

CANADIAN MENNONITE

March 7, 2011
Volume 15 Number 5

Sliding into summer fun

Focus on Camps and Summer Christian Education

pg. 24

inside

Upside-down wisdom 17

IVEPers gather to worship, share their cultures 21

C.N. Friesen: A missionary in overalls 23

EDITORIAL

Priesthood: A work in progress

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

The church, or congregation, as a “royal priesthood” was announced as one of our core beliefs by the Anabaptist Reformers nearly 500 years ago, setting us apart from our Catholic-Protestant counterparts who, in that time and place, were perceived to have corrupted the faith with their vertical view of a believer’s relationship to God.

Taking seriously Apostle Peter’s declaration that every person who believes in Jesus Christ is a “priest,” Anabaptists went even further to say that final authority rests with the community of faith, not the pope, a presbytery or any hierarchical designate presumed to have exclusively direct channels to God.

And while the language has changed from “priesthood” since the Dordrecht Confession of 1632 to our most recent confession of 1995, as “an assembly of those who voluntarily commit themselves to follow Christ in life and to be accountable to one another and to God,” we still hold to the belief of direct access and to the discerning community as the final word. I say we still believe it. Practising it is another matter. Priesthood is still a work in progress.

Cultural advancement and shifting models of leadership in society and in the church have sometimes put this core belief in jeopardy. As our communities of faith migrated from western and eastern

Europe and from southern Russia, the realities of holding faith communities together in changing political environments sometimes gave way to authoritarian bishops and elders who knew best what was right and “spiritual” for the laity, taking for themselves the “priestly” role of authority and biblical interpretation.

In more modern times, the shift from the vocational preacher ordained by lot to the paid, seminary-trained, professional pastor or team of pastors, has tended to water down the practice of priesthood when the congregation looks to the pastor or team to do the work of the church because that’s “what we hired them for.”

That’s why what happened at a leadership seminar last month at the 64th gathering of Mennonite Church Manitoba in Gretna is significant, not only for that area church but for all congregations across Canada. The area church planners courageously tackled what is sometimes known as the “elephant in the room” of church conflict by looking at the quality of leadership and what has come to be termed as “team dysfunctions.”

Resource person Don Rempel Boschman, lead pastor of a team ministry at Douglas Mennonite Church in Winnipeg who is finishing up his work in this field at Fuller Theological Seminary, Calif., drew on the work of management

guru Patrick Lencioni, as well as the scriptural examples of Jethro, father-in-law to Moses, and of Jesus’ choosing of his 12 disciples, to point up areas of leadership and congregational conflict in carrying out ministry.

While Boschman carefully laid out five obstacles to effective leadership as an absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability and inattention to results, I couldn’t help but wonder if all of those didn’t also apply to congregations as they interact with their pastors in doing “priesthood” or of everyone being a priest, as we believe.

I also found myself wondering if a congregation can be diagnosed as “dysfunctional” as well. When the “priesthood” breaks down, isn’t there an obvious absence of trust, not only in the leadership, but also in each other? In such situations, rumours run rampant about this or that “believer,” wrong motives are ascribed, sides are taken on sometimes trivial matters masquerading as theological issues.

All the while, isn’t there, at the same time, a fear of conflict and the subsequent nursing of personal hurts and perceived injustices which form an ongoing undercurrent of dissatisfaction and disaffection? And don’t these lead, too, to the other breakdowns of commitment, accountability and inattention to results?

We are not without help here. The Manitoba conversation is opening a window of opportunity to renovate our core belief in the priesthood. Leaders and congregations need to work together in first acknowledging the problem, then by addressing it in productive ways through a prayerful and honest look at themselves.

And professional help is available. MC Manitoba, to its credit, has named three professionals as “conflict advisors” in the persons of Dean Peachey, Lois Edmunds and Erwin Warkentin.



ABOUT THE COVER:

Tanner Buck will tell you that water sliding is one of the many fun outdoor activities offered at Mennonite camps like Hidden Acres each summer. Our Focus on Camps & Summer Christian Education section begins on page 24.

PHOTO: HIDDEN ACRES

Circulation: Please contact Lisa Jacky toll-free at 1-800-378-2524 ext. 221 or by e-mail at office@canadianmennonite.org for subscriptions and address changes. Subscriptions can also be ordered at our web site. We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund towards our mailing costs. ISSN 1480-042X

Canada

CANADIAN MENNONITE

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40063104 REGISTRATION NO. 09613

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Milestones announcements: milestones@canadianmennonite.org

Obituaries: lisa.metzger@canadianmennonite.org

Calendar announcements: calendar@canadianmennonite.org

Material can also be sent "Attn: Submissions/Readers Write/Milestones/Obituaries/Calendar" by postal mail or fax to our head office.

Reprint requests: reprints@canadianmennonite.org

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

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Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



contents

Women in ministry 4

Read the inspiring profiles of five women pastors across the country: **EVE ISAAK** from B.C., **DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD** from Alberta, **EMILY TOEWS** from Saskatchewan, **ERIN MORASH** from Manitoba, and **MARTHA SMITH GOOD** from Ontario.

Sharing the good news of hope, peace and justice 18

The Anabaptist Network in South Africa is telling the 'good news stories' that the mainstream media ignores. The stories are available online at anisa.org.za/news.

Let war resisters stay in Canada, rally urges 20

American military volunteers who later refuse combat roles for conscientious reasons should be granted asylum in Canada, a protest in Steinbach, Man., tries to tell Public Safety Minister **VIC TOEWS**.



A heart for grieving people 22

Retiree **HANK FRIESEN** engages his life's passion—and second career—in the funeral business in British Columbia's Fraser Valley, in our 'Business of Faith' continuing series.



Focus on Camps & Summer Christian Education 24

Read about summer happenings at Hidden Acres, Camp Squeah, the Ontario Mennonite Music Camp, Silver Lake, Camp Valaqua and UMEI's Camp Explore U.

Regular features:

For discussion **10** Readers write **11** Milestones **16** Pontius' Puddle **16** Yellow Pages **28** Calendar **29** Classifieds **30**

Priesthood: A work in progress 2

DICK BENNER

My mother's couch 12

MELISSA MILLER

Are you ready? 13

KEVIN DAVIDSON

'That's what we're called to do' 14

TIM FROESE

New blog postings

at canadianmennonite.org/blog/

Born to run: **PAUL LOEWEN**

Reflection on listening: **CHERYL WOELK**

Women in ministry

Canadian Mennonite profiles the inspiring stories of women pastors from each of Mennonite Church Canada's five area churches, beginning with Eve Isaak from British Columbia and working east to Martha Smith Good in Ontario.

From a closed community to an open heart

BY EVE ISAAK

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

Growing up in a very conservative Old Colony Mennonite home in the 1950s and '60s, I soon learned that education was not encouraged. Church was meant only to attend. I was to keep anything I heard or learned to myself; the men would sort out what needed to be sorted out. My place was to marry, have children and submit unconditionally to my husband, to leadership and to authority.

I did not respond well to this environment. I was perceived as a rebel early on. Having to help with the family income, I left school at 15. After marrying three years later, and having a new baby at 21, I secretly applied for a mail-in high school course from Toronto and, by the grace of God, I received a letter to say I had passed. This gave me the wings I had been looking for. I had a tremendous urge and longing to learn, and a new feeling of compassion for people was constant in me although I had not a single tool to do this.

Life began to throw me some serious punches. My



first husband suffered a serious heart attack at 36, forcing me into the workplace to provide an income. In 1979 I agreed to manage a 154-unit apartment complex. I single-handedly cleaned up the run-down building located in Surrey, B.C.'s most violent neighbourhood, full of drug addicts, prostitutes and homeless people.

By developing and implementing fair rules and living conditions, a respectable place was created in which to live. I cared for the old, the sick, the unemployed, the addicted and the grieving. These included those whom I had worked with and given opportunities to comply with the building rules, but whom I had to eventually evict.

Since I was so involved with the hurting and needy people, and my desire to

continue to help them help themselves grew stronger and stronger, I set up a "giving tree" in my home church. Rather than send the needy to the food bank, I involved the congregants, who bought the groceries that were then distributed to the needy families, and I made sure that they knew these Christmas food baskets came from a caring community.

All the while I had to devote increasing care to my husband, who had open-heart surgery in 1981. Being thrown into the unfamiliar medical system due to my husband's illness, I began to learn more about myself, the medical system, human anatomy, certain illnesses and the great need to study. Through all of this turmoil, we decided it was time to call Rudy Goertzen, pastor of Cedar Hills

Mennonite Church, who, with all of his gentleness, grace and kindness, led us through the catechism and understanding of faith in Jesus Christ, and we were baptized upon the confession of our faith in 1982.

Intense palliative care for my husband over the ensuing years took its toll on me. Finally, the medical system took the decision for long-term care for him out of my hands and placed him in an institution, where he died in 2001.

After taking the time I needed to recover and heal from my long journey, I responded to Cedar Hills' invitation to complement my life experiences with academic studies, an opportunity I embraced with open arms.

In August 2003 I entered Hesston

College, Kan., with all my worldly possessions—two suitcases—and a desire and determination to study the Bible more in depth. I asked theological questions and took every opportunity for extra studies during the two-year program, which included a month of study and service in Guatemala; work in a orphanage in Reynosa, Tex., during spring break; clinical pastoral education at Wesley Medical Center, Kan.; and a chaplaincy internship in the Kansas Correctional Institute, a maximum-security prison for men.

My work with victims, which began more than a decade before, had never given me the opportunity to work with offenders, but I had always had the desire to try to help them change their lives of crime. This internship gave me the opportunity to do that, and I found I was changed by the inmates in ways I had not expected. I recognized the immense grief the prisoners were experiencing due to incarceration, as well as past, unresolved grief. Some would never see the outside of the prison walls again and some would never receive a visit from anyone from the outside, as they were either abandoned by family and friends or they did not have anyone in their lives when they were incarcerated. This experience confirmed in me that more contact and communication must be made with those on the margins of our society, especially by we who sit in comfortable pews on Sunday mornings.

Before I left for pastoral ministry studies in Kansas, I was licensed in ministry in preparation for ordination. But as a community mental health liaison worker with the Low German-speaking Mennonites who came to Canada from Paraguay, Bolivia, Mexico and Belize, and then working with my new husband, Helmut Isaak, as spiritual directors in the rehab centre in Cuauhtémoc, Mexico, continuing with my ordination would not

have been possible, as being ordained as a woman would have hindered my work with these people.

But with relationships established with the Old Colony leadership and the community, I was able to hold support groups with women who felt strengthened and encouraged after seeing and hearing how I, who had come from the same background as they did, had struggled and triumphed, so they knew there was hope for them also.

Coming to Burns Lake, B.C., was a gift of a whole new experience for Helmut and me. I have relied on Scripture and the Holy Spirit to carry me through, but I also recognize that God sends people into our lives to walk with us on our journeys, and there are so many people who have supported, mentored and held me up when I could not do so on my own.

During the past five years, Helmut, a scholar in Anabaptist/Mennonite theology and history, has given me more insight into my being a woman in leadership than I could have imagined or studied. His constant, patient and gentle teaching that we are all created equal, and constant encouragement that women must be given the opportunity to use their gifts, has helped shape me and set me free to develop and use my God-given gifts.

