

CANADIAN MENNONITE

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Volume 15 Number 12



DECADE TO OVERCOME VIOLENCE

inside

Speaking with one voice (Cover Story) 14

Stories of Fire and Rain 16-18

In Praise of Thrift Shopping 20-22

EDITORIAL

Conversing in the 'big tent'

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

“If we step back and review the letters to the editor in this magazine over the past several years, we generally find debates in the church and religion framed in terms of conservative and liberal.

“Each side thinks the other is at best misguided, perhaps even profoundly wrong, and misinterprets Scripture. There tends to be a fair bit of each side yelling at the other.”

No, this is not me, your *Canadian Mennonite* editor, speaking, but it might as well be. This is a direct quote from David Harris, editor of the *Presbyterian Record*, in his latest editorial. Harris frames his remarks in the context of what he calls “Christianity reforming into two overarching worldviews.” One is concerned with morals, calling out the rightness and wrongness of our choices; the other, as discerning on how to be good, making community and relationships paramount.

Harris’s comments are just as applicable to our small group of 32,000 believers making up Mennonite Church Canada as to the much larger Presbyterian Church in Canada. And Mennonites are no more unified than the Presbyterians, both communions experiencing a great deal of dissension over the past 150 years.

What brought this home to me in the last two weeks is the passionate response to my editorial of May 16, “A political

lament,” in which I voiced my disappointment in two national events: the killing of Osama bin Laden by the U.S. military and the victory of the military-oriented Conservative Party in the Canadian national election. My sentiments apparently hit a raw nerve among you, our readers. Letters will tell the story over the next several issues.

While the majority of the responses agreed with the thoughts expressed—so far 9-3 in favour—it was not a little unsettling to see how deeply held are our political views and how revealing they are in exposing the fault lines in our Anabaptist-driven belief system.

One critic, taking issue with my comments about Prime Minister Stephen Harper holding the most uncompromising views on the Middle East peace process, warned that I would be condemned and judged in the “final war when God takes command and gives the Jews their land back and punishes their enemies. You again picked the wrong horse.”

On the other side, another person echoing the sentiment of the majority of the respondents, “was delighted to learn” he wasn’t alone in his mourning about the election, sadly observing that “the success of the Conservative Party can be partly contributed to the unquestioning support of Mennonites.”

Yet another off-the-record response

advised that “the function of a church newspaper is to [reasonably] reflect the diversity of its constituency with a view to educating and engaging us as to that diversity,” suggesting I write a few editorials on what *Canadian Mennonite* is primarily about (reporting and dialogue) and what it primarily is not (a devotional journal), and why it’s important to engage political questions rather than just safe churchy topics. “This would help people to remember that our church is a very big tent; very diverse in politics, theology and culture,” the writer stated.

With that cue, let me have a little heart-to-heart about the process of engaging this diversity. First off, yes, we are a big tent, including our young people who are not the mythic “future church” but part of church now (see our new *Young Voices* section beginning on page 34).

Second, inside that tent we should be able to discuss anything that is dear to us in civil and respectful discourse. “What if we could lay these (conservative/liberal) distinctions aside?” Harris further asks. “Instead of demonizing the other side, we might agree that everyone is trying to conform to God’s will, just in different ways, and so with different outcomes.” Good advice.

Third, let’s stop using the Bible as a weapon and consider it reverently as our primary guidebook. In the very divisive debate over sexuality, for instance, those on the one side quote Leviticus and Paul to prove that homosexuality is wrong, and the other side quotes Jesus’ “love of neighbour” as the defining commandment. Oh, how we love to hit each other over the head with the Bible!

Rather, let us “reason together” as a faith community in the days ahead. God is much more honoured with that style of discernment.



ABOUT THE COVER:

In a world where violence has been overcome, there will no longer be any need for war cemeteries containing the bodies of fallen soldiers. For story and photos on the celebration to mark the end of the Decade to Overcome Violence—an initiative first proposed by Mennonite theologian Fernando Enns—see page 14.

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Please send all material to be considered for publication to:

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Guiding values:

-Hebrews 10:23-25

-Accuracy, fairness, balance

-Editorial freedom

-Seeking and speaking the truth in love

-Open hearts and minds in discerning God's will

-Covenantal relationships and mutual accountability

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Dick Benner, Editor/Publisher, editor@canadianmennonite.org

Ross W. Muir, Managing Editor, managinged@canadianmennonite.org

Barb Draper, Editorial Assistant, edassist@canadianmennonite.org

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Lisa Jacky, Circulation/Finance, office@canadianmennonite.org

Advertising Manager: Lisa Metzger, advert@canadianmennonite.org, toll-free voice mail: 1-800-378-2524 ext. 224

Correspondents:

Rachel Bergen, National Correspondent, ca@canadianmennonite.org, 204-885-2565 ext. 259; **Amy Dueckman**, B.C. Correspondent, bc@canadianmennonite.org, 604-854-3735; **Donita Wiebe-Neufeld**, Alberta Correspondent, ab@canadianmennonite.org, 780-436-3431; **Karin Fehderau**, Saskatchewan Correspondent, sk@canadianmennonite.org, 306-933-4209; **Evelyn Rempel Petkau**, Manitoba Correspondent, mb@canadianmennonite.org, 204-745-2208; **Dave Rogalsky**, Eastern Canada Correspondent, ec@canadianmennonite.org, 519-579-7258.



Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



contents

Who gets the church . . . when a couple divorces? 4

Alberta correspondent **DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD** explores how churches respond to divorce among their members and how members view the church when their marriages are in trouble and they are going through separation and divorce.



Speaking with one voice 14

A peace message closes the Decade to Overcome Violence celebration in Jamaica. Mennonite voices—**FERNANDO ENNS** and **THOMAS FINGER**—were prominent at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation.

The survey says . . . 23

Managing editor **ROSS W. MUIR** tallies the responses to *Canadian Mennonite's* latest survey, discovering that readers still look to the magazine as their first choice for local and national church news.

Baking is a privilege 26

Wheat Song Bakery's **LYNETTE FROESE** says, 'It is a privilege to be able to use the gifts I have to make a living and help others.'



Focus on the Environment & Health 28

Eastern Canada correspondent **DAVE ROGALSKY** profiles the New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sales' efforts to go 'green'. Plus, read about a Bolivian fruit tree project and 'Reflections on Mennonite environmental values' by **DAVID NEUFELD**.

Cooking for peace 31

In her autobiographical *Nettie's Story*, **NETTIE BAER** recalls her days cooking for Pax volunteers in Germany, Austria and Greece from 1954-56.

Young Voices 34

With this issue we begin our Young Voices section with a vision from section editor **EMILY LOEWEN**, a story about printmaker **MIRIAM RUDOLPH** and an election retrospective by **SUSAN GUENTHER LOEWEN**.

Regular features:

For discussion **7** Readers write **8** Pontius' Puddle **12**

Milestones **13** Schools Directory **33**

Calendar **38** Classifieds **38**

Conversing in the big tent 2

DICK BENNER

An uncomfortable place to be 9

BRIAN BAUMAN

A different sort of challenge 10

PHIL WAGLER

The television set 11

WILL BRAUN

Online NOW!

at canadianmennonite.org

Meet the new pastors of MC Eastern Canada: **DICK BENNER**

Who gets the church...

when a couple

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD
Alberta Correspondent

When a couple divorces, lawyers help decide how jointly held possessions are divided. There are many things, however, such as church attendance, that the couple are left to negotiate on their own.

One divorcee, when asked who gets the church, replies vehemently, "Who wants it?" In spite of continued committed involvement in her congregation, she is candid about the immense difficulties separated couples and their families encounter there. "I hated it," she says. "There seems to be an assumption that now you will start working on [your marriage], but you've done so much soul-searching already. It's so painful to get to that place. You are judging yourself. . . . I knew I was being judged."

Another person in a similar situation admits, "I felt ashamed, even humiliated, in church. I felt like I was not a good Christian, even though it was not my conscious choice for my marriage to end. I felt like people might not understand, that I might be judged and condemned. For a few months I stopped attending church."

How to be a healing place

For a variety of reasons, it is difficult—if not impossible—for separated or divorced couples to continue attending church at all, much less the same congregation. The concluding paragraph in the "Family, Singleness and Marriage" clause of the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* states: "As the family of God, the church is called to be a sanctuary offering hope and healing for families."

divorces?

But the reality is that separated and divorced people often do not find support in the church as they struggle with the feelings of pain, failure, anger, grief and betrayal that are the tenacious companions of relationship breakdown.

How exactly to be a healing place for families in the throes of separation is often unclear to even the most well-meaning congregations. Hoyt Hickman writes in *Ritual in a New Day*, “At precisely the time when individuals are most lonely and need to establish links of communication with others, members of the Christian community know least how to respond, and the person is usually met with silence, embarrassment and whispered conversations that end abruptly when the person enters a room.”

Divorce in historical perspective

Just over 40 years ago, divorce and remarriage was the “hot” issue for the General Conference Mennonite Church in Canada. Aldred Neufeldt, now moderator of the Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada, was a young adult on the Board of Christian Service at the 1969 assembly in Saskatoon, Sask. He remembers the official discussions about the issues of divorce, remarriage and

church participation. A recommendation made by the Board of Christian Service chair resolved to provide resources for marriages and families, and commit to ongoing study of the issues.

“Up to that point, there was reluctance to talk about divorce and strong opposition from some quarters,” Neufeldt recalls. “My memory of it was to even

How exactly to be a healing place for families in the throes of separation is often unclear to even the most well-meaning congregations.

adopt what seems innocuous to us now, the opponents wanted outright condemnation. It was a critical issue in those days. More study and resources for congregations was contentious, according to the vocal opponents, but the motion was overwhelmingly accepted by the floor.”

The issue of divorce and remarriage largely dropped out of national church discussions after 1979. “By that time, there was scarcely a congregation without personal experience,” Neufeldt notes. “People knew these were good people caught up in difficult situations.”

Minutes from the 1978 assembly in Gretna, Man., note that “there appears

to be no unanimity in terms of approach taken by various congregations.”

While there is greater understanding and acceptance of divorced people in Mennonite churches in 2011, practices and experiences still vary widely in and among congregations.

“Divorce seems to have lost some of its stigma in our church,” says a Mennonite

pastor, adding that some individuals struggle with the idea of a divorcee in a position of leadership or teaching. Side-taking and application of double standards—acceptance of divorce in a person’s own family, but not in others—causes further problems. The muddle of issues led to one divorced church member leaving the congregation when his volunteer gifts were not accepted by a few vocal critics.

When children are involved

The difficulties in separations are most poignant when children are involved. Separated parents agonize over what is best, but may disagree with what to do

about the faith practice of their children. The church often does not know how to be of help in these situations.

One pastor emphasizes the importance of showing children their parents are cared for during their struggles. “While it is difficult for both parents to share the same worship space, and the children are aware of the tensions that come with this, we need to be examples that both people are cared for and loved,” he says. “This is an area where our church failed. . . . Children are more aware of what happens to others than we sometimes give

the experiences of children of divorce.

In *Between Two Worlds*, Marquardt examines the effects of the split lives children lead as they struggle to bridge the gap between parents while living in two worlds: “[I]t can be bewildering to children of divorce when neither parent is doing anything wrong, but their rules and habits are simply different.”

A parent whose child alternates churches each week says, “There are two value systems . . . different sets of norms. . . . I don’t know of any upsides to going to two churches.” She wishes it

strategies for thinking correctly, but a place to belong, a community in which their humanity is upheld.” He suggests the church can be an anchor for the members of a broken family. “[F]inding a community that suffers with and for us can assure us that we are real, that our suffering is embraced concretely by these people called church, who witness to God in Jesus Christ who bears our brokenness,” he writes.

In order to be there for these families, church programs must be flexible so children with two homes can participate. Youth programs, kids clubs and mentorship programs can provide a sense of connectedness for children who can’t attend every Sunday. At a time when grief is raw—often during the initial separation—things like scheduled play dates for children, an offer of a meal, a non-judgmental ear or a card can be meaningful and provide encouragement for them to stay connected to the community.

Another divorcee, with no extended family in the congregation, says, ‘For me, the patience, love, understanding and acceptance by both clergy and laity has been the strongest factor in healing.’

them credit for.”

When children perceive that a parent is not treated well by the church, they are unlikely to want to continue their involvement.

Arrangements for children to remain attending their home church vary. Some may alternate between the two churches their parents attend, while others may always attend their church but with only one of the parents.

Author Elizabeth Marquardt grew up as a child of divorced parents. Although her parents had an amicable separation, and she is successful and accomplished, Marquardt writes with great sorrow about

were possible for her child to regularly attend one church, especially at times like Christmas, when concert practices and performances don’t line up in a doable manner for the families involved.

Another divorcee who attends the same church as an ex says, “We do attend, but it is difficult. A commitment to respect and politeness is necessary for me. At this point, it does not honestly seem desirable for me, but it is good for our child.”

Andrew Root, another child of divorce, describes the problem in his book *The Children of Divorce*: “I contend that what children of divorce need most is not

Being—or becoming—a welcoming place

In all the turmoil of divorce, the church can be a place of healing as couples divide up their lives, or just another profound loss. In many divorces, at least one partner stands to lose his or her community of faith and support.

For those who manage to continue attending their church, the support of friends and family is crucial.

“The only thing [that kept me coming] was that my parents went there,”

Divorce ministry resources

- *Becoming a National Church* by Adolf Ens. CMU Press, Winnipeg, Man., 2004.
- *Between Two Worlds: The Inner Lives of Children of Divorce* by Elizabeth Marquardt. Three Rivers Press, New York, N.Y., 2005.
- *The Children of Divorce: The Loss of Family as the Loss of Being* by Andrew Root. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, Mich., 2010.
- *Practices: Mennonite Worship and Witness* by John D.

Roth. Herald Press, Waterloo, Ont., 2009.

