

CANADIAN MENNONITE

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‘The ministry of war’

Handling conflict in the church

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EDITORIAL

'Habits of repair'

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Not in my lifetime did I imagine that neuroscience and the Anabaptist construct of "community" would come together as a paradigm shift "away from the cult of the individual and back to nurturing relationships," as one planner of a recent weekend seminar on "Attachment Theory" put it.

The experience was mind-spinning. I was not only awestruck by the presentations of high-profile experts in the field of brain research, but also with the fact that the three-day conference, "Conversations on attachment: Integrating the science of love and spirituality," held at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Va., drew not only 700 students and practitioners in the field of psychology, but 500 people from the local community, mostly with Mennonite/Brethren roots, looking at new developments in human behaviour.

"We have cracked the code of love," said Sue Johnson, author of the popular *Hold Me Tight*, with her endearing British accent, in her opening keynote speech. "We are designed to live in community and in close relationships. Love is not an intoxicating mixture of sex and infatuation, but rather an emotional bond with others to give us safe haven from the storms of life."

Well, duh, didn't we know that already, we who have honed this thing called community over five centuries? Why

should this be such startling news, such a welcome observation from a group of academic experts outside of our religious system?

Precisely because we have gotten a bit shoddy about practising it, that's why.

Just read the painful stories told in our main feature, "The ministry of war," on page 4, and know that we may have fallen away from the very thing that has held our faith system intact through so many migrations, adversity, persecution, and, yes, our own internal divisions.

Has this thing we call community gotten so familiar that we have forgotten how it is supposed to work? Have we been so presumptuous that we think it is automatic and natural in our interpersonal and congregational relationships, and forget that they, like our bodies, need constant care and nourishment to give life and energy to our faith expression?

To take a step back and see how we treat each other at times would suggest that, yes, we do just that. And more. Has the culture's emphasis on individualism, and our own experience of making it against all odds, made us inattentive to the fragility of community? At this conference the North American myth that says personal strength is embodied in a lone individual making his or her way self-sufficiently through life, pretending not to need long-term, committed relationships, was challenged.

One of the speakers even tapped into our deeply held love of singing—congregational singing in harmony, no less—as a metaphor for this new wave of nourishing relationships. Quoting from his book *Mindsight*, Daniel J. Siegel, a Harvard Research Fellow at UCLA, spoke of the importance of social "integration" by describing a choir in which "each member of the choir has his or her unique voice, while at the same time they are linked together in a complex and harmonious whole. One is never quite certain where the choir will take the song, but the surprises simply highlight the pleasure of a familiar, shared melody."

What was so inspiring was to see faith and science come together in such a forceful way. Throughout the conference, EMU philosophy professor Christian Early offered brief, heartfelt responses following the major speeches, often tying modern scientific insights into love with the 2,000-year-old teachings of Jesus. "It is good for us to live in community," he said. "It is exhausting for us to live in isolation from each other."

In all honesty, however, he noted the dark side: "Community can also be harmful. Strangers cannot betray us. It is those closest to us who can betray us." As a result, we must cultivate "habits of repair," in order to heal harms that have been done, in addition to learning how to love in healthy ways.

Habits of repair are what we need most right now when unity breaks down in the congregation, when pastors or professors are not dealt with redemptively, when employees in our church-related institutions feel devalued, or when families are conflicted. "Caring relationships are as necessary to human life as air, food and water," the new research suggests.



ABOUT THE COVER:

While the church may try to keep conflicts from becoming 'messy and public,' as is reported by our national correspondent, Rachel Bergen, in our feature on page 4, that doesn't mean they aren't messy and private.

PHOTO: ISTOCK

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Mennonites are so hot right now: **WILL LOEWEN**
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'The ministry of war'

When office conflict comes to an impasse

BY RACHEL BERGEN
NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT

Pastor Epp (a pseudonym), finding himself in conflict with his church board, became increasingly depressed. Sharing his emotional ill health with the board, they arrived at a compromise about the number of times he should preach. Or so he thought.

Agreeing that there were enough good speakers to cover for him, he rested gratefully in the fact that he was given time for treatment and renewal of spirit before ending his contract. But, in a surprise move, the board then reneged and demanded that he preach every Sunday until the last day of his ministry.

Confused by the mixed message, he sought the counsel of the area minister, who distanced himself with the rationale that he didn't want to interfere with the congregation's autonomy. Epp was told, rather, to seek legal counsel. When the pastor did just that, the issue rose to higher levels, with the result of another mixed message from the conference moderator, who told the pastor that "his was the greater sin" for going the legal route, rather than trying to resolve the conflict inside the community of faith.

Epp became progressively ill and unable to deal with the situation. Threats and accusatory comments were made about his character by the board of the church, alluding to a charge that he stole church property without specifying, however, what was stolen.

To this day, the conflict has not been resolved. Epp continues to suffer from crippling depression and anxiety. Most church members deserted him; only a few maintain contact.

Changing views of handling conflict

Such a scenario is all too familiar to Dean Peachey, a mediator and coordinator for the human rights and global studies degree program at Global College at the University of Winnipeg, Man. He calls such conflict the "ministry of war," saying that such conflictual disruptions in the life of a congregation are often a result of

There is still a prevailing attitude that Christians deal with these things differently in the faith community than outside, that there is a kind of congregational pride that says these conflicts should be contained within the 'body' and not become messy and public.



“fuzziness about polity.”

The good news, he says, is that there has been an “attitudinal shift” away from an authoritarian view of conflict, as was prevalent with a former bishopric structure when such behaviour was indeed considered “sinful,” to an increasing acceptance of different holistic perspectives.

What is at play generically in the Epp case, says Peachey, are the lack of guidelines and clarity about how decisions are made; who makes what decision—the church council, the congregation or the pastor; how involved the congregation gets in issues—whether they vote or use consensus.

There is still a prevailing attitude that Christians deal with these things differently in the faith community than outside, that there is a kind of congregational pride that says these conflicts should be contained within the “body” and not become messy and public.

Then there is the related issue, evident in the Epp case, of the injured party getting redress. What are the pastor’s legal rights as an employee if the final decision is dismissal? And what are the legal and ethical procedures for a congregation to take when this is the final outcome? Labour laws in the workplace dictate

that the employer go through a painstaking process of evaluation, warnings, a timeline to improve and meet expectations, before taking the final action of dismissal. And then there is the issue of severance pay to give time for the person to find another job.

Much of this is often ignored in church disputes, says Peachey. A remedy is the formation of a pastoral relations committee, especially necessary in a team ministry. These committees do regular evaluations and establish performance guidelines as well as develop a roadmap for dealing with conflict, should it occur during the time of a pastor’s contract.

A typical scenario these days for potential conflict in a team ministry, he further elaborates, centres around differing musical styles in worship. A conflict develops, for instance, between the senior pastor and the associate pastor of music. Pressured by some congregants that the music used in worship is not appropriate, the senior pastor complains to his board or council. The council, not wanting to wade into the conflict, says the pastor “needs to make a decision about the music associate.”

Caught between some dissatisfied members of the congregation and an obstinate associate, the senior pastor summarily dismisses his associate, thus starting another version of Peachey’s “ministry of war.” Congregants take sides and the conflict breaks into open warfare. Nobody wins; everyone, in the end, loses.

All of which could be avoided, Peachey

says, if things were handled in a more forthright manner, using pre-determined guidelines in decision-making and how conflicts are handled. While grateful for the shift away from authoritarianism, Peachey observes that Mennonites, in particular, have not fully replaced it with anything else that is more wholesome and productive.

When caregivers need care

Conflicts are not confined to Mennonite congregations.

A respected residential care facility for seniors suffering from Alzheimer’s disease, dementia and other degenerative diseases, has recently experienced a sudden exodus of high-profile employees, especially those in management.

Eight senior staff members, including two board members, some with long careers at this facility, have resigned over a two-year period.

Although the chief executive officer of the facility hopes to meet its mission and values, while at the same time providing the “best possible care, support and encouragement for the folks who live here and the folks who work here,” many have not felt either supported or encouraged.

When a new senior manager was hired, according to a former employee,

the facility that was once considered a supportive, faith-centred organization seemed to go in the opposite direction. A new management style seemed to diminish good relations with employees and a partnership with pastors in offering counselling.

The new manager saw it differently, however. “When an organization is going through a lot of change, sometimes those things are not upheld as much as they should be. Sometimes people don’t perceive that they are, because some decisions are difficult ones, particularly if there is a great deal of financial pressure that is prompting you to make some changes,” he said. “Our organization, as well as many other health facilities, is going through some tough times.”

As a result, though, many employees perceived that their work wasn’t valued, feeling themselves trapped in bringing their concerns to management. One employee, resigning after working for 17 years, felt her job would be at stake if she went over the manager’s head and took her complaints directly to the board, one of whom dismissively said, “We are very aware that conflict resolution doesn’t always work.” He regretted that “if we don’t have unions, the employees get taken, one by one.”

Blue like jazz

In a Mennonite college setting, a respected music professor with a background in conducting, left five years ago after teaching for 20 years, when he was unable to resolve a conflict involving the type of music he used on choir tours.

He knew his work was a delicate balancing act in working with different opinions about types of music among faculty and donors, and meeting the demands of his teaching responsibilities, conducting choirs and organizing college concerts. He got used to his work coming under criticism.

But after a particularly successful choir tour, he was brought into the president’s office to speak with him and the academic dean, who asked him to stop doing jazz and start doing contemporary music.

“I was pumped and gung-ho! We had just set a benchmark,” he recalled. This

incident led to similar conversations about his repertoire selection, resulting in his becoming very depressed.

The level of criticism rose with him as he listened to comments like “the work you did for this concert was a waste of time.” Malicious conversation between administrators in front of the faculty about his ability to lead the choir and choice of repertoire led the professor to feel hurt and unsupported.

Sometimes the professor would receive positive feedback, but then he would question if the administrators really liked his work, if they were telling the truth, or when the next negative comment would come.

“It was like waiting to be hit,” he said. “I had put my heart and soul into [these concerts]. . . . It was like being kicked in the head [every time they evaluated my work negatively].”

He left his position five years ago due to the stress. Some of the faculty and staff members were concerned about the circumstances surrounding his departure.

According to the current president, who has been in his post for four years, “Typically, we try to resolve the conflict first, and then mediation is probably one of the next steps.”

Mediation was not a step in this conflict, however, as the professor

was employed prior to this president’s posting.

The value of mediation

While not referring to any of the cases presented in this article, Nan Cressman, director of Conciliation Services of Canada, Kitchener, Ont., says mediation is not particularly helpful in working through the causes of a conflict, but is instructive for the present and future.

“Interpersonal healing can take place through mediation” she says, “because the mediator can achieve a balance of power between the conflicted that can bring learning to future situations. As a third-party observer not invested in the outcome, the mediator, through skilled communication techniques, can help each party see the other’s point of view and focus on the ‘light of learning,’ rather than assigning blame.”

Congregations and Mennonite organizations have resources for both conflict prevention and sets of guidelines provided through the offices of Mennonite Church Canada, although Karen Zimmerly Martens, denominational minister, insists that they are not “police, not enforcers,” but rather resource persons who can help guide congregations, rather than “solve their problems for them.” ❧

/// For discussion

1. How are conflicts in the faith community different from those in other organizations? Do you think such conflicts show a lack of a caring community? What is the most important thing we can do to reduce such conflicts?
2. Do you think employees of Mennonite churches or institutions have higher expectations of their employers than other workers? In what situations do church employees have difficulty in getting fair treatment? Are there circumstances in which it is appropriate for an employee to sue?
3. Dean Peachey suggests that conflicts in the church are often the result of fuzzy polity. Do you agree? Does your congregation have clear guidelines about how decisions are made? Do you agree that conference ministers should not get directly involved in a congregation’s conflict?
4. Sometimes an institution or congregation needs to make difficult decisions due to financial pressures or new situations. How should church institutions deal with the need to reduce staff or replace management? Why do church boards sometimes do a bad job? How could churches and institutions do a better job of dealing fairly with employees?

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.

✉ Call on whatever God you worship for comfort when grieving

I WAS INTERESTED in "A heart for grieving people," March 7, page 22, which featured Hank Friesen in his role as an assistant funeral director in British Columbia's Fraser Valley.

For 45 years I have had the privilege to be a licensed funeral director in Waterloo, Ont., employing many part-time funeral directors assistants who are often retired and bring an enormous amount of life experiences to assist in serving families.

My involvement in funeral service has taught me that death is the great equalizer; it has no boundaries on who we are or who we worship. Our ethnic traditions and personal lifestyle often determine how we grieve: some in solitude, others surrounded by countless family members and friends, and others steeped in ethnic tradition.

During those 45 years I have walked on holy and sacred ground with thousands of families from all faith traditions. Those walks have strengthened my Anabaptist beliefs; however, they have also helped me to recognize that regardless of the faith traditions of the families we serve, we are equal in the common pain of grief, equal in a need to grieve in meaningful ways, and equal in calling on the God we worship for comfort.

For those of us involved in funeral service, we need to recognize that all families we serve—regardless of faith or ethnicity—grieve, find hope and live out their faith in traditions that deserve our respect and acknowledgment that we are all children of God.

JIM ERB, WATERLOO, ONT.

✉ New West Coast group resonates with 'upside-down wisdom'

THANK YOU TO Troy Watson for his thought-provoking article, "Upside-down wisdom," March 7, page 17.

It is easy to think that we are more capable of knowing what God is doing in the world than Jesus' first disciples, and it is always a good reminder that so often "our assumptions and expectations hinder us," as Watson says.

It is particularly exciting to learn of the author's Mennonite community, "The Quest," a community of faith that sounds similar to a new (ad)venture underway in the east side of Vancouver, British Columbia. Supported by Langley Mennonite Fellowship, the new group is seeking to be faithful followers of an unpredictable and surprising God in this highly secular, urban context.

While we are firmly rooted in the Anabaptist tradition, we are also, in some ways, outside of the traditional Mennonite "box," believing with Watson that "upside-down wisdom" is precisely the sort of wisdom the church needs to witness to God in an ever-increasingly diverse and postmodern Canada.

At this point, we are still very small, with 10 to 20 on a given Sunday, but hope to grow as we find others in Vancouver who are looking for an adventure in faith and community such as ours. To learn more, please feel free to contact us at either fasta@telus.net or hakrause@telus.net, and come by for a potluck and worship some time.

ANITA FAST, VANCOUVER, B.C.

HENRY KRAUSE, LANGLEY, B.C.

✉ Good surprises abound at Sam's Place

DURING THE PAST three years I have been involved as a volunteer at Sam's Place in Winnipeg, Man., and at a local MCC thrift shop working in the book department.

Perhaps a more careful reading of the Feb. 7 "A new direction for Sam's Place" article on page 19, would have helped to dispel the surprise experienced by letter writer Jim Suderman ("Visit to Sam's Place leaves customer 'surprised,'" March 21, page 12).