Now, as co-pastor of First Mennonite Church, Burns Lake, as director of

PHOTO COURTESY OF FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH



Wilf Dueck, moderator of First Mennonite Church, Burns Lake, B.C., presents Pastor Eve Isaak with flowers and an education bursary from the congregation at her ordination service last June.

spiritual care in the local hospital and care home, and as chaplain and hospice coordinator in this small town, all of my experiences and studies are gathered together to make me more tolerant and accepting of all cultures, religions and backgrounds, and to serve with more understanding and wisdom.

First Mennonite, with the help of Mennonite Church Canada and MC B.C., is slowly recovering from a very difficult past. The dedicated group of people left in this congregation continue to make a tremendous contribution to the health and rebuilding of the church and its image in the community.

Helmut and I have said, “Where he sends, we will go. For now, it is Burns Lake. Where the next place will be, we do not yet know. But what we do know is that we will serve willingly.” ☞

Rather than send the needy to the food bank, I involved the congregants, who bought the groceries that were then distributed to the needy families, and I made sure that they knew these Christmas food baskets came from a caring community.

Not a stereotype

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

As far as I know, I'm the only one. I'm the only home-grown Alberta woman who left the province, studied in Mennonite institutions, and is a pastor back here. Friends in other provinces wondered, "Why go back?" They knew Alberta's redneck reputation. Happily, stereotypes are never the whole truth and sometimes they are lies.

As a pastor I've encountered a few stereotypes, but parents, friends, teachers and mentors in the church have ensured that these were not obstacles to my calling.

I was 19 when I preached my first sermon at Bergthal Mennonite, my home church, near Didsbury. Afterwards, C.G. Neufeld, a respected elder and former pastor, said to me, "I never thought women should be in the pulpit. Now I am going to reconsider that." His words greatly encouraged me. Another person

said she believed God was calling me to ministry. Although this went against her former thinking on the issue, she always supported me.

While studying in Waterloo, Ont., I had concurrent part-time jobs as an associate pastor at Wanner Mennonite Church and as a seniors chaplain at Fairview Mennonite Home. Both communities nurtured my call to ministry, and I found that my gender was an asset.

The assumptions of what a pastor was didn't easily fit a woman in her early 20s and perhaps even gave me a kind of freedom. I found both youths and seniors willing to share openly with me. I had the privilege to hear stories from life's beginning and ending perspectives.

The stereotype of women being good communicators may have worked in my favour! After a sermon at Fairview, I asked the 80-year-old worship leader what he thought of a young woman

When my husband, Tim, and I first shared a job, people would sometimes come to me with their personal questions and would ask Tim the work questions.

preaching. He laughed and said, "I've seen so much change in my life, I'm comfortable with it." His acceptance and encouragement helped me to be comfortable with it too.

Subtle forms of gender stereotypes are occasional irritants. Generally, these will disappear if I focus on what I've been called to do and allow others to support me. When my husband Tim and I first shared a job, people would sometimes come to me with their personal questions and would ask Tim the work questions. It put me in the awkward place of feeling I might have to be pushy to be taken seriously.

Tim, however, became adept at noticing the problem. If a question was about something I worked on, he'd redirect it to me even if he knew the answer. In time, people saw us as equal partners.

Currently, some irritants still happen, although they are infrequent. Last year, after I did a presentation at a local community church, that pastor called Tim to the front to thank him, even though all he did was accompany me and eat lunch! We laughed about that.

I don't think of myself as a woman pastor. I'm simply a pastor who happens to be female, a pastor thoroughly convinced we need both genders using their unique gifts as we seek to be the church in the world. ☸

Donita Wiebe-Neufeld is co-pastor of First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, Alta., and the Alberta correspondent for Canadian Mennonite.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD



Donita and Tim Wiebe-Neufeld are ordained in May 2006 by Jim Shantz, Mennonite Church Alberta conference minister.

Not her gender, but her age that's an issue

BY KARIN FEHDERAU

SASKATCHEWAN CORRESPONDENT

Recently ordained, Emily Toews—at 35—is the youngest female lead pastor in Mennonite Church Saskatchewan. She has served for four years at North Star Mennonite Church in Drake, and clearly enjoys her work.

Growing up in Leamington, Ont., Toews experienced an average Canadian life. “My dad worked at Chrysler; my mom was a nurse,” she says. Together with her family, she attended North Leamington United Mennonite Church. The youngest of three girls, she knew from an early age that she wanted to serve God. “I always wanted to do something for the church,” she says.

There were no surprises when she

decided to become a pastor. Her family was very accepting of her decision, she says. No-one raised an eyebrow. Rather, she understood from her parents that simply by being a child of God she was welcome to pursue her calling to serve in the church.

Although she experienced equality in the home, Toews says she did not see it in the church. Growing up, she knew women could be Sunday school teachers and missionaries, but it ended there. “In the late '70s, early '80s women were not in leadership,” she recalls. “They were not pastors, not deacons.”

She questioned that in her teens. “We couldn't even have women as ushers,” she

says. “I wondered why women couldn't welcome people into the church.”

After North Leamington opted out of German-speaking services, Toews noticed changes in her church. It seemed to coincide with a different approach to picking leadership. Instead of calling lay pastors from within the congregation, the church began to hire pastors.

During her teen years, Toews began to participate in worship by reading Scripture. Later, she was also elected as an elder.

After attending United Mennonite Educational Institute (now UMEI Christian High School), Toews decided to get some Bible knowledge under her

The youngest of three girls, [Emily Toews] knew from an early age that she wanted to serve God. 'I always wanted to do something for the church,' she says.

PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILY TOEWS



belt, believing she was destined for missions. She acquired a bachelor of theology from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Man., graduating in 1997.

“If I'm going to be a missionary, I'm going to need a trade,” she reasoned, so she went back to school and obtained a bachelor of education degree from the University of Winnipeg in 2000.

After teaching at UMEI for just over three years, she knew she needed to do more. It was back to school she went, this time down to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., earning a master of divinity degree in pastoral care and counselling.

Prevailing attitudes among Mennonites about women in leadership have changed a lot. Now in her mid-30s, Toews readily admits that she felt no opposition from her home congregation in Leamington about pursuing her desire to serve in the church. Not having arrived on the scene embattled and embittered because of restrictive roles or power struggles means

Toews has energy left to love others.

And, as Toews breezily observes, in Mennonite circles it isn't her gender but her age that sometimes causes difficulties. "For my generation, there was never

a question that there was something we couldn't do because we were women," she affirms. But she has seen where she is not listened to in the same way because of age-related inexperience. ❧

You don't have to be perfect

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

MANITOBA CORRESPONDENT

It was the simple yet profound welcome she received as a stranger in a Mennonite church that made all the difference to Erin Morash, who says she grew up in "an extraordinarily secular family."

When the family moved to Langham, Sask., in her adolescence, Morash chose to attend Zoar Mennonite. For the first time, she heard a peace theology expressed. "That and the music blew me away," says Morash, who now pastors at Trinity Mennonite Church in Mather and Crystal City Mennonite, rural Manitoba congregations 20 minutes apart.

"The first time I asked about becoming a minister I was 19, in an adult Bible study group in Langham," she says. "I got such good feedback from people in the Bible study group, and the pastor asked me to do a sermon."

Morash began to explore what felt

'I realized that this religion stuff, which up to that point I had taken to be quite personal, had incredible social power and consequences.'
(Erin Morash)

like a call to ministry. Friends within the church encouraged her, recognizing her gifts in studying the Bible. "But the idea horrified my mom," she admits. And her grandmother told her, "You have to be perfect to be a Mennonite minister."

"I decided I would finish my degree

in history and then I would get away and take time to think about it," she says. While at university, Morash became involved with women in abusive relationships. She studied the Scriptures with them, sometimes in secret, as they struggled with decisions of whether to stay or to leave those relationships. "I realized that this religion stuff, which up to that point I had taken to be quite personal, had incredible social power and consequences."

When she completed her degree, she decided to go to Canadian Mennonite Bible College (now Canadian Mennonite University) in Winnipeg. In 1997 she completed her master of divinity degree. Following a pastoral internship at Langley Mennonite Fellowship in B.C., she was associate youth pastor at North Kildonan Mennonite in Winnipeg for eight years.

"I think because I walked in clueless, and because I wasn't part of the denomination by birth, I was given permission to do things the insider couldn't," she muses. "That being said, there are 'ins' I don't have, like family connections and subtle cultural understandings."

PHOTO COURTESY OF ERIN MORASH



Erin Morash pastors at Trinity Mennonite Church in Mather and Crystal City Mennonite, rural Manitoba congregations 20 minutes apart.

Early in her ministry, Morash recalls a meeting of ministers at which she was mistaken for one of the servers and handed a cup of coffee to refill. When they realized she was one of the ministers, the conversation came to halt. "Please, God, don't let it be like this every time," she prayed.

And it hasn't. When Morash was an associate pastor it was easier for those who had trouble with her gender to accept her leadership under a male lead pastor. Now in small rural communities as lead pastor, she says that "not everyone is equally accepting, and yet they have been so welcoming, coming every Sunday, bringing me into their homes, coming to Bible studies I lead. We eat together and pray together."

Morash isn't about trying to change minds: "I just try to follow my calling as faithfully as I can, owning up to the mistakes I make, as well as I can." ❧

'I don't have to prove anything'

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

EASTERN CANADA CORRESPONDENT

Throughout her childhood and youth Martha Smith Good believed her conservative Swiss Markham-Waterloo Mennonite church north of Toronto was all about rules and regulations. "In my spirit/soul I knew there was something more, and I wanted to find that," she says.

Grieved at not being allowed to go on to high school, she found the traditional women's roles of the 1950s stifling. After becoming a registered nursing assistant, she began attending Hagerman Mennonite Church in the then Mennonite Conference of Ontario and Quebec (MCOQ). From 1960-63 she studied at the Ontario Mennonite Bible Institute in Kitchener, a winter Bible school that spawned many leaders.

Time in Basel, Switzerland, with the Intermento Trainee Program opened her eyes to the wider Mennonite world and whetted her appetite to learn more. At 28, she was accepted as a mature student at Goshen College, Ind.

She especially appreciated Millard Lind, who asked her as her time at the college neared the end, "Have you ever thought of going to seminary?" When she laughed and asked why, he replied, "Because I see potential in you."

In 1971, she began her studies at Goshen Biblical Seminary. But even a summer internship at the Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Ohio, didn't change her thinking that "the Mennonite church doesn't use women." John Howard Yoder challenged her to prove that women could do ministry. "Prove it?" she retorted. "I don't have to prove anything. If I'm called into ministry I'll accept the call, but I'm not going into ministry to prove women are able."

After taking on a chaplaincy

assignment in Colorado, Oak Grove called and a year later she went back there on staff. Smith Good never argued for women in ministry from the pulpit; instead, she allowed her ability and call to show themselves through her work, finding that even the most vocal critics were won over in time.

After pastoring at Hively Mennonite in Elkhart, she explored a position with Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont. She recalls that half the interview was taken up with questions about the Bible and women in ministry.

Following a pastorate at Hillcrest Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont., she took some time off to adjust to the new task of parenting after marrying Gerald Good, a widower with four daughters.