- *Ritual in a New Day* by Hoyt Hickman. Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1976.
- *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*. Herald Press, Waterloo, Ont., 1995.

All are available from the Mennonite Church Canada Resource Centre (visit mennonitechurch.ca and click on the “Resource Centre” link).

—COMPILED BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

a divorced woman says. “The minister spent time with one and not the other.”

Although it aided her, the presence of extended family was one reason her ex found it too painful to continue his attendance.

Another divorcee, with no extended family in the congregation, says, “For me, the patience, love, understanding and acceptance by both clergy and laity has been the strongest factor in healing.”

A pastor currently helping a family through separation says, “Anything appropriate to care for the grieving is appropriate now.”

A divorcee remembers with gratitude, the “thing that helped me most was [someone] who came and helped me move and unpack. That’s all she did. That’s how people can help.”

Other divorced people within a congregation are important connections, as they are uniquely able to provide an understanding ear and help the newly separated feel less alone in their struggle.

Clergy and care teams, including deacons or elders, can shape an “official” church response, whether that simply means ensuring a private visit occurs and counsel is offered, or by helping the couple to communicate with the congregation. Each situation is best treated on its own terms, in consultation with those involved. Speaking about the hard parts of life must happen at church so that compassion, not condemnation, is a first response to people’s pain.

“We need to recognize in ourselves that we are imperfect people, subject to human nature and all of its failings,” says a pastor. “Healing comes from a place of understanding that we are all capable of doing what has happened in the break-up of a marriage.”

Says a divorcee, “The main thing is to talk openly about inclusivity and support for people in different stages in life, and being there for each other and saying those kinds of things . . . make a point of including people who have just been separated to things.”

The church can consciously work towards being a welcoming place by teaching there is no such thing as a perfect family.

In his *Practices: Mennonite Worship and Witness*, John D. Roth points out that the idea of mom, dad and two kids in a single family dwelling is a recent, not biblical, image of family. “[T]o the extent that the ideal family has come to

collection of genetically related groupings. This helps create welcoming spaces for those who need a place to belong.

One pastor sums up her comments on divorce and the church this way: “We need to be able to share this information

One only has to look at Jesus’ lineage in the gospels to see many forms of family, and various ‘colourful’ individuals, represented.

be defined in narrow and exclusive terms and as a refuge of intense privacy, the biblical family may be a source of liberating news,” he writes.

One only has to look at Jesus’ lineage in the gospels to see many forms of family and various “colourful” individuals represented. Roth suggests that Christians “might practise our commitment to porous family boundaries by reshuffling our seating arrangements in worship. . . . [W]e would do this . . . as a reminder that family connectedness is not the only relevant category for congregational involvement and identity.”

Setting for odd numbers at church potlucks, consciously intermingling seating during worship and other church functions, and involving singles in public leadership all move the church to function more as a faith family than a

[pain of divorce] with the congregation as a whole and pray publicly for persons who carry the weight of this grief. Just as we have special services for remembering those who have died, maybe we could have a public worship ritual of lament for all who carry the weight of struggling or broken relationships, named or unnamed.

“We need to name [with the permission of the couple] for the benefit of the congregation practical ways that people can be supportive. We need to give people permission to call, have coffee, offer a meal and otherwise check in with persons who carry this profound grief. We need to preach and teach and demonstrate forgiveness and the power of new hope provided by the resurrected Christ, who brings life to the dead.” ❧

❧ For discussion

1. What has been your congregation’s experience with divorce? Does the church respond differently to divorce than it did in the 1970s? Has divorce lost its stigma? Are those who are divorced still discouraged from taking positions of leadership in the church?
2. When is the break-up of a marriage a sin and when is it just an unfortunate situation? If the church responds with compassion, rather than condemnation, will that result in more divorces because it is now an acceptable option?
3. How can a congregation provide practical support for those whose marriages have ended? What could churches do to support the children of divorce? Is it inevitable that one church cannot embrace both parties after a separation or divorce?
4. How should the facts of a separation or divorce be communicated to the congregation? Is it important to acknowledge it openly? Do you agree that, “[s]peaking about the hard parts of life must happen at church so that compassion, not condemnation, is a first response to people’s pain”?

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.

✉ In search of a 'relational' theologian

THANK YOU VERY much for your editorial, "Habits of Repair," May 2, page 2.

Your report of the three-day conference on attachment theory, relationality and the integration of love and spirituality was insightful and provocative. Sue Johnson, whom you refer to as the keynote speaker at the conference, is a Ph.D. graduate of our program in counselling psychology at the University of B.C. She is doing some interesting work as she continues to elaborate and expand the theory of relationality and interpersonal interaction.

You refer to these developments as a paradigm shift from an emphasis on the individual to community. In a sense this is correct. Western philosophical thought has developed around the significance of the individual, the self, personal autonomy and self-realization. Theologically, we have followed a similar paradigm. I am delighted that you are recognizing the importance of the development of a relational and interactive paradigm in theology. I have, for years, been in search of a reputable theologian who was willing to commit to a relational theology. I have not been able to find such a theologian.

Perhaps the best work in this area with an emphasis on community has been undertaken by John MacMurray, entitled *Persons in Relation*, Humanities Press International, 1961, and republished in 1991. Another book of similar perspective is called *Social Intelligence* by Daniel Goleman, Bantam Books, 2006; it is an important update on a relational psychology, making the case that human beings are "wired to connect."

My own work, *The Alcohol Recovery Project*, uses a relational theoretical perspective on the treatment of alcoholics and their families. This 15-year experimental investigation provides significant empirical validation of the effectiveness of a relational theoretical paradigm in the treatment of alcoholism.

JOHN FRIESEN, VANCOUVER, B.C.

✉ Hold off on MCC change 'until we get it right'

MY THANKS TO both Will Braun and Robert J. Suderman for their contribution to the Wineskins process. If nothing else, their sincere but differing perspectives are indicative of the complexity of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and the difficult task of reorganization and change.

I have little doubt that there has been considerable consultation over an extended period of time, but I also have no doubt that the consultation was not deliberate enough and had significant omissions. And it is unfortunate that Suderman does not respond adequately to Benner's editorial, "Congregations too want 'new wineskins,'" and Braun's article, "MCC revisioning loses connection with people in the pew."

More specifically, Vancouver has thousands of Mennonites and yet no church consultation took place here. Why? Similarly, former MCC staff in leadership positions were not consulted. Why? Was consultation a facade or was it real?

MCC is one of God's wonderful gifts to the world. Let's not change it unless—and until—we get it right, even if it means more consultation.

PETER A. DUECK, VANCOUVER, B.C.

✉ Tour advertisement gives unbalanced view of the Holy Land

HAVING JUST RETURNED from Israel/Palestine on a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) learning tour, the Sunworld Tours ad for trips to the Holy Land on page 19 of the April 18 edition caught our eye.

However, by researching the itinerary and company, a person can see this is a very different tour from what we had just experienced. We visited the same moving historical sites that this tour would offer, but in addition visited with Palestinian groups and individuals, even staying in their homes for two nights. We also met with a number of Jewish and Muslim groups and visited the Jewish Holocaust Museum.

Our brothers and sisters in Christ who have lived there for 2,000 years desperately want people to hear their stories and struggles, and many of our

organizations and individuals are working to help them. So somehow seeing an advertisement for tours that completely ignore them in a Mennonite publication feels wrong.

We would encourage people to travel to the Holy Land and experience the historical sites for themselves, but to not ignore our fellow Christians there. Perhaps travellers could contact MCC or individuals who have participated in tours that include that perspective.

A tour that includes hearing a variety of perspectives is never easy, but we think that is what Jesus

would ask us to do. I don't think any of us would have traded our experience, painful as it was at times, for a slick tour that ignored the very people Jesus came to serve.

**LEON KEHL, KENDRA WHITFIELD ELLIS,
MAHLON MARTIN, FLORADALE, ONT.**

The letter writers all attend Floradale Mennonite Church.

FROM OUR LEADERS

An uncomfortable place to be

BRIAN BAUMAN

Mennonites are in a unique position in this era of mission. Arthur Boers, author and seminary professor, notes that we sit in that uncomfortable place between the mainline and the evangelical church traditions.

I work with a number of new churches and church planters. Some are “new-comer” congregations; others are steeped in the culture of the post-Christendom, post-millennium mindset; while several are simply striving to join God in doing ministry in their neighbourhood. It can be a significant task to help these churches and their leaders be in that “uncomfortable place.” I suspect it is just as challenging for many traditional Mennonite congregations to be in that “uncomfortable place.”

It can be argued that the definition of mission within the North American church has experienced an unfortunate schism:

- In the 1800s, the mainline churches went in one direction and were labelled “social gossellers” as they focused on the

welfare of the community. Most important was the civilization of the society so that its people could understand and accept the gospel.

- In the other direction went the evangelical churches, the “soul savers,” which gave their best energy to individuals, believing that once they accepted the gospel they would be better citizens, which would make for a better society.

The end desire for both these defi-

nitions was the same, but they differed in the means to that end.

A casual observation across the church planters with whom I work and the established Mennonite congregations would suggest that this schism of mission definition is alive and well within the Mennonite church. On the one hand, I hear great fervour for service ministry with and to economically marginalized communities because that is the mission of the church. On the other hand, I also hear great passion for

evangelism—which focuses on individuals making decisions to follow Jesus Christ, including making disciples, baptizing and teaching them—because that, too, is the mission of the church.

It is critical for us as a body to find our way back to that uncomfortable place between our mainline and evangelical sisters. We are in a unique position, historically and theologically, to reconnect this divided definition of mission. God intends for the mission of the church to be about the agendas of both the social gossellers and soul savers. To suggest that we should do one over and above the other only plays into the ongoing dichotomy that found its way into Mennonite understandings of mission in the 20th century.

If your church likes to “minister to the

We are in a unique position, historically and theologically, to reconnect this divided definition of mission.



less fortunate” but is uncomfortable talking about your experience of Jesus Christ, or your church loves to reach out to “the lost” but is reluctant to love them unless they follow Jesus, then it is mistakenly living with a partitioned definition of mission. Together, let's find a way to reconnect our varying understandings and practices of mission, standing in concert in a godly but uncomfortable place of mission.

Brian Bauman is mission minister for Mennonite Church Eastern Canada.

✉ Children need to be highly valued by our church

RE: "WITH SADNESS and lament," May 2, page 15.

In the words of Willard Metzger, it is truly with "sadness and lament" that I was notified that Elsie Rempel's position as director of Christian nurture with Mennonite Church Canada was terminated due to a reduction of expenditures at the national level.

Although I was saddened by the news, I wasn't completely surprised. Children don't tend to be highly valued in the church and, especially within Mennonite communities, views of children are ambiguous. We love to see their smiling faces, but we struggle to fund and staff programs and ministries for them.

Yet God has not given up on our children—and neither have Mennonites in Canada. We want the children in our midst to know and love God and follow in

OUTSIDE THE BOX

A different sort of challenge

PHIL WAGLER

A few months ago our four-year-old daughter was overheard singing a song with only one line, which she repeated irritatingly till my patient wife didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Our little fireball of estrogen was singing a song of her own creation ripe with ironic truth: "I'm a different sort of challenge." Amen, little sister.

We are all different sorts of challenges. I am one, you are one, and if we open our eyes we see we are communities of Jesus-followers in the midst of a whole host of unique challenges. The urban is not the suburban is not the rural. In fact, even supposedly similar places end up being starkly unique. Montreal and Vancouver are both cities, but it would be foolish to say they are therefore the same. Rural Saskatchewan and rural Newfoundland are both in the "country," but no one would be so dumb as to say they are parallel universes.

Even neighbouring communities can be completely unique. I once lived in Ayr, Ont., which, as a community that rolled out the haggis to celebrate its Scottish heritage, was just up the road from Paris. You don't have to be Sherlock Holmes

to sniff that there are different histories, DNA and challenges at work there. Sure, the passage of time brings change, just like a four-year-old will not always bring four-year old challenges. But even new realities for a locale—like a sleepy village becoming a bedroom community—create challenges that cannot be ignored. This dynamic is easily forgotten by churches, and especially churches with a long history in a community that has developed an unhelpful immunity to change.

When the church sends missionaries from one locale to another, we assume they will learn to think like a landed immigrant in that culture. They will think like a missionary and learn the language,

adapt, and build friendships and understandable and credible bridges across a river of different challenges. In fact, any missionaries who fail to do this will simply not make an impact. They will, in reality, not even be missionaries.

The same must be said about the church as it now finds itself in Canada.

A recent *National Post* article states, "Evangelical Christian children of immigrants feel they cannot openly practise their religion, and worry that Christianity is no longer a guiding force in Canadian society, while Muslims say they are free to follow their faith in this country but face other forms of discrimination." The study reveals a number of interesting trends in Canadian culture, but at the very least it should make us aware that, whether we've been in Canada for a short time or a long one, we are all living in the epicentre of a different sort of challenge.

This can—but must not—elicit fear. Fear, of course, will be sure-fire proof we have ceased living and thinking like missionaries. In fact, if this current challenge arouses fear it should make you very afraid that you have sacrificed the missionary call of Jesus and the church, which is sent as a beacon of hope into whatever challenging reality is set before it, for a closed, protectionist society of the religiously comatose.

Very clearly this historical moment presents a different sort of challenge. The times invite us to think and live like

Fear, of course, will be sure-fire proof we have ceased living and thinking like missionaries.



missionaries yet again, or perhaps for the first time.

Phil Wagler (phil_wagler@yahoo.ca) is learning much about the unique challenges of thinking like a missionary in Surrey, B.C. He is the author of Kingdom Culture.

the way of Jesus now and for a lifetime.

