Theology, at 8 p.m.

### Alberta

**Oct. 29, 30, Nov. 12, 13:** MCC Alberta annual celebration meetings; (29) Tofield Mennonite Church, at 7 p.m.; (30) Grande Prairie (location TBA), at 7 p.m.; (12) Vauxhall Mennonite Brethren Church, at 7 p.m.; (13) West Zion Mennonite Church, Carstairs, at 4 p.m. Annual general meeting voting to take place in Carstairs.

**Nov. 4-7:** Business as a Calling: Unleashing Entrepreneurship, MEDA's annual convention, Calgary. Go to [businessasacalling.org](http://businessasacalling.org) or call 1-800-665-7026 for more information.

**Nov. 10:** MCC Alberta fine arts peace festival at Menno Simons Christian School, Calgary.

**Nov. 13:** MCC Alberta restorative justice event at Deer Park United Church, Calgary.

**Nov. 14:** Cowboy Church at Trinity Mennonite Church, near DeWinton/Calgary. Join Doris Daley and other friends and guests for western-style worship, cowboy poetry, music and yodelling; at 11 a.m.

**Nov. 20:** Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta meeting, at First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, at 1 p.m. Four travellers will speak about Mennonites beyond Canada's borders.

**Jan. 21-23, 2011:** Junior high snow camp at Camp Valaqua. For more information, call 403-637-2510.

**Feb. 25-27, 2011:** Senior high snow camp at Camp Valaqua. For more information, call 403-637-2510.

### Saskatchewan

**Nov. 6:** MCC Saskatchewan "encounter" and annual general meeting, at West Portal Church, Saskatoon.

**Nov. 22:** RJC perogie supper fundraiser at First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

**Dec. 2-5:** RJC Christmas dinner theatre.

**Dec. 4, 11:** Buncha Guys fundraisers for Shekinah Retreat Centre; (4) Knox United Church, Saskatoon; (11) Shekinah Retreat Centre.

**Dec. 12, 17:** RJC choir concerts; (12) at Knox United Church, Saskatoon, 7:30 p.m.; (17) at RJC, 7 p.m.

**Jan. 7-8, 2011:** RJC alumni Tournament of Memories.

**Jan. 21, 2011:** RJC open house for prospective students.

### Manitoba

**Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 7:** Camps with Meaning celebration and fundraising banquets; (30) Whitewater Mennonite, Boissevain, at 6 p.m.; (6) Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Winkler, at 5:30 p.m.; (7) Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 5 p.m. For more information and tickets, call Eva at 204-895-2267.

**Nov. 5-7:** Quilting retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

**Nov. 6:** "Blending music in worship" workshops at CMU with Christine Longhurst.

**Nov. 8:** MCI annual general meeting, at the school, at 7 p.m.

**Nov. 18:** Evening of the Arts at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, at 7 p.m.

**Nov. 10, 11:** DIVE—a short intensive retreat for serious senior high students—at Camp Assiniboia; 7 p.m. (10), 3 p.m. (11). For more information, call MC Manitoba Youth Leadership Ministries at 204-896-1616.

**Nov. 22:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate annual general meeting, at Westgate, 7 p.m.

**Nov. 25-27:** *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* community drama at MCI's Buhler Hall; 7:30 p.m. each evening. For tickets, call 204-327-5891.

**Nov. 27:** Manitoba Mennonite Youth Organization volleyball tournament in Steinbach. Bus trip offered from Winkler and Winnipeg. For more information, call MC Manitoba Youth Leadership Ministries at 204-896-1616.

**Nov. 27, 28:** "Christmas@CMU"; (27) 7 p.m.; (28) 3 p.m. Both concerts at the north campus.

**Dec. 5:** Mennonite Community Orchestra concert, featuring pianist

Becky Reesor, at CMU, at 3 p.m.

**Dec. 6:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Christmas concert, at Westminster United Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.

**Dec. 9:** Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School Christmas concert, at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m. For more information, call 204-261-9637.

**Dec. 11, 12:** Faith and Life Choirs concert; (11) Winnipeg, (12) Winkler.

**Dec. 16:** Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary and Middle School Christmas concert, at Immanuel Pentecostal Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m. For more information, call 204-885-1032.

**Dec. 16, 17:** MCI Christmas concerts at Buhler Hall; (16) 7:30 p.m.; (17) 1:30 p.m.

**Jan. 14-16, 2011:** Manitoba Mennonite Youth Organization junior youth retreat at Camp Koinonia.

**Jan. 21-23, 2011:** Manitoba Mennonite Youth Organization junior youth retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

**Jan. 23, 2011:** "A Thousand Hallelujahs" 25th anniversary concert by the Faith and Life Male Choir, at Centennial Hall, Winnipeg.