While pastoring at Guelph Mennonite Church, Ont., she was given the freedom

to pursue a doctor of ministries degree. The congregation also wanted to ordain her for ministry.

This was one of the "hard" parts on her path, as there seemed to be resistance from the conference. At a meeting to discuss this she was told, "It's not because you're a woman." To which she responded, "So we've laid that one to rest. What then is the reason to not ordain me?" After more discussion she said, "I've heard no reason to not ordain me, so I'll wait for you to set up a time for the interview."

In April 1982, Smith Good became the first woman ordained by MCOQ. ❧



Martha Smith Good, left, talks with Joanna Wall, pastor of the now-closed Warden Woods Church, Scarborough, Ont., in June 2009.

/// For discussion

1. When did your congregation first have a woman preach a sermon or first have a woman pastor? How open was the congregation to this change? Were there surprises in who resisted? How has the attitude toward women pastors changed since the 1970s?
2. How did the acceptance of women in leadership happen in your congregation? Did the first woman on church council or the first woman elder/deacon have something to prove? Are there any differences in our expectations of men and women leaders? Are women's gifts for ministry different from men's?
3. Martha Smith Good says she found the "traditional women's roles of the 1950s stifling." Why do you think traditional societies tend to limit the role of women? Are there negative consequences to opening possibilities for women? Do men also have stereotypical roles that can be stifling?
4. Have you ever encouraged anyone to enter pastoral ministry? What gifts did you see that you wanted to foster? How important is this encouragement in drawing people into church work? Should we be more deliberate in encouraging people to consider pastoral ministry?

VIEWPOINTS

/// Readers write

We welcome your comments and publish most letters sent by subscribers intended for publication. This section is largely an 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. Keep letters to 400 words or less and address issues rather than individuals. We do not countenance rancour or animosity. Personal attacks are inappropriate and will not see the light of print. Please send letters to be considered for publication to letters@canadianmennonite.org or by postal mail or fax, marked "Attn: Readers Write" (our address is on page 3). Letters should include the author's contact information and mailing address. Letters are edited for length, style and adherence to editorial guidelines.

✉ Celebrate the 'kitchenhood of all believers'

RE: "EAST PASKA together and be glad," Feb. 21, page 10.

The church that I attend invites all ethnicities. We share our stories. Even though the potluck tables are still heavily Russian-Ukraine-oriented, this is changing as our own cultural fabric evolves. This is how it should be.

My mother, now passed on, and her sisters have poignant stories of their life in Russia. Like Ramon Rempel, I feel a connection to those stories when I eat *zwieback* (rolls) and borscht. When I eat foods from other ethnic groups, I share in their cultural identity. This is part of the community that we are building today.

I will not shun my cultural heritage, as I do not expect others to shun theirs. We break bread together and live our Mennonite lives as a church community embracing all comers and their faith journeys in all their expressions. Apart from strict theology, this is also what I think it is to be Mennonite.

Is it possible to separate ethnicity from the word Mennonite? Google "Mennonite food" and view the many sites that not only delve into the cultural history of such foods, but direct readers to recipes and places where these foods can be found and purchased. Of special note is The Kitchenhood of all Believers by Matthew Bailey-Dick.

"Let us break bread together . . . let us drink wine together . . . let us praise God together on our knees," says the words of Hymn No. 453 in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*. In so doing, let us share our stories, our food, our songs and our faith, celebrating and building

our evolving Mennonite theological/cultural community richly, while passing it on to those who follow.
KEN WIENS, KINGSVILLE, ONT.

✉ Keep the dialogue on finances going

AS SOMEONE WHO has been a pastor, conducted academic research on the practice and theology of Mennonite giving in Canada, and who continues to work as a fundraising consultant, you could say that the mix of fundraising and theology is a passion of mine.

From this experience and from articles in *Canadian Mennonite*, it's clear that the future of many Mennonite institutions is in jeopardy. My own opinion is that Mennonite Church Canada and area churches are actually stoically dying a death by a thousand cuts.

One doesn't need to have a fundraising background to understand that MC Canada needs money to carry out its mission. I am also certain that "the dollars are here," as Dick Benner's May 31, 2010, editorial was titled.

Where I have a different perspective is in the causes and cure for declining giving to MC Canada. Benner suggests that older donors are more tied to print



**Allison Turman
consults with
Dr. Judy Mullett.**

Hometown:
Stouffville, Ont.

Major:
psychology

Cross-cultural:
India

"I've gained so much personally and academically at EMU. It's worth the distance! I've made amazing friends, gained appreciation for my country, spent an amazing semester in India and come to love the Shenandoah Valley!"

 EASTERN
MENNONITE
UNIVERSITY

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media and thus less susceptible to the emotional appeals of organizations such as World Vision and Samaritan's Purse. I have sat around a table of older Mennonites who list Mennonite Central Committee as their favourite charity. But every single senior could explain in detail the offer of a well-known Christian charity that advertises on TV, and many of them support that charity on an ongoing basis.

Benner suggests that MC Canada needs to represent what it does in "compelling images that make people reach for their pocketbooks." It's difficult to compete

with TV and I don't think even a well-crafted video appeal or YouTube broadcast will turn the tide of declining giving.

In my view, the low-tech approach of personal contact and ongoing relationship is foundational. Someone from the area churches should show up often at churches on Sunday, since most Mennonites do not know what their area or national church does, although it is assumed that they do. While there are generational differences, the cultural divide that we need to worry about first is actually the divide between

FAMILY TIES

My mother's couch

MELISSA MILLER

Waking from a nap on my mother's couch, I stretch and think, "What a blessing." My mother's couch is a perfect spot for napping: generously long, wonderfully comfortable and cozily firm. It's also lovely to look at, with a flowered fabric of rose and blue trimmed by light oak wood. For decades, this substantial piece of furniture has been the focal point of the living room, steadily offering welcome and comfort. Children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren have sunk into its cozy embrace, napping, visiting, telling stories and savouring the simple pleasure of being together.

My latest naps on the couch occurred this winter when the family gathered to mark my mother's 80th birthday, another blessing. We are all grateful for our mother's long and fruitful life. In our gratitude, and in recognition that she has had few occasions when the spotlight shone on her, we wanted her milestone birthday to be special. So we planned a party in a beautiful space with delicious food and invited guests to celebrate with us. The party unfolded exactly as hoped for, with a hundred of Mom's family and friends in attendance. By day's end, Mom was glowing. When asked what was her favourite part, she replied with quiet joy, "Everything."



A parental home that is steady and loving offers a firm foundation on which to stand.

It is no small blessing, I know, to have a mother who lives to the age of 80. It is no small blessing to be able to go home long after one has become an adult. It is no small blessing to know home as a place of security, warmth and love.

Such blessings include being able to hear my mother's musical voice, constant and bubbling like a mountain stream, a soothing sound I have known from even before my birth. The blessings include gathering at her table to eat the food she has prepared, the food of my childhood, and holding her hand as we say grace, a hand that is marvellously soft and tender

as a young girl's.

The blessings include the continuity of past and present. Being in my mother's home connects the dots between my childhood and the adult I am today and all the points in between. Through her and her home, I am linked to my great-grandparents and grandparents and father, now long dead. It is easier to see their faces and hear their voices, and to be strengthened by their memory when I am in my mother's home.

Having a home I can return to is an

invaluable source of nourishment and sustenance. Such a gift provides both roots that ground me and wings that enable me to travel to and from this home. A parental home that is steady and loving offers a firm foundation on which to stand.

I am mindful that homes are not always pure gold. Many of us do not have a family home to return to, nor parents who live to see a full and ripe age, nor homes that are welcoming and hospitable. Not all of the past, nor all of the present (even in the home with the perfect couch), is infused with grace and harmony. Still, we are wise to see the blessings we have and ponder them with gratitude.

As we honour our elders and the

homes they provide, we might paraphrase a biblical text. The psalmist names sons as a heritage from the Lord, and gives thanks for the fruit of the womb as a reward (Psalm 127). How about naming our elders as a heritage from the Lord, and giving thanks for the womb that brought us to life?

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

the area and national church and the average Menno warming a pew.

Mennonites also need to make a theological shift away from giving as a duty and in response to needs, and towards giving as a joyful response to God's grace. To make that shift, we need to start discussing giving and what we do with our money, preferably not only when there is a budget shortfall! To that end, I am pleased to see columnists from the Mennonite Foundation of Canada writing regularly in *Canadian Mennonite* to keep the dialogue going.

LORI GUENTHER REESOR, MISSISSAUGA, ONT.

✉ Former U.S. president Carter deserves Mennonite praise

RE: "LAMENTING RICHARD Holbrooke," Jan. 24, page 10.

Richard Penner makes a brief and accurate assessment of Richard Holbrooke's career, but he goes on to make some criticisms of current Anabaptist stances and demeanour, to which I wish to raise a few objections:

- Penner's denigration of former president Jimmy Carter. Carter certainly had his faults, but he deserves the praise of every Mennonite for pointing out to the

GOD, MONEY AND ME

Are you ready?

KEVIN DAVIDSON

On Aug. 13, 2010, after one month in the Foothills Hospital in Calgary, Alta., my dad died of mesotheliomameso, cancer of the outer lining of the lung. Although Dad had experienced shortness of breath for the past year, it never stopped him from maintaining a busy social and family life. He even attended a Calgary Stampede breakfast the day he entered the hospital.

Although his diagnosis and death—one week apart—were quick and unexpected, his preparation was not. Many years before, Mom and Dad had intentionally completed a will and incapacity documents. They updated everything a few months before Dad's passing. Dad must have known something was up. My brother found the documents along with a list of Dad's investments on top of his desk.

Dad's lawyer did an excellent job in setting up his will. It is clear and concise, and so far we have not needed any legal advice. However, we are retaining the services of a tax accountant. By the way, everyone has a will: Either the one you or your lawyer complete, or the one the court completes for you.

Even though Dad and Mom's assets were jointly owned, application still had

to be made to remove his name from the business, house, vehicle, investments, bank accounts and other papers. Also, accounts set up in Dad's name alone were transferred to my mom or closed.

Each financial institution has its own privacy and security rules. The process has been as easy as a five-minute telephone conversation or as complex as having to provide a notarized copy of the will, a notarized copy of the death certificate, a letter of indemnity and a letter of direction.

If my dad had not understood the



Although his diagnosis and death—one week apart—were quick and unexpected, his preparation was not.

value of a will, it would have meant higher stress, more time away from my family and work, unnecessary legal and court costs, and even the real possibility of despising Dad for not being properly prepared.

Dad's sudden entrance into the Lord's presence has shown me that death is unpredictable and even unexpected. You realize you're never fully prepared. Dad left me with a wonderful legacy of generosity, and spiritual and financial responsibility.

Do you have an up-to-date will? Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC) encourages you to review your will every three to five years, or whenever there is a life change such as buying or selling a business, a marriage or a move. Is your immediate family aware of your future wishes? Keeping them updated lends itself, hopefully, to cooperation and unity later on.

Have you been asked to look after anyone's estate, children, financial affairs or healthcare decisions? If so, request a copy of the will and incapacity documents, and know how to access the originals. Ask questions, discuss expectations.