In *Children's Voices: Children's Perspectives of Ethics, Theology and Religious Education*, esteemed theologian Marcia Bunge notes that there are at least five ways that churches undermine support for parents, children and families. Each of these struggles poses serious challenges to churches, families and children. Yet each one can be remedied—even without a formal Christian nurture director at the helm.

1. MANY CONGREGATIONAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION INITIATIVES OFFER UNDER-FUNDED AND

WEAK PROGRAMS. Nurturing the faith of children and advocating for children's ministry must become top priorities so that young people don't become neglected and lost among other ministries and initiatives.

2. SEVERAL CHURCHES DO NOT ADEQUATELY EMPHASIZE THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN CHILDREN'S SPIRITUAL FORMATION. Congregations can encourage parents and grandparents to take more active roles in spiritually nurturing their children by providing resources, offering tools and not letting the over-involvement in church programs add to the busyness

NEW ORDER VOICE

The television set

WILL BRAUN

According to a tract produced by a Holdeman group, television is “rocking people to sleep morally and spiritually.” I agree with our Anabaptist cousins—however outdated they sound—although I still love TV.

As a child I did not share my parents' view that there were better things to do than watch TV. I felt miserably oppressed by the one-hour daily quota they imposed. Later in life, when an out-of-town job came with a fully furnished house trailer and free cable, my Holdeman sympathies gave way to World Cup yearnings. The TV came out of storage for the soccer spectacle and it dominated my morally drowsy evenings until I moved.

The allure of TV is strong. Although other gadgets have come along, TV holds its place. It is easy, titillating and distracting. Just sit, click and enjoy. It can also be educational—as addicts love to point out—but those are not the reasons I like it.

Nor do I find those defences as persuasive as the indictments in the Holdeman tract. “A steady diet of brutal crime and violence, sponsored by ungodly men, is fed to millions not having the moral will to resist,” reads the tract, which is

entitled “The Television Set.” That's not exactly how I would state it, but I can't argue. Wisdom from Ephesians follows: “*See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*” The point is simple and true: “Much valuable time is wasted in front of the TV.”

I recall visiting a Holdeman church in the late 1990s and hearing the minister explain the church's opposition to TV. Although church regulation of lifestyle is considered unsophisticated in most circles, I found their practice courageous and sensible. I could not imagine crafting

defence that there are good things on TV. Of course, there are. But we're in trouble if we look to Hollywood for spiritual enrichment. We're in trouble if our edification is interspersed with the naked greed of advertising. We're in trouble if the easiest way to get Christians together is to have a movie night (and it doesn't even matter which movie). We're in trouble if our ethical sophistication is no more nuanced than deeming something good so long as no nudity, swearing or violence passes before us.

TV is not all bad, but the medium itself tends to numb creative capacities, social interaction and home life. Few people or families would benefit from more TV.

Neither my wife nor I have ever owned our own television set. Our four-year-old son barely knows what TV is, although he likes YouTube clips of farm machinery.



We're in trouble if the easiest way to get Christians together is to have a movie night (and it doesn't even matter which movie).

an argument to convince them that TV should be church-sanctioned, so I had to admire their stand.

The tract invites readers to embrace “nobler blessings of life” such as “inner contentment” and “peaceful and intimate conversations so essential to family unity.”

Many Amish churches also ban TV. As Amish bishop David Kline told me last year, “If it's bad for the family, you don't have it.” TV would fall in that category for him.

Many times I have heard the clichéd

Tough choices lie ahead. I don't want to offer my children up to the advertisers. I don't want them rocked gently into moral ambivalence, nor do I want them to be complete misfits.

What I would like is for them to grow up in a faith community in which people's lives clearly show that there are better things to do than watch TV.

Will Braun attends Hope Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, Man. He can be reached at wbraun@inbox.com.

of family life.

3. PARENTS TEND NOT TO ENGAGE THEIR CHILDREN IN DISCUSSIONS ABOUT MORALITY, FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY. Parents need to know that it's okay not to have all the answers, and to express and share their doubts with children.

4. YOUNG PEOPLE TYPICALLY DON'T KNOW VERY MUCH ABOUT THEIR FAITH TRADITIONS AND STRUGGLE TO ARTICULATE HOW FAITH RELATES TO THEIR DAILY LIVES. Parents and other caring adults can talk with children about events in the world and in their lives—bullying, competitive sports and violence—bringing insight about faith and the Mennonite way of life to bear on how our faith affects how we live in the church and in the world.

5. DENOMINATIONS TEND NOT TO OFFER CRITICAL THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON ISSUES OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND PARENTING. There needs to be serious theological reflection about what it means to be a child in today's world. Perhaps parents and ministry leaders can begin small groups focused on discussing issues of childhood, parenting and family from Mennonite perspectives.

With cutbacks at the national level, we must all take on the role of director of Christian nurture wherever we may be, so that children are not left behind. And as we all become directors of Christian nurture in the lives of young people in our families and communities, we will discover that they, in turn, become directors of Christian nurture in our lives.

DAVID M. CSINOS, TORONTO, ONT.

✉ Mennonites should lament recent federal election results

RE: "A POLITICAL lament," May 16, page 2.

Thanks for the excellent and insightful editorial. Yes, our peace witness has gone silent when the Mennonite support for Conservatives—especially in ridings in B.C., Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario—contradicts any commitment to our confession of Christian faith.

How can we vote for a party on a Monday (election day) that promises stealth aircraft and expansion of punitive and retributive justice, and rewards cabinet ministers who lie, when on Sunday we give our offerings to promote peace, support restorative justice and emphasize truth-telling.

In no Canadian federal election has there been such a disjunction between a political party and its policies, and our commitment to the example and life of Jesus.
VERN RATZLAFF, SASKATOON, SASK.

✉ Mennonites still confused about 'priesthood of all believers'

RE: "WHAT ABOUT the young people?," May 2, page 13.

As a young person in the church, the question of how to be involved in the church is important to me. I agree with Melanie Kampen that young people shouldn't be treated separately from the rest of the church. We, the young, are constantly delegated to be the "church of the future," but we would much rather be acknowledged as part of the church of today. If we aren't being called today, then why should we stick around till tomorrow?

As a fellow member of today's church, I want to question her assumption that "Mennonites practise a priesthood of all believers." She assumes that we do practise some priesthood of all believers, and also that we have a common understanding of what this priesthood means for us and our practices. We have no such

Ponius' Puddle



thing!

As letter writer Bruce Hiebert pointed out, the priesthood of all believers was originally a Lutheran theology, not a particularly Mennonite one (April 18, page 12). Menno Simons briefly referred to it to encourage a holy, set-apart lifestyle for believers, not to say that all Christians should share the responsibilities of ordained leaders. What meaning does “priesthood” hold today for Anabaptists that we should be using this phrase to describe our practices together?

I’m excited by theology that empowers all believers—especially young believers—to share in the ministry of the church. But please do not use the phrase “priesthood of all believers” to argue that any and all believers should be doing the jobs that our leaders have been intentionally trained and ordained to do. If we can’t explain what priesthood means to us, don’t even use it at all.

MICHAEL TURMAN, WATERLOO, ONT.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Berg—Miriam Anne (b. May 24, 2011), to Bryan and Kristen Berg, Breslau Mennonite, Ont.

Birch—Lucy Maria (b. May 6, 2011), to Brett and Tara Birch, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Boese—Tysen Glen Peter (b. May 23, 2011), to Scott and Aimee Boese, Tofield Mennonite, Alta.

Clark—Adalyn Nicole (b. May 13, 2011), to Janice (Teichroeb) and Matthew Clark, Laird Mennonite, Sask.

Gerber—Sawyer Nathaniel (b. April 7, 2011), to Chad and Kaitlin Gerber, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.

Higgs—David Anderson (b. May 11, 2011), to Sharon and Jesse Higgs, Rouge Valley Mennonite, Markham, Ont.

Kasdorf—Eli Anthony (b. May 10, 2011), to Anthony and Haley Kasdorf, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Manzolini—Zoe (b. April 18, 2011), to Holly Wiens and Corrado Manzolini, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Niessen-Toews—Lauren Helena (b. May 27, 2011), to Erika and Hartmut Niessen-Toews, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Neufeldt—Mia Isabelle (b. April 18, 2011), to Krista and Marty Neufeldt, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Robins—Ayden Loren (b. Feb. 20, 2011), to Loren and Heidi Robins, Hanley Mennonite, Sask.

Shandera—Justice Samuel (b. May 3, 2011), to Joseph and Sarah Shandera, First Mennonite, Edmonton, Alta.

Steinmann—Rachel (b. May 18, 2011), to Michael and Megan Steinmann, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Thiessen—Solomon Peter (b. May 5, 2011), to Jennifer Coon and Matthew Thiessen, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Wedler—Micah Jonathan and Davin Isaac (b. March 24, 2011), to Tim (First Mennonite, Edmonton, Alta.) and Karyn Wedler (Langley Mennonite, B.C.), in Langley.

Wiegand—Levi Matthew (b. May 15, 2011), to Melanie and Erik Wiegand, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Baptisms

Rachel Friesen, Rebekah Enns, Laura Carroll, Blake Penner, Emalee Sawatzky, Keith Kampen, Jude Guzzi, Mathieu Sawatzky—Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Erica Doucette—Osler Mennonite, Sask., May 22, 2011.

Nicole Jaeger, Caleb Niemeyer, Susan Prestwich—Rouge Valley Mennonite, Markham, Ont., April 24, 2011.

Marriages

Christie/Turman—Michael Turman (First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.) and Alicia Christie, at St. Louis Roman Catholic Church, Waterloo, Ont., March 5, 2011.

Fast/Martens—Ernest Fast (Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.) and Pamela Martens, at Warman Bergthaler Mennonite, Sask., April 23, 2011.

Deaths

Bender—Debbie, 39 (b. Oct. 29, 1971; d. May 21, 2011), Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Cleary—Eric, 64 (b. Feb. 20, 1947; d. May 8, 2011), Wideman Mennonite, Markham, Ont.

Dike—Elva (nee Wideman), 84 (b. June 24, 1926; d. April 27, 2011), Wideman Mennonite, Markham, Ont.

Epp—Abe, 95 (b. Dec. 10, 1915; d. April 13, 2011), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Epp—Gordon, 84 (b. March 19, 1927; d. April 26, 2011), Eigenheim Mennonite, Rosthern, Sask.

Epp—Neil, 63 (b. July 27, 1947; d. March 16, 2011), Laird Mennonite, Sask.

Friesen—Erna, 73 (b. Jan. 7, 1938; d. April 10, 2011), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Funk—Annie, 96 (b. Jan. 18, 1915; d. May 23, 2011), North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

Kroeker—Abe, 85 (b. Oct. 19, 1925; d. May 15, 2011), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Nesdoly—Gordon, 59 (b. Oct. 6, 1951; d. May 17, 2011), Laird Mennonite, Sask.

Neufeld—Lindsey, 24 (b. Feb. 24, 1987; d. April 29, 2011), Horse Lake Mennonite, Duck Lake, Sask.

Rempel—Elsie (nee Goertzen), 73 (b. June 5, 1937; d. May 19, 2011), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Sawatzky—Hilda, 72 (b. Jan. 22, 1939; d. April 8, 2011), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Schmidt—Lothar, 62 (b. April 14, 1948; d. April 4, 2011), Pembina Mennonite, Morden, Man.

Schwartzentruber—Elmina, 89 (d. May 14, 2011), Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

COVER STORY

Speaking with one voice

Peace message closes Decade to Overcome Violence celebration; Mennonite voices prominent at International Ecumenical Peace Convocation

World Council of Churches
KINGSTON, JAMAICA

Participants at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC)—held last month in Kingston, Jamaica, to celebrate the end of the Decade to Overcome Violence—released a message expressing their unified experience of a week-long exploration of a just peace and ways to navigate a path forward as they return to their homes and churches around the world. Attempting to take into account each other's varied contexts and histories, participants were unified in their aspiration that war should become illegal and that peace is central in all religious traditions.

The message states: "With partners of other faiths, we have recognized that

peace is a core value in all religions, and the promise of peace extends to all people regardless of their traditions and commitments. Through intensified inter-religious dialogue we seek common ground with all world religions."

The participants acknowledged that each church and each religion brings with it a different standpoint from which to begin walking towards a just peace. Some begin from a standpoint of personal conversion and morality. Others stress the need to focus on mutual support and correction within the body of Christ, while still others encourage churches to commit to broad social movements and the public witness of the church.



"Each approach has merit," states the message, which was crafted by a seven-member committee chaired by Bishop Ivan Abrahams of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. "They are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they belong inseparably together. Even in our diversity we can speak with one voice."

Abrahams hopes that convocation participants will find their voices in the message. "In many ways, this convocation is a milestone in the march toward just peace," he said at the convocation's closing event. "This message is to ourselves, to our churches and related organizations, and to the world that is bruised and broken, and that God so loves."

The message also acknowledges that the church has often obstructed the path towards a just peace: "We realize that Christians have often been complicit in systems of violence, injustice, militarism, racism, caste-ism, intolerance and discrimination. We ask God to forgive our sins, and to transform us as agents of righteousness and advocates of just peace."

The convocation's message captures only part of a truly historic event, said the Rev. Dr. Walter Altmann, moderator of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Central Committee, as he received the IEPC message on behalf of the WCC. "You take with you much more than a text; you take with you a profound ecumenical experience," he said.

The ending of WCC's Decade to Overcome Violence—an initiative first proposed by German Mennonite theologian Fernando Enns—is also a new beginning, Altmann added. "As we return, each of us

WCC PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS



German Mennonite theologian Fernando Enns, who first proposed the Decade to Overcome Violence, speaks at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in Kingston, Jamaica, an event held to celebrate the decade's conclusion.

WCC PHOTO BY MARCELO SCHNEIDER

becomes a living message for the IECPC," he said.

The peace convocation participants responded to a reading of their final message with a standing ovation.