**Jan. 24-26, 2011:** Winter Lectures at CMU.

**Feb. 3-5, 2011:** Refreshing Winds conference, "Here in this place," at CMU.

**Feb. 10-11, 2011:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate junior high students perform three one-act

plays, at Franco-Manitoban Centre, Winnipeg.

**Feb. 11-13, 2011:** Manitoba Mennonite Youth Organization senior youth retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

**Feb. 21-23, 2011:** Manitoba Mennonite Young Adults winter retreat at Camp Koinonia.

**Feb. 25-26:** MC Manitoba annual delegates gathering, at MCI, Gretna.

**March 21, 2011:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate fundraising banquet at the Marlborough Hotel, Winnipeg, at 6 p.m.

### Ontario

**Until Nov. 10:** "Willow, ash and rye: Traditional basketry revisited" exhibit, at Joseph Schneider Haus museum, Kitchener, featuring the work of folk artist-in-residence Wendy Durfey. For more information, call Susan Burke at 519-742-7752.

**Until Nov. 28:** "Via: Exploring the Way of Christ" each Sunday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, Kitchener. Supper and childcare provided. For more information, or to register, call 519-745-4769.

**Oct. 30:** Menno Singers performs J.S. Bach's *Jesu Meine Freunde* and H. Schuetz's "German Requiem"; at St. John's Anglican Church, Kitchener, at 8 p.m.

**Oct. 31:** Woldemar Neufeld book presentation by Hildi Froese Tiessen,

## UpComing

### Artwork sought for gallery exhibition

WINNIPEG, MAN.—A juried exhibition will take place at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery related to Canadian Mennonite University's January 2011 Refreshing Winds conference. The exhibit will complement the conference theme, "Here in this place." "Our goal is to recognize the importance of context and culture in our worship, to explore and understand how culture impacts us, what culture means in our theology and how worship is embodied in location," organizers write. Using that statement as a guide, artists are invited to make submissions to be considered for the exhibition. The submission deadline is Dec. 1. Visit [mennonitechurch.ca/programs/gallery/](http://mennonitechurch.ca/programs/gallery/) for details, or call curator Ray Dirks at 204-888-6781 ext. 196. The exhibition will run from Jan. 21 to March 5, 2011.

—Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery Release

at Conrad Grebel University College Great Hall.

**Nov. 2-6:** Ten Thousand Villages sale at the Aylmer Public Library; (2-3) 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; (4-5) 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; (6) 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, e-mail [annib@mcsn.org](mailto:annib@mcsn.org).

**Nov. 3-6:** Annual Ten Thousand Villages festival sale at Vineland United Mennonite Church; (3-5) 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., (6) 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tea and lunch room open each day.

**Nov. 5-7:** Marriage Encounter weekend at the King Hotel, Palmerston, from Friday at 7:30 p.m. to Sunday at 4 p.m. For more information, or to register, call Marjorie Roth at 519-669-8667 or e-mail at [wmroth@rogers.com](mailto:wmroth@rogers.com).

**Nov. 7:** Grand Philharmonic Children and Youth Choirs present "Fall to Singing," at the Cedar Worship Centre, Waterloo, at 3 p.m.

**Nov. 11:** "Fear and hope: Religion's role in conflict and peace" colloquium with Luis Lugo of the Pew Forum, at the Centre for International Governance Innovation, Waterloo, at 7 p.m.

**Nov. 13,14:** DaCapo Chamber Choir presents "Vanishing Point: Music for choir, organ and saxophone," at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener; 8 p.m. (13), 3 p.m. (14). For more information, or for tickets, call 519-725-7549 or visit [www.dacapochamberchoir.ca](http://www.dacapochamberchoir.ca).

**Nov. 19:** Spirituality and aging seminar, at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Speaker: George Handzo. Topic: "Integrating spiritual care into health care."

**Nov. 19:** Benjamin Eby Lecture at Conrad Grebel University, at 7:30 p.m. Speaker: Nathan C. Funk. Topic: "Peace starts now: Religious contribution to sustainable peacemaking."

**Nov. 20:** Annual handicraft sale at Fairview Mennonite Home auditorium, Cambridge. Crafts, decorations, gifts, quilts, woodworking, and much more. Tea room and lunch available. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Nov. 20:** Mennonite and Brethren Marriage Encounter annual general meeting at Hawkesville Mennonite Church. Potluck supper, 6 p.m.; meeting, 7 p.m.