Not sure where to start or whom to ask? Contact the MFC stewardship con-

sultant closest to you, visit our website at MennoFoundation.ca or call us toll-free at 1-800-772-3257. We are available to assist you as you contemplate and plan your end-of-life arrangements.

Kevin Davidson is a stewardship consultant at the Calgary, Alta., office of Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For stewardship education and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit Mennofoundation.ca.

American electorate that America, as a nation, needed to live within its means (thereby insuring his electoral defeat), and for not losing a single American life through military action or causing massive dislocation through military action in other countries. Compare that to the insane actions of a more recent president.

• Penner calls for “Anabaptists to stand up and be counted.” This statement cannot be argued with. But to what end and in what manner?

Some wag offered the following distinction between Quakers and Mennonites: Quakers think you can change the world; Mennonites know that you can’t. I’m afraid that the Mennonites are correct. If there is

anything that the Bible and Charles Darwin agree on, it is the immutable, irredeemable nature of humanity.

My point here is that there is a limit to what we might do in the larger political arena, and that we continue with the successes we have at lower levels. The widely recognized competence of Mennonite Central Committee and our success at establishing bridges with Islamic Iran come to mind.

• If forceful and abrasive stances are required, as Penner suggests, I would suggest emulating the careers of the Berrigan brothers, something I myself was totally incapable of doing.

EDWARD BERGEN, TORONTO, ONT.

FROM OUR LEADERS

‘That’s what we’re called to do’

TIM FROESE

“*It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth*” (Isaiah 49:6).

This passage connects well with a series of recent experiences.

Not long ago, a member of one of our congregations called me for help in providing resources for a family of new Canadians. The circumstances were difficult, challenging the family, community support systems, cultural and spiritual understandings, and even trust and relationships within the congregation. In the end, we decided to respond with more specialized help, knowing full well that the journey ahead was likely to continue its long and difficult path. Praise God!

Before ending the conversation, I wanted to acknowledge the significant commitment shown by this individual and the congregation by offering thanks and a blessing for their concern, care and accompaniment. The response

acknowledged this, and added, “That’s what we’re called to do.” An enormous task is approached with the simple belief that God is yet bigger, more capable, and able to provide and sustain as needed. And it is this God that we are called to follow. Praise God!



The couple invited me to help discern whether God was calling them to go overseas into long-term ministry.

Last week I was in the living room of a young family. The couple invited me to help discern whether God was calling them to go overseas into long-term ministry. I responded as best as I could. And I am very aware that God has been speaking to their hearts even before I arrived, for it is God who calls, equips and sends. Praise God!

Before Christmas, I received a note from the Mennonite church in Chile. This group of congregations accepted a new ministry proposal in the town of Ercilla. Of this new venture, fellow pastor Samuel Tripainao, who visited Canada

in 2009 for the International Mennonite Pastors Coming Together event, commented: “Ercilla is in the centre of the Mapuche [indigenous people] conflict, where farms, trucks and tractors are burned. A dangerous zone with much violence, where indigenous people walk around hooded with axes, stones and machetes. I believe it is a good place to plant a church.” Praise God!

A week ago, my congregation learned about a family with an insurmountable need. They had just found out that their little two-year-old girl had cancer. In front of such odds, we as a church did what we are called to do. Pray. Seven days

later, we were informed that the cancer was gone. Praise God!

God’s words in Isaiah remind us that he envisions bigger things for those he calls to be—and to do—as his servants. May God grant us the faithfulness and blessing to follow as we are called. Praise God!

Tim Froese is executive director of International Ministries for Mennonite Church Canada. The column was adapted from the MC Canada World of Witness International Report, February 2011.

✉ Let the intergenerational instrumental music begin!

IN HER JAN. 10. article, “New realities for Mennonite schools,” on page 28, Gail Schellenberg states that private schools need to explore the possibility of providing educational, dramatic and musical contributions to the life of the church. One way this could happen is in the area of instrumental music.

Our Mennonite schools have produced fine bands and the occasional orchestra. There is now a pool of players for churches to draw upon to enhance worship. Can we imagine following the biblical example in Psalm 150, so that our sanctuaries ring with the sounds of cymbals, yea even loud crashing cymbals! This involvement could also be an occasion for the kind of intergenerational church experience Kathy Giesbrecht lifts out in her Dec. 20 article, “From edge to centre,” on page 9, as the basis for meaningful youth ministry.

But a shortage of suitable music poses a simple but significant obstacle to this instrumental involvement. This could be overcome if teams of private school music teachers, or retired teachers suitably encouraged by area church offices, were encouraged to search the highways and byways of the Internet, Mennonite-friendly music stores, and schools and churches with established bands and orchestras, to come up with a graded and thematically organized list of instrumental music. Other enhancements could include an annual reading session of such music, the creation of an Internet venue to share the results of their search, and a compendium of biblical and theological references to support and encourage instruments of all kinds in worship.

BOB WIEBE, WINNIPEG, MAN.

✉ ‘A lasting foundation for a vibrant organization’

RE: “MCC REVISIONING loses connection with people in the pew,” Feb. 21, page 23.

Given the 90-year history of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and people’s staunch ownership of the organization, we realized the path to a renewed MCC would unlikely be straightforward or cheap. Over the years MCC has become exceptionally diverse and complex, and we understood the importance of consulting broadly before implementing change.

Did the revisioning process lose its connection with people in the pew? We don’t think so, but it is a question probably best answered by those in the pew. MCC sought input from a broad sweep of people through public consultations both here and overseas.

Comments were welcomed at newwineskins.mcc.org, and still are.

Out of this process came an identity, vision, priorities and values that will inform MCC’s work for years to come. We believe it is a lasting foundation for a vibrant organization that will enable people to do what God calls them to do and be. With the revisioning complete, MCC is now in the process of restructuring to do this ministry better.

Through it all we have sought to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to MCC. Was it money well spent? Yes, we believe it was, but time will tell. Could we have done better? With the clarity of hindsight, we probably could have. But we committed to a complicated journey on a path that wasn’t always clear and that sometimes shifted.

MCC is a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches, a place where those in the pews are connected by God to others around the world. We are deeply grateful for people’s prayers and support as MCC continues to share God’s love and compassion for all in the name of Christ.

DON PETERS, WINNIPEG, MAN.

Don Peters is executive director of Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

✉ Obeying Scripture can add to mental health

RE: “BUILDING UP God’s kingdom together,” Jan. 24, page 4.

I would like to add a personal dimension to this integration of science and faith in the healing process, and that is taking seriously how the Scriptures can add to better health.

I may be a bit of a fundamentalist, but it has worked for me. The special pill I found is Psalm 119:93: “*I will never forget your commandments, for you have used them to restore my health and joy.*”

In the second half of my life’s journey I experienced times of depression and often lacked the joy of living. It seems to have been in the family DNA. Before travelling to Africa in 2007, I had been diagnosed as being bipolar. Upon my return from Africa I was no longer lying under the covers until 11 a.m., but now I am an early riser. Since then I picked up my hard cycling again six days a week and combined it with three segments of 30 push-ups. Lithium had been prescribed to slow me down, which I took reluctantly, but eventually told both of my doctors of my “joy and health” pill.

I have found it to be most salutary to continue with the “Bible therapy” in keeping with Psalm 119:11: “*I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin*

against you.” Having a good memory, but dreadfully short, the upside of my “Bible therapy” habit is that it helps to keep my thoughts away from greed, envy, lust, worry and despair, and these negatives have been greatly reduced.

Most helpful in my aging has been the assurance from II Corinthians 5:1,2: “For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down, we will have a home in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not with human hands.”

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Heinrichs—Liam Bernhart (b. Feb. 9, 2011), to Will and Lena Heinrichs, Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

Ruediger—Harrison Edward (b. Feb. 7, 2011), to Lorie Ham and Edward Ruediger, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

VanderBurgh—Joshua David (b. Jan. 27, 2011), to Carolyn Neuman VanderBurgh and Ian VanderBurgh, St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.

Baptisms

Ty Minholz, Philip Metzger—Pioneer Park Christian Fellowship, Kitchener, Ont., Jan. 23, 2011.

Marriages

Black/Gingrich—Ernie Black and Bonnie Gingrich, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., Feb. 14, 2011.

Deaths

Bergen—Jacob (Jack), 91 (b. Feb. 12, 1919; d. Feb. 8, 2011), First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Brubacher—Ivan, 83 (b. July 4, 1927; d. Feb. 12, 2011), St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.

Colert—Ann (nee Bergman), 88 (b. July 29, 1922; d. Jan. 29, 2011), First Mennonite, Kelowna, B.C.

And then the warranty comes from Philippians 3:21: “He will take these weak mortal bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same mighty power that he will use to conquer everything, everywhere.” When aches periodically show up, I thank God for the new non-aching body to come. By faith I can appropriate that prescription, which is not just a lot of hocus pocus.

GEORGE H. EPP, CHILLIWACK, B.C.

Gingrich—Edna (nee Ruby), 92 (b. Nov. 14, 1918; d. Feb. 4, 2011), Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Goertzen—Arthur, 74 (b. Aug. 9, 1936; d. Dec. 24, 2010), Carrot River Mennonite, Sask.

Isaac—Frank, 87 (b. March 24, 1923; d. Nov. 14, 2010), Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man.

Koop—Agnis (nee Willms), 89 (b. Dec. 24, 1921; d. Feb. 1, 2011), Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont.

Martin—Norma (nee Bauman), 71 (b. May 19, 1939; d. Feb. 6, 2011), St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.

Snider—Luella (nee Hoffman), 84 (b. Jan. 9, 1927; d. Feb. 4, 2011), St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.

Weber—Joe Ralph, 88 (b. Jan. 31, 1922; d. Jan. 7, 2011), Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Thiessen—Elvera, 87 (b. Jan. 28, 1924; d. Jan. 30, 2011), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Thiessen—John, 80 (b. May 12, 1930; d. Jan. 19, 2011), Carrot River Mennonite, Sask.

Wiens—John, 82 (b. April 28, 1928; d. Jan. 22, 2011), Carrot River Mennonite, Sask.

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

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

Poncius' Puddle



LIFE IN THE POSTMODERN SHIFT

Upside-down wisdom

BY TROY WATSON

I've often wondered why the vast majority of Jesus' contemporaries rejected him as the Messiah, why a community filled with longing for the Saviour God had promised them refused to believe Jesus was the one they were waiting for. How did they miss what seems so obvious to us? Were they less intelligent, moral, religious or biblically literate than us? No, it was simply that Jesus did not fit their assumptions and expectations.

How often do our assumptions and expectations hinder us from seeing what God is doing in our midst?

The gospels tell us it was the most educated, moral, religious and biblically literate who most vehemently rejected Jesus, for they had the most rigid assumptions and expectations about what God's salvation would look like. Jesus was God's un-

but if biblical history teaches us anything, it is that those who have the least capacity to be surprised by God will be most surprised by God in the end!

We would be pharisaically foolish to assume an infinitely creative God only wove plot twists into ancient history. I believe God is doing a new thing in our time and culture, and our need for spiritual leaders with humility, flexibility and Spirit-tuned senses has never been greater.

I confess I have often wondered why Jesus chose Peter to be the leader of his revolution after he was gone. The gospels certainly don't imply Peter was an A-plus disciple who was always "with the program." So why him?



early church leader. Jesus was looking for someone with upside-down wisdom, the kind Socrates described this way, "Wisdom is limited to one's awareness of one's ignorance."