The general secretary of the WCC, Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, expressed his pride to the participants who challenged themselves and each other to reach new levels of understanding and determination. "We are called to be one in our witness," he said. "We also see that the way to just peace has united us. This is a gift for all of us and we shall use it well."

The final message may be complete, but the work of the peace convocation is only beginning, said Enns, who was moderator of the preparatory committee for the event. "We are only beginning to grasp the possibilities we have when we really respect one another," said the professor of Mennonite peace theology and ethics at the Free University of Amsterdam, Holland. "The church shall not speak to the marginalized; the church is where the marginalized are."

While convocation participants should celebrate their experience, Enns believes they should not rest satisfied. "Our journey must continue," he told those at the closing event. "You and I, we shall hold each other accountable. The church is either accepting the call to just peace or it is not the church at all."

Peacemaking can be rooted in theology and mission

Making peace an integral part of the life of church mission and witness has not been as common as some might think, according to Thomas Finger, a former professor of



Thomas Finger, a former professor at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., leads a workshop on 'Peace: The lens for re-visioning Christian theology and mission,' at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in Kingston, Jamaica.

Is it possible there is a non-coercive expression of mission and theology that can move the church towards being a peacemaker? This was the point of discussion during a convocation workshop Finger led. Entitled "Peace: The lens for re-visioning Christian theology and mission," participants explored his views about peace, justice, salvation, sin and Jesus' mission.

He explored classic theological assumptions, one of the strongest being that violence is central to the theological concept of sin. "If the way that led to death is violent, the way that leads to life cannot be violent," Finger suggested, adding, "Sin is not only the personal breaking of divine

at the age of 38, helped workshop participants reach the consensus that, through the lens of peace, theology can be more than "the clarification of the articulation and the testing of our basic conditions."

One of these basic conditions is that people think life is a struggle. But life can be something different, he said, citing the possibilities of relationships and peace. People can also reverse the current "logic" of violence through the strength of their faith and commitment. "The resurrection itself reversed the logic of violence and condemns those who killed Jesus," he concluded.

Finger, who maintains a dialogue with elements of both Orthodox Christian theology and liberation theologies, said the Holy Trinity is essential for any theological reflection and a perfect model of peace, inviting human beings to live in communion through the event of the resurrection.

Finger also echoed some elements of liberation and contextual theologies, especially when analyzing structural sins and defending liberation for renewal and the establishment of peace and justice. ❧

The Decade to Overcome Violence logo is used with permission from the World Conference of Churches.

[P]articipants were unified in their aspiration that war should become illegal and that peace is central in all religious traditions.

systematic and spiritual theology at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. Rather, the opposite seems to be true, as the church throughout history has found itself pointing the sharper—rather than the blunt—edge of the sword, many times using violence in the name of God. Following closely behind has been mission and theology, either justifying it or keeping silent.

laws, but also the corporate turning away from and losing sight of God, peace and justice."

By proposing complementary approaches to Christian theology, Finger said this would help churches and individuals focus the experience of their faith on the core of Jesus' message, which is peace. Finger, who joined a Mennonite Church U.S.A. congregation

STORIES OF FIRE AND RAIN

WINNIPEG FREE PRESS PHOTO BY MIKE DEAL



Tony Peters looks at his flooded farmland. The Manitoba farmer hopes this year's flooding prompts the province to re-examine its entire flood-protection system to better balance the negative effects of flooding.

Paying the price to keep Winnipeg dry

Mennonite farmer wants province to quit 'transplanting the problem' of spring flooding

BY RACHEL BERGEN
National Correspondent

While Winnipeggers remained dry and free from the worry of flooding this spring, this is not the case for farmers living near the Portage Diversion, including Tony and Astrid Peters and their family. Up to 75 percent of the Peters' 405-hectare potato farm is engulfed by water.

This is because the move was made, more than 40 years ago, to protect Winnipeg by building a diversion so that water would flow from the Assiniboine River to Lake Manitoba.

According to Tony Peters, a member of Portage Mennonite Church in Portage la Prairie, Man., this diversion has not done its job. "Water pours out and the water breaches the banks and floods agricultural land around Lake Manitoba," he says. "The outlet is way too small for the amount of water that enters into the lake."

Because of wet weather conditions this spring, the Portage la Prairie/Brandon area and other communities surrounding Lake Manitoba have experienced the "flood of the century," Peters says. "We won't be planting any acres on our farm this year."

Although the family has experienced a great deal of stress from the flood, they have been helped a great deal by the local churches and their neighbours. Portage Mennonite, as well as the local Alliance church, helped sandbag. "They even brought food," Peters says enthusiastically. "To have that kind of input to help you is a heartwarming experience."

It isn't just the local church that has been helping out. Mennonite Church Canada has been trying to raise awareness by sending out prayer requests to churches across Canada, says communications director Dan Dyck.

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) has also been responding to calls for help with flooded basements and rescuing appliances that are dangerously close to encroaching water.

According to Manitoba MDS chair Dan Klassen, there isn't a great deal of work for MDS right now, but the "local volunteers have been responding as needed," he says. "The government has been providing a bunch of funding. After a few months we will be covering those who fell through the cracks."

But based on the many floods he has lived through, Peters has found that the government does little to help those who are suffering. "The programs put in place are very, very long, tedious and difficult to be a part of," he says.

He thinks this may be because those who are not directly affected by the flood do not understand the big sacrifice those affected have made so that Winnipeg can stay dry. "It feels like it isn't [Winnipeg's] problem at all, just our problem," he says, adding, "That's a hurting feeling. . . . We're paying a big price tag to keep Winnipeg dry."

"I think we have to learn that taking the problem away from one sector of people and giving it to someone else is really not a solution," Peters says. "It's just transplanting the problem." ❧

STORIES OF FIRE AND RAIN

Slave Lake burns while Valaqua road is flooded

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent

In the past month, wildfires in northern Alberta devastated the community of Slave Lake, with the resulting losses coming to the attention of both Mennonite Mutual Insurance (MMI) and Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), while in the south

the swelling Little Red Deer River cut off access to Camp Valaqua from the north.

Although Alberta's Mennonite Mutual Insurance only has a dozen policyholders in the north, the heat from the Slave Lake fires was felt all the way to its Calgary

offices. "It kind of hit home because it's one of our staff whose parents lost their home," said claims manager Larry Jantzi.

On May 15, wildfires ripped through Slave Lake, pushed by winds up to 100 kilometres per hour. Residents rushed to evacuate and were unable to take more than a few possessions with them. A third of the town of 7,000 was destroyed, including businesses, homes, the new town hall and library.

Lauren Dyck, an insurance representative at the La Crete MMI office, is helping Slave Lake area policyholders deal with

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Evacuation

© BY AARON A. LEHMAN

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

"Where have you been today?" the customs officer at the Edmonton International Airport asked.

My wife Winifred named the places: "Meridian, Miss.; Atlanta, Ga.; Minneapolis, Minn., and here?"

"What have you heard about Slave Lake?"

"We haven't heard anything since we left home eight days ago."

"Slave Lake is on fire?"

"You mean a forest fire?"

"Yes, and the town."

"Oh no!"

"I'm sorry. Go ahead."

At 1 a.m. on May 17, our emotions tumbled forth. We were tired from the long trip, waiting in terminals, eating airport food and dealing with a delayed flight. Now, an hour behind schedule, we were standing bewildered waiting at the baggage claim.

Our trip to Mississippi had been planned for some time, the latest in several Voluntary Service reunions for us. We had a great time of sharing and fellowship, listening to the night sounds of frogs, cicadas and other animals.

"Slave Lake may have ice and snow during a long winter, but we don't have to worry about tornadoes and floods," I recall saying, oblivious to what was happening in Slave Lake at that very moment. I had forgotten—or ignored—the fact that we live in the middle of the Boreal Forest, prone to forest fires in May.

At this time in Slave Lake, some seven thousand people and numerous pets were being evacuated.

Some barely escaped with their lives as acrid smoke darkened the sky and surging flames torched their homes and businesses.

How could this have happened? As is often the case in northern Alberta in May, there are days with south-east winds that bring hot, dry air. Everyone enjoys these spring days.

All was fine until May 14, when a spark ignited dry grass east of town. Such fires are common in our area. The forest service was prepared to take immediate action. Firefighters were called in. Air tankers and helicopters with buckets scooped up water from the lake and dropped it and flame retardant on the fire.

But wind was the culprit. Fanned by strong winds, the fires got out of control. By that evening, a combination of abnormal factors combined to bring a forest fire "tsunami," as one firefighter described it, over the town. Winds of 100 kilometres per hour made it too dangerous to use air tankers or helicopters. Firefighters bravely battled the onslaught, but lost. Most of the institutions, including schools and the hospital, were saved. The new library, town office and some 300 homes were gone by the next day, however.

At the last minute, residents hopped into their vehicles and joined the procession out of town. Some saw their houses flash into flames as they drove away. They gathered again in evacuation centres in Smith, Westlock, Athabasca and Edmonton, to hug and share stories and get aid provided by generous Alberta donors. We met our family members in Edmonton and learned that our places were spared, but homes of our neighbours and friends were lost. Courageous actions by firefighters ensured no one died.

Finally, the call has come to go home. Everyone will need to help rebuild the community. Some people will need more help than others, but there is a strong community spirit and we will get it done. ❧

STORIES OF FIRE AND RAIN

PHOTO COURTESY OF ABE AND RITA DYCK

their losses. Dyck's parents, Abe and Rita Dyck, lost their home and all its contents to the fire.

Dyck, who grew up in La Crete and worked in the Slave Lake area before joining the staff at MMI, clearly understands his work as Christian ministry. "After the fire, I was calling [policyholders] representing MMI, but also knowing them," Dyck said. He found policyholders thankful for the call and relieved to hear they were covered for the wildfire, evacuation expenses and other damage they may yet discover.

Dyck's parents were not at home when the wildfires struck. A few days earlier they had left Slave Lake to manage a campground near La Crete. In spite of losing their home, Dyck said his parents feel blessed knowing people are safe and that they have a place to stay. They also did not have to face the trauma of emergency evacuation surrounded by wind and fire.

MDS is waiting to be called in to volunteer with clean-up and rebuilding. Peter Goertzen, the MDS rep in La Crete, has made contact with town administration and tried to get in to see what is needed.



All that's left of the home of Abe and Rita Dyck of Slave Lake, Alta., after last month's wildfire wreaked havoc to the town of 7,000.

"We haven't been in there yet," he said on May 26. "They are starting to let residents back in. . . . Nobody's prepared for this kind of thing."

Many of the destroyed homes were bulldozed before residents could see them. "It's a little like burying the body before the family has had a chance to see," Goertzen said. He is frustrated and sad about the situation, predicting there will be added

grief because of it.

As of May 26, MDS and other organizations such as Samaritan's Purse didn't know what they might be called upon to do. "There's a good possibility [MDS] will be in the rural areas," Goertzen speculated. "The rural area has lost 59 houses. Those have not been [bulldozed]."

Meanwhile, heavy rains in southern Alberta, combined with snow melt from the mountains, caused a number of rivers to flood, including Little Red Deer River, which bisects Camp Valaqua. At one point, the water completely covered the bridge that allows access to the camp from the north.

Camp staff told *Canadian Mennonite* that they aren't particularly concerned. When the river floods, it only affects one shed and a swimming area. The only loss at this point is the swimming dock that got swept downstream and the slide that used to be attached to it is missing. ☺

PHOTO BY JIM SENIOR



The Water Valley bridge over Little Red Deer River flooded this spring, blocking access to Camp Valaqua from the north.



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God at work in the World snapshots

PHOTO BY RICHARD ALBRECHT

As part of an ongoing Mennonite-Muslim dialogue, Mennonite Central Committee Ontario volunteers—including Marlene Epp, left, and Sagal Muse—converged recently on the Residential Energy Efficiency Program (REEP) House in Kitchener, Ont., to install a rain garden. Instead of having rain run off, collect pollutants and carry them to streams and rivers, rain gardens are specifically designed to increase rainwater soaking into the ground, where contaminants are filtered out, leaving clean water to enter the aquifer.



EDEN HEALTH CARE SERVICES PHOTO



A large and appreciative crowd came out on May 13 to celebrate the grand opening of Wilson Courts, a two-building, 24-unit Eden East complex in Steinbach, Man. The apartments provide safe, affordable housing for people living with mental health concerns. Pictured from left to right: Mark and Bonnie Loewen, who originally owned the apartment complex; Ron Dyck, Eden East director; Jack Dueck, Wilson Courts West resident; Ed Penner, Eden East board member; James Friesen, Eden Health Care Services chief executive officer; Pat Moore of Manitoba Housing; Bill Kehler, Eden East board chair; and Deb Taillefer, director of mental health for South Eastman Health.

IN PRAISE OF THRIFT SHOPPING

MCC thrift shop sales continue to boom

BY GLADYS TERICHOW
Mennonite Central Committee

ST. CATHARINES, ONT.—Business was brisk at the 56 Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) thrift shops across Canada last year, as local boards and volunteers continued to explore new ways to increase sales.

In 2010, Canadian thrift shop contributions to MCC exceeded \$7.2 million, far above the projected income and the previous year's record contributions of \$5.9 million, says Canadian thrift shop coordinator Judy Dyck.

Although unpaid volunteers continue to be the "heart and soul" of MCC thrift shops, Dyck says many shops have become large multi-faceted businesses. Some shops now occupy department-store-sized spaces and have grown to the point where they require assistance from paid managers.

"Donors, customers and volunteers want to know their contributions will produce a good end result, and MCC thrift shops have demonstrated their commitment to caring for creation and supporting MCC projects and programs," Dyck notes.

The Christian Benefit Shop in St. Catharines exemplifies some of the changes that thrift shops are making to recycle used goods, support local communities, increase sales and operate well-organized shops, says Dyck.