Especially the paragraph which reads: "It is our hope that Sam's Place will generate enough funds to cover its costs and eventually have profits that will be donated to MCC, but it is not just about making money for MCC," Reimer stresses. 'Sam's Place is developing into a hybrid social enterprise that blends community benefits and income generation.'"

We are surprised at the unexpected. Hope speaks to

expectations for the future. Sam's Place is a work-in-progress. Should we be surprised that it is still "on the road," not having reached its goal as of yet?

A hybrid incorporates into itself selected features and qualities of each of the "parent groups" brought together in this hybrid. Sam's Place is not a thrift shop, some of which give away all Bibles free of charge. Neither is it a purely commercial venture where Bibles can sell for three or four times the price of an "experienced" Bible. Sam's Place is not a Tim Horton's drive-through where speed of service is combined with a hasty exit by the customer to make way for the next one. Hasty service, yes; but don't rush! Should we be surprised?

The book store is run by volunteers. Of the thousands of books on the shelves, I personally would be extremely surprised if I did not find one which is dated and therefore irrelevant. If you expect perfection—surprise! We, as volunteers, are human and subject to making mistakes.

Are you interested in going to Sam's Place? Then expect to find a calm, relaxed atmosphere. Expect to find some limitations in the things available. This is not simply another thrift shop, nor is it only a commercial enterprise. You might be surprised at the success with which Sam's Place has accomplished its stated purpose.

MARTIN PENNER, WINNIPEG, MAN.

GOD, MONEY AND ME

Missing the mark

DONALD BROOKER

As parents, many of us go to great lengths to ensure that our children and youths get the best of everything. We sign them up for hockey camps, music and snowboarding lessons, swim teams, tutors and after-school clubs, all in an effort to guarantee their success.

But many of us don't teach our children biblical stewardship. I don't mean to say that we don't practise biblical stewardship or that by our example we don't live out our faith in front of our children. But how often do we talk to our children about financial stewardship from a biblical perspective?

For so many of us, we focus on the tangible, rather than the intangible. We focus on them scoring a goal or hitting the bull's eye.

Recently in my church, we had a special month of offerings to help pay down our mortgage. The leadership shared its vision for the church and gave very compelling reasons for us to pay down the mortgage early, and the funds came in. Nathaniel, my 12-year-old son, came home from church that day excited and announced that he needed a ride to the bank.

The excitement didn't last long,

though. When he arrived home from youth group later that week, he was confused. "Why didn't they talk about this at youth?" he asked. "The benefits sounded great when they presented to the adults. Why didn't the youth know more about this?" After just a few weeks, his excitement turned to frustration. "Do they think we don't care about the church? Do they think our gifts won't make a difference?"

My son contributed a few hundred dollars he earned from his newspaper route,



[O]ur churches need to include our children and youths in stewardship education

but couldn't get over the fact that no one ever considered sharing the challenge to give with the youths. Our children need us to model a life of faithful stewardship by our actions. They also need us to explain what we are doing and why.

In addition to this, our churches need to include our children and youths in stewardship education and give them the opportunity to be involved. After all, we want them to develop good stewardship habits now that will last them a lifetime.

A practice that we started recently was

to involve Nathaniel in all of our charitable giving decisions. At first, we questioned how he would react to giving what in his world would be very large amounts of money. To our surprise, he quickly gave his input. His only disappointment was the tough decision of which charities we wouldn't support.

Our children naturally want to help. They see a need and they want to respond. Society teaches us to store up our treasures on earth and this will bring happiness. The Bible teaches us to store up treasures in heaven.

Are we missing the mark with our children and youths? Our youths need and want to be involved in the church. If

we don't help them become involved in the joy of giving to support the work of the church, I believe we are both missing the mark and short-changing them spiritually.

Donald Brooker is a stewardship consultant at the St. Catharines, Ont., office of Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For stewardship education and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit MennoFoundation.ca.

✉ Book provides insight in resisting conscription

RE: “NEW BOOK examines pacifism and nationalism in Prussia,” March 21, page 31. A few of us here in Winnipeg have been wondering how to anticipate a possible return of conscription. Mark Jantzen’s study, *Mennonite German Soldiers*, may help us.

Whether Mennonites in any country of the world can sustain a credible stance of Christian peace over the long haul remains to be seen. A basic Mennonite

commitment to contribute towards wholesome community building easily conflicts with participating in defence of the nation. Thus, military exemption could be implemented as the result of special immigration privileges made with recipient governments whose habitats were sought, including in Poland, Russia, the U.S., Canada and several Latin American nations. Then, as the social pressures around us mounted, those privileges often fizzled. It was then that Mennonites frequently emigrated; thereby, an enduring peace stance was exempted from long-range testing.

FAMILY TIES

The truth about marriage

MELISSA MILLER

I’ve imagined a column with this title for some time. While it sounds more than a little presumptuous, it is a topic to which I’ve given a great deal of thought.

For starters, as a counsellor and pastor, I have been invited into deep conversations with many individuals and couples about their marriages. I’m also curious about relationships—some might even say nosy—and I have engaged freely with my family and friends on the subject.

And there’s the union I have shared with my partner for nearly 35 years. So I come to a reflection on the truth about marriage with significant experience.

The phrase pops into my mind regularly as I move in and out of people’s lives: sparkling new lovers as they shyly explore the gift of each other . . . young parents who navigate the tumbling chaos of tending children . . . mid-lifers emerging into the space of an empty nest and finding each other again . . . elderly spouses who keep a long and faithful vigil by their partner’s deathbed . . . and the people whose marriages end in the pain of divorce. In all these places, we might

see glimpses of the truth about marriage.

Probably the phrase has been with me since a counsellor asked me and my spouse, “What is the deeper truth of your relationship?” In the years since then, I’ve returned to the question often, sometimes with gratefulness when we connect deeply, sometimes with my teeth gritted at longstanding frustrations, sometimes in the mundane moments of sharing a simple meal or the familiar comfort of our curled poses in bed. Seeking the



Seeking the deeper truth of a relationship clarifies one’s perspective and sharpens one’s resolve.

deeper truth of a relationship clarifies one’s perspective and sharpens one’s resolve.

Our Scriptures speak to the truth of marriage. On the occasion of the first union, between Adam and Eve, the storyteller declares, “*Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh*” (Genesis 2:24). Jesus returns to this truth in response to questions about divorce (Matthew 19:5, Mark 10:7). Paul also weaves this truth about marriage into his

teachings on sexuality; he names it as a great mystery and goes so far as to apply it to Christ and the church (I Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:28-31). The truth in the Genesis passage seems to be centred on the three movements of leaving and clinging and becoming one, all of which merit their own thoughtful reflection.

Given the complexity of human life and relationships, it seems wise to shift from a declaration of the truth about marriage to a more modest offering of a truth about marriage. Today, I propose that we honour marriage as a sacred friendship; to be sacred is to set aside a holy boundaried place where we encounter the Divine. To be a friend means to leave aside something of one’s self-focus and interest, and to create space for the other’s needs and interests. It means leaning into each other—clinging

together—to weather stormy winds and troubled waters. It means entering the crucible where two beings are, at least in part, shaped into one flesh.

To name marriage as sacred friendship is to bind together the holy and human qualities of our unions, a truth in which we can rest.

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

“When it comes to join the army,” my non-Mennonite classmate in a B.C. public school once told me, “you Mennonites run for cover. Why don’t you pull your share? Why not join up and fight like the rest of us do?” he asked.

Jantzen’s findings in Poland have a way of mirroring back the possibility of a new wave of conscription, even in Canada. If conscription returns, we will again face pressures from the encompassing society to join up. Perhaps now, before the momentum carries us away, we should assess where the increasingly patriotic peace church, now increasingly lured by patriot disposition, is at.

MENNO WIEBE, WINNIPEG, MAN.

✉ R2P panellist clarifies statement

THE “DREAMING OF a world without war” article, April 4, page 26, helpfully points to the difficulties in determining how vulnerable citizens in affected countries may interpret an international intervention under the “Responsibility to Protect” (R2P) doctrine. Some of those directly affected may be desperately calling for this protection, while others may see it as an imposition by outsiders under false pretences.

The article is drawn from a panel discussion at the “Partnering for Change” forum in Winnipeg, Man., March 17-19. While the article captures the flavour of the panel discussion, there is a quotation attributed

FROM OUR LEADERS

The light that we have

BY DAN DYCK

Most regular readers of *Canadian Mennonite* now know that Mennonite Church Canada is adopting a smaller structure to reduce ministry expenditures by a half-million dollars. The question of “why” persists.

While it is tempting to find and blame a single scapegoat, reality is less straightforward. In a recent MC Canada news release, general secretary Willard Metzger was careful to say that a “downward trend in giving does not necessarily appear to be a reflection of decreased generosity.” This is an important distinction to make, but it isn’t the only factor.

The situation is complex. Baby boomers are retiring and living with less income. Loyal, older church supporters are moving into care homes and passing away. The economic downturn of 2008-09 continues to affect some sectors. World disasters of epic proportions draw the compassion and dollars of generous donors. Information clutter makes it increasingly difficult to reach busy two-income families with children involved in a feast of activities and attractions. Monthly church attendance is now considered “regular.” Younger generations are demonstrating less

interest in institutions. With more than 85,000 deserving charities in Canada, the offering plate has ceased to be the favoured choice for financial giving. And for some churches, becoming more missional at a congregational level may mean keeping more money within for valuable and effective ministry.

Challenges like these apply beyond MC Canada structures. Area churches across the country and other faith formation-oriented bodies like Mennonite Publishing Network also feel the pinch.

How do we see and understand church bodies beyond ourselves and our own congregations? Should local initiatives trump wider church ministry? We have



[T]he offering plate has ceased to be the favoured choice for financial giving.

inherited many good “legacy” ministries from our forebears, but can we continue to do it all? How can we best serve the generation that will inherit our ministries? With decreasing church involvement, how will the disciples of the future be shaped and formed to serve the Mennonite Central Committees and Mennonite

Disaster Services of the future?

Where do we focus our efforts to continue being the church?

Lynda Loewen, a fellow church member, recently preached an inspiring Lenten sermon to my congregation. She shared her struggle to spend time daily in devotional practice and her internal challenge of deciding how much and to whom she should give her money. God’s Word exhorts us to pray for those who hurt us, to study Scripture and more, she said.

Drawing inspiration from the Gospel of John, where Jesus rubs clay on the eyes of a blind man and gives him sight, she said, “The mystery of faith is that we have to have it in order to see things. It is not inevitable that we will see.”

“You won’t understand why if you don’t do it. You won’t get more light if you don’t use the light you’ve got,” she said. “We are called to be hardcore Christians.

Our master meets us along the way, intercepts us when we stumble, asks us if we love him, and reveals himself to us as we follow the light we have.” Indeed. May we follow the light that we have.

Dan Dyck is MC Canada’s director of communications.

to me that I do not recall making in this way: “When UN countries send military armies to intervene, ‘we’re killers,’ Siebert said. ‘We’re killers rather than fighters.’”

I may not have been as clear on this point as I should have been. What I wanted to convey about killers versus fighters has to do with the circumstances being considered when R2P was formulated. The doctrine was proposed in response to situations such as Rwanda, where “killers” from the community were committing atrocities, rather than organized “fighters” from a government military or a rebel force. Where the government is unwilling or unable to protect, it was foreseen that an intervening military force sanctioned by the UN under R2P principles would interpose itself between the killers and those being killed, much like a police force would intervene to stop any crime in a community.

The intervening UN-sanctioned military force is faced with a much more difficult situation on the ground when organized military or opposition “fighters” are engaged in committing the atrocities. How does the intervening military force, adhering to R2P principles, primarily protect civilians in the face of an organized fighting force while not supporting one side or the other in an armed conflict?

This is the dilemma of the international Libya mission that literally started while our panel was sitting in Winnipeg in mid-March.

JOHN SIEBERT, WATERLOO, ONT.

John Siebert is executive director of Project Ploughshares.

✉ MCC calls for sustainable peace in North Africa, Middle East

The following is an open letter to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ church members in Canada and the U.S. from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada and MCC U.S.

“THEY HAVE TREATED the wound of my people carelessly, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace” (Jeremiah 6:14, 8:11).

At this time of great change in North Africa and the Middle East, MCC applauds the courage of those who are speaking out for basic rights and working for more just societies in Egypt, Tunisia and elsewhere.

We lament the suffering of all people and are dismayed by the actions of governments that disregard the rights of their own people. We share the concern, stated by numerous governments, the Arab League and the United Nations, of protecting civilians at risk of harm.

However, the history of military interventions, even those carried out for “humanitarian purposes,”

or because of a “Responsibility to Protect,” has shown that there are very often unintended consequences. Thus, we have serious concerns about the current UN mission in Libya, and we cannot support the use of our countries’ militaries to purportedly bring peace.

In our experience as Christian peacebuilders, it is only nonviolent actions that provide the critical impetus for long-term, sustainable peace. Peace that endures also requires a just society in which basic rights are respected and human needs are met.

Jesus said that those who work for peace will be blessed and will be considered children of God (Matthew 5:9). The Scriptures are clear about God’s displeasure with those who claim to have achieved “peace” in the midst of unjust circumstances (Jeremiah 6:13-15).

Therefore, we call on all church members to pray for peace, and encourage them to engage and discuss these important issues in their congregations and communities, and with their government. Our hope is that these conversations will promote peace and understanding with one another, as well as around the world.


DON PETERS, WINNIPEG, MAN.

J. RON BYLER, AKRON, PA.

Don Peters is executive director of MCC Canada and

J. Ron Byler is executive director of MCC U.S.

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LIFE IN THE POSTMODERN SHIFT

Blessed are the innovators

BY TROY WATSON

I think the famous line from 1960s rock band Buffalo Springfield—"There's something happening here, [but] what it is ain't exactly clear"—sums up how many of us feel about the paradigm shift we find ourselves in.



percent are open to new ideas that have a proven track record; and 16 percent are laggards, either reluctantly going along with the majority or digging in their heels to resist.

This would mean that 84 percent of the church is wary

of innovation and new ideas. This has several implications:

of innovation and new ideas. This has several implications:

Everything is in shift, including Christianity. Churches respond to this faith transition in one of four ways:

1. DENIAL. What paradigm shift? Postmodernity is a fad!

2. DEFIANCE. The remnant shall fight this rebellion against God to the death!

3. DESPAIR. Will all our children and grandchildren abandon our church, denomination and faith?

4. DECONSTRUCTION AND INNOVATION. Let's look at this with fresh eyes and try something different.

The last response holds the key to the future. It is the faith of present-day iconoclasts and innovators that will move forward into the new paradigm and inspire future generations to heed the timeless call of Christ to be people of peace and love, attuned to God's Spirit.

Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory claims that 2.5 percent of people are innovators, creating big new ideas; 13.5 percent are early adopters, supporting innovation and risking trying "crazy" ideas; 34 percent are open to new ideas that have demonstrated promise; 34

percent are open to new ideas that have a proven track record; and 16 percent are laggards, instead of pioneers, change-makers and cultural influencers (adopting egalitarian policies years after the women's rights movement; accepting other forms of music as valid expressions of worship many years after those forms of music became

We should value creativity equally alongside holiness, mercy and honesty, and make it just as much a mark of authentic Christian spirituality.

normative for the culture that is our missional context and accepted in other denominations).

• **WE CAN DISCOURAGE** or shut down the most creative people in our midst, the very innovators who could help us move forward with vitality into the new paradigm.

• **THE SUSTAINABILITY CRISIS** our church is facing will not be solved by status-quo mentalities. As Albert Einstein once said, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

The good news here is that God continues to gift the church with innovators, but it is up to us to empower them and experiment with their "far out" ideas.

This means that we will have to risk failure because many of their ideas will not work. (Remember Thomas Edison created a thousand light bulbs that didn't work

before coming up with the one that did.) It is important for us to remember there are no such things as failures, only outcomes or results to interpret and learn from.

To create congregational environments where innovation is celebrated and encouraged we must pattern our lives after our Creator God. To be godly is to be creative.

When I look around at this incredibly diverse and strange universe full of platypuses, aye-ayes, Venus flytraps and the like, it certainly seems like God gets carried away with being creative! I certainly can't think of a moral or practical reason for the creation of blobfish or the proboscis monkey.

I am not sure why creativity has become secondary to other divine character traits we strive to emulate. We should value creativity equally alongside holiness, mercy and honesty, and make it just as much a mark of authentic Christian spirituality.

The majority may caution us to "be careful about being creative for the sake of being creative," but that makes about as much sense as "being careful not to be moral for the sake of being moral."

It's time to unleash our innovators and get carried away with the creative spirit.

Ask yourself or your church:

• Are we intentionally working at encouraging and creating space for innovators in our midst?

• Are we driving our most creative, imaginative people to other churches, denominations or worldviews?

• Are we inadvertently encouraging our most entrepreneurial young adults to pursue careers in fields other than ministry because there is not enough room for innovators to experiment and flourish in church settings? ❧

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.

YOUNG PROPHETS

What about the young people?

BY MELANIE KAMPEN

I have always been interested in the various ways the church witnesses to the world and so “Called to be Peacemakers,” the report of the international dialogue between the Catholic Church and Mennonite World Conference (1998-2003), caught my attention during a class at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Man.



dialogue need to know what they are talking about. This is understandable, but it's not sufficient. My primary issue here is not with the knowledge requirement, but with the fact that I find myself alienated for the most part from the church that practises interfaith dialogue, the church of which I proclaim to be a member.

Mennonites practise a priesthood of all

It was an absolutely fascinating read of an ecumenical endeavour between two Christian traditions with a fractured and bloody history. Not only was the report theologically informative, but when I hear about something like this, I think to myself, “Yes, this is the church being the church.” This is what the church does. This is the body of Christ witnessing to a watching world, or even one that's not watching.

This is the kind of work—the kind of life—I thought I was signing up for upon my baptism at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, in 2005. So why haven't I heard of this until now? Why am I not a part of this? And, most importantly, how can I become a participant in church practices like this?

What struck me about the 1998-2003 dialogue report is that all the participants were either elected or nominated top executive-type representatives of each church tradition. Even among local interfaith initiatives, it seems that the people who are involved in this kind of peace-building work tend to be highly theologically educated professionals: teachers, ministers, deacons, and various council and committee members. In short, not lay members.

There is a strong sense in which the people who participate in interfaith

The most common frustration I hear voiced among young people who care about the church is that the church doesn't do anything!

believers. If we take this seriously, we need to consider who is—and who is not—participating at events like the ecumenical dialogue. The church has tried to engage young people in many good ways, most of which, though, are separate from the rest of the church body and specific to us.

This becomes problematic when it is the only way we are being engaged and involved in what the Mennonite church is doing locally, globally and everywhere in between. The church is precisely the place where divisions are overcome, including those concerning age and knowledge.

I, for one, would have loved to have been a participant at the interfaith dialogue. I wouldn't necessarily have played the same kind of role as elected or nominated theological representatives. But my being present throughout the whole process would have been invaluable to the cultivation of skills and resources, both theological and ethical-political, and to the formation of an ecumenical character.

Young people are said to be the future

of the church, but if we aren't participants at some level, in some role, in all the kinds of things the church does, how are we supposed to know how to be the church? It is only by participating in the practices of the church themselves that knowledge is cultivated, a knowledge that names a particular kind of people, in this case, an ecumenical people. Participation in interfaith dialogue is a character-forming activity, and without that kind of engagement of youths by the church, we are left with a grim picture of Christianity as a complacent, self-serving body of Christ.

The most common frustration I hear voiced among young people who care about the church is that the church doesn't do anything! This kind of a picture is also in conflict with the stories of

Jesus and the apostolic church that we read of in Scripture, that drip with ethical implications for everyday living.

By being treated separately from the church body, young people are often left ignorant of what the church is doing, and, if not ignorant, then in large part resourceless, unable to get our foot in the door, to get involved, to serve the church and God we love. This is certainly among the reasons young people leave the church.

The role of the church is to call people, to discern gifts, and to imagine ways to serve and engage each other and the world around us. As a young adult, I have struggled to see the church being the church, and, as such, I have toiled over how to get involved in those practices I believe in. I urge the church to call its young people—and other lay members—to participate in a variety of practices on a variety of levels, from local to global, and to act as a resource and informant for opportunities of service, involvement and character formation, regardless of age and education. ❧

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Friesen—Taten Russell (b. March 20, 2011), to Ryan and Deanne Friesen, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

Heinrichs—Candace Jaimie Ann (b. March 16, 2011), to Jamie and Crystal (McKeller) Heinrichs, Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

Heinrichs—Thomas Bernard (b. March 27, 2011), to Ben and Mandy (Srigley) Heinrichs, Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

Lee-Epp—Paiton James (b. March 25, 2011), to Chris Epp (Bergthal Mennonite, Didsbury, Alta.) and Jennifer Lee, in Calgary, Alta.

Reimer—Austin Luke (b. March 18, 2011), to Ken and Kathryn Reimer, Graysville Mennonite, Carman, Man.

Srigley—Chloe Morgan (b. March 27, 2011), to Ken and Debbie Srigley, North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

Tonon—Sean Giacomo Johann (b. March 18, 2011), to Paul and Rebecca (Bueckert) Heinrichs, Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

Deaths

Cmela—Ellie (nee Wall), 85, (b. Nov. 9, 1925; d. April 9, 2011), Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Dyck—Mary (nee Funk), 92 (b. June 2, 1918; d. April 6, 2011), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Enns—Elvira (nee Loewen), 84 (b. Dec. 10, 1926; d. Jan. 28, 2011), First Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Friesen—John R., 76 (b. Aug. 24, 1934; d. March 21, 2011), First Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Harder—Helene (nee Friesen), 94 (b. April 18, 1926; d. March 20, 2011), First Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Goertzen—Susie, 89 (b. Feb. 6, 1922; d. March 20, 2011), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Jantzi—Elmer, 77 (b. Aug. 25, 1933; d. April 9, 2011), Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

Janzen—William J., 87 (b. Sept. 23, 1923; d. March 31, 2011), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Krause—Elsie (nee Wolfe), 69 (b. Sept. 27, 1941; d. April 5, 2011), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Nafziger Lichty—Noah, 79 (b. Aug. 6, 1931; d. Feb. 26, 2011), Tree of Life, Monetville, Ont.

Nafziger Lichty—Samuel, 89 (b. Oct. 7, 1921; d. March 6, 2011), Calvary Mennonite, Monetville, Ont.

Neufeld—Elna, 80 (b. Jan. 7, 1931; d. March 29, 2011), Springstein Mennonite, Man.

Pauls—Henry, 80 (b. July 24, 1930; d. March 15, 2011), Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Rempel—Christina (nee Loewen), 98 (b. Jan. 13, 1913; d. March 18, 2011), First Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Schroeder—Jacob, 69 (b. Feb. 3, 1942; d. April 6, 2011), Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Sommerfeld—Mary, 84 (d. March 27, 2011), Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask.

Steckly—Katherine Barbara, 49 (b. Oct. 3, 1961; d. April 10, 2011), Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

Unruh—Walter, 84 (b. June 14, 1926; d. April 7, 2011), First Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Wiebe—Ralf, 56 (b. Feb. 10, 1955; d. March 13, 2011), Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

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

Pontius' Puddle



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

'With sadness and lament'

Mennonite Church Canada announces reductions to staff and programming for 2012

BY RACHEL BERGEN

National Correspondent
WINNIPEG, MAN.

In order to manage as yearly donations are decreasing, Mennonite Church Canada announced publicly on April 12 that, regrettably, it must reduce expenditures by terminating or altering positions and programs. The announcement comes a month after MC Canada councils met to identify the core responsibilities of the national church, those that are integral to its mission and values.

After the council meeting in March, executive staff examined staffing needs around these core responsibilities, and, on April 9, their recommendations were approved by the General Board to reduce expenditures by \$415,000 by the beginning of next February and eliminate 3.4 full-time-equivalent (FTE) national church staff positions effective this Aug. 1:

- **MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES**, headed by Samson Lo, is terminated, although certain projects will still continue as funding permits.

- **THE DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN NURTURE** position that is filled by Elsie Rempel is terminated, although Christian Formation resources will still be provided to the Resource Centre.

- **THE YOUTH MINISTRY FACILITATOR** role filled by Anna Rehan will transition into a contract position.

- **TWO EXECUTIVE LEVEL POSITIONS** will be eliminated—executive secretary of church engagement, and executive director of international ministries, currently filled by Norm Dyck and Tim Froese, respectively.

- **TWO VOLUNTEER POSITIONS** on each of MC Canada's three councils will be cut to help reduce travel costs for meetings.

Unfortunately, these cuts must be made, as "tweaking the budget" is no longer

possible to minimize cuts, says MC Canada general secretary Willard Metzger. "There is sadness and lament for the necessity of these cuts," adding, though, "It's something we need to implement."

The budget cuts are "not a shift in priorities," Metzger stresses. "Mennonite Church Canada is just a smaller entity still aligned with its original vision and priorities."

Many who have been laid off are being offered positions with less than full-time hours in different areas of MC Canada or in an area conference; however, they continue to be grieved by the loss of the programs they feel are important.

For Rempel, there is a deep mourning for the ministry she has served for the past nine years. "There is a great sadness in participating in the reduction of services of the wider church for the congregation," she says.

Fortunately for her, the loss of her job will not be the kind of financial burden it is for her younger colleagues, including one with a large, young family to support.

Rehan's work will transition into contract work every other year in correlation with the biennial youth assembly, but the networking between youth pastors across Canada that she facilitated will not happen.

For the terminated Multicultural Ministries program, although there won't be a specific person to network with the multicultural churches, the area churches across the country have already embraced the growing edge of multicultural ministries. Karen Martens Zimmerly, MC Canada denominational minister, is also working on a Pastoral Leadership Development Task Force with a key focus on developing multicultural leaders.

Biennial assemblies being proposed

Another change being proposed as a result of the cuts involves holding national assemblies every two years, instead of annually. A proposal to that effect will be on the floor at the upcoming assembly in Waterloo, Ont., in July.

"To continue meeting every year, we would need to recoup an additional estimated \$100,000 by structuring assembly registration fees to reflect the true cost of staff time in planning and hosting annual assemblies," said Vic Thiessen, chief executive officer, in an April 12 press release.

According to Dan Dyck, MC Canada's communications director, the cuts will mean the national church will have a reduced capacity to serve its constituency.

Metzger asks the members of MC Canada to remember its staff and leadership in prayer during this time of transition. ❧

❧ Briefly noted

Manitoba camps shorten summer program period

The 2011 Camps with Meaning summer program will be reduced to 20 weeks, one week less at camps Assiniboia and Moose Lake. "It takes 135 to 150 staff people for a week of summer camp," explains program director Aaron Nussbaum. "Typically, 14 of these are paid from the conference office and the rest are volunteers, many supported by their churches. It has been getting more difficult finding enough volunteers and we don't feel good about running at bare minimum." This year, Camps with Meaning is encouraging individual churches to take one week of summer camp and provide kitchen, maintenance and nursing staff for that week. Another change will be a slightly shorter camp week, running from Sunday to Friday, instead of Saturday. "The primary reason is staff care," says Nussbaum. "This will provide a break for camp staff between the weeks and give them a full day off."

—BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

A different kind of spring break

MCI students split their time between France and Winnipeg's North End

BY JEREMY SIEMENS
Mennonite Collegiate Institute

Their destinations were drastically different, but two groups of students from Mennonite Collegiate Institute (MCI), Gretna, Man., used their spring break to learn a lot about the world around them.

For 28 students, the break was an opportunity for world travel and global exposure. The group spent nine days touring France and visiting the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre Museum, and La Chartres cathedral.

The trip was aimed at educating students about world history and Canada's relatively short role in it, according to teacher and trip organizer Lester Schellenberg. "It seems that at almost every corner there was something new to marvel at that was

older than Canada," he says. "Much of it was beyond anything that we have here in southern Manitoba, in terms of architecture, age and the 'wow' factor."

As part of the tour, the group spent time at Normandy Beach, the historical World War II site where, on D-Day—June 6, 1944—Canadian forces helped secure an Allied presence in France that ultimately led to the country's liberation.

Nolan Kehler, a Grade 11 student from Altona, Man., says that this stop proved to be the most poignant and it added new perspective to how he sees the war. "When you see it, you can really appreciate it better," he says. "When you see the craters and the

floating bridge and bombed-out Nazi bunkers, it showed me that all this history actually happened. It really drove the sacrifice [of the Canadian soldiers] home for me."

At the same time, 31 MCI students travelled to Winnipeg's North End for their spring break, where three student teams took part in MB Mission's Soar: Heartland, a 10-day program focused on service and spiritual growth. Soar allows high-school students to partner with local non-profit agencies in service. The work ranged from providing Vacation Bible School programming for inner-city children to preparing meals and sorting clothing at Siloam Mission.

In addition to providing students with service opportunities, Soar also helps foster personal and spiritual growth. Annika Enns-Dyck, a Grade 9 student from Altona, notes that the program revealed a hopeful side to Winnipeg's inner-city. "Soar really taught me that God is already in the North End and is at work," she says. "We are just there to shine his light and be a joy to the community." ❧

PHOTO BY KRISTEN GIESBRECHT



Mennonite Collegiate Institute student Patrick Falk stands in the entrance to one of the Nazi bunkers overlooking the beach at Normandy, France, where Canadian and other Allied troops came ashore on June 6, 1944. Fellow student Nolan Kehler says that seeing the memorial 'really drove the sacrifice [of the Canadian soldiers] home for me.'

Nazareth Village gets Canadian charitable status

BY DAVE ROGALSKY
Eastern Canada Correspondent

Nazareth Village in Israel/Palestine has much to celebrate in its 10th year of existence.