At times Peter's awakening to his unknowing was painful. His assumptions about his own loyalty and courage were quickly dismantled after he abandoned and denied Jesus repeatedly a few hours after boldly proclaiming publicly that he would never forsake Jesus, that he would die with Jesus if need be. Less

than a day later he was forced to let go of the core belief he had staked his entire theology and future upon—that Jesus the Messiah would re-establish the throne of David and reign of God on earth—as Jesus was now dead and nothing had seemed to have changed. When the risen Jesus appeared to the disciples in the closing chapter of John's Gospel, Peter is a broken, naked and hopeless fisherman who couldn't catch a fish. He is surprised yet again by another plot twist: Jesus is alive! However, the most unexpected thing of all to Peter is that Jesus still wants him to lead his church!

I believe this is the moment of Peter's rebirth, preparing him for Pentecost and church leadership. Like Scrooge in Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, Peter's soul awakens with upside-down wisdom, causing him to exclaim, "I don't know anything! I never did know anything. But now I know that I don't know anything!"

We are all ignorant when it comes to the mysterious ways of God. What we need are leaders like Peter who are aware of their own ignorance to lead us through the paradigm shift. I am convinced it will be the present-day Peters with upside-down wisdom who will shape the future of faith in postmodern Canada.

To be continued . . . ❧

Troy Watson is a Mennonite minister, resident theologian, spiritual director and a founding leader of The Quest, "a different kind of 'church' for life in the postmodern shift" in St. Catharines, Ont.

As in Jesus' day, letting go will be more difficult for church folk advanced in the areas of morality, religiosity, education and biblical literacy, but if biblical history teaches us anything, it is that those who have the least capacity to be surprised by God will be most surprised by God in the end!

expected plot twist, and those who knew the old plot line the best opposed him the most. Jesus was a spiritual paradigm shift for the first-century Jewish community. They were entering new history and it was only the few who were able to let go of their assumptions and expectations regarding how God moved and worked in the world who were able to develop eyes to see and ears to hear the new thing God was doing.

I believe the same applies to us in our present paradigm shift. As in Jesus' day, letting go will be more difficult for church folk advanced in the areas of morality, religiosity, education and biblical literacy,

I believe it was connected to Peter's capacity to let go of assumptions and expectations, and remain open to God's mysterious ways of working in the world. If anyone had a solid notion about what would happen to someone who jumped out of a boat in the middle of the sea, in the middle of the night, in the middle of a raging storm—it was a born and raised Galilean fisherman! But Peter the fisherman radically and recklessly let go of those assumptions and expectations, and hopped out of the boat to try to walk on the water with Jesus. This risky openness to a God beyond his understanding was core to Peter's qualifications as an

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

Sharing the good news of hope, peace, and justice in South Africa

Mennonite Church Canada

Hungry children are being fed, students of peace are learning nonviolent responses to conflict, and ordinary people are making extraordinary sacrifices to bring hope and justice to those on the margins.

These are the good news stories that do not enjoy the same attention in the mainstream media as other, more violent and sensational stories, claims Andrew Suderman, director of the Anabaptist Network in South Africa, located in Pietermaritzburg. January of this year marked one year of the network's work in bringing alternative, good news stories to South Africans.

While peace and justice projects bring one kind of hope to the vulnerable, in sharing the news of these projects Suderman, an international ministry worker with Mennonite Church Canada Witness,

shares a kind of prophetic hope and encouragement with an audience that is in a position to help empower change.

"There are amazing stories about amazing people all over South Africa who can inspire others toward peace and justice," says Suderman. "There's a small group of women in Ladysmith with very limited resources who feed hundreds of children every day. Others tirelessly walk with people who are marginalized. Yet others are educating children and adults in the ways of peace and conflict transformation. These are people who make sacrifices so that others can also work for peace and justice, so that all may have a hopeful future."

The stories are available online at anisa.org.za/news.

Joe Sawatzky, a regular online columnist, writes, "I hope that someone will read

MC CANADA PHOTO BY ANDREW SUDERMAN



Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker Karen Suderman, right, chats with Ladysmith women who are committed to feeding hundreds of South African children each day.

these stories and columns, and that it will challenge them to think in a new way. . . . I hope that it can be a voice that offers a different perspective exposed through stories that might not be known or focused on. And I hope that readers will widely share these stories with others."

Allen Goddard, director for theology and citizenship for A Rocha South Africa and an online columnist, says, "South Africa suffers from the psychological and spiritual drag of generational bad news. For decades the media has not highlighted good news nearly enough. Reading contributions by

Help build a peace library in South Africa

Mennonite Church Canada

Pace and justice projects in South Africa are creating a large appetite for the nonviolent peace principles of Anabaptist theology. Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers Andrew and Karen Suderman invite Canadians to feed that need by helping them to build the Anabaptist Network in South Africa Peace Library. This resource centre will provide students and theologians with a wide range of Anabaptist material, from academic books and journals to children's books and music.

Interested Canadians can contribute new or used Anabaptist materials to the Peace Library shelves, or provide funds to pay for the shipment of those materials to South Africa.

The Sudermans, who provide leadership to the network, say the library recently moved into an office space that once served as home to the library of the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa. When that library was relocated to a new building, the seminary offered the Anabaptist Network the space in exchange for student access to the growing Peace Library and assistance with

teaching several seminary courses and workshops.

"Moving into this new space is an exciting step in the development of the . . . Peace Library," says Karen. "It's very large, spacious, with lots of room to grow. The books that we currently have, however, do not fill much of the shelves, but we're looking forward to receiving the books that have been donated for this project thus far. ❧"

MC CANADA PHOTO BY ANDREW SUDERMAN



Canadians can help fill the shelves of the Anabaptist Network in South Africa Peace Library and share Anabaptist theology across South Africa by donating books and resources to the cause. To learn more, visit mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1470.

South Africans of all walks of life . . . or reflections of the more prominent personalities and international theologians from South Africa has encouraged me to catch a glimpse of God's reign of peace coming into the world where I live."

"We receive a lot of support from the different online news sources as we gather stories of peace, hope and reconciliation from all over South Africa, and we are grateful for that," says Suderman. "The unfortunate part is that news of this kind does not enjoy the same attention as other stories—stories that tend to be more violent and sensational. The news we read shapes our thoughts about the context in which we live and the imagination we have in exploring possible solutions in dealing with the violence, injustice, poverty and

social ills that we face."

The aim of the network of people, churches and organizations is to walk with, support and grow reconciling communities of peace and justice that are grounded in the life and witness of Jesus Christ. It encourages and

supports South Africans to live lifestyles of peacebuilding and walk the way of peace on a daily basis. It also brings together those who draw inspiration from the history, teachings and experiences of the Anabaptist Christian faith movement. ❧

/// Briefly noted

Superb Mennonite pastor ordained

On Jan. 9, Superb Mennonite Church, Sask., ordained its pastor, Lois Siemens. Siemens, who has served in the congregation for four years, felt it was important to be ordained for several reasons. "I work in an ecumenical setting," she says. "I felt it would help in relating to other churches in the area." But for Siemens, who is also serving two other Mennonite Church Saskatchewan congregations in an interim position, the decision to be ordained was also connected to her faith journey. "I see it as an extension to my baptism vows," she says, explaining how ordination would make her more accountable to the wider Mennonite community. "It makes me work harder at being a Christian," she says. Part of an ordination ceremony involves kneeling for prayer. Siemens chose to put her own spin on it by kneeling in the middle of the sanctuary surrounded by the people, rather than at the front with the congregation looking on. "It was a symbol of the way I want to live in a community," she says. Siemens, who has also lived in B.C., graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., in 2006.

—BY KARIN FEHDERAU

/// Briefly noted

Stranger surprises Japanese congregation

SURREY, B.C.—Sometimes God provides a lesson in worship that isn't in the sermon, members of the Mennonite Japanese Christian Fellowship learned, thanks to an unexpected visitor. Pastor Gerald Neufeld reports that at a recent worship service, a "scary-looking guy" covered in tattoos and with a glazed look in his eyes walked into the service. "I asked him why he was there," recalls Neufeld, "and he said, 'This is a worship service, isn't it?'" Neufeld explained he was welcome, except everything would be in Japanese. The man said it was okay, and to just show him which passages from the Bible would be used. During the service the visitor sometimes became quite agitated and would speak out in a loud voice saying things that didn't seem to make much sense. "At the end of the service, as I was giving the benediction," recalls Neufeld, "he quickly came to the front, heading toward the offering bag. I wondered if he was intending on grabbing the bag and running! Instead, he went and dropped in some money." God's Spirit may sometimes call Christians out of their comfort zone, the worshippers concluded, and give a surprising lesson in acceptance through different people.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

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GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Let war resisters stay in Canada, rally urges

STORY AND PHOTO
BY RACHEL BERGEN

National Correspondent
STEINBACH, MAN.

The Steinbach office of Canadian Public Safety Minister Vic Toews was the scene of a mid-January rally in support of American war resisters seeking asylum in Canada that took place in the wake of the defeat of Bill C-440.

The bill would have prevented war resisters—people who had voluntarily joined the military, but who later refused combat roles and applied for conscientious objector (CO) status—from being deported and would have allowed them to seek permanent residence in Canada.

The Steinbach rally, part of a nationwide initiative, involved Project Peacemakers, the Keep Resisters in Canada Campaign, Peace Alliance Winnipeg, the Council of Canadians and Joshua Key, himself a war resister.

According to Key, there were atrocities happening to the innocent people of Iraq at the hands of the American military that he did not want to participate in. “I didn’t want to be a part of it no more,” he said on the War Resisters Support Campaign website.

Two American war resisters who sought refuge in Canada have recently been deported to the U.S., where they have been incarcerated.

For Michael Bueckert, the program coordinator of Project Peacemakers who attends Hope Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, the Let Them Stay rally was an opportunity for him to stand in solidarity with war resisters in both his professional and personal capacities.

“A large portion of [Project Peacemakers] membership is from the Mennonite community who have a history of resisting in the Second World War,” Bueckert, a self-proclaimed Mennonite, said. “We have fought very hard for the right to be COs. It is important to support others in a similar struggle.”

“Personally, I don’t think it is right to punish people who have stood up for the same values that I hold,” he added.

At the rally, the group delivered a letter to Toews that requested an emergency

meeting with him and other Members of Parliament.

In the letter, Cheryl-Anne Carr of the Keep Resisters in Canada Campaign stated that the Iraq War is illegal and, that by deporting resisters, Canada is supporting an illegal war. The letter was an invitation to exchange views and information. She believes that the deportation and imprisonment of war resisters is a situation in dire need of attention, claiming those sent back to the U.S. are treated cruelly for their beliefs.

According to Bueckert, Toews has yet to respond to the request for a meeting. ☞

Epicurean Hootenanny produces fun and funds

STORY AND PHOTO
BY DAVE ROGALSKY
Eastern Canada Correspondent
KITCHENER, ONT.

Wearing strings of beads reminiscent of a New Orleans Mardi Gras, 220 people were transported to the U.S. Gulf Coast in Kitchener’s Conrad Centre for the Performing Arts on a cold January evening for John Bergen’s eighth annual Epicurean Hootenanny.