In January 2009, the seven-member board that operated two thrift shops in this southwestern Ontario city invited MCC service workers Phil and Joan Steininger of Larkspur, Col., to manage the new combined shop.

The new managers had retired from their careers, he as the manager of a municipal water and service district and she as an elementary school librarian. They brought the management skills needed to assist the board and volunteers with combining the two shops and moving the business into larger premises.

The shop is now located in a 715-square-metre building in a multi-ethnic residential

community. It is operated like a retail business. Sales are tracked by department to give volunteers a sense of what sells and what doesn't, and to acknowledge their contributions to overall sales. Silent auctions, extended hours and special events also contribute to increased sales.

This past year sales increased by 57 percent, to \$600,000. Despite having mortgage payments and higher expenses, contributions to MCC increased by 34 percent, Phil says. "Every day we have people standing outside waiting for us to open the doors. This is a meeting place for people of all ages. People feel very comfortable coming here. One person even fell asleep on a couch. That tells me that people feel comfortable in this shop."

"It is the personal touch of our volunteers that makes this place so special," Joan adds. "Our volunteers genuinely like working with people."

The shop has a volunteer base of 160 people. Betty Penner has been volunteering since the first shop opened in 1974. She says that in the early years her main responsibilities in the shop were cleaning and polishing shoes. "I had six children and my mother-in-law came to our house to babysit that day," she recalls. "I liked working in the thrift shop; it was my day off."

She now has 11 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, but still comes to the shop on a weekly basis to price housewares. "MCC is important to me because MCC helped my parents in Russia, and now we are able to give back and help others," Penner says.

Thirty-eight years after the first thrift shop opened in Altona, Man., in 1972, 108 shops now operate across Canada and the U.S., contributing more than \$112 million to the work of MCC during that time, says Dyck. ❧

*'I liked working in the thrift shop; it was my day off.'
(Betty Penner, long-time thrift shop volunteer)*

MCC PHOTO BY NINA LINTON



Managers Joan and Phil Steininger take a moment to enjoy one of the furniture displays in the Christian Benefit Shop in St. Catharines, Ont.

IN PRAISE OF THRIFT SHOPPING



MCC thrift shop manager Gerry Loewen, left, and customer Margarite Courchene are pleased that a mural on the building is reducing graffiti in this Winnipeg neighbourhood.

'A good peaceful place to be'

Thrift shop provides sense of community in Winnipeg neighbourhood

**STORY AND PHOTO
BY GLADYS TERICHOW**
Mennonite Central Committee
WINNIPEG, MAN.

Margarite Courchene lives alone in the North End of Winnipeg and doesn't leave her home when it is dark outside. "I don't need to watch the news on TV to learn about the crime and violence in this neighbourhood," she says. "It is in front of me when I look out of my windows."

But she is not afraid to leave her house during the day when the streets are filled with people of all ages and from all walks of life, and her destination is the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) thrift shop on Selkirk Avenue, just a short walk from her house. "I come here lots of times, sometimes more than once a day," she says. "It is a good peaceful place to be."

Finding things that she would not be able to find anywhere else is not the only reason for her daily visits to the thrift shop, however. "I always run into my friends and neighbours here," she says. "It is a good place to meet people."

The shop's manager, Gerry Loewen, says violent crimes in the community affect the well-being of everyone living and working in this historic neighbourhood. The important issues for her and others working in the thrift shop are meeting physical, social and emotional needs of people living in the community, and participating in community efforts that strengthen a sense of belonging.

The thrift shop has developed into an inter-generational meeting place that brings together people who have lived in the city's North End for many generations. This includes aboriginals, newcomers from other countries and people from other communities working for agencies and businesses located near the thrift shop.

"We are located in a neighbourhood that benefits tremendously from our merchandise," says Loewen. "We are a very busy store. But even on days that we don't

sell a lot, it is busy because it is a meeting place."

Proceeds from the sale of the items support MCC projects in other countries, but Loewen says she often reminds her volunteer staff that "it is not just about making money for MCC; it's about serving people who have witnessed violence or have been victimized."

Relationships, she explains, are being developed through making efforts to know people by their first names, taking the time to hear their stories, and creating an atmosphere that is welcoming and peaceful.

To reduce graffiti and beautify the neighbourhood, the thrift shop participated in the Selkirk Avenue Mural Project. These efforts are appreciated by Courchene and others who live in the neighbourhood. "The murals look beautiful. They make the back alley look clean," she says.

Although there is a lot of visiting and laughing taking place in the shop, the main attraction is the goods donated to the shop.

"There are only two things in my house that I haven't bought here—my bedroom suite and dining room table," Courchene says. "Everything else that I have in my house I have bought here. I always walk out with something." ❧

IN PRAISE OF THRIFT SHOPPING

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



Rebekah McGill, left, manager of the New Hamburg (Ont.) Thrift Centre perennial sale and market garden, pots plants with one of the volunteers, her mother Heather. McGill, a fourth-year life sciences student at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ont., was hired for the season through an Ontario government grant. The perennial sale attracts home-owners as well as landscaping companies that buy large numbers of plants. The plants come from volunteers, including people who divide their plants each spring, and from those who are moving from their homes into apartments or nursing homes. In its first year (2010), the plant sale took in \$22,000; this year, it sold \$5,000 worth of plants in the first week of operation. Over its 30 years of operation, the thrift centre has contributed \$4 million to Mennonite Central Committee Ontario.

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GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

The survey says . . .

Latest survey shows Canadian Mennonite readers still look to magazine as their first choice for local and national church news

By ROSS W. MUIR

Managing Editor
WATERLOO, ONT.

Despite a small survey sample—only 215 out of more than 14,000 subscribers took the time to send back the two-page questionnaire in our Feb. 21 issue—it is clear that readers still believe *Canadian Mennonite* “should be a primary source of information about Mennonite Church Canada”; 89 percent agree or strongly agree with this sentiment. More than 90 percent said we succeeded in being their primary source of information.

When it comes to representing readers’ geographical areas “adequately,” 79 percent agree or strongly agree that we do just that. Our approval rating was highest in Manitoba (83 percent) and lowest in Alberta (64 percent).

The demographics of our readership have changed somewhat since our last survey in 2001. At that time, 46 percent said they were over 60. Now, nearly 69 percent are over 65; another 25 percent are between 41 and 65. That leaves less than 7 percent of our readers between the ages of 15 and 40.

Our readers tend to be better educated than the general population, with more than 53 percent citing an undergraduate or post-graduate degree, more than twice the national average. Less than 10 percent reported they had only a grade school education.

Nearly 59 percent of respondents read every issue from cover to cover, while another 40 percent read items of interest. On average, 28 percent spend more than two hours reading each issue, with another 61 percent taking between one and two hours.

However, when it comes to accessing our magazine online, three-quarters indicate that they never visit canadianmennonite.org for news updates or the online version of our publication. Twenty percent visit occasionally. Of those who do visit our

website, 62 percent agree or strongly agree that it is easy to navigate.

Ninety-three percent of respondents said our articles strike “a good balance between criticism and promotion,” while 88 percent agree or strongly agree that our publication is “true to its mission of ‘providing a balance of Anabaptist perspectives in news and commentary.’” We also received kudos for providing “a good balance between theological issues and practical, down-to-earth Christian living”; 82 percent agree or strongly agree with this statement.

Individual respondents spanned the gamut on these questions. “The magazine has lost its critical edge as it has become more of a spokespiece for the denomination,” was one comment, while another said, “I like reading the *Canadian Mennonite*; it is kind of ‘homey’ and pleasant, with a great variety of topics covered and viewpoints expressed.”

When it comes to the quality of our magazine: 94 percent agree or strongly agree that the writing is professional; 84 percent agree or strongly agree that we use photographs effectively; and 87 percent agree or strongly agree that the layout is appealing.

However, “professionalism” is not perceived as good by everyone. Wrote one respondent: “Sometimes [*Canadian Mennonite*] is too professional. The Scriptures tell us that when Jesus was here, the common people heard him gladly. . . . There are still many

loyal people in the church who are intelligent and thoughtful, but cannot relate to highly professional thinking and big words, who you are losing as readers, in my opinion.”

Readers tend to turn to the editorial first (47 percent), followed by feature articles (16 percent) and letters to the editor (15 percent).

Our readers are committed to Anabaptism, with 80 percent saying they have been affiliated with the Mennonite faith for more than 50 years. Only 4 percent of respondents have been affiliated for less than 10 years.

But the magazine does have appeal to younger readers. Said one, “Have noticed my 22-year-old grandson picking up the paper and reading it at our house. It is his only contact at present, as he has removed himself from the church fellowship. That is the situation with many of our youth.”

Top 10 Suggestions

- Get rid of the coloured backgrounds.
- Keep the print version/ don’t go online only.
- Print more arts/culture articles and poetry.
- Lighten up on the over-emphasis on peace and social justice.
- Print more Bible-based or salvation articles.
- Print more articles from Eastern Canada. (More than half of the survey respondents were from Eastern Canada.)
- You have lost your edge; articles need to be more critical.
- Print more longer articles.
- Switch to good quality—glossy—paper.
- Keep using newsprint. ☞

Readers comment

- I would like to see more critique and analysis of our politics through the lens of Anabaptist-Mennonite theology.
- We would like to see a good Bible study in each issue. The Scripture must remain our focal point.
- More articles by Aiden Enns and Will Braun or that type of theological thinking.
- As it is, this paper gives one the impression that preaching the gospel and helping people find salvation in Christ is not very high on the agenda of Mennonite Church Canada.

Emerging from the shadows

Church families not immune to domestic violence and abuse

By HENRY NEUFELD

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

Domestic violence knows no boundary between the secular and spiritual worlds, as one in four families—whether outside or inside the church—is impacted by domestic violence and abuse.

“Emerging from the shadows” was the theme of a recent conference put on by Peace and Safety in the Christian Home, a leading international organization promoting peace and safety in the Christian home. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada and MCC B.C. were among the sponsors of this three-day annual event in Abbotsford, which drew nearly 200 participants from Canada, the U.S. and abroad.

About 50 pastors met to hear University of New Brunswick sociologist Nancy Nason-Clark’s comments on the role of the church in domestic violence.

“Sometimes home is not a place of peace and safety,” she said. “When violence strikes at home, people often look to the church for help.” She noted, however, that there is a “high hush” that operates in many churches that do not want to hear about abuse and violence.

Citing her research, she said that when a religious leader supports and counsels the abuser, recidivism is reduced by 80 percent. Most church leaders, however, say they are not equipped to help in situations

of domestic violence.

Nason-Clark has developed “Religion and Violence E-learning,” a web-based resource (theraveproject.org) to help church leaders respond to domestic violence in ways that are compassionate, and to inform them about walking alongside victims of domestic violence.

In responding to the presentation, Pastor Andrew Dyck of King Road Mennonite Brethren Church, Abbotsford, noted that pastors experience a lot of pressures in their work and often lack the resources to deal with situations. “There are no ‘model’ families in the Bible,” he said. “There are some dastardly stories there.”

Another conference session focused on a survey of a hundred people who left a church due to spiritual abuse, defined as situations where a spiritual leader misuses Scripture and authority to control, dominate and manipulate people, and often does this with the blessing of an elders board of “yes men.”

Churches where spiritual abuse occurs are under the control of a pastor with no accountability structure, where “you must

be 100 percent loyal to the pastor,” according to Barb Orłowski, author of the self-published book, *Spiritual Abuse Recovery*. These men have violated their sacred trust to be a shepherd, she said, adding that public rebuking, legalism and social shunning are strategies often employed in spiritual abuse situations.

The wounds of spiritual abuse take time to heal, according to Orłowski, cautioning against quick forgiveness. “Only when the depth of injustice is conscientiously reckoned with, can forgiveness be extended,” she told the conference.

“I was disappointed with the leadership because I perceived that I did not get a fair hearing,” a respondent said. “I went into meetings where decisions had already been made and any listening was really only waiting for their turn to lower the boom. My hope had been that, as a minimum, we would clarify our differing views and come to an understanding of each other’s positions. . . . If the views were differing enough we could painfully, but at least amiably, separate. Unfortunately, . . . the leaders had to believe they had God’s will, and, as such, had to stick up for God by booting us out the door.”

The conference also had sessions on working with men who act violently; faith-based shelters; the link between hope and accountability; why clergy don’t understand; pornography; and domestic violence in a peace church. ❧

*‘Sometimes home is not a place of peace and safety.’
(Nancy Nason-Clark)*

CANADIAN MENNONITE

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Check out the profiles of MCEC’s new pastors in our new Photo Gallery

canadianmennonite.org/galleries



Alissa Bender,
 new pastor at
Hamilton
Mennonite Church

/// Staff changes

New pastors for B.C. churches

Two new pastors have begun ministry in Mennonite Church B.C. congregations.

- Matthew Kwok has begun at Chinese Grace Mennonite Church in Vancouver as English/youth pastor; he began his duties on May 1.
- Rob Wiebe of Burns Lake was installed as pastor of Church of the Way in Granisle, also on May 1. Wiebe and his wife Tammy, long-time members of First Mennonite Church Burns Lake, are living in Burns Lake while ministering to the small Granisle congregation.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

/// Briefly noted

New buildings transform two Saskatchewan camps

• Camp Elim is adding a fifth camp to its program this summer. The family camp will be held over the long weekend from July 29 to 31 and will finish up with a music fest fundraiser event. Another new development has been an improvement to the camp website; groups wishing to rent space at the newly built Elim Lodge can now register online, instead of mailing in their registrations.

• Youth Farm Bible Camp is also dealing with a new building—the former Eigenheim Mennonite Church—on the grounds. Although the camp will only be able to use the present sanctuary for chapel space this summer, it is hoping to do much more with the building once summer is over. Camp director Mark Wurtz is hoping that Youth Farm will be able to plan a winter camp experience for adult special needs campers, something it has never done before. Bringing in a more accessible chapel space in the form of the church building was done deliberately to help make adults with balance issues more independent, since there are fewer stairs to manage.