Jewish families on sabbath outings mingle with Muslim students coming to see the only first-century Palestinian village in existence, while Christian visitors from around the world attend the place where the one they consider the Messiah lived. More than 50,000 visitors came in 2010.

While Miracle of Nazareth International Foundation Inc. has had charitable status in the United States for years, it was not until very recently that the Galilee Charitable Foundation received its charitable status for Canadian donations.

Glenn Witmer, long-time Nazareth Village supporter and board member, told *Canadian Mennonite* that attempts to get charitable status for “an Arab village in Israel for peace and education after 9/11” have been difficult. While U.S. donations have gone more to bricks and mortar, Canadian support has been focused on

web design and education.

Nazareth Village—created on land too steep to farm or use for other structures—is the result of an ecumenical vision by Nakhle Bishara, an Orthodox lay person; the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society, which owns the land independent from denominational affiliation; and Michael Hostetter, a Mennonite who served as its first director.

As the land was being prepared for buildings like a synagogue, three homes showing a variety of businesses and levels of wealth, a carpentry shop, an olive press, a *mikveh* or ritual bath, and a farm, careful work by archeologists discovered a wine press, channels for irrigation, watch towers, quarries, terraces and first-century pottery shards. These have been incorporated into the village and its educational mission.

The first project finished was the Parable Walk, where interpreters help visitors to experience Jesus’ stories in their original

setting. The last project added has been a tomb, complete with a rolling stone closure. The interpreters are careful to explain that this tomb would have been unlikely in first-century Nazareth, as only the very wealthy could afford such extravagant workmanship and Nazareth was not a wealthy village.

Plans for the next five years include a web portal that will allow people anywhere to experience the village, including extensive background information for lay people, pastors and scholars, and an interpretive centre that would extend the village’s season in both the cold and hot seasons of the year. ❧

/// Briefly noted

Latin American women call MWC community to prayer

The Movement of Anabaptist Women Theologians in Latin America (MTA) invites Mennonite World Conference (MWC) member churches to establish an annual day of prayer during the month of May, focusing particularly on Latin American women. The MTA World Day of Prayer is an initiative of the women theologians who gathered in Paraguay during the 2009 MWC assembly. Each year, women from a different country prepare a worship guide that includes a meeting format, worship and teaching resources, and background material for intercession. The liturgy for 2011 was developed by Mennonite women in Guatemala; it is available online at teologasanabautistas.blogspot.com. The prayer focus for this year is on Guatemala, Argentina, Cuba and Haiti. “Our goal is that we may see relationships between men and women of the world transformed into equity and justice, to build the kingdom of God,” says Rebeca González of Mexico. A guiding verse for the planners was Jeremiah 29:12-13: “*Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*”

—Mennonite World Conference

PHOTO COURTESY OF NAZARETH VILLAGE



A shepherd leads his flock at Nazareth Village, a first-century Palestinian interpretive site.

Vancouver couple helps establish Cuban seminary

BY HENRY NEUFELD

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

A Vancouver, B.C., Mennonite couple have been actively involved in establishing the Conrad Grebel Seminary in Holguin, Cuba. John and Erna Friesen, members of Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, acknowledge that an Anabaptist seminary is unusual in Cuba, which has no Mennonite churches.

The idea for this seminary was promoted by Gordon Smith, executive director of reSource International, an agency that fosters excellence in theological education in the developing world (formerly Overseas Council Canada). Smith, who previously taught at Vancouver's Regent College, believes in the transforming potential of a teaching-learning institution in which a community of faculty and students lives a disciplined life around a curriculum.

Smith sought the Friesens' assistance in this venture. In addition to financial support, the Friesens asked the seminary to establish programs reflecting Anabaptist teachings on justice, peace and reconciliation. Additionally, they wanted the seminary to develop an integrative approach focusing on a fruitful exchange between faith and the social and natural sciences.

Eleven Cuban Christian denominations

are participating in developing the seminary, a majority of them Pentecostal. It began offering courses in January with 20 full-time and 60 part-time students. Eight denominations are represented in the student body. The seminary is designed to serve the 400 Christian churches in the Holguin area, most of whose pastors have no formal theological training.

Since all education in Cuba is free, students are not charged tuition, so the new seminary needs operating funds from the participating Cuban churches and from abroad.

Former Mennonite Church Canada general secretary Robert J. Suderman points out that, after the Cuban Congress amended the constitution in 1992 to guarantee religious freedom, Cuban authorities assumed that, when given religious freedom, Cuban Christians would join the communist party. Instead, the opposite happened; many party members previously prohibited from religious affiliation entered the churches to see what they offered.

Churches in Cuba now have some highly educated people with strong leadership skills, but no background in the Christian faith. Establishing a seminary in a country

where theological education has been lacking is a challenge. The challenges are numerous; finding qualified faculty, library services, administrative training and collaboration between denominations are all needed.

Friesen notes that religion in Cuba must fit within the political system, rather than challenge it. "Christianity can exist in Cuba as long as it does not threaten the socialist beliefs and practices," he says. "Castro believes that socialism is more consistent with the teachings of Jesus than the capitalist economic system."

Now that the seminary is up and running, Friesen acknowledges its future "is dependent upon God's grace, faithful administrators and professors, students and financial contributions."

The Friesens hope the new seminary will facilitate a network with other Latin American Anabaptists. Suderman sees Anabaptism as a "common root" that can provide a uniting vision for the churches. ✎

✎ Briefly noted

Goshen College launches three new institutes

GOSHEN, IND.—An "exciting new chapter" has begun at Goshen College, according to the college's president, James E. Brenneman, on March 24, as he launched three institutes, all focused on the college's distinctive academic strengths as they relate to faith. "I'm pleased to formally announce the creation and launch . . . of the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism, the Institute for Ecological Regeneration and the Institute for Latino Educational Achievement," said Brenneman at a gathering on campus. "Naming these distinctive programs as identifiable institutes will make explicit the quality of our academic work and I believe these institutes will enhance our vision of becoming a truly interdisciplinary, integrative liberal arts college." For more information about the institutes, visit goshen.edu/institutes.

—Goshen College

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN AND ERNA FRIESEN



John and Erna Friesen of Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, Vancouver, B.C., at left, are pictured with Gordon Smith of reSource International, right, at the new Conrad Grebel Seminary in Holguin, Cuba, that they had a hand in establishing.

Reaching out to moms

BY GLADYS TERICHOW
Mennonite Central Committee
CHATHAM, ONT.

Eva Unger, a mother of a 13-month old daughter with a second one on the way, loves the idea of making washable baby books that can be cuddled and chewed by her children.

“I like sewing and never thought about making my own books,” Unger says of the possibilities.

She picked up the idea at an early-literacy workshop offered through the Building Healthy Babies program at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Help Centre in Chatham. Building Healthy Babies is one of many programs supported by MCC Ontario to help Low-German Mennonite families returning to Canada from Latin American countries give their children the

best possible start in life, says Maria Fehr, family support coordinator.

“MCC supports programs like this because it helps families improve their interactive skills with their young children,” Fehr says. “Not only are the new ideas they pick up affordable, they are also simple and applicable.”

Early literacy does not mean learning to read early, explains Carrie Myers, a speaker at the workshop. “It means snuggling with your baby, singing, pretending, rhyming, conversation and looking at books,” the specialist in early literacy says. “The more experiences babies have with music, rhymes, books and reading, the easier it will be for them to learn to speak and learn

to read.”

In addition to learning new information at Building Healthy Babies workshops, Unger says she enjoys the social interaction with other mothers and their children. “I was hesitant to come at first, but I started coming because my sisters offered me a ride,” she says. “Coming here is just something I look forward to. It brightens up the rest of the week.”

Her sisters had encouraged her to come, she says, because she was experiencing post-partum depression following the birth of her daughter. “I had mood swings and everything made me cry,” she says. “It just kept on getting worse. It lasted nine months. I would not have gotten through it as fast if I did not have the social support that I get here. Hearing other women share their stories helped me realize I was not the only one feeling like this. That was really helpful.” ❧

MCC PHOTO BY NINA LINTON



Early literacy specialist Carrie Myers, left, reads to young Sahra Fehr while her mother Katharina and other participants, Maria Krahn, left, and Tina Klassen, right, watch Sahra's response.

Still no consensus on future of Warden Woods

By EMILY LOEWEN

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

TORONTO, ONT.

An evening set aside to discuss the future of the Warden Woods Community Centre property began with a request and a prayer for open minds as Mennonite Church Eastern Canada representatives met with interested parties. While the evening stayed respectful, no clear way forward emerged.

At the April 14 meeting, David Martin, MC Eastern Canada executive minister, presented options for going forward:

- Have the Warden Woods Community Centre, which currently uses the space following the closure of Warden Woods Mennonite Church in 2009, purchase it;
- Transfer ownership to another charitable organization with goals similar to those of MC Eastern Canada;
- Sell the building to an unrelated party at market value.

The biggest concern raised was that the community centre would have to close if the building is sold. This was especially troubling to some, as Mennonites helped start the church and community centre.

"I have a real burden if we sell it and don't provide something so that they can continue their ministry. To me, that would be embarrassing," said Martha Smith Good.

Others, like Tim Reimer, wondered whether Warden Woods could fit in with MC Eastern Canada's mandate.

Some proposed that multiple community groups could use the space in affiliation with an MC Eastern Canada congregation. Hans Peters mentioned a Jane Finch Faith Community proposal for that kind of arrangement. Others suggested that Mennonite Central Committee might want to use the building.

But those suggestions frustrated some, like Aubrey Wilkinson, who said that the community centre already uses most of the space most of the time, and likely wouldn't want to make room for others. He also

added that, since no churches took ownership when they were offered the building, it's time to move on and sell.

Wilkinson's position echoed that of MC Eastern Canada. While Warden Woods does good work, MC Eastern Canada is not, and doesn't want to be, a property manager.

Polar opposites seek common ground

By DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

Often it seems that differences become polarities when people of faith gather. Whether the issue is worship music, Bible version, the colour to paint the sanctuary, women in ministry or clothing styles to wear to church, it soon becomes black and white for all who are involved, whatever side they are on.

But a seminar based on *Polarity Management in Congregations* by Roy M. Oswald and Barry Johnson (Alban Institute, 2009), held at Conrad Grebel University College on March 29, Associates Resourcing the Church helped congregations and leaders get out of the polarity trap and begin to find common ground.

Congregations with clear visions and directions are less likely to fall into the polarity trap, participants were told. Examples of polarities include: tradition and innovation; management and leadership; caring for the congregation and outreach; nurture and transformation.

Kathryn Smith, a Baptist minister who works as a congregational health associate for the Canadian Baptists of Ontario

While the meeting wasn't intended for decisions, Mike DeHaan suggested that the executive set a deadline to allow interested parties to complete proposals, and, if none are suitable, the area church can move forward having done due diligence.

Ginelle Skerrit and Lydia Mungall, Warden Woods staff who observed the meeting, would welcome a deadline. "We thought as long as [MC Eastern Canada] was discussing, there wasn't much we could do," said Mungall, adding that Warden Woods cannot afford to buy the property at market value.

The next steps will be decided by the executive, which will receive a report at its next meeting. ❧

and Quebec, presented a tool to help congregants find common ground between polarities. A sheet of paper is divided into quarters; in the upper left quadrant people write reasons that support their position; in the lower right, reasons that don't support their position; in the upper right, reasons which support the opposing position; in the lower right, reasons that don't support the other position.

With each person needing to think both about the weaknesses and strengths of their position and the strengths and weaknesses of the other position, people are more likely to move into the ground between positions, rather than moving to their strengths and only seeing the weaknesses of the other position, she explained.

Betty Pries of ARC noted that Matthew 18's challenge and forgiveness is a model of managing a polarity, neither being "soft on sin," nor strictly judgemental. The hope is for people to come to see that there are two rights in tension, rather than a right and a wrong, she said. ❧

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

'Leading in a connected world'

Waterloo Region MEDA members meet for local convention

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
BADEN, ONT.

A broad range of ideas and opinions on the effects and uses of communications technology served as the focus of the 2011 Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) spring convention for its Waterloo Region chapter.

The 150 registrants heard from Mike Morrice, executive director of Sustainable Waterloo, a not-for-profit organization that helps link businesses and community organizations with sustainable solutions, and Tim Jackson, chief executive officer of the Accelerator Centre at the University of Waterloo.

Jackson spoke of the social effects of the concentration of high-tech companies in Waterloo Region. His central point was that many of the young entrepreneurs, and

their even younger employees, have not been taught to give and volunteer. The children of immigrants who gave from their poverty, in many cases, they saw the \$20 given to the Heart and Stroke Foundation canvasser by their parents, he said, and they now do likewise, even though they often earn six-figure salaries. Being entrepreneurs, they have not been taught by elder business people the need to give back in time and resources to the community that sustains them and their businesses.

Jackson held up the Accelerator Centre, which "incubates" new tech companies, and MEDA as places where the needed giving of time and talents is being taught.

In one of the workshops, Paul Morris of the Meeting House Church, a Brethren

in Christ congregation based in Oakville, Ont., with nine satellite groups that meet in movie theatres, spoke on managing teams from a distance. The congregation's teaching is done by Bruxy Cavey in Oakville and then shown at the satellite locations. Morris, in charge of the teams in the satellite locations, told of the ups and downs of using technology in worship. Initially, Cavey's Oakville sermons were copied to DVD and shown a week later to the satellite churches. Then the church switched to a live satellite feed, so all the churches were receiving the same message at the same time. Now the church has gone back to the DVD technology.

"If technology is not a strong solution," Morris said, "it will be a perpetual stress."

Another media workshop focused on the use of social media for organizations to get their message out to a wired world.

The event took place on March 26 at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden. ❧

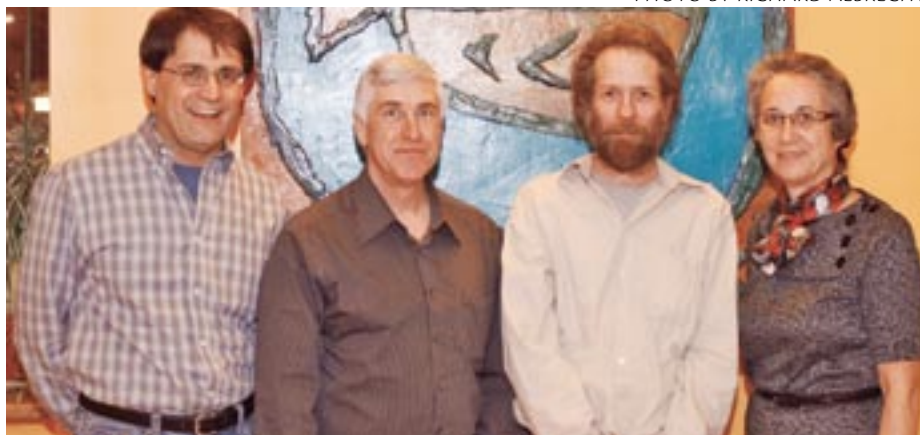
/// Briefly noted

Menno Simons College students 'make a difference'

WINNIPEG, MAN.—Two Menno Simons College students have been recognized for their part in making the world a better place. During International Development Week, which had as its theme, "I am making a difference," the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation named eight youths as Young Global Citizens, including Menno Simons's Tyler Morden of Morden, Man., and Zoe Gross of Beresford, Man. Morden, who works for the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba, says, "I am making a difference through the work I do supporting newcomer children and youth with their settlement in Winnipeg." For Gross, spending eight months in Kenya working with a national women's organization helped her learn that women's concerns in Kenya are similar to concerns of women in Canada.