At \$85 a plate, guests feasted on gumbo,



Protesters at the Let Them Stay rally picket the office of Vic Toews, federal minister of public safety, in hopes of setting up a meeting to discuss the deportation and incarceration of American war resisters. Michael Bueckert, holding the Peace Alliance Winnipeg sign, right, protests as a representative of Project Peacemakers.



Betsy Petker, principal of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ont., enjoys her dessert at John Bergen’s eighth annual Epicurean Hootenanny.

shrimp, spicy sausage and coleslaw, while sipping a glass of wine in the crowded corridors and foyer of the Conrad Centre. But food was only one focus of the evening. Backed by a hot house band, various performers sang southern-inspired songs like Allannah Miles' *Black Velvet* and Neil Young's *Southern Man*.

While some acts were serious—bass-baritone Dan Lichti sang "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho"—others, like The Rockways, made up of women from Rockway Mennonite Church conscripted by Bergen, who sang "9 to 5" dressed as Dolly Parton, were there for comic relief. In true hootenanny fashion, all songs were meant to be sung along to, and the crowd did its part, joining in lustily.

While tickets were pricey, \$50 from each one was divided between Mennonite Central Committee and Voice for Hearing Impaired Children. ❧

IVEPers gather to worship, share their cultures

STORY AND PHOTO
BY RACHEL BERGEN

National Correspondent
WINNIPEG, MAN.

Fifty-five young adults from 23 countries in Latin America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia—participants in the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) International Visitor Exchange Program (IVEP)—gathered alongside members of the North American Mennonite community on Feb. 20, to share their cultures and worship styles at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

"Today there are 23 different countries worshipping in different ways," Andrea Geiser, the U.S. IVEP coordinator, announced. "We are the same, yet we are different. It's a beautiful thing."

Terence Sibanda of Zimbabwe said the service worked to "break down stereotypes



During a gathering in Winnipeg, Man., IVEPers take part in an intercultural worship service at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church.

among cultures, to broaden horizons between people, in order to promote international peace."

The evening included traditional dance, music, drama and Scripture reading in different languages, as each geographical group presented aspects of its culture, language and ways of worship.

The Latin American group performed a skit highlighting the more stereotypical aspects of their culture, including soccer, dancing, and leniency when it comes to time constraints. They shared that their various cultures' worship loudly. "We are crazy! It's part of our culture," they shouted.

The Asian group read Scripture in Japanese, Korean and Indian. They shared

*"We are the same, yet we are different. It's a beautiful thing."
(Andrea Geiser)*

about the different spiritual practices in their countries, including bare feet within places of worship, head coverings, and separate seating for males and females.

"Each of our traditions and cultures present a small piece of the broader family of God," said Kathryn Deckert, the Canadian IVEP coordinator.

The IVEPers are halfway through their year-long exchange. ❧

❧ Briefly noted

MCC international workers return to Egypt

All Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) international workers removed from Egypt during the popular recent uprising are returning to their work placements. The decision to send 13 MCC international staff, including two children, back to Egypt was made in consultation with MCC partner organizations in Egypt that have assured MCC that life is returning to normal following President Hosni Mubarak's resignation on Feb. 11. "Our partners in Egypt take hospitality very seriously and part of that hospitality includes protecting their guests," said Jan Martens Janzen, a director of MCC's Middle East program. "We know that they thought things through very carefully before they said it feels safe enough for MCC workers to return." Other factors considered in the decision to have workers return included general stability in regards to communication and banking services, said Martens Janzen. MCC service workers were moved out of the country in early February due to insecurity resulting from protests that led to Mubarak's resignation. MCC also has three national staff in Egypt who remained in the country during the unrest. MCC's work in Egypt focuses on education and peacebuilding. For more comments by MCC international staff in Egypt, visit canadianmennonite.org and do a search for "MCC workers return to Egypt"

—Mennonite Central Committee

GOD AT WORK IN US

A heart for grieving people

Retiree finds second career in funeral business

STORY AND PHOTO
BY AMY DUECKMAN
B.C. Correspondent
ABBOTSFORD, B.C.



When it comes to the business of death, Henry “Hank” Friesen has found life in his retirement years.

Friesen, 70, who spent most of his working life in sales, officially retired 10 years ago. But at an age when many seniors are content to take life easy, Friesen decided to follow his passion and offer his services in the funeral business. For the past several years he has worked about 20 hours a week as assistant funeral director for a group of funeral homes in British Columbia’s Fraser Valley.

Working in the funeral business is not a new calling for Friesen. His interest started as a teenager when he did gardening for a funeral home in Burnaby, and continued even during his sales career, when

he volunteered part-time to help a friend who owned a mortuary. His work included assisting at pre-service viewings, and he realized he had a desire to help people experiencing grief. “I’ve always had empathy for grieving people,” Friesen says. “Even at that time it was my passion.”

Friesen might have gone into the mortuary business himself as a career, but he would have had to learn all aspects of it, including embalming, and this was not his interest. He prefers to walk alongside families in their journey of loss. Offering his arm to a widow walking into the chapel to view her husband’s body for the first time, or answering the questions of a child wondering why Grandma is so cold, are rewarding to Friesen.

He recalls the service for a murdered gang member at which the widow and two small daughters arrived at the funeral home guarded by police cars and surrounded by gang members on motorcycles. The two children clung to him because there was no one else for them.

One of eight older men who work for the funeral home group as assistant funeral directors, Friesen’s duties include transporting the body to the funeral site, setting up flowers at the church, ministering to the deceased’s family, or driving the hearse or limousine to the cemetery. Those in his age group are ideal for the job because of their life experiences, Friesen believes, adding that his white hair and grandfatherly appearance help put people at ease and make him more approachable. “It’s great for retired people,” he says. “We’ve all experienced the loss of parents.”

A nearly-lifelong resident of Abbotsford, Friesen has found that his connections with many of the city’s older people, particularly in the Mennonite community, have served him well. Often just a sentence or two in Low German to an elderly Mennonite widow will be enough to put her at ease. He enjoys the aspect of his job that allows him to get to know the family of the deceased.

Friesen’s Christianity is very much a part of his work. “I do it because of my faith, because of love and empathy for others,” he says. “My faith is very interwoven with what I do. I almost always pray for the family. I do a lot of praying when they’re Buddhist or [Sikh] Indo-Canadian.”

Becoming acquainted with clients of other religions has been an eye-opening experience, and a way to witness silently, he says. Friesen has observed that those of the Sikh religion wail loudly at funerals, and one time a Sikh man came to talk to him. “He asked me, ‘You know why my people cry so hard?’” recalls Friesen. “It’s because we have no hope. You Christians have hope.”

Over and over, the word “passion” continues to come up when Friesen talks about his second career in the funeral business. “I do feel very passionate about it. When something’s your passion, it’s hard to explain,” he concludes.

He plans to continue with what he considers a ministry as long as he can. “By



Hank Friesen has followed his life’s passion, working in the funeral business in his retirement years.

nature, I'm a very active person, and it's always been a part of me to help people. I like to keep busy and this is a way I can give of myself. Because you give of yourself emotionally, it's a demanding ministry on its own."

'My faith is very interwoven with what I do. I almost always pray for the family. I do a lot of praying when they're Buddhist or [Sikh] Indo-Canadian.'

(Hank Friesen)

OBITUARY

A missionary in overalls

Cornelius Nicolai Friesen

March 26, 1922 – Dec. 26, 2010

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent

“As long as there are disasters, we should be better prepared and we should continue to prepare people and to make it exciting,” C.N. Friesen said in an interview in 2008. That commitment to service embodied Friesen’s life. Even at 88, in his final year, he would round up a group of volunteers to help stuff envelopes for Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS).

Cornelius Nicolai (C.N.) Friesen died on Dec. 26, 2010. Born on March 26, 1922 in Altona, Man., to Anna Gerbrandt and Abram D. Friesen, he was the youngest of nine children. With his decision to be baptized in 1943, Friesen gave his life over to Christian service. Following his baptism, he served as a conscientious objector in Manitoba during World War II. During that time he married Laura Klassen.

When the flood of 1948 hit southern Manitoba, he left his family-run Altona real estate, insurance and paralegal business to fill and place sandbags until the waters receded. Again in 1950, he closed up his shop to help coordinate flood relief efforts. Realizing a need for more formal organization and preparedness in the face of disasters, Friesen became one of the original organizers of MDS in Manitoba.

Friesen was a member of Olivet Mennonite Church for 47 years before the congregation withdrew from Mennonite Church B.C. He now attends Emmanuel Mennonite. ❧



Friesen

“I had an office in Altona and we sort of used it as a headquarters at the time. It was strictly under MCC [Mennonite Central Committee] then,” Friesen related to freelance videographer Bruce Hildebrand in 2008.

Friesen became provincial director of MDS and later held various Manitoba, B.C. and binational board positions.

“As a family, we always felt that there was more that we could give than just money and that we could get involved personally in projects and programs,” Friesen told Hildebrand. “I was self-employed and I could find time to go and help. I thought

of it as a ‘missionaries in overalls’ sort of thing”

He remained active in the organization throughout its 60-year history.

Heeding their commitment to Christian service, the Friesens sold their business in Altona in 1968 and took on a Voluntary Service assignment in Minneapolis, Minn., as leaders of an alternative service unit during the Vietnam War. During this time, Friesen worked with the unit members and Minneapolis city jail inmates to develop a work placement program and a vocational school that jail authorities dubbed “Friesen Hall.” Friesen took the opportunity to study criminology at the University of Minnesota during this time.

In 1971, the family moved to Winnipeg and Friesen worked for MCC Manitoba, creating and directing an alternative sentencing group home for first-time offenders. He went on to spearhead a prison visitation ministry, Open Circle, in Winnipeg under the auspices of MCC.

Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, where Friesen was a member for many years, asked him to plan and manage the construction of Bethel Place, a seniors residence adjacent to the church. After Bethel Place was completed in 1981, the Friesens moved to Abbotsford, B.C., where they served as co-directors of MCC Self-Help (now Ten Thousand Villages) until 1987. Following this assignment, Friesen helped plan and manage the construction of MCC Plaza, a thrift store and office complex in Abbotsford. While there, the Friesens were active at both Olivet and Emmanuel Mennonite churches.

In 2000, the Friesens retired to Manitoba and moved into Bethel Place. ❧

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FOCUS ON CAMPS & SUMMER CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Nurturing creation connections @ camp

BY TINA ASHLEY

Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp

Camp is the perfect place for environmental principles to be brought to life. An Arctic glacier slowly melting may be too far removed for children to fully grasp the significance of, but a caterpillar in hand, a hike in a forest or a camp-out under the stars are real and immediate demonstrations of the importance of caring for God's creation.

Besides simply being exposed to nature, camps are places that can teach about the concept of stewardship on a level that goes beyond secular pleas for sustainability. Faith-based camps can teach campers about caring for the environment not only out of obligation for future generations, but because God has entrusted us with this land to "work its ground and to take care of it" (Genesis 2:15b). Leading by example, incorporating hard facts about the environment with faith concepts, and simply reviving—or creating for the first time—a connection between children and nature, are all ways camps promote stewardship.