—BY KARIN FEHDERAU

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Herald Press



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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GOD AT WORK IN US

Baking is a privilege

STORY AND PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent

MORDEN, MAN.



Mennos at work

Lynette Froese is reluctant to call her unique career a business, or even a career. “I was raised to consider work as a form of service, so I try to see this work not just as a business, but as a way of offering a service,” she says.

Froese has a degree in nutrition and a life-long interest in creating healthy food. “In a world where so many do not have enough food, I wanted to give my children a sense of responsibility and of being faithful with how we treat food and produce it,” she says.

When she and her young family lived close to the Tall Grass Prairie Bread Company in Winnipeg, Man., she asked to volunteer at its bakery. “I liked their philosophy and the way they did business,” she says. “A lot of the bread was formed by hand. They use organic ingredients, mill their own flour, and pay a fair wage to the farmer.”

Froese valued the training she received at Tall Grass Prairie, and when her family moved to Morden 10 years ago, she decided to pursue her dream of opening her own bakery. She took a course on how to start a small business and, together with a business partner, came up with a plan.

With two young daughters, and her husband Ken working full-time as a nurse, she wanted to keep her time and family life in balance. Rather than purchasing the local bakery that was for sale, she and her husband decided to buy a house with a summer kitchen in the basement and restyle it into a bakery. She purchased a second-hand oven, mill, bun machine and kneading machine.

Together with Yvonne Stoesz, her business partner and fellow church member at Pembina Mennonite Fellowship, Morden, Froese opened Wheat Song Bakery out of her basement in 2002, carrying on the tradition of Tall Grass Prairie, she says, by becoming a “meeting place where the loaf

of bread is born and begins to sing its own song.”

At Wheat Song Bakery, Froese diligently tries to be accountable to the land and to her suppliers by supporting local organic farmers and paying a fair return for their produce.

“For those first five years we developed organic whole-grain products and a customer base,” she says. “We have had a really warm reception from the community.” Members of their house church have been strong supporters and product testers.

But finding a life-work balance has been an ongoing struggle for Froese. Stoesz decided to pursue other work about five years ago, leaving Froese to carry on the work by herself, which often meant working

four days a week. With two school-age daughters, she says, “I felt the balance tipping again and so I cut back.” For the past four and a half years Froese has been balancing the baking with part-time immigrant service work, but that is now coming to an end.

Several years ago Froese took a course in England that offered instruction on how to use organic whole grains and natural yeasts. She now uses natural yeasts in a growing number of her products.

And whenever possible, she tries to avoid plastic, using paper instead. It is easy to see how she views her work as a form of service, rather than simply

a business venture. Every first-time customer gets a free loaf of bread. She caters to special needs and allergies; recently a customer requested a chocolate cake made with 100 percent spelt flour, so she agreed to give it a try. Every Friday morning she delivers freshly baked pre-ordered cinnamon buns to schools and businesses in the community.

“I love being involved in the physical act of feeding people, of providing something that is beneficial to their health,” she says. “It is a privilege to be able to use the gifts I have to make a living and to help others.”

Froese has offered cooking classes for the regional health authority and 4-H Club programs, and she is dreaming of a course for people who want to learn the art of baking and bread-making using locally grown products.

Froese used to get up at 3 a.m. to go to her basement bakery and begin the day’s mixing. Now she sleeps in until 5. “I really like that quiet time in the morning,” she says. “It allows me to think and meditate before everyone wakes up.” ❧



Lynette Froese displays some of her Wheat Song Bakery products that are all made from organic, locally grown grains and natural yeasts.

From hoof to table

Camp Squeah chef explores preparing natural farm products

BY AMY DUECKMAN
B.C. Correspondent
HOPE, B.C.

When Camp Squeah head chef Hiro Takeda wants to order food for the camp kitchen, he places a call and the food comes delivered to him, neatly pre-packaged. But earlier this spring food took on a more personal touch when the camp hosted a pork dinner featuring fresh meat from a hog raised on a local organic farm.

Takeda (commonly known as “Yoshi”), who has been camp chef since last year, has always believed in the nutritional value of food and the relationship between food and the earth it comes from. One day at a church retreat, Walter Bergen, co-proprietor of Six Masters Farm in rural

‘When people sit down to a good meal, relationships are built. When people sit down to a bad meal, they talk about the food.’

(Hiro Takeda, Camp Squeah chef)

Chilliwack, struck up a conversation with Takeda. As the two talked it became clear that they shared the same philosophy on food and its impact on people.

Takeda loved the idea of supporting local farmers and preparing meat raised on natural food that is not mass produced. “I care that my philosophy lines up with his in order to get the best product possible,” Takeda says.

Bergen and his partner, Tony Funk, raise mainly specialty meats such as duck, rabbit and squab (pigeons) on their farm, not the usual fare for camp meals. But they also have a few hogs. The idea developed for Takeda to buy one of Six Masters’ hogs and use the meat for a special dinner at Camp Squeah, inviting people to buy tickets for



‘Yoshi’ Takeda, right, Camp Squeah chef, showcased his culinary skills in April with a dinner using organically raised pork from a local farm.

the meal at \$20 each to cover costs.

Takeda asked to be present when the animal was slaughtered. With his camp meat orders coming impersonally pre-packaged, he says it was important to him to remember that all meat comes from a real animal that was once living and breathing. Witnessing the death of the animal, whose meat he would prepare a few days

white bean cassoulet with smoked hock, and pulled pork shoulder sandwiches with caramelized onion jam, plus accompanying side dishes. He had hoped to sell 30 tickets, but 45 signed up.

Takeda grew up at Surrey Mennonite Church and attended Camp Squeah as a youngster. He has always loved working with food, and at age 25 he has completed a chef course. “As a chef, all I know how to do is take raw ingredients and make them good,” he says. “I love making beautiful food. I understand the impact of food on people. When people sit down to a good meal, relationships are built. When people sit down to a bad meal, they talk about the food.”

Takeda hopes to continue exploring ways to support local businesses and farmers, as opposed to large corporations, through the food used at Camp Squeah.

“I’m starting to realize food is only a vehicle,” says Takeda. “Food is secondary to what is important in life: honouring God in what you do, being in a community and nourishing relationships.”

“It is a pleasure to work with Chef Yoshi,” says Bergen. “It’s my job to raise food with integrity, it’s the chef’s task to plumb the depth of that integrity and present it to the diner. Yoshi and I are doing ecological theology, one step on the farm, one step in the kitchen, and the last step is in the community of faith.”

later, gave him a sense of appreciation for animals as a food source.

Takeda knew the meat he was preparing would be superior to anything from a large meatpacking plant.

“He identifies himself as a Christian farmer,” Takeda says of Bergen. “Because of that, he wants to do things the way God intended them to be done. When you do things right, when you feed the animal [naturally], you get a far superior product. When you strive to do what’s important from a godly perspective, everything else falls into place.”

The meal on April 19 proved to be a success. Takeda prepared 10 different pork entrees, including such appetizing dishes as braised barbecued pork belly, maple

PHOTO BY WALTRUDE GORTZEN

FOCUS ON THE ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH



Tyler Yantzi, centre, moves compostable paper bowls from a blue box into the green bins as volunteers Scott Bauman, left, and Mark Brubacher, right, look on.

New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale goes 'green'

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
NEW HAMBURG, ONT.

One of the stated goals of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is creation care, to the point of MCC Ontario hiring Darren Kropf part-time to spearhead this effort in congregations. But activities like the New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale, now having completed 45 years, are run by grassroots organizations and are not part of MCC proper.

John Reimer, a member of both the Relief Sale board and its creation care subcommittee, notes that they had been approached by a number of patrons over the years about recycling at the event. This spurred him and others to follow their own desires to improve the ratio of recycled

matter to garbage.

While there were still a few vendors depending on Styrofoam dishes and some bottled water being sold, most were using paper plates that could be put into green bins for composting. Even most of the plastic cutlery on site was biodegradable. Water stands using municipal water were scattered around the New Hamburg fair grounds, equipped with degradable paper cups for those who had forgotten to bring their own bottles or mugs.

Although they didn't get enough volunteers, many of the busiest waste sites were watched over and the materials in the garbage cans, blue bins and green bins were



Savang Nay, a volunteer from the Grace Lao Mennonite Church, Kitchener, takes a break from making spring rolls to load up on fries and ketchup, served in a recyclable paper container.

being sorted into the appropriate containers. At the end of the sale, much of the garbage was resorted to ensure as much as possible was diverted from the dump.

In the future, the sale hopes to encourage more patrons to bring their own containers for food like the spring rolls and empanadas, develop greener transportation like

FOCUS ON THE ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH

shuttle buses from Kitchener/Waterloo, and encourage car pooling and biking.

The information tent at the centre of the fair grounds provided education to those at the sale. This year the Menno Café served beverages in china cups and saucers, which were washed at end of the day. The overwhelming positive response may lead the café to use more washable dishes in the future.

While Bullfrog power—energy from renewable sources—had been used in previous years, it was felt that going with recycling and green bins would make a bigger impact.

After the sale, Reimer said the committee was pleased with the results and had only received positive feedback from patrons, although he acknowledges that this is a multi-year process of learning how to



In past years, garbage bins at the New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale were filled with a mix of recyclables, compostables and garbage. This year, there was an effort made to sort the garbage before taking it to the landfill.

do it and to educate the public.

The sale this year raised around \$350,000 for MCC work around the world, an increase of \$17,000 over 2010. ❧

neighbourhood through ordering trees for his neighbours, picking them up and delivering them.

“When I heard that we could order the trees and pick them up at Centro Menno, it was convenient for me to provide this service for my neighbours,” he says. “Sixty yards around here now have fruit orchards.”

Neufeld does not have to be convinced of the benefits of trees and fruit orchards. His parents had a small orchard that produced avocado, guava, cherries, oranges and lemons. “I could hardly wait until the fruit was ripe,” he recalls.

In 1998, he bought 18 hectares of land and the first thing he did was plant papaya trees. “Even before I built the house, I planted papaya trees,” he says. Shortly after the house was built, he planted banana and mandarin orange trees.

In a few years, when the trees begin to produce fruit, he plans to expand his small beekeeping hobby. Currently, he has two beehives in the pasture and each beehive produces about 80 kilograms of honey per year. “It doesn’t matter where I put the boxes, it doesn’t take long for the bees to move in,” he says. “We use as much as we need and sell the rest.”

Pointing towards the newly planted trees in his orchards, he says, “There won’t be any honey that will be more delicious than what these trees will produce.” ❧

‘Better than medicine’

Fruit tree project takes root on Bolivian colony

BY GLADYS TERICHOW
Mennonite Central Committee

Orchards of grapefruit, mango, papaya, avocado and other trees will soon produce fruit on Heinrich and Sara Neufeld’s large farmyard on the Swift Current Mennonite colony 40 kilometres south of Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

“I want our children to be able to go into the orchard and eat as much as they want,” says Neufeld, a father of seven children aged 1 to 11. “When all the trees produce fruit and the fruit is ripe, it will be better than medicine.”

The past two years he has planted 560 fruit trees on their 53-hectare farm and he plans another 140 trees next year. This fruit tree project is part of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Bolivia’s agricultural program that encourages people to plant fruit trees for a healthy diet and a healthy environment. During the past five years, more than 7,000 fruit trees have been planted through a partnership between MCC Bolivia and the local provider of citrus trees, Vivero Citrico.

After learning about MCC’s program through reading *Menno-Bate*, a 20-page

magazine published by MCC, Neufeld drove around the colony and told his neighbours about the project. He also helped promote the endeavour in his



Heinrich Neufeld and his four-year-old son, Heinrich, relax in their yard on the Swift Current Colony, Bolivia.

MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PHOTO BY SILAS CREWS

FOCUS ON THE ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH

Reflections on Mennonite environmental values

BY DAVID NEUFELD

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

I've been thinking about faith and environmental issues for some 30 years. Over this time, I have come to appreciate that some Mennonites are writing about environmental stewardship, some church schools now embrace green building projects and offer courses in environmental education, and some agencies are creating service opportunities that reflect creation care themes.

At the People's Summit for Faithful Living, held by Mennonite Church Canada in 2008, Mennonite Creation Care Network, of which I am a member, asked workshop participants what Mennonite perspectives contribute to creation care. They listed four areas: holistic theology—connecting faith and work; peace and justice—peace with others and the land; farming roots—practical skills and simple living; and a global perspective—immigrant history, awareness and service to others.

Our agricultural roots have kept us close to the land. There is a strong sense of responsibility to feed and care for the world.

Stewardship values, emerging out of the need for frugality and depending on others to survive, has gradually transformed into the positive idea of living more with less, and simplifying our lifestyles out of consideration of the needs of others.

Working for peace and justice has been another anchor and conscience for our churches. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Mennonite Economic Development Associates support projects of soil conservation, reforestation, appropriate technology and safe water. MCC Ontario is a leader in promoting creation awareness and action by churches.

But before we congratulate ourselves, we need to ask whether we could do more.

We need more local congregations praying for guidance, studying and acting

on God's love for all creation. It can take many forms, like providing bike racks, car pooling to church, creating a garden

plot on church property, sharing tools or equipment among families, and adopting greener energy sources for heating and cooling church buildings, like Hillcrest Mennonite Church, New Hamburg, Ont., recently did.

Let's put our beliefs into actions: that should come naturally for Mennonites! ☸

David Neufeld of Winnipeg, Man., is a member of the Mennonite Creation Care Council.

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ARTBEAT

Cooking for peace

Nettie Baer remembers her years in the kitchen for Pax

STORY AND PHOTO

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

“Will the fellows like my cooking?” wondered Nettie Redekopp in 1954 as she arrived at the Pax post-World War II rebuilding project in Wedel, Germany. That question haunted her for years, but finally in 2010 she dredged up the courage and began to call those whose phone numbers she could find.