—Canadian Mennonite University

PHOTO BY RICHARD ALBRECHT



Ten budding entrepreneurs graduated from the Waterloo Region Assets Program (WRAP) this spring with the assistance of two local organizations: the local Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) chapter and the Kitchener, Ont., Working Centre. Pictured from left to right: Joe Mancini, executive director of the Working Centre; instructors Bob Shantz of MEDA and Greg Roberts of the Working Centre; and Marion Good, who linked WRAP with Mennonite Savings and Credit Union, which provides and administers the graduates' micro-loans.

Muslims, Mennonites share interfaith potluck for peace

BY MONA CHIN

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
RICHMOND, B.C.

With the goal of encouraging congregants to engage in meaningful dialogue with Muslim neighbours about their faith, around 100 Mennonites and Muslims got together for dinner at Peace Mennonite Church on April 9.

This initiative had been in the making for about five years. In 2005, Tim Kuepfer, pastor of Peace Mennonite, got to know Imam Esmail through the church's English language classes, where the imam and his wife studied for several years.

As Kuepfer became good friends with Esmail, a tiny seed began to germinate in both their hearts to do something to bring their communities together to work for peace and understanding.

In attendance were Muslim friends from Vancouver, Richmond and Surrey, who had come to Canada from such countries as Pakistan, Singapore, Iran, Yemen and India.

Esmail and Erwin Cornelson, a retired Mennonite pastor, offered a blessing for the food and the evening. While the group ate, Mennonites listened to their Muslim tablemates share about their lives and their faith. The Mennonites, in turn, shared about their faith and what it means to live as a follower of Jesus (Isa in Arabic).

Both communities were equally represented at each table, with a facilitator encouraging tablemates to engage in dialogue by asking questions such as, "What was it like to grow up in your particular Muslim/Christian community/family/culture?" "What does your faith mean to you?" "What are some regular practices that are a part of your faith as a community and/or individually?"

Members of both faith communities brought dishes to share. In keeping with Muslim dietary laws, the dishes were divided into halal [permissible food for Muslim

consumption], vegetarian and non-halal.

The leaders of the various Muslim organizations spoke of building mutual understanding, friendship and peace. They spoke of the person of Jesus, who is of great significance in both Islam and Christianity.

Mennonite pastors included Ingrid Schultz of First United Mennonite, Vancouver; Henry Krause of Langley Mennonite Fellowship; Kuepfer and Cornelson. They each spoke about Christ and his message of love and peace.

The evening ended with the making of placards and posters for "A Joint Muslim-Christian Public Prayer for Peace," held on April 16 in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery. Muslims and Christians agreed to stand together to pray for peace in the nations of the Middle East.

It is hoped that more fellowship meals between the two faith communities can take place in the future. ❧

Pursuing peace through legislation

STORY AND PHOTO

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

A significant crowd for a warm spring Saturday afternoon sat with rapt attention as Paul Heidebrecht described the joys and trials of private member's bills.

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada Ottawa Office director spoke particularly about Bill C-390: An Act respecting conscientious objection to the use of taxes for military purposes, Bill C-440: An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, and Bill C-447: An Act to establish the Department of Peace.

Both bills C-390 and C-447 have been bouncing around Parliament over the course of a number of governments, even having a number of members as their movers. Heidebrecht noted that, in spite of what is seen during Question Period,

PHOTO BY PAUL CHIN



Mennonites and Muslims gather at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C., for what is hoped to be the first of many joint meetings of the two faith communities.



Paul Heidebrecht, MCC Canada Ottawa Office director, left, discusses his presentation with Jonathan Seiling of Conscience Canada, centre, and Marlene Epp, associate professor of history at Conrad Grebel University College, which hosted the event sponsored by Conscience Canada.

there is a remarkable measure of collegiality in Parliament, and all three of the bills have support in each of the major parties. Bill C-447, in fact, has 20 seconders from all three parties, the maximum allowed.

Since governments cannot fall on private member's bills, MPs are open to persuasion by their constituents. An election is a good time to ask candidates whether they support bills such as these, Heidebrecht suggested.

Conscience Canada, with its long program of conscientious objection to war taxes, is particularly interested in Bill C-390, which would allow the legal redirection of tax dollars away from the Canadian military.

If Bill C-447 were to become law, a federal Department of Peace would be established, tasked with finding peaceful solutions to conflicts in Canada and around the world.

Bill C-440 follows the direction set by a vote in Parliament that directed the government to no longer treat war resisters as criminals or to deport them to their countries of origin, a direction the government disregarded, instead advising border crossing guards to treat potential resisters as criminals and refuse them entry to Canada.

Heidebrecht said repeatedly, "Pursuing legislation is an effective and faithful way to work for peace." He also noted that "systemic change is slow; peacemaking takes generations." ❧

'How far can they be pushed?'

Mennonite worker appeals for prayer for Burkina Faso

BY DAN DYCK

Mennonite Church Canada

Jeff Warkentin, a Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, West Africa, has sent out a prayer appeal in light of continued political unrest in the capital city.

He reported in an e-mail last month that the government announced all schools in Burkina Faso will close down earlier than normal for their two-week spring break in an effort to quell student unrest.

The early break applies to the University of Ouagadougou as well, which had just barely begun courses for the 2010-11 school year, about five months later than the traditional starting date in October.

Warkentin and his wife Tany—whose home church is Springridge Mennonite Church, Pincher Creek, Alta.—began a church for university students in Ouagadougou six years ago at the invitation of the Mennonite church in Burkina Faso.

Warkentin also reported that the military has evicted university students from their housing without notice, and the university's subsidized restaurants—as well as student financial aid programs—have been shut down.

"This is a fairly provocative move," he said



Jeff and Tany Warkentin, pictured with their children, are Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers with university students in Burkina Faso.

in his e-mail. "Take away people's food and roof, and they will respond."

In early March, the city of over a million people was also on daily rolling power blackouts lasting up to seven hours in some areas, while temperatures reached the mid-40s C.

Warkentin wrote that the city's streets are emptier than usual and downtown protests have resumed, but added, "We are not in a state of fear or worry. To put things into perspective, one university student said that if this were anywhere else, a civil war would have broken out by now, that's how much the Burkinabé [people] love peace. But how far can they be pushed?" ❧

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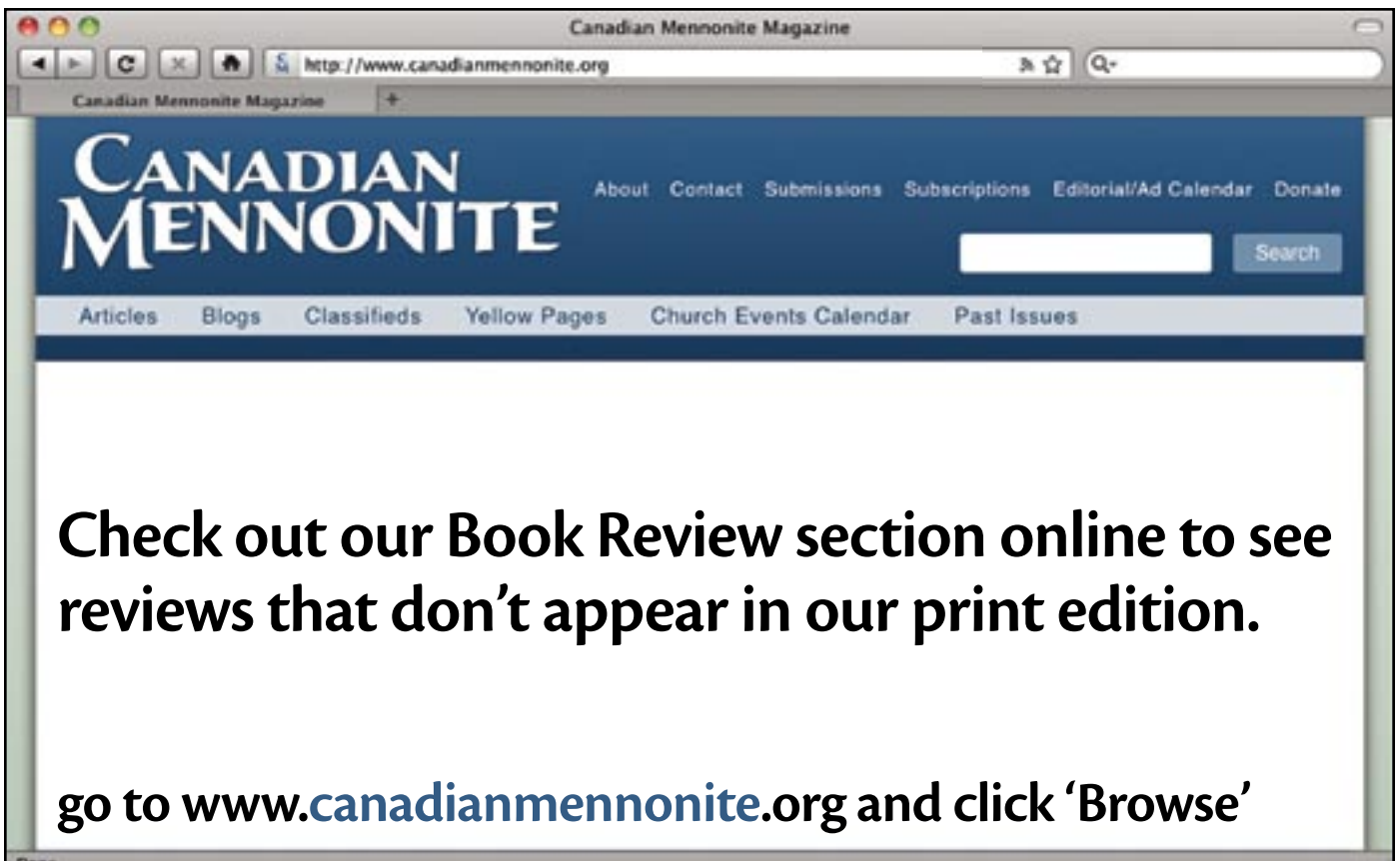
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GOD AT WORK IN US

Playing with numbers

Mathopoly game helps students learn without realizing they're actually learning

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD
Alberta Correspondent

Teaching may not be an unusual career, but Willi Penner has made a unique contribution to the field. Penner is the creator of Mathopoly, a curriculum-based math learning tool. The game is gaining the attention of educators and parents, and last October it was featured on the CBC's *Dragon's Den*, a TV show that gives entrepreneurs a chance to pitch their product to potential investors.

After teaching Grade 5 math for five years at Menno Simons Christian School in Calgary, Alta., Penner currently teaches junior high science there.

"I was a terrible math student," admits Penner, who graduated from Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, Winnipeg, Man., and has a bachelor's degree in education with majors in science and math from Brandon University, Man.



Mennos at work

"I don't think it was because I didn't have the aptitude for it," he says. "I think it was just because I felt disengaged, I wasn't really inspired. No offence to my teachers, the text book wasn't engaging. . . . It [had] a repetitive nature. I scraped along, really just literally scraped along, so my taste for math was not something I felt good about going into university."

His inspiration for Mathopoly came during his last year of study at Brandon.

"We were given an assignment worth 10 percent of our mark," he says. "It was to find diversity in teaching math. A friend and I got together and came up with a game. We went about it slowly and got a working prototype, and teachers and fellow students really fell for it."

Penner took the prototype to his first teaching job.

"That's how I got the job," he says. "And it kept on growing and growing."

Penner describes Mathopoly as "a learning tool and it's disguised as a game. It's to get students engaged and to be able to do it themselves. And that's the feedback I've had from teachers is that they can literally be a 'fly on the wall' and watch the kids play this game."

"Because the things I've added to it over time—like formula sheets and answer sheets—the kids are never going away from an answer without knowing what was correct and what wasn't," he says. "I really wanted to engage students and keep them motivated when they are learning this math, and to not really know they are learning math at the same time. That's the premise of it."

Of his experience on *Dragon's Den*, when one of the "dragons" offered him \$150,000 to "burn the game," Penner responds, "No offence to them, I don't think they understood it. When I left, of course I was a bit dejected, . . . but when I came home I didn't hang my head down. I knew I had a great tool."

He then met what he calls "sort of angel investors," and put in some of his own money to develop the game, with a primary focus on schools and home schooling.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF WILLI PENNER

*Willi Penner on the set of Dragon's Den.*

"It's Grade 5 to 8 curriculum, so I'm geared toward schools, teachers, homeschoolers, parents, anybody who's interested in their child's education is what it comes down to," Penner says.

Mathopoly went on the market in January.

"Right now it's word of mouth," he says. "I'll tell you a funny story. Through a contact, I met a girl, she was in about Grade 6 or 7, and she was sort of a 'math ambassador.' I met up with her and her teacher and her mother at a Starbucks to talk

about math. . . . I just by chance brought a game with me and we ending up playing in Starbucks for an hour, the four of us. It was so spur of the moment. It was so funny to me. The mom bought a bunch of copies right there. . . . I was giddy. I thought this is exactly why I made it. For the mom to be just as engaged as the daughter. This is worth it."

Penner sees Mathopoly as more than just a board game, however.

"I would love for it to go digital," he says. "That's really my goal, so eventually a student at Menno Simons could play a student in Manitoba, or a class versus a class. That's really what I'd love to get out of this, a digital version available over the Internet."

Mathopoly is available in Calgary Chapters bookstores and online at mathopoly.ca.

"If you're looking at a different avenue of getting math across, it's something worth checking out," enthuses the teacher-cum-entrepreneur. ❧

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Mennonite-China connection aids healing

STORY AND PHOTO BY PHILIP BENDER

Mennonite Church Canada

Sometimes Mennonite Church Canada international workers benefit from the broad network of relationships that have been knit between us and our local communities. I learned this first-hand during a recent health crisis.

Last July 11, in Dazhou, China, I suddenly lost part of the hearing in my left ear. Three days later, I was almost completely deaf in that ear, so I sought a specialist in Chongqing, a large city three hours away. My wife Julie and I had taught there from 2004-09.

At First Affiliated Hospital of Chongqing Medical University, the doctor offered a grim diagnosis: idiopathic sudden sensorineural hearing loss. The prognosis: limited recovery, if any. The treatment

plan: a week of intravenous drugs, plus 10 sessions of hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

I had never heard of this treatment, but I learned that it meant sitting with other patients in a chamber pressurized like an airplane cabin and inhaling oxygen through a mask for 70 minutes.