Although we would like to think that we can be motivated to do something simply because of a biblical mandate, or a desire to

save the earth, this is easier said than done. It is all too easy to simply go along with the status quo environmentally, especially for children and youths who are growing up in a consumeristic society.

Creation care becomes a little less difficult when a genuine interest, love and connection to the environment are cultivated. The more nature is woven into our lives, the less willing we are to stand by and watch it disappear. Summer camp, church outings, family trips or Sunday strolls

through a forest are great ways to nurture this connection.

Simply telling children and youths to "go play outside" may not do the trick. As adults, it will begin with leading by example and creating meaningful but relaxed encounters with the outdoors. With God's help these experiences, along with the mandate God has given us to be good stewards, will help children and youths to question their choices and work towards a greener future. ☚

Family camp to debut this summer at Camp Squeah

BY AMY DUECKMAN

British Columbia Correspondent

Summer camp is not just for children any more.

For one week this summer, Camp Squeah will be alive with the sound of voices of all ages as the camp tries something new: a multigenerational family camp, to be held from July 25 to 29.

"There is great value in family camping," said Tim Larson, Squeah's program director, in a phone interview from Hope, where the camp is located. "This is an excellent, well-rounded evangelical ministry. Parents [who may have gone to summer camp as young people] can see and experience camp once again. Everyone can relax, and moms and dads: no cooking or cleaning!"

Families with children of all ages—from infant to teen—are welcome, as are grandparents. Families with young children will have access to babysitting services.

There will be a multitude of family-appropriate activities from which to choose. On-site activities include hiking, archery, a ropes course and swimming, while nearby excursions can include golfing, river rafting or the Hell's Gate Air Tram. Also planned is

a mid-week speaker who will provide input on a topic of interest to all age groups.

Families will have a choice of lodging options: cabin, main lodge or the new motel-style lodge. Those who wish may alternatively bring their own tent or RV.

For more information, contact Camp Squeah at 604-869-5353 or e-mail info@squeah.com. ☚

HIDDEN ACRES PHOTO



Canoeing is one way Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp gets campers to understand the need to nurture creation.

PHOTO BY J.D. DUECKMAN



Archery is one of the many activities offered by Camp Squeah that can be enjoyed by all age groups at this summer's inaugural family camp.

Don't forget your instrument ... or your voice

Ontario Mennonite Music Camp gears up for 28th summer session

BY INGRID LOEPP THIESSEN

Ontario Mennonite Music Camp
WATERLOO, ONT.

It's 11 p.m. We've been treated to the final program—a full, original musical about recycling prepared in two short weeks—and heard dozens of songs done by wind instruments, strings, brass, vocal quartets and pianists. We're in awe, tired just thinking about what went into the show. Now the only one thing left to do is get the performers—our kids—home!

Ontario Mennonite Music Camp is a rare find in the world of summer camps: a two-week overnight camp for 12- to 16-year-olds on the campus of Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont. It's two weeks of daily chapels; it's a chance for campers to hone their musical craft with instruction from university-trained musicians. Singers and piano, string, wind and brass players all find their voice.

It's about 40 awesome home-cooked

meals straight from the Grebel kitchen. Not to be missed are the wacky mealtime activities, the performances in local churches and nursing homes, the nightly campfires and a trip to the beach. Unforgettable are the late-night talks, spontaneous jamming, secret friends, the dormitory experience and the wonderful feeling of being with people who love music.

The camp is in its 28th year of nurturing teens to use their musical skills to build up the body of Christ. The camp strives to encourage and equip teens to share their gifts of music with their churches. The campers learn music in a variety of genres, striving to worship God in many different styles.

A half-hour after the last notes of the show have died away, the campers are beginning to trickle out, not without endless hugs, hasty plans for a camp reunion, and

teary goodbyes, knowing that even if they beg, they can't stay another night.

Campers of all abilities are welcome. Bursaries may be available from your church or the camp. For more information, visit grebel.uwaterloo.ca/ommc. ☺



Singing around the piano is a popular activity at the Ontario Mennonite Music Camp in Waterloo, Ont., each summer, as Heather Imrie, Marlo Young-Sponga, Taya Kehler and Kiana Epp can attest.



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CONRAD GREBEL PHOTOS BY JEN KONKLE



Campers who play stringed instruments—including Saskia van Arrangon, Jordan Klassen and Daniel Penner, pictured—as well as brass, woodwinds and piano, or those who sing, are all welcome at the Ontario Mennonite Music Camp, held each summer at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont.

'Not what we planned as a 50th anniversary focus'

Silver Lake Mennonite Camp dining hall burns . . . again

BY DAVE ROGALSKY
Eastern Canada Correspondent

The word spread quickly on Feb. 7 and the days that followed: Silver Lake Mennonite Camp's dining hall had burned . . . again.

SILVER LAKE MENNONITE CAMP PHOTO



Silver Lake Mennonite Camp's dining hall was gutted by fire on Feb. 7. Camp director Dave Erb hopes to have a refurbished or new building set to open by June.

The camp, near Sauble Beach on Lake Huron, suffered a fire in its third year of operations, back in 1968. The present building has been a favourite of campers and off-season users because of its wide open space and large stone fireplace.

Director Dave Erb told *Canadian Mennonite* that insurance will cover the expenses of repairing the building after last month's blaze, including bringing it up to 2011 building code standards, but the board is wondering if this is the time to modernize it by increasing the insulation, putting in better windows and adding washrooms.

"There's a real change in the expectation of parents for what is acceptable for their children compared to 50 years ago when . . . outhouses were the camp standard," he said.

The timing of the fire, probably caused by embers from the fireplace somehow getting under the floor into leaves which had gathered there, is good, as Erb expects that a new or repaired building will be ready by June.

The attached kitchen suffered smoke damage, but is already being restored.

Under Erb's leadership, the camp has moved into the black financially, paying off \$100,000 in accumulated debt, but he says this was "not what we planned as a 50th anniversary focus."

A committee has been struck do fundraising for capital renewal, and Erb hopes it will still do that, building a new camper cabin and a climbing wall.

Before the dining hall is rebuilt, the constituency across Ontario will be polled for priorities. The website's replies include many well wishes, and offers to help with the rebuilding.

Ron Giesbrecht, a winemaker in Niagara, wrote: "I was [just] too young to be a camper in 1968, but I do recall seeing the devastation, the crowded scene of the temporary arrangements, and then the hammer-wielding crews that rebuilt the dining hall, certainly Pete Isaak figuring large in that memory. I wanted to help then, and I couldn't. Now I am more able to provide some help to rebuild. The camp has always meant so much to Kathy and me, understandably, since that is where we met." ▮

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UMEI CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL PHOTO



UMEI Christian High School is offering Camp Explore U again this summer in Leamington, Ont. Children in grades 4 to 8 are invited for a weekend of fun activities and making friends from July 18 to 22. For more information, e-mail office@umei.on.ca.

Camp snapshots

CAMP VALAQUA PHOTO

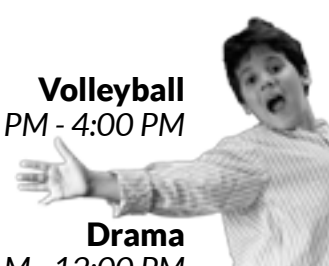


Despite the snow in this photograph, Mennonite Church Alberta's Camp Valaqua is putting the finishing touches on a new permanent staff residence at its Water Valley location. The need for it was recognized more than 15 years ago, and the project is finally nearing completion. Funds raised through donations and annual hike-a-thon and banquet events amount to approximately \$170,000, enough to pay for the house as well as landscaping, deck and garage that are yet to be added.




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Calendar

British Columbia

- April 8-10:** Junior youth “Impact” retreat, Camp Squeah.
- April 16-17:** Camp Squeah paddle-athon fundraiser.
- April 16,17:** Lenten Vespers with Abendmusik Choir, 8 p.m. each evening; (16) Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford; (17) Knox United Church, Vancouver. Free-will offering to Menno Simons Centre.
- April 23:** Columbia Bible College commencement.
- April 30:** MC B.C. women’s inspirational day, Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver.

Alberta

- May 14:** Camp Valaqua spring work day. Chop wood, clear trails, ready the facilities for campers. For more information, call 780-637-2510.

Saskatchewan

- March 18-19:** MC Saskatchewan annual delegate sessions, at Territorial Drive Alliance Church, North Battleford.
- March 30:** Saskatchewan Women in Mission Enrichment Day, at Tiefengrund Mennonite, Laird. Theme: “God’s gift through health issues.”
- April 5:** Pastors gathering at Zoar Mennonite Church, Langham.
- April 19:** RJC/CMU joint banquet and concert at Osler Mennonite Church.

Manitoba

- March 17:** Verna Mae Janzen Music Scholarship performances, at CMU’s Laudamus Auditorium, at 7:30 p.m.
- March 20:** Mennonite Community Orchestra performs at the CMU chapel, at 3 p.m.
- March 21:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate fundraising banquet at the Marlborough Hotel, Winnipeg, at 6 p.m.
- March 26,27:** CMU 10th anniversary choral concerts featuring four CMU choral ensembles; (26) at Westminster United Church, Winnipeg, at 7:30 p.m.; (27) at Buhler Hall, Gretna, at 3 p.m.
- March 27:** Peace event and book launch for *Create Space for Peace: 40 years of Peacemaking*, Gene Stoltzfus,

at Crossways in Common, Winnipeg, at 12:30 p.m. Sponsors include MC Canada Witness, MCC Manitoba and Project Peacemakers. For more information, visit createspaceforpeace.info.

April 2: MDS annual fundraising and awareness banquet, at Rhineland Pioneer Centre, Altona, at 6 p.m. The event will include project reporting and music, as well as the meal. For complimentary tickets, call 1-866-261-1274 or contact your local MDS representative.

April 4: Jazz at CMU, in the Great Hall, at 7:30 p.m.

Ontario

March 14, 15: Grandparent and Grandchild Days at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp and Retreat Centre. Inter-generational fun and learning each day. For more information, visit hiddenacres.ca or call 519-625-8602.

March 15: March Break open house at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo.

March 17,18: Bechtel Lectures in Anabaptist Studies at Conrad Grebel University College chapel, at 7:30 p.m. each evening. Speaker: Roger Epp, Ph.D. Topics: (17) “We are all treaty people: What is the settler problem?” and (18) “We are all treaty people: The stories we tell ourselves.”

March 18-19: Living Water Fellowship, New Hamburg, hosts a communications workshop for engaged or newly married couples. For more information, contact Denise Bender at 519-656-2005 or denise_bender@yahoo.com.

March 25-27: Marriage Encounter weekend at King Hotel, Palmerston; begins 7:30 (25) to 4 p.m. (27). For more information, or to register, call Marjorie Roth at 519-669-8667 or e-mail wmroth@rogers.com.

March 25-27: Crosshill Mennonite Church, present a series on the “end times.” Speaker: Brian Froese, CMU professor. Theme: “Who wins in the end? The Christian apocalypse in popular culture.” Start times: (25) 7:30 p.m.; (26) 9 a.m.; (27) 9:45 a.m. For more information, call 519-699-5299.

March 26: Menno Singers present “Choral Mystics,” at Waterloo North Mennonite, Church, Waterloo, at 8 p.m.