Her nephew, John Thiessen, notes that she logged over a hundred long-distance calls some months—some of them successful, some wrong numbers. The project came as part of her recovery from clinical depression as she lived in a seniors’ home in Waterloo.

Erica Jantzen, a Waterloo Region writer, had finished writing her family’s stories and announced at Waterloo North Mennonite

PHOTO COURTESY OF NETTIE BAER



Nettie Baer stands at her stove in 1954.



Nettie Baer, left, sits with her nephew, John Thiessen. Waterloo Region author Erica Jantzen, who helped with Nettie’s Story: The Pax Years, Feb. 1954 - Nov. 1956, stands behind them at the book launch on May 16.

Church that she was prepared to help others write theirs. Thiessen heard this and the project was born. *Nettie’s Story: The Pax Years, Feb. 1954 - Nov. 1956* was launched at Parkwood Mennonite Home on May 1.

Pax was a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) program that ran from 1951-76, providing alternative service to American young men who were being drafted. Some Canadian men also joined the projects, which included work in Germany, Holland, Greece, Austria, Jordan, Nepal, Vietnam, Liberia and Paraguay.

Redekopp, then 32, was sent as a matron to care for “the boys.” She did this at Wedel, in Vienna, Austria, and at Panedita, Greece.

Armed with her *Mennonite Community Cookbook: Favourite Family Recipes* by Emma Showalter, she cooked at first on a coal-fired stove, carried water from a pump outside, and stored food in an unheated

room behind the kitchen area.

Upon concluding her service she returned home to Winkler, Man. She trained as an X-ray technician, which brought her to Winnipeg, where she married Raymond Erle Baer in 1968, a man she had met on an MCC assignment in Kitchener, Ont., just before she travelled to Europe.

“My deepest desire was to be an asset to the program, not a hindrance,” Baer writes in *Nettie’s Story*. “[The Pax fellows] were not the tough fellows I was warned about. They were meek and mild, and very polite. But I never knew if they enjoyed my meals! They never said a thing. . . . It wasn’t until I got home, when Mark Conrad and his wife came to visit, that I got any feedback. He surprised me with the biggest hug I had ever received. And then it happened with every Pax fellow that came to visit me. They just about crushed my ribs.”

To order *Nettie’s Story*, e-mail John Thiessen at jbthiessen@execulink.com. ☘

‘My deepest desire was to be an asset to the program, not a hindrance.’

(Nettie Baer)

BOOK REVIEW

A classic Mennonite tale of one city

At the Forks: Mennonites in Winnipeg.

By Leo Driedger. Pandora Press, 2010. 473 pages.

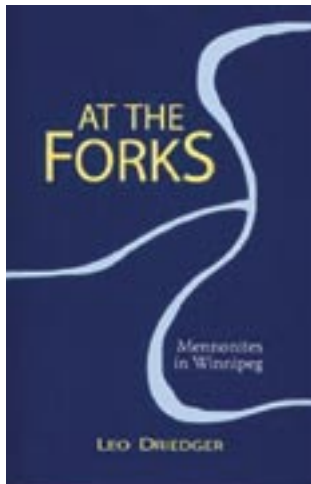
REVIEWED BY DICK BENNER

As a relative newcomer to the Canadian scene, I found Leo Driedger's latest book, his 19th, a virtual map, as he traces Mennonite development in Winnipeg, Man., which has become the largest concentration of Mennonites in the world, surpassing Amsterdam, Holland.

While slightly on the decline since 1991, when Mennonites numbered 21,900, the city still represents a "Mennonite metro model," with some 40 churches, six Mennonite colleges, a media centre, scores of businesses and professionals (including those in the legal and medical fields), not to mention artists, musicians, politicians and creative writers, all of whom he describes in the 12 chapters of his well-researched study.

Not only chronicling with fastidious detail the numbers and data in an easy-to-follow narrative, Driedger, a well-known sociologist, gives insightful interpretation to the story as it moves from the mass exodus of Mennonites in Ukraine in 1874 to their present pervasive presence in Canada's ninth largest city.

He is especially interested in the rural-to-urban shift over these 140 years and draws on peer sociological studies like Reginald Bibby and Don Posterski's *Teen Trends: A Nation in Motion* to observe that "attitudes of Mennonite teens were very similar to those of other Canadian youth, with more than 80 percent supporting family relationships, changing lifestyles and religious beliefs. Older Mennonites scored higher on in-group identity, moral behaviour and



church participation."

As a new observer on the Canadian scene with a Swiss/German historical narrative, I found his ruminations keenly insightful on the re-urbanization of Russian Mennonites from Ukraine, who, prior to the 1917 Revolution, had a highly developed society that prepared them for easy assimilation into a more urban culture in Manitoba.

Driedger's tracing of the many Mennonite groups, some anchored in migrations, others in dissension over religious differences, is even-handed and fair. I couldn't tell from his writing whether he himself is what he still calls a General Conference Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren, Evangelical Mennonite Missions Conference, Evangelical Mennonite Conference, Sommerfelder or Chortitzer. Nor does he show any particular bias in what seems to be an ongoing debate over evangelism versus social justice, or missions versus service and peacemaking.

I was particularly intrigued with his chapter on creative writers, whom he describes as "dislocated Mennonites" in search of a "home": Rudy Wiebe, Paul Hiebert, Arnold Dyck, Di Brandt and Miriam Toews, among a list of 23. He dispassionately tells their tortured stories, while at the same time holding them up as prophets and seers pointing the way for a people struggling to emerge from their "boundaried traditional rural communities."

His interpretation of their struggle to find a new "home" is especially poignant with this passage in his summary: "As Mennonites became more highly educated and urban, their search for new psychological identities changed as their language and culture changed. Individuals studied and re-evaluated loyalties, emotions and feelings toward their Anabaptist past and traditional rural values.

"In the city, they were faced with new forms of space, organization, symbols and communication, which required thought, debate, study and evaluation. In Winnipeg, Mennonite creative writers, artists and musicians helped in the process of finding new Anabaptist identities, some of which reflected their 16-century roots and others which reflect the information age."

That observation could well apply to Mennonites everywhere in North America. Driedger's narrative is a classic story that should be on the library shelf of every Mennonite church in Canada. It is a gift to any serious Anabaptist Mennonite wanting some significant signposts for the future that are firmly rooted in the past. ❧

Dick Benner is editor/publisher of Canadian Mennonite.

/// Briefly noted

Dueck novel wins 2011 Book of the Year Award

WINNIPEG, MAN.—Dora Dueck's novel *This Hidden Thing* has been named the McNally Robinson Book of the Year, as announced at the Manitoba Book Awards this spring. The novel is a "humane and fully satisfying depiction of times, places [and] communities," according to jurors Joan Barfoot, Trevor Cole and Richard Lebrun. *This Hidden Thing* is the first novel to be published by CMU Press, which is an academic publishing initiative of Canadian Mennonite University.

—CMU Press

Young seminarian wins T-shirt design contest

By STEVE SHENK

Mennonite Publishing Network
HARRISONBURG, VA.

Anthony Martin of Ephrata, Pa., is the winner of a T-shirt design contest that commemorates the release of the 30th anniversary edition of *Living More With Less* and the creation of a website for the book (www.livingmorewithless.com).

Martin, 28, is a graphic designer and landscaper who plans to enroll at Dallas Theological Seminary, Tex., in July to pursue a master's degree in theology.

The winning design, which topped a total of 23 entries, is built around the word "simplify." It will be imprinted on T-shirts that will be given away at a launch event for *Living More With Less* in Pittsburgh, Pa., in July, at the Mennonite Church U.S.A. convention. The event will be sponsored by MennoMedia, a new agency formed by the merger of Mennonite Publishing Network and Third Way Media.

"I knew a design about living simply should be simple," says Martin. "The circle just embodies the holistic mentality that goes along with living simply. . . . I am passionate for my generation to develop a truly Christian worldview, where our faith informs every aspect of our lives." ❧



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EDITORIAL

Calling all 'young voices'

EMILY LOEWEN,
YOUNG VOICES EDITOR



Here begins a new adventure: *Canadian Mennonite's* Young Voices section. What is this section, you ask? Why is it here?

Upon reflection, the magazine realized that its readership is—how to put this gently—aging. And while this threatens the life and breath of subscriptions, it's also a problem because many voices in

can be shared, added to and carefully critiqued. Of course, there is irony, in that our voices are in a separate section of the magazine—and yet they are still a part of the greater whole that is *Canadian Mennonite*.

Now about the name, a challenging endeavour on its own. To start, I first wrote down all the characteristics this section

Of course, there is irony, in that our voices are in a separate section of the magazine—and yet they are still a part of the greater whole that is Canadian Mennonite.

the church aren't part of the conversation.

The hope is that Young Voices, along with its accompanying website, provides a forum for "young people" to discuss the issues we find important. Here at the *Canadian Mennonite* office, located just uptown from Uptown Waterloo, I dream of online interaction, letters to the editor, slideshows and stories from you, our young readers. This is a space for "young" Mennonites, however you define the term, to share your work and find ways to live more faithful lives. I know I dream big, but I think we can do it together.

I believe young people have important ideas to share with our church. But sometimes, whether because of doubt in our own abilities or because people dismiss us as idealists, our ideas don't lead to anything. Here, those thoughts

should have, and words that I hope it will grow into. I then cut out each of those words onto a little piece of paper, and then spent a good hour arranging them into different combinations until there were two full pages of possibilities.

After much deliberation I, along with the other *Canadian Mennonite* staff, settled on Young Voices. As a name, it's not perfect, but it does some things well. I tried hard to avoid classifying this as either a youth or young adult section, as we focus on neither exclusively. Instead, the word "young" explains how this part of the magazine differs from the rest. I chose "voices" because every reader should have a part in creating it, not just the staff.

Which brings us to the website. Young Voices is not limited to the confines



of these pages. It's accompanied by an online section—
youngvoices.canadianmennonite.org
 —with extra content, polls and opportunities for contributions. The website also has a slate of young bloggers sharing their ideas and experiences, hoping to spark interest and wider conversations. You'll have to take a look at the website to find

out their names and what they have to say.

So now it's up to you. This project can only succeed if you take part. Check out our website, then send your story ideas, something you've written or photographs you've taken to me at eloewen@canadianmennonite.org. Young Voices is your playground: Explore, learn and enjoy. ☘

Printing places

Winnipeg printmaker Miriam Rudolph maps her life through art

BY EMILY LOEWEN

Young Voices Editor

Growing up, Miriam Rudolph always said she wanted to be an artist . . . or a gardener. Now, only 28 and working as a full-time printmaker, she gets to live out one of her childhood dreams.

Unsure when her creative drive began, Rudolph believes she always had an intrinsic desire to create. Her parents, both teachers, encouraged that desire, and a steady stream of art supplies for her mother's early childhood education class gave her lots to work with.

Rudolph started painting in high school, but discovered and fell in love with printmaking while working on her fine arts de-

Man., and has been part of several group exhibits, including one of Canadian printmakers in Washington, D.C.

While those experiences stand out as highlights of her career, Rudolph's art is also a personal form of diary, expressing her experience of place. "Somehow I always feel I live in multiple worlds and underlying my work lies a search for belonging," Rudolph says. And given her experience growing up in Paraguay, living in Germany and then moving to Winnipeg, that search for a home makes sense.

In fact, cartography features prominently in most of Rudolph's work. Full of

'I think underlying the Mennonite culture is still the notion of simplicity and unadornment and I don't fit in there. I don't like plain white walls - except to hang my work.'

(Miriam Rudolph)

gree at the University of Manitoba. After her first degree, she moved on to study education while working at printmaking on the side. And while some people might have given up on art as a career after getting her degree, she says she "decided to continue with my own artwork instead of applying for jobs."

Her choice seems to have paid off. In 2011 alone she's had one solo exhibition at the Martha Street Gallery in Winnipeg,

landmarks and mapping symbols, her art is tied to a personal experience of locations. The idea for that mapmaking style began after she moved to Winnipeg and had difficulty with a sense of direction, likely due to growing up in the Southern Hemisphere.

"I had the sense that the sun rises in the west and goes down in the east," she says. "Star constellations appeared on their heads and I would instinctively turn 180 degrees in the wrong direction at every intersection."



Winnipeg printmaker Miriam Rudolph at work.



'My Winnipeg II', 2010. Etching, hand coloured. 45.5cm x 45.5cm.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MIRIAM RUDOLPH



'Farewell to Montekamp (Paraguay)', 2011. Double-plate colour etching, Chine-Collé, printed on Pescia Magnani paper. 30cm x 30cm.

Now she creates art that helps her hold on to places, including memory maps of Paraguay or places she feels connected to in Winnipeg.

Alongside themes of place, Rudolph is also influenced by artists like Warrington Colescott, Marc Chagall, Paul Klee, and Frida Kahlo with her diary-esque paintings.

Although she's recognized as a Mennonite artist, Rudolph struggles with the term because her faith has little influence on her current art. She has done some work for a chapel and a church, but finds that visual art still isn't as important to Mennonite communities as music. "I think underlying the Mennonite culture is still the notion of simplicity and unadornment, and I don't fit in there," she says. "I

don't like plain white walls, except to hang my work."

As a self-employed artist, Rudolph sometimes experiences an accompanying lack of motivation, but most days she loves going to work at the Martha Street Studio, a communal space available for Winnipeg artists to rent. She still enjoys teaching and leading printmaking workshops at the studio, but says that "at this point I can't really see myself as a full time high-school teacher. Being able to live as an artist, I love it"

Visit Rudolph's website, miriamrudolph.com, for more about her work.

Know other artists, visual, musical or otherwise, that Young Voices should write about? Write to Emily Loewen at eloewen@canadianmennonite.org.

VIEWPOINT

Political dialogue 101 for Mennonites

BY SUSAN GUENTHER LOEWEN

Special to Young Voices



This spring's federal election rekindled my interest in Canadian politics after I'd experienced disillusionment with the whole process. Several elections changed nothing and the candidates I voted for always seemed to lose.

But this election seemed different; there was energy and enthusiasm, especially among people my age. Many of you probably heard about—or joined—the "vote

booth with a bit of a spring in my step.

But the results were strange, weren't they? I don't quite know how to interpret the polarization of the political landscape. The majority government is, for the Conservatives, a dream come true, but it is balanced by incredible gains by the New Democrats.

Whichever way people voted, there was a sense of ambiguity at these hot-and-cold

It's safe to say that Jesus' followers spanned the political spectrum of the time, and Paul's intense mediation within the early church is evident throughout the New Testament.

mobs" of students with messages like "Surprise, we're voting!" Facebook was also crammed with election articles and encouragement to get out and vote. I'm not usually one to follow trends, but this was inspiring. It sent me off to the polling

results. Difficult questions surfaced almost immediately: How can these two parties get anything done with opposing viewpoints on almost every issue? Is it even possible for them to work together?

These questions apply beyond the strictly

political realm, to the political landscape within the Mennonite church as well. While I haven't done official surveys, based on my decade of Mennonite Church Canada membership I suspect most Mennonites voted either NDP or Conservative in this last election, meaning that we contributed, however indirectly, to the polarization in the House of Commons.

If my speculations have any truth to them, questions about working together could easily be applied to our Mennonite church: Is it possible, given these vastly different political opinions, for us to work—or remain—together? I think both groups see their vote as a matter of faith; for some, the Christian way to vote is Conservative, and for others, it's NDP.

Theologically, those who vote NDP, myself included, probably see their faith as a continuation of Jesus' ministry among the outcasts of society. Those who vote Conservative, I speculate, value the Conservative Party's position on certain moral issues. But before we accuse each other of disloyalty to the faith, it's important to remember that neither vote aligns exactly with our Mennonite convictions. For example, I don't like that faith is taboo in some NDP circles. Nor do I enjoy surrendering my nonviolent Mennonite beliefs when voting, something that affects both sides, since both the NDP and the Conservatives support the Canadian military.

The Mennonite instinct is to cut and run when disagreements occur. But it's much more difficult to stay, relate to and live with those we disagree with, those who are strangers, and therefore to be welcomed as Jesus welcomed followers from all different

walks of life. It's safe to say that Jesus' followers spanned the political spectrum of the time, and Paul's intense mediation within the early church is evident throughout the New Testament.

I'm not suggesting this tactic leads to tidy middle ground, that we water down our beliefs or avoid talking about them for the sake of unity. I'm thinking along the lines of "inter-political" Mennonite dialogue: learning from each other in our differences without erasing them, realizing that both positions have their blind spots and profound insights. As our age group, like those brand new MPs, begins participating in the church as adults, I hope we can keep this in mind. It'll open up the possibility of working together. ☘

Susanne Guenther Loewen is a doctoral student at the Toronto School of Theology.

☘ Young voices on politics

- I didn't want to vote for corporate and individual tax breaks; after school is done, I won't mind paying taxes if the money will be used wisely.

(Darren Neufeld, 23, Glenlea Mennonite Church, Man.)

- I believe that the church is called to be active in the world; this is being political. Whether or not Mennonites are called to vote is a trickier matter.

(Gerald Ens, 21, Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man.)

- To me, the Conservative Party stands for the self; its emphasis on lower taxes—especially for those who are well off—goes against the teachings of Jesus. Didn't he believe in helping the poor?

(Elise Epp, 24, Toronto United Mennonite Church, Ont.)

To read more responses, visit youngvoices.canadianmennonite.org.

The image shows a screenshot of the Canadian Mennonite website. At the top, the logo "CANADIAN MENNONITE" is displayed in large, bold, white letters on a dark blue background. To the right of the logo are navigation links: "About", "Contact", "Submissions", "Subscriptions", "Editorial/Ad Calendar", and "Donate". Below the logo is a search bar with a "Search" button. Underneath the search bar is a horizontal menu with links: "Articles", "Blogs", "Classifieds", "Yellow Pages", "Church Events Calendar", and "Past Issues". Below this menu is a white banner with the text "Canadian Mennonite is now on Facebook" in bold black font. Underneath the banner is a Facebook "Like" button with the text "Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/Canadian.Mennonite".

Calendar

Alberta

July 8-9: MCC Alberta Summerfest and Auction (formerly called the Relief Sale), at Sherwood Park, Edmonton. For more information, visit MCCReliefSale.com.

Saskatchewan

July 17-22: Natural Building School, at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

Aug. 27: Second annual Spruce River Folk Music Festival, at Spruce River Farm, 20 kilometres north of Prince Albert on Highway 2; from 2 to 8 p.m.

Sept. 16-18: Saskatchewan Mennonite Youth Organization junior youth retreat at Youth Farm Bible Camp.

Oct. 4: Youth Farm Bible Camp annual fundraiser at the camp, from 5 to 7 p.m.

Manitoba

July 13: MCC Manitoba's ninth annual golf tournament fundraiser, at the Links at Quarry Oaks, Steinbach, in support of literacy and education in Afghanistan. Register online at Manitoba.mcc.org/golf. For more information, call Paul Friesen toll-free at 1-866-761-1046.

July 15-17: MCC alumni reunion for workers who served in Southern Africa. Visit mcc.org/alumni/reunions.

July 16: Eden Foundation's "Visit the Villages Tractor Trek" from Reinland to Gretna, begins at 8 a.m. in Reinland.

Aug. 23: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate fundraising golf tournament, at Bridge Golf Club, Winnipeg.

Ontario

June 18: Mennonite heritage dinner at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, celebrating Walter and Marina Unger's heritage cruises to Russia. Funds raised will go to the Mennonite Archives of Ontario. For tickets call 519-885-0220 x 24223.

June 18-19: Faith Mennonite Church, Leamington, 50th anniversary celebrations. (18) registration, barbecue supper and program beginning at 4 p.m.; (19) worship service at 10 a.m., followed by a potluck lunch and afternoon activities.

June 22: Fairview Mennonite Home, Cambridge, hosts its annual strawberry social, "All Things Bright and Beautiful." Program at 2 and 7 p.m. featuring the Fairview Vocal and Handbell Choirs. Fresh strawberry pie and beverages served following the program by the auxiliary.

June 25: Strawberry social at Nithview Home, New Hamburg, from 2 to 4 p.m., and again from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Sponsored by the Nithview Auxiliary.

June 26: Truckers Sunday with Transport for Christ at Milverton Mennonite Fellowship. Truck parade at 9:30 a.m., church service at 10 a.m. followed by barbecue lunch.

July 1-3: Family Camping Weekend at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp over the Canada Day weekend. Campsites are first come-first served; cabins need to be reserved. For more information, or to book a cabin, e-mail info@hiddenacres.ca.

July 4-8: Assembly visitors are invited to drop in at TourMagination's Waterloo office from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily for refreshments and door prizes.

Aug. 8-12: Peace Camp at Conrad

Grebel University College, Waterloo, for students who have just completed grades 6, 7 or 8. For more information, e-mail pac@uwaterloo.ca or call 519-885-0220x24269. Register by July 29.

Aug. 14-26: Ontario Mennonite Music Camp at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo. For more information, visit grebel.uwaterloo.ca/ommc.

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

Classifieds

For Rent

Two-bedroom retreat **cottage for rent**. Modern conveniences. By the Little Mississippi River in the **Bancroft area**. Call 519-471-3309 or e-mail kacee@rogers.com.

For rent: Dunromin Cottage. 3-bdrm cottage at Red Bay on Bruce Peninsula. Nestled among maple trees. Short walk to sandy beach known for sunsets and small park. Rear deck. Available June 25-Aug 6 and Aug 13-Aug 27. Phone 519-746-4920.

Advertising Information

Contact *Canadian Mennonite*

Ad Representative

Lisa Metzger

1-800-378-2524 x.224

519-664-2780

advert@

canadianmennonite.org

For Sale

Yamaha **Grand Piano for Sale**. Black, 6ft. 1in, C3E, 25 years old. Well maintained, \$16,000 or best offer. Contact Sharon Wilkinson at 905-642-6859 or aubrey_phmark@hotmail.com.

Notice of Meeting

NOTICE: At a special meeting the membership of the **North Kildonan Funeral Aid Society** voted to dissolve the Society. All members in good standing will receive a refund on the amount of money paid in over the years. Refunds will be sent to all members by the end of August, 2011.

Employment Opportunities

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
cpkrah@sasktel.net, 306-463-8228

or

Jerry Buhler, Mennonite Church Saskatchewan
jerry@mcsask.ca



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FACULTY POSITION IN PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES

Conrad Grebel University College, a Mennonite College at the University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, invites applications for a full-time permanent faculty position in the undergraduate Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) program and the proposed graduate PACS program, with a teaching and research specialty in interdisciplinary and multisector approaches to peace studies. The appointment will begin July 1, 2012. The College will begin reviewing applications on August 1, 2011. For further information about the position and application procedures: grebel.uwaterloo.ca/pacsfaculty.



MENNONITE
FOUNDATION
OF CANADA

Communications Strategist

Mennonite Foundation of Canada, a donor-advised charitable foundation established in 1974 to promote financial stewardship from a Christian perspective, is seeking a Communications Strategist.

The Communications Strategist will report to the MFC Executive Director and will plan, direct, and coordinate the communications strategy of MFC. This will involve developing promotional products and services, making recommendations with respect to product positioning, managing the marketing budget, and providing market research and analysis. Key communications vehicles and channels currently in use include: brand style guide, website, denominational periodical correspondence, electronic newsletter, workbooks, and an annual report.

As the ideal candidate you will:

- ♦ have a university degree, preferably in Business or Communications, or equivalent relevant experience (preferably in the charitable sector)
- ♦ have ability to manage multiple projects and time schedules
- ♦ be committed to ongoing professional development
- ♦ have an understanding, knowledge, and appreciation of the wider Anabaptist church community and related agencies and cooperative organizations
- ♦ be an active member or adherent in an Anabaptist church.

MFC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. Resumes will be considered as received.

Darren Pries-Klassen, Executive Director
Mennonite Foundation of Canada
4-595 Carlton Street
St. Catharines, Ontario L2M 4Y2
Email: dpklassen@mennofoundation.ca
1-888-212-8731

MANAGER

Sargent Ave. MCC Thrift Store, Winnipeg is seeking individual or couple to serve as Manager starting Aug. 2/11. Applicants should have good management and administrative skills and work well with volunteers and public. Retail sales experience preferred. Successful applicant is expected to have a commitment to the church and to mission of MCC. Salaried, full-time position. Rate of remuneration to be negotiated. For info and job description contact Henry Fast, Chairperson, hfast@mts.net or (204) 261-7768 by June 30/11.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

PEACE MENNONITE CHURCH
RICHMOND, BC

Peace Mennonite Church invites applications for the full-time position of **Associate Pastor**.

This position places major focus on youth and family ministries along with a minor focus on general congregational ministry.

Applicants should have a relevant degree in Christian ministry, an understanding of contemporary Anabaptist theology and an interest and ability to relate to young people.

Please send resumes either by mail to: The Search Committee, Peace Mennonite Church, 11571 Daniels Rd., Richmond, BC V6X 1M7 or by e-mail to office@peacemennonite.ca by June 30, 2011.



ROCKWAY
MENNONITE
COLLEGIATE

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

All faculty and staff at Rockway demonstrate commitment to the vision and ideals of education within a Christian faith-based learning environment, and have a personal connection to an Anabaptist church community.

BUSINESS MANAGER

This position is for an individual who will bring leadership and strategic direction to the business and finance services for our school, as an integral part of the Administrative Team. This half-time contract position is for a one year period from October 2011 to October 2012. Qualifications and Required Skills:

- Experience in Business Management, and minimum of Bachelor degree in Business or related field
- Demonstrated knowledge and ability in all areas of business and finance administration, including but not limited to budget setting, account management, some personnel management, and policies/ procedures development

TEACHING POSITIONS

Teachers (one full-time and one half-time) are required for September 2011 in following areas – Grade 9 and 10 Science; Gr. 10/11/12 College Mathematics; Grade 11 World Religions; possibly intermediate French. Qualifications and Required Skills:

- Ontario College of Teachers Certification (or equivalent) with Intermediate/Senior qualifications
- Commitment to students and student learning, as well as professional knowledge and expertise in program planning and use of excellent instructional, assessment, and evaluation strategies

Cover letter and resumes are due Monday, June 20, 2011 to principal@rockway.ca. Please refer to www.rockway.ca for further details.

Waldo Neufeld, right, initiated a pledge drive at Mennonite Church Canada's spring leadership assembly, which raised more than \$15,000 from board and council members. "If we believe in what the church is doing, we need to support it," he said, adding that he believes financial contributions from board members and staff give those who are engaged in resource development an edge when they go to constituents asking for money. "It can be a real encouragement," Neufeld said. Also pictured are Christian Witness Council members Irene Crossland, centre, and Bock Ki Kim.



God at work in the Church snapshots



Preparations to attend Mennonite Church Canada's youth and adult assembly in Waterloo, Ont., from July 4 to 8, have begun to ramp up. On May 26, Adina Doerksen, Jessie Zacharias, Mary Fehr and Martha Harder—volunteers with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) Region V—held a "block party," stuffing 500 baggies with MDS postcards and Duplo building blocks. The packages are destined for delegate tote bags at Assembly 2011 and the blocks are for the construction of an MDS "house" at the MDS display table. Service organizations like MDS see the importance of opportunities to meet together with the church as fundamental to supplying service-oriented volunteers and disciples of Christ who are ready and willing to serve wherever and whenever needed.