**Nov. 20:** Grand Philharmonic Chamber Choir presents "Music of the North," at First United Church, Waterloo. For more information, or to

purchase tickets, call toll-free 1-800-265-8977.

**Nov. 23:** Willowgrove annual general meeting, at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Markham, at 7 p.m. Guest speaker: Colin McCartney, founder of Urban Promise, Toronto.

**Nov. 26:** House of Doc Christmas concert at Hamilton Mennonite Church, at 7:30 p.m. For more information or tickets, call 905-632-8268, or e-mail: [ennsme@cogeco.ca](mailto:ennsme@cogeco.ca).

**Nov. 26, 27:** 19th annual Spirit of Christmas event at Nairn Mennonite Church, Ailsa Craig; (26) 7 to 9 p.m.; (27) 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Featuring local talent and Ten Thousand Villages crafts for sale. For more information, call Barb at 519-232-4720.

**Dec. 3:** University of Waterloo Chamber Choir presents "Oil and Water," at Knox Presbyterian Church, Waterloo, at 8 p.m.

**Dec. 4:** University of Waterloo Choir presents "Peace for Our Times," at Knox Presbyterian Church, Waterloo, at 7:30 p.m.

**Dec. 4,5:** Pax Christi Chorale presents Bach's "Christmas Oratorio I, VI & Cantata 140," "Wachet Auf"; Carols and Motets with guest conductor Howard Dyck at 7:30 (4) and 3 p.m. (5).

**Dec. 11:** Second annual *The Children's Messiah* designed for the younger crowd with Pax Christi Chorale and Gallery Choir of the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, at Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, Toronto, 4-5 p.m.

**Dec. 11:** Grand Philharmonic Choir presents Handel's *Messiah* with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, at Centre in the Square, Kitchener, 7:30 p.m. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call toll-free 1-800-265-8977.

**Feb. 12, 2011:** Grand Philharmonic Choir presents the premiere of John Burge's "Declaration" with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, at Centre in the Square, Kitchener, 7:30 p.m. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call toll-free 1-800-265-8977.

**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](mailto:calendar@canadianmennonite.org).**



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## Classifieds

### Announcements

**TRAVEL:** Visit Europe the Mennonite Way! See website for the 2011 Hotel and Youth Hostel Heritage Tours, including Holland, Germany, Poland, France and Switzerland. [www.mennoniteheritagetours.eu](http://www.mennoniteheritagetours.eu).

**Parent Support Group:** Announcing a bimonthly support group for Mennonite parents of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) persons in Southwestern Ontario. We provide confidential support, fellowship, resources and opportunities for dialogue in the Spirit of Christ. For more information please contact the following: [rvfast@rogers.com](mailto:rvfast@rogers.com), [pmsnyderangel@rogers.com](mailto:pmsnyderangel@rogers.com), or Roy and Mary Gascho, 519-742-1850.

### For Rent

**FOR RENT:** Spacious main-floor, 2-bedroom apt. in century home. Very large backyard adjacent to Festival Theatre, Stratford, Ont. Call Gerald or Grace Plett: 519-271-8268.

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### Employment Opportunities

**Shekinah Retreat Centre** is inviting applications for:

#### **PROGRAM DIRECTOR (FULL-TIME)**

Qualifications should include training/experience in working with children and school programming. Sensitivity to camping and retreating, summer camp marketing and promotion, maintenance of summer camp and school database; possess the ability to work well alongside other people; a willingness to incorporate environmental practices that promote sustainability; have an understanding of Shekinah's philosophy, aims and objectives.

On-site accommodations available. Employment opportunities available for spouse as well.

#### **Direct all resumes and inquiries to:**

Lorne Friesen, Co-administrator  
Shekinah Retreat Centre, Box 490, Waldheim, SK S0K 4R0  
or e-mail: [lorne@shekinahretreatcentre.org](mailto:lorne@shekinahretreatcentre.org)

**PASTOR**

**Tofield Mennonite Church** is searching for a pastor who is fearless and passionate for God, and is gifted in the areas of community outreach, preaching and teaching. We are an Anabaptist congregation of about 70 members in a growing town of about 2,000 people, with many acreage and farm families living in the surrounding area. Edmonton is only about 45 km northwest of us. Blessed with a newer sanctuary and fellowship hall, we look forward to working together with a pastor who has an outgoing personality and is eager to help our church bring Jesus to our community. The opportunity is great. Is God calling you?