On my third day of therapy, one of the nurses addressed me in English. It turned out that Xiaomin Yan had studied nursing at Bluffton (Ohio) University as a China Educational Exchange (now Mennonite Partners in China) scholar from 1987-88. This is the organization through which Julie and I teach English as Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers. Thanks to the China-North America Mennonite network, my nurse was an extended family

member!

Having worked for several years at First Affiliated Hospital as a neurosurgical nurse, Xiaomin today is head nurse of the hyperbaric oxygen department. Many of the patients she meets come for treatment following brain surgery, head trauma, carbon monoxide poisoning, and, like me, sudden hearing loss.

During my first week of oxygen therapy, Xiaomin pointed out that at least 15 sessions are usually recommended for my condition. So when the 10 sessions my doctor ordered were finished, I decided to continue for another five.

Two hearing tests showed progressive improvement. I ended up returning for an additional 20 treatments. While my ear has not returned to normal, I have regained far more hearing than the original prognosis offered.

My doctor pronounced me "very lucky."

When Julie and I were based in Hamilton, Ont., last fall for a Canadian assignment with MC Canada, I saw an ear specialist. Hyperbaric oxygen is not used to treat sudden hearing loss in Hamilton and the doctor seemed sceptical of the treatment I had received, but it certainly worked for me.

I'm very glad to have Xiaomin as a new Chinese friend and for the information she provided about a longer series of oxygen treatments. I'm grateful for the Mennonite Partners in China network that enabled me to meet her. And I'm grateful that God, more than we are aware, uses such connections to impart healing and grace. ❧



Philip Bender's nurse, Xiaomin Yan, in front of her hyperbaric oxygen machine that was used to treat his hearing loss.

ARTBEAT

PHOTO BY SHAWN FENNELL, SCENE CHANGE



Haitians and Canadians mingle in a joyful dance in the Haitian village during a recent production of *Iron Will* in Waterloo, Ont.

Microfinancing plays well in Waterloo

Iron Will explores the joy and resilience of the Haitian people

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

About a year ago some Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) staff saw the play *Iron Will* in Hamilton, Ont. So inspired were they by its microfinance message that they came back to the Waterloo office wondering if it could be performed there.

On March 26 their hope was realized as the Scene Change production played to 500 people in the Humanities Theatre at the University of Waterloo. The performance was sponsored by MEDA, and executive director Allan Sauder had the opportunity to speak about MEDA's work

with Fonkose, a microfinance credit union in Haiti, during the intermission.

The play centres around three Canadian youths who prepare a project on microfinance for a university class. When they hold a fundraiser to help out a microfinance program, among the donations they find a cheque for \$10,000 and tickets to Haiti. *Iron Will* explores family responses to the opportunity, as well as the youths' decisions to go.

While in Haiti, they note the oft used phrase, "we're getting as much or more than we're giving," but articulate what it is.

Although the Haitians have little compared with the Canadians, they share it freely. Life is hard, and sometimes Haitian mothers have to choose who eats and who doesn't in their families, but they continue with a joyful and resilient strength. Microfinance helps them to buy small things like a sewing machine, or a shop for bicycle repairs. Small things, but they make a big difference.

Written by Lance and Peggy Wright, and directed by Rob Irish, the story is based on experiences of North American workers in Haiti. Scene Change Productions styles itself as "a movement of young people who imagine and create a more just and compassionate world."

Besides *Iron Will*, Scene Change produces *The Global Village*, which explores life in a limited environment; *Amazing Race for the Human Race*, which builds teams to work for change; and *The Global Dinner*, where diners receive unequal portions based on what people around the world receive. ☺

FOCUS ON BOOKS & RESOURCES

MEDIA REFLECTION

Exploring Dora and the Prince of Peace

BY MATTHEW BAILEY-DICK

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

Enough with trying to save the world. That's an impossible and thankless job. Our real task is to save Baby Jaguar. With my youngest child nestled on my lap and a *Dora the Explorer* book in my hand, I've concluded that we can accomplish this task with God's help.

Welcome to the animated world of Dora, Boots, Diego, Baby Jaguar, and Swiper the Fox—just a few of the characters who inhabit the popular books, television shows and video games churned out by the makers of *Dora the Explorer*.

Dora, a seven-year-old Latina girl, is the cartoon hero, and her intrepid side-kicks include her cousin Diego, a monkey named Boots, a talking map and a magical backpack. As each story gets underway, the charismatic Dora says, "Let's go!" and then leads her posse of adventurers in finding lost treasure or rescuing an animal in distress. Along the way, she overcomes obstacles, solves problems and perseveres against the dastardly Swiper the Fox. When Dora succeeds, she invites her friends to join in a group dance, singing, "We did it!"

The signature feature of every Dora episode is that it requires participation. At every turn, Dora looks out at the readers,

expecting help. In the video series, there are several seconds of silence as Dora waits expectantly for viewers to repeat words or do actions.

This is the first lesson: The story requires our participation. However, without fail, Dora's adventures include an encounter with the cunning Swiper, who pops out from a hiding spot. In response to Swiper's attempted burglary, Dora says, "Swiper, no swiping!" Three repetitions of this command appear to thwart Swiper every time. As friendly and as winsome as Dora is, she holds tremendous power over Swiper.

Jesus also engaged the principalities and powers of violence, hatred, greed and sin when he was on earth, demonstrating that love is stronger than all of these "Swipers," and telling his followers that this type of exorcism is part of their

work (Mark 3:13-15).

The second lesson is that the story brings together peacemaking and praise. As Christians try to make sense of an apparent contradiction between Jesus' Easter victory over the powers of violence and the reality that these powers still wreck the planet, perhaps we can take counsel from Dora. She never asks why Swiper keeps coming back. She maintains an indomitable spirit and confronts him over and over again.



The biblical story shows that discipleship involves following Jesus' teachings as well as fostering the very "mind of Christ" (Philippians 2:5). With an increasing possession of this mind, Christians find a refreshing blend of faithfulness and effectiveness as we bear witness to Christ's nonviolent love that reigns over fear, injustice and all manner of brutality.

The final lesson is that the story forms a non-violent community of character. Just as Jesus'

nonviolent disposition reveals the character of God, so Christians equip ourselves by fostering the "mind of Christ" in preparation for responding to conflict. We plug away, make choices for peace (sometimes unpopular ones), and try to remain true to our calling.

From time to time, we begin to hear the distant anthem of the new heaven and earth, where the Prince of Peace will be fully at home among us (Revelation 21:1-5). ☸

Matthew Bailey-Dick is a peace educator with Mennonite Central Committee Ontario. See a longer version online at canadianmennonite.org.

As Christians try to make sense of an apparent contradiction between Jesus' Easter victory over the powers of violence and the reality that these powers still wreck the planet, perhaps we can take counsel from Dora.

FOCUS ON BOOKS & RESOURCES

One man creates space for peace

Create Space for Peace: Forty Years of Peacemaking—Gene Stoltzfus: 1940-2010.
Edited by Dorothy Friesen and Marilen Abesamis. TriMark Press Inc., 2011. 256 pages.

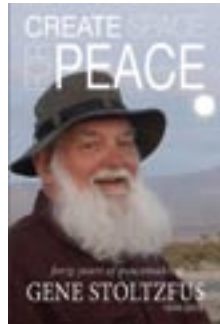
REVIEWED BY ANNE STEWART

On television, in the publications that we read, on the web, and even in our games, violence and injustice are highlighted without antidote. Seldom are we given the chance to see action for peace and justice as a dominant theme.

Create Space for Peace, a collection of Gene Stoltzfus's e-mails, blogs, letters and sermons, and the testimony of friends and colleagues, reveals the life of a man of peace who stood his ground against injustice and violence. His life experiences and observations as he journeyed to 30 countries over 40 years provide a social and historical perspective of the realities and the everyday people who are within the confines of conflict zones.

Stoltzfus joined First Nation groups in the United States and Canada when they were seeking justice. He was there when the fighting was going on in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines and Haiti. He was there to create a space for peace.

His journey as a peace worker began during the Vietnam War, when he registered for the draft as a conscientious objector, and then, at age 23, went to Vietnam as a member of the International Voluntary Services (IVS). The assignment was to establish schools, distribute seeds and assist the military-pacification. He became aware of the activities outside the acknowledged boundaries of military operations, including the assassination of suspected enemy sympathizers, both Vietnamese and American. He



and other IVS members quit in protest and then lobbied the U.S. Congress to stop the war.

Stoltzfus was a genius at assessing a situation and determining how to defuse hostility and make a connection. His tactics included everything from blowing bubbles over the wall where Haitian refugees were being held, to asking

someone arresting him to later have ice cream or a cup of coffee. His ability to remain open and not blame his adversaries, or require that those he was trying to connect with share his religious or political beliefs, contributed to his amazing success, whether helping Iraqis find relatives who had disappeared into the prisons or walking Palestinian children to school past hostile Israelis.

This collection of letters, e-mails and blogs from a man who did not have the time to write a book, because he was much too busy working for peace and justice, is a fortunate legacy that needs to be discovered by a world so wrapped in violence and injustice. The amazing revelation of *Create Space for Peace* is that one man, quietly and without fanfare, was so steadfast in his work for peace and so undaunted that he made a difference. The letters and remembrances attest to the fact he was an inspiration for so many. ❧

Anne Stewart is a freelance writer who lives in northeastern Minnesota.

Stoltzfus was a genius at assessing a situation and determining how to defuse hostility and make a connection.

CMU PRESS



The Gift of Difference: Radical Orthodoxy, Radical Reformation
Chris K. Huebner and Tripp York, eds.
\$29.50 | 978-0-920718-85-8



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Shedding light on southern Manitoba's conservative Mennonites

A Prairie Pilgrim: Wilhelm H. Falk.

By Mary Neufeld. Self-published, 2008, 461 pages.

REVIEWED BY ECKHARD GOERZ

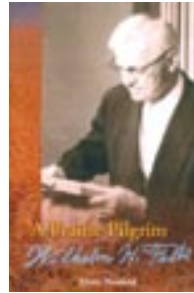
This comprehensive biography of Wilhelm H. Falk (1892-1976), founding bishop of the Rudnerweide Mennonite Conference, is an important addition to the history of Mennonites, particularly in southern Manitoba. The book outlines the early history and origins of the Rudnerweide Gemeinde, later to become the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church.

Through a unique church leadership discerning process, Falk became a minister in the Sommerfelder Mennonite Church, an off-shoot of the General Conference that emphasized tradition as a means of preserving the essence of Mennonite faith

and identity.

A humble yet inquiring man, Falk was influenced by local revival events. He became convinced of the importance of evangelizing and began to support such "radical" activities as Sunday evening church services. This created sufficient discomfort within the Sommerfelder leadership that a formal split ensued.

A Prairie Pilgrim details the difficult separation and Falk's ongoing work of leading this fledgling church conference as its bishop. Falk remarried after the untimely death of his first wife and had 12 children who lived past infancy. Although he received no pay and made his living from farming, he sacrificially devoted most of his energies to his role of bishop. He travelled extensively,



Manitoba, presenting a fascinating picture of how power shifted from a hierarchical bishop-based church structure to a localized pastor-based structure.

In some respects, the book is very personal, in that people named or their close relatives are still alive. Some explanations appear angry and defensive.

The evolving state of southern Manitoba's health care, and the story of mental illness also threads its way through the narrative. Falk is identified as having too sensitive a nature to carry the leadership load, but he rises to the challenge only to succumb periodically to the "dark dogs of depression."

The latter part of the book is about a beloved but aging leader put out to pasture, having outlived his organizational useful-

The evolving state of southern Manitoba's health care, and the story of mental illness also threads its way through the narrative. Falk is identified as having too sensitive a nature to carry the leadership load, but he rises to the challenge only to succumb periodically to the 'dark dogs of depression.'

often leaving his family to essentially fend for themselves. After 27 years of dedicated sacrificial service, Falk, who believed he had been appointed bishop for life, was sidelined in a painful process which many of his family felt was unjust.

With this revisionist biography, Mary Neufeld, Falk's daughter, has given her extended family and the Mennonite community a rare gift. Although somewhat uneven at times—it would benefit from a diligent editor—in many respects it is a sociological history of the Mennonites in southern

ness, but increasingly revered by members of his family.


This book paints a fascinating picture of the ever-evolving Mennonite church community, moving through stages of traditions, language wars, urbanization and education. Definitely a worthwhile read for those familiar with that era and for those who would strive to understand the complex world of the "quiet in the land." ✎

Eckhard Goerz is a former chief executive officer of Eden Health Care Services.

CMU PRESS

This Hidden Thing
WINNER

McNally Robinson Book of the
Year 2010



This Hidden
Thing
by Dora Dueck

CMU Press 2010
350 pages, paper,
\$19.50

ISBN
978-0-920718-
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Congratulations to Dora Dueck

To order *This Hidden Thing*, contact
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through the Mennonite Publishing
Network (www.mpn.net).

FOCUS ON BOOKS & RESOURCES

A Psalm-like devotional

Tongue Screws and Testimonies: Poems, Stories and Essays Inspired by the Martyrs Mirror.
Kirsten Eve Beachy, ed. Herald Press, 2010, 224 pages.

REVIEWED BY FRED REDEKOP

Tongue Screws and Testimonies, a book of essays, poems and artwork reflecting on *Martyrs Mirror*, is written by insiders for insiders. In the introductory essay, Kirsten Beachy, the editor, states that this volume reflects a wide variety of opinions of, and attitudes to, the role that *Martyrs Mirror* has played, and is playing, in the Anabaptist

essays as very much from the inside.

Two of the poems that I appreciated most were in tension with each other. In contrast to Kasdorf's poem, "Mennonites," is "A New Mennonite Responds to Julia Kasdorf," written by David Wright that reflects an outsider's view. There is much to ponder about being Mennonite in both

poems: Are you on the inside or outside?

How can I use this volume in my work in the church as a pastor? In Beachy's introduction, she sets a framework for reading *Martyrs Mirror*. It seems to me that this framework could also be used in reading the Bible and I will use it in my Bible study group. This volume can be read as a devotional book, like the Psalms, and I will go back to it often. Who am I in our Mennonite world: inside or out? ❧

Fred Redekop is pastor of Floradale Mennonite Church, Ont.



community. The *Mirror* was written in the 17th century and many Mennonites have read it alongside the Bible.

Tongue Screws' eight sections highlight different themes in the *Mirror*, although it seems that the submissions could have gone in any of the sections. At the beginning of each section, Ian Huebert, an artist, has taken the famous Dirk Willems etching from *Martyrs Mirror* and added some elements. I found the artwork funny and provocative, although slightly out of place because there is little other humour in the book.

Two of the most provocative essays are those by Julia Spicher Kasdorf and Stephanie Krehbiel. Kasdorf chronicles a story of personal abuse and the community's reaction to it, while Krehbiel writes about her coming to the martyr stories later in life. Both writers see themselves as being on the edge of the Mennonite-Anabaptist world, but I experience their

Mission and Migration now available

BY JOHN A. LAPP

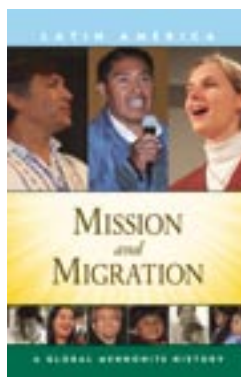
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

The third volume in the Global Mennonite History Series is now available, documenting the story of Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in Latin America from 1911 to the present.

Mission and Migration, by Jaime Prieto Valladores of the Costa Rican Mennonite Church, is based on more than a decade of research. Valladores travelled to most of the countries in Central and South America and the Caribbean, as well as the United States, interviewing hundreds of church members and exploring numerous archival collections.

Mission and Migration highlights the driving forces that led to the establishment of 103 separate conferences in 26 countries, with a current membership of 170,000. The first church established by missionaries in Argentina pioneered a process of evangelism and church planting that eventually spread across the entire region.

The first churches established by Mennonite migrants from Canada were



in Mexico and Paraguay in the 1920s. In the 1930s and '40s, large numbers of refugees from the former Soviet Union and Prussia moved to Paraguay, Brazil and Uruguay.

Valladores's work reflects his particular interest in the practice of church at the local level. Sharing both indigenous and Hispanic ancestry, Valladores captures the rich

interaction of cultures that make up Latin American Christianity in general, as well as the Anabaptist-Mennonite church culture in particular.

A graduate of the University of Hamburg, Germany, Valladores is professor of church history and cultural studies at the Latin America Biblical University, San Jose, Costa Rica. He has been a frequent teacher with Semilla, the Anabaptist seminary in Guatemala.

Mission and Migration is published in Canada by Pandora Press, Kitchener, Ont.

A Spanish edition is being prepared and its release will be announced this year. ❧

A timeless message for the ages

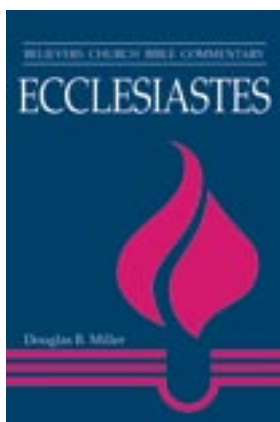
Ancient writer encourages readers to enjoy God's gifts, says author Douglas B. Miller

MENNONITE PUBLISHING NETWORK

Life is meaningless and vain—that, we've been told, is the message of the Book of Ecclesiastes. But is that what the author is really saying?

Not according to Douglas Miller, professor of biblical and religious studies at Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kan. "A major issue in Ecclesiastes studies is the Hebrew word *hebel*," says Miller, author of *Ecclesiastes*, the newest addition to the Herald Press Believers Church Bible Commentary series. "It is often translated as 'vanity,' or, more recently, 'meaningless.' But it literally means 'breath' or 'vapour.'"

For Miller, the author of this ancient book



of wisdom isn't saying "that life is vain or meaningless—so grab for whatever fun you can find, or shake your fist at the sky." Instead, the author describes "a world of tragedy and chance, in which good things are short-lived and where treasured things turn out to be of little worth," he says.

While conceding that this view is "certainly grim," Miller notes that "the author has not given up hope. He advises his readers how to make the most of their lives in the midst of such realities."

For Miller, the author's hopeful message has three elements:

- First, he urges his readers to acknowledge

and accept the "vapour" nature of all human experience.

- Second, he challenges his readers to reject inadequate ways of responding to these realities, such as assuming that hard work and wisdom guarantee success, or that pleasure and material gain will bring satisfaction.

- Finally, Miller says, he "offers some carefully worded strategies for those who would take the risk to hopefully navigate their complex world." These include cultivating contentment, embracing community and generosity, advocating for the oppressed, showing prudence towards those in power, and, especially, enjoying God's gifts of work and pleasure.

"I understand the author to be giving realistic counsel in a world of uncertainty, paradox, tragedy and stressful challenge to the possibilities of faith," says Miller, adding that it's a message that still applies today. "All people at all times face the issues that are addressed by Ecclesiastes. Things like lack of satisfaction or sense of purpose, financial catastrophe, personal tragedy, societal injustice, fear, frustration, chance, uncertainty, physical suffering, old age and death. That's why this book has proved to be timeless."

The author's honest approach to "the dark side of faith" also makes Ecclesiastes valuable for those within the believing community, Miller says. "He understands those who are disappointed with God, whether they are pondering in silence or crying out in their pain." Miller adds that the author's "unrelenting questions, sometimes scathing criticisms and refusal to accept simplistic or comfortable answers," also make Ecclesiastes a welcome travelling companion for those outside or on the boundaries of faith.

In the end, Miller says, Ecclesiastes "is a complex book. But I believe it has an analysis of life, faith and human experience that is especially relevant for our current situation. As the author points out, 'there is nothing new under the sun.'"

The Believers Church Bible Commentary series is a cooperative project of Brethren in Christ Church, Brethren Church, Church of the Brethren, Mennonite Brethren Church, Mennonite Church Canada and MC U.S.A. ¶

UpComing

Rhubarb calls for submissions for Jewish-Ukrainian-Mennonite special issue

Rhubarb: A Magazine of New Mennonite Art and Writing is soliciting submissions from writers and artists who self-identify as being of Jewish, Ukrainian or Mennonite cultural heritage for a special issue to be published in the spring of 2012. It's been a century or more since our ancestors came to North America. We share much in our common history: emigration in the face of oppression, pride of community, marginalization within the mainstream. We also acknowledge tensions among our communities. This issue will explore how the writing and art we now make expresses both these commonalities and differences. Guest editors are Myrna Kostash (non-fiction), Rhea Tregobov (poetry), and Rudy Wiebe (fiction). Writing should be clear, stimulating and persuasive without being obviously didactic. All submissions should include a short bio and the full name and address of the contributor. The deadline for submissions (by e-mail only to venns@mts.net) is Dec. 1; send writing attachments as doc or docx files, and image attachments as tif or jpg files. For more submission guidelines, visit rhubarbmag.com.

—Rhubarb

FOCUS ON BOOKS & RESOURCES

'MennoMedia' selected as name of integrated agency

Print and electronic media efforts to merge on July 1

BY STEVE SHENK

MENNONITE PUBLISHING NETWORK

When Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN) and Third Way Media merge on July 1, the new agency will be called MennoMedia. That was the decision of the board that now governs MPN and which will govern the new integrated agency.

The eight-member binational board voted unanimously to approve the name on April 8 during its quarterly meeting in Harrisonburg, Va., where the main offices of MennoMedia will be located.

MPN is the publishing agency of both Mennonite Church Canada and MC U.S.A. Third Way Media is currently a program of Mennonite Mission Network and had programming and operations in Canada from the mid-1950s to the mid-1980s. As a merged entity, MennoMedia will be binational.

A joint staff working group of Third Way Media and MPN proposed the MennoMedia name to the board, which was looking for a simple umbrella name.

The working group also proposed that the two agencies' three brand names continue to be used. The three brands, or imprints, are: Herald Press—books; Third Way Media—video, radio, the Internet and other media; and Faith & Life Resources—Sunday school and other resources for churches.

"The term 'media' describes what we're all about," says Ron Rempel, executive director of MPN. "The new agency will deliver creative and inspirational content not only in print, but in a variety of electronic formats. The 'Menno' prefix should clearly identify the agency for church insiders and also for a broader audience."

At its meeting in Harrisonburg, the board reviewed progress on the plans for merging the two organizations and approved a two-year budget. Rempel is

retiring as MPN executive director in July; a new executive director is expected to be named prior to his retirement.

MennoMedia offices in Harrisonburg will be housed in what is now Third Way Media's building. While the largest number of staff—about 20—will be in Harrisonburg, there will also be staff in Canada (Waterloo, Ont., and Winnipeg,

Man.), and other parts of the U.S. (Newton, Kan.; Elkhart, Ind.; and other locations).

More than a century of publishing in Scottsdale, Pa., will come to an end this summer when MPN merges with Third Way Media. Some of the staff in Scottsdale will move to Harrisonburg and the Scottsdale building will be sold. ☘

"The new agency will deliver creative and inspirational content not only in print, but in a variety of electronic formats. The "Menno" prefix should clearly identify the agency for church insiders and also for a broader audience."
(Ron Rempel, MPN executive director)

/// Staff change

MPN appoints director of marketing, sales

HARRISONBURG, VA.—Steve Shenk of Harrisonburg, Va., has been appointed as director of marketing and sales for Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN), which will become MennoMedia following the merger of MPN and Third Way Media on July 1. He will provide leadership for the marketing and sales of all MPN/Third Way products, provide input into the creation of these products and supervise the marketing staff. He will also provide leadership in the ongoing branding process for the new MPN/Third Way agency, MennoMedia. For the past seven years, Shenk has been the executive director of the Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center in Harrisonburg, with overall responsibility to develop and promote the start-up organization as the place to learn about Mennonites and Brethren as the first newcomers to the Shenandoah Valley. Earlier, he was director of public relations at Bluffton University, Ohio, for two years, and director of communications at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, for 11 years. For seven years, he was managing editor of *Gospel Herald*, and before that he worked as news and information manager at the Mennonite Board of Missions.

—Mennonite Publishing Network

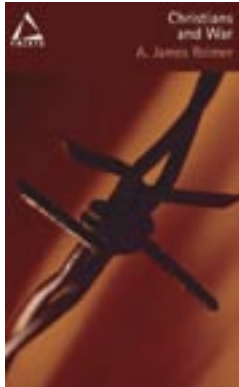


Shenk

Spring 2011 List of Books & Resources



Theology, spirituality



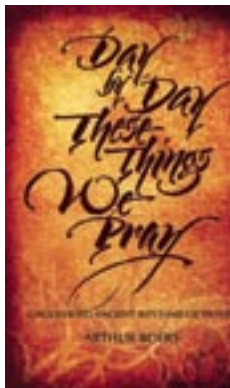
Christians and War: A Brief History of the Church's Teachings and Practices. A. James Reimer. Augsburg Fortress Press, 2010, 192 pages.

Published soon after his death, this little book is based on courses Reimer

taught. It examines biblical passages and just war thinking as well as modern concepts of war. It is suitable for group study.

Day by Day These Things We Pray: Uncovering Ancient Rhythms of Prayer. Arthur Boers. Herald Press, 2010, 235 pages.

In this revision and expansion of Boers' earlier book, *The Rhythm of God's Grace*, he explores the history of how Christians have prayed over the centuries and presents a case for regular morning and evening prayers.



The Ethics of Evangelism: A Philosophical Defense of Proselytizing and Persuasion.

Elmer John Thiessen. InterVarsity Academic Press, 2011, 288 pages.

Thiessen reviews and refutes various contemporary objections to religious proselytizing and explains how evangelism is ethical.

Going Missional: Conversations with 13 Canadian Churches Who Have Embraced Missional Life. Karen Stiller and Willard

Metzger. Word Alive Press, 2010, 160 pages.

For each of the 13 congregations from across Canada, Metzger writes a short introduction while Stiller describes their new mission ventures. The chapters conclude with lessons learned by the congregations and questions for group discussion.

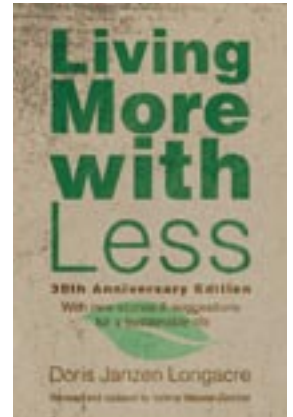
The Limits of Perfection: Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Goshen Conference on Religion and Science. Noreen Herzfeld. Pandora Press, 2010, 120 pages.

In her lectures and answers to questions, Herzfeld, a Quaker and computer scientist, argues that humans have limits and cannot reach ultimate perfection, not in science, theology or mathematics.

Living More With Less: 30th Anniversary Edition. Doris Janzen Longacre, revised and

edited by Valerie Weaver-Zercher. Herald Press, 2010, 255 pages.

This updated edition includes parts of the original book published in 1980, but also includes many new suggestions and stories for living simply and earth-friendly. There are many personal anecdotes from a wide variety of North American Mennonites.



The Spirituality of Sex. Michael Schwartzentruber, Mary Millerd, Charlotte Jackson and Lois Huey-Heck, Wood Lake Publishing Inc., 160 pages.

This hardcover book explores the relationship between sexuality and spirituality.

Teaching That Transforms: Why Anabaptist-Mennonite Education Matters. John D. Roth. Herald Press, 2011, 236 pages.

Roth explores the question of the future of Christian education and gives a theological foundation for education from an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective.

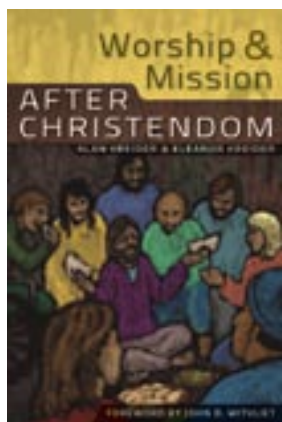
UpComing

Launch for book of church apologies

WINNIPEG, MAN.—In recent years, churches have repented for their historical wrongs. In his new book, *Ecclesial Repentance: The Churches Confront Their Sinful Pasts*, Jeremy M. Bergen tells the story of these apologies and analyzes the theological issues they raise about the nature and mission of the church. To mark the publication of Bergen's first book, there will be a launch at McNally Robinson Booksellers, Grant Park location, Winnipeg, at 8 p.m. on May 31. Last November, Bergen, an assistant professor of religious studies and theology at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., presented a paper entitled "Lutheran-Mennonite reconciliation in Stuttgart as an instance of ecclesial repentance" at the Confessing in Faith: Healing Between Lutherans and Mennonites Conference at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, situating the Lutheran repentance for the persecution of 16th-century Anabaptists within a larger framework of church apologies in recent decades. Doing so allowed him to raise some critical questions about what such repentance means, and how Mennonites and Lutherans might express a new relationship.

—Conrad Grebel University College

FOCUS ON BOOKS & RESOURCES

**Worship and Mission After Christendom.**

Alan Kreider and Eleanor Kreider. Herald Press, 2010, 322 pages.

As well as showing how worship and mission have changed as society has

become less Christian in recent decades, the Kreiders reflect on how worship and mission can be most beneficial for our modern world.

You Welcomed Me: Interfaith Spiritual Care in the Hospital. Leah Dawn Bueckert and Daniel S. Schipani, eds. Pandora Press, 2010, 210 pages.

The essays in this collection explore interfaith spiritual care, building on Bueckert and Schipani's previous book, *Spiritual Caregiving in the Hospital* (2006). Some of the essays are personal reflections on providing care for those whose faith is other than Christian.

History**At the Forks: Mennonites in Winnipeg.** Leo Driedger. Pandora Press, 2010, 400 pages.

Driedger, professor emeritus at the University of Manitoba, explains how and why Mennonites have moved to the city of Winnipeg and what they have been doing there for 100 years.

Cities of Refuge: Stories from Anabaptist-Mennonite History and Life. Harry Loewen. Pandora Press, 2010, 344 pages.

The 38 stories in this collection are set in a variety of places, from the early days of Anabaptism to Mennonites of the 20th century. Loewen's first collection of historical tales, *No Permanent City*, was published in 1993.

Defending Constantine: The Twilight of an Empire and the Dawn of Christendom. Peter J. Leithart. InterVarsity Press, 2010, 375 pages.

This defence of Constantine argues that John Howard Yoder's characterization of

the church in the fourth century is wrong. Leithart, a pastor in the Reformed tradition, is not convinced by Yoder's claim that Jesus was a pacifist.

European Mennonite Voluntary Service: Youth Idealism in Post-World War II Europe. Calvin Wall Redekop. Cascadia Publishing House and Herald Press, 2010, 130 pages.

Redekop describes the spread of work camps for Mennonite youths throughout Europe from 1948-72. Although the European model ended abruptly, voluntary service has been continued with the German *Christliche Dienst* program.

History and Mission in Europe: Continuing the Conversation. Mary Raber and Peter J. Penner, eds. Institute of Mennonite Studies and Neufeld Verlag, 2011, distributed by Herald Press.

A *Festschrift* in honour of Walter Sawatzky, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary professor of church history and mission.

Side by Side: A Memoir of Parents, Anna Enns and Heinrich M. Epp. Linda Epp Sawatzky. Privately published, 2010, 185 pages, hardcover.

This family history with lots of photos and maps traces the story of the Enns-Epp family who came to Canada from Russia in the 1920s. After about 20 years in Manitoba, the Epps began berry farming in B.C. and today the descendants are scattered across Canada.

Other Books**Collected Stories/1955-2010.** Rudy Wiebe. University of Alberta Press, 2010, 552 pages.

This collection of 50 short stories by Rudy Wiebe includes four that have not been previously published.

Create Space for Peace: Forty Years of Peacemaking, Gene Stoltzfus 1940-2010.

Dorothy Friesen, Marilen



Abesamis, eds. TriMark Press Inc., 2011, 256 pages.

This collection of writings by and about Gene Stoltzfus tells the story of his work in peacemaking, including his efforts to bring an end to the Vietnam War. Stoltzfus was the original director of Christian Peacemaker Teams.

Favoured Among Women. Hedy Leonora Martens. CMU Press, 2010, 425 pages.

This historical novel is based on the biography of Greta Enns, who was raised in a Mennonite village in Ukraine. The first of two volumes, it describes the difficulties of living in post-revolutionary Russia and the purges of the 1930s. It ends with Greta and her family fleeing from their homes during World War II.

Mennonites Don't Dance. Darcie Friesen Hossack. Thistledown Press, 2010, 205 pages.

The short stories in this collection are set on the Prairies. Several are told from a child's perspective, presumably in a Mennonite family of the mid-20th century.

**Setting the Agenda: Meditations for the Organization's Soul.** Edgar Stoesz and Rick M. Stiffney. Herald Press, 2011, 290 pages.

Edgar Stoesz has written widely about org-

ganizational boards and how to run effective board meetings. This book provides advice about spirituality in the boardroom and includes 90 meditations by a variety of writers.

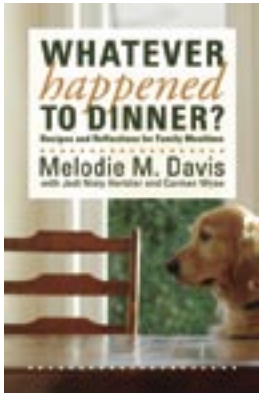
Tongue Screws and Testimonies: Poems, Stories and Essays Inspired by the Martyrs Mirror.

Kirsten Eve Beachy, ed. Herald Press, 2010, 224 pages.

The various poems and stories



in this collection provide a contemporary view of what it means to be Anabaptist. Among the contributors are Rudy Wiebe, Di Brandt, Julia Spicher Kasdorf, Rhoda Janzen and many others.



Whatever Happened to Dinner? Recipes and Reflections for Family Mealtimes.

Melodie M. Davis with Jodi Nisly Herzler and Carmen Wyse. Herald Press, 2010, 241 pages.

As well as reflecting on the importance of families eating meals together, Davis provides a number of simple and inexpensive recipes. She encourages families to meet at the table by suggesting ways to deal with the challenges.

FOCUS ON BOOKS & RESOURCES

Resources

Close to Home pamphlets, Mennonite Publishing Network. Two of the 19 available are "Dealing with Elder Abuse" and "Dealing with Electronic Addiction." Visit www.mpn.net/closetohome.

Kids Can Make Peace and **Kids Can Dig the Bible**. Kids' Club curriculum for grades 1 to 5. Each unit has 10 sessions, with Bible stories, crafts and activities, games and music. Visit www.faihandliferesources.org/curriculum.

Let the Children Come: Preparing Faith Communities to End Child Abuse and Neglect. Jeanette Harder. Herald Press, 2010.

With real-life stories and discussion questions, this book provides information so that churches can keep their children safe.

—Compiled by **Barb Draper**,
Books & Resources editor.

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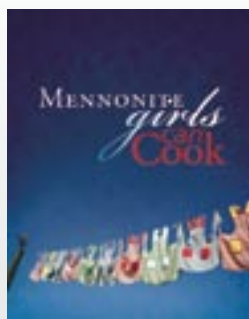
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Mennonite Girls Can Cook

Lovella Schellenberg, Anneliese Friesen, Judy Wiebe, Betty Reimer, Bev Klassen, Charlotte Penner, Ellen Bayles, Julie Klassen, Kathy McLellan, Marg Bartel

Three years ago, Lovella Schellenberg started a blog to record her thoughts, memories and recipes from her Mennonite heritage. It proved so popular that she invited other women to join her. The result: The blog Mennonite Girls Can Cook.

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Herald Press is the book imprint of Mennonite Publishing Network.

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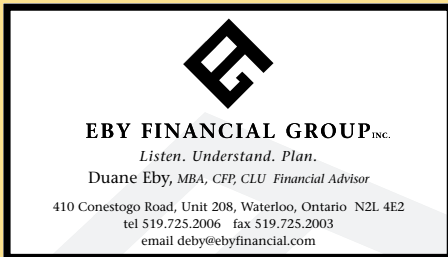


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Calendar

British Columbia

May 28,29: Columbia Bible College Library and the Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. present the Walter Ratliff film, *Through the Desert Goes Our Journey*; in the CBC chapel; (28) at 7 p.m.; (29) at 2 p.m.

Alberta

May 27-28: A theological studies event featuring David Miller of AMBS, at Sylvan Lake Pentecostal Retreat Centre. Hosted by the Congregational Leadership Committee of MC Alberta. For more information, call Jim Shantz, conference minister at 780-921-2420 or e-mail JimShantz@live.ca.

June 8: Heritage retreat at Camp Valaqua. Speaker: Abe Janzen, MCC Alberta director. Music by Corpus Christi Choir. For more information, call Erna Goetzen at 403-335-8414.

June 11: Camp Valaqua hike-a-thon

fundraiser. Location TBA. For more information, call 430-637-2510 or e-mail valaqua@xplornet.com.

Saskatchewan

May 19: Women in Ministry luncheon, at Wildwood Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

May 24-26: Continuing education course on missional preaching at Wildwood Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, with Allan Rudy-Froese.

June 10-11: MCC Relief Sale at Prairieland Park, Saskatoon.

Manitoba

May 12-14: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate senior high musical.

May 18: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate work day.

May 27-28: MCC Manitoba Quilt Show and Sale, Winnipeg; (27) 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., (28) 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

May 27-29: Birding retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

Ontario

May 9: Spring seniors retreat at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp and Retreat Centre. Theme: "Building relationships globally and locally." Keynote speaker: Allan Sauder of MEDA. Intergenerational panel discussion on "Integrating persons into the life of the church." Registration deadline: May 2. For more information, call 519-625-8602.

May 13: Canadian Bible Society, Kitchener-Waterloo Branch, annual banquet, featuring Vessels of Honour southern gospel quartet, at Waterloo North Presbyterian Church, Waterloo, at 5:30 p.m. For tickets, call 519-746-7341.

May 14: Maple View and Crosshill Literary/MYF Reunion for those born before 1951, at Maple View Mennonite Church, Wellesley. Fellowship at 4 p.m.; fundraising dinner for Maple View's building fund at 5 p.m. RSVP by April 30 to 519-656-2946 or mvmchurch@cyg.net.

May 14: Menno Singers present "Lift Every Voice and Sing," a fundraiser for Menno Homes, at Floradale Mennonite Church, at 7:30 p.m.

May 14: Third annual Paddle the Grand fundraiser for Silver Lake Mennonite Camp, from 10 a.m. to noon.

May 14: Silver Lake Mennonite Camp 50th anniversary celebration, at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit slmc.ca.

May 14: The New England Youth Chamber Ensemble performs at the Waterloo Luther Village auditorium, at 7 p.m.

May 15: House of Friendship's Trek 4 Kids, starting at MCC Ontario office, Kent Ave., Kitchener, at 2:30 p.m. Hike and bike the Iron Horse Trail and raise money to send kids to summer camp. For more information, call House of Friendship at 519-742-8327.

May 15: The New England Youth Chamber Ensemble and storyteller Jack Dueck present a worship service of music, song and story, at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, at 9:45 a.m.

May 29: Ontario Mennonite Bible School and Institute Reunion, "Celebrating the vision through our memories," at Mannheim Mennonite Church, from 2 to 6 p.m. Bring a potluck lunch and lawn chair. For more information, call Lester Kehl at 519-669-0553.

May 24-27: St. Jacobs Mennonite Church "Quilts for the World" event with guest artist Elizabeth Schneider. Gift shop and appraisals. (24-26) 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; (27) 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Proceeds to MCC.

Classifieds

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For Rent: 4-bedroom charming cottage that sleeps 10 with 150 feet of frontage on Lake Bernard. Just north of Huntsville. The shallow sandy bottom extends 100 yards

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Employment Opportunities



STUDENT INTERN

Summer intern to join the staff of Canadian Mennonite at its Waterloo, Ontario office.

Term: 16 weeks, beginning May 16 and ending September 2.

Compensation: Minimum wage based on 40-hour work week.

Applicant to be trained in basic writing and interpretive reporting with advanced computer skills in the Macintosh platform. Skilled, too, in digital photography and photo journalism, all to the end of developing a youth section in the bi-weekly Canadian Mennonite that references a specialized youth page on the magazine's website. Must be capable of navigating social media and setting up linkages to same. Personal requirements are social skills to develop key contacts with denominational youth leaders and engage in conversation on issues facing Mennonite young people. A team player who has knowledge of and respect for the Mennonite belief system and ethos. One-page written statement of faith required.

Submit resume and statement of faith to:

Dick Benner
editor@canadianmennonite.org
Deadline: May 6, 2011



MCC Canada (MCCC) is recruiting for the following salaried position:

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS - MCC CANADA

The Director of Programs reports to the MCCC Executive Director and is part of the MCCC Management Team. The Director of Programs supervises the Canadian Program Director/Coordinator for domestic programs, and ensures relevant stakeholders are included in appropriate ways in order to position the organization to remain true to its mission and to accomplish its goals. The Director of Programs will ensure that adequate measurable outcomes are achieved according to a strategic plan for international programs approved by both the MCC Canada and MCC U.S. Boards.

The Director of Programs (MCCC) works jointly with the Director of Programs (MCC U.S.) to manage all aspects of international programs, and each will supervise some combination of international area directors and thematic department heads as identified by the New Wine/New Wineskins process.

Interested individuals are asked to please send a cover letter and resume to Ilda da Silva Storie at idss@mennonitecc.ca. Only those candidates who are legally eligible to work in Canada should apply. Application deadline is May 28, 2011.

For more information on this position, please visit our website by following this link <http://mcc.org/serve/positions/director-programs-mcc-canada-mccc>.

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.



Rosthern Junior College invites applications for:

RESIDENCE STAFF - full-time positions for residence staff in boys and girls' dormitories beginning August 22, 2011.

For complete job description, please visit www.rjc.sk.ca. Qualified applicants should forward resumes to:

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Closing Date: May 13, 2011

TWO NEW MARKETING/SALES POSITIONS with Menno-Media: This new agency of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA is based in Harrisonburg, Va. See www.thirdwaymedia.org and click on Job Openings for complete job descriptions, an application form, and instructions for applying. Application deadline is May 13.

HOST/HOUSTESS - MENNONITE GUEST HOME IN CALGARY

Foothills Mennonite Church is seeking a Host/hostess for Guest Home which provides accommodation to adults and families coming into Calgary for health related matters. Living accommodations and food allowance provided. A minimum 2 month commitment is also required. For more information contact Darrel Heidebrecht at dgheidebrecht@shaw.ca or 403-274-4301.

PASTOR

The Fiske and Herschel Mennonite Churches are inviting a new Pastor to begin in the Summer of 2011.

We are congregations of 50 and 77 members, located in two quaint rural communities in rolling West Central Saskatchewan.

The pastor should:

- be committed to Anabaptist / Mennonite theology and practice within Mennonite Church Canada
- be open to working with lay leadership
- be comfortable preaching, providing pastoral care and relating to all generations

Seminary education is preferred; pastoral experience is desirable. The position will be full time and could be shared by a couple.

Please reply to:

Peter Krahn, Search Committee
cpkrahns@sasktel.net, 306-463-8228
or
Jerry Buhler, Mennonite Church Saskatchewan
jerry@mcsask.ca

Manager Investment Services

We are currently seeking a full-time **Manager Investment Services** for our Head Office in Kitchener. You will provide leadership of the Investment Services business unit, including active coaching of our Investment Specialists. In addition, you will lead in the development and implementation of an integrated financial planning and literacy platform while promoting Christian stewardship and values in financial planning.

The successful candidate will have:

- Relevant formal education and industry designation including 10+ years of proven job-related experience in a financial planning environment
- Experience as an accomplished coach and mentor
- Understanding of and commitment to support the co-operative philosophy, as well as MSCU's core values and Statement of Shared Convictions

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For a full description of this position visit www.msuc.com.

Interested persons should send their resume and cover letter by **Friday, May 6th, 2011** to:

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www.meda.org

Open?

*Conrad Grebel University College students Kimberlee Walker and Jessica Reesor Rempel portray the Canadian Immigration process in *Open?*, a theatrical presentation dramatizing the refugee claimant experience in Canada.*

Celebrating Refugee Rights Day, the April 4 performance was a fundraiser for the Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support; it sold out the Conrad Centre for the Performing Arts in Kitchener, Ont. Originally written and performed by students for a final-year peace and conflict studies course at Grebel, the play mirrors the creators' own deepening understanding of refugee issues, especially the extended waiting during the long process. The characters express concern about being white and privileged, while trying to understand the refugee experience.