April 1: Celebrate Refugee Rights Day by seeing the play *Open? A Story of Refugee Claimants in Canada*, at the Conrad Centre for the Performing Arts, Kitchener, at 7:30 p.m. The event is a fundraiser for the Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support.

April 1,3: Benefit concerts for MCC work in Haiti with soloist Elaine Pearce; (1) Knox Presbyterian Church, Walkerton, at 7:30 p.m.; (3) Gale Presbyterian Church, Elmira, at 7 p.m.

April 2: Silver Lake Mennonite Camp special 50th anniversary editor “smorg” at Niagara United Mennonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake. For more information, visit slmc.ca.

April 2: Paul Heidebrecht, director of MCC Ottawa Office will speak on the topic, “Pacifist-friendly legislation in Canada: Can Bills C-390, C-440 and C-447 contribute to a more peaceful society?” at Conrad Grebel University

UpComing

Explore the Christian apocalypse with CMU professor

Crosshill Mennonite Church, Ont., presents “Who wins in the end? The Christian apocalypse in popular culture,” a series on the Christian end times story in contemporary religious and secular culture by Canadian Mennonite University history professor Brian Froese. Consideration will be given to the rich consumer landscape of apocalyptic goods, as well as how the Bible has been—and is being—used to explain this topic. The series begins March 25, at 7:30 p.m. with an exploration of the history and roots of the *Left Behind* understandings of the Bible. On March 26, from 9 a.m. to noon, participants will consider such “end times practices” as decoding 666, identifying the Antichrist, locating current events in the Bible, and contemplating what post-resurrection life will be like; they will then explore selected “secular” end-of-the-world scenarios in popular culture and their possible meanings in society today, including the current fascination with evil, humans and technology, and whether such endings reflect an attempt to reclaim spiritual power in a secularized world. The series will conclude on March 27, at 9:45 a.m., with worship and a follow-up session, “Reading the Book of Revelation in its biblical context.” For more information, call the church at 519-699-5299. —Crosshill Mennonite Church

Danforth Mennonite Church celebrating 100 years of ministry

TORONTO, ONT.—People with past or present connections to Danforth Mennonite Church are invited to participate in special events over the weekend of April 15 to 17, to celebrate 100 years of ministry in Toronto. Plans include birthday cake and an open house for neighbours on the afternoon of April 16, followed by an evening hymn sing of favourite songs from the various books used by the church throughout the decades. The highlight of the weekend will be the celebration worship service on April 17, followed by a potluck lunch and an open microphone for sharing stories and memories. For more information about the weekend, visit DanforthMennoniteChurch.ca.

—BY JOANNA REESOR-MCDOWELL

College's Great Hall, at 3 p.m.

April 7: AMBS presents a public presentation, "Leading the church into God's future," by new president Sara Wenger Shenk, at Faith Mennonite Church, Leamington, at 7 p.m. For more information, call Sherri Martin-Carman at 519-669-1005.

April 9: Pax Christi Chorale presents Verdi's "Requiem" at P.C. Ho Theatre, Scarborough, with guest conductor Norman Reintamm, the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony and the Peterborough Singers.

April 10: AMBS presents a public

presentation, "Opportunities and challenges of theological education for the 21st century," by new president Sara Wenger Shenk, at Floradale Mennonite Church, at 3 p.m. For more information, call Sherri Martin-Carman at 519-669-1005.

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

Classifieds

For Rent

Apartment for rent: 1 BR single occupancy in house near University of Waterloo. Quiet Beechwood neighbourhood. Furnished. Available immediately. Phone 519-885-4408 or e-mail jhedrick@uwaterloo.ca.

Bright, open-concept, renovated 1920's, three-bedroom **home for rent** beginning May 2011. Located within walking distance of Uptown Waterloo and Downtown Kitchener and is close to U of W and WLU. \$1100 per month plus utilities. Contact: kwhouseforrent@gmail.com.

Work Wanted

Eloquent Editing: providing students, authors, job-seekers and professionals with clarity, creativity and excellence in their writing. Contact jen@eloquentediting.ca or visit www.eloquentediting.ca for details.

Announcement

Housesitting Opportunity - Beautiful San Luis Valley of Colorado. Love gardening, chickens, cats, mountains? Housesitter needed June 18 - July 23 in Saguache. 2 bedroom, 1 bath, fully stocked + use of our car. Water garden, care for chickens/cats, eat garden produce, enjoy the mountains! 719.655.2776 or sarahkoehn@yahoo.com.

Employment Opportunities

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – MPN/THIRDWAY

Seeking a visionary leader with passion for a publishing and media ministry. Reporting to the binational board, and based in Harrisonburg, Va., the Executive Director will lead the integration of **Mennonite Publishing Network** and **Third Way Media** in the transition to a new multi-media agency providing Anabaptist formation and witness resources. Five years or more executive leadership experience and the willingness to regularly travel within North America. For further information, see www.mpn.net/about/openings.html or e-mail indication of interest to search@mpn.net.

Upcoming Advertising Dates

Issue Date Ads Due

April 4 March 22

Focus on Summer Events & Travel



Mennonite Central Committee Ontario invites applications for the position of **ASSISTANT MANAGER FOR RECEIVING** Waterloo Generations Thrift Shop, Waterloo

This position requires a person with a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and non-violent peacemaking.

The Receiver is responsible for coordinating the receiving of donations and the pickup and delivery of furniture. Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work as part of a team required.

This full-time salaried position begins in April, 2011. Application deadline is March 18. Complete job description is available at mcc.org/serve/positions. To apply send cover letter and resume to Cath Woolner at cathw@mennonitecc.on.ca.

CAMP DIRECTOR

Willowgrove is seeking a full time Director for **Glenbrook Day Camp**. The position is responsible for all aspects of the summer program including; recruitment, hiring, training, supervising & supporting a full complement of staff to administer the Glenbrook Day Camp program. The successful candidate will be proactive in program development and implementation, setting and managing an \$800K budget, public relations and marketing. The incumbent will be well grounded in the Christian faith, committed, and active in a church community. Senior camp leadership experience is essential. As the position is currently vacant an early spring start date is required.

Details of Willowgrove and the camp are on our website at www.willowgrove.ca and www.glenbrookdaycamp.com. To apply, forward a resume by email to Ron Shantz, Executive Director at ron@willowgrove.ca by March 12, 2011.

Willowgrove is a Christian organization affiliated with the Mennonite Church that serves children and youth.



Kildonan MCC Thrift Shop

445 Chalmers Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R2L 2C9
1-204-688-0167

The Kildonan MCC Thrift Shop invites applications for the position of:

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

This position requires a person with a commitment to Christian Faith, active church membership and non-violent peacemaking, and must possess:

- a strong business acumen
- solid administrative experience
- strong interpersonal skills

This person will work with the Board to oversee the total operation of the shop and to ensure that the mission and vision of the Thrift Shop is fulfilled.

This full-time salaried position begins on a mutually agreed upon date. Application deadline is April 15, 2011.

Complete job description and application form are available on the Kildonan Thrift Shop's website at: <http://thrift.mcc.org/shops/winnipeg-kildonan-thrift>.

To apply, send cover letter application form and resume to John Bergen at mjbergen@mts.net.

FULL-TIME PASTOR

Rosthern (SK) Mennonite Church seeks a full-time Pastor for a congregation of around 185 active members. We are looking for an individual who is committed to joyfully serving God in pastoral ministry, who has strengths in preaching and visitation, and who will work collaboratively with our youth pastor in a pastoral team setting.

Please send letters of interest to Kathy Luitjens, Search Committee Chair, at k.luitjens@sasktel.net or 306-232-4360, or contact our conference pastor, Jerry Buhler, at jerry@mcsask.ca or 306-249-4844.

TEACHING POSITIONS

Woodland Christian High School invites applications for possible teaching positions for the 2011-2012 school year. Teachers who are qualified to teach in the following areas are encouraged to apply:

- Science
- Physical Education
- Technical Design/Shop
- Humanities

Please address inquiries to John VanPelt, Principal at office@woodland.on.ca. Information about Woodland Christian High School is available on our website at www.woodland.on.ca.

NOT JUST ANOTHER JOB FAIR

Looking for a job or volunteer opportunity with a faith-based employer?

A place to work where your employer's values match your own?

You are invited to a job fair sponsored by local Mennonite and other faith-based agencies and employers such as Mennonite Savings and Credit Union, Mennonite Central Committee, FaithLife Financial, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, Peaceworks and many others.

Thursday, March 24, 12 noon to 5:30 p.m.
Waterloo Recreation Complex, Hauser Haus meeting room,
 101 Father David Bauer Drive, Waterloo, Ont.
 For more information, contact phartman@mscu.com or cathw@mennonitecc.on.ca.

PASTOR

Zoar Mennonite Church at Waldheim, a congregation of about 80 regular attendants, is currently seeking a pastor.

We are a small rural community 60 km. north of Saskatoon. Currently we are involved in supporting immigrant families from Colombia moving to our community.

We are looking for a person who:

- has a strong personal commitment to Jesus Christ.
- endorses commitment and respect to Anabaptist faith.
- has gifts of leadership in evangelism and visitation.

Please submit inquiries, resumes and references to:

Jerry Buhler, Conference Pastor
 301 10A Pakwa Place
 Saskatoon, SK S7L 6A3
 Phone: 306-249-4844
 E-mail: mcsask@mcsask.ca
 Fax: 306-349-4441

**PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH**

The Board of Governors of Canadian Mennonite University invites applications and/or nominations for the position of President, expected to be effective July 1, 2012.

CMU is an Anabaptist Christian university located in Winnipeg, Manitoba. It was chartered by the Province of Manitoba in 1998, and received membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada in 2008.

The President will lead CMU in accordance with its mission, vision and core commitments that are based on Biblical principles and rooted in Anabaptist-Mennonite and Evangelical perspectives, and will oversee all aspects of CMU including academic, student life, enrolment and marketing, administration and finance, development, strategic planning, and external relationships.

CMU seeks a candidate who

- will lead in articulating and implementing the mission and core values of the university;
- will be committed to faith and life as expressed in the Confessions of Faith of the Mennonite Brethren Conference & Mennonite Church Canada;
- will have an understanding of and commitment to CMU's supporting constituencies;
- will be committed to inter-Mennonite and inter-university cooperation;
- can articulate a compelling vision of Anabaptist Christian university education, and will understand its opportunities and challenges;
- has an earned doctorate, or equivalent, and a demonstrated capacity to engage in the intellectual life of the university;
- possesses skills for raising funds to enhance and ensure CMU's financial sustainability;
- displays proven leadership skills, including fiscal management, strategic thinking and planning, and building effective relationships with the bodies of the institution—its board, faculty, staff, and students;
- can present, promote, and advocate for CMU internally and in its relationships to church, other universities, to government, and to the public.

A full position profile and other details can be found at

http://www.cmu.ca/presidential_search.html

Nominations or expressions of interest should be addressed to:

Ron Loepky

Chair, Presidential Search Committee

500 Shaftesbury Blvd.

Winnipeg, MB R3P 2N2 CANADA

Or sent by email to: **presidentalsearch@cmu.ca**

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Manitoba

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Camp Moose Lake – Sprague

Ontario

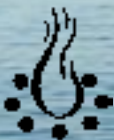
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