Please direct resumes to:  
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**PRINCIPAL**

**UMEI Christian High School** has a 65-year history as an accredited, independent high school providing Christian education (with an Anabaptist/Mennonite perspective). The school welcomes students from many faith backgrounds and teaches those students the Ontario curriculum using a holistic approach that incorporates physical, social and spiritual growth for students, as well as the development of strong academics.

The Board of UMEI Christian invites applications for the position of **Principal**. As a leader with vision and commitment to the mission of the school, the successful applicant will participate in the continuing growth and development of the school, as well as supervise the school program. Duties to commence Sept. 1, 2011. Applications should be sent to:

Janice Huntingford Wagner, Personnel Chair  
UMEI Christian High School  
614 Mersea Road 6  
Leamington, ON N8H 3V8  
or e-mail cats6dr@aol.com



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Canadian Mennonite University invites applications for a full-time, tenure-track faculty position in theology and/or history of Christianity. Competence in Anabaptist-Mennonite theology will be an asset. Teaching responsibilities will be in both undergraduate and graduate programs

Review of applications will begin November 30, 2010 and will continue until the position is filled. Subject to final budgetary approval, the appointment will begin July 1, 2011. Rank will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada will be given priority. CMU is committed to employment equity.

More information: [www.cmu.ca/employment.html](http://www.cmu.ca/employment.html)  
Call 204.487.3300 Email [hrdirector@cmu.ca](mailto:hrdirector@cmu.ca)

**STUDENT RECRUITING AND FUNDRAISING**

Rosthern Junior College is issuing a **Request for Proposals** for responsibilities in Student Recruiting and Fundraising. Please see [www.rjc.sk.ca](http://www.rjc.sk.ca) for the job description and essential elements of your proposal. Closing date: Nov. 15, 2010.

**Position Announcement  
CHIEF MEDA ENGAGEMENT OFFICER**

Due to our success and growth, Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) invites applications for a full-time Chief MEDA Engagement Officer. MEDA is an association of compassionate business women and men who invest in people living in poverty around the world so they can unleash their potential to earn a livelihood to provide for their families and enrich their communities ([www.meda.org](http://www.meda.org)). We invite you to join our team of innovative, entrepreneurial professionals dedicated to finding business solutions to poverty.

**Position Summary**

The Chief MEDA Engagement Officer (CMEO) provides executive-level strategic leadership to engage MEDA's association of private supporters with our mission; secure financial contributions that leverage other sources of funding; protect and enhance MEDA's image; and expand awareness of MEDA in diverse market segments. A member of MEDA's Executive Leadership Team, the CMEO will lead a staff of senior professionals to develop and implement the MEDA Engagement strategic plan and annual budget.

The ideal candidate will have a proven track record of implementing successful marketing strategies and an understanding of fundraising, particularly within the Anabaptist community. With a keen interest in MEDA's approach to finding business solutions to poverty, and a desire to engage others in this vision, the CMEO will participate in speaking engagements, media appearances and visits to key members of the constituency.

A full-time opportunity, with a strong preference to be based in the Waterloo, Ont., MEDA office, this position will involve regular domestic and international travel. This unique position is a chance to use your significant leadership and technical expertise to make a difference.

**Qualifications**

- Minimum of 10 years of successful executive leadership and senior staff management.
- Demonstrated experience in developing and leading successful marketing campaigns for a variety of audiences.
- In-depth knowledge and understanding of MEDA's constituency (Mennonite, Anabaptist and Christian business and professionals).
- Background and understanding of fundraising, especially in the development of major gift proposals. Familiarity with the Moves Management System is preferable.
- Highly motivated, self-starter and results-oriented.
- Excellent and proven interpersonal skills in team leadership, relationship-building, active listening, communicating and negotiation.
- Understanding and appreciation of international development and MEDA's approach to finding business solutions to poverty.
- Appreciation and support of MEDA's faith, values and goals.

**Please submit resume to [jobs@meda.org](mailto:jobs@meda.org).**

A gift fit to hang

# in Rideau Hall



PHOTO BY DAVID PERRIN

*Conrad Grebel University College president Henry Paetkau, left, presents “Barn Raising,” a Peter Goetz print from the Grebel collection, to David Johnston as a farewell gift on behalf of the University of Waterloo colleges. Johnston left the University of Waterloo after 11 years as president and was sworn in as Governor General on Oct. 1; he often referred to the spirit of Mennonite barn-raising during his university tenure and assured Paetkau that this print would hang in his office in Rideau Hall